
WHEN BEAUTY BECOMES DANGEROUS: CERAMIC TILES, DOMESTIC SAFETY, AND AESTHETIC PREFERENCES IN MODERN HOMES IN ABRAKA, DELTA STATE

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Abstract: *The use of ceramic tiles in modern homes has revolutionized domestic flooring of various Nigerian homes, especially in Abraka, Delta State. Even though ceramic tiles are considered to be convenient in terms of their aesthetic nature, durability, and sleek patterns, concerns over the issue of safety persist. The main objective of the study is to assess the influence of homeowners' aesthetic preference on domestic safety in relation to the use of ceramic tile in residences located within Abraka. More specifically, the study looked at housing and flooring options, taste preferences, psychology and perceptions of beauty, awareness of safety issues arising from these variations in the use of ceramic tile, and rates of slip-and-fall incidents. The study used a mix-methods case study design. Quantitative data were collected with structured questionnaires from 348 homeowners, while qualitative data were derived from semi-structured interviews from 32 purposively sampled stakeholders (tile vendors, builders/tilers, interior designers, and healthcare professionals). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data, and qualitative responses were analyzed thematically. Results from the study indicated that glossy ceramic tiles turned out to be the most dominant flooring selection, as they had strong associations with beauty, modernity, and social status. Respondents showed an overall awareness of slip risks; it was evident that aesthetic preference remained paramount over safety when selecting flooring materials. The comparative spatial analysis demonstrated that the NUT area had the highest percentage of use of glossy ceramic tile and also had the largest reported numbers of domestic slip-and-fall incidents. Furthermore, the neighbourhood was relatively high in student landlords and younger homeowners which could mean familiarity with present-day building types over preference for long-term security and slip resistance. The study recommended the use of slip-resistant ceramic tiles for flooring in homes, especially those located in areas that are known to experience wet conditions.*

Keywords: *Abraka; Aesthetic preference; Ceramic tiles; Domestic safety; Residential flooring; Slip-and-fall incidents*

Introduction

The housing sector in Nigeria especially, has gained significant transformation over the past decades with contemporary architectural as well as interior design becoming more widespread within Nigeria and all over the world. Thus, providing shelter, security, and comfort, thereby fulfilling one of the most fundamental needs in human existence (Rikko & Gwatau, 2011). This development has occurred in parallel with massive urbanization, real estate expansion, greater access to imported finishing materials. Flourishing middle-class consumerism has also led to the seismic entry of ceramic tile flooring into middle and lower-income homes alike. Domestic aesthetics have become more important in this changing housing culture, especially in urban and peri-urban areas. Interior design has increasingly been seen in the 21st century as a reflection of aspirational lifestyles, social standing, and personal identities rather than just a practical consideration. Rationale for these choices includes glossy tile finishes, color variety, surface textures, durability, and the capacity to communicate modernity and sophistication (as one of the most obvious manifestations of these goals). As a result, the visual experience of the home—how it feels and looks—has come to be closely linked to more general aesthetic trends influenced by modern architectural styles, social/digital media, and imported catalogues. The architectural character and residential housing patterns of Abraka, thus, becomes more and more indicative of these contemporary ceramic tile trends.

Ceramic materials have formed an integral part of human civilization for thousands of years and continue to play an important role in today's contemporary society. Ceramics is the technology of transforming clay and clay-related materials into functional and aesthetic products through shaping and subsequent firing at high temperatures (Otimeyin, 2015; Ojie-Ogwu & Ozidede, 2022; Ozidede, 2025b; Kalilu et al., 2024). The result is a durable material that is suitable for either domestic, industrial, and architectural applications. Before now, ceramic products were first created for functional factors like for use in storage, food preparation, ritual service, etc., (Ozidede 2025a; Ozidede 2024). Gradually, it evolved from mere functional utilitarian products to aesthetic finishing elements in architectural and structural facets. Due to technical advances, it quickly became a focal point in architectural designs — a special ornamental covering for floors and walls. Modern manufacturing methods utilize advanced raw material processing, high temperature roller kilns being more exacting and precise than the traditional ones, digital printing technologies for colourful designs with unsurpassed visual fidelity and glazing systems that once again are superior in accuracy to produce stronger/accurately, sized/visually superior tiles.

For example, the first glazed ceramic tiles were seen across the ancient Near East, Mesopotamia, Egypt and China (Kalilu, 2013; Fournier, 2000; Speight & Toki, 2003; Rhodes, 1998) before spreading to include much of Europe in the Roman/Byzantine and medieval periods (Forrer, 1901; Turner, 2020). In addition to their use in the decoration of surfaces—walls, floors and monumental structures—of temples, palaces and mosques, as well as public buildings (including castles) and elite residences; these glazed clay units also served as durable, moisture-resistant and weather-resistant architectural surface layers (Rhodes 1998; Speight & Toki 2003; Ojie & Egede 2002). Glaze also improved both aesthetics and functionality in ceramic tiles even further, allowing them to be used for structural as well as decorative purposes. Mechanized production and standardization of quality control and firing technologies during the Industrial Revolution revolutionized ceramic tile manufacturing in such a way that ceramic tiles could be produced on a mass scale as well as to be more readily available for architectural usage (Nasseti, 1989; Lamas et al., 2018). With this major technological innovation, machine-made ceramic tiles are nowadays the most significant component of contemporary architectural design due to their versatility, visual appeal, endurance, and low maintenance. Ceramic tiles are now of global ubiquity and their use has become almost universal in residential and commercial buildings (Chhabra et al., 2022); as such, Abraka may serve as an important case study for examining contemporary patterns of housing in Delta State, Nigeria.

Ethiope East Local Government Area is one of the 25 local government areas in Delta State and is home to the traditional center, which is Abraka. This rapid growth of infrastructural development in Abraka captures most of the 21st-century housing trends in urban and semi-urban societies across Nigeria. A natural climate and strong infrastructure encouraged urban development and housing expansion. Founded in 1992, Delta State University (DELSU) expedited Abraka economic, physical, and demographic transformation (Ojeh & Origho, 2023). Its main administrative offices are located in Abraka campus. There has been a steady growth in population due to rising student enrollment alongside employment of academic and non-academic staff members, as well as expanding trade activities that come with the demand for higher education (Efe & Aruogodore, 2003). These initiatives have also drawn in high and low-skilled labour-enhancing investment into residential and commercial housing across neighbouring areas of the community. As a result, the need for modern home finishes increased and ceramic tiles became one of the most preferred flooring materials, because they are considered to be attractive in aesthetic properties, more practical than conventional cement and stone flooring, and are viewed as more

modern and prestigious. Glossy ceramic finishes are particularly popular in living rooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and other interior spaces, which reflects homeowners' growing preference for contemporary architectural aesthetics. However, this increasing emphasis on visual appeal has also raised important safety concerns, particularly where aesthetic preferences outweigh safety considerations in the selection of residential flooring materials.

With the growing interest in the use of ceramic tile selection for aesthetic enhancement and maintenance-free flooring values, the wrong selection of tiles seems to be an understated domestic safety issue. When damp or wet, highly polished ceramic tiles becomes slippery, leading to a higher risk of falls that causes fractures, head injury and other otherwise avoidable events which are especially dangerous for children, older adults and those with limited mobility (Ibharokhonre et al., 2025; Atoyebi et al., 2021; Gilkey, 2021). Yet, when homeowners, builders and interior designers choose flooring materials they regularly favour aesthetics, price and social status ahead of slip resistance and other safety factors. Limited regulatory enforcement and a lack of public knowledge around suitable flooring material selection and installation practices that ensure proper safety standards are only exacerbating this problem. As a result, aesthetic appeal often trumps risk avoidance when choosing materials. Although studies have examined ceramic materials, interior design, and domestic accidents independently, there is limited empirical evidence on how aesthetic preferences for ceramic tiles influence domestic safety in Nigerian homes, particularly in Abraka, Delta State. This study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between ceramic tile use, aesthetic preference, and domestic safety among homeowners in Abraka, Delta State. Accordingly, the study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the housing and flooring characteristics of ceramic tiles among homeowners in Abraka?
- ii. What are the aesthetic preferences and decision-making factors regarding ceramic tile selection among homeowners in Abraka?
- iii. What are the levels of homeowners' psychology and perception of beauty regarding ceramic tiles?
- iv. What are homeowners' safety awareness and risk perceptions of ceramic tiles in Abraka?

Conceptual Foundations

The study is based on three interrelated concepts which explain the reasons for homeowners' attitude in purchasing ceramic tiles that may turn out to be a threat to their health and safety. These concepts offer theoretical justification for how consumer selection, choice, and aesthetic preferences produce domestic safety outcomes. Environmental psychology focuses on the interplay between people and their physical environment, including how both natural and constructed environments affect human perception, behaviour, emotion and well-being. According to Gifford (2007), environmental psychology is the field that focuses on human interaction with their environment. Gifford et al., (2011: 440) explain that these transactions are reciprocal, that individuals modify their environments while their behaviour, experiences, and perceptions are simultaneously shaped by those environments. Consequently, environmental psychology integrates theory, research, and practice to improve human interaction with both the built and natural environments by creating spaces that are functional, safe, and responsive to human needs.

Within this perspective, the home represents one of the most significant physical environments influencing everyday human behaviour. As Gifford et al. (2011: 451) observe, the home is the most important physical setting for most people because it provides the immediate environment within which daily activities, social interactions, and personal experiences occur. Environmental psychology therefore recognizes that residential environments influence not only comfort and emotional well-being but also safety and behavioural responses. Furthermore, individuals do not perceive every environmental cue equally. Their level of awareness, adaptation, and selective attention within complex physical settings often determines how environmental information is interpreted. Consequently, important environmental hazards may be overlooked, resulting in negative consequences for health and safety (Stamps, 2005; Gifford et al., 2011). Applied to residential interiors, environmental psychology explains how visual characteristics such as colour, texture, brightness, and surface finish may influence homeowners' perceptions and material preferences (Gifford, 2014; Steg et al., 2012). Contemporary houses often have glossy ceramic tiles because they are reliable, up-to-date, and generally associated with cleanliness, elegance, and prestige. Consequently, flooring decisions are mostly motivated by how it looks rather than the safety aspects such as slip level of resistance, utility or long-lasting security. This explains why highly polished ceramic tiles are found in many houses across the country despite their potential contribution to domestic slip-and-fall accidents.

The Aesthetic Usability Effect (AUE) (Kurosu & Kashimura, 1995; Norman, 2004) is used to reinforce this discussion. According to the theory, consumers generally consider an aesthetically-pleasing design to be more effective, reliable and easier to operate than a corresponding product with an aesthetic that is neither good nor bad (Schlamann et al., 2026; Thielsch et al., 2024; Moshagen & Thielsch, 2010), regardless of objective evidence. When this is applied to ceramic tile selection, homeowners can see shiny ceramic tiles that have been displayed in a showroom to be good, and this perception may subconsciously persuade the consumers that the tiles are of superior quality, safe and comfortable (this may eventually lead to an actual consideration for purchase). Consequently, the theory provides an appropriate account of the psychological mechanisms behind homeowners opting for glossy ceramic tiles in spite of domestic safety dangers posed by their inherent properties as highlighted in this research. As applied to ceramic tile selection, if homeowners like the way glossy ceramic tiles look, they may mistake that for preference and assume a slippery flooring material is better; and such aesthetics preference can backfire. Therefore, this theory can sufficiently explain the psychological workings behind why homeowners opt for glossy ceramic tiles. Risk Perception Theory (RPT) essentially explains how humans interpret risks and how they react to perceived threats. This happens because people tend to underestimate risks that are familiar, commonplace, or aesthetically pleasing (Slovic, 1987). Due to their popularity and social acceptability, hazards linked with usage of ceramic tiles may be overlooked or normalized. As a result, homeowners may underestimate the risk of falls, slips and other related injuries (especially where safety is at odds with aesthetics). Together these three concepts explain how environmental factors, aesthetic assessments and risk perceptions jointly influence homeowners' ceramic tile preferences and domestic health and safety in Abraka.

Material and Methods

This study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were generated through the administration of 348 structured questionnaires to homeowners and tenants across the four selected residential areas in Abraka, as well as 32 semi-structured interviews conducted with tile vendors, builders/tilers, interior decorators, and healthcare professionals. Secondary data were derived from relevant books, articles from scientific journals, and other academic publications for the study. The research used the mixed-methods case study research design in order to explore issues of ceramic tile use, aesthetic preferences, and home safety relating to relevant aspects of modern homes systems in Abraka, Delta State. To achieve adequate geographical representation and subsequent neighbourhood-level comparisons, the

questionnaires were uniformly distributed across four areas of the study. Participants were purposely selected according to their professional knowledge and experience in relation to ceramic tile selection, installation, interior design and health. Demographics were summarized using frequency counts, percentages, and simple mean scores for the quantitative data while qualitative data were transcribed, coded and analyzed thematically against common pulses of opinion. The combination of quantitative and qualitative findings provided a complete picture of how aesthetic preferences influence ceramic tile selection and domestic safety in Abraka.

This study was conducted in Abraka, Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria. Four areas, namely Police Station Road, Obadudu Area, Ekrejeta and the NUT Area, were selected based on the fact that residential buildings with ceramic floor tile constitute a high proportion of all types of dwelling units in these neighbourhoods. Thus, the selected sites were representative of homeowners' preferences for ceramic tile use in the study area.



Figure 1. Exterior View of a Retail Outlet with Visible Signboard (Left) and Display of Ceramic Tiles Inside the Retail Shop (Right), Abraka, Delta State.
Source: Field photograph by the researcher (2026), used with the permission of the store manager.



Figure 2. Super Gloss Ceramic Tiles Commonly Used in Residential Buildings in Abraka, Delta State.
Source: Field photograph by the researcher (2026).

A total of 380 participants were selected through purposive sampling. The normative sample consisted of 348 homeowners/tenants who consented to answer the structured questionnaires and 32 participants interviewed, including eight (8) tile vendors, eight (8) builders / tilers, eight (8) interior designers and eight (8) healthcare professionals. A total of 87 questionnaires were administered across each neighbourhood – Police Station Road, Obadudu Area, Ekrejeta and the NUT Area – in order to ensure geographical representation was possible. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants prior to the start of data collection. Confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation was ensured among the participants. No personal identifiers were collected, and all information so gathered was only used for research.

Results and Analysis

Table 1. Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Under 20	17	4.9
21-30	27	7.8
31-40	41	11.8
41-50	98	28.2
51 years and above	165	47.4
Total	348	100.0

Table 1 shows the age distribution among 348 respondents. The results revealed that majority of the respondents were aged 51 years and older 165 (47.4%), followed by participants who were aged between 41 to 50 years old 98 (28.2%). Respondents aged 31-40 represented 41 (11.8%) whilst the age group 21 to 30 and under 20 contributed to 27 (7.8%) and 17 (4.9%), respectively. The high proportion of respondents between age 41 and above indicates that the survey targeted an adult audience who are most likely to be homeowners or long-term tenants and, therefore, actively involved in decisions relating to house construction, flooring material selection, and household safety. The results present a credible basis for evaluating the

link between the use of ceramic tile, choice of aesthetics and domestic safety in modern homes at Abraka.

Table 2. Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	232	66.7
Female	116	33.3
Total	348	100.0

Table 2 presents the gender distribution of the questionnaire respondents. Out of 348 respondents, 232 (66.7%) were male and 116 (33.3) were female. This implies that male respondents were two-thirds of the total population studied, and men are more likely to be decision-makers in purchasing ceramic tiles and building houses within the area surveyed. However, the use of female respondents allows for relevant references to topics related to family experiences, aesthetic appeal, and safety around the home, thus allowing this survey to represent both genders.

Table 3. Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Student	58	16.7
Civil Servant	104	29.9
Trader	152	43.7
Artisan	34	9.8
Total	348	100.0

Table 3 presents the occupational distribution of the respondents. The findings reveal that the largest occupation group were traders, with 152 respondents (43.7%), followed by civil servants with a total of 104 (29.9%). 58 of the respondents (16.7%) were students, and 34 (9.8%) were artisans. The prevalence of traders and civil servants further indicates that the study focused on financially active individuals expected to influence housing construction, renovation and flooring material selection decisions.

The broadness of occupational background enriched the study with a wider array of respondents from different socioeconomic backgrounds, to confirm perspectives on the use of ceramic tile and perception of domestic safety among households in Abraka; thus, provided a higher degree of validity.

Research Question One: What are the housing and flooring characteristics of ceramic tiles among homeowners in Abraka?

Table 4: Housing and flooring characteristics of ceramic tiles among Homeowners in Abraka

S/N	Housing and Flooring Characteristics	N	Ceramic tiles	Cement floor	Vinyl	Other	Mean
1	Type of flooring	348	291	57	0	0	0.84
		N	Entire house	Living room	Bathroom/Kitchen	Outside compound	Mean
2	Areas tiles are used	348	253	19	57	19	0.73
		N	Glossy	Matte	Irregular	Don't know	Mean
3	Tile surface texture	348	272	76	0	0	0.78
Total Mean							0.78

Table 4 presents the housing and flooring characteristics of respondents in Abraka. Results from the study showed that 291 respondents (83.6%) employed ceramic tiles as a flooring material, while 57 (16.4%) used cement floors. None of the responders stated they had used vinyl or other flooring materials. With regard to the positions of ceramic tiles, most 253 (72.7%) respondents reported covering the whole house with ceramic tiles, whilst fewer respondents had them in bathroom/kitchen 57 (16.4%), living room 19 (5.5%), and outside compound (19; 5.5%). On the type of ceramic tile surfaces, 272 (78.2%) respondents used glossy ceramic tiles, while 76 (21.8%) used matte-finished tiles. In general, the findings show a clear preference for polished ceramic tiles installed throughout the entire house; meaning from the perspective of Abraka homeowners, aesthetics trumped choice of flooring experience.

Research Question Two: What are the aesthetic preferences and decision-making factors regarding ceramic tile selection among homeowners in Abraka?

Table 5: Aesthetic preferences and decision-making factors regarding ceramic tile selection among homeowners in Abraka?

S/No	Aesthetic Preference and Decision-Making	N	Beauty/appearance	Modern design	Maintenance ease	Other	Mean
1	Main reason for tile choice	348	158	95	95	0	0.45
2	Importance of appearance	N	Very important	Important	Neutral	Other	Mean
		348	190	133	25	0	0.55
3	Glossy tiles improved beauty	N	Yes, Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	No, Strongly Disagree	Mean
		348	310	0	38	0	0.89
Total Mean							0.63

Table 5 presents respondents' aesthetic preferences and decision-making regarding the use of ceramic tile in Abraka. The results indicate that the most important criteria for ceramic tile selection were beauty and appearance, followed by modern design and ease of cleaning. Most respondents considered the appearance of ceramic tiles very important (54.6%) or important (38.2%). Likewise, 89.1% opined that glossy ceramic tiles possess better aesthetics for domestic spaces. The results from the study demonstrate that aesthetic factors dominate homeowners' decisions-making about ceramic tile, outweighing functional and safety needs.

Research Question Three: What are the levels of homeowners' psychology and perception of beauty regarding ceramic tiles?

Table 6: Level of homeowners' psychology and perception of beauty regarding ceramic tiles.

S/No	Psychology perception Beauty	and of	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
1	Beautiful floor is safer		348	140	113	76	19	3.07
2	Ceramic tile as a status symbol		348	253	76	19	0	3.67
3	Main influence on choice		348	129	56	133	30	0.38
Total Mean								2.37

Table 6 shows the psychology and perception of the beauty of ceramic tile by homeowners in Abraka. The results indicate a consensus of opinion among respondents toward agreement for "Beautiful floors are safer," with an average of 3.07, suggesting a strong perception for aesthetically pleasing ceramic tile surfaces over safety. Also, the statement "Ceramic tile as a status symbol" had the highest mean score of 3.67, which indicated that ceramic tile flooring was strongly related to prestige, modernity and social status. The 0.38 average score for a significant impact on tile selection indicates that homeowners make decisions based on personal preferences, family influence, builder recommendations, and showroom displays. The study revealed that Abraka homeowners are greatly influenced in their perception and choice of ceramic tiles by psychological and aesthetic factors as shown by a grand mean score of 2.37.

Research Question four: What are homeowners' safety awareness and risk perceptions of ceramic tiles in Abraka?

Table 7: Homeowners' safety awareness and risk perceptions of ceramic tiles in Abraka?

S/No	Safety Awareness and Risk Perception	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean
1	Awareness of slip risk	348	160	74	95	19	3.03
2	Household experience	N	Very Frequently	Frequently	Once in a while	Never	Mean
		348	190	19	73	66	3.96
3	Location of fall	N	Bathroom	Kitchen	Living room	Entrance	Mean
		348	171	30	74	73	0.49
Total Mean							2.18

Table 7 shows homeowners' awareness and perception of risk and safety in the use of ceramic tile in Abraka. The results show that the mean score for slip risk awareness is 3.03 which demonstrates a high level of knowledge among study participants regarding awareness about the risk of slips and falls. The average score for having had a fall at home was 3.96, indicating that falls happen with moderate frequency. The average score of 0.49 for the location of falls means that bathrooms were the most frequently reported locations where slip-and-fall accidents occurred. The overall mean of 2.18 indicates that homeowners are aware of slip hazards, but domestic falls continue to be a high reported background consequence of ceramic tile utilization.

Qualitative Findings from Semi-Structured Interviews

The qualitative component of the study explored professional and experiential perspectives on ceramic tile use and domestic safety. Data obtained from the semi-structured interviews were organized into four major themes based on participants' occupational backgrounds and the recurring patterns that emerged during thematic

analysis. These themes examine consumer preferences, professional decision-making, aesthetic influences on material selection, and public health experiences relating to domestic slip and fall incidents.

Table 8: Distribution of Interview Participants

Category	Location(s)	Number
Tile Vendors	Police Station Road (4), Benin Junction Area (2), Obadudu Area (2)	8
Builders/Tilers	Old Winner's Church Area (3), Ekrejeta (2), NUT Area (3)	8
Interior Designers	Old Winner's Church Area (3), Ekrejeta (3), Campus 1 Area (2)	8
Healthcare Professionals	University Health Centre (4), General Hospital (2), Ufuoma Hospital (2)	8
Total		32

Theme 1: Consumer Preferences and Ceramic Tile Selection - *Tile Vendors*

Response received from eight tile vendors suggested that safety is not a major driver of consumer preference in Abraka when compared with aesthetics. While glossy ceramic tiles were the most popular product among six vendors, only two vendors claimed that consumers preferred matte surface finished tiles. On the same token, five vendors saw that safety was sacrificed for visual appeal in tile selection by consumers, whereas three noted that consumers' purchasing decisions had been driven by safety concerns. Eight vendors added that consumers hardly ever asked about slip resistance surface or other safety features while selecting tiles, they only sort after colour, finishing, and appearance. Perhaps, because most homeowners blame their own clumsiness on slipping accidents rather than the flooring material, complaints about slipping accidents were rare; although two vendors had received such complaints. Overall, these results indicate that ceramic tile selection in Abraka is predominantly driven by aesthetics while the importance of being aware of the safety implications concerning different surface finishes remains lacking.

Theme 2: Professional Perspectives on Ceramic Tile Specification - *Builders/Tilers*

Builders' and tilers' views suggest a tight interplay between client preferences and professional advice. Of the eight subjects, six said that it was primarily aesthetic appeal that drove their recommendations, while only two insisted durability was

paramount. All subjects confirmed that clients were asking for high-gloss ceramic tiles, a format preferred by the current leanings of new-era residential buildings with its smooth finishing touch. Where three builders reported they took the slip resistance of materials and other safety features into account in discussions with clients, while five said such considerations were seldom raised. Moreover, six participants commented that clients rejected more stable flooring choices due to its adverse aesthetic appeal. The study indicates that construction professionals are often in the habit of complying with client preferences even if their preferences affect domestic safety. Thus, it seems that aesthetic effectiveness has more impact than functional performance on specifying and choosing ceramic tiles.

Theme 3: Aesthetic Perception and Material Choice in Interior Design - *Interior Designers*

The responses from interior designers demonstrate that aesthetics are an important driver in material choices for the home. Eight respondents indicated that the increasing popularity of polished ceramic tiles is all about creating impressive, stylish and modern inner spaces. All eight respondents stated that beauty impacts homeowners' perceptions of quality and safety, that is, aesthetically attractive materials are presumed to perform better than their functional qualities would suggest. Five designers additionally noted that the flooring choice is influenced not only by a desire for modernity but also by social status, as many homeowners view glossy ceramic finishes as both an indication of importance and prestige of sophistication and a manifestation of a modern lifestyle. Together these observations lend credence to the contention that aesthetic preferences emerge from a broader context of human motivation, where visual appreciation serves as a vehicle through which identity and social aspirations are expressed, overriding functional factors such as slip resistance or how suitable they are in home environment.

Theme 4: Public Health Perspectives on Domestic Slip-and-Fall Injuries - *Healthcare Professionals*

Domestic slip-and-fall incidents are frequently highlighted by healthcare professionals as a serious public health debate. Eight participants described domestic fall injuries as very common injuries and acknowledged that they often provide treatment for falls occurring because of slipping on ceramic-tiled floors. Five respondents stated the group most at risk are adults aged 50 and over, whilst fewer children as well as those in younger age groups. Out of all the types of injuries, head trauma was by far the most common form of injury reported along with fractures and bruises. All participants in this category felt that many of these incidents were

preventable through appropriate flooring choices and public education efforts. There was a split on the answer as to why homeowners still preferred glossy ceramic tiles over safeties? Each respondent either cited their widespread availability or aesthetic appeal. In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of consumer education, higher acceptance and usage of slip-resistant ceramic floor tiles in households and more attention to home safety when considering flooring decisions to reduce preventable domestic injuries.

Comparative Spatial Analysis of Respondents by Study Area in Abraka, Delta State

The study compares responses to aid in understanding the use of ceramic tile vis-à-vis housing safety features and hazards across the four selected study areas in Abraka. The research compared tile properties of individual homes, domestic slip-and-fall incidents and respondent characteristics in a spatial analysis. This analysis therefore delineates important neighbourhood level differences in aesthetic preferences, safety awareness, injury experiences and respondent's demographic profiles – factors that may help explain the ways in which residential context, shaped homeowner's material choices and domestic contextual influences on safety perceptions within the study area.

Table 9. Distribution of Ceramic Tile Use and Flooring Characteristics by Study Area

Study Area		N	Glossy Tiles	Matte Tiles	Cement Floor	Entire House Tiled	Bathroom/ Kitchen	Living Room	Outside Compound
Police Road	Station	87	70	17	10	65	12	04	06
Obadudu		87	65	18	18	60	15	05	05
Ekrejeta		87	52	24	22	50	18	06	06
NUT Area		87	85	17	07	78	12	04	04
Total		348	272	76	57	253	57	19	19

Table 10. Distribution of Domestic Slip-and-Fall Incidents and Safety Awareness by Study Area

Study Area		Aware of Slip Risk	Not Aware of Slip Risk	Bathroom	Kitchen	Living Room	Entrance
Police Road	Station	38	05	45	08	18	18
Obadudu		36	06	38	07	16	14
Ekrejeta		36	04	25	05	10	08
NUT Area		52	04	63	10	30	33
Total		160	19	171	30	74	73

Table 11. Distribution of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics by Study Area

Variables	Police Road (n=87)	Station (n=87)	Obadudu (n=87)	Ekrejeta (n=87)	NUT (n=87)	Area	Total (N=348)
Age Group							
Under 20	05		04	02	06		17
21-30	07		06	05	09		27
31-40	10		08	05	18		41
41-50	27		15	36	20		98
51 years and above	40		28	52	45		165
Gender							
Male	63		37	50	82		232
Female	30		28	22	36		116
Occupation							
Student	16		13	09	20		58
Civil Servant	32		15	27	30		104
Trader	49		27	30	46		152
Artisan	11		05	09	09		34
Residence Type							
Owner-Occupied	35		32	28	56		149
Rented	52		55	59	33		199

Discussion of Findings

Homeowners, tile vendors, builders, and interior designers all prefer glossy ceramic tiles, because it encourages a sense of luxury as well as durability apparent in modern housing systems, as validated by both the quantitative and qualitative findings. This preference, however, is not a uniform one throughout the study area as suggested by comparative spatial analysis. At NUT Area, there was a high level of glossy ceramic tile, and houses in this area tended to be tiled through-and-through. Police Station Road and Obadudu area also showed some preference for gloss ceramic tiles; however, greater reliance on matte tiles and cement flooring was observed in Ekrejeta. Surprisingly, the NUT Area also reported both the largest student population and greatest number of owner-occupied homes of the four neighbourhoods. This indicates that a relatively high share of new residential developments, in combination with a younger and economically active population, is likely to be responsible for the increased demand for modern flooring finishes in the area. Overall, the results indicate that neighbourhood related variables and demographic composition shaped housing preferences and ceramic tile flooring in Abraka.

Observations from this study also found that NUT Area has an above average proportion of younger homeowners and student landlords, with large proportions of respondents in under 20, 21-30, and 31-40 age categories. This demographic characteristic may partly explain the higher occurrence of fall-related incidents recorded in the neighbourhood. The idea is that consumers from these demographics are relatively more aware of current architectural trends, through digital/social media and changing insights into interior designs – being in the technical era naturally factors higher impressions. Consequently, practical considerations such as slip resistance and long-term safety may receive comparatively less attention during flooring decisions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although the interpretation of findings needs more empirical validation, the current results provide an indication that homeowner aesthetic preferences were not associated with domestic safety in the study area. While the study demonstrated that people often base their choice of ceramic tile on aesthetics, the demographic and behavioral factors driving such choices are poorly understood. Future research should thus explore the socio-demographics, housing styles and rental preferences of younger owner-occupiers and student investors in Abraka community. This type of research would enhance understanding of the impact of age, lifestyle, housing investment

behaviour and aesthetic values on residential design choices and material selection processes on safety outcomes and ultimately inform evidence-based housing policies that could lead to safer residential environments.

These results thus underline the importance of balancing aesthetic values with safety in residential choices for flooring. Given these results, consumers should be advised based on the following recommendation.

- i. Homeowners the interdiction to deviate from acquiring slip-resistant educe porcelain tile in letting wherein it may be applicable, such as bathrooms, kitchens and entrances.
- ii. Architects and interior designers should focus on battering safety and visual charm, while advising flooring materials usable in diverse home areas.
- iii. It is essential that builders and tilers amply explain the safety implications of ceramic tile surface finishes to their clients in advance of installation.
- iv. iv. Tile suppliers and vendors must educate the customer on slip-resistant tiles, and they must also recommend safer alternative tiles when necessary.
- v. Encourage government and other regulatory bodies/agencies to promote public awareness campaigns about domestic slip-and-fall prevention and safe flooring practices.
- vi. Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON) should strengthen standards and product labeling to include slip-resistance ratings for ceramic tiles sold in Nigeria.
- vii. It is imperative that researchers carry out similar investigations in other Nigerian communities and the long-term relationship between flooring materials, housing design, and domestic safety.

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