

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FEMALE CERAMISTS IN ACADEMIA TO THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF CERAMIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE IN GHANA**



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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF CERAMIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE IN  
GHANA**



**A thesis in the Department of Art Education,  
School of Creative Arts, submitted to the School of  
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy  
(Art Education)  
in the University of Education, Winneba**

**DECEMBER, 2022**

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Gifty Baidoo, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

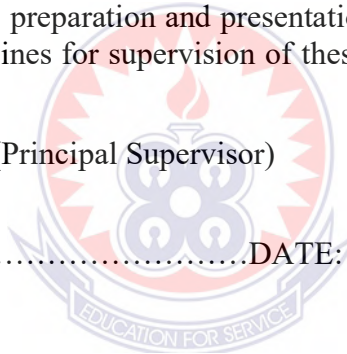
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### SUPERVISORS DECLARATION

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Dr. J. B. K. Aidoo (Principal Supervisor)

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Dr. E. R. K. Amissah (Co-Supervisor)

Signature: .....DATE: .....

## **DEDICATION**

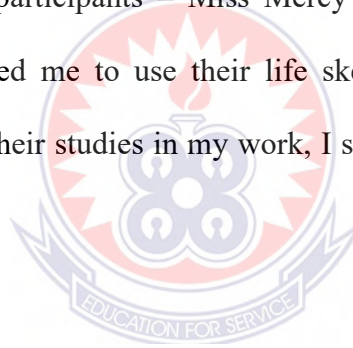
To my lovely girls (Heavenly Baah and Josie Baah) and my dear husband - Alex Baah



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

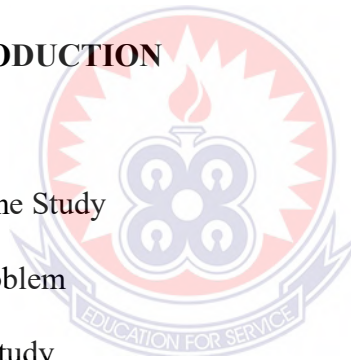
I express my sincere appreciation to my lecturers who taught me during my studies in the Department of Art Education, University of Education Winneba (UEW). I am grateful to Dr. J. B. K. Aidoo, my Principal Supervisor, Dr E. R. K. Amissah (Co-Supervisor), Dr. Ebenezer Acquah (my internal assessor) for their tireless support, guidance, direction and motivation throughout the writing and research process.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Overview	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of Problem	5
1.3 Purpose of the Study	7
1.4 Objectives of the Study	8
1.5 Research Questions	8
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Delimitations of the Study	9
1.8 Definition of Terms	10
1.9 Organisation of the Study	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b>	<b>12</b>
2.0 Overview	12
2.1 Theoretical Framework	13

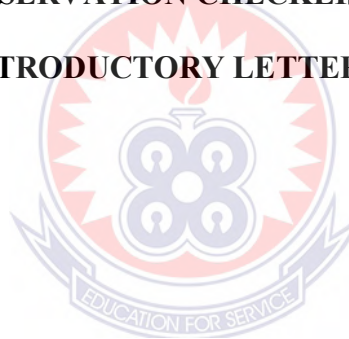


2.2 The Concept of Ceramics and Ceramic Education	14
2.3 History of Ceramic Education and Industry in Ghana	16
2.4 Female Ceramist Icon in Africa: The Academic and Professional Journeys of Ladi Kwali	22
2.5 The Ceramic Education and Industry	28
2.6 Higher Education Institutions Offering Ceramics as a Course of Study in Ghana	30
2.6.1 Rationale for Ceramic Education in Ghana	30
2.6.2 Ceramics in Higher Education	31
2.6.3 Nature of Ceramic Courses offered by these Institutions	33
2.7 Challenges Facing Ceramic Education and Practice in Ghana	41
2.8 The Potentialities of Ceramic Art Education to Mitigate the Challenges	49
2.9 Ceramic and Economic Development	52
2.10 Women and Economic Development in Ghana	55
2.11 Female Ceramists in Ghana and their Contributions to Ceramic Education and Practice in Ghana	56
2.12 Summary	58
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>59</b>
3.0 Overview	59
3.1 Philosophical Assumption/Paradigm	59
3.1.1 The Interpretivist/Constructivist Paradigm: epistemology and ontology	59
3.2 Research Design	62
3.3 Population	63
3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure	64



3.5 Methods of Generating Data	64
3.6 Ethical Consideration	65
3.7 Data Trustworthiness	66
3.7.1 Credibility	66
3.7.2 Transferability	68
3.7.3 Dependability	69
3.7.4 Confirmability	69
3.8 Data Collection Procedure	70
3.9 Data Analysis	70
3.10 Limitations	71
3.11 Conclusion	71
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</b>	<b>72</b>
4.0 Overview	72
4.1 The biographies of the participants for the study	72
4.1.1 The Life Story of Mrs. Henrietta Barfi- Mensah	72
4.1.2 The Life Story of Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah	78
4.2 Themes generated from the narratives	84
4.2.1 Theme 1 – Identification of female ceramists in academia, their academic and professional journey	84
4.2.2 Theme 2 – Roles played by the female ceramist in ceramic education and practice in Ghana	98
4.2.3 Theme 3 – Challenges faced by the female ceramist (participants)	111
4.2.4 Theme 4 – coping strategies to mitigate the challenges	117
4.3 Conclusions	120

<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>122</b>
5.0 Overview	122
5.1 Summary	122
5.2 Conclusions	123
5.3 Recommendations	124
5.3 Suggestions for further research	124
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW GUIDE</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>APPENDIX B - OBSERVATION CHECKLIST</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>APPENDIX C – INTRODUCTORY LETTER</b>	<b>137</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 - list of public universities and technical universities in Ghana	31



## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figures</b>	<b>Page</b>
1 - Sea shells used as female idiom by Mercy Abaka-Attah	104
2 - Sea shells used as female idioms by Mercy Abakah- Atta	105
3 - Clay containers for curbing plantain post-harvest losses designed by Mercy Abakah Attah	106
4 - Pair of Decorative Flower Pots for the Main Auditorium of Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana by Mercy Abaka-Attah	106
5 - Embossed Kroye Slices on a Building designed by Henrietta Barfi Mensah & co	107
6 - Seashells designed by Mercy Abakah- Atta	107
7 - Embossed Anieden Slices on a Building designed by Henrietta Barfi Mensah & Co	108
8 - Feminism as a Model in Pottery artworks of Mercy Abaka-Attah	108



## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

BECE – Basic Education Certificate Examination

CSIR - Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research

GCE – General Certificate Examination

GDP - Gross Domestic Products

HTU - Ho Technical University

JSS – Junior Secondary School

KNUST - Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

SDG - Sustainable Development Goals

SHS – Senior High School

TTU - Takoradi Technical University

UEW - University of Education, Winneba

WASSCE – West Africa Senior Secondary Certificate Examination



## ABSTRACT

The indigenous Ceramic sector especially pottery in Ghana and Africa at large are pioneered by women. However, the contributions of female ceramists in academia have not received much attention in previous studies. This research implored a qualitative study with a biographical-narrative design to explore the academic and professional journey of the female ceramists identified in academia; their contributions to Ceramic education in Ghana, their challenges and how they have learnt to cope. Purposive sampling was used to identify two female ceramists in academia. Data were collected primarily using semi-structured interviews were supported by the use of observation and graphics(pictures). Thematic analysis was applied in analysing the data. It was reported that both participants had their secondary education at Fijai Secondary school, Sekondi and obtained their first and higher degrees from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. Participants have contributed their quota to the development of Ceramic education through teaching, research publications and projects undertaken. The study also reviewed that both participants had challenges at home and in the institution. The coping strategies adopted by these participants to overcome their challenges at the workplace were intrinscally generated. It was reccomneded that Universities and higher institutions in Ghana should recommend, encourage and assist the promising and interested females in the field of Ceramics to upgrade themselves to lecture at the tertiary institutions. Also, women should be given more opportunity in academia to contribute immensely and meaningfully in the field of Ceramic. To help curb the challenges of Ceramic education in Ghana it was reccomneded that Ceramic studios at both the Second Cycle Schools and in the Universities should be well resourced with modern equipment & raw materials by the stakeholders of education for effective teaching and learning.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the introduction to the study. This includes the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research objectives and their related questions. The significance of this study, delimitations, definitions of terms, abbreviations used and the organisation of the rest of the study are also elaborated here.

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Ceramics refer to a wide-ranging group of materials whose ingredients are clays, sand and feldspar (Balasubramanian, 2017). According to Balasubramanian, Ceramics are hard, brittle, good electrical and thermal insulators with high hardness, electrical and thermal insulating, chemical stability, and high melting temperatures, virtually no ductility. Ceramic is an inorganic, non-metallic solid prepared by the action of heat and subsequent cooling. Because most common Ceramics are crystalline, the definition of Ceramic is often restricted to inorganic crystalline materials, as opposed to the non-crystalline glasses, a distinction followed here.

The history of Ceramic and its production is traced back to the earliest centuries. According to Zephaniah (2008) the earliest Ceramics made by humans were pottery objects, including 27,000-year-old figurines, made from clay, either by itself or mixed with other materials, hardened in fire. Later Ceramics were glazed and fired to create a coloured, smooth surface. The above assertion is supported by Kayamba and Kwesiga who stated that Ceramic 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 (Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016). Ceramics now include domestic, industrial and building products and a wide range of Ceramic art. In the 20th century, new Ceramic materials were developed for use in advanced Ceramic engineering; for example, in semiconductors (Dennis, 2009).

Ceramics is not only an enterprise in Ghana but also offered as a course of study at both the tertiary and secondary levels of education. Ceramics education is therefore a form of learning in which knowledge and practical skills of how to make Ceramic products for consumption is transferred from lecturer to students in any academic institution (Okonkwo, 2014). Asante-Kyei (2009) adds that the Ceramic education in Ghana has been generally tailored towards preparing the required specialized educated and skilled technicians in the field of Ceramics (mould and casting, hand building, throwing, brick and tiles, glazing, jiggering, majolica, materials preparation, etc.) to fill various positions in the industry as well as educational sector.

In Ghana Ceramic courses are offered at the tertiary institutions as well as second cycle schools. Ceramics is offered as a subject/course of study in Ghana at most second cycle and tertiary institutions in the country. At the second cycle level of Ghana's educational system, the Visual Arts Teaching Syllabus categorizes the elective subjects as either two- or three-dimensional (2-D or 3-D) art forms. Every student reading visual art at Senior High level is made to select from both a 2-D and a 3-D which will comprise their elective subjects/major area. Ceramics is one of the 3-D subjects which students often choose to study (Evans-Solomon & Opoku-Asare, 2011). At the tertiary level, the programme in Ceramics education is designed with the philosophy and intent of providing a broad, yet specific, base of knowledge as related to the Ceramic arts (Nick, 2008)



Ceramics like any other Art plays an important educational role, bringing artistic skills, values and practices into the public eye which provides a form of expression and gives validation to the experiences, history and cultural heritage of societies where the majority of the population may have been historically marginalized (Marschall, 2002). Similar to the desire by students to study Ceramics in schools, the Ceramic Industry in Ghana has been a vibrant industry, which employed sizable workers (Tamakloe, 2014). Asante-Kyei (2019) reported that finished Ceramic wares such as sanitary wares, cups, plates, bowls, flower pots, glass, bricks, tiles, water coolers and many others produced by these companies were in high demand on the Ghanaian market because they were predominantly used in the food and beverage industries, households and building industries. The industry was not only a source of employment to sizeable Ghanaians but also contributed to about 1% -2% of the country's total Gross Domestic Products (GDP) (Ministry of Trade and Industry-Ghana, 2004). The Government of Ghana in trying to consolidate the gains the nation had made, in respect of the Ceramic industry has established academic institutions to train students in Ceramics, so as to take up different responsibilities in the Ceramic industry. Thus, the Government of Ghana has seen the need to establish institutions that offer Ceramics as a programme of study to train people who will come out as experts to contribute to the growth of the Ceramic industry.

Ceramic education and the Ceramic industry have played a vital role in the history and lives of Ghanaians. Asamoah-Mensah (2013) reported that past Ceramic objects are still being studied because they are central to the understanding of African cultural history and that of the people of Ghana. Additionally, Nortey, Amoanyi and Essuman (2017) also said that Ghana as a nation is endowed with abundance of clay which is the principal raw material used in the Ceramic industry. Accordign to Nortey et

al, The availability of the raw material in almost every region of Ghana has made pottery production a source of employment for many indigenes of the various regions.

The birth and the growth of Ceramics education and practice would not have known success without the contribution of females (women). In the U.S.A, women have made great contributions to the Ceramic industry and education. According to Mark (2007), Frances Senska, a woman, was the first person to receive a honorary life member award from the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts, showed a film that some students made of her working with clay. Mark (2007) further stated that women in the Ceramic industry group were the first to found their own companies in America. Some Women such as Maria Longworth Nichols Storer founded Rookwood Pottery in 1880 and Pewabic Pottery founded by Mary Chase Perry Stratton in 1906 (Owen, 2001).

The role of women in art is so dynamic and on-going that, there would always be more for researchers to discover. Undoubtedly, many Ghanaian women play very significant roles in the socio-economic development of Ghana as artists and as themes of works of art (Asante, 2009). In Ghana and Africa at large, indigenous women have played pivotal roles and contributed to selected Ghanaian visual arts in the field of pottery and mural decorations; Indigenous basket weaving industry; and Ghanaian women as themes of some traditional visual arts. Asante further argues that in Ghana, both traditionally and contemporarily, some women indulge themselves in all the visual art forms in diverse ways; we see women as textile artists, jewellers, Ceramic artists, wood artists and sculptors, painters among others. For instance, the 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2008 edition of the Daily Graphic captures the veteran Ghanaian artist, Mrs Theodosia Salome Oko, who designed Ghana's national flag and seven out of the ten brilliant Members of Parliament of the first Republic (Asante, 2009). This is in congruence with what Nortey (2022) reported that the

Ghanaian culture in the past frowned on males to practice as ceramists as Ceramics was seen as a job for only women.

Many previous researches have reported on the numerous roles played by women in Art. In the area of Ceramics, these studies concentrated on indigenous women in indigenous Ceramics like pottery. For instance, several studies have explored the means and bases for feminine inclusion especially in contemporary and academic pottery practices (Asante, 2009; Abaka-Attah, 2015; Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbologah, 2017). However, the contribution of female Ceramic lecturers and practitioners in academia at Ghanaian tertiary institutions to the growth and development of Ceramic education and the Ceramic industry and the subsequent impact on Ghana's economy has not received much scholarly attention. It is against this background that the researcher explored the contributions of female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Globally, educating men and women is key to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2008). Raising the education levels and literacy rates of women is one of the most effective investments for increasing female productivity as well as enhancing the well-being of families and children. According to the OECD report, the challenge now for most countries is making better use of women's qualifications. In developing countries, reducing gender inequality in literacy and in primary and secondary education is essential to reducing poverty and accelerating economic development. In failing to make the best use of their female populations, most countries are underinvesting in the human capital needed to assure sustainability (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2008).

Although women account for over one-half of the potential talent base throughout the world, as a group they have been marginalised and their economic, social and environmental contributions go in large part unrealised (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2008). Similarly, In Ghana, estimated populations of about 51.4% are women. Majority of these women are engaged in petty trading, Artwork, menial jobs and farming, with unsecured sources of income. Considerably, in income generation ventures, women are shut out of the workforce consequently lowering their capacity for political influence and rendering them economically incapacitated (Abaka-Attah et al, 2017)

Studies have confirmed that Art is one of the preferred courses read by women across the globe in our educational institutions, however, women as artists and especially women ceramist have not been accorded much attention (OECD, 2008; Asante, 2009; & Abaka-Attah et al, 2017). Within Africa and around the world, men get almost all the attention for their creative accomplishments. Throughout history, most societies have thought that women in the field of Art are of inferior status compared to that of men especially when it comes to the visual arts; thus, women as visual artists and women as themes of visual art works (Asante, 2009). Asante further says that in many societies for instance, most people have the notion and belief that women are less intelligent and creative in nature, and are moreover emotionally, spiritually and physically weaker than men but it has been observed by many scholars that both men and women generally have the same level of creative and intellectual capabilities, this means that given the same materials and task the woman (not necessarily an artist) may do it as well as the man would and may be even better (OECD, 2008; Asante, 2009).

In Ghana, literature clarifies that women have traditionally made Ceramic vessels intrinsic for domestic and everyday use (Nortey et al., 2017). Strangely, although women

traditionally practiced pottery or Ceramic art, historical accounts and literature only mention males as significant contributors to its development in Ghana (Nortey, 2022). Interestingly, men were not encouraged to practice Ceramics in West African ethnic culture (Frank, 1998 as cited in Nortey), but currently, the once women-centric Ceramic practice has given way to a male-dominant status. In Ghanaian academia, there are considerable gaps in terms of representation. The Ceramics sections at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and University of Education, Winneba (UEW) has no records of women as lecturers/ instructors/technicians since their establishments (Nortey, 2022). The same is true for the Ceramic sections at most of the public and technical universities across Ghana.

Although many studies have been done on the enormous roles Ghanaian women have played in the various Ghanaian art forms, especially as visual artists, potters, painters, weavers and themes of works of art (Mark, 2007; Asante, 2009; Asamoah-Mensah, 2013; Abaka-Attah, 2015; & Abaka-Attah, et al, 2017) very little is known about women in Ceramics. Thus, though Ceramics is intimately associated with women in a indigenous context, they have been marginalized in academic and contemporary art settings. This current study filled this lacuna by looking at the contribution of female ceramist in academia and their roles played to the development of Ghana in terms of their impact on Ceramic education and practice in the country.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

This study explored the academic and professional journey of female Ceramic lecturers under study. The study also brought to light the various challenges, humiliations and the stumbling blocks they had to overcome in both their academic and professional journey as female Ceramic lectures in Ghanaian universities. Also, the study unearthed the various impacts of these female Ceramic lecturers in Ghanaian tertiary institutions

and their various contributions to enhance the Ceramic disciplines in our tertiary institutions.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The following served as the basis for this study:

1. To identify and explore the academic & professional journey of female ceramists in academia in Ghana.
2. To examine the roles played by the female Ceramic lecturers in developing Ceramic education and practice in Ghana.
3. To analyse the challenges faced by the female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana.
4. To explore the coping strategies female Ceramic lecturers used to adjust to the challenges in their field of work.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the academic and professional journeys of female Ceramic lecturers identified in academia in Ghana?
2. How do female Ceramic lecturers contribute to the development of Ceramic education and practice in Ghana?
3. What are the challenges faced by female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana?
4. How do female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana cope with the challenges they encounter in their field of work?

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Firstly, this current study will guide young and upcoming females who have passion and interest in the field of Ceramic education and practice. The academic and professional journey of the participants under study will serve as a career information to

the future generation of ceramists especially females. Secondly, the numerous contributions of these pioneer female ceramists in academia that were unearthed in this study will help to motivate other women who aspire to become Ceramic lecturers and contribute their quota to the socio-economic development of Ghana, particularly in Ceramic education and practice.

Also, the discouraging factors to females who want to become Ceramic lecturers or tutors were discovered by this study. How these challenges were curtailed by these women forerunners in Ceramic education in Ghana would help as a motivator to young women and upcoming ceramist who aspires to study and practice the Ceramic discipline in higher levels of education.

Lastly, this document will provide information to scholars, policy makers, ceramists, artists, gender activists, and women organizations. The information contained in this study may be integrated in the developmental plans and actions of the policy makers of this nation. More especially, this study highlights on gender equality in academia and encouraging women and the minors in society to attain higher heights in education and contributing their quota to global sustainability and development of the economy. This will in turn contribute to Ghana's interest to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) which emphasizes on gender equality in society

### **1.7 Delimitations of the Study**

This study was confined to female ceramists in academia in Ghanaian public Universities, Technical Universities and the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The study focused on only women who teach or practice Ceramics in these institutions. This biographical study concentrated on the academic and professional life sketches of the women under study.



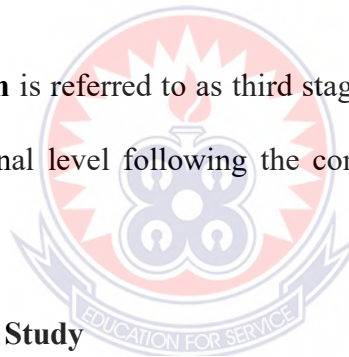
## 1.8 Definition of Terms

**Academia** refers to an educational community of higher learning concerned with the pursuit of research, education, and scholarships.

**Ceramics** refer to a wide-ranging group of materials whose ingredients are clays, sand and feldspar. A Ceramic is an inorganic, non-metallic solid prepared by the action of heat and subsequent cooling. Ceramic materials may have a crystalline or partly crystalline structure, or may be amorphous (e.g., a glass).

**Ceramics education** is a form of learning in which knowledge and practical skills of how to make Ceramic products for consumption is transferred from lecturer to students in any academic institution

**Tertiary education** is referred to as third stage, third level, and post-secondary education, is the educational level following the completion of a school providing a secondary education



## 1.9 Organisation of the Study

The rest of the study continues with chapter two which contains a review of relevant literature related to the study. Various articles, internet materials, books, periodicals are reviewed in order to situate the study in a proper perspective.

The methodology of the study is found in chapter three which describes the various methods and procedures employed to generate data for the study. It includes research design, population and sampling procedures, research instrument, data collection procedures and analysis. Brief description of the study area also forms part of chapter three. Chapter four presents the results and discussion. It includes data analysis



procedures and their interpretation. Chapter five provides summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

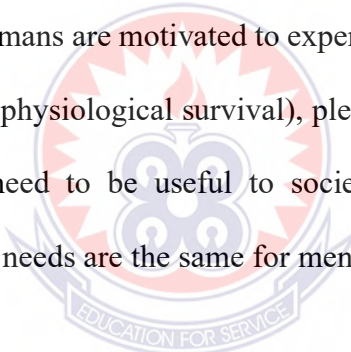
This section looks at the theory serving as the framework for this study. Also, previous studies on women's contribution to artwork especially Ceramics are reviewed, discussed and analysed. The theoretical framework and the related literature reviewed were:

- The Astin's Need-Based Sociopsychological Model
- The concept of Ceramics and Ceramic education in Ghana
- History of Ceramic Education and Industry in Ghana
- Female ceramist icon in Africa: the academic and professional journeys of Ladi Kwali
- Ceramic education and industry
- Tertiary Institutions Offering Ceramics as a Course of Study in Ghana
- Challenges facing Ceramic education in Ghana
- The potentialities of Ceramic art education to mitigate the challenges
- Ceramic and economic development
- Women and economic development in Ghana
- Female ceramists in Ghana contribution to Ceramic education and practice in Ghana

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study employed the Astin's Need-Based Sociopsychological Model as its theoretical framework. Astin's (1984) primary intent was to construct a theory that would describe more adequately the career-choice process of women, as well as explain recent changes in women's career aspirations. She attempted to develop a model of career choice and work behaviour that attempted to combine both personal (psychological) and social forces as well as their interaction. Her need-based sociopsychological model contains four key constructs: motivation; expectations; sex-role socialization; structure of opportunity. Thus, - both psychological and sociological variables are included in the model.

**Motivation:** All humans are motivated to expend energy to satisfy three primary needs - survival (primarily physiological survival), pleasure (intrinsic satisfactions from work) and contribution (need to be useful to society and be recognised for one's contributions). These three needs are the same for men and women - though they can be satisfied in different ways.

The logo of the University of Education, Winneba, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst design with rays emanating from a central point. Below the sunburst, there are three stylized human figures or symbols. The entire emblem is encircled by a banner that reads "EDUCATION FOR SERVICE".

**Expectations:** Concerned with the individual's perceptions are: kind of work that will satisfy needs and the types of work that are accessible and that the person is capable of performing. They differ for men and women because of the sex-role socialization process and the structure of opportunity (e.g., distribution of jobs, sex typing of jobs, discrimination). During the sex-role socialization process, a person is rewarded and reinforced for gender-differentiated behaviour. The result is that the individual internalizes social norms and values regarding appropriate sex-role behaviours and choices.

**Sex-role socialisation and structure of opportunity:** Interacting with the sex-role socialization process is the opportunity structure, which is different for men and women, and is not static. Social changes modify the opportunity structure for all. Thus, the interactive relationship between sex-role socialization and the opportunity structure is what accounts for the changes in women's aspirations and choices in recent years. The socialization process probably sets limits to changes in the structure of opportunity, whereas the structure of opportunity ultimately influences the values that are transmitted through the socialization process (Astin, 1984)

Astin's theoretical statement on women's career development lay its value in the way in which it directs our attention to important factors influencing women's career development. Thus, according to Astin's (1984) needs-based sociopsychological model the gender-role socialization experiences and structural opportunities of men and women differ, and this means that women encounter different career choices from those of men. Adapting the framework to this study, it was evident that the women aspired to be Ceramic lecturers and practitioners as they were motivated to achieve their dreams and expectations. The participants did not limit themselves to only home-based careers and indigenous pottery by rather combined higher learnings with their passions and interest for Ceramics, making them who they are today.

## **2.2 The Concept of Ceramics and Ceramic Education**

A Ceramic is an inorganic, non-metallic solid prepared by the action of heat and subsequent cooling. Ceramic materials may have a crystalline or partly crystalline structure, or may be amorphous (e.g., a glass). Because most common Ceramics are crystalline, the definition of Ceramic is often restricted to inorganic crystalline materials, as opposed to the non-crystalline glasses, a distinction followed here. According to Zephaniah (2008) the earliest Ceramics made by humans were pottery objects, including

27,000-year-old figurines, made from clay, either by itself or mixed with other materials, hardened in fire. Later Ceramics were glazed and fired to create a coloured, smooth surface. Ceramics now include domestic, industrial and building products and a wide range of Ceramic art. In the 20th century, new Ceramic materials were developed for use in advanced Ceramic engineering; for example, in semiconductors (Dennis, 2009).

Education in its general sense is a form of learning in which knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training, research, or simply through auto didacticism (Dewey, 2008). Generally, it occurs through any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts. Ceramics education is therefore a form of learning in which knowledge and practical skills of how to make Ceramic products for consumption is transferred from lecturer to students in any academic institution. Asante-Kyei (2009) adds that the Ceramic education in Ghana has been generally tailored towards preparing the required specialized educated and skilled technicians in the field of Ceramics (mould and casting, hand building, throwing, brick and tiles, glazing, jiggering, majolica, materials preparation, etc.) to fill various positions in the industry as well as educational sector.

In Ghana Ceramic courses are offered at the tertiary institutions as well as second cycle schools. Tertiary institution is a study beyond the level of secondary education. Institutions of higher education include not only colleges and universities but also professional schools in such fields as law, theology, medicine, business, music, and art (Sarvon as cited in Okonkwo, 2014). They also include teacher-training schools, community colleges, and institutes of technology. At the end of a prescribed course of study, a degree, diploma, or certificate is awarded. A student is a learner, or someone who attends an educational institution. In its widest use, student is used for anyone who

is learning, including mid-career adults who are taking vocational education or returning to university (Okonkwo, 2014).

According to Kayamba and Kwesiga (2016) Ceramic 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 (Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016).

### **2.3 History of Ceramic Education and Industry in Ghana**

The growth of the Ceramic education and industry in Ghana and Africa at large has undergone several metamorphoses. Ceramic practice in Ghana can be traced way back to the pre-colonial times. According to Kayamba (2012), a large percentage of the local Ceramic 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. Several aspects of local Ceramic production have particularly stayed at a very traditional level, including prospecting for clay, forming and decorating methods, and the firing technology (Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016).

Local Ceramic products have found their use in homes since the pre-colonial ages. Kayamba and Kwesiga (2016) aver that for centuries, the pot, a common Ceramic product, has been a major utensil in African homes, and Ghana in particular, used for various functions, including cooking, storage, administering medicine, and used in ritual ceremonies among others.

In Ghana, indigenous Ceramics production can be dated as far back to about 4000 BC (Asamoah-Mensah H, 2013). According to Anquandah (2006), pottery products have been found in ancient sites which date to around 4000-3000 B.C. Indigenous Ceramic production in Ghana flourished in all the sixteen regions of the country because of the

availability of raw materials and demand for the products. Before metal and plastic products became common, Ceramic wares were the main sources of utensils for cooking and eating, fetching and storage of, tapping and storage of wine from the palm tree, herbal preparations, and many more household stuffs as pertained in most indigenous societies (Asamoah-Mensah, 2013). Pottery styles differed slightly from region to region, dictated by the kind of staple food consumed by the local people. The communities where this activity thrived were very popular because of the importance of the Art to the socio-cultural and economic sustenance of the people (Anquandah, 2006). It is believed that there were over 40 major potting centers across the country in the past 4000 to 5000 years (Anquandah).

Until the recent past, say about 30 years ago, Ceramic products had occupied a very important place in the homes of many Ghanaians. It has become commonplace in some indigenous homes in Ghana today to say - wash the pots! when one literally means wash the dishes. Indigenous Ceramics production in the past concentrated on utilitarian wares with some evidence of figurative forms that were used for burial purposes (Adjei, Wynn, & Seid'ou, 2020).

Before the arrival of Westerners in the Gold Coast (now Ghana), clay practice was far advanced in created studios and even at the homes of most families. The dexterity to which one could manipulate the clay was easily noticed. When Herbert Vladmir Meyerowitz arrived in the Gold Coast and became principal of Achimota Art School, Harrod (2014, as cited in Nortey & Bodjawah, 2022) referred to Meyerowitz as someone with an ambition and a background from Kunstgewerbe-schule and was interested in the Art-into-industry possibilities (Nortey & Bodjawah, 2022).

Nortey and Bodjawah reported further that Herbert Vladimir Meyerowitz viewed the arts of the Gold Coast as Art. The colonial governments introduced education and specialized art schools to develop the skill through several reforms. In the process, our practice became a mixed-bag of indigenous and Western forms especially for those who had the opportunity to study at Achimota Art school and others who travelled to Germany, United Kingdom, USA and Netherlands such as James Kwame Amoah, Daniel Cobblah, Kofi Asante, Kingsley Kofi Broni, etc.

It is important to note that these generation of Ghanaian ceramists –James Kwame Amoah, Kofi Asante, Kingsley Kofi Broni and Daniel Cobblah were able to push their work by combining indigenous concepts and forms with modern and postcolonial ideas like their counterparts in painting and sculpture. It does appear that by the turn of the century, a generational gap had been created in the Ceramic industry in Ghana. The older generation had retired and coupled with the lack of infrastructure for pottery and Ceramics. WC Owusu took the practice to a certain level, making murals at our airports etc (Nortey & Bodjawah, 2022).

Michael Cardew (1901-1983) a pioneer of the studio pottery movement and revivalist of the slipware tradition in England also spent a long working life in Africa, particularly, in Ghana and Nigeria (Harrod 2013, as cited in Adjei, Wynn, & Seid'ou, 2020). It is believed that Michael Cardew introduced modern Ceramics production to Ghana when he taught at Achimota College and later at Vume in the Volta Region of Ghana where he set up his pottery center with one Kofi Atey and introduced new designs and forms and fired stoneware products. He spent three years in teaching at the Achimota College, Ghana from (1942-1945), and also set up the Vume pottery centre from 1946-48. Cardew later moved to Nigeria as a Pottery Officer in Abuja, from 1950-1965 where



he encouraged indigenous potters such as Ladi Kwali, (Okunna, 2012) in the modern expansion of indigenous pottery in Nigeria.

The introduction of the potter's wheel for Ceramics production in Ghana, which is ascribed to Michael Cardew, brought a new dimension to the Art by way of the material, form, firing, and finishing - what is referred to as the Anglo-Oriental style which was championed by Leach and Hamada. This approach to Ceramics expression by Leach (Cooper, 2003, as cited in Adjei, Wynn, & Seid'ou, 2020) was a blend of Eastern aesthetics of form and decoration with the English practicality (Watt, 2015, as cited in Adjei, et al., 2020). The clay used on the potter's wheel was very plastic to enable forming. Ironically, the Art which hitherto was female enterprise became male-dominated at the formal education level. Ceramics became accepted by males with the introduction of the potter's wheel for forming, kiln for firing and glaze for finishing

Later after Cardew had left, Kofi Antobam also taught at Achimota during the 1950's and early 1960's. He emphasized the use of African themes and images in art. He and his Achimota students painted the mural at the Accra Community Centre. Kofi Antubam also designed important artifacts such as the State Mace, the doors to Ghana's Parliament House chambers, and the Chair and Seat of State used for parliamentary functions (Old Achimotan Association (OAA) 1973 Year Group, 2022).

According to OAA, the Achimota's outstanding Art School helped to nurture the talents of several students that passed through its doors. The art curriculum comprised drawing and painting (composition and still life), pottery, sculpture, weaving, and woodwork. All students studied art from Forms 1 through 3. Thereafter, students studied art, on an elective basis, at both the GCE "O" and "A" Levels. The Art School attracted some of the best art teachers of the time, such as Seth Galevo and Ato Delaquis, both of

whom are internationally recognized artists. Other famous artists that taught at Achimota's Art School are Michael Cardew whose pottery has a distinctly African influence, and the late Kofi Antubam, an internationally renowned painter, illustrator, and sculptor (Old Achimotan Association (OAA) 1973 Year Group, 2022).

The history of Ceramics and its education in Ghana will not be complete without the unique contributions of K. K. Broni. Broni's professional career as a ceramist span over thirty years of successful practice. His exposure in the field of Ceramics is clearly unmatched by most contemporary artists. His career has been shaped by some of the greatest and most influential ceramists of the past 100 years specifically Michael Cardew, Bernard Leach, and Peter Voulkos and he reflects the influence of these three iconic figures (Adjei, Wynn, & Seid'ou, 2020).

Having completed his training in 1976 in the western world, he left for Ghana for a teaching appointment at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana. The art programme there had received the remains of Cardew's project at Achimota including Ceramic equipment and materials. It was only fair that he would be among those to develop the Ceramics course that grew from the seeds that Cardew had planted. What had once been a British colonial interest was now in his hands and under his guidance. Upon his return, Broni left behind the strict functional parameters of the Leach and Cardew tradition to produce uniquely Modern African Ceramics. This new body of works was informed by the expressive idioms of Euro-Western Modernism but now specifically rooted in Ghanaian tradition and culture. He also developed new forms inspired by the tropical forest in Ghana. He often searched for skeletons and rotten tree trunks for sculptural forms, some of which he exhibited in Europe and some African countries. He has also developed a keen interest in rock and termite-cave forms.

Adjei, Wynn, and Seid'ou (2020) continue to argue that Broni's impact on his students cannot be over-emphasized. His use of natural and indigenous-forms, symbols and images within a contemporary discourse has been admired by all and has formed an iconographic reference for many artists and students in Ghana. Over the 28 years that Broni taught at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, he trained many ceramists who are now doing well in their professions. It is important to recognize that Broni's collection of his works is amazing and needs, protection, and further research. It deserves a proper permanent space for the exhibition. Broni's work is truly a treasure and an essential chapter in Ceramic history. Broni's training, practice, and teaching experience make him stand tall among many ceramists of his generation. His contribution to the development of Ceramics through practice and teaching in Ghana and the world cannot be over-emphasized.

In the contemporary Ghana, Ceramic products are all over the sixteen regions of Ghana. At some senior high school, Ceramics is offered as a 3D subject by visual art students. Currently, seven universities offer Ceramics as a course for the award of a higher national diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctor of philosophy degree (National Accreditation Board a, 2022; National Accreditation Board b, 2022).

The institutions are:

1. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
2. University of Education, Winneba
3. Takoradi Technical University;
4. Ho Technical University;
5. Tamale Technical University;
6. Sunyani Technical University
7. University of Ghana - Legon

It is worth noting that at the University of Ghana, the school does not offer Ceramics as course of study for the award of diploma or degree. However, at the department of material science and engineering, students have the opportunity to choose Ceramic courses as their major or elective course.

#### **2.4 Female Ceramist Icon in Africa: The Academic and Professional Journeys of Ladi Kwali**

The development of the Ceramic profession especially in the area of pottery cannot be told without highlighting the contributions of women. Previous researchers such as Abaka-Attah have highlighted the numerous roles played by Ghanaian women potters. Similarly, In Africa the story of the development and practice of modern Ceramics cannot be told without according a pride of place to Ladi Kwali (Okunna, 2012).

According to Okuna, Ladi Kwali was part of the pioneering effort in the Ceramic industry in Nigeria and indeed carved a niche for herself through her efforts in the whole process. She lived through two distinct domains in her Art practice: the indigenous, cultural environment where she was discovered, and the modern, she transited to.

According to Okunna (2012) Ladi Kwali started from a small village of Kwali in the present Kwali Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. She was born in 1920 to the family of late Mallam Shago Kyebese in Kwali Village. She grew up in a family in which the women folk made pots for a living. It was therefore not surprising that Ladi learnt to make pots, in which she also excelled, very remarkably. A biographical narrative study by African Voices (2004) reported on her excellence in pottery making during her lifetime at the indigenous cultural domain that: “even in the early years of pottery making, Ladi Kwali excelled in the Ceramics and her wares were often sold even before they were taken to the markets”. This indicates the excellence of Kwali’s Ceramic

works and her expertise in the field making her artefact readily absorbable in the Ceramic market

Studies revealed that the community in which Ladi Kwali lived and also produced pottery had a lot of influences on her pottery work. She produced pottery that were characteristically Gbagyi, the community where she lived, but accentuated with idioms that were characteristically personal. Thus, the indigenous cultural environment she lived in, and also worked for, became therefore a strong factor in her forms and styles. The nature of her basic material, clay, came in strongly too as a factor that dictated her approach, echoed by the deep mathematical sense that Ladi brought to bear in her works. This engendered the symmetry she displayed in every piece (Okunna, 2012).

Additionally, Moloney (2001) avers that perhaps one very strong feature that marks out Ladi Kwali, was the surface embellishing of her indigenous pottery. Her pots were characterized by their incised decoration of animal forms. She preferred, for her figural motifs, scorpions, lizards, crocodiles, snakes, chameleons, birds and fish, although she produced pots she also decorated with geometric, linear patterns.

In 1954, Ladi Kwali transitioned from indigenous pottery making and new ways and technological means of making Ceramic products. That year, Kwali joined the Pottery Training Centre in Abuja. The pottery training centre was established by a renowned British potter, Michael Cardew in 1951 in Suleija, formerly Abuja (Moloney, 2001). According to Okunna (2012) that move sign-posted a turning point in the life and Ceramic art practice of Ladi Kwali, while on the other hand, the year marked an important interface between the two domains in the art historical experience of this iconic personality. Ladi Kwali now saw herself in entirely new domain.

Okunna added that the transition from tradition to modernity meant so much for Ladi Kwali as she not only had to begin to master her new environment but also had to

abandon some of her indigenous production practices and techniques for a new western technology. In a situation that contrasted sharply with what it was in the indigenous cultural domain, Ladi had to work and produce pottery on the potter's wheel. For her, it was the first ever feel of western technology in the process of pottery production. For her, the firing of pottery was no more to be open air but instead in a device made for the purpose by western technology; a device known as the Kiln. With the introduction of the Kiln, Ladi would no longer produce biscuit wares or terra cotta but would rather have her works glazed. For Ladi Kwali there was therefore a very strong contrast between the indigenous and the modern, two distinct domains she inevitably had to experience, having transited from one to the other.

African Voice (2004) supports this argument of Kwali transitioning from indigenous pottery to modernised pottery when it reported that: “the whirl of mechanized wheels filled the air as potters adopted the most modern of techniques into the ancient art of pot making”. In effect, Ladi's transition from tradition to modernity brought her face to face with a technology she was experiencing for the first time in her life. There was the potter's wheel, and the kiln for firing pottery. There were the glazes for the adornment of the surfaces of her pots. She also had to contend with higher temperature firing and other experiences in the tradition of the European studio pottery which she needed to master. Remarkably, in bracing up to the new challenges posed for her by the introduction of Western technology to the art of pottery making, Ladi Kwali proved to have a natural ability to throw on the potter's wheel (pottery journal studio cited in Okunna, 2012). Her mastery of the potter's wheel and consequently her perfection of the art of throwing informed her introduction of forms she never had produced before. For her, it was a most exciting experience as echoed by the zeal and dexterity she displayed in her works. Ladi's attainment of excellence in the use of the new technology did not diminish Michael

Cardew's strong interest to ensure the preservation of the indigenous Gbagyi pottery Ladi had excelled in making before joining the centre. At the Pottery Training Centre, Cardew therefore designated a room to enable Ladi continue to produce these Gbagyi indigenous pots. He named this separate room Darkin-Gwari (African Voices, 2004). Okunna (2012) added that, it was a most rewarding experiment as these indigenous Gbagyi pots made by Kwali were formed by indigenous production methods and production completed through subjecting them to the vagaries of Western technology for firing and glazing. Thus, with the establishment of the Darkin-Gwari at the Pottery Training Centre therefore, Ladi relived her indigenous production techniques alongside throwing. The water pots constituted the bulk of her modelled forms at the Pottery Training Centre. And their new domain brought tremendous changes to the pots too, in physical structure, prices and even in usage by buyers. these indigenous pots produced by modern technology became much less breakable than the ones produced by local techniques, and they became collector's treasures, now worth huge sums at auction, which neither Cardew nor Ladi herself could ever have envisaged (Cardew, 1970; Moloney, 2001).

Cardew and Moloney opined further that several other throw-ups followed from Ladi transition to modernity from her indigenous cultural domain and were felt very strongly in the area of surface ornamentation. She had over the course of time advanced her skill, and some of her works very much illuminate the sophistication she had brought into her production. The rather mathematical bellying and symmetry that she had perfected in her works were further enhanced with patterns she covered the surface of her pots with; a very remarkable advancement from where she once was.

According to Okunna (2012), Ladi did not give up on the use of her premier and popular motifs which included the lizards, birds, scorpions, crocodiles and fish but rather integrated them into her new collections. Rather, she blended her indigenous pottery



skills and modernization and technology at that time to produce valued artefacts. Barely four years after she joined the Abuja Pottery Training Centre, Ladi had become well prepared for the international exposition which came first in 1958 and followed closely by another in 1959 through the exhibition of the works of the Centre at the Berkeley Gallery in London.

African Voices (2004) reported that the tremendous success that this exposition recorded accentuated Cardew's fame while Ladi Kwali was becoming a household name. The success she had begun to make of her Ceramic art practice opened the door to other women potters although none of these was a match to Ladi Kwali. In 1962 Ladi was again away in England for three weeks, during which she was demonstrating Gbagyi pot-building techniques. She attended yet another exhibition of the Pottery Training Centre's works at Berkeley Gallery (African Voices, 2004).

Despite the hostile disposition that was beginning to build up in her fellow staffers at the Pottery Training Centre against her could not stop Ladi. She was again away from Nigeria in 1972, visiting many institutions and galleries in the United States of America. She demonstrated at the Howard University, Washington D.C., for students, staff and administrators, including Ola Oloidi, a student, who later became a Professor of Art History (Okunna, 2012).

Okunna added that the international fame which Ladi had won through her Ceramic art activity attracted for her several honours. She has been honoured in many ways, perhaps much more than anyone else with a comparative pedigree: the MBE (Member of the British Empire) in 1962 by the British Government; the honorary doctorate degree in 1970 by the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, an honour described as unprecedented academic distinction for a woman potter without formal education (Moloney, 2001); the Pottery Training Centre renamed after her; the conference centre



of the luxurious Abuja Sheraton Hotels and Towers named after her; and in 2007 the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria printed her image on the new twenty Naira Currency notes, showing her throwing forms on the potter's wheel (Okunna, 2012).

In conclusion, the name Ladi Kwali is one that has become unmistakable in the historical development of Africa and more particularly when the history of Ceramic Art practice is told. Ladi began from a humble background as an indigenous potter. But her transition to modernity from the indigenous cultural domain she began from marked for her a turning point, which ripples nobody, not the least herself, had envisaged. Ladi pioneered the fusion of the indigenous with the modern when she took a bit of the indigenous to the Pottery Training centre as a worker.

While she kept alive her indigenous coiling techniques by which she continued to produce indigenous Gbagyi pots at the centre, the works were fired to a high temperature in the kiln. This practice contrasted sharply with her indigenous pottery practice – the open-air firing. She therefore bridged the techno-cultural gap between the indigenous and modern practice; a gap between the village and the town, between the indigenous female potter and the sophisticated male ceramist in the tradition of the European studio pottery. Ladi worked to strike a balance between indigenous design and modern techniques of production and so created for the urban folks what would have remained consigned for the indigenous (village) folks.

Ladi has left a legacy for all females who aspire to be ceramist. Her training and professional journey reviewed above serves as motivation for African females in this 21<sup>st</sup> century who aim to study and practice Ceramics to higher levels. Though she did not have formal education as a ceramist, her passion and zeal for the field made her to excel to international level. Modern female ceramists who have the privilege to formal

education can do more as they fly above the challenges they may encounter in their chosen fields or specializations in the Ceramic discipline.

## **2.5 The Ceramic Education and Industry**

Ceramics education is one of the major programmes in Ghana's higher education institutions designed to promote growth in aesthetics, technical knowledge, and conceptual approaches. According to Okonkwo (2014), the Ceramic education programme uses individual tutorials, group seminars, and critiques to provide a variety of settings for development and exchange of ideas relevant to the arts in general, and Ceramics in particular. Higher education also referred to as third stage, third level, and post-secondary education, is the education received at the Universities with the award of bachelors or higher degrees (Okonkwo). Brick (2006) defines higher education as including universities as well as institutions that teach specific capacities of higher learning such as colleges, technical training institutes, community colleges, nursing schools, research laboratories, centres of excellence, and distance learning centres. Higher education is taken to include undergraduate and postgraduate education. Tertiary generally culminates in the receipt of certificates, diplomas, or academic degrees.

The undergraduate programme in Ceramics education is designed with the philosophy and intent of providing a broad, yet specific, base of knowledge as related to the Ceramic arts (Nick, 2008). Educational experiences include technical explorations with Ceramic materials and firing processes (electric, gas, wood, raku, primitive, and vapour). Two-and three-dimensional design concepts and aesthetics are studied as related to Ceramic arts. Historical precedents, contemporary issues; artists, and art works are incorporated throughout the curriculum. The studio environment is one where vessel aesthetics; form and surface design, are taught along with Ceramic sculpture (Dennis, 2009). Conceptual development and innovative contemporary forming processes are

taught in addition to indigenous techniques of hand-forming, wheel-throwing, and mould-making (Okonkwo, 2014).

Any nation that seeks relevance and competitiveness in the age of globalization must make every effort to give its citizens the best education possible. Ceramics Education is an instrument par excellence that a nation can rely upon to bring about self-reliance. Ghana's philosophy of education has provisions for the teaching of art at all levels of education. It recognized the role of art education which includes Ceramic study as one of the powerful instruments for self-reliant economy. Okonkwo (2014) avers that the study of Ceramic is one of the disciplines in our educational programme that avail trainees the opportunity of acquiring appropriate skills, abilities and competences both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live and contribute to the development of the society.

But the reality of the situation is that the teaching of Ceramics in Ghana's higher education institutions has a huge setback because of students' ambivalent negative perception towards the course. Many students, especially females, have neglected Ceramics education; some of them have even despised the course. Consequently, students' enrolment into Fine and Applied Arts programmes such as the study of Ceramics has been on the decrease in the recent time. Arayela supported this assertion when he stated that one thing that has become worrisome is the fact that the children of professional ceramists, those who teach Ceramics in higher institutions now opted for courses or careers other than Ceramics (Arayela, 2006).

Also, due to the increase in popularity of sciences in the society, students now develop more interest in science courses to the detriment of art related courses, especially Ceramics (Okon, 2010). Some students have developed hatred on Ceramics education for

no just reason. This may be attributed to the false stories they were told about Art education in general and Ceramics in particular. Some students also believe in the fallacy that those who study Art in the university never get rich because it has little or no job potentials (Bello as cited in Okonkwo, 2014). Students speculate that Ceramics education is a very difficult and tedious discipline. Therefore, anyone applying to study the course is subjecting him or herself to perpetual stress and suffering. Others speculate that Ceramics education is for those who were either less intelligent or did not meet up with the requirements for other disciplines or course of studies (Okonkwo, 2014).

## **2.6 Higher Education Institutions Offering Ceramics as a Course of Study in Ghana**

This section has reviewed the rationale of Ceramic education in Ghana, universities offering Ceramics in the country and the scope of Ceramic education they offer their students.

### **2.6.1 Rationale for Ceramic Education in Ghana**

The Ministry of Education avers that Ceramics as a component of Arts embraces all Art activities that result in two-dimensional and three-dimensional visual forms. A society achieves its cultural significance through its production in the Arts and as a people we are identified through our Art works (Ministry of Education, 2010). To develop pride and patriotism, it is important that the country's young people acquire love for the cultural and African values in Ghanaian Art. The impact of Ceramics is presently felt on education, health and communication and, in fact, on the total lifestyle of societies of the nation. Ceramics has contributed to the advances in Art and technology. Ceramics has consequently, made tremendous impact of the socio-economic development of nations and improved the quality of life in most parts of the world. In Ghana, the combined energy of Ceramics, Science and Technology reinforces the people's survival and development. To this end, it is important to help the young people develop artistic skills and capabilities

in Ceramics, not only to enable them contribute to the development and significance of Ghanaian Art forms but also as a source of employment for themselves (Ministry of Education, 2010).

### 2.6.2 Ceramics in Higher Education

According to the National Accreditation Board, currently there are 12 Public Universities (National Accreditation Board a, 2022) and ten Technical Universities in the country (National Accreditation Board b, 2022). These are listed below in Table 1.

*Table 1 – list of public universities and technical universities in Ghana*

S/N	Institution	Location	Type of Accreditation
1	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration, Achimota	Achimota	Public University
2	Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology	Kumasi	Public University
3	University for Development Studies	Tamale	Public University
4	University of Cape Coast	Cape Coast	Public University
5	University of Education, Winneba	Winneba	Public University
6	University of Energy and Natural Resources	Sunyani	Public University
7	University of Ghana	Legon	Public University
8	University of Health and Allied Science	Ho	Public University
8	University of Health and Allied Science	Ho	Public University
9	University of Mines and Technology	Tarkwa	Public University

Continuation of Table 1

S/N	Institution	Location	Type of Accreditation
10	University of Professional Studies	Legon	Public University
11	S.D. Dombo University of Business and Integrated Development Studies	Wa	Public University
12	C.K. Tedam University of Technology and Applied Sciences	Navrongo	Public University
13	Bolgatanga Polytechnic	Bolgatanga	Technical University
14	Wa Polytechnic	Wa	Technical University
15	Accra Technical University	Accra	Technical University
16	Cape Coast Technical University	Cape Coast	Technical University
17	Ho Technical University	Ho	Technical University
18	Koforidua Technical University	Koforidua	Technical University
19	Kumasi Technical University	Kumasi	Technical University
20	Sunyani Technical University	Sunyani	Technical University
21	Takoradi Technical University	Takoradi	Technical University
22	Tamale Technical University	Tamale	Technical University

Out of these lists, only seven institutions offer Ceramics as a course for the award of a higher national diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctor of philosophy degree (National Accreditation Board a, 2022; National Accreditation Board b, 2022).

The institutions are:

1. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
2. University of Education, Winneba
3. Takoradi Technical University;
4. Ho Technical University;
5. Tamale Technical University;
6. Sunyani Technical University

## 7. University of Ghana

**2.6.3 Nature of Ceramic Courses offered by these Institutions**

University of Ghana does not offer Ceramics as a course of study for the award of diploma or degree. However, at the department of material science and engineering, students have the opportunity to choose Ceramic courses as their major or elective course (UG, 2022). Apart from Ceramics, students can opt for metal or polymer when in level 300 and level 400. The Ceramic courses taught at the department of material science and engineering; university of Ghana are listed below:

At level 300 semester two, the following Ceramic courses are offered as electives option against metals option and polymer option courses

<b>Course code</b>	<b>Course title</b>	<b>Elective €</b>	<b>Credit hour</b>
<b>MTEN 312</b>	Crystal Chemistry Ceramics	E	3
<b>MTEN 314</b>	Ceramic Processing Principle	E	3
<b>MTEN 316</b>	Engineering Ceramics I	E	2

Similarly, at Level 400 semester one the following Ceramic courses are offered as electives option against metals option and polymer option courses 1

<b>Course code</b>	<b>Course title</b>	<b>Elective</b>	<b>Credit hour</b>
<b>MTEN 407</b>	Engineering Ceramics II	E	2
<b>MTEN 409</b>	Glasses, Cements and Concretes	E	2

At the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) the institution is mandated to train and equip students with relevant skills and knowledge to enable them teach Art effectively and competently in the basic and second cycle institutions in Ghana (UEW, 2022). The Department of Art Education at UEW offers a 4-year Bachelor of Art

Education. The Department has eight Units: Ceramics, Sculpture, Graphic Design, Picture Making, Basketry, Jewellery, Leatherwork and Textiles. Thus, at UEW, students have the option to specialise in Ceramics education as their 3D major and undertaking their project work or thesis in the Ceramic unit.

The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Is the only public university in Ghana that award various degrees for the study of Ceramics. Unlike UEW and University of Ghana where students only specialise in Ceramic courses or opt for elective Ceramic courses, the KNUST runs full four-year undergraduate programmes in Ceramics and also offers graduate studies in Ceramics.

According to a publication at the university website, the Department of Industrial Art is one of the Four (4) Departments in the Faculty of Art (FoA) under the College of Art and Built Environment (CABE) in KNUST. The Department comprises the following sections, namely:

1. Ceramics
2. Fashion
3. Integrated Rural Art and Industry
4. Metal Product Design and
5. Textiles

The Department currently runs a number of undergraduates and postgraduates' programmes in the Applied Art and Sciences in the sections. All undergraduates' programmes are Four (4) years (with Three (3) months of Industrial placement Programmes offered under the Ceramic section are:

At the Undergraduate level, the Department offers Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) Ceramics and Bachelor of Science (BSc) Ceramic Technology programmes. The



postgraduate programmes offered at the Department include Master of Fine Art (MFA) Ceramics, Master of Philosophy (Mphil) Ceramic Technology, and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Ceramic Technology

Established in 1968, the Department of Industrial Art is mandated to train high-level manpower to manage the country's industries and institutions in the areas of Ceramics, Metal Product Design, Textiles and Fashion Design (KNUST, 2022). A unique addition is the Integrated Indigenous Art which focuses on integration of indigenous concepts, materials and techniques aimed at expanding and developing the frontiers of indigenous technology for sustainable development of the Art and Art industry.

The department is poised to promote and develop academic excellence in teaching and research with a focus on industrial practices. The Department can boast of its unique programmes of study which are all oriented toward Competency-Based Training (CBT) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) (KNUST, 2022). Below is the list of various courses have to undertake for the award of various degrees in Ceramics at KNUST.

### **Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) Ceramics**

#### First Year:

1. Basic Design (For Two (2) Semesters)
2. Communication Skills (For Two (2) Semesters)
3. Creative Thinking (For Two (2) Semesters)
4. Digital Literacy (For Two (2) Semesters)
5. Drawing Fundamentals (For Two (2) Semesters)
6. History of Art (For Two (2) Semesters)
7. Introduction to Sculpture
8. Indigenous Ghanaian Ceramics

Second Year:

1. Ceramics Screen Printing
2. Ceramics Slip Casting: Part I
3. Computer-Aided Design (CAD)
4. History of African Art
5. Introduction to Studio Ceramics (For Two (2) Semesters)
6. Literature-in-English (For Two (2) Semesters)
7. Oriental and Classical Ceramics History
8. Research Methodology: Part I
9. Studio Art Elective (Metals/Painting)
10. Studio Art Elective (Photography)
11. Technical Ceramics: Glazes
12. Technical Ceramics: Materials and Processing Methods

Third Year:

1. Intermediate Studio
2. Ceramics Slip Casting Part II
3. Research Methodology: Part II
4. Technical Ceramics: Kiln Design
5. Contemporary Art History
6. Studio Art Elective (Textiles)
7. Industrial Placement (Second Semester-12 Weeks)

Fourth Year:

1. Advanced Studio (For Two (2) Semesters)
2. Art Market
3. Ceramics Production (For Two (2) Semesters)

4. Independent Study
5. Management and Entrepreneurial Skills
6. Seminar in Ceramics (For Two (2) Semesters)
7. Research Project (For two (2) Semesters)
8. Ceramic Technology

### **Bachelor of Science (BSc.) Ceramic Technology**

#### First Year:

1. Algebra
2. Calculus with Analysis
3. Ceramic Material Selection and Properties
4. Characterisation of Ceramic Raw Materials
5. Communication Skills (For Two (2) Semesters)
6. Computer-Aided Design (CAD)
7. Geology and Mineralogy of Ceramic Raw Materials
8. Introduction to Ceramic Technology
9. Introduction to Glass Science and Technology
10. Processing of Ceramic Raw Materials
11. Solid State Chemistry
12. Solid State Physics
13. Technical Drawing (For Two (2) Semesters)

#### Second Year:

1. Calculus with Several Variables
2. Cement Technology
3. Ceramic Fabrication Processes
4. Differential Equations

5. Elective (For Two (2) Semesters)
6. Enamels Glazes and Colours
7. Literature-in-English (For Two (2) Semesters)
8. Refractory Laboratory
9. Refractory Technology
10. Research Methodology
11. Thermodynamics of Materials
12. Whitewares (For Two (2) Semesters)
13. Whitewares Laboratory

Third Year:

1. Ceramic Colloids
2. Fuels and Combustion
3. Mould and Casting Technology: Part I
4. Plant and Furnace Design
5. Probability and Statistics
6. Structural Ceramics
7. Super and Monolithic Refractories
8. Technical Writing
9. Industrial Placement (Second Semester-12 Weeks)

Fourth Year:

1. Ceramic Seminar
2. Characterisations of Ceramic Products
3. Kiln and Furnace Technology (For Two (2) Semesters)
4. Management and Entrepreneurial Skills (For Two (2) Semesters)
5. Mould and Casting Technology: Part II

6. Pollution Control in Ceramic Industries
7. Sustainable Development in Ceramic Industries
8. Research Project (For two (2) Semesters)

### **Master of Philosophy (Mphil) Ceramic Technology**

#### First-year:

1. Glaze Technology
2. Glass Technology
3. Application of Phase Diagrams in Ceramics
4. Research Methodology
5. Elective (Closed) – Advanced Refractory Technology; Whiteware Production Technology; Cement Process Technology
6. Advanced Materials Characterisation
7. Advanced Ceramic Processing
8. Pollution Control in Ceramic Industries
9. Technical Writing
10. Elective (Closed) – Industrial Furnace Technology; Industrial Mould Design Technology; Structural Clay Technology

#### Second-year:

1. Seminar (For Two Semesters)
2. Thesis (For Two Semesters)

### **Master of Fine Art (MFA) Ceramics**

#### First Year:

1. Aesthetics and Criticism (For Two (2) Semesters)
2. African Art, Cultural and Museum Studies
3. Critical and Contextual Studies

4. Independent Study (For Two (2) Semesters)
5. Mould Making and Casting Processes
6. Philosophy of Art
7. Studio Practice (For Two (2) Semesters)

Second Year:

1. Seminar (For Two (2) Semesters)
2. Thesis Exhibition and Statement (For two (2) Semesters)
3. Ceramic Technology

**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Ceramic Technology**

First-year:

1. Industrial Furnace Instrumentation and Control
2. Special Topics in Ceramics
3. Research Methodology
4. Management, Marketing and Entrepreneurial Skills
5. Ceramic Composite Materials
6. Sustainable Development in Ceramic Technology
7. Technical Writing
8. Elective (Open)

Second-year to Fourth-year:

1. Seminar
2. Thesis

The four Technical Universities and the various certificates/degrees they offer as published by the national accreditation board and the universities websites are also enumerated below:

The Ho Technical University under the faculty of art and design in the dept of industrial art offers bachelor of technology, industrial Art (specializations: Ceramics and others like sculpture, painting, graphic design, textiles) and HND industrial Art with specializations in Ceramics and others like sculpture, painting, graphic design, textiles

Similarly, both the Tamale and Sunyani technical universities offer bachelor of technology (B-Tech) degree in Ceramics and HND industrial Arts (Ceramic Arts). The mission of these departments is to provide hands-on and career-focus training and research to students and career development for staff in knowledge disciplines in the built environment, applied Arts and related areas critical to industry and national development. Lastly, the Takoradi technical university offers bachelor of technology in Ceramics where students are equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge for the Ceramic industry and the world market.

## **2.7 Challenges Facing Ceramic Education and Practice in Ghana**

Africa's cultural and customs diversity are threatened by modernity, where the once largely rural populations are being drained to urban centres (Kwesiga & Kayamba, 2014); they encounter changes brought about by Western influence (Otiso, 2006). For instance, Nortey and Bodjawah (2022) opine that over the centuries and during the colonial period, it was a commonplace that Westerners considered African Art as "primitive" and this perception carried with it a negative influence on the practice of Art in Africa. Though Stevens (1930) opined that before the arrival of Western education in the Gold Coast now Ghana, the Arts were in a more flourishing state, these 'primitive' perceptions of African Art lacking technical abilities and low socio-economic status indeed may have limited the practice of Art especially clay not to attend to its breadth of cultures and being exclusive in the global practice. The colonial hold on seeing some of

the Ceramic vessels being used for religious rituals and labelling them as ‘fetish’ contributed a great deal to limiting Ghanaian indigenous pottery and Ceramic practice to expand its frontiers of production. While it is worth saying that tradition and culture evolve and change over time due to new developments, it is also significant to note that quite often, when it comes to the story of Africa, until recently, writers tended to isolate and associate tradition to the past and think of modern developments and Art practices as not part or representations of African Art.

With the introduction of Christianity in Africa in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which ushered in Western education, the local Ceramic Art and the use of local Ceramic products in homes, other than for cooking, was despised and associated with paganism. When most African countries were under British protectorate, and after their independence from the British colony, many Africans 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. In eastern Africa, the Gisu communities have different sizes of clay works like 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 (Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016).

Such influence affects Ceramic education and practice in the country. It has been argued that in indigenous societies across the globe that the production of Ceramics is threatened by new materials and lifestyle (Vincentelli, 2000). Vincentelli further argues



that although these techniques have survived successfully until the present day in all continents, it seems unlikely that this will continue for much longer.

However, in urban homes, it may seem that indigenous Ceramic products are, in all ways, being replaced by modern vessels of aluminium, enamel-ware and plastics or more informal containers scavenged from the western-style industrial packaging (Barley 1994 as cited in Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016). Local Ceramic products are seen as dramatically endangered. Africa is not an exception; local Ceramic Art is at the cross-roads; it is challenged by modern vessels. The demand for local Ceramic products like pots is dwindling rapidly, and the result is growing unemployment among the local Ceramic producing families and a breakdown of the social fabric (Asante-Kyei, 2019).

Asante-Kyei (2019) further stated that the Ceramic industry in Ghana over the past years has been gradually reducing in terms of growths and development. Apart from the consequent negative economic outcomes being experienced by the country, the education institutions that were established by the government of Ghana to provide the industry with the necessary skilled manpower also appears to be retrogressing concurrently with it. Recently, the Ceramic industry in Ghana has gone through difficult moments resulting in closing down of production of most of the companies in the industry and a lot of workers have been redundant as a result of these shut downs

The challenges affecting the Ceramic industries also impacted Ceramic education negatively across the globe. A study by Anlezark, Karmel and Ong (as cited in Okonkwo, 2014) found that students have a very wrong perception about Ceramics education. Students speculated that the course have no job potential, therefore will not lead them anywhere in future after graduation. They also noted a mismatch between the Ceramics courses and programmes which students undertook at school, and those which they

studied after school. This leads to the question of whether school Ceramic studies need to be better linked with the world of work and post-school study or, alternatively, should concentrate on providing a broad pre-vocational skill.

Similarly, Lamb and Vickers (as cited in Okonkwo, 2014) examined the number of students that applied for Ceramic studies in Mutchana University, Newcastle at the commencement of new section. They found out that the number of students enrolled to study Ceramics education in the university is on decline. This is an indication that admission into Ceramics education is drastically reducing year by year.

Also, Harris, Rainey and Sumner (as cited in Okonkwo, 2014) conducted a study on the rate of students drop-out from Ceramic studies on campus at Hyaghi University, Norway. The findings recorded showed that students admitted to study Ceramics education in the school were dropping-out either at the end of every semester or at the end of a particular academic year. This trend was attributed to their negative view about Ceramics education in general.

Likewise, the teaching of Ceramics in Ghana's higher education institutions has a huge setback because of students' ambivalent negative perception towards the course. Many students especially females have neglected Ceramics education; some of them have even despised the course. Consequently, students' enrolment Fine and Applied Arts programmes such as the of study Ceramics has been on the decrease in the recent time. Arayela supported this assertion when he stated that one thing that has become worrisome is the fact that the children of professional ceramists, those who teach Ceramics in higher institutions now opted for courses or careers other than Ceramics (Arayela, 2006). A study by Evans-Solomon and Opoku-Asare (2011) on the attitude of girls studying visual Art in selected secondary schools in the central region of Ghana revealed that in the

Ceramic sculpture, throwing, and firing lessons, the girls were very careful in handling clay and because they did not want to make their uniforms dirty, they did the pounding and wedging of the washed clay very gingerly. They were not confident in mounting and throwing on the potter's wheel for fear of falling off it and so could not produce good works. In the firing lesson, the girls clearly became discouraged when some of their artifacts got shattered, cracked or warped because they had not wedged the clay well, and so had trapped air bubbles. Because very few of the girls had aprons on, many of them worked slowly and tried hard to prevent the clay from soiling their clothes, which made it difficult for them to complete their assigned tasks on time. Thus, it can be argued that these negative perception and poor attitudes of the students toward the study of Ceramics pose a challenge to the growth of Ceramic education in the country.

Also, due to the increase in popularity of sciences in the society, students now develop more interest in science courses to the detriment of Art related courses, especially Ceramics (Okon, 2010). Some students have developed hatred on Ceramics education for no just reason. This may be attributed to the false stories they were told about Arts education in general and Ceramics in particular. Some students also believe in the fallacy that those who study Arts in the university never get rich because it has little or no job potentials (Bello as cited in Okonkwo, 2014). Students speculate that Ceramics education is a very difficult and tedious discipline. Therefore, anyone applying to study the course is subjecting him or herself to perpetual stress and suffering. Others speculate that Ceramics education is for those who were either less intelligent or did not meet up with the requirements for other disciplines or course of studies (Okonkwo, 2014).

A study conducted by Nortey, Opoku-Amankwa, and Bodjawah (2013) revealed that even among Art students in Ghana, only few choose to specialise in Ceramics. According to this research, in the first year of Art programme in the Kwame Nkrumah

University of Science and Technology (KNUST), students are introduced to the courses under the various specialized areas of the department to give them a fair idea of industrial activities and also help them take decisions as to which area to specialize after the diagnostic year. However, a careful study of the decision pattern reveals that Ceramics major has been receiving the least number of students after the students' first diagnostic year, as shown. This study revealed that in 1999, out of 132 students who enrolled on the Industrial Art programme, only eleven representing a mere 8.3% opted to major in Ceramics compared to 50% for textiles. Similarly, in 2011, out of 168 students, only 37 representing 22.02% majored in Ceramics as compared to 42.26% (about 1.92 times) for textiles. The amount of time devoted to the learning of Ceramics is, however, equal to the other specialized areas, majority of the Art students do not prefer to specialize to be ceramists.

A similar study by Asante-Kyei (2019) reported that in the year 2014, the number of students admitted by Takoradi Technical University (TTU) formerly Takoradi Polytechnic was 55, and was reduced to 48 in the year 2015. Enrolment in the year 2016 was subsequently reduced to 40 and in the year 2017, it was 38 (Department of Ceramic Technology – Takoradi Technical University, 2017 as cited in Asante-Kyei). At the University of Education, Winneba the intake was 133 in the year 2014, 60 in the year 2015, 78 in the year 2016, and drastically reduced to 33 in the year 2017 (Ceramic section – UEW, 2017 as cited in Asante-Kyei).

Perhaps, a contributing factor to this decline in the number of students pursuing Art courses is the fact some parents coerce their children to forego the study of Art. A study by Ogunduyile and Mbahi (as cited by Kashim & Adelabu, 2012) reported that most Nigerian parents are biased against fine and applied Art as a subject because it is assumed that success could only be made in life if children are encouraged to study

engineering and medical sciences, even when they do not have the mental capacity to cope with them. From the observation, the case of Ghana is not different from that of parents in Nigeria. Most parents in Ghana push their wards to study science related courses against the children's wish and interest.

The results of the study by Nortey, Amoanyi and Essuman (2017) demonstrated that apart from internal factors inhibiting the choice of Ceramics study, most schools do not offer Ceramics at the senior high level. It presents a good deal of evidence that exists relating to factors influencing specialization of a course within the Industrial Art programme. Among the numerous factors identified is the fact that the Ceramic course is not offered at various senior high schools, which inadvertently diminishes interest in students to choose this as a major at the university level. Consequently, there is a high probability that those who will gain admission to higher education institutions would not opt for Ceramics as a major course since they did not study Ceramics during their SHS education.

Another factor that has contributed to the collapse of most Ceramic industries in Ghana is due to inconsistent government policies over the years (Asante-Kyei, 2019). The Trade Liberalization Policy, which formed part of Ghana Government's Structural Adjustment Programme pursued in the 1980s and 1990s paved way for increased in the establishment of metal and plastic factories in Ghana in the wake of urbanization and the importation of refrigerators, metallic and plastic plates, cups, bowls, flower pots, tiles, blenders, metallic cooking pots and plastic buckets into the country. These items either serve or have similar purposes for the Ceramic products.

Happy (as cited by Asante-Kyei, 2019) also argues the fact that most of the Ceramic industries have shut down due to cheap imports from China. He argues that not

only is Chinese plastic product less durable as compared to made-in-Ghana Ceramic products, but also sells far below the price of Ghanaian Ceramic products. Industry observers are worried that if the flood gates are opened for the foreign Ceramic products to saturate the Ghanaian market, then the industry will totally collapse. They posit that the current situation has made it difficult for local producers of Ceramics and pottery to sustain production levels and to operate profitable. They believe that the dwindling fortunes can be addressed if the Government strengthens agencies such as the Customs Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) to intensify border patrols (Asante-Kyei, 2019). However, Ekem (as cited by Asante-Kyei, 2019) argues that the use of obsolete technology by local Ceramic and Pottery manufacturers is the bane behind their problems and not unfair competition. According to him, the industry cannot do well when it is still operating with machines that are over 40 years old.

Another major drawback to Ceramic education and practice in Ghana and Africa at large is inadequacy of well-equipped Ceramic studios to help conduct research, teaching, learning and practice. Kashim and Adelabu (2012) aver that most higher institutions offering Art and design programmes still have to contend with problems of ill-equipped studios and inappropriate teaching materials, which results in the improvisation of tools. The paucity of teaching materials and ill-equipped Ceramic studios pose serious challenges for quality education delivery.

Also, processed Ceramic raw materials are hard to come by either through local processing or through importation. Local processing is difficult because of the lack of access to appropriate equipment, while importation consumes too much money through foreign exchange (Kashim & Adelabu, 2012). Kasim and Adelabu argue further that it is an established fact that higher education institutions in Africa are poorly funded. This makes it difficult to accomplish the basic objective of education as outlined by the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The emphasis that is being placed on science and technology-based subjects in the curriculum seems to relegate the Art-related disciplines to the background (Kashim & Adelabu, 2010).

## **2.8 The Potentialities of Ceramic Art Education to Mitigate the Challenges**

In spite of the various constraints clouding the prospects for Ceramics education in Ghana and Africa at large, ample opportunities and possibilities are waiting to be unveiled. Firstly, present day students of Ceramics are motivated by the efforts of their predecessors. Some previous researchers reported on this when they stated that: the pioneering efforts of educators past and present since the early part of the twentieth century, laid a good foundation for Art Education and practice. And also, contemporary Ceramics scholars have pushed the frontiers by exploring new trends in Ceramic with new languages of expression. These rich legacies and constant changes occurring in Ceramic Art practice are good indications of the continuity and sustainability of this age-old practice (Ozioma, 2009; Kashim & Adelabu, 2010).

A study by Evans-Solomon and Opoku-Asare (2011) reported that the teachers of Ceramics teach well and make their lessons interesting. Clay, the main material for Ceramics, is soft, malleable, easy to use and can be recycled after drying. Clay is also readily available for executing the assigned practical exercises. Although processing clay is tedious and its products are fragile in the unfired state, anyone who has patience, dexterity and the right temperament can work with the material. The teachers offer much encouragement and inspire students to work hard. The only challenge is that wet clay can stain the students' clothes.



Apart from the country's vast cultural creative Arts potential of men and women, the country is endowed with abundant Ceramic resources that could serve the purpose of education and research capable of transforming the nation economically and technologically. Clay is readily available in almost all parts of Ghana and sub-Saharan Africa and fuels for the firing of clay products has not been a challenge due to the availability of useable fuels that can easily be converted from the reserves of petroleum products in the country (Asante, 2009; Kashim & Adelabu, 2010; Abaka-Attah, 2015).

A good number of Ceramic industries like the Saltpond Ceramics; Tarkwa Glass Factory; Ekem Ceramics, Winneba; and Ceramica Tamakloe, Dodowa; Happy Ceramics, Accra; Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR, Ceramic section), Accra; Building Research and Road Institute (BRRI, Ceramic department), Kumasi; National Centre for Culture (Ceramic sections), Kumasi and Accra; and Geological Survey Department (Ceramic section) Accra; Vicalex Bricks and Tiles Production, Kumasi have been established in Ghana based on this availability of Ceramic raw materials. In spite of the unfavourable economic conditions, the surviving small and medium enterprises in the country are struggling to sustain their production for local consumption. Hence engagement in creative, productive Ceramic practices, and functional governmental policies, these Ceramic industries can operate in full capacity and this will be a gainful venture with good potential for job creation.

Moreover, the future of Ceramic education is bright with an increase in housing construction coupled with an increase in the acceptance of Ceramic tiles, bricks, tableware and sanitary ware are producing a growth in demand. Thus, scholars and students of this field are encouraged to explore more areas through research to come out with more advanced Ceramic products that will be readily absorbed in the housing and construction industry.



Addressing the limitations of Ceramic education, Mamza, 2007 (as cited in Kashim & Adedabu, 2012) maintained that any nation that seeks relevance and competitiveness in the age of globalization must make every effort to give its citizens the best education possible. The extent to which Ceramic Arts education could be a viable instrument by which the nation can promote self-reliance in the twenty-first century cannot be overemphasized. But for that to be possible the following agenda needs to be addressed:

1. the need for holistic appraisal of the Art education programmes within the current education system;
2. the need for a deliberate and purposeful training of Art teachers to be able to meet the challenges in the nation's school system;
3. implementation of the educational policies, including research funding support to the higher institutions;
4. the need for participation of the private sector in the development of Art education, with a view to promoting ingenuity of standard domestic production and aesthetic expression suitable for modern taste;
5. a constant review of the design process;
6. raw materials development through the mining and research institutions; and
7. appraisal of the existing teaching models to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Thus, according to Mamza, Constant reviews and evaluation of Art curricula, theories and methodologies will make for improvement and the development of Art education in the country. With the growth of applications in the use of Ceramic raw materials, Ceramics as a course of study in Ghana has a promising future considering the vast potential that can be tapped and maximized from it locally and internationally. Art,

science and technology should be properly synergized, seen as a means of securing sustainable Ceramic practices, and adopted as a key tool for advancing Ghana's national development in the twenty-first century (Kashim & Adelabu, 2012).

## **2.9 Ceramic and Economic Development**

Kayamba (2001) states that local Ceramic industry has played a fundamental part in the rural subsistence economy and social relations of country-side communities. Quartey (2006) opines that industrial development has been recognized as one of the surest means of ensuring higher and sustained growth in the world rates. Hence, Ghana pursued import substitution industrialization (ISI) in the 1960s and 1970s. The rationale was to move her economy from their agrarian (agriculturally driven) state to a modern industrialized economy. Policies to promote import substitution industrialization were accordingly pursued and this led to the establishment of light industries to produce goods locally and operate behind tariff barriers. Ghana's industrial approach was meant to reduce economic dependence; hence, manufacturing industries were established to produce items that were previously imported. As a result, industries manufacturing Ceramic wares, and other important commodities were established and contributed significantly to the livelihood of Ghanaians (Asante-Kyei, 2019).

Asante-Kyei further listed some of the key Ceramic manufacturing companies which included Saltpond Ceramics; Tarkwa Glass Factory; Ekem Ceramics, Winneba; and Ceramica Tamakloe, Dodowa; Happy Ceramics, Accra; Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR, Ceramic section), Accra; Building Research and Road Institute (BRRI, Ceramic department), Kumasi; National Centre for Culture (Ceramic sections), Kumasi and Accra; and Geological Survey Department (Ceramic section) Accra; Vicalex Bricks and Tiles Production, Kumasi. Beside these medium to large scale Ceramic factories, there were hundreds of small-scale Ceramic and pottery setups

scattered across the length and breadth of the country whose contributions to the state were phenomenal.

According to Asante-Kyei (2019) most of these companies in the industry produced high quality Ceramic wares, which had high patronage on the local, West African and international markets. Finished Ceramic wares such as sanitary wares, cups, plates, bowls, flower pots, glass, bricks, tiles, water coolers and many others produced by these companies were in high demand on the Ghanaian market because they were predominantly used in the food and beverage industries, households and building industries.

The Ceramic industry has been not only a source of employment to sizable Ghanaians but also contributed to about 1% -2% of the country's total Gross Domestic Products (GDP). In trying to consolidate the gains, the nation through the government of Ghana established academic institutions to train students in Ceramics, so as to take up different responsibilities in the Ceramic industry (Asante-Kyei, 2019).

According to Okonkwo (2014), Ceramics play an important role in addressing various households, environmental and industrial needs. Apart from Ceramic table and sanitary wares which includes cups, plates, pots, vases and baths among others, much of the construction industry depends on the use of Ceramic materials. This includes brick, cement, tile, and glass. Cement is used to make concrete which in turn is used for roadways, dams, buildings and bridges, uses of glass in the construction industry include various types of window, glass block and fibres for use in insulation of ceiling panels and roofing tiles. Brick is used for homes and commercial buildings because of its strength, durability and beauty. Brick is the only building product that will not burn, melt, dent, peel, warp, rot, rust or be eaten by termites. Tile is used in applications such as flooring,

walls, countertops, and fireplaces. Tile is also a very durable and hygienic construction product that adds beauty to any application. The electronic industry would not exist without Ceramics as Ceramics can be excellent insulators, semiconductors, superconductors and magnet.

The need to train more Ceramicists has become imperative with the emerging of industries that make heavy use of Ceramic materials and products (Norley, Amoanyi, & Essuman, 2017). Not long ago, Ghana discovered oil in its territorial waters and started exploring oil in commercial quantities. According to Norley, Amoanyi and Essuman, the extraction and processing of the oil discovered in Ghana would involve the use of Ceramic products such as Ceramic proppants, crucibles, etc. Undoubtedly, for most people, when we hear ‘Ceramics’, they are inclined to think only of tiles, pots, dinnerware, brick and toilets. Yet, a new class of Ceramics has transpired and, with the advancement of modern industrial Ceramics, is being used for applications such as engine components and machine parts for mining.

With the advent of the oil industry in Ghana, the way is paved for the establishment of many petro-chemical industries for pharmaceuticals, fertilizer production, plastics, pesticides and the likes. The industrial processes for these industries depend heavily on Ceramics. Ceramic substrates, catalytic converters, filters, refractory tiles, crucibles and bricks are a few examples of Ceramic materials that many industrial processes depend on. Without Ceramics, most major industries especially the petro-chemical industries could never function as expected (Norley, Amoanyi, & Essuman, 2017).

## 2.10 Women and Economic Development in Ghana

In Ghana, estimated populations of about 51.4% are women (Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbologah, 2017). According to Abaka-Attah et al, majority of these women are engaged in petty trading, Artwork, menial jobs and farming, with unsecured sources of income. Considerably, in income generation ventures, women are shut out of the workforce consequently lowering their capacity for political influence and rendering them economically incapacitated (Peprah & Boohene, 2011).

The inadequacy of effective policy guidelines to protect citizens in various parts of the continent, have also resulted in social conflicts and deep-rooted poverty, deepening inequalities between various social groups including women. Ross (2008) also made some interesting claims regarding the relationship between the economy and gender equality. With the discrimination against women on the labour front as far as some sectors of the economy is concerned, Pippa Inglehart & Pippa Inglehart (2003) has also suggested that, economic development automatically leads to an improvement in gender equity.

Some researchers believe that empowerment of women usually accrues to generations (Popik, 2012). Many now acknowledge that to enable women to escape poverty; development policies should place more emphasis on their contributions to the economy. Even though women make up a significant proportion of the economically active population, their contribution is not fully recorded because they are mainly engaged in family, farming or in the informal sector (FFI). In other cases, what they do, such as household work, is not considered an economic activity (Mutume, 2005).

These limitations on women to contribute their quota to the nation's economic growth and development are not exempted to women ceramist. In many African regions, women who belong to Art workers' groups are involved in local Ceramic works (Kaneko,

2013). Pottery, a local Ceramic industry, is one of the oldest activities of human-kind and the power of fire to transform soft, malleable clay into a robust and durable material (Cooper, 2000). Indigenous local Ceramics especially pottery as a domestic Art has for many years been the exclusive preserve of women especially the elderly (Rattray, 1927). Becker (1996) has pointed out that literature from archaeology, Art history and gender studies suggest that women were the first makers of clay objects. In this case, feminism is often linked with features, such nature, earth, domesticity or the home, commonly associated with clay material.

Unfortunately, there is lack of strategies and required motivation to bring back the female Art and thus, make contemporary local Ceramics take the meaning of the indigenous model. Although, Quinn (2004) affirms that, female Ceramic artists and designers have always been inspired by the natural world which makes them feel so connected to nature, Abaka-Attah et al affirms that women who are the originators of local Ceramic practice have not received much support to help them contribute to economic growth and development in the country (Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbologah, 2017).

## **2.11 Female Ceramists in Ghana and their Contributions to Ceramic Education and Practice in Ghana**

Though women are the originators of local Ceramic practice yet much has not been documented on female Ceramic practitioners and their contributions (Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbologah, 2017). Similarly, Toki (as cited in Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016) observe that, in Africa, local Ceramic making is mainly the work of women. This statement is supported by Freestone and Gaimster (as cited in Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016), 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.

In many Ghanaian communities, historical perceptions reserve Ceramics as an exclusively female activity or “naturalized activity linked to females (Vincentelli, 2000). In indigenous Africa, women who belong to Art workers’ groups are involved in local Ceramic works, as a domestic Art (Kaneko, 2013). Pots are widely used for many purposes and different types of pots are made in different communities for household and religious purposes. Due to this, indigenous local Ceramic has been the exclusive preserve of women, especially the elderly (Rattray, 1927; Berns, 1993).

LaDuke (1991) reiterated that local Ceramic practice has for hundreds of years been sustained by women as in most villages, women collectively contribute to local Ceramic production, ranging from the mining and processing of clay, forming, trimming and firing. Similarly, a study by Nortey, Amoanyi and Essuman (2017) revealed that female students at the higher education institutions were more satisfied with the course content of Ceramics as compared to their male counterparts.

LaDuke further argues that while some women opt for local Ceramic work as a complete occupation, others take it as extensions of domestic activity where money accrued from the proceeds go into the provision of household necessities. Meanwhile, Berns (1993) has deduced that a closer look at contemporary local Ceramic practice exposes the gender biases that privilege men’s “high” over women’s “low” Art, making men the presumed creators of these works.

In spite of feminine dominance in the indigenous practice, female participation in local Ceramic practices in the contemporary era has dwindled drastically as style and representation has changed from the normal domestic wares to more sophisticated



sculptural pieces (Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbologah, 2017). The Art has therefore become more masculine, thus making indigenous local Ceramic products lose its meaning in the phase of modernity. Though men were involved in some aspects of local Ceramic produce, women are naturally endowed with endurance and patience which are attributes needed in the practice.

A study by Stanwick and Sherman (2006) which investigated the outcomes from various levels of Ceramics education and training found out that the employment outcomes six months after training depend on the level of Ceramics education and training undertaken. They also considered initial outcomes by gender of Ceramics education and training (ECT) students. They found that males had a smoother transition to employment, obtaining better employment outcomes six months after training when compared with females. Thus, though Ceramics had been the indigenous occupation for women in Africa, males seem to find work easily after studying Ceramics at the higher education institutions than their female counterpart.

## **2.12 Summary**

This chapter has reviewed, discussed and analysed the findings of previous researches that are relevant to this current study. This has helped to situate this current study in previous researches as the unique roles of women in Ceramic education and practice were unravelled. This will serve as the backbone for this research as the various contributions of women ceramist in Ghanaian universities were explored. The next chapter discusses the methodology used for this current study.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Overview

In this section, the researcher has outlined the methods that were employed in carrying out this study. This includes the research paradigm & design, the research population, the sample size and techniques, ethical issues & trustworthiness of the data collected, the data collection method and how it was analysed.

#### 3.1 Philosophical Assumption/Paradigm

Guba and Lincoln (1994) define a paradigm as a basic set of beliefs or worldview that guides research action or an investigation. Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2000), define paradigms as human constructions, which deal with first principles of ultimate indicating where the researcher is coming from so as to construct meaning embedded in data. The researcher approached this study from the Interpretivist/constructivist perspective. How this was done in the study is explained below:

##### 3.1.1 The Interpretivist/Constructivist Paradigm: epistemology and ontology

The researcher approached this study from the Interpretivist/constructivist point of view because the researcher wanted to explore the various contributions of female Ceramic educationists in Ghanaian higher education institutions towards the growth of Ceramic education and practice in the country. The study aimed at unearthing the academic and professional journeys of the participants, the diverse challenges they faced in choosing the path of their profession and how they have learnt to cope with those obstacles as academics in the field of Ceramics. This idea is supported by Guba & Lincoln (1989) who reported that the central endeavour of the Interpretivist paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience. The use of this approach made

it easier and allowed the participants of this study to speak for themselves without limiting them to choose from few available options provided by the researcher as in the case of positivist paradigm for quantitative studies. Every data collected and discussed in the next chapter were therefore interpreted from the meaning, the perception and understanding each participant constructed from their diverse experience in the teaching and practice of Ceramics.

Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) stated that, in the constructivist paradigm, every effort is made to try to understand the viewpoint of the subject being observed, rather than the viewpoint of the observer. In this study, the researcher placed emphasis on understanding the participants and their interpretation of the world around them. Also, the researcher allowed the participants to express their subjective views on the issue under discussion. This was done because the key tenet of the Interpretivist paradigm is that reality is socially constructed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). This is why sometimes this paradigm has been called the Constructivist paradigm. This paradigm assumes a subjectivist epistemology, and relativist ontology. These elements and how the researcher used them for this study are explained below:

For this research, the researcher and my participants were engaged in interactive processes as the researcher dialogued, questioned, listened to, read, wrote and recorded the participants to generate research data. This helped me to make meaning of their data through their own thinking through interactions with participants. This is supported by Punch as cited in Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) who reported on the constructivist paradigm that, there is the understanding that the researcher will construct knowledge socially as a result of his or her personal experiences of the real life within the natural settings investigated. This conforms to the epistemology of the constructivist approach. In research, epistemology is used to describe how we come to know something; how we

know the truth or reality; or as Cooksey and McDonald (as cited in Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017) put it, what counts as knowledge within the world.

During my interaction with the participants of this study, individual ideas were given the due attention, and no point raised by a participant during the interview was overlooked by. During the interviews, the interviewees were also allowed to express their diverse and personal opinions on the subject under discussion. This was done because of the ontological stand of the constructivist used for this study. Ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of existence or reality, of being or becoming, as well as the basic categories of things that exist and their relations (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

The assumption of a relativist ontology means that a person believes that the situation studied has multiple realities, and that those realities can be explored and meaning made of them or reconstructed through human interactions between the researcher and the subjects of the research, and among the research participants (Chalmers, Manley, & Wasserman, 2005). Thus, the ontological position of interpretivism is relativism. Relativism is the view that reality is subjective and differs from person to person (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.110). Thus, Reality is individually constructed; there are as many realities as individuals. For the purposes of this study, individual interviews were conducted with the participants as they shared different stories of how they have journeyed through to become ceramists, the unique challenges peculiar to each participant and how they have to overcome those challenges. In the nutshell, the researcher ensured that the relative & subjective views of the participants were collected for discussion without prioritizing any experience of a participant over the other.

### 3.2 Research Design

The study used the qualitative approach of research with a biographical-narrative design. Qualitative research is a systematic, observation-based method designed to answer questions about individuals in a specific, social setting. Qualitative researchers study participants in the natural environment in order to interpret phenomena based on the meanings people ascribe to certain events (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Creswell, 2007). Qualitative methods enable researchers to study people and issues in depth and detail. The researcher utilizes an inductive approach to analyse data without preconceived categories in mind. As a result, openness allows the researcher to generate a wide variety of information about a select group of people (Gauweiler, 2005).

The researcher chose a qualitative approach for this study because it is the most appropriate method to answer my research questions. In this study, the researcher explored the academic and professional journey of female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana. The researcher also found out the roles played by these female ceramists in developing Ceramic education and practice in Ghana. Thirdly, the researcher also appreciated and critiqued the artworks by the female ceramist in Ghana. Lastly, the researcher found out the challenges faced by the female ceramist in Ghana. The researcher was able to collect detailed responses to the research questions raised in this study, and had the participants first hand experiences and subjective views of the phenomenon under study through the use of the qualitative research approach.

In this study, the researcher employed the narrative design. The form of narrative research design used for this study is biographical study. A biographical study is a form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person's life (Creswell, 2007). The contextual focus of this study was female ceramist whose diverse and dynamic contribution to Ceramic education and practice have been

mented over the years in the country. The study explored the past, the present and future of two female Ceramic lecturers in the Takoradi and Ho Technical Universities. The biographies of these ceramists with regards to their academic & professional journey were unravelled. Also, their areas of specialisation and the motivation behind it were explored. This biographic study also enabled me to fish out the contributions of the female ceramist in the field of Ceramic education and practice in the country.

Central to the use of the biographical - narrative design for this study is the retelling of the story of the ceramists in a chronologically coherent manner as detailed in chapter four of the study, and the subsequent generation of themes from the story foretold. This in congruence with what Creswell avers that the narrative study tells the story of individuals unfolding in a chronology of their experiences, set within their personal, social, and historical context, and including the important themes in those lived experiences (Creswell, 2007).

The use of qualitative approach with a biographical narrative design for the study enabled the researcher to generate qualitative data from the participants through the use of interviews. This is supported by Creswell (2012) who opined that one of the methods to collect data for qualitative research is through the use of interview guide.

### **3.3 Population**

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2006), the population is a group to which results of the study are intended to apply. That is, the population to which the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusion. All female Ceramic lecturers in the Universities, Technical Universities and research institutions in Ghana served as the population for this study.

### **3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure**

A sample can be defined as a group of relatively smaller number of people selected from a population for investigation purpose (Creswell, 2007). the researcher used purposive sampling with snow balling techniques to help me get my informants/participants. With the snow balling technique, Mercy Abaka-Atta, a female Ceramic lecturer at Takoradi Technical University was identified as my first respondent. Mercy introduced me to her colleague, Henrientta Barfi-Mensah who also lectures Ceramic courses at the Ho Technical University in the Volta region, Ghana. Thus, two participants were identified as eligible for this study.

The purposive sampling with the snowballing technique enabled me to generate data from respondents who were knowledgeable about the problem under study. The participants selected for the study were lecturers in the field of Ceramic and have had several years of teaching experience in the Ceramic discipline and have contributed their quota to national development through teaching and the various artworks made.

### **3.5 Methods of Generating Data**

The qualitative nature of this research made me as the main instrument for data collection. The researcher employed the interview guide method as the primary means of data generation. Additionally, the use of observations and art (graphics/pictures) were also employed to generate data for this study. Thus, the interview was the primary source of gathering data for the study supplemented by the observations made and art/graphics of the artworks.

A qualitative interview occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers (Creswell, 2012). The researcher then transcribes and types the data into a computer file for analysis. For the purpose of

this, the researcher used semi structured interview to gather information from the participants. The questions that were asked in the interview were open ended in nature.

One-on-one interview was used in the data collection process as the researcher asked questions to and records answers from only one participant in the study at a time. Two in-depth interviews were conducted for this study. The two participants were females' Ceramic lecturers in the Takoradi and Ho Technical Universities. These participants were the only females teaching Ceramics in Ghanaian accredited Universities and Technical Universities, and therefore they were the only people who had knowledge and skills with regards to the subject under discussion. There was no female Ceramic researcher identified at the centre for scientific and industrial research (CSIR).

Each of the two participants identified was interviewed separately to be able to do an in-depth interview and also explore the diverse experiences of each of the participants. Also, observations were made and the graphics of the various artworks done/supervised by these female ceramists were taken. The one-on-one interview also covered these artworks, their significance and relevance to Ceramic education/practice and the growth of society.

### **3.6 Ethical Consideration**

In research context, ethics is concerned with the moral concepts and principles that underpin socially recognized professional as well as legal obligations (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison as cited in Ntim, 2014). An ethical consideration in this study refers to protecting the rights of the participants and the institutions in which the study was conducted as well as maintaining scientific integrity.

To ensure the ethics of this study, permission was sought in the form of an introductory letter from the Department of Art Education, Winneba to the participants



concerned for the study. Also, the consent of participants was sought before the interviews were audiotaped. Additionally, permissions were sought from the participants before photographs of their artworks and projects were taken for the purpose of this study. Finally, the transcribed interviews were sent to the participants and they confirmed it as the exact information they provided during the interview, and gave the permission to be used for this study.

### **3.7 Data Trustworthiness**

Guba (1981) suggests that in research conducted within the Interpretivist paradigm, the positivist criteria of internal and external validity, and reliability should be replaced with four criteria of trustworthiness and authenticity. These criteria are credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. These four criteria proposed by Guba and Lincoln who said that “internal validity should be replaced by that of credibility, external validity by transferability, reliability by dependability and objectivity by confirmability” (Guba & Lincoln, 1982) are discussed below:

#### **3.7.1 Credibility**

Credibility is defined as the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). Credibility establishes whether or not the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants’ original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants’ original views (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To ensure that the information the researcher had was credible, the first thing I did was to involve myself in the participants’ world. This helped me to gain an insight into the context of the study, and it helped to minimize the distortions of information that might arise because the researcher generated the data myself from the field. This is



supported by Onwuegbuzie & Leech (2007) who said that the researcher's extended time in the field improves the trust of the respondents and provides a greater understanding of participants' culture and context. the researcher visited the institutions where these participants teach just to familiarise myself with the environment. During these visits, personal observations were made on the artworks done by these lecturers and their students. This rapport created increased the participants' willingness to volunteer in the study and also give sensitive information that may have been withheld. Also, prolonged engagement in the fieldwork helped me to understand the core issues that might affect the quality of the data because it helped to develop trust with the study participants.

To add to it, before the analysis and the interpretation of the data, the researcher sent all the transcripts of the audio recordings to the respective informants for them to read through, authenticate and confirm that information they gave to me for the purpose of this research have not been altered. After going through the transcripts of the audio recordings, the participants were made to sign a confirmation Agreement form. this way of ensuring credibility in qualitative study is supported by Guba (1981) when purported that the member checks strategy involves establishing structural corroboration or coherence. That is, testing all the data to ensure that there is no internal conflict or inconsistencies, and establishing referential adequacy, i.e., testing the analysis and interpretation against the documents that were used during data collection before producing the final document (Guba, 1981)

Moreover, I ensured the credibility of this study by working hand-in-hand with my supervisors. During the research process, the researcher sought support from my supervisors and other professionals who willingly provided scholarly guidance. The feedback from these people helped me to improve the quality of this study.

### 3.7.2 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents – it is the interpretive equivalent of generalizability (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begley, 2004). According to Bitsch (2005), the “researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through ‘thick description’ and purposeful sampling” (p. 85). This means that when the researcher provides a detailed description of the enquiry and participants are selected purposively, it facilitates transferability of the inquiry.

The researcher used purposive sampling to help me get my informants/participants. This sampling technique helped me to focus on key informants, who are particularly knowledgeable of the issues under investigation. Thus, to ensure the transferability of this study, the researcher purposefully selected females who have been teaching Ceramics and supervising students’ artworks in Ghanaian higher education institutions. These participants served the purpose of this study as they share their experiences in the field of Ceramics, their challenges and how they overcame them.

Also, thick description of this research including all the research processes, from data collection, context of the study to production of the final report was clearly elucidated. This description helps others researchers to replicate the study with similar conditions in other settings. According to Guba (1981), to ensure transferability of qualitative inquiry the researcher must “collect thick” descriptive data which allows “comparison of this context to other possible contexts to which transfer might be contemplated” and produce a thick description of the context in order to make a judgment about it fitting in with other possible contexts (p. 86).

### **3.7.3 Dependability**

According to Bitsch (2005), dependability refers to “the stability of findings over time” (p. 86). Dependability involves participants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants of the study (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

To ensure the dependability of this research, the researcher employed the Code-Recode Strategy and the peer examination strategy. According to Anney (2014), the code-recode strategy involves the researcher coding the same data twice, giving one- or two-weeks’ gestation period between each coding. The results from the two coding are compared to see if the results are the same or different (Chilisa & Preece, as cited in Anney, 2014). The researcher also discussed the research process and findings with my colleagues who are knowledgeable in qualitative research. All these were done to ensure that the findings of this study can stand the test of time.

### **3.7.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of an inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers (Anney, 2014). Confirmability is “concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data” (Tobin & Begley, 2004, p. 392). Studies suggest that Confirmability of qualitative inquiry is achieved through an audit trail, and triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

An audit trail involves an examination of the inquiry process and product to validate the data, whereby a researcher accounts for all the research decisions and activities to show how the data were collected, recorded and analysed (Anney, 2014). For the purpose of establishing the Confirmability of this study, the following documents

were kept for cross-checking the inquiry process: raw data and one-on-one interviews with the participants that were recorded and collected from the field.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

Permission letter was taken from the Department of Art Education, University of Education, Winneba to the Institutions where these lecturers teach. The purpose of study was unveiled to the people concern. Those who qualify to be included to participate formed the sample for this study. the researcher organised one-on-one interview with the participants to help explore their contributions to Ceramic education in Ghana over the years, their challenges in becoming Ceramic lecturers and the strategies that were adopted to overcome them. Additionally, observations and arts were also used to collect data. These data generated were made available for data analysis as described in the next sub-section.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The data gathered from the individual interviews conducted were presented as a whole as common themes were identified and highlighted. Similar ideas were given a common label and identified as the same theme while new ideas were given new labels and identified as new themes. The verbatim translations of the recordings formed an essential part of the data analysis as the researcher try to incorporate all meanings and nuances of the subject.

This allowed the researcher to categorize the information from the participants into themes like: Exploring the roles of female Ceramic lecturers in enhancing Ceramic education in Ghanaian higher education institutions; exploring the significant artworks and artefacts by these female Ceramic lecturers that have impacted Ceramic practice in Ghana; the discouraging factors in becoming a female Ceramic lecturer and practitioner

in Ghana; and the coping strategies adopted by the female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana to deal with their challenges.

Also, observations, pictures and other forms of art made on the various artworks by the participants were presented and discussed. Interviews were made on these artworks about their significance and relevance to society.

### **3.10 Limitations**

The current sample was relatively small due to the fewer number of female Ceramic lecturers and practitioners in Ghanaian universities and Ceramic research institutions. Female Ceramic practitioner who was contacted at The Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Ceramic Unit in Accra could not be included in this current study as her area of specialisation was not Ceramics, and her academic and professional journeys did not match the objectives of this study. Also, all attempt (both in person and email) to reach out to one other female lecturer at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology who read Ceramics as a course to participate in this study proved futile. Lastly, the artworks of Henrietta were not available for observation during the course of this study. This accounts for the reason why the pictures for her undertaken projects are missing in this study.

### **3.11 Conclusion**

The qualitative approach with a biographical narrative design used for this study enabled the researcher to get an in-depth, detailed information and life experiences of the participants who participated in this research. This brought to light the numerous contributions of Ghanaian female Ceramic lecturers in the country. The findings for this study are presented and discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Overview**

The chapter presents the findings of the interviews the researcher had with the participants for this study. All my participants were female Ceramic lecturers in the universities in Ghana. the researcher employed a story telling technique to re-tell the story of my participants for the purpose of chronological coherency of events and purposes of this study. The second part of this chapter looked at the various themes that were generated from the biographical narratives. There are four main themes that addressed the four main research questions raised in this study. Sub-themes and sub-headings were also generated from the major themes.

#### **4.1 The biographies of the participants for the study**

There were two participants who were identified for this biographical narrative study. Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensa was a Ceramic lecturer in the Ho Technical University. Likewise, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah lectures in the Ceramic department, Takoradi Technical University. Their biographical sketches centered on their academic & professional journeys; the roles played as female ceramist in developing Ceramic education and practice in Ghana; the challenges encountered in their profession and the various ways of overcoming those challenges. The individual life sketches are reported below:

##### **4.1.1 The Life Story of Mrs. Henrietta Barfi- Mensah**

This biographical story is composed of the discussion the researcher had with Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensah. The story reveals the academic and professional life story

of Mrs. Barfi-Mensah as a Ceramic artist, her current position and dreams as an artist in the field of Ceramic education and practice.

Although my participant had interest to study Arts since her childhood days, she developed much interest in the study of Art in the year 1991 at Fijai Secondary School, Sekondi she was about completing her GCE “O” Level. At Fijai secondary school, Henrietta studied mathematics and science in addition to Art. She continued her education to Wesley College, Kumasi where she obtained Cert. “A” 3-Year Post-Sec in 1995.

After her successful completion of Wesley College in Kumasi, she taught as an Art teacher from 1995 to 1998 at Nsuta Atonsu Methodist Junior Secondary School (JSS) at Nsuta, a suburb of Asante Mampong in the Ashanti region of Ghana. During those days, her interest and passion for the teaching of Art was exceptional as she engaged her pupils in Art practicals such as painting, drawing, design, claywork, among several others, making the study of Art lively and interesting to the learners this led to most of her pupils pursuing Art in the secondary school level.

While serving as a class teacher at Nsuta Methodist, Henrietta was not stuck to the classroom but also pursued academic excellence and updated herself with knowledge in the profession by offering courses and obtaining the following certificates: private G.C.E “A” level, private G.C.E “A” and private G.C.E “O” in the years 1997, 1998 and 1999 respectively.

In 1998, she was transferred from Nsuta to Asawasi M/A Junior Secondary School, Kumasi. At Asawasi M/A JSS, she continued to teach Art related courses from JSS one to JSS three. Until she left in the year 2000, her pupils always enjoyed her lessons and did not want to miss any lesson with her. With her, the students found the study of Art to be a way of creativity in bringing out the best in them (pupils).



In the year 2000, Henrietta left the classroom to pursue a degree in Bachelor of Art in Industrial Arts in the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). She completed her degree successfully within the four years stipulated period and graduated in 2004. During her undergraduate studies, she undertook a project titled: Design and Construction of Meaks Oven for Fish Smoking. From the project work she undertook; it is evident that Henrietta is passionate about Ceramic arts and would always want to dive and explore better ways of designing and constructing indigenous Ceramic artifacts for modern day use.

Due to her exceptional performance and passion for Art, she was appointed as a Teaching Assistant in 2004 to 2006 in KNUST, Industrial Art Ceramics Section, Kumasi. As a Teaching Assistant, she facilitated several Ceramic practicals with students and also took students through tutorials in the field of industrial art.

In 2006, Henrietta got appointed back into the Ghana Education Service as a tutor for General Knowledge in Art (GKA). She taught this course for five years at Opong Memorial Senior High School, Kokofu in the Ashanti Region. In 2011, she left for Kumasi Senior High Technical School, Kumasi, where she continued to teach GKA as a course.

At the advanced level, Mrs Barfo-Mensah specialized in Fine Art. In 2011, she obtained her master's degree in MFA Ceramics from KNUST. During her second degree, she researched into Design and construction of facial slices for the building industry. This thesis enabled Henrietta come out with new designs and improved ways of constructing facial slices for the building industry in Ghana and the world at large. Currently, she is pursuing her PhD in Ceramic Technology in the same University.



At the time of the interview, Henrietta was a Ceramic lecturer in the Ho Technical University (HTU), in the Volta region of Ghana. Since 2012, She has worked as a Ceramic artist and has served in the rank of an assistant lecturer, lecturer and has risen to the rank of Head of Department in HTU. At the Department of industrial Art in the Ho Technical University, Henrietta lectures in Ceramic courses. For the past 10 years, she taught several students in the Ho Technical University. According to Mrs. Barfi-Mensah, she can boast of 35 of her students who are doing very well in the Ceramic business and industry. All these students received tuition and practice from her hands as a Ceramic lecturer and practitioner between 2012 and 2022. Without recounting much the knowledge and skills she imparted into learners/pupils in her early years of teaching as an Art teacher at Nsuta, Asawasi, Kokofu and Kumasi at the pre-higher education level, one can proudly avers that Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensah has contributed and still contributing her quota to the development of art education in Ghana.

Aside the classroom, Henrietta has had a lot of industrial experiences in Ceramics which has been helpful to her teaching profession as a ceramist. In the years 2004 and 2005, she was attached to a Ceramic factory by name Vicalex Brick and Tile Factory as an intern to gain the needed skills to help practice as a ceramist. As a professional Ceramic lecturer and practitioner, she practices a lot and has a number of artworks which will be highlighted in this study under the heading 4.2.2.2

My participant has four published articles in international journals at the time of the interview. One of her famous publications that has received much scholarly attention is *Using Indigenous Symbols to Enhance the Aesthetic Look of Ceramic Facial Tiles*. This article was co-authored with Dzegblor Noble Komla and Mokpokpo Adja-Koadade. The article was published in March 2015 by the International Journal of Innovative Research & Development (IJIRD), Volume 4 Issue 3, ISSN 22. From my discussions with the

participant, I also realized that she is currently working on four other unpublished articles. Though my interviewee had no published book to her credit, she had written several course handouts in Ceramics which helped in smooth lesson deliveries.

When Mrs. Barfi-Mensah was probed on the challenges she has faced in her academic and professional journey, she had the following to say: intimidation from some male colleagues; parenting, combining work with family issues and lack of collaboration from the outside world. Expounding on these challenges, she stated that instead of colleague lecturers motivating her as the only female ceramist in the institutions, these male colleague lecturers often discourage her with their words and also show dislike for Ceramic practical and its related activities. The passing of comments by even some Art lecturers will kill her spirit for the Ceramic discipline. According to Henrietta, most colleagues do not know about the importance of Ceramics to education and national development and hence their disapproval of the course. Colleague lecturers and other staff not having much respect for the Ceramic discipline, belittling the importance and relevance of the ceramist is a source of intimidation for ceramists like Henrietta who had spent all their life in the discipline and looking forward to unearth other areas in the field.

The practical and activity-based nature of Ceramics coupled with parenting roles is a headache for female ceramists who are mothers like Henrietta. Unlike colleague males who are at liberty to visit the Ceramic studios at any time, females on the other hand are handicapped and cannot go near fire or source of intense heat when pregnant or breastfeeding their babies. As a result, a lot of practical activities are put on hold for female ceramists during their gestation and breastfeeding days. The parental role of female ceramists added to family stress goes a long way to impact their practice negatively both in the classroom and in the studio. Lastly, lack of support from the government, NGOs, and the university is a challenge scraping the progress of Ceramic education in the country.

When probed further on the kind of support she was referring, she stated most schools in Ghana including the technical universities do not have modern Ceramic studios for practice. As a result, students are often subjected to theories of the subject instead of paying more attention to studio work and practice. She added that the few studios in the country even have inadequate tools and equipment for studio practice. With regards to this challenge, the outside world referring to the government, school authorities and NGO's do not see much need to build modern Ceramic studios well furnished with tools and equipment for teaching, learning and practice of Ceramics in Ghana. This makes the lecturers and practitioners of Ceramics incapacitated in carrying out their professional duties.

Henrietta has learnt to cope with these challenges in her profession as a Ceramic lecturer and practitioner through determination, effective time management and the passion to mentor others in the field. Her resilience in the field of Ceramics is as a result of determined effort to pursue her passion and interest amidst the intimidation and disapprovals she receives from colleagues and people. This has helped her to build herself in the art discipline and specializing in industrial art/Ceramics over the years. Additionally, proper time management has helped her a lot to practice as a ceramist even though she is a mother and a wife. Despite taking care of her family, Henrietta has been able to further her education to a higher level. She is currently a PhD final year student in KNUST pursuing Ceramic technology. She lectures, and also practice in the field. Her area of interest has been in Art -Murals Fountains brick and tiles, where she researches into it design and construction. Since she is motivated intrinsically, Mrs. Barfi-Mensah has not diverted from the study Art especially Ceramics during her years of study in the university. She aims at becoming a consultant in the field so as to mentor a lot of students and several others who have interest and passion for the discipline.

According to Henrietta, Ceramic education and practice in the country will be superb in the coming years only if they concentrate on their mandate, do not divert to other faculties of study but rather explore other areas of Ceramics. From her perspective, there are several interesting fields in Ceramics that both practitioners and learners need to dive into to bring to light through research and practice. Ceramics has a lot to contribute to our national development as stakeholders come on board to revive Ceramic industries in the country, build modern studios for practice and expand the number of schools that run Ceramic courses in the country. She added that exhibitions should be organized for Ceramic artworks to showcase the discipline to the outside world while conferences, workshops and seminars should also be held to develop the intellects and skills of ceramists in the country. When these are done, Ceramics would have a new and brighter face in the near future.

At this time, I showed my appreciation and gratitude to Mrs Henrietta Barfi-Mensah for her willingness to participate in this study and not withholding any information I desired from her. I closed the interview and requested to come for any additional interview if necessary.

#### **4.1.2 The Life Story of Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah**

The life story of a female ceramist and a university lecturer, Miss Mercy represents a joint effort. The story is crafted primarily out of the information the researcher gathered from Mercy during our interview sessions. I have, however, taken certain storytelling liberties, while always remaining faithful to the facts presented by Miss Mercy as this story reflects the realities of her life.

Mercy Abaka-Attah, an indigene of Nkroful in the Western region, Ghana began her journey as a professional ceramist and lecturer some decades ago. During her

secondary school education from 1997 to 1999 at Fijai Secondary School, Sekondi, she opted for Visual Art as a course despite her parent's interest for her to pursue science related programmes in order to become a health practitioner. At secondary school, her three-dimensional (3D) electives included Ceramics and graphics. Mercy exhibited special interest in the study of ceramist at that level although most of her female counterpart did not show interest especially during Ceramic practical or what is called Ceramic studio work.

Her love for Ceramics made her continue to pursue her interest in the field. After successfully completing her second cycle education in 1999 at Fijai, she entered the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi in the year 2001. At KNUST, she read Bachelor of Art (B.A) Industrial Art with Ceramics as her area of specialization.

When Mercy was asked on why she specialized in Ceramics during her first degree at KNUST, she stated that "I read Ceramics due to my love for the versatility of clay, the active raw material for ceramist," this made her to opt for Ceramics above other specializations like textiles, metal product design, and fashion in the department of industrial arts.

From 2001 to 2005, Mercy was one of the proud members of Ceramic Associations on campus such as the Ceramics Students' Association of KNUST and the Art society, College of Art and the Built Environment. Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah was not limited to classroom activities during her school days at KNUST. During her four years at KNUST, she was a long-distance runner for the Africa Hall. Due to her outstanding performance, she was picked to run Marathon also for the University team from 2001 to 2004.

In 2005, Mercy graduated with BA in Industrial Arts (Ceramics) and due to her outstanding performance and keen interest for Ceramics, she was appointed as a Teaching Assistant in the Industrial Art Department (Ceramics Section) from August 2005 to July 2006. During those days, her responsibilities included but not limited to: Assisting lecturers with teaching and other supervisory roles and any other role assigned by the HOD; and assisting students with their semester's project work and assignments.

In 2012, Miss Mercy pursued her interest for Ceramics to the higher levels of learning when she got admission to read Master of Fine Art (MFA) Industrial Art (Ceramics) at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, K.N.U.S.T, Kumasi. In 2015, she graduated from this Programme and obtained MFA Industrial Art Certificate.

Though Mercy picked up an appointment in August 2009 to January 2016 as a Senior Instructor at the Takoradi Polytechnic, School of Applied Arts, Ceramics Department, even before her admission into the masters Programme at KNUST. The higher degree offered her the necessary credentials to teach Ceramic courses at the Takoradi Technical University as a lecturer. As the only female Ceramic lecturer in the institution, her MFA degree has given her sufficient knowledge as a ceramist to offer thoughtful critiques to her students' project in the discipline. From February 2016 to the time of this interview, Mercy Abaka-Attah has served as a Ceramic lecturer in the Takoradi Technical University, TTU, School of Applied Arts, Ceramics Department.

At TTU, her responsibilities as a lecturer include but not limited to teaching and supervising students' practical research and project work; Providing academic counseling to students and offering assistance to students to create an enabling environment to make their stay on campus meaningful. Since her appointment at TTU, she has rendered

numerous services to the institution, namely; Departmental Representative for the following units/divisions at the Takoradi Technical University: Academic Quality Assurance (2015 to date); Academic Board (from 2016-2017); and Centre for Business and Entrepreneurship Development since 2015 to the time of the interview 2015 to date. Aside this, Miss Abaka-Attah has served on many committees and boards at the university including; Academic Board, Library Board, Quality Assurance, Transport, Industrial Liaison, Centre for Business and Entrepreneurial Development, Quiz committee for FAAT, etc. currently, serving as a coordinator for Gender Mainstreaming at the Centre for Gender and Advocacy

Mercy has also contributed her quota to international literature through her numerous publications. Some of her publications are:

- The Production of Ceramic Wares with Idea Development from Shells to Promote Femininity in Ghanaian Pottery published in 2019 by the American Journal of Art and Design, vol. 4, No. 2, pp8-14, August, 2019.
- The Production of Clay Containers for Curbing Plantain Post-Harvest Losses in Ghana in July 2019 by the New Journal of Glass and Ceramics-SCIRP, vol.9, No.3, pp50-65.
- Feminism as a Model in Pottery: Contribution of Women to the Preservation of Pottery Heritage published by the International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR), vol.32, issue 3, pp 1-12, April, 2017.
- Design and production of a Pair of Decorative Flower Pots for the Main Auditorium of Takoradi Polytechnic: Ghana in April 2016 in the International Journal of Innovative Research and Development (IJIRD), volume 5, issue 5.

Aside this published works, Mercy has several seminar presentations experiences in the fields of Ceramic education and practiced and currently working on a lot more



articles to make them ready for publications. Some of her artefacts/artworks include the use of seashells as a female idiom to promote feminism in pottery. the rationale behind this particular artwork was to emphasize on the fact that the Art is more feminine with the aim of promoting the image and contributions of females in pottery.

As a Ceramic artist and lecturer in the School of Applied Arts, Ceramics Department, Takoradi Technical University, it can be argued that Mercy has come a long way and followed her passion. During the interview, she reviewed that she has trained several students, though the number was not mentioned, who are now well-established entrepreneurs in the field of Ceramics. Thus, through her profession as a ceramist in the higher education institution, she has imparted knowledge and skills to several others who are also contributing their quota to the nation's development. Skill based courses like Ceramics offer students the needed skills to come out of the classroom and establish themselves without depending on others for employment after graduation. This is exactly what Mercy has been doing as a lecturer and ceramist in the university for the past years.

When probed on the challenges she encounters in her teaching and practice as a ceramist, she reported that lack of interest in the course at the basic level has inhibited the growth of Ceramic education and practice in the Country. According to her, many young and genius artists are forced/persuaded to forgo their interest and pursue other fields like science when selecting courses after completing their basic education certificate examination and entering second cycle schools. Visual Art is often regarded as a course for the less brilliant students by many Ghanaians. Though this is not true, she asserted, this disregard for the study of Art and particularly Ceramic has made a lot of people to have negative perception on the course and losing interest in studying them. Unfortunately, even some teachers at our basic schools do not make the study of Art



interesting as they theorized it instead of making the teaching and learning of Art activity & practical based to help catch the attention and interest of the learners.

An additional challenge reported by her was that of the challenges associated with exploring other raw materials to make Ceramic studies and practice more attractive. Though the active raw material, clay, is easily available in Ghana, it is difficult getting other raw materials such as silica, alumina, flint, quartz, aluminosilicates, among others for research work and studio practices. Though, Mercy reported that this challenge does not affect his work output much, her students are disadvantaged as they would have hands-on experience with some of these raw materials and their related works due to their unavailability.

Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah has learnt to overcome her challenges at her workplace by making good use of the available resources and maintaining her zeal and zest for Ceramic education and practice as she works to contribute her quota to national development. In the near future, she has in her plans to explore other fields in Ceramics through research and practice. Miss Mercy believes that in the next 20 years, Ceramic education and its practice will eventually take its rightful place especially in the building and hospitality industries. it would create employment opportunities for the youth who would be trained in architectural and environmental Ceramics, bricks and tiles production, building of high temperature equipment, mould and casting in order to mass produce artefacts, etc.

At this time, I showed my appreciation and gratitude to Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah for her willingness to participate in this study and not withholding any information I desired from her. I closed the interview and requested to come for any additional interview if necessary.

## **4.2 Themes generated from the narratives**

The second part of this chapter addresses the various themes generated from the biographical narratives of the participants. There were four main themes with their sub-themes. The four themes were generated in response to the four main research questions raised in this study. Theme one, two, three and four were used to respond or address research one, two, three and four respectively. The various discussions and findings of the themes generated are presented next.

### **4.2.1 Theme 1 – Identification of female ceramists in academia, their academic and professional journey**

Research question one was to identify female ceramists in academia and explore their academic and professional journey. This theme answers the question. Theme is divided into three main sub-themes, namely; identification of female ceramist in academia, academic journey and professional journey of the participants. Each sub-theme has their sub-headings for discussion.

#### ***4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1 – identification of female ceramist in academia in Ghana***

According to the National Accreditation Board, currently there are 12 public universities (National Accreditation Board a, 2022) and ten technical universities in the country (National Accreditation Board b, 2022) and these institutions served as the target population for the study. For the full list of the schools refer to table 1 in chapter two. The research institution selected for this study was the centre for scientific and industrial research (CSIR).

Out of the 22 universities, only seven offer institutions offer Ceramics as a course for the award of a higher national diploma, bachelor's degree, master's degree or doctor

of philosophy degree (National Accreditation Board a, 2022; National Accreditation Board b, 2022). The institutions are:

1. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology
2. University of Education, Winneba
3. Takoradi Technical University;
4. Ho Technical University;
5. Tamale Technical University;
6. Sunyani Technical University
7. \*\*\*University of Ghana

University of Ghana does not offer Ceramics as course of study for the award of diploma or degree. However, at the department of material science and engineering, students have the opportunity to choose Ceramic courses as their major or elective course.

This helped the researcher to narrow down her search for female ceramists in academia to only these seven institutions. Inquiries done at these seven universities and at the CSIR revealed that there was no female Ceramic lecturer or researcher at their institution except Mercy Abaka-Attah of the Takoradi Technical University and Henrietta Barfi-Mensah of the Ho Technical University. However, it is worth reporting that there was one retired female ceramist at KNUST whose unavailability made it impossible to include her in this study. Also, there was one female researcher at the Ceramic unit in CSIR headquarters, Accra but did not have any specialisation in Ceramics, hence did not meet the participant inclusion criteria for this study.

The two female ceramists identified in academia, their biographies, and contributions to Ceramic education and practice in Ghana are enumerated in the remaining themes and sub-themes.

#### **4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2 – academic journey**

The findings for the academic journey of my participants for the study are reported and discussed under this sub-theme. This section explored the Programme selection of the participant from the second cycle level to their higher degrees acquired. The various levels of educations of the participants were categorized into secondary education, first degree and higher degrees (graduate programmes) for easy discussion and analysis. Also, their contribution to academia through publications international journals were captured under this theme. The various sub-sections under this sub-theme are reported and discussed below:

##### **4.2.1.2.1 Secondary Education**

The selection of courses or programmes of study in the Ghana's educational system starts at the second cycle institutions. After a pupil successfully completes his/her Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and upon entry/admission into a senior high school, students are made to choose between the sciences, the Arts, the technical or the vocational as the Programme of study.

Both Henrietta and Mercy had their secondary education at Fijai Secondary School in Sekondi, Ghana in 1991 and 1999 respectively. Among the available programmes, my participant opted to read visual art amidst the pressure from parents and colleagues to read others like science. This is in agreement to the findings of previous studies that a contributing factor to the decline in the number of students pursuing Art courses is the fact some parents coerce their children to forego the study of Art. A study by Ogunduyile and Mbahi (as cited by Kashim & Adelabu, 2012) reported that most parents are biased against fine and applied art as a subject because it is assumed that success could only be made in life if children are encouraged to study engineering and medical sciences. Unlike others who succumb to the influence of parents and friends as

reported by previous researchers, the participants for this study were able to stand against same pressure when the time came for them to choose their course of study. For instance, Mercy reported that:

she opted for Visual Art as a course despite her parent's interest for her to pursue science related programmes in order to become a health practitioner – **MAA**

Mercy's choice of programme at the high disagrees with the findings of Okon who reported that due to the increase in popularity of sciences in the society, students now develop more interest in science courses to the detriment of art related courses, especially Ceramics (Okon, 2010).

For Henrietta, she chose the study of Art over science and mathematics at Fijai secondary when pursuing her GCE O level due to the passion she had for the study of Arts, most especially Ceramics. This disapproves the Okon (2010) findings that students always prefer the sciences and mathematics over the Arts like Ceramics. Henrietta's keen interest in art made her to further her education to Wesley training college (now College of Education) for Cert. "A" 3-Year Post-Sec. Certificate A. at Wesley training college, she majored in Art. She stated:

I developed much interest in the study of Art in the year 1991 at Fijai Secondary School, Sekondi when I was about completing my GCE "O" Level. At Fijai secondary school, I studied mathematics and science in addition to Art. I continued my education to Wesley College, Kumasi where I obtained Cert. "A" 3-Year Post-Sec in 1995 with special interest in Art - **HBM**

Though previous reports that Some students have developed hatred on Ceramics education for no just reason. This perception was attributed to the false stories they were told about arts education in general and Ceramics in particular. Some students also believe in the fallacy that those who study arts in the university never get rich because it

has little or no job potentials (Bello as cited in Okonkwo, 2014). Students speculate that Ceramics education is a very difficult and tedious discipline. Therefore, anyone applying to study the course is subjecting him or herself to perpetual stress and suffering. Others speculate that Ceramics education is for those who were either less intelligent or did not meet up with the requirements for other disciplines or course of studies (Okonkwo, 2014). From the biographical narratives of Mercy and Henrietta, the participants for the study, it is evident they were exception to such assertions as reported by Okonkwo.

According to Nortey, Amoanyi and Essuman (2017) most senior high schools in Ghana do not offer Ceramics as one of their electives for visual art students. Contrariwise, Fijai senior secondary school has produced a lot of Ceramic practitioners over the years including the participants of this research. Ceramics was one of the three dimensional (3D) electives participants studied at Fijai secondary school, Sekondi. Since both participants pursued the study of Ceramics during their first degrees and graduate studies, it can be argued that they had a solid foundation and developed interest for Ceramics at Fijai secondary. They reported:

I exhibited special interest in the study of Ceramics at that level although most of my female counterpart did not show interest especially during Ceramic practical or what is called Ceramic studio work – **MAA**

I developed much interest in the study of Art in the year 1991 at Fijai Secondary School, Sekondi when I was about completing my GCE “O” Level – **HBM**

The development of the participants interest for Ceramic studies at the higher education levels are reported and discussed in the next sections.

#### 4.2.1.2.2 First Degree

Both Henrietta and Mercy had their undergraduate studies at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi – Ghana. They read Bachelor of Art in Industrial Art. Their area of specialization in KNUST was Ceramics as they have developed keen interest in Ceramics and wanted to pursue it to the higher level. Henrietta studied in KNUST from the year 2000 to 2004 while Mercy started her first degree in 2001 and graduated in 2005. The department of industrial Art is one of the four departments in the faculty of Art under the college of Art and Built Environment. The Department of Industrial Art has the sections: Ceramics, Fashion, Integrated Rural Art and Industry, Metal Products Design and Textiles. When they were probed on why they specialized in Ceramics during their first degrees at KNUST among the available options, Mercy Abaka-Attah reported that:

I read Ceramics due to my love for the versatility of clay, the active raw material for a ceramist,” this made me to opt for Ceramics above other specializations like textiles, metal product design, and fashion in the department of industrial arts. I can boldly say that I have not regretted studying Ceramics because I am really proud of it and would always want to associate myself with that course – **MAA**

Similarly, Henrieta Barfi-Mensah added that:

I knew the course I wanted to offer at KNUST. I had Ceramics in mind before applying for admission to study Industrial Art. I wanted to develop my passion for this course, pursue it to the advance level and contribute my quota to Ceramic practice in the country and the world at large- **HBM**

While Henrietta undertook a project titled: Design and construction of meaks oven for fish smoking in partial fulfillment of her B. A Industrial Art degree programme, on the other hand, Mercy researched into Ghanaian female potters. In the nutshell, both



participants had their first degrees in Industrial Art at KNUST with specialization in Ceramics because that was their area of interest. The programme of study was not forced on them by the university or the department, rather they chose it so as to pursue their passion and interest.

The participants of this study interest and passion to pursue Ceramics as a profession is supported by the findings of previous studies. For instance, a study by Nortey, Amoanyi and Essuman (2017) revealed that female students at the higher education institutions were more satisfied with the course content of Ceramics as compared to their male counterparts, and this propel them to study Ceramics to advance level to have career in the chosen area.

#### **4.2.1.2.3 Second and Third Degrees**

The outstanding performance of my participants during their first degrees paved way for them to pursue their education to higher degrees (Masters and Doctorate degrees). Once again, both participants pursued their Masters Degrees in KNUST. They read Master of Fine Art in Ceramics (MFA Ceramics). Henrietta obtained her MFA degree in 2011 and currently a PhD final year candidate in the department of Fine Arts (Ceramics section) at KNUST. Mercy started her master's degree in 2012 and graduated in 2015.

These higher degrees obtained by the participants have equipped them with the relevant knowledge and requisite skills to lecture at the technical universities in Ho and Takoradi. This has made them to offer expertise guidance to their students pursuing similar interest. There are no previous research findings to support that early female ceramists in Ghana and Africa at large had formal education and obtained higher degrees. The academic contributions of my participants in terms of published works are discussed next



#### 4.2.1.2.4 Publications

The knowledge and skills gained in school have propelled my participants to become prolific writers in the area of Ceramics. The academic journeys of my participants for this study would not have been without highlighting their scholarly contributions to academia. Mercy and Henrietta are among the few women across the globe who have published articles in international journals to their credit.

In the year 2016, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah had her first published work in the International Journal of Innovative Research and Development (IJIRD), volume 5, issue 5. The title of the was - “Design and production of a Pair of Decorative Flower Pots for the Main Auditorium of Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana.” As it can be substantiated from the publication title, this was not only a scholarly writing to the credit of Mercy but a project that benefitted the Takoradi technical university community as their auditorium was furnished and beautified with wonderful project undertaken by her.

In April 2017, *Feminism as a Model in Pottery: Contribution of Women to the Preservation of Pottery Heritage* published by the International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR), vol.32, issue 3, pp 1-12 was another study that received scholarly attention among Ceramic scholars across the globe. This study unearthed the unique contribution of women potters and their participation in modern pottery production.

Also, in 2019, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah had two published works to her credit. These were: the production of Ceramic wares with idea development from shells to promote femininity in Ghanaian pottery published in 2019 by the American Journal of Art and Design, vol. 4, No. 2, pp8-14, August, 2019. The second one was the production

of clay containers for curbing plantain post-harvest losses in Ghana in July 2019 by the New Journal of Glass and Ceramics-SCIRP, vol.9, No.3, pp50-65.

Aside this published works, Mercy has had several seminar presentations experiences in the fields of Ceramic education and practiced and currently working on a lot more articles to make them ready for publications. Not forgetting the various project and thesis should undertook in partial fulfilment of her degree programmes at KNUST.

At the time of the interview, Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensah revealed that she had four published articles in international journals. One of her famous publications that has received much scholarly attention was *Using Indigenous Symbols to Enhance the Aesthetic Look of Ceramic Facial Tiles*. This article was co-authored with Dzegblor Noble Komla and Mokpokpo Adja-Koadade. The article was published in March 2015 by the International Journal of Innovative Research & Development (IJIRD), Volume 4 Issue 3, ISSN 22.

From the discussions with the participant, the researcher also realized that she was currently working on four other unpublished articles. Though my interviewee had no published book to her credit, she had written several course handouts in Ceramics which helped in smooth lesson deliveries. During her undergraduate studies, Henrietta undertook a project titled: Design and construction of meaks oven for fish smoking. during her master's degree, she researched into Design and construction of facial slices for the building industry.

It is evident that these female Ceramic lecturers have contributed a lot to the pool of knowledge in Ceramic education and practice through the research conducted over the years. Interestingly, my participants have not relented their efforts but are doing more to

have unexplored areas in Ceramic education and practice unraveled through their studies and project.

#### ***4.2.1.3 Sub-theme 3 – professional journey***

This sub-theme reports on the work experiences of the participants for the study. The work-related experiences termed as professional journey of the participants are grouped into three sub-sections, namely: internship, teaching, and studio practice. Other experiences that may not be relevant to the Ceramic profession but have helped build the participants over the years are also lighted.

##### **4.2.1.3.1 Internship**

The period of internship is a professional learning experience that offers people with meaningful and practical experience in the field of work in their chosen career. As students fresh from the university, internship was a necessary experience for my participants as they were offered the opportunity for exploration and development in the field of Ceramics. Similarly, Okunna (2012) reported that Ladi Kwali joined the Pottery Training Centre in Abuja as an intern and subsequently a worker. According to Okunna that move sign-posted a turning point in the life and Ceramic art practice of Ladi Kwali, as this served as a period of learning and transition from indigenous pottery to modern pottery.

Due to the participants' exceptional performance and passion for Ceramics, both participants for this study had their internship experiences at KNUST when they were appointed as teaching assistants in the Ceramic section, Department of Industrial Art. Henrietta stated that -

I was appointed as a Teaching Assistant in 2004 to 2006 in KNUST, Industrial Art Ceramics Section, Kumasi. As a Teaching Assistant, I facilitated several Ceramic practicals with students and also took students

through tutorials in the field of industrial art. During that, I saw myself as an intern who was learning on the job and at the same time offering assistance to my lecturers by carrying out my assigned responsibilities –

**HBM**

Similarly, Mercy reported that -

After my graduation in 2005, I was appointed as a Teaching Assistant in the Industrial Art Department (Ceramics Section) from August 2005 to July 2006. During those days, my responsibilities included but no limited to: Assisting lecturers with teaching and other supervisory roles and any other role assigned by the HOD; and assisting students with their semester's project work and assignments. This opportunity helped me to learn new skills that I could get when I was a student in the same department. I really explored the university working environment - **MAA**

Aside the professional experienced gained at KNUST as an intern or teaching assistant, Henrietta has had a lot of industrial experiences in Ceramics which has been helpful to her teaching profession as a ceramist.

In the years 2004 and 2005, I was attached to a Ceramic factory by name Vicalex Brick and Tile Factory as an intern to gain the needed skills to help practice as a ceramist. I had a lot of hands-on experiences at Vicalex and learnt more skills that has been really helpful in my studio practice as a ceramist – **HBM**

The internship experience has helped to bridge the gap between the classroom and the world of work for my participants. This is in congruence with the findings of previous studies who reported that Ladi Kwali's experience at the Pottery Training Centre helped her to merge traditional knowledge and skills with modernity and technological ways of throwing and firing Ceramic products (African voice, 2004; Okunna, 2012). It is not surprising that these two teaching assistants have ended up as lecturers in the university.

The exposure they had at KNUST and Vicalex as interns have useful influences on their career as Ceramic lecturers and practitioners in Ghana.

#### 4.2.1.3.2 Teaching

The journey to become a female Ceramic lecturer at the university is a not a day's journey. Henrietta and Mercy have come a long way before realizing their dreams. The participants for this study have taught at different levels of our educational system and gain several experiences in the field of teaching. Throughout their journey as professional teachers, they have provided guidance to a lot of students, imparted knowledge and skills in the field of Ceramics and Art in general.

Henrietta began her teaching profession as a subject teacher when she graduated from Wesley College in Kumasi. She asserted that -

After I graduated from Wesley Grammar College in Kumasi, I taught as an Art teacher from 1995 to 1998 at Nsuta Atonsu Methodist Junior Secondary School (JSS) at Nsuta, a suburb of Asante Mampong in the Ashanti region of Ghana – **HBM**

This experience at Nsuta set the stage for Henrietta to build her interest for the teaching of Art since she had the opportunity to teach Art right after college. In 1998, she was transferred from Nsuta to Asawasi M/A Junior School School, Kumasi. At Asawasi M/A JSS, she continued to teach Art related courses from JSS one to JSS three. Until she left in the year 2000, her students always enjoyed her lessons and did not want to miss any of her lessons.

Henrietta had also taught Art in the second cycle institutions. In 2006, Henrietta got appointed back into the Ghana Education Service as a tutor after graduating from KNUST with a Bachelor of Art Certificate in Industrial Art with specialization in

Ceramics. Though she did not have the opportunity to teach Ceramics at the Senior High School (SHS) level, she successfully handled this subject for five years.

I taught General Knowledge in Art (GKA) for five years at Oppong Memorial Senior High School, Kokofu in the Ashanti Region. In 2011, I left for Kumasi Senior High Technical School, Kumasi, where I continued to teach GKA as a course - **HBM**

Contrariwise, Mercy had no teaching experience at the pre-tertiary level of education. Unlike Henrietta, she began her teaching at the higher education level. Before her appointment as a lecturer in February 2016 at Takoradi Technical University, she served as a Senior Instructor at the School of Applied Arts, Ceramics Department in August 2009 to January 2016 in the same institution.

At the time of the interview, both participants were Ceramic lecturers at Takoradi and Ho Technical University respectively:

I am Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah, a professional ceramist with specialization in Ceramics Design promoting projects in the arts industry as a practitioner and lecturer in the field ... Currently, a staff of Takoradi Technical University as a lecturer at the Ceramic Technology department, Faculty of Applied Arts lecturing in Ceramic Mould and Casting Processes, Traditional Ghanaian Pottery, Traditional West African Pottery, History of Ceramics, Studio Ceramics, Introduction to Art and Contemporary Art including students project supervision... - **MAA**

Similarly, Henrietta Barfi-Mensah asserted that:

I got appointed as an Assistant lecturer in the Ho Technical University (HTU), in the Volta region of Ghana. That was 2012, and got promoted to my current rank as a lecturer... I have been teaching Ceramic courses in the department of Industrial Art. For the past 10 years, I have taught several students in the Ho Technical University... - **HBM**

At the time of the interview, Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensah has taught as a teacher for the past 27 years at all levels of our educational system. Within this 27 years, 10 years

of her teaching were done at the university facilitating Ceramic courses and supervising their project work. On the other hand, Mercy Abaka-Attah has had 13 years' experience of teaching in the University, starting as a senior instructor to her current rank as a lecturer. It is evident that these women have come a long way as teachers/lecturers as they were determined to follow their passion and aspiration of becoming female lecturers in the country.

#### 4.2.1.3.3 Studio Practice

Key to professional experience of every ceramist is the construction of artefacts or artworks in Art studios. The sub-section looked at the exhibition of the skills of my participants in the studio. It is at the studio where ceramist develop their skills and practice what they have learnt.

I practice a lot in the studio. I have a lot of artworks to my credit. I also take my students to the studio quite often to practicalize what we are learning at the lecture halls. Studio practice has been a beautiful experience for me and I still love it – **HBM**

...yes uuhm the studio has been helpful in my career. That's where I practice with my students. as ceramists, we cannot be professionals without going to the studio for practice. So, I often take my students there... - **MAA**

Findings of previous research indicate that the success of early female ceramist and continuous practice in the studio has opened the door to other women in the field (African voices, 2004). Thus, studio practice has been instrumental to the growth of Ceramics since the ages as experienced women engage and train young and upcoming potters to become experts in the field.



#### **4.2.1.3.4 Extra-curricular activities**

Apart from their profession as female Ceramic lecturers, my participants have gained other experiences in their professional that was worth highlighting. Both participants were members of the Ceramic associations on campus like the Ceramics Students' Association of KNUST and the Art Society, College of Art and the Built Environment (CABE). Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah was not limited to classroom activities during her school days at KNUST. During her four years at KNUST, she was a long-distance runner for the Africa Hall. Due to her outstanding performance, she was picked to run Marathon also for the school team from 2001 to 2004.

Additionally, she added:

I have served on many committees and boards at the university including; Academic Board, Library Board, Quality Assurance, Transport, Industrial Liaison, Centre for Business and Entrepreneurial Development, Quiz committee for FAAT, etc. currently, serving as a coordinator for Gender Mainstreaming at the Centre for Gender and Advocacy - **MAA**

These other experiences gained by the participants have helped their holistic development. Though not related directly to their profession, their impact on my participants cannot be overlooked.

#### **4.2.2 Theme 2 – Roles played by the female ceramist in ceramic education and practice in Ghana**

The second theme generated from the interviews conducted centered on the roles played by the participants with regards to the growth and development of Ceramic education and practice in the country. Previous researchers have reported that the Ceramic industry especially pottery in Ghana and Africa at large has been preserved and sustained by women in most villages, women collectively contribute to local Ceramic production, ranging from the mining and processing of clay, forming, trimming and firing



(Vincentelli, 2000; Kaneko, 2013; Kayamba & Kwesiga, 2016) yet much has not been documented on female Ceramic practitioners and their contributions to the growth of the Ceramic industry and education in the country (Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbologah, 2017). This theme therefore has unravelled the numerous contributions of women who teach Ceramics at the university. These various contributions of my participants who have taught Ceramics over the years cannot be under-estimated. This theme is sub-divided into three other themes, namely; impartation of knowledge and skills to their students, the various projects they undertook and lastly their published works contributing to the world of knowledge. These findings generated for these sub-themes are discussed below:

#### ***4.2.2.1 Sub-theme 1 – imparting knowledge and skills***

One major role a teacher plays in education is the impartation of knowledge and skills to learners. Teachers facilitate lessons, supervise their students project and serve as guardians to students for their wholistic development. Henrietaa and Mercy, participants for this study, have taught several students in Ceramic courses and other related ones like General Knowledge in Art.

Henrietta for instance had taught for 16 years in the pre-tertiary level. During those days, she built learners interest for the study of Art. Through her passionate way of teaching at Nsuta and Asawasi junior high schools in the late 1990s, a lot of students opted to read Visual Art at the senior high school. She asserted this during the interview:

...during those days, my interest and passion for the teaching of Art was exceptional as I engaged my pupils in Art practicals like painting, drawing, design, clay work, among several others. This made the study of Art lively and interesting to the learners and this led to most of her pupils pursuing Art in the secondary school level - **HBM**

... my students always enjoyed my lessons and did not want to miss any lesson with me. With that, the students found the study of Art to be a way of creativity in bringing out the best in them (students) - **HBM**

Both participants have also served as teaching assistants in the Department of Industrial Art, Ceramic section in KNUST. During those days, they facilitated several Ceramic practicals, took students through tutorials, assisted lecturers with teaching, assisted students with their semester's project work and assignments and other supervisory roles assigned by the lecturer

At the higher education level as female Ceramic lecturers, Henrietta and Mercy have come across a lot of students through their teaching profession. The influence these lecturers have had on their students cannot be underestimated. Through their teaching and guidance, some of their students have used the knowledge acquired to establish themselves as entrepreneurs.

For the past 10 years, I taught several students in the Ho Technical University... I can boast of 35 of my students who are doing very well in the Ceramic business and industry. All these students received tuition and practice from my hands as a Ceramic lecturer and practitioner between 2012 and 2022 - **HBM**

Without recounting much the knowledge and skills Henrietta imparted into learners/pupils in her early years of teaching as an Art teacher at Nsuta, Asawasi, Kokofu and Kumasi at the pre-higher education level, one can proudly avers that Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensah has contributed and still contributing her quota to the development of art education in Ghana. **HBM**

Similarly, as a Ceramic lecturer at Takoradi Technical University, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah have contributed to the growth of Ceramic education in the country by helping trained students who pass through her hands as a teacher. During the interview,

she reviewed that she has trained several students, though the number was not mentioned, who are now well-established entrepreneurs in the field of Ceramics. Thus, through her profession as a ceramist in the higher education institution, she has imparted knowledge and skills to several others who are also contributing their quota to the nation's development. She revealed that:

At TTU, my responsibilities as a lecturer include but not limited to teaching and supervising students' practical, research and project work; Providing academic counseling to students and offering assistance to students to create an enabling environment to make their stay on campus meaningful... - **MAA**

Her impact to the university cannot be felt only in the classroom. She added that:

Since my appointment at TTU, I have rendered numerous services to the institution, namely; Departmental Representative for the following units/divisions at the Takoradi Technical University: Academic Quality Assurance (2015 to date); Academic Board (from 2016-2017); and Centre for Business and Entrepreneurship Development since 2015 to the time of the interview 2015 to date. Aside this, I have served on many committees and boards at the university including; Academic Board, Library Board, Quality Assurance, Transport, Industrial Liaison, Centre for Business and Entrepreneurial Development, Quiz committee for FAAT, etc. currently, serving as a coordinator for Gender Mainstreaming at the Centre for Gender and Advocacy - **MAA**

In the nutshell, my participants for this study have imparted knowledge and skills in the Ceramic discipline and this have yielded much fruit. Some of their students are now entrepreneurs, business men and women, teachers and practitioners of Ceramics in the various part of the country. It is worth mentioning that, my participants were not only stereotyped to the teaching of Ceramics but also broadened to their scope to other responsibilities that needed their attention for total development of their students and the school community at large. Though previous researches highlight the unique role of

women in the local Ceramic industry as the originators of local Ceramic practice (Abaka-Attah, Opoku-Bonsu, & Gbolohah, 2017) and in African regions, historical perceptions reserve Ceramics as an exclusively female activity or “naturalized activity linked to females (Vincentelli, 2000), there are no documentations on female participation in Ceramic education in the country.

#### ***4.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2 – projects undertaken***

An Art project simply means creating or designing artwork or carrying out research to come out with a unique functional artistic value by an Artist. Art projects often has the primary purpose of displaying artworks, talents and skills of the designers or the artist. Project here refers to the various constructions, manufacturing and researches carried out by the participants in the field of Ceramics. These projects were carried out within a time frame and had their specific purposes. The various researches discussed under this sub-theme are those that were project-based. other published works in international journals which were not project-based are treated as a separate sub-theme.

All the participants undertook their unique projects during their bachelors’ degrees and postgraduate degrees. These projects were requirements for the attainment of the various degrees. For instance, during her first degree at KNUST, Henrietta designed and constructed a meaks oven for smoking fish. This Artwork was unique and new way of smoking fish without suffering from smoke and intense heat as in the traditional way of fish smoking.

During my undergraduate studies, I undertook a project titled: Design and construction of meaks oven for fish smoking - **HBM**

From the project work she undertook; Henrietta was creative and Innovative to explore better ways of designing and constructing indigenous Ceramic artifacts for

modern day use. This project adopted on a large scale in the country will go a long way to help fish mongers who preserve fishes by smoking them as the escape the hazards of smoke and heat.

On the other hand, Mercy Abaka-Attah during her first degrees worked on the use of seashells to promote feminism in pottery. the rationale behind this particular artwork was to emphasize the fact that the Art is more feminine with the aim of promoting the image and contributions of females in pottery in the contemporary world. The materials used for this artwork were Abonko and Mfensi clays from Central and Ashanti region respectively, manganese and glaze.

...during those days, my project or artwork was on the use of seashells as a female idiom to promote feminism in pottery - **MAA**

Also, During Henrietta's second degree in KNUST, she researched into Design and construction of facial slices for the building industry. This thesis enabled Henrietta come out with new designs and improved ways of constructing facial slices for the building industry in Ghana and the world at large.

As a Ceramic lecturer and practitioner, I practice a lot and a number of artworks which I designed myself. Aside the classroom, I have had a lot of industrial experiences in Ceramics which has been helpful to my teaching profession as a ceramist - **HBM**

In the year 2016, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah carried out project-based research and got published in the International Journal of Innovative Research and Development (IJIRD), volume 5, issue 5. The title of the project was - "Design and production of a Pair of Decorative Flower Pots for the Main Auditorium of Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana." As it can be substantiated from the publication title, this was not only a scholarly writing to the credit of Mercy but a project that benefitted the Takoradi Technical University

community. Mercy and her team designed and produced decorative flower pots that was used to decorate and beautify the main auditorium of the Takoradi Technical University.

It can be concluded that, the participants for this study have carried-out several project-based researches, undertaken the design and construction of artworks/artefacts that have benefited humanity. If such works are adopted and produced on larger scales, their benefit to society will be much felt. Some of the artworks/project undertaken by the participants are shown figures 1 to 8.



*Figure 1 - sea shells used as female idiom by Mercy Abaka-Attah*





*Figure 2 sea shells used as female idioms by Mercy Abakah- Atta*



*Figure 4 - Pair of Decorative Flower Pots for the Main Auditorium of Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana by Mercy Abaka-Attah*



*Figure 3 - clay containers for curbing plantain post-harvest losses designed by Mercy Abakah Atta*





*Figure 6 -seashells designed by Mercy Abakah- Atta*



*Figure 5 - Embossed Kroye Slices on a Building designed by Henrietta Barfi Mensah & co*



*Figure 7 - Embossed Anieden Slices on a Building designed by Henrietta Barfi Mensah & Co*



*Figure 8 - Feminism as a Model in Pottery artworks of Mercy Abaka-Attah*

The contributions of my participants quota through research publications to the growth and development of Ceramic education and practice in Ghana and the world are discussed next.

#### ***4.2.2.3 Sub-theme 3 – research publications***

Addition to the participants roles played towards the growth of Ceramic education and practice in the country is their researches undertaken over the years. Some of these studies carried out have been published in international journal, and have become reference materials to new researches being conducted in the field. Now let's begin to highlight some of the major publications of my participants that have contributed much to the pool of knowledge in academia.

In the year 2016, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah had her first published work in the International Journal of Innovative Research and Development (IJIRD), volume 5, issue 5. The title of the was - “Design and production of a Pair of Decorative Flower Pots for the Main Auditorium of Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana.” As it can be substantiated from the publication title, this was not only a scholarly writing to the credit of Mercy but a project that benefitted the Takoradi technical university community as their auditorium was furnished and beautified with wonderful project undertaken by her.

In April 2017, *Feminism as a Model in Pottery: Contribution of Women to the Preservation of Pottery Heritage* published by the International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research (IJSBAR), vol.32, issue 3, pp 1-12 was another study that received scholarly attention among Ceramic scholars across the globe. This study unearthed the unique contribution of women potters and their participation in modern pottery production.

Also, in 2019, Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah had two published works to her credit. These were: the production of Ceramic wares with idea development from shells to promote femininity in Ghanaian pottery published in 2019 by the American Journal of Art and Design, vol. 4, No. 2, pp8-14, August, 2019. The second one was the production of clay containers for curbing plantain post-harvest losses in Ghana in July 2019 by the New Journal of Glass and Ceramics-SCIRP, vol.9, No.3, pp50-65.

Aside this published works, Mercy has had several seminar presentations experiences in the fields of Ceramic education and practiced and currently working on a lot more articles to make them ready for publications. Not forgetting the various project and thesis should undertook in partial fulfilment of her degree programmes at KNUST.

At the time of the interview, Mrs. Henrietta Barfi-Mensah revealed that she had four published articles in international journals. One of her famous publications that has received much scholarly attention was *Using Indigenous Symbols to Enhance the Aesthetic Look of Ceramic Facial Tiles*. This article was co-authored with Dzegblor Noble Komla and Mokpokpo Adja-Koadade. The article was published in March 2015 by the International Journal of Innovative Research & Development (IJIRD), Volume 4 Issue 3, ISSN 22.

From the discussions with the participant, the researcher also realized that she was currently working on four other unpublished articles. Though my interviewee had no published book to her credit, she had written several course handouts in Ceramics which helped in smooth lesson deliveries.

During her undergraduate studies, Henrietta undertook a project titled: Design and construction of meaks oven for fish smoking. during her master's degree, she researched into Design and construction of facial slices for the building industry.



It is evident that these female Ceramic lecturers have contributed a lot to the pool of knowledge in Ceramic education and practice through the research conducted over the years. Interestingly, my participants have not relented their efforts but are doing more to have unexplored areas in Ceramic education and practice unraveled through their studies and project.

#### **4.2.3 Theme 3 – Challenges faced by the female ceramist (participants)**

Challenges here refers to series of actions and events that unfold as the participant interact within their work environment and carry-out their occupational roles. Generally, challenges include but not limited to making mistakes, time management, getting along with your boss, disagreeable coworkers, office bullies, gossipers and trouble makers.

When my participants were probed on the challenges they face as female ceramist at the higher institutions of learning they find themselves, they reported on the following: intimidation from their colleagues, combining work with parenting/family issues, lack of collaboration from authorities, lack of interest in Art courses and inadequate raw materials for studio work. These challenges are treated as sub-themes for discussion below:

##### ***4.2.3.1 Sub-theme 1 – intimidation***

Intimidation is the act of making others do what one wants through fear or the act of dominating someone and making the person feel inferior. The participants for this study reported intimidation as one of the challenges they face as the workplace. The intimidations were reported to have come from their learned colleague lecturers.

The passing of comments by even some art lecturers will kill your spirit for the Ceramic discipline. most colleagues do not know about the importance of Ceramics to education and national development and hence their disapproval of the course. Colleague lecturers and other staff not

having much respect for the Ceramic discipline, belittling the importance and relevance of the ceramist is a source of intimidation for some of us who have spent all our life in the discipline and looking forward to unearth other areas in the field – **HBM**

Expounding on these challenges, Henrietta stated that instead of colleague lecturers motivating you as the only female ceramist in the institutions, these male colleague lecturers often discourage you with their words and also show dislike for Ceramic practical and it related activities. Similarly, Mercy also added this:

There was a time someone, a colleague, called me the “clay madam.” He wasn’t been humorous. He thinks Ceramics is old fashioned and we deal with a lot of dirt and stuff...if those who are educated have such preconceptions about, then you can imagine those who are not well educated - **MAA**

It is clear that comment from some colleagues and staff at their workplace are discouraging that often push these women to go back into their shells. however, it is worth reporting that it is not all their colleagues who pass such weird comment about their discipline. Some have been source of strength to them, and this will be highlighted in the coping strategies in the next theme.

#### ***4.2.3.2 Sub-theme 2 – parenting, combining work with family issues***

A challenge often reported by women in various profession is how to combine their duties as wife or mother coupled with workplace load. For instance, Popik (2012) reported that even though women make up a significant proportion of the economically active population, their contribution is not fully recorded because they are mainly engaged in family, farming or in the informal sector (FFI). In other cases, what they do, such as household work, is not considered an economic activity (Mutume, 2005).

This was in congruent with what my participants reported. As women teaching in the higher institutions of learning, they are loaded with students’ project supervision,

teaching/lecturing, undertaking research work and other assigned duties by the University. This coupled with their duties as home-makers was a pressing challenge to them.

During pregnancy, I am unable to practice in the studio. You see, pregnancy, breastfeeding and parenthood all hinders you as a Ceramic practitioner. In a way, we females are limited especially those activities that require rigorous energy and getting close to intense heat... **HBM**

The practical and activity-based nature of Ceramics coupled with parenting roles is a headache for female ceramist who are mothers like Henrietta. Unlike colleague males who are at liberty to visit the Ceramic studios at any time, females on the other hand are handicap and cannot go near fire or source of intense heat when pregnant or breastfeeding their babies. As a result, a lot of practical activities are put on hold for female ceramist during their gestation and breastfeeding days. The parental role of female ceramist added to family stress go a long way to impact their practice negatively both in the classroom and in the studio.

#### ***4.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3 – lack of collaboration from the outside world***

Participants for this study also reported lack of support from the government, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and university community as a major challenge to female Ceramic lecturers. According to Asante-Kyei (2019), another factor that has contributed to the collapse most Ceramic industry in Ghana is due to inconsistent government policies over the years and lack of support and governmental policies to help grow the local Ceramic industry.

Also, the participants asserted that the Ceramic sections in their departments need to resourced to enhance teaching and learning. However, their plea over the years seem to fall deaf ears as little were been done in terms of capacity building, resourced studios, etc.

There is lack of support from the appropriate stakeholders of education. this has been a challenge scraping the progress of Ceramic education in the country - **MAA**

Henrietta added to this assertion when she stated that:

most schools in Ghana including the technical universities do not have modern Ceramic studios for practice. As a result, students are often subjected theories of the subject instead of paying more attention to studio work and practice. even the few studios in the country have inadequate tools and equipment for studio practice - **HMM**

This is in agreement to the reports of Kashim and Adelabu (2012) who aver that most higher institutions offering art and design programmes still have to contend with problems of ill-equipped studios and inappropriate teaching materials, which results in the improvisation of tools. The paucity of teaching materials and ill-equipped Ceramic studios pose serious challenges for quality education delivery.

With regards to this challenge, the participant further stated that the outside world referring to the government, school authorities and NGO's do not see much need to build modern Ceramic studios well furnished with tools and equipment for teaching, learning and practice of Ceramics in Ghana. This makes the lecturers and practitioners of Ceramics incapacitated in carrying out their professional duties. Similarly, Kasim and Adelabu argues that it is an established fact that higher education institutions in Africa are poorly funded. This makes it difficult to accomplish the basic objective of education as outlined by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The emphasis that is being placed on science and technology-based subjects in the curriculum seems to relegate the art-related disciplines to the background (Kashim & Adelabu, 2010).



#### **4.2.3.4 Sub-theme 4 – lack of interest in the course at the basic level**

Lack of interest in Art courses at the basic schools in Ghana was also a challenge reported by the participants. As lecturers in the higher education institutions, the number of enrollments in Ceramic courses is dependent on the enrollment in the second cycle institutions. If the number of students enrolled in visual Art courses decline, it has direct impact on enrollment in Art courses in the universities. Participants reported that lack of interest in the course at the basic level has inhibited the growth of Ceramic education and practice in the Country. It was asserted by Mercy that:

Ceramics and Art in the broader sense is often regarded as a course for the less brilliant students by many Ghanaians. many young and genius artists are forced/persuaded to forgo their interest and pursue other fields like science when selecting courses after completing their basic education certificate examination and entering second cycle schools - **MAA**

This is in congruence to the report of an earlier study by Anlezark, Karmel and Ong (as cited in Okonkwo, 2014) which found that students have a very wrong perception about Ceramics education. Students speculated that the course have no job potential, therefore will not lead them anywhere in future after graduation. They also noted a mismatch between the Ceramics courses and programs which students undertook at school, and those which they studied after school. This leads to the question of whether school Ceramic studies need to be better linked with the world of work and post-school study or, alternatively, should concentrate on providing a broad pre-vocational skill.

Similarly, Lamb and Vickers (as cited in Okonkwo, 2014) and Harris, Rainey and Sumner (as cited in Okonkwo, 2014) conducted studies on the rate of students drop-out from Ceramic studies on campus in Mutchana University, Newcastle and Hyaghi University, Norway respectively was attributed to the students' negative view about Ceramics education in general.

Mercy further stated that:

...Though this is not true, she asserted, this disregard for the study of Art and particularly Ceramic has made a lot of people to have negative perception on the course and losing interest in studying them. Unfortunately, even some teachers at our basic schools do not make the study of Art interesting as they theorized it instead of making the teaching and learning of Art activity & practical based to help catch the attention and interest of the learners - **MAA**

Henrietta had this to say on this challenge:

unfortunately, a lot of senior high schools in Ghana do not even offer Ceramics as one of their electives. For reasons best known to themselves, students are not given the opportunity to it that level. So, you see, it becomes a challenge when somebody from any of these schools wants to offer Ceramics at the university, s/he becomes ineligible to gain admission - **HBM**

The above assertion is earlier supported by the findings of Nortey, Amoanyi and Essuman (2017) who reported that apart from internal factors inhibiting the choice of Ceramics study, most schools do not offer Ceramics at the senior high level. It presents a good deal of evidence that exists relating to factors influencing specialization of a course within the Industrial Art programme. Among the numerous factors identified is the fact that the Ceramic course is not offered at various senior high schools, which inadvertently diminishes interest in students to choose this as a major at the university level. Consequently, there is a high probability that those who will gain admission to higher education institutions would not opt for Ceramics as a major course since they did not study Ceramics during their SHS education.

Here, my participants opined that the challenges to the Ceramic profession can be traced far back to the pre-higher education education level, where the study of Art is not

given the needed recognition and attention. This has resulted in low enrolment in Art related courses, students not given the chance to read Art by their parents/guardians and the teaching of Art theorized by some teachers who are not Art inclined.

#### ***4.2.3.5 Sub-theme 5 - the challenge with exploring other raw materials***

An additional challenge reported by Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah was that of the challenges associated with exploring other raw materials to make Ceramic studies and practice more attractive.

Though the active raw material, clay, is easily available in Ghana, it is difficult getting other raw materials like silica, alumina, flint, quartz, aluminosilicates, among others for research work and studio practices -

#### **MAA**

Though, Mercy reported that this challenge does not affect her work output much, her students are disadvantaged as they would have hands-on experience with some of these raw materials and their related works due to their unavailability. This challenge is supported by the findings of previous study which stated that processed Ceramic raw materials are hard to come by either through local processing or through importation. Local processing is difficult because of the lack of access to appropriate equipment, while importation consumes too much money through foreign exchange (Kashim & Adelabu, 2012)

#### **4.2.4 Theme 4 – coping strategies to mitigate the challenges**

This theme looked at the various behaviours, thoughts, and emotions that the participants used to adjust the various challenges they encountered at their workplace. Generally, coping strategies may be conscious or unconscious styles people use to reduce unpleasant situations they encounter in life.

The various techniques adapted by the participants to overcome their stressful situations were determination, effective resource management, and the passion to mentor others in the field. These coping mechanisms or strategies have helped the participants to overcome their workplace challenges and deliver efficiently at their workplaces.

#### ***4.2.4.1 Sub-theme 1 – determination***

Participants were relentless in their efforts to pursue their goals of becoming lecturers and practitioners of the Ceramic discipline. Though faced with several challenges along their academic and professional journeys, through determined will and persevered efforts they have risen above all drawbacks and were doing well in their professions during the time of the interview. It can also be argued that the participants resilience in the field of Ceramics was as a result of determined effort to pursue their passion and interest amidst the intimidation and disapprovals they receive from some colleagues and people.

I have built myself in the art discipline and specialized in industrial art/Ceramics over the years. It is not because things were easy. There have been a lot of challenges here and there. But I must say, I was determined to follow my passion and goals – **HBM**

On the same note, Miss Mercy stated that:

Uhhmm, the journey has not been easy. But by God's grace, I was determined to achieve my goals. In the field of work, there are challenges too but with good will, I have learnt to cope - **MAA**

#### ***4.2.4.2 Sub-theme 2 – effective resource management***

Managing the available resources effectively has been of the major coping mechanism employed by my participants. Though my participants do not have resourced or equipped Ceramic studios at their workplaces, they have learnt to effectively manage the available for their smooth teaching and practice as ceramist in the technical

universities. Miss Mercy Abaka-Attah has learnt to overcome her challenges regarding limited resources by effectively making use of the available one. She stated:

at my workplace, I make good use of the available resources and maintain my zeal and zest for Ceramic education and practice as I work to contribute my quota to national development - **MAA**

Henrietta has also learnt to manage her time properly as this has helped her to be productive and industrious both at the workplace and home.

Yeah...I plan my activities and keep notes events and programmes to attend. You see, it is not easy for me oo. As a wife, mother and lecturer. That's a lot of workloads. But I have learnt to cope all these years by managing my time well... – **HBM**

Previous studies assert to this when they opined that clay is readily available in almost all parts of Ghana and sub-Sahara Africa and fuels for the firing of clay products has not been a challenge due to the availability of useable fuels that can easily be converted from the reserves of petroleum products in the country (Asante, 2009; Kashim & Adelabu, 2010; Abaka-Attah, 2015).

Moreover, a participant added that proper time management has helped her a lot to practice as a ceramist even though she is a mother and a wife. Despite taking care of her family, Henrietta has been able to further her education to the PhD level, combining schooling, teaching and her duties as wife and mother together.

#### ***4.2.4.3 Sub-theme 3 – the passion to mentor others in the field***

Another theme generated was the participant's passion to train young ones in the field of Ceramics. This has been a source of motivation when she sees young people who have passed through her hands becoming entrepreneurs and practitioners in the various fields of Ceramics. This is supported by the findings of previous research which stated that present day students of Ceramics are motivated by the efforts of their predecessors.

the pioneering efforts of educators past and present since the early part of the twentieth century, laid a good foundation for arts education and practice. And also, contemporary Ceramics scholars have pushed the frontiers by exploring new trends in Ceramic art and design with new languages of expression. These rich legacies and constant changes occurring in Ceramic art practice are good indications of the continuity and sustainability of this age-old practice (Ozioma, 2009; Kashim & Adelabu, 2010). Similarly, a study by Evans-Solomon and Opoku-Asare (2011) reported that the teachers of Ceramics teach well and make their lessons interesting as they have passion for the course.

Mrs. Barfi-Mensah stated that:

I have not diverted from the study Art especially Ceramics during the years of study in the university due to my passion for the job. I aim at becoming a consultant in the field so as to mentor a lot of students and several others who have interest and passion for this field. – **HBM**

Similarly, Abaka-Attah supported this assertion when she stated that:

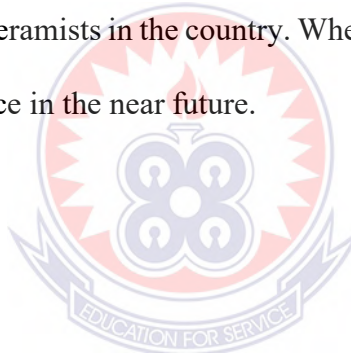
I see some of my students when they graduate from here. I become happy because they are not in the job markets hunting for jobs. The practical nature of this course has made some of them to setup their own business. Some are also teachers and few others working in the industries. It keeps us moving since we see the result of our labour – **MAA**

#### **4.3 Conclusions**

The journey to become Ceramic lecturers and practitioner in Ghanaian universities were full of ups and downs. Notwithstanding, they have learnt to fight their challenges without given up on their interest, passion and goals. Now as professional female ceramists in Ghana, their hard work which contributed to the growth and development of Ceramic education and practice in the country were unearthed through this study.

According to my participants, Ceramic education and practice in the country will be superb in the coming years only if they concentrate on their mandate, do not divert to other faculties of study but rather explore other areas of Ceramics. They added that, there are several interesting fields in Ceramics that both practitioners and learners need to dive into to bring to light through research and practice.

Ceramists have a lot to contribute to our national development as stakeholders come on board to revive Ceramic industries in the country, build modern studios for practice and expand the number of schools that run Ceramic courses in the country. Exhibitions should be organized for Ceramic artworks to showcase the discipline to the outside world while conferences, workshops and seminars should also be held to develop the intellects and skills of ceramists in the country. When these are done, Ceramics would have a new and brighter face in the near future.





## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Overview

The purpose of this study was to find various roles women ceramists play as educators, researchers and practitioners of the Ceramic discipline and their contributions to Ceramic education in the country. This chapter is devoted to the summary, conclusions, and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study. Further research areas have also been suggested.

#### 5.1 Summary

The study specifically explored the academic and professional sketches of two female Ceramic lecturers in the Ho and Takoradi Technical universities, and their unique contributions towards Ceramic education and practice in Ghana. The main findings of the study are itemised as follows:

1. Two female Ceramic lecturers were identified in academia. These were Mercy Abaka-Attah, a lecturer in the Takoradi Technical University (TTU), and Henrietta Barfi-Mensah of the Ho Technical University (HTU). These women were trained at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology-Kumasi for both their undergraduate and graduate studies. Henrietta started her career in 1995 at the basic education level as an Art teacher and has risen through the ranks in her profession. At the time of the interview, Henrietta was Ceramic lecturer at Ho Technical University. Mercy Abaka-Attah started her career as a ceramist studio assistant at TTU in 2009 and risen to the rank of a lecturer in the Takoradi Technical University at the time of the interview.
2. The participants for the study have contributed their quota to the development of Ceramic education and practice in Ghana. As lecturers in the field, they have

mentored, coached and supervised students who are now entrepreneurs, teachers and practitioners of Ceramics in the various part of the country. Also, project-oriented researches undertaken by Mercy and Henrietta has led to the discovery of new facial slices, decorative flower pots, murals, among other artefacts. Lastly, their research publications in peer reviewed journals have contributed to the pool of knowledge in the field of Ceramics.

3. The study reviewed that both participants had challenges at home and in the institution. These were combining work with parenting/family issues, intimidation from colleague lecturers, non-resourced studio laboratory for teaching and learning, and lack of support from appropriate stakeholders towards the growth of Ceramic education in the universities.
4. The various coping strategies adapted by the participants to overcome their challenges were determination, effective resource management and the passion to mentor others in the field.

## 5.2 Conclusions

From the major findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There is minimal representation of female ceramists in academia in Ghana compared to their male counterparts in the field.
2. Female ceramist in academia, though fewer in number, have equally contributed their quota to the development of Ceramic education in Ghana and the world at large through their teaching, projects undertaken and research publications
3. Female ceramist in academia encountered more challenges than their male counterparts. Though the negative effects of these challenges cannot be quantized, they had negative impact on the participants productivity at their workplace.

4. Lastly, the participants for the study surmounted the challenges encountered through intrinsic motivation and the desire to move to higher heights in their chosen career.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities and higher institutions in Ghana should recommend, encourage and assist the promising and interested females in the field of Ceramics to upgrade themselves to be able to lecture at the higher education institutions.
2. Women should be given more opportunity in academia to contribute immensely and meaningfully in the field of Ceramic.
3. To help curb the challenges of Ceramic education in Ghana as outlined in the findings of the study, Ceramic studios at the second cycle schools and the universities should be well resourced with modern equipment & raw materials by the stakeholders of education for effective teaching and learning.
4. Lastly, young and upcoming female ceramist should be motivated intrinsically to be able to rise to the peaks of their career, so that their dreams will not be shut-down by challenges they may encounter along their professional journey.

### **5.3 Suggestions for further research**

A survey study to fish out the number of female Ceramic teachers at the second cycle schools in Ghana is highly recommended. Case study research should be conducted on the numerous researched based projects undertaken by these female Ceramic lecturers. This would help to unravel the major contributions by these ceramists to the economic growth and development of the country. It is further suggested that, future research should concentrate on why most females decline pursuing Ceramic studies to higher levels of

the educational ladder despite the fact that there are quite a number of females who read visual art the second cycle institutions in the country.



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## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW GUIDE

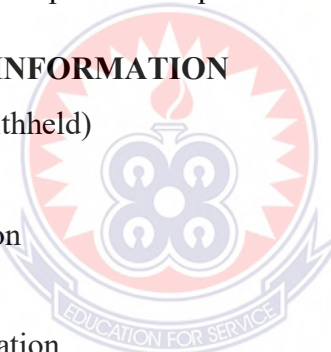
I am Gifty Baidoo, a student of University of Education, Winneba reading MPhil. in Art Education. I am researching on the topic: **exploring female ceramists' contribution to Ceramic education and practice in Ghana.** My study is guided by the following research objectives:

1. To identify female ceramists in academia in Ghana and explore their academic & professional journey.
2. To examine the roles played by the female Ceramic lecturers in developing Ceramic education and practice in Ghana.
3. To find out the challenges faced by the female Ceramic lecturers in Ghana.
4. To explore the coping strategies female Ceramic lecturers used to adjust to the challenges in their field of work.

Please kindly respond to these open-ended questions to help me undertake this research.

### A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

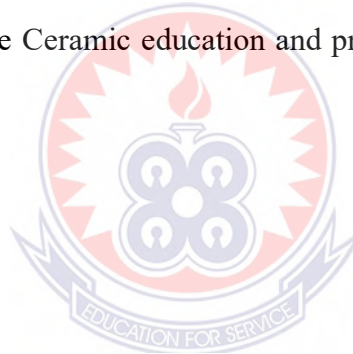
1. Name (maybe withheld)
2. Title
3. Level of education
4. Profession
5. Area of specialisation
6. Rank
7. Place of work/institution



### B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

8. What have been the programmes of study from second cycle to your highest level of education?
9. What were your major/areas of specialisations during your higher education?
10. What informed the above choices?
11. Has there been a diversion/change of programme in your academic progress. If yes, why?
12. What is/are your profession?
13. Do you have area of specialisation in your profession?
14. Why did you choose to specialise in that field?

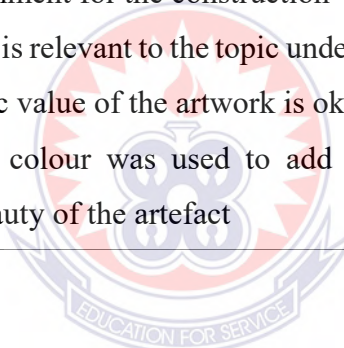
15. Are you a member of any professional
16. What has been your contribution to Ceramic education and practice in the areas of
  - Teaching
  - Practical/practice
  - Publications of articles of books
  - Others
17. What are some of your projects/artworks/artefacts in the field of Ceramics?
18. What were the rationales behind the artworks?
19. What have been your challenges in your teaching and practice as a ceramist?
20. How do these challenges affect your output at work?
21. How do you cope with those challenges you face as a ceramist?
22. Do you have plans of doing more specialisation in the field of Ceramic or would you prefer to divert to other areas?
23. How do you see Ceramic education and practice in the next 20 years in the country?





## APPENDIX B - OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

S/N	Questions	Yes	No
1	There was element of creativity in the artwork		
2	The artist was innovative during the construction of the artwork		
3	The artwork was original of the artist ideas		
4	The artwork was suitable for the purpose it was constructed		
5	The texture of the artwork was suitable		
6	The shape of the artwork is not hazardous to it users especially children		
7	Artist used materials easily available in the local environment for the construction		
8	The artwork is relevant to the topic understudy		
9	The aesthetic value of the artwork is okay		
10	Appropriate colour was used to add to the aesthetic beauty of the artefact		



## APPENDIX C – INTRODUCTORY LETTER

