

**Small industries and their importance in sustainable development in Libya.  
(Small ceramic industries as a model)**

**Prof. Ayman Ali Gouda**

Professor of the Department of Ceramics - Faculty of Applied Arts - Helwan University  
[aymanalyalgouda@gmail.com](mailto:aymanalyalgouda@gmail.com)

**Prof. Fathy Abd-Elwahab**

Professor of the Department of Ceramics - Faculty of Applied Arts - Helwan University  
[dr.fathy.a.wahab@gmail.com](mailto:dr.fathy.a.wahab@gmail.com)

**Assist. Lect. Ibrahim Salem Ismail**

Assistant Lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Architecture - Omar Al-Mukhtar  
University (Durna)

[ibrahim.s.r.ismail@gmail.com](mailto:ibrahim.s.r.ismail@gmail.com)

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**Introduction:**

Small enterprises occupy a great importance in the economies of all societies, regardless of the degree of their development and the different economic systems and concepts. The stages of its social transformations vary, as small enterprises play an important role in the process of economic and social development in most countries of the world, due to their effective role in providing employment opportunities, as small enterprises provide very wide job opportunities, given the small capital invested for workers and then contribute effectively to Solving the unemployment problem, as well as contributing to the GDP, as well as its contribution to showing new projects that support economic growth, and based on the important role that these projects play in contributing to achieving economic and social goals that achieve spatial development, many developed countries have supported and encouraged this type of projects and this is what helped to achieve a significant qualitative leap in these countries. (12)

**Small business concept:**

It is not possible to provide a final definition and a specific concept for small enterprises, as it is a relative concept that differs according to the different standards taken to define these projects, as well as the difference of these standards between one country and another, according to their different capabilities, economic and social conditions and the degree of their technological development, and therefore there are many definitions that are consistent with the political and economic environment in the concerned country, differ in other countries, as it may differ in the same country according to the stages of growth that the economy of that country is going through, and from here we find the discrepancy between one country and another and from one stage to another in adopting a specific definition of small enterprises in a country in accordance with their capabilities and economic conditions. The definition also differs according to its purpose, and whether it is for statistical, financial, or any other purposes [21] [8] [13].

### **Definition of small enterprises:**

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) defines small enterprises as those projects managed by one owner, and takes full responsibility for their long-term (strategic) and short-term (tactical) dimensions, and the number of its employees ranges between 10-50 workers.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) also defined a small business as an independently owned and managed company that is not controlling in its field of work and is often small in size in terms of annual sales and the number of employees compared to other companies in the industry.

The US Committee for Economic Development has developed a definition of the project that included many characteristics for this type of project, as it defined a small project as that project that must meet two conditions or at least two of the following characteristics:

1- Management independence: the project manager is himself the project owner.

2- Capital: It is provided by the individual owner or by a small group of owners [15].

The conclusion of the previous definitions is that; it is a group of enterprises that produce small-scale production, use small capital, and employ a limited number of manpower. This definition extends to include crafts, small factories and cottage industries [18]

### **Advantages of small industries:**

Small projects are characterized by many characteristics, the most important of which are:

1 - Low production capacity: technological development helped the possibility of fragmentation of production processes, and thus it allowed developing countries to enter into productive areas.

2 -Low wages: Small enterprises are characterized by low wages and not being affected by the institutional factors that lead to higher wages in large projects.

3 - Decreasing the absolute size of the capital: Small enterprises are characterized by a low absolute size of capital, which is consistent with the desire of investors in most developing countries.

4 - Dependence on local raw materials: The majority of small enterprises depend on local raw materials, and then the need for importing decreases, and this has a positive impact on the trade balance.

5 - Achieving the geographical spread of industrial settlement: These projects are considered a means of spreading industrial settlement geographically through the geographical spread of industrial projects in which the spirit of competition prevails.

6 -Providing job opportunities: Because of these projects' use of uncomplicated production and operation methods, they help to provide job opportunities for the largest number of workers, as well as allow rapprochement and direct interaction between their owners and their workers.

7 - Training centers: Small enterprises are considered self-training centers for their owners and workers, given that they practice their work continuously in the midst of production processes, which leads to their acquisition of more information, knowledge and experience, which qualifies them to lead investment operations in the future that exceed the size of their current institution [8].

8 - Adaptability: with the new changes through increasing capacity for new innovation, as well as ease and freedom to enter and exit the market.

9- High production quality: Given the dependence of small enterprises on specific and specialized fields of work, their production is often characterized by accuracy and quality because quality and accuracy are the presumption of specialization and focus of work, because work in small enterprises depends on the skill of craftsmanship and design of production. [12]  
[14]

### **The importance of small industries:**

The importance of the small enterprises sector lies in the ability of this sector to contribute effectively to the development process and to achieve a set of economic and social goals, and to develop, support and develop small enterprises. Interest in these projects is due to the following:

- It is considered the most important mechanism of technological development in terms of its ability to develop and update production processes faster and at a lower cost.
- It has an effective role in achieving balanced and sustainable economic and social development.
- It is considered the nucleus of most of the major industries.
- It is characterized by ease of establishment and small size of investment required, which makes it a good vessel for attracting the savings of small investors.
- It contributes to the distribution of income and the achievement of a balanced spatial development.
- It depends on the techniques of high labor intensity.
- Help to transfer, localize, and facilitate response to economic and technical changes at the lowest cost.
- It helps to increase exports as a result of global competition.
- It represents the main base for the private sector and preserves the heritage works (craft / handicraft).
- It helps large projects in some marketing activities, which leads to lower marketing costs.
- Produces goods and services that large projects cannot produce for economic considerations.
- It can be a source of innovation and transition to work on large projects.
- It reduces gaps in the social fabric.
- Limiting the phenomenon of migration to cities, due to its importance as a key player in spatial development. [2]

### **The extent to which small industries are linked to sustainable development:**

The concept of sustainable development: It was stated in the report of the World Commission for Environment and Development headed by Brunt land, issued in 1987, in which it was stated that; sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without exhausting the ability of future generations to provide for their own needs, as defined by the United Nations as development that can last forever or at least for a very long time.

### **The role of small industries in sustainable development:**

Small industries are distinguished by a set of positive advantages that are distinguishing them from others, which qualify them for an important role in bringing about sustainable development, especially in developing countries, perhaps the most important of which are:

- It is characterized by high flexibility in the adaptation of industrial processes, and it has the ability to face challenges and continue to compete in the market by changing and improving production methods and responding to the desires of consumers.
- Provides goods and services to low-income groups in society that seek to obtain them at relatively cheap prices, even if it is sometimes necessary to waive some quality considerations.
- Providing job opportunities for unqualified groups of young people who are not qualified to join large industrial establishments.
- Its role in fighting poverty and containing its negative social impacts.
- Assimilating women's energies. It is important to participate in the production process, whether by working in workshops and production units or by distributing work between homes.
- Developing human skills and training them in the arts of production, marketing and management.
- Its wide spread between regions, administrative units and even the countryside makes it more capable of achieving balanced development, social justice, reducing regional disparities, and reducing the phenomenon of migration from the countryside and from smaller cities.
- Their wide spread greatly reduces the costs of transporting products to consumers, thus they can obtain goods and services at an acceptable price commensurate with the modest capabilities of the poorest segments.
- By its nature, it needs a limited amount of inputs, which does not cause the depletion of natural resources, and thus preserving the rights of future generations.
- It has contributed to the integration of a large number of members of society into its industrial activities, and this helps to expand the size of the middle class and reduce the size of the poor class in society.
- Since it adopts individual and direct management in production and marketing operations, it contributes to the accumulation of administrative expertise and its capacity horizontally.
- Those in charge of it have a better ability to adapt to the market situation and search for markets to dispose of the production.
- Mobilize scarce domestic savings and invest in human skills.
- It is mostly considered environmentally friendly, and is not wasteful in depleting its wealth.
- It could later be a tributary to the large industrial projects gradually transforming them into medium and large.

### **Results:**

1. Local Libyan raw materials have a great role in developing ceramic products that help solve some economic problems.
2. Through small ceramic industries, one can reach ceramic products that help the development of the industrial field in Libya.
3. The advanced industrial countries have devoted great attention to small industries because of their great economic importance in developing countries.

4. It is possible to dispense with many imported products by using local raw materials.
5. The contribution of small industries, especially traditional industries, helps preserve the cultural identity.
6. The clay materials are not based on a place found in Libya, but are distributed over many places and cities, and this contributes to the spatial development of many Libyan cities.
7. The suitability of Libyan clays to the various ceramic forming methods involved in small ceramic industries.
8. The success of the clays used in molding by casting alone without relying on modifiers such as feldspar and others, because this technique does not work with many types of clays.
9. Using local materials can produce high-quality shapes that help in developing the economic aspects of the Libyan society.

### **Recommendations: The researcher recommends the following:**

1. Experimenting with clays used in industrial ceramics (ceramic tiles, sanitary ceramics, refractories, etc.) to know their potentials more broadly.
2. By creating chemical formulations of Libyan ceramics, the economic aspects of our society can be developed.
3. Experimenting with other sites in Libya that are untapped, in ceramic industries, to see their results and potentials.
4. Establishing a specialized training unit for small ceramic industries, including traditional craft industries in colleges, to provide support and advice to those interested in this field.
5. Holding seminars, training courses and workshops to find out the developments, problems and obstacles facing this sector.
6. Emphasis on introducing the concept of traditional craft industries into the educational curricula of art colleges and higher art institutes.
7. Urging the colleges for students to undertake graduation projects and ideas that serve this field, while providing permanent advice on developing the creative side, whether for students or workers in this field.

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