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## **Sand Mining: Ecological Impact on Environment and Physical Impact on Community**

Musah (2009) carried out a research in Northern Ghana and the East Gondja District on the socio-economic impacts of sand and gravel mining and found out that commercial gravel and sand extraction to supply aggregate to the construction industry has increased tremendously, and this contributed to land degradation and desertification through the destruction of economically important trees which are mostly indigenous in nature. He noted that the practice of sand and gravel mining leaves behind bare soil, large gullies which collect water during rainy seasons and this result in health related problems as these pits serves as a breeding ground for mosquito's and spread other waterborne diseases.

According to Homer- Dixon (1991) all humans need a healthy environment for their livelihood, and that most people from the less developed countries depend on agriculture and farming for their survival. He further noted that sand mining is carried out at an alarming rate an if this unregulated and uncontrolled practice continue then people around the world will face challenged in terms of resources to support their families as rivers will dry up, farms will be eroded and crop yields will also decrease.

Kondolf (2001) notes that in Nigeria sand and gravel mining on agricultural land is one of the alternative livelihood activities of the rural people and that this practice is becoming an environmental issue. It is noted that there is an increase in the demand for sand for construction and other purposes as communities grow at an alarming rate due to urbanization. He also noted that due to the increase in affluence of the community members, more sand and gravel are required as community members are building big brick houses in their villages, thus they need more sand than wood and grass.

According to Kondolf (2001) sand and gravel mining on farms and agricultural land is becoming common and this is having a noticeable impact on the soil structure, vegetation and the local wildlife in the rural areas. Although sand and gravel mining contributes to the construction of building and development in the area the practice is widespread, highly unregulated and uncontrolled as the community members do not take the negative effect on the environment into consideration (Kondolf , 2001). Sand dust production was another land related activity which was observed in the area. The dust from this activity not only affected their agricultural activity, but it also polluted the air and caused health issues such as asthma especially among young children in the area.

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