

Mining and Community Conflict: A Study of AngloGold Ashanti and Sanso Community in the Ashanti Region of Ghana

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Abstract:

One cannot dispute the fact that AngloGold Ashanti has contributed to the development of Sanso community. Nevertheless, its operations in the area have caused several conflicts. The study was basically to assess the factors that fuel conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso. The research was purely qualitative with case study as its design. The participants selected for the study were 22. The selection of participants was done using nonprobability sampling techniques such as snowballing, purposive and convenience. Data was collected through the use of open-ended questionnaire, semi-structured interview and focus group discussion. Three police personnel and four AGA staff were given the open-ended questionnaire to answer. Interviews were conducted with the three opinion leaders, two AGA security guards and one official from the Obuasi Municipal Assembly. The researchers also held focus group discussion with the last group of respondents, that is, the Gather-them-and-sell ('Galamseyers') artisanal miners who were nine in number. The factors fuelling the conflict which the study revealed include failure of AGA to employ the local folks, reluctance of AGA to discharge its social responsibilities to the mining community and the company's unpreparedness to foot the electricity bills of community members after it had connected them to the national grid. The recommendations were that the AGA must employ the youth directly or provide them with an alternative livelihood and also the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources should establish a special desk to oversee the relationships between mining communities and companies with the view to dealing with mining-related issues that have the tendency of causing serious clashes.

Keywords:

Anglogold Ashanti, Conflict, "Galamseyers", Mining, Peace, Sanso Community

1. Introduction

Mining is a major catalyst for economic growth in many developing countries of the world. Indeed, it has played a significant role in Ghana's development. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Report on the Mining Sector revealed that mining registered the highest growth rate of 3.2% in the industrial sector ahead of

manufacturing, construction, water and electricity in 2014 [1]. The report expounds that, on merchandise export, minerals recorded about 34.7% of the total merchandise export in 2014. Total revenue and grants for 2014 was GHC 24.745 billion, of which mining revenue which includes royalties, corporate taxes, dividends and rights fees was estimated at GHC1.25 billion.

According to Ghana Chamber of Mines, there were 21,670 Ghanaians and 252 expatriates in employment in large scale mining in 2014. No precise artisanal and small scale mining employment figures were found in Ghana [2]. Although, it was estimated that about 200,000 people were found in artisanal and small scale mining across the country. It should be noted that the returns from the mining industry in one way or the other have contributed to infrastructural development in mining communities across the country. Mining is also crucial to the economies of many African countries. Tanzania's mining industry directly contributed about 3.3% to its GDP in 2013. The sector attracted FDI inflows to the tune of US\$ 460.86 million per year from 1998 to 2011 [3]. Honde and Abraha assert that in Botswana, the mining industry is an important engine of growth contributing 24.5% to the country's GDP in 2013 [4]. According to them, mineral revenue has played a pivotal role in developmental projects scattered across the country and the mining industry has also created jobs for the people. According to Akabzaa and Darimani, notwithstanding the mining industry's positive contributions to national development, its attendant problems including environmental right violations often lead to violent conflicts which can undermine the country's juvenile democracy and threaten the benefit it seeks to provide [5].

The mining companies operate with a neo-liberal capitalist world view whereby maximizing profit is seen as their main objective [6]. However, the communities place more value on environmental conservation because their livelihoods depend on the environment. Kemp, Owen, Gotzmann and Bond argue that mining conflicts are normally concerned about livelihood, security, access to resources, ownership, environmental effects, human right violations, cultural beliefs, distribution of risks and factors that impede development in the community [7]. The relationship between mining companies and the rural communities is seen as a battle ground for contesting the operational activities of the industry [8]. Increase in both large scale and small scale mining activities have led to intensification of conflicts in areas surrounding operations over access to mineral-rich lands [9].

In Ghana, almost all the mining communities have experienced mining related conflicts. In 1996, there was a clash between artisanal miners and contingent of police on the concession of Barnex Ltd. in Prestea [10]. In the same year, a clash occurred between galamsey operators and state security forces at Obuasi during which properties estimated at US\$ 10 million were destroyed [10]. In 2005, there was a clash between galamsey miners operating on Golden Star Resources Ltd. concession and the company in Bogoso [11]. Between 2004 and 2006, there were disputes between Chirano Gold Mines in the Western Region and landowners as well as farmers over payment of compensations [12]. In 2006, the people of Abirem in the Eastern Region protested against Newmont Ghana Gold Ltd. when they realized that their source of livelihood (land) was to be taken from them by the mining company [13]. In 2010, artisanal miners attacked and seriously wounded two AngloGold Ashanti Ltd. security personnel in Obuasi who were on patrol duties on the company's concession [14].

In 2011, there was a demonstration against the arrest of one hundred and fifty illegal miners by the police and the military in Obuasi and this turned violent [14]. Similar cases have occurred in some African countries. Couttenier, Berman, Rohner and Thoenig reveal that, heavy fighting broke out between the Rizeigat and Bani Hussein, two Arab tribes over the Jebel Amer Gold Mines near Kabkabiya in Sudan's North Darfur Region. This resulted in more than 800 deaths and about 150,000 displaced people in January, 2013 [15]. Vibe also reveals that, mining conflict took place around the North Mara Gold Mines (NMGM) in the North Western part of Tanzania in Tarime District of the Mara Region. Vibe further reveals that, since the opening of NMGM, at least fifty villagers have lost their lives due to several confrontations and many people were critically injured making it one of the most violent cases of mining conflicts in the world [16]. Beyond Africa, we have Adatepe gold mining conflict in Bulgaria, Esquel gold mining conflict in Argentina, uranium mining conflict in Brazil, gold mining conflict in Guatemala and gold mining conflict in Costa Rica [17]. From the discussion so far, the issue of conflict in mining communities should be a worry to every individual who believes in peaceful co-existence as an essential ingredient to community integration and national development at large.

The problem statement for the study is that commercial gold production has a long history in Ghana. It dates back to the colonial period. Indeed, gold is a major foreign exchange earner for Ghana. That is why a lot of concessions and leases have been granted to mining companies by the government of Ghana over the years to either engage in mining or mineral prospecting. Sanso in the Ashanti Region is one such place where mining activities take place. Studies have shown that conflicts usually break out in communities where mining takes place. These conflicts normally take place between the mining companies who own the concessions and the communities in which they operate. According to Arthur, the exploitation of natural resources such as gold and oil have contributed to instability, war and degradation in Africa over the last fifty years [18]. He explains that the conflicts have occurred mainly because these mining companies have refused to respect the agreements between their companies and the host communities in respect of corporate social responsibility and employment.

It must be noted that land has alternative uses. This means that land which is given out as concessions to the mining companies is no more available for agriculture which is the mainstay of the rural people. Most of the people in Sanso depend on the land for their survival but AngloGold Ashanti (AGA) has taken these lands as concessions for their mining activities. This has deprived the local people of their livelihood. Many of the indigenes have therefore been forced to enter the concessions of the company to eke out a living for themselves. The operations of AGA and activities of the galamseyers have frequently sparked clashes between AGA security guards and the galamseyers which have resulted in injuries, deaths and destruction of social amenities in the area. This study was therefore conducted to examine the operations of AGA especially in respect of its agreement with the communities and how the implementation of the agreement contribute to conflict in the area.

The main thrust of the study was to examine the activities of AGA in Sanso community and how these activities fuel conflicts in the area. The significance of the study is that land has alternative uses, that is, land can be used for farming or mining. It must however be noted that when land is used for mining or housing it is no more available for agriculture. Findings of the study will help the National Peace Council

(NPC) to know the actual factors that fuel conflicts in mining communities in Ghana so as to adopt appropriate measures to resolve such conflicts. Also, the Security Agencies such as the Police and Military will benefit from this study. For instance, the sources of conflict which this study will reveal can be part of the intelligence which the security agencies can use to predict future actions of mining communities in order to nib them in the bud.

In addition, it will be useful to AGA and other mining companies operating in Ghana to acquire much information regarding the roles and views of community folks on mining activities. This in the long run will reduce the tensions that normally ensue between them and their host communities.

Moreover, this study will be a public document which will help many Ghanaians to really understand the factors that fuel mining conflicts in Sanso and other mining communities in Ghana. The findings of the study will also enable the government consider issues that fuel conflicts between mining companies and communities so as to address them in mining contracts it signs with these companies. The results will also add to the literature on mining and land use in Ghana.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Perspective

Mining is the extraction of valuable minerals or other geological materials from the earth, from an ore body, lode, vein, seam or reef which forms the mineralized package of economic interest to the miner [19]. Mining is the process of digging into the earth to extract naturally occurring minerals [20]. According to Acheampong, mining is the removal of minerals from the earth's crust in the service of man [21]. According to Down and Stocks, mining is the world's second oldest and most important industry after agriculture. Conflicts are unavoidable from one's personal life, between communities, within an organization or among nations [22]. Kinicki and Kreitner defined conflict as a process in which one party perceives that their interests are being opposed or interest is negatively undermined by another party [23].

Nelson and Quick are of the view that conflict is any situation in which incompatible goals, attitudes, emotions or behaviours lead to disagreement or opposition between two or more parties [24]. Mankoe sees conflict as a contest of opposing forces or powers where there is a struggle to resist or overcome [25]. It is therefore seen as the existing state of disagreement or hostility between two or more people. Conflict exists when people hold different views about an issue [26]. From the above, conflict can be said to exist when two or more interdependent parties oppose each other with the aim to frustrate the other for the attainment of one's goals. According to Obeng, all conflicts are divided into two namely violent conflicts and non-violent conflicts [27]. To him, violent conflicts are conflicts that lead to loss of lives and properties. Such conflicts involve the use of guns, cutlasses and other dangerous weapons. People are usually attacked physically creating fear and insecurity in an area. To him, non-violent conflicts are characterized by peaceful demonstrations amidst singing, drumming and dancing, verbal exchanges and withdrawal of services.

The ideas and principles that have helped shape the framework of this study are mainly drawn from the biological theory, the frustration-aggression theory, the economic theory and the resource conflict theory. Thomas Hobbes and St. Augustine are some of the scholars for the biological theory. According to them, since our ancestors were instinctively violent beings and we came from them, we too must bear

destructive impulses in our genetic make-up. According to Obeng, this theory gave rise to the innate theory of conflict which contends that conflict is innate in all social interactions and among all animals including human beings. The next theory is frustration-aggression theory [27]. The thrust of this theory is that, violent behaviour stems from the inability of an individual to fulfill his/her needs [28]. The third one is the economic theory. Collier points out that some people commonly called conflict entrepreneurs actually benefit from chaos and as much as possible appreciate the occurrence of chaos at the expense of overwhelming majority of people in the society who are negatively affected by these chaos [29].

In other words, these conflict entrepreneurs see conflicts as having a functional utility and are embedded in economic disparities. To them, wars have sometimes become a vast private and profitmaking enterprise and will always wish there are wars. The last one is the resource conflict theory. This theory discusses the relationship between natural resources and civil violence [30]. According to them, the relationship is explained through two concepts which are greed and grievance. Greed is based on the idea that civil wars erupt in resource rich regions because of rebel groups' motivation or desire to get rich quick. The resources provide the rebel groups financial backing for large-scale violence. Grievance is based on a sense of injustice in the way a social group is treated in mining communities.

Globally, several factors account for mining related conflicts. The researchers' idea about some of these factors helped in conceptualizing this framework.

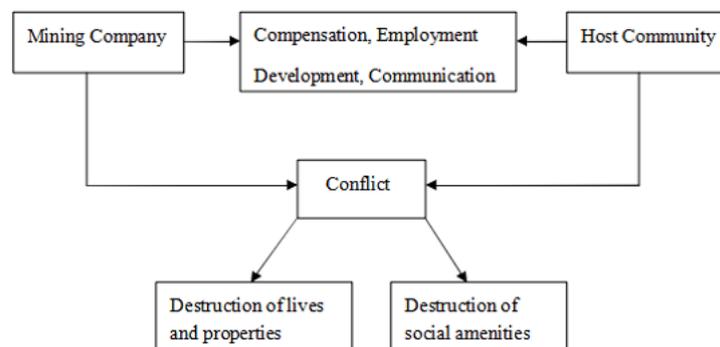


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

There are several factors that can fuel conflicts in mining areas. According to Wehrmann, conflicts are likely to erupt in natural resource areas when there are real or perceived restrictions by the state or conservation agencies [31]. Poor coordination and participation of the local people in decision-making process is a major cause of conflict in resourced-endowed areas [32]. Policies, institutions and processes governing the access, use, ownership and management of natural resources can be critical drivers of conflicts in resource rich areas. Violent conflicts have their roots in disputes over access to lands [33]. Hilson attributes the primary cause of land conflicts partly to poor communication between the mining sector stakeholders [34]. Slack argues that, mining activities have led to rising conflicts resulting from frustration by the local people, not benefiting from the huge profits of the companies, deterioration of living conditions, poor communication and the fear that mining may contaminate land and water sources [35]. Lawson and Bentil are of the opinion that, mining induced degradation, violation of human rights, forceful evictions and demolitions affect the way mining is perceived and contributes in intensity the conflictual aspect of mining [36].

Okyere analyzes Ghanaian cases of company-community disputes over gold mining and reveals that, many of the disputes centered on compensation, resettlement, unfulfilled promises, mistrust and lack of alternative livelihood programmes [37]. Twerefou, Aryeetey and Osei elaborate on the different sources of conflicts in African countries to include conflicts on royalties, land use, resettlement and survival of small scale mining [38]. Badu-Nyarko opines that, another area of potential conflict is the influx of non-indigenes into the area of mining [39]. According to Badu-Nyarko, the success of the non-indigenes at the expense of the indigenes may gradually develop into hatred [39]. This becomes even worse when the non-indigenes begin to acquire properties like buildings, commercial ventures and become prosperous. Burke states that, the process of mining operations affect the environment of the mining communities negatively and that has also been a source of conflict in mining areas [40]. This view is supported by Barnett when he said that, mining is one of the most environmentally harmful practices on the planet because of the way in which it disturbs the land and the chemicals it uses to extract minerals from the rock ore [41]. According to Armstrong, mining activities in Ghana have caused widespread ecological degradation and Ghana's EPA has since its inception in 1994 lacked the necessary capacity in terms of both human and financial resources to carry out its job [42]. To him, this has also generated conflict situations in some mining areas in the country.

3. Methodology

The study was purely qualitative with case study as its design. This helped the researchers to uncover trends in thoughts, experiences and opinions from the participants selected for the study.

The population for the study comprised the people of Sanso, police personnel, workers of AGA and workers of the Obuasi Municipal Assembly. According to Anastas, population in research is any set of people or events from which the sample is selected and to which the study results will be generalized [43].

Based on the researchers' selected design (case study), only one mining community (Sanso community) where AGA operates in the Obuasi Municipality was considered with a sample size of 22. The selection of 22 participants for the study was done using non-probability sampling techniques such as snowballing, convenience and purposive. Cohen, Manion and Morrison assert that snowballing sampling is where the researcher identifies small number of individuals who have the characteristics he/she is interested in and later use them as informants to get to others [44]. Snowballing sampling technique helped the researchers to get in touch with the three opinion leaders. Convenience sampling technique involves choosing individuals who will be available and accessible at the time you may need them [44]. The researchers used this sampling technique to select three police personnel, two AGA security guards and four AGA staff. The residence and duty schedules of these personnel were taken into consideration. Purposive sampling is where the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of his/her judgment of their typicality or possession of particular characteristics being sought [44]. According to Neuman, purposive sampling is used when the researchers want to select respondents with a specific purpose in mind [45]. The researchers employed this sampling technique to select the nine galamseyers and one respondent from the Obuasi Municipal Assembly.

Yin outlines four main methods for data collection namely interview, questionnaire, focus group discussion and observation [46]. The researchers employed three of the methods suggested by Yin and these were interview, focus group discussion and questionnaire. In the study, semi-structured interview was employed. It was used to gather data from three opinion leaders, two AGA security guards and one person from the Obuasi Municipal Assembly. The focus group discussion was conducted with nine participants who were all galamsey operators. Open-ended questionnaire was adopted and it was used to gather information from four AGA staff and three police personnel.

Both primary and secondary data were gathered for the study. The researchers collected primary data from the field using semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and open ended questionnaire. Secondary data were gathered from related articles and thesis. The primary data were analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis. Documentary analysis was done for the secondary data gathered by the researchers. Documents are good places to search for answers and they provide useful check on primary information gathered through interviews and questionnaires [47]. In this study, related articles and thesis were gathered by the researchers, read, summarized and compared with the primary data collected by the researchers.

4. Results and Discussion

The researchers deduced four questions. The questions were, has compensation payment been a source of conflict between AGA and the people of Sanso? Have galamsey activities caused conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso? What other issues might have resulted to the conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso? Which of the stated issues is more critical and has often fueled conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso? All the opinion leaders (OPLs) stated that, compensation payment has fuelled conflicts in the area. They said that AGA does not factor the life expectancy of their crops in the calculation of their compensation but they only multiply the unit cost of the crops by the number of crops on the land. OPL-1 (male & 52 years) for example remarked:

The compensation paid by AGA should be $70 \times 100 \times 40$ where 70 is the unit cost, 100 being the number of crops and 40 being the life expectancy of the crops but AGA only pays 70×100 of the whole compensation.

Responses from galamsey operators (GOs) were not different from that of the opinion leaders. They said that, indeed the issue of compensation payment has resulted to conflicts in the area. They added that at times AGA delay in paying the compensation and that has also resulted to conflicts between them and AGA.

Apart from AGA not calculating the compensation very well, it does not pay the compensation on time and this has created problems between us and AGA (GO-6, male & 26 years)

The Municipal Director (MD) agreed that some of the conflicts in Sanso have revolved around compensation payment but as to how the calculation is done, he was not aware of it. Responses from the police personnel (PP) were not different from that of the MD. They attested to the fact that, they have no idea of how the compensation is calculated but confirmed that it has been a source of conflict in the area. According to AGA security guards (SGs), the farmers have always been paid what they deserve but they always ask for more.

The SG-2 (male & 51 years) for instance had this to say:

AGA pays these farmers their compensation accurately and on time but yet they complain and always ask for more.

AGA staff (AS) shared similar views to that of the SGs. According to them, they do not know why these farmers agitate on the grounds of compensation because they normally sit down with them, do the necessary calculations and pay them accordingly. It is clear from the data that, majority of the respondents in one way or the other admitted that issues relating to compensation payment have resulted to conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso. This was evident in the statements made by OPL-1 and GO-6. The finding confirms the study by Okyere [37]. He analyzed Ghanaian cases of company-community disputes over gold mining and revealed that, most of the disputes centered on compensation, resettlement packages, unfulfilled promises, mistrust and lack of alternative livelihood programmes. This is to say that, issues relating to compensation payment in mining communities need to be critically looked at so as to minimize some of these disputes in mining areas. On the second issue, all the security guards stated that, the galamsey operators normally encroach on AGA concession using different routes they have created for themselves and this has created conflicts between AGA and these galamseyers.

The galamsey operators have identified several routes to AGA fence, they use sophisticated tools to cut some part of it. They enter into AGA concession, do their illegal mining activities, pass through the same routes and seal their routes nicely to prevent any suspicion (SG-1, male & 53 years)

SG-2 (male & 51 years) also had this to say:

The galamseyers normally dig holes underground to link AGA tunnels. They pass through such holes till they get to AGA tunnels where the fine rocks are found. They do their illegal mining activities after which they run back through the same means.

All the AGA staff (AS) supported the views shared by the SGs. They attested to the fact that at times some of the galamseyers encroach on AGA concession after being warned several times and this has resulted to conflicts between their security guards and some of these galamseyers. For instance, one of them had this to say:

The galamseyers most at times encroach onto AGA concession and that has resulted to clashes between our security guards and them (AS-3, male & 35 years).

All the galamsey operators (GOs) agreed with the assertions made by AS and SGs on the issue of encroachment but gave reason for encroaching onto AGA concession. According to them, they encroach onto AGA concession because where it has allocated to them is not as rich as where it operates. The GO-4 (male & 18 years) for example had this to say:

AGA has allocated some portion of their concession to us at “Kotere Face” which was somehow rich but want us to relocate to a different place which is not as rich as where we were.

Two of the opinion leaders (OPL-1 & OPL-3) said that at times the galamsey operators’ trespass AGA concession and that has generated clashes in the area. The OPL-2 on the other hand denied the assertion made by her colleagues. To her, the galamsey operators have never gone closer to where AGA operates.

I haven't heard of any galamsey operator trespassing onto AGA concession before since I came to this town (OPL-2, female & 68 years).

The response from the Municipal Director (MD) was in line with that of the SGs and AS. He confirmed that, some of the galamsey operators in Sanso have dug holes to link the main tunnels of AGA concession and through the holes, they go there to do their illegal mining activities. Two of the police personnel (PP-2 & PP-3) shared similar views with those of SGs, AS and MD. According to them, there have been several reported cases of some galamsey operators intruding onto AGA concession in the area. For instance, PP-2 highlighted that at times they are called upon by AGA to help sack these galamseyers from their lands. The PP-3 supported the view shared by PP-2. He added that, moving these galamseyers from AGA concession has been one of the tedious jobs embarked upon by the police in the area. The other respondent (PP-1) did not give any opinion on the issue. From the data, most of the respondents agreed that at times the galamsey operators intrude onto AGA concession and this has resulted to clashes between AGA security guards and the galamseyers. As to how they manage to get to AGA concession, the data indicated that the galamsey operators normally create their own routes either by cutting the fence or digging directly to AGA tunnels through which they get to AGA concession and do their illegal mining activities. It is evident in the comments made by SG-1 and SG-2. The finding corroborates Twerefou, Aryeetey and Osei assertion on the potential causes of conflicts in mining communities [38]. According to them, one of such causes is the survival of small-scale miners. On the issue of other factors that might have fueled conflicts between AGA and Sanso community, the six sets of respondents made the following assertions. Two of the opinion leaders (OPL-2 & OPL-3) said that, inability of AGA to employ the local folks, destruction of streams and rivers due to AGA's activities were some of the factors that have fueled conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso. The OPL-3 (male & 30 years) for example remarked:

AGA does not employ we the local people not even the labourer work even though some of our people have gone to school and have good certificates.

OPL-1 on the other hand was of the view that, AGA not providing the people of Sanso essential social amenities has resulted to conflict situations in the area. He expressed this view as follows:

AGA has benefited from Sanso community a lot meanwhile they haven't provided us with enough boreholes, schools and KVIP's (OPL-1, male & 52 years).

Responses from the Municipal Director (MD) support the views shared by OPL-2 and OPL-3. According to him, destruction of streams and rivers, AGA not complying with the local content policy have all been sources of the conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso. For instance, MD (male & 52 years) had this to say:

AGA has failed to employ the young men and women of Sanso meanwhile a lot of them have attended school and some are even engineers.

The MD added that, AGA wanted to reconnect Sanso community to ECG power supply so that the people of Sanso will now pay electricity bills but this issue was not taken lightly at all by the people of Sanso and has also resulted to some demonstrations in the area. Responses from the galamsey operators (GOs) were not different from those of OPLs and MD. They highlighted the same factors that have fueled conflicts in the area. To them, AGA not employing the local folks, not providing them with social amenities and the issue of AGA trying to reconnect them

to ECG for them to pay electricity bill have been some of the sources of conflicts between the company and the people of Sanso.

*AGA has benefited a lot from us and yet they want us to pay electricity bill.
We the people of Sanso will never pay (GO-8, male & 27 years).*

All the Security Guards (SGs) stated unemployment as a source of conflict between AGA and the people of Sanso. To them, the local people have it in mind that the minerals belong to them since it is on their land and for that matter they should be employed in AGA and not outsiders. For instance, according to SG-1 in a conversation with one of the local people, he told him that, the minerals belong to them and not AGA. He reported what the man said and I quote “Our gold and not your gold”. The views shared by AS and PP were not different from what the other respondents have highlighted. It is clear that, the issues that fuel conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso go beyond compensation payment and galamsey activities. According to the OPLs, inability of AGA to employ the people of Sanso, destruction of streams due to AGA’s activities, AGA not providing Sanso community enough social amenities were some of the factors that have fueled conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso. The views shared by the OPLs were supported by many of the respondents after which some of them made additions. For instance, the MD added that AGA wanted to reconnect Sanso community to ECG power supply so that they pay electricity bill and the people were also not ready to accept that. According to him, this has been a source of conflicts in the area.

On the issue of which of the factors has frequently fueled conflicts between AGA and the people of Sanso, all the OPLs indicated that, AGA not employing the local folks has been the most critical factor that has fueled conflicts between AGA and Sanso community. This assertion was supported by the rest of the respondents. They all agreed that, most of the conflicts between AGA and Sanso community have revolved around the inability of AGA to employ the indigenes of Sanso. The various statements made by the respondents in relation to unemployment already captured by the researchers support this view. Slack argues that, mining activities have led to rising conflicts resulting from frustration by the locals not benefiting from the huge profits made by the mining companies, deterioration of living conditions, poor communication and the fear that mining may contaminate land and water sources [35]. The statements made by OPL-1 and OPL-3 endorse the position shared by Slack [35]. OPL-1 statement was in relation to inadequate social amenities whilst OPL-3 statement was about unemployment. The two respondents’ views suggest that AGA has benefited a lot from Sanso meanwhile little has been done for the community.

According to majority of the respondents, AGA has made enough money from Sanso but the people are still poor, a condition that at times make them frustrated and push them to embark on series of demonstrations as a way of fighting for equity in jobs, social amenities and above all better standard of living. The opinions shared by OPL-1 and OPL-3 are also in line with the frustration aggression theory propounded by John Dollard in 1939. According to Dollard, violent behaviour emanates from inability to fulfill ones needs. In an attempt to explain aggression, he points to the difference between what people feel they want or deserve and what they actually get “the want-get-ratio” [28]. According to him, when expectation does not meet attainment, the tendency for people to confront those they hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions is high.

5. Conclusions and Recommendation

It is an undisputable fact that mining has played a significant role in the development of most mining communities across the country. However, the operations of some of the mining companies have led to conflict situations in most mining communities including the Sanso community. The issue of compensation payment has been a source of conflict between AGA and the people of Sanso. According to the local people, there is no fairness in how the compensation is calculated and at times too, there is delay in the payment of the compensation.

The galamsey operators in Sanso community most at times trespass the AGA concessions through their own routes they have created and this has resulted to conflicts between AGA security guards and the galamsey operators.

The recommendations seek to provide the overall measures that can be used if not prevent or at least minimize the occurrence of clashes between AGA and Sanso community. In a general sense, they are to be applied in all mining communities across the country in order to promote peace in those areas. The recommendations have been done in themes and presented as follows:

5.1. The Role of Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

Firstly, the Ministry has to monitor the implementation of compensation agreements between AGA and the people of Sanso. It has to ensure that these agreements are fulfilled. Again, the Ministry should establish a special office with qualified personnel, well versed in conflict management so that these people can easily resolve the conflicts between AGA and Sanso community as early as possible. Lastly, the Ministry should regularly monitor the activities of AGA in Sanso community to ensure that they comply with the EPA laws.

5.2. The Role of Mining Companies

AGA should regularly engage the people of Sanso on compensation payments and other related issues to avert any conflict. Also, AGA should adhere to the local content policy. That is, it should employ many of the indigenes in Sanso. When this is done, the indigenes will feel that, they are part of the company and will even help in protecting the company's concession. Again, the company should perform their social obligations towards Sanso community. Lastly, AGA should provide Sanso community folks alternative livelihoods. That is, it should give the people skills development and initial fund to establish themselves after the skill acquisition. The skills development could be in bead making, shoe making, basket making, etc. When the people benefit from AGA this way, they will see it as an engine for personal and community transformation. This will go a long way to promote peace in Sanso community.

5.3. The Role of Obuasi Municipal Assembly

The MCE should regularly visit Sanso community to assess any potential mining related conflict and find a way of resolving it as early as possible. Again, the MCE should have an office mandated to receive complaints from mining communities in the Municipality. This will go a long way to help mitigate most of the issues that have the potential of causing conflict within the mining communities. Lastly, the MCE should serve as a supervisor and monitor the activities of AGA very well bearing in mind the EPA laws to reduce the rate of environmental degradation by AGA which

have the tendency of causing conflict in Sanso and other mining communities in the Municipality.

5.4. The Role of Security Agencies

The Government should establish police and military barracks in Sanso community to help avert any mining related conflict. Also, the security agencies should not take side but rather engage both parties when there is mining related conflicts. Lastly, the security agencies presence in Sanso community should not be felt in the entire community through regular patrols and anything heard or seen as potential cause of conflict should be dealt with as early as possible.

5.5. The Role of Sanso Leaders

The government being the trustee of the lands in the country should be cautious of how lands are given out to AGA. It should therefore make sure that, all rules and regulations in relation to land acquisition are complied with by AGA. Also, the chief together with the assemblyman, unit committee chairman and other opinion leaders in the community should frequently meet the people of Sanso and listen to their grievances relating to the activities of AGA. After that, they should meet the executives of AGA and dialogue with them as a way of finding solutions to the problems raised by the people. Lastly, the leaders of Sanso should educate the people on the need to use dialogue rather than violence in resolving mining related conflicts. This can be done on one-one basis, one-group basis, on radio etc.

Conflicts of Interest

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