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EDITORIAL NOTE

Welcome once again, to another edition of our journal, which aims to provide opportunities for researchers in the fields of Arts and Social Sciences to publish their research findings, intellectual debates and views. The edition presents researches from the following fields: Linguistics, information and communication technologies and education, literature, development research, public relations, mass media and agriculture, geology, human capital development, management, risk perception, policy implementation, culture and tourism, poetry, among others.

It is our belief, therefore, that the multi-disciplinary nature of this edition would further enrich academic and professional discourses among our esteemed readers.

Once again, we thank you for the usual support and understanding that has kept this publication in line with your expectations.

Thank you.

UMARU A. PATE, PhD
Editor-in-Chief

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**RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS
OF
ILLEAGL MINING ACTIVITIES IN ATISBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA
OF OYO
STATE.
BY**

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Abstract

The mining and exploitation of solid minerals are known to have contributed to the economic development of several countries despite identified negative environmental consequences. Even where the mining activities are illegally been carried out, they tend to have far reaching socio-economic implications on the people of the mining communities and surrounding areas. This study examines the perception of residents on some socio-economic implications of illegal mining activities in Atisbo Local Government Area of Oyo State. In carrying out this study, three hundred and three questionnaires were randomly administered on adult residents of the immediate mining community of Ofiki while some community leaders and officials of the Local Government Council were interviewed. Amongst others the study revealed that the activities of the illegal miners have provided employment and increased economic opportunities to youths, traders and artisans respectively. Influx of many people, particularly foreigners and leisure workers, and increased criminal activities have affected some components of human environment. Some recommendations are offered to address perceived inadequacies. These include the need to encourage members of the community to obtain mining licences and carry out their operations legally and in tune with relevant laws and regulations and the need for increased security in the area to stem the influx of foreigners and other undesirable elements.

Keywords: *illegal, implications, mining, perception, residents, socio-economic.*

Introduction

Mining activities generally and particularly those of solid minerals are veritable sources of foreign exchange as well as employment to both developed and developing countries. This is apart from supporting the socio-economic development of these countries. These activities also serve as agents of national economic development (Sanni, 2008). While the solid minerals sector contribute less than 1.0% to Nigeria's GDP, in some other countries, particularly some South Africa Development Community (SADC) countries, the sector contribute over 90% of all foreign earnings, 60% of gross national products, 50% of total government revenues and 30% of total employment (Imasiku, 2008 as quoted by Osasan, 2009). Despite the low contribution of the sector to the Nigerian economy, its growth has the potential to diversify the country's economy and minimize

the overdependence on oil and gas as primary sources of revenue. Nigeria, for instance is the 6th largest producer of cassiterite (tin ore) and notable exporter of other solid minerals including columbite, tantalite and coal (Alison-Madueke, 2009).

Despite the seemingly economic benefits of mining to the Nigerian economy and other countries alike, its negative consequences on the environment has been documented, especially where it is illegally carried out and without the appropriate procedures and technology. Aside the negative environmental consequences, some socio-economic fall-outs of illegal mining activities, especially on the mining communities are detrimental and also impact negatively on the health and values of residents.

In Atisbo Local Government Area of Oyo State where tantalite is illegally been mined since 1998, the community and surrounding areas have not been the same ever since, especially given the increasing socio-economic implications of the activities of the large number of miners. While some of these are perceived to have positive implications on the area, they have also impacted negatively on the area and threaten the social cohesion of the area and its value system. This study therefore, examines the various perceived socio-economic implications and impacts on human environmental components of the illegal mining activities.

The Study Area

The study area, Ofiki in Atisbo Local Government Area of Oyo State lies between longitude 3°20" East of the Greenwich Meridian and precisely on latitude 8° 27" North of the Equator. This area is located in the north-western part of the State popularly referred to as Oke-Ogun. Atisbo Local Government Area of which Ofiki is a prominent settlement is bounded in the north by Saki West Local Government Area and in the east by Saki East and Atiba Local Government Areas respectively. It is bounded in the west by the Republic of Benin and in the south by Itesiwaju and Iwajowa Local Government Areas respectively. Ofiki, the main mining community is about twenty kilometers to Tede, the headquarters of the Local Government Area and about three hours drive to Ibadan, the State capital.

The study area is generally a rural community with more than 60% of its inhabitants engaged in agriculture and allied activities. Main agricultural crops cultivated in the area are maize, yam, cassava, guinea-corn and groundnut. Atisbo Local Government Area like most local government areas in the northern parts of the State is lacking in most modern amenities and infrastructure like good roads, potable water supply and regular

supply of electricity. Government presence in the area is generally less visible.

Conceptual Issues and Literature Review

Mining is defined as the process by which minerals are excavated from the ground. It is the extraction of mineral occurring naturally such as coal, ores, crude petroleum and natural gas (National Bureau of Statistics, 2005). According to Tamufor (2005), mining is a unique activity which involves the depletion of non-replaceable resources. It is also seen as a major economic activity in many developing countries (Tauli-Corpuz (1997), UNEP(1997).

Weissberg (1993), however, defined a mineral as an ore whose exploitation is economic. The author stressed that although this definition has governed the thinking of economic investment for a long time, new factors have come to play on the international stage in recent years and many countries have woken up to the reality of environmental impacts due mainly to mining and mineral processing activities.

The fact has also been stressed that mining supplies raw materials for the survival and socio-economic development of nations although this is only feasible in areas with sufficient deposits (UNEP, 1983). In Nigeria, mining started many centuries before the arrival of the Europeans. This was carried out by traditional methods with locally available technology. Gold, clay, iron ore, tin, salt and soda were among the minerals mined then. According to NEST (1991) the minerals were used in body adornment, for fabrication of weapons, tools, and vessels, for building construction, in the diet and so on. Thus, mining occupied a highly respected position in the traditional economics of large parts of the country and contributed greatly to intra-tribal commerce as well as conflicts. However, following the arrival of the British in the 19th Century, the number and varieties of minerals mined in the country increased and large-scale mining commenced.

Solid minerals play many important roles in Nigeria's economy. Apart from being the sources of capital formation, they constitute a source of generating economic growth. Foreign exchange earnings accrue from the export of coal, tin, and marble and also are important substitutes of imports, thereby conserving scarce foreign exchange for other pressing alternative uses. According to MBendi (2004), the Nigerian mining industry has been neglected and has only been recently rekindled by the establishment of

the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development with intent of increasing the contribution of the sector to the country's economy.

According to the Nigerian Society for Environmental Management and Planning (SEMP) (1998), the location and physico-chemical properties of mineral deposits are determined by some imperfectly understood natural forces. However, prior to 1993, there was persistent decline in the production of solid minerals in Nigeria. This decline was attributed to the perennial and deteriorating problems of obsolete and malfunctioning equipments, inadequate infrastructural facilities, inaccessibility of mines due to flooding, high and rising transport costs (CBN, 1990). According to the report, illegal mining and smuggling activities also suggest that there may be a wide gap between actual production and the falling official production figures. However, it was reported that with the present tempo of activities in the sector, it is likely that both the structure and monetary value of exports shall change positively. This noticeable improvement in the sector was attributable largely to government policy measures to revamp and promote the growth in output of solid minerals (CBN, 1995). According to the report this policy measure itself was in recognition of the role of solid minerals as a major source of basic inputs for industrial segment of the non-export sub-sector.

According to Traore (2008), the extractive industry has considerable impacts on the West African sub-region, not least its economies pointing out that its impacts are felt and seen at many levels, including employment, government revenues, expropriation of populations, population displacement, health, the environment, education, culture and life in general. However, in some other parts of the continent, particularly East and Central Africa, Asadho (2007) contends that despite the extraction of gold, timber and diamonds and other resources, it is only rarely that they are engine for socio-economic growth and stability in these countries. Rather, the author argued, they provide disproportionate power and an unfair advantage to national and foreign companies who exploit these resources with only a small local elite profiting from their exploitation. It has however, been pointed out that illegal mining just like artisanal and small scale mining cause extreme environmental and social impacts and seldom contribute to government revenues. According to Hoadley and Limipitlaw (2004) although it cannot be regarded as contributing to sustainable livelihoods, it provides emergency poverty relief and daily sustenance. Although artisanal and small-scale mining provides a form of livelihoods for miners, there is usually no net generation of wealth. The authors are of the

view that uncoordinated mining activities have a number of common stages each of which has potentially adverse impacts on the environment, society and cultural heritage. In addition to this, the authors argued that illegal mining accelerate the destruction of traditional livelihoods and leadership structures and increases social ills such as threat of HIV/AIDS and incidence of prostitution and excessive consumption of alcohol.

Writing on the 'Rehabilitation of Artisanal Mining in Tanzania', Mutagwaba (1993) opined that small scale mining are being carried out by individuals, families and ad-hoc groups of local peasants majority of whom have no technical know-how or adequate equipment. He however, argued that despite this technical deficiency, the contribution to development of the mining industry made by these people cannot be over-looked. This is because it has become a well-established fact that many large deposits and hence many large mines have their origins from small workings. The cost incurred by the artisanal explorers in making these mineral discoveries is usually not documented as their activities are uncoordinated. If these discoveries were left to be done by the government or its agencies, few of them would be found despite the high cost of the exercise.

Despite perceived contribution of the uncoordinated miners, the inadequacy of their mining practices leads to serious environmental degradation. These include land degradation, deforestation and soil erosion amongst others (Sanni, 2000). Mutagwaba (1993) therefore, proposed that essential mining and processing equipments required to ensure reasonable production levels and safer working conditions be made available to these miners. It was only recently that improved environmental control and regulations were been enforced even among the organized miners. Macedo (1993), writing on 'Brazilian Mining at a Cross-roads: Garimpeiros, Companies and the Environment', traced the origin of environmental consciousness in the mining industry in that country to the 1970s when pollution control became mandatory and only after 1986 did the requirement for environmental impact studies enforced.

The literature is replete with several social and economic effects of illegal mining activities especially in developing countries with weak regulatory environment and inadequate technology.

Research Methodology

The research was first conducted in 2000 when the effects of the illegal mining on the physical environment were examined. In 2003 a subsequent visit was made to the mining sites to assess further the perceived socio-economic implications of the activities on the

people of the mining community. The principal research instruments used were questionnaires, oral interviews and extensive field observation.

Three hundred and three questionnaires (303) were randomly administered on the residents of the mining community (Ofiki) which was about 5% of the projected population of the area for the period. In addition, some community leaders and officials of the Atisbo Local Government were interviewed about various aspects of the illegal activities. The views and opinions expressed during the questionnaire administration and oral interviews are presented in logical sequence using frequency tables and percentages.

Research Findings

This section discusses both the social background of the illegal miners and the socio-economic implications of their activities on the mining community. It further discusses the perceptions of the residents of the area regarding the various social and economic fall-outs engendered by the sudden activities of the unwholesome miners.

Ethnic Composition of the Miners

Although Atisbo Local Government Area of Oyo State is a Yoruba speaking area, only a few of its indigenes were directly involved in the illegal mining activities. This is because before the commencement of the illegal mining, such activities were alien to the people who lacked the basic know-how of mineral mining. However, the study revealed that the ethnic composition of the miners who were more than a thousand include both local indigenes and foreigners. Not less than two hundred of the miners are known to have migrated from some West African countries such as Senegal, Mali and Niger Republic. A substantial percentage came from the northern parts of the country, particularly from the Middle-belt areas such as Jos, Keffi, Lafia and Nassarawa Local Government Areas of Plateau and Nassarawa States respectively where similar minerals are known to have been mined continuously. These people are known to be skilled in mining procedures. It was the accidental discovery of tantalite by some farm labourers who are non-indigenes of the area that encouraged some local chiefs and merchants to later employ more of them to specifically mine on their behalf. It was this move that subsequently led to the influx of more foreigners to the area.



Plate 1: Some of the Illegal Miners at work

Implications of Illegal Mining on Some Human and Environmental Components

The study sought the perception of residents of the mining community on the implications of the illegal mining activities on some human and environmental components of the area.

Their responses are shown in table 1 and discussed in the following sub-sections.

Decrease in Farm Yield

Given that farming and related activities are the predominant occupations in the area, 39.93% of the respondents agreed that the illegal mining activities have had adverse effects on farm yield in the study area. These respondents believed that since the commencement of the illegal mining many farmers have abandoned their various farms for the different mining fields dotting the area therefore resulting in lower farm yields. However, when this response pattern was analyzed on gender basis, it revealed that while male respondents who maintained this opinion are 38.24%, female respondents maintained a slightly higher proportion of 43.43%. This awareness level was a little higher among the womenfolk because many of them trade in farm products sourced from the area.

Implications on Human Health

The study also sought to know whether the illegal mining activities have had unpleasant consequences on the health of the people of the mining community. However, only 23.1% of respondents answered in the affirmative, while a majority of 76.9% disagreed.

It should be pointed out however, that when the study sought to know the specific health implications of the illegal mining on residents of the area, none was mentioned. This is however, understandable as the activities were a relatively new development and as such it might take quite sometimes before the negative health impacts become noticeable and felt.

Increased Solid Wastes Generation

Agglomeration of people in a relatively small area is usually known to lead to generation of domestic wastes. Therefore, the study sought to know whether there is increased generation of wastes and if same has constituted a challenge to the community. The study revealed that 38.94% of the respondents believed that solid waste management has become a big challenge to the community while more than half of them disagreed. This too is also understandable as the mining sites are a bit far off from the main residential quarters and residents may take time to notice and feel the impacts of the waste problem. It is however, envisaged that with time, the waste management problem would become more daunting to the community if urgent measures are not taken to address it, as level of sanitation and hygiene in the areas where the illegal miners reside was appalling.

Volume of Traffic

Agglomeration of large number of people is also known to pose traffic challenges and this is manifested in the study area as majority (68.65%) of respondents opined that increased traffic volume has become a permanent feature in the community lately. Miners, traders and other artisans who serviced them are known to be in a continuous movement in and out of the mining community for one reason or another. Many of the respondents affirmed that a lot of commercial vehicles, including motorcyclists popularly known as "okada" now ply the routes leading to the area now than was the case before the commencement of mining operations.

Table 1: Implications of Illegal Mining on Various Human Environmental Components

RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF ILLEGAL MINING ACTIVITIES IN AINBO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE

Implications	Response	Male		Female		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Decrease in farm yield	Yes	78	38.24	43	43.43	121	39.93
	No	126	61.76	56	56.57	182	60.07
	Total	204	100.0	99	100.0	303	100.0
Human Health	Yes	41	20.10	29	29.29	70	23.10
	No	163	79.90	70	70.71	233	76.90
	Total	204	100.0	99	100.0	303	100.0
Solid Waste	Yes	79	38.73	39	39.39	118	38.94
	No	125	61.27	60	60.61	185	61.06
	Total	204	100.0	99	100.0	303	100.0
Traffic Volume	Yes	145	71.08	63	63.63	208	68.65
	No	59	28.92	36	36.36	95	31.35
	Total	204	100.0	99	100.0	304	100.0
Soil Loss	Yes	141	69.12	51	51.52	192	63.37
	No	63	30.88	48	48.48	111	36.63
	Total	204	100.0	99	100.0	303	100.0

Source: Author's Fieldwork



Plate 2: A Typical Degraded Landscape in the Study Area

Soil Loss

The threats posed to the immediate physical environment of the study area by the unwholesome mining practices being employed by the army of illegal miners had been identified. These include extensive land degradation, deforestation and soil erosion amongst others (Sanni, 2000 and 2008). The current study has revealed that

these problems are becoming more pronounced as more farmlands have been degraded and ravaged by erosion, especially those close to the mining vicinity as attested to by an aggregate 63.37% of the respondents. More farmers are said to be abandoning their farms for the more lucrative mine fields. These developments are capable of further leading to lower farm yield and thus discourage farming activities which are the main-stay of the people of the area.

Perceptions of the Socio-economic Implications of Illegal Mining Activities

Table 2 revealed some socio-economic implications of the illegal mining activities on the people of the mining community and the perceptions of the people about them.

Influx of Temporary Workers

There is usually a deluge of movement towards the location of new economic activities as many people would want to take advantage of such activities to enhance their economic conditions, particularly the unemployed and the semi-skilled. The pattern of movement towards the mining community since the discovery of tantalite is not different from this trend. While over 95% of respondents reported that there was an influx of many temporary workers to the area, however, 81.19% among them emphasized that this is a positive development to the people of the area.

Presence of Leisure Workers

It is the usual practice that different categories of people are found in areas of various economic activities. While the activities of some of this people are seen as positive, those of others are negative even if they provide a service of some sorts. A large number of leisure and sex workers are increasingly noticeable in the mining community since the discovery of the mineral being mined. As shown in Table 2, the study revealed that 37.29% of the respondents believed that several leisure workers had migrated to the area since the discovery of the mineral and that they provided some form of unholy services to a section of the miners, particularly the aliens among them. This corroborates the view of Bryant (2005) who reported that foreign miners and prostitutes lured by new job opportunities have more than tripled Sanso's (a mining community in Mali, West Africa) population in five years and that local officials believed that they are likely the source of HIV/AIDS witnessed for the first time in the area.

Enhanced Conditions for Traders and Artisans

One significant positive implication of the illegal mining activities despite perceived

and latent threats to the environment and human health is the numerous economic benefits it has brought to members of the community, particularly traders and artisans. Many members of the community were seen trading in one article or the other and attending to numerous needs of the miners in some of the mining sites visited. All the respondents agreed that this is a very positive development that may boost the living standard of the people of the area.

Change in Occupational Opportunities

The illegal mining activities in Atisbo Local Government Area of Oyo State have brought about increased opportunities for the people of the area to change to other occupations in addition to enhanced commercial activities. Many who were hitherto farmers and artisans had also taken to constructing temporary make-shift structures to serve the needs of the numerous miners while some others engaged in commercial motorcycle operation popularly called "okada" to ferry miners and traders to the different mining sites that dotted the area. Almost all (94.72%) the respondents agreed that this is a very positive development for the area as they now have opportunities of making more income.

Change in Property Rental Value

There was also a significant increase in rent of properties in the area. Prior to the discovery of the mineral, rent was extremely low in the area considering the fact that it is a relatively rural area. A room which usually went for between one hundred and fifty naira (N150) and two hundred naira (N200) in the area suddenly jumped to between three hundred and four hundred naira. Many of the traders and merchants who daily besieged the mining sites who could not sleep in the numerous make-shift structures chose to rent rooms in the main settlement. More than half of the respondents considered this a positive development notwithstanding.

Presence of Criminals

Although pockets of armed robbery attacks were usually experienced in the area and the larger Local Government Area prior to the commencement of the mining activities, this however became a more frequent occurrence since the beginning of the mining activities. Many of the traders and particularly the merchants who traded in the mineral being mined were frequently waylaid and robbed, sometimes in broad day-light. There were instances where some of the victims were killed. Cases of rape and other sexual assaults are becoming common features of the hitherto peaceful neighbourhood. This is one serious negative fall-out the area had to contend with.

The mining industry is increasingly becoming a very important source of revenue to the government as well as employment to the local communities where the minerals are being mined. However, due regards to the existing rules and regulations that govern their operations as is the case in the study area many elements and components of the physical environment are affected. Despite the environmental consequences of such illegal and unwholesome activities they however, have several positive economic implications, particularly on the immediate mining environment and surrounding areas. These include increased economic opportunities and income to the residents of the area particularly to the youths who are increasingly becoming active participants in the whole exercise as well as traders and artisans alike. Increase in house rent also has a tendency to encourage further housing construction which in itself has a multiplier effect on the larger economy of the area and its surroundings. Socially, while some of the effects are positive others portend great danger to the area. The influx of more people to the area not only lead to the creation of new social

Conclusion and Recommendations

Source: Author's Fieldwork

Note: the percentage may not add up to or greater than 100.0% due to multiple responses.

Table 2: Perception of the Socio-Economic Impacts of Illegal Mining Activities

Variables	Yes		No		Positive		Negative	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Influx of temporary workers	288	95.05	15	4.95	246	81.19	33	10.89
Influx of non-indigenes	289	95.38	14	4.62	273	90.50	17	5.61
Presence of leisure workers	113	37.29	190	62.71	-	-	72	35.3
Enhanced conditions for traders and artisans	303	100.0	-	-	303	100.0	-	-
Change in occupational opportunities	287	94.72	16	5.28	289	95.38	6	1.98
Introduction of new social classes	99	32.67	204	67.33	103	33.99	144	47.52
Change in community infrastructure	16	5.28	287	94.72	16	5.28	-	-
Change in land acquisition and disposal	-	-	303	100.0	-	-	-	-
Change in property rental value	133	43.89	170	56.11	161	53.14	133	43.89
Relocation of individuals	87	28.71	216	71.29	93	30.69	16	5.28
Presence of criminals	289	95.38	14	4.62	-	-	303	100.0

classes it further allows the introduction of new social values to the area. However, this has also encouraged prostitution, armed robbery and other criminal tendencies which will lead to the erosion of the moral values of the society.

Having identified some of the socio-economic implications of the mining activities, this study offers some recommendations to address the attendant negative development and to strengthen the various economic opportunities. Although the country has witnessed tremendous progress in the mining sector since the creation of the Ministry of Solid Minerals Development, much still need to be done to regulate series of illegal mining activities being carried out in various parts of the country, including the study area. For instance, residents and other indigenous corporate organizations interested in mining in the area should be encouraged to obtain mining licenses and all other relevant documents and made to observe all rules and regulations governing the operations. Concessions may be offered to local interests to facilitate their active involvement. This would no doubt prevent the influx of all sort of elements into the industry and the mining communities as well as mitigate the various attendants negative social activities been wrought on the mining community.

Given the economic benefits accruing to the mining community and surrounding areas, especially employment opportunities, the people of the area not only need to be actively involved in the regulated mining operations, there is need for improved security and infrastructural development to further encourage related economic activities and drive the development and transformation of the area.

Finally, the country's immigration laws and surveillance should be strengthened to address the influx of foreigners to the country, particularly mining areas and other places where extractive activities are carried out in order to curtail their excesses.

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