UNDERSTANDING FARMERS AND HERDSMEN CONFLICT,
THE CASE OF CROP FARMERS AND FULANI HERDERS IN
THE ASANTE AKIM NORTH DISTRICT

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SCIENCE

JULY 2018
Declaration

I hereby declare that this work entitled “Understanding Farmers and Herdsmen Conflict, the case of Farmers and Herders in the Asante Akim North District” was entirely done by me. This work has not been previously submitted, either in whole or in part for a degree at this university or any other institution of higher learning. This thesis is original and contains no materials previously published or written by any other persons except as acknowledged in the text and references.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to Priscilla Afia Manu. Your strength and love will always remain with us. You will forever be remembered.
Acknowledgement

Firstly, all the honour, praise and glory to the God Almighty, for His mercies, grace, guidance and wisdom to pursue and successfully complete this programme. A special appreciation to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Kyei Yamoah, for your support, counsel and inspiration throughout my life. To my siblings Kwame, Kwesi and Ofeibea, thank you for the care and support during my studies. To my grandmother Auntie Dinah, your constant encouragement and care is always cherished. Indeed, I am blessed to be a part of these wonderful people and call them family.

Secondly, my profound gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Isaac Owusu-Mensah and Dr. Lloyd George Adu Amoah. Thank you for your consistent guidance, constructive critiques, key suggestions and encouragement. God richly bless you. Special thanks to all the lecturers, staff and colleagues of the Department of Political Science of the University of Ghana.

Lastly, my humble appreciation to all the respondents of this study especially the good people of the Asante Akim North District. Thank you very much for your cooperation.
Abstract

Farmers and herdsmen have co-existed for centuries. Nonetheless, as the world population increases, migration induced by climate change and the increasing prevalent scarcity of resources, farmers-herdsmen relationship has tragically experienced a paradigm shift of co-existence to fierce competition over limited resources.

The primary objective of this study is to engage the gap in the literature as to why farmers and herdsmen conflict in Ghana have become protracted, increasingly violent and widespread across the country. This conflict after years of attempts by successful Ghanaian government to resolve it, continues to be insuperable and consequently detrimental to Ghana development agenda particularly in the Agricultural and livestock industry.

This study centres on the case study of the Asante Akim North District in Ghana. This district has experienced the highest cases of farmers-herdsmen conflict within the country. The study employed qualitative methodology and methods of data collection, with the use of interviews, observation and a review of documents provided by key stakeholders.

The study found out that the clashes between the Fulani who are widely regarded as ‘foreign invaders’ and farmers stems from the competitive use of land for their respective agrarian livelihoods. Furthermore, it is identified that issues such as the influence of so-called ‘Big Men’ with extensive political network; the economies of agrarian livelihoods and the poor land distribution policy of the chiefs are the pertinent issues underlying farmers and herdsmen conflicts. This thesis recommends, that in order to avert a conflagration between farmers and herdsmen the solution depends on public policy on ‘Cattle Colonies’ and Early Warning Mechanisms which ought to be implemented by the relevant stakeholders without any measure of political interference.
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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AAND Asante Akim North District
ATC Agogo Traditional Council
CAADP Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CBPP Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia
DACF District Assembly Common Fund
DCE District Chief Executive
DISEC District Assembly Security Council
ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States
FAO Food and Agricultural Organisation
FASDEP Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy
FMD Foot and Mouth Disease
GAF Ghana Armed Forces
GCRPC Ghana Cattle Ranching Project Committee
GSGDA Ghana Shared Growth Development Agenda
GSS Ghana Statistics Service
ITC International Transhumance Certificate
MoFA Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MoLGRD Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
NEPAD New Partnership for African Development
PPP Public Private Partnership
PPR Peste des Petits Ruminants
PSC Protracted Social Conflict
REGSEC Regional Security Council
<table>
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<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
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<td>WANEP</td>
<td>West African Network for Peace</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Throughout the world and history, farmers and herdsmen have been in conflict for centuries. According to one Hebrew version of the Bible, the story of Cain and Abel provides the first recorded conflict between a farmer and a herder (van den Brink et al., 1995:1). Hence, some academics see the conflict between farmers and herdsmen as the “Economics of Cain and Abel”. In addition, in other parts of the world such as India and Bangladesh, conflicts between crop farmers and cattle owners is a frequent phenomenon of their societies (Mayaram, 2014; Roy, 1994). Over the course of time farmers and herdsmen, conflicts in those areas evolved into religious dimensions with the crop farmers being Hindus and cattle owners being Muslims, consequently deepening religious rivalries in those countries.

In Africa, farmers and herdsmen have coexisted for centuries, developing an interdependent relationship through economic interests such as trading and other means of support (Moritz, 2010). At the same time, conflicts between them have also existed for centuries (ibid). Across the continent, the impression of the alarming rate of farmer-herders conflicts is not over emphasized as evidence suggests the conflict is widespread and increasingly becoming more violent. This conflict has plunged communities along the borderlands of Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania into a series of violence and displacing families from their homes (Butler & Gates, 2012; Mwamfupe, 2015).
Even in some other cases, farmers-herders conflicts have articulated with other ethnic, political and religious conflicts (Aliyu, 2015). For instance, some scholars suggest the 1994 genocide war in Rwanda was a consequence of long historical hostilities between farmers and herdsmen, with the Tutsi, which historically means, “People who own cattle” and the Hutu, which means “People who farm” (Bachelor, 1996; Heroro, 2003; Abubakar, 2012, cited in Aliyu, 2015:18).

In West Africa, since the 1970’s, the pastoralist question has been a recurring issue. The conflict is prevalent in areas such as Northern Nigeria, Southern Mali, Western Cameroun, Northern Cote d’Ivoire and the South West of Burkina Faso (Abubakar, 2012; Aliyu, 2015; Blench, 2010; Olaniyi, 2015). According to a BBC report, the Government of Nigeria considers the herders raids as the second-biggest threat to peace in the country after the Boko-Haram militants (Patience, 2016). In Nigeria, the cycle of violence between farmers and Fulani herdsmen has resulted in the death of thousands of people leading to a crisis of internally displaced persons in the country (ibid). The existence of massive and persistent incidence of farmers-herders conflicts in the West African Region is a large concern to regional governments and organisations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (Moritz, 2010).

In Ghana, behind a smokescreen of peace and stability, various forms of local conflicts exist within the country (Ayee et al, 2011:2). Indeed, some of these conflicts existed before independence and with time has articulated through various political dimensions (Ayee et al, 2011). These endemic conflicts manifests through a cycle of violence between chiefs,
families, governments and minor communal groups such as migrant workers and tenants who also claim rights to the lands they inhabit (Aryeetey et al., 2001 cited in Ayee et al., 2011). Some current internal conflict are the Dagbon Chieftancy crisis, the Nkonya-Alavanyo clashes, the proliferation of land guards, farmers-herders conflict and illegal mining popularly referred to as ‘Galamsey’. Perhaps, it is interesting to note that none of these conflicts has assumed national status so far unlike the experiences in other countries.

Among these conflicts, the focus of this study is the conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Farmers and herdsmen conflict is over lands for agricultural or pastoral activities respectively. The availability of arable lands is a variable often intimately associated with basic welfare among rural folks (Giordano et al., 2005). In Ghana, farmers-herders conflicts over the years have evolved from minor disagreements and isolated skirmishes to highly violent and frequent conflicts. Within the mostly rural communities that are affected, the conflict is highly destructive resulting in the loss of lives, injuries, displacements of families and the destruction of properties. In recent years, successive governments have been committed in managing the conflict but their efforts remain futile as farmers-herders conflict is considerably spreading in various areas across the country. The rise of this conflict tarnishes the reputation of Ghana as a country of peace among her neighbours.

1.2 Brief Historical Overview: Farmers and Herders in Ghana

The migration of the Fulani herdsmen into Ghana was in the early years of the twentieth century (Baidoo, 2014; Tonah, 2006). The herdsmen came from neighbouring West African countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Initially, the herdsmen settled in the
north of Ghana then referred to as the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast specifically between Bolgatanga and Bawku (Tonah, 2006). By the 1920’s the Fulani herders had settled permanently in northern Ghana becoming the largest non-indigenous ethnic group in Ghana (Baidoo, 2014; Tonah, 2006).

In the initial years of settlement, the relationship between Ghanaians and the herdsmen was of cooperation specifically along economic interests or trading (Baidoo, 2014; Opoku, 2014; Tonah, 2006).

However, the relationship began declining in the 1960’s when additional herders joined their families already in Ghana. This migration consequently increased their population rapidly, raising concerns among the indigenous people. The new arrivals however, were not accustomed to the rules of their host communities and engaged in activities contrary to the terms of agreement between them and their hosts, consequentially frequent disputes ensued between the communities and the herdsmen.

In response to these new challenges, the herdsmen moved further south to the Afram Plains and the Volta Basin. In these new areas, from 1960 to 1980, the population of the herdsmen increased considerably and their presence and activities could no longer be ignored. Once again, conflict between farmers and herders became a recurring theme in the Afram Plains similarly to the events in the north of Ghana. By the 1990’s, endemic violence had become a common feature of farmers and herdsmen relationship.
According to various studies, the most frequent cause of farmers-herders conflict is the destruction of farms by cattle. For instance, a West African Network for Peace (WANEP) report in 2012 indicate that, the destruction of cultivated lands by herds of cattle have led to a series of conflicts between farmers and herdsmen in areas such as Agogo, Kwahu, Gusheigu and other towns in the Afram Plains.

In the affected communities within the Kwahu Traditional Area, the activities of the herdsmen and the fear of violence have forced schools to close down and residents have fled their homes, virtually turning these areas into ghost towns. In another area such as Agogo, according to police records from 2009 to 2012, farmers-herders conflicts have resulted in the death of twelve (12) people (REGSEC, 2012). However, the local people dispute this figure and give higher estimated figures (Baidoo, 2014; Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015). Further north, in 2017, reports indicate that brewing tension between the Konkomba farmers and herdsmen in Sene East District resulted in counter and reprisal attacks leaving five hundred and sixty-two (562) families homeless, including the loss of livestock, properties and monies (Daily Guide, 2017).

From the cases above, it seems herdsmen are mostly the aggressors of these conflicts. However, this notion is not entirely accurate. For instance, in 2011, fourteen (14) herdsmen were killed and their properties looted and destroyed by local farmers in Gushiegu (Allafrica, 2011). In addition, in 2017 hundreds of residents in Berekum armed themselves in preparation for attacks from herdsmen as residents forcefully evicted herdsmen from the area. This resulted in the death of thirteen (13) herdsmen and four (4) local people (Myjoyonline,
As illustrated above, both herdsmen and farmers are victims as well as perpetrators of violence. Both actors arm themselves as a means of self-defence making violent clashes uncontainable. These events have worsened the relationship between farmers and the Ghanaian society on one side and the Fulani herdsmen on the other (Tonah, 2006).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Traditionally, a favourable and peaceful environment is a prerequisite for agricultural production and development in any country (Adelakun et al., 2015:59). It is only through such an enabling environment that local communities can implement sustainable programs for agricultural and rural development. For instance, the strategy of successive Ghanaian Governments to develop the economy has been to implement programs or policies that focus on agricultural industrialisation. In this regard, the Government encourages growth-oriented programs such as “One District One Factory” and “Planting for Food and Jobs”, which are capable of driving the agro-industrialisation agenda. Therefore, a sustainable development program in agriculture demands the peaceful co-existence and cooperation of all persons within agricultural producing communities. However, a perennial challenge facing agricultural and rural development in Ghana is the problem associated with crop farmers and herdsmen conflicts.

According to Tonah (2006), farmers-herders conflicts in Ghana have been on the increase since the 1990’s. In the late 1990’s, tensions between farmers and herdsmen had started brewing amid accusations of destruction of farms, robberies and raping by herdsmen (Tonah, 2006). By 2000, under the Rawlings administration, the cycle of violence between farmers
and herdsman in Agogo prompted the government to deploy the military to quell the violence (Olaniyan et al, 2015).

The army was able to maintain peace until 2004 during the Kufuor administration, when the Agogo people launched another protest against the herdsman and restated their initial demand for the complete expulsion of the herdsman from the area. Once again, the protests turned violent and the army was called to restore law and order.

However, this was a short-lived peace as violence resurfaced in 2006 and by 2009 the violence had become endemic (ibid). To address this endemic, the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) under the Mills administration launched a military exercise code named ‘Operation Cow Leg’ in 2010 (GAF, 2016). The objective of this operation was to once and for all put an end to the violence between farmers and herdsman that was erupting in Agogo and other areas of Ghana.

However, the violence persisted and due to the continuous state of violence, in 2012 under the Mahama administration the Kumasi High Court in response ordered the Regional Security Council (REGSEC) to immediately, expel all the herdsman from that area (REGSEC, 2012). Once again, this intervention failed to achieve the desired objective.

To exacerbate the situation, in January 2018, during the Akuffo-Addo administration, herdsman attacked and wounded four state security personnel in the Asante Akim North District (AAND), leaving three in critical conditions. This attack on the state security is viewed as an attack on the state that emphasized the impunity and defiant attitude of the
herders. In response, the Ashanti Regional Command similar to previous administrations ordered a surge of military and police personnel to expel the herdsmen from the AAND and its jurisdictions as previously ordered by the courts in 2012.

Currently, farmers-herders conflicts have been reported in several areas besides Agogo where the conflict first begun. There have been cases of farmers-herders conflict in Kwahu East, Gushiegu, Sene East, Sene West and towns and villages around Berekum such as Agege, Kawompe, Kunsu, Gulumpe, Atta-Akua and Babatokuma. The increasing prevalent nature of the farmers-herders conflict in Ghana has raised a public debate whether government has the ability to permanently solve this situation.

The series of conflicts demonstrate that the approach adopted by the state to address farmers and herdsmen conflict since the inception of the conflicts have so far failed to keep the situation under control. It is in response to this perennial problem that this study investigates the underlying reasons for the persistent nature of farmers-herders conflict in Ghana. Hence, the central question of this study is why there are protracted or persistent conflicts between crop farmers and herdsmen in spite of the legitimate intervention by successive governments in the Fourth Republic.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To examine the underlying causes of the farmers and herders conflict.
2. To describe the effects of the conflict on the livelihoods of the actors and victims.
3. To identify the challenges in managing the conflict.
4. To ascertain the role of primary and secondary actors in the conflict.
1.5 Justification of the Study

In the literature, several authors from different academic disciplines note the economic, political, social, environmental and geographical factors that drive natural resource conflicts. (Bannon & Collier, 2008; Butler & Gates, 2012; Chourci, 1983; Dosu, 2011; Flavel, 2010; Martin, 2011; Nie, 2003; Poncian & Kigodi, 2015 and Ubelejit, 2016). Specifically, within farmers and herders conflict, scholars have published various works detailing the causes and effects of these conflicts in Africa. (Abubakar, 2012; Alihyu, 2015; Blench, 2010; Moritz, 2010; Mwamfupe, 2015; Olaniyi, 2015; Shettina & Tar, 2008 and Tonah, 2006). Particularly, in relation to cases in Ghana, some authors have examined the history, causes and effects of farmers and herders conflicts within the country (Baidoo, 2014; Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015; Olaniyan et al, 2015; Opoku, 2014; Stanley et al, 2017 and Tonah, 2006)

Across the literature, the general pattern of work has been to emphasize the history of farmers-herders relationship, the contributing factors of the conflict and its subsequent consequences on the affected communities and countries. However, there is minimal or limited work on why the conflict is increasingly becoming a recurring feature in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa.

Therefore, the justification or rationale of this study is to address this gap by providing up to date information that can guide the diverse stakeholders in managing this conflict to understand why the conflict has become a protracted one and why government is unable to permanently resolve it and suggest recommendations to deal with the situation.
In addition, this study seeks to contribute to the body of academic knowledge by building on the existing scholarly works to present a precise and in-depth knowledge of conflicts relating especially to farmers and herders.

1.6 Organisation of Study

The study is organised into six chapters.

Chapter One comprises an introduction which includes a background and history of farmers-herders conflict in Ghana. The chapter also includes the problem statement, objectives of the study and the justification of the study.

Chapter Two focuses on a review of the existing literature. This chapter gives detailed history of relations between farmers and herders. In addition, this chapter reviews the suggested contributing factors of this conflict across the literature and their counter arguments by other scholars. In addition, the chapter examines the social and economic effects of the conflicts on both groups and the community as a whole. The chapter further examines the various conflict resolution mechanisms employed to solve these conflicts across in Ghana and Africa. In conclusion, this chapter address the challenges of these mechanisms and their prospects for the future.

Chapter Three examines the theoretical concepts that are used to support, explain and understand the conflict.

Chapter Four discusses the methodology including the study area, population and the method of research employed to gather information for this study. The occupation, ethnic and
religious composition are also discussed in this chapter. Following, is the process of data
collection and data analysis. This includes the techniques on how the researcher collected the
data or information for the research.

Chapter Five deals with a discussion and analysis of the data collected. In this chapter, the
data is interpreted to ascertain the final findings of this research.

Chapter Six entails the summary, conclusion and recommendation derived from the findings
of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The objective of the literature review is to examine the existing literature about the objectives this study seeks to explore. The sequence of the literature review is to explore a broad analysis of first; why some conflicts are prolonged and why some non-conflict situations escalate into violent conflict, the pastoralist and agrarian livelihoods, the causes, effects and the resolution mechanism in place to reach a dispute resolution.

2.2 Understanding and Distinguishing Protracted Conflicts

The study of conflict is characterized by a multi-disciplinary approach where researchers continue to develop some concepts with the aim of explaining the complexities of conflicts including why some conflicts are protract than others. Ideally, studying conflicts is with the expectation that the studies will contribute to the ending of the conflicts and a peaceful co-existence will ensue between the actors. Nevertheless, some particular conflicts seem to have no clear end in sight and their tragedy results in the continuous loss of lives and constant destruction forcing individuals to abandon every hope of a permanent solution. The question always asked regarding these prolonged conflicts is why some conflicts are solved within a reasonable period and why others become worse and more violent with time. Across
scholarly literature, there is divergence in the definitions, parameters, applications and characteristics of protracted conflicts. In the following section, the study clarifies the term, ‘Protracted Conflict’ and the appropriate application of this term in analysing the long-standing conflict between farmers and herders across Ghana.

Beaudoin, (2013) describes ‘Protracted Conflicts’ as a broad category of conflicts that last over a period and withstand all efforts at a resolution. Within the literature of ‘Protracted Conflicts’, there are two main component, which are, ‘Enduring Rivalries and Protracted Social Conflicts (PSC)’. While both Enduring Rivalries and PSC share some conditions such as conflicts over long periods and the repeated periods where tensions are higher than others, there are some substantive distinctions that justify their classification as different components of protracted conflicts (Azar 1985, 2000; Diehl & Geortz, 2002; Friedman, 1999; Marshall, 1999; Maoz et al, 2002 cited in Beaudoin, 2013).

The first and perhaps the most essential distinction between the two components is the unit of analysis or the actors that make up the conflict. In enduring rivalries, the primary actor is the state. As Diehl and Geortz, (2001:19) cited in Beaudoin (2013:7) emphasizes “Rivalries consist of the same pair of states competing with one another”. On the other hand, in PSC, the focus of analysis is the non-state actors where the ‘Identity Group’ is the primary actor of the conflict. By recognising, the ‘Identity Group’ as the centre of analysis, their impact on the conflict can be properly examined (Beaudoin, 2013).

Secondly, in Enduring Rivalries, though violent conflict can occur, violence is not an important feature of this component. They can be based solely on competition rather than
being violent. A classic example is the rivalry between Russia and the United States. In PSC however, in all cases identified by scholars such as Azar, violence is an integral feature of the relationship between the primary actors.

Lastly, Enduring Rivalries measure casualties in terms of those directly involved in a battle among warring states due to its basis of the state as the primary actor. Conversely, in PSC individual and isolated incidents of death related to the conflicts are recorded as casualties of the conflict.

Often across the literature, conflicts with features of PSC have generally been termed as protracted conflicts. While this may be accurate in some instances, nevertheless there is a clear distinction between PSC and protracted conflicts in general. The inter-changeable use of these terms results in the lack of clarity among the body of knowledge of whether there is any difference between the two concepts. Therefore, it is a prerequisite to distinguish between protracted conflicts and PSC in order to establish their fundamental definition and distinction and how to apply them in describing conflicts. To this end, Beaudoin (2013:4-5) defines protracted conflicts as

The conflict between actors with some degree of regularity over extended periods of time in which the stakes under contention are perceived by all to be inseparably linked to national, societal and individual needs where the use of violent conflict is used or considered therein.

She further states that when exploring an enduring violent conflict, correctly identifying what it is and what its supporting aspects are is critical. Failure to do so could result in continued
tragedies for the societies in which the conflict occurs. Therefore, the fundamental distinction is that ‘Protracted Conflicts’ is the broad term used to describe all forms of conflict that have persisted over a considerable period, whiles PSC is a microscopic description of ‘Protracted Conflicts’ particularly at the societal or group level.

In addition, according to Moritz (2010), as much as there is a consensus across the field that all conflicts differ in dynamics and conditions, there are some general assumptions that explain the underlying reasons why some conflict continue to exist without any clear resolution in sight. Azar, identifies these four key characteristics responsible for such conflicts. They are security, self-identity, group identity and effective participation (Azar, 1985:2a cited in Beaudoin, 2013:2).

2.3 Background to Transboundary Transhumance in West Africa

According to Sihm (1989) cited by van den Brink et al.(1995), as much as 25% of the total population of West Africa are engaged in some form of pastoral activity or another that classifies them as herdsmen. In West Africa, herdsmen originate mostly from the Sahel regions such as Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. In their original habitats, herdsmen live in dry but arable lands where their survival mostly depends on their in-depth or intimate knowledge of their surrounding dry and harsh environment and the well-being of their livestock (Antonio & Silvia, 2009). To buttress this argument, Aliyu (2015) attributes the survival abilities of herdsmen irrespective of their environment to their development of an organised herding system that guarantees their ability to survive the harsh environmental
conditions of the Sahel, social upheaval and government intervention. Among herdsman, the ownership of cattle is a symbol of prestige and wealth and used as a measure of social status.

There are different pastoral systems determined by most importantly the prevailing natural conditions, the economic and political environment. These conditions either separately or combined can influence or determine the movement of the herdsman. Across all the different pastoral systems mobility is the fundamental character of a pastoral lifestyle or tradition. Among the herdsman, there are different systems of movement such as the nomadic and transhumance system of livestock rearing, which often are interchangeably or incorrectly used within academic and social discourse. In an effort to clarify the distinction, the term nomadic refers to where the mobility of pastoralist is frequent and irregular whiles the transhumance system is where herders move along a predefined route between fixed locations (Aliyu, 2015). Nevertheless, there are other pastoralist systems widely referred to as sedentary. From the above distinctions, the pastoralist of interest in this study are categorised as transboundary transhumance pastoralist due to their practice of moving livestock across well-defined borders of countries in West Africa along existing and specific routes. The practise of moving livestock across the borders of ECOWAS countries is a customary activity of herdsmen dating as far as the 1950’s (Akunzule, 2014). However, these cross border movements are inadequately regulated which results in the huge influx of livestock to a particular country, which consequentially leads to conflict.

Economically, the pastoral industry contributes as much as 30% to 40% of the total agricultural output of West Africa (van den Brink et al., 1995), supplying all major urban
centres in West Africa with a steady and increasing flow of meat (Swift, 1986 cited in van den Brink et al, 1995). Various researchers such as Adelakun et al, (2015) and Kuusaana and Bukari, (2015), through their studies attest to the lucrative nature of the pastoral industry. Furthermore, in the study on herdsmen and crop farmers in Oyo state in Nigeria, Olaniyi (2015) details how the economic interest of cattle rearing has resulted in conflicts and subsequently cattle rustling.

2.4 History of the Fulani Herdsmen in Ghana

In Ghana, herdsmen are widely referred to as ‘Fulani’, making the term ‘Fulani’ synonymous with cattle rearing even though other ethnic groups are largely involved in the rearing and trading of cattle. The Fulani began moving into Ghana specifically at the beginning of the twentieth century (Tonah, 2006). Initially, these herders came from Burkina Faso, namely the Tenkodogo and the Fada N’gourma ethnic group (ibid). With time, the presence of these herdsmen increased steadily with some coming from Mali, Niger and Chad. Their population growth prompted them to move deeper into the savannah and forest vegetation of the country, particularly areas in the Brong-Ahafo, Eastern, Ashanti and Volta regions. According to Akunzule’s report in 2014, the herdsmen favour two main grazing routes in Ghana. The area along the Red Volta River through Widnaba, Adoboya, Nangodi, Karimnega and Naaga. The second route is through the Sissili-Kayaro Forest, Nakong Forest and Wiasa.

Scholars such as Baidoo (2014) and Tonah (2006) outline some reasons for the high rate of migration of the Fulani to Ghana. Firstly, the thriving cattle trade between Ghana and other
West African countries encouraged the Fulani to establish and expand the local cattle trade in Ghana in order to bypass the intermediaries and reap excessive profits.

Another factor that advanced the cross border migration of the Fulani into Ghana was the policies of the colonial government during the early 1950’s. Due possibly to the monopoly of the French in the cattle rearing industry through their colonies in West Africa, the British in an effort to counter French control established large-scale cattle ranches under the ‘Native Administration Farms’ project in the Northern Protectorates of the Gold Coast. At that time, the main occupation of the people of the Gold Coast was trading, mining and crop farming. Therefore, the colonial government outsourced the management of the cattle ranches to Fulani herdsmen from other West African countries.

Lastly but very fundamental to the migration of the Fulani to Ghana is the perennial droughts that affects the Sahel areas of West Africa. One of such devastating droughts occurred in the 1970’s that forced many of the Fulani to migrate further south of the Sahel in search of suitable or conducive environment for their families and herds. Most of these Fulani herdsmen did not return to their original homes and stayed in Ghana and populated their communities.

In those early years of their incursion into Ghana, the Fulani movements were largely restricted to the area between Bolgatanga and Bawku (Tonah, 2006). By the 1960’s, the migration of the herdsmen from the Sahel region into northern Ghana had rapidly increased their population and their activities could no longer be ignored (ibid). Hence, competition
over available resources ensued between the indigenous population who were mostly crop farmers and the herdsmen resulting in conflicts between the two groups.

In response to the challenges confronting them, the herdsmen moved further south into the areas located within the Afram Plains and Volta Basin (Olaniyan et al, 2015; Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015 and Tonah, 2006). The cattle were able to survive in these disease prone areas due to the introduction of modern medicine to fight cattle diseases. Moreover, the herdsmen also took advantage of the deforestation and the establishment of sporadic farming settlement in the forest region, which opened up the previously dense forest region, therefore making the mobility of the cattle herds easier. Above all, the vegetation or foliage of the Afram Plains and the water sources of the Volta Basin make those areas a very conducive area for rearing cattle (Dosu, 2011).

Due to the availability of land that provides feed for the cattle all year round, the pastoral industry in Ghana witnessed a tremendous growth in cattle population and subsequent trade. This encouraged local and wealthy Ghanaians to invest in the industry. This necessitated the demand for more Fulani herdsmen as caretakers of the herds. Authors such as Olaniyan and others (2015) note that the increased investments in the cattle industry by Ghanaians encouraged many herdsmen to migrate into the country in search for employment.

2.5 Background to Agricultural Crop farming in Ghana

Authors such as Kuusaana and Bukari (2015) categorize crop farming in Ghana into two main classes known as large holders and small holders. Large holders have large concessions
of land, which they cultivate cash crops and timber on large scale particularly for exports. These agricultural projects are financed through international cooperation or organisations. The average acre for large holders is 2,086 (MoFA, 2015).

Even though large holders control large tracts of land, their numbers are less as compared to the other group of small holders. Pockets of smallholders’ farms litter the forest belt of Ghana and cultivate crops such as maize, millet, sorghum, rice, yam, cassava, plantain, cocoyam, fruits and vegetables. Smallholders’ farms are cultivated by families to feed themselves whiles large holders’ farms are cultivated by international organisations for exports. With time, small holders can expand to medium scale farming therefore shifting their interest from feeding their families to economic interest. The farmers use their produce as stock collateral and a guarantee to improve their credit ratings with financial firms. Good credit ratings means farmers are able to access loans to expand their farms and related activities or operations. However, smallholders remain vulnerable to the encroachment of herdsmen who drive cattle to graze in their farms and destroy their crops in the process.

In Ghana, land area under agricultural cultivation is 6,421,450 Ha, constituting a 26.89% of the total land area of Ghana (MoFA, 2015). Furthermore, the agricultural sector or industry employs 45.8% out of the total work force (GSS, 2012:12). Moreover, the Government of Ghana asserts its vision for the agricultural sector through the Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) which aims to:
Modernise the agricultural sector culminating in a structurally transformed economy and evident in food security, employment opportunities and reduced poverty (FASDEP II, 2007 cited in Akunzule, 2014:8)

This policy is in agreement with the objectives of the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and the first goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on eradicating extreme poverty by 2030.

Subsequently, the government has launched programs such as ‘One District One Factory and the ‘Planting for Food and Jobs’ with the ambition of achieving this vision. From the above, the agricultural sector is by all accounts the most promising sector of the Ghanaian economy that can fuel economic growth and prosperity, therefore all activities that hinder the development of the agricultural sector such as the destruction of crops by cattle and threaten the realisation of this vision must be tackled urgently.

2.6 Historical Relationship between Farmers and Herdsmen

Throughout history, the relationship between the Fulani herdsmen and crop farmers is based on the economic interest of both groups. According to Tonah (2006), the initial contacts between the Fulani and Ghanaians were made at the markets centres in Bawku, Pusiga, Zuarungu and Nangodi at the beginning of the 20th century. In the markets, the Fulani traded with intermediary livestock traders who posed as intermediaries and assisted the Fulani sell their beef, hides and milk in the local markets. There was no barrier in communication due to
the historical cross border trading activities between towns in the north of Ghana and towns in countries such as Burkina-Faso and others in the Sahel.

With time, the relationship between the Fulani and Ghanaians strengthened as a result of the lucrative cattle trade. Hence, in an effort to expand the cattle trade further south the intermediaries assisted the Fulani herdsmen to acquire lands in Ghana through the local rulers or chiefs. Over the years, the Fulani and their cattle witnessed a steady increase in their population. For instance, from 1950 and 1960 the population of the Fulani increased from 5,500 to 25,000 (Tonah, 2006). Over that period, the Ghanaians population including the communities in which the Fulani settled increased as well.

The simultaneous increase of population on both sides resulted in the competition over limited space for resources such as land and water. Gradually, disputes over the access to lands and water resources between the communities and the Fulani herdsmen became a frequent occurrence.

In response to these new challenges in northern Ghana, some Fulani migrated further south to areas located in the Afram Plains and the Volta Basin (Tonah, 2006) and settled on the outskirts of farming communities and market centres and grazed their herds in the remote parts of the Afram Plains, which was far away from the communities. Furthermore, the Fulani established cattle markets and butcheries within the communities they settled in, hence once again initiating a relationship with their host communities through the economic activities. The first members of the host communities to establish a relationship with the Fulani were the chiefs or community leaders. The chiefs and the Fulani reached agreements
and the latter was to pay the chiefs with cattle as a payment for rent for the lands they settled and grazed. After years of cattle payment to the chiefs, the chiefs of predominantly crop farming communities were now large cattle owners.

Until the 1960’s, the population of the Fulani and their cattle in the Afram Plains was small and their presence and activities were hardly noticed. Nevertheless, the Fulani population grew considerably, which earned them the largest non-indigenous group in Ghana. Today, the Fulani are settled in almost every major town in Ghana. Due to their pastoral life style, they are located mostly in the Volta Basin and Afram Plains of Ghana where the environment is conducive for the rearing and expansion cattle. In the areas they settle and graze, some of them settle permanently constituting a significant population. In these communities, they are recognised as members of the society and are represented at the traditional council by their own Fulani chief.

In their initial periods of settling in Ghana, the Fulani established cordial relations with the chiefs of the communities based on the economic interest that was mutually beneficial to both parties. However, socially there was a gap in the relationship as both groups failed to strengthen social and cultural ties. Tonah, (2006) and others attribute the unwillingness of the Fulani and their host communities to socially integrate, inevitably led to the deterioration of social relations between the hosts and the ‘Aliens’.

The location of the Fulani on the outskirts of the town highlights the spatial distance between them and the communities, which reinforces the cultural difference between the groups and their reluctance to integrate even though both groups share social and economic
infrastructures such as schools, clinics and market centres (Tonah, 2006). Hence, minor disagreement, which could easily be resolved amicably, escalates into violent conflicts due possibly to the lack of social ties between parties involved. Others such as, Baidoo (2014) and Tonah (2006) highlight some characteristics of the Fulani culture such as their reclusive way of life and their communication with cattle as being viewed with suspicion and misunderstood by the people of the community.

However, Tonah (2006) notes that the misunderstanding is mostly among the adults of the communities and the Fulani adults. On the other hand, the children of both groups socialize freely with each other at schools and one can hardly tell the difference between them.

2.7 Discourses on the Causes of Conflict between Farmers and Herdsmen

In examining the factors that contribute to conflicts between crop farmers and herdsmen it is imperative to categorize the factors under two main thematic areas. They are the ‘Fundamental’ or ‘Remote’ factors and the immediate ‘Triggers’ of the conflict. According to Stanley and others (2017), the ‘Fundamental’ or ‘Remote’ factors are those factors accumulated over a considerable period and are the root causes for conflict in the first place. Authors of farmer and herders conflict such as Stanley et al, (2017), Olanyin et al, (2015) and several others acknowledge the ‘Fundamental’ or ‘Remote’ factors and distinguish them explicably from the immediate ‘Triggers’ of the conflict. The immediate ‘Triggers’ on the other hand are those factors that immediately escalate violence between the two parties.
2.7.1 Fundamental or Remote causes of Conflicts

Stanley and others (2017) suggest climate change, population growth, land tenure system and identity as the key underlying reasons to crop farmers and pastoralist conflict.

a) Severe changes in climatic conditions

Firstly, the most fundamental factor of this conflict is the change in climate or weather conditions. Researchers, policy makers, environmental activists argue that climate change will result in mass migration, which will lead to competition and ultimately armed conflicts around the world. In addition, climate researchers note that these effects of climate change will be more acute in developing countries where the necessary infrastructure is absent making agricultural economies more vulnerable to environmental stress.

Within the crop farmers and pastoralist literature, authors such as Ubelejit (2016), Dosu (2011) and others link climate change as the most fundamental factor of the conflicts. Historically, it was due to the perennial droughts in the Sahel region of Africa, which resulted in a drastic change of weather conditions that drove the Fulani further south to countries such as Ghanaian search of better climatic and environmental conditions. Over time, northern Ghana began experiencing a decrease in annual rainfall dwindling foliage and water resources (Dosu, 2011). Once again, deteriorating climatic conditions in Northern Ghana drove the Fulani herdsmen to move further south into areas such as the Afram Plains and Volta Basin where foliage and water resources are in abundance. From the above, this study subscribes to the argument that the gradual increase in climate change and its consequences
forced the Fulani to migrate and settle in foreign lands and compete over resources with host populations that consequently has led to conflicts.

Furthermore, scholars such as Flavel (2010) identify food insecurity as one of the key impacts of climate change that forces affected people to migrate to other areas and where the process is not properly manage can spiral into communal conflicts. Flavel (2010:29) suggests that in the initial stages of environmental degradation, migration can signify the only logical means of survival. When environmental degradation becomes severe resulting in desertification and drought, the conditions may require relocation of affected populations, either internally or in another country (ibid). Therefore, the migration of the Fulani herdsmen to south of the Sahel is a rational action imposed on them due to worsening climatic conditions that dwindled water resources and increased food insecurity.

b) Rapid population explosion

Another fundamental factor of crop farmers and herders conflict is the rapid population growth of human and cattle populations in Ghana. The growing population of both humans and livestock depend on the same resources for survival. The utilization of the land and water resources of the Afram Plains and Volta Basin by both parties increases competition on who gets what, when and how. Scholars such as Dosu (2011) and Opoku (2014) note that the continuous grazing of cattle over the same area over long periods in conjunction with the expansion of farming communities into deeper areas of the Afram Plains is dwindling land or vegetation and water resources that consequently aggravate competition into armed conflicts.
The Fulani and their cattle population have been increasing steadily since their arrival at the beginning of the 20th century. The increase in the cattle population translates into the need to expand grazing lands to cater for the large herds of cattle. On the other side, with annual growth rate of 2.3% (MoFA, 2015) and an increase of 30.4% in the last census (GSS, 2012), Ghana’s population growth rate and its connection to violence cannot be underestimated and ignored. Farming communities within the Afram Plains and Volta Basin area have witnessed considerable spatial expansion over the years. Hence, with both parties expanding rapidly over a limited amount of space and obstructing the activities of each other ultimately will lead to armed conflicts.

In addition, researchers such as Baidoo (2014), Kuusaana and Bukari (2015), Olaniyan et al (2015), Stanley et al (2017) and Tonah (2006) attest to the issue of population growth in Ghana and its subsequent effects such as the expansion of settlements in areas such Berekum, Agogo, Kwahu, and Sene, all located within the Afram Plains. Coincidentally, these areas are also ‘Hotspots’ of crop farmers and herdsmen conflict in Ghana. In these areas, the authors note that the communities have expanded and cultivated farms into lands that were formally allocated to the herdsmen for grazing. From the similar perspective of population growth, the herdsmen have also enlarged their grazing areas and routes without permission on to lands under cultivation. Hence, since the contact made by parties is not mutually beneficial but rather of competition over resources, parties result to the use of intimidation and force to achieve their objective of controlling the resources and most at times the Fulani have the advantage due to their use of firearms.
However, not all scholars or researchers attribute the conflict to natural or environmental factors. Other authors allude the conflict to some pragmatic social and political factors detailed in the following section.

c) The Land Tenure system

Scholars such as Tsikata and Seini, (2004) and Ayee et al (2011:2) argue that political factors such as land tenure policies in Ghana are a major cause of conflicts within the country. In addition, others such as Peluso and Lund (2011) also attribute the nature or system of allocating land use, contributes to conflicts in Africa. Furthermore, Peluso and Lund (2011), attempt to link land tenure and identity where they argue that, land and property ownership in Africa is connected to citizenship and social identity. Therefore, as Ayee and others (2011:2) note, “Land is an asset with cultural, economic, political and social ramification”. Hence, its allocation or distribution can be a source of conflict.

In the Savannah and Sahel regions of West Africa both small scale farmers and Fulani herders face land tenure insecurity (Campion & Acheampong, 2014). Particularly in Ghana, the nature of the prevailing customary land tenure system exacerbates the current land tenure insecurity experienced all over the country (Tsikata & Seini 2004:4). Land tenure system in Ghana, is poorly managed and rife with corruption that usually results into confusion and conflicts between tenants of the land over which portion of land is rightfully theirs. The Fulani take advantage of the inadequate land management policy and exploit the insecurities in customary land tenure system (Baidoo, 2014). For instance, the Agogo Traditional Council (ATC) originally leased land to four individuals for cattle rearing (Kuusaana & Bukari,
However, because of poor monitoring of the land other Fulani herdsmen particularly from Nigeria who had no agreement with the ATC encroached and grazed their herds on the land destroying the crops in the process (ibid).

These conflicts arising from land tenure are due to the lack consultations with land stakeholders in the community, during the allocation of land by traditional leaders (Ayee et al, 2011 & Baidoo, 2014). The nature or system of land tenure is quite dynamic as compared to other land tenure systems in other areas. The land tenure system in Ghana is in many varying forms such as land leasing, share contracts, land hiring and outright purchase (Baidoo, 2014).

Secondly, conflicts occur in land tenure system partly because the land tenure system particularly lacks transparency especially at the local governance level. This fuels suspicion and mistrust among land users.

d) The Fulani as foreigners

Lastly, underneath these accusations and counteraccusations is a fundamental factor of nationality and identity (Olaniyan et al, 2015:61). Cultural, religious and ethnic differences between pastoral and host communities cause conflicts by creating misunderstandings, suspicion, hostility and prejudice. An interim report by the Ghana Cattle Ranching Project (GCRP) Committee acknowledges the issue of identity in noting that:
Herdsmen are one of the most misunderstood, vulnerable and marginalised occupational groups that are often blamed as the source of troubles and violent conflict across the Sub-Saharan Africa (GCRP, 2017:4).

Various authors submit the arguments that identity and nationality within a state highlights the supremacy of indigenous population over those considered migrants or foreigners. Olaniyan and others (2015), stress this argument in relation to the Fulani in Ghana, where they note that the Fulani are regarded as foreigners and will always be regarded as such irrespective of the generations born and raised in Ghana. This is simply because the Fulani are believed to have migrated to Ghana after its consolidation as a state. This fundamental issue of the definition of citizenship poses a constitutional quagmire for the Ghanaian state in addressing the Fulani question. Several of the Fulani are born and raised in Ghana and enjoy some social benefit such as health insurance and even partake in voting exercises. In the face of the law, they are Ghanaians but according to the people, they are foreigners who should not exercise the rights of citizens such as access to lands at the expense of Ghanaians. As Peluso and Lund (2011) postulate that in Africa land ownership is intimately linked with identity.

The difference between the people’s perception of who is a Ghanaian or not and the constitutional provision for citizenship constitutes a major dilemma for the state. Conflict between farmers and herders is not only existence in Africa but also in other regions as well. As Roy (1994) notes, conflict between the Hindus and Muslims arise when cattle belonging to the Muslims destroy farms belonging to Hindus. This conflict in its escalation adopts
features such as religious identity and explores the difference between Hindus and Muslims similarly as it explores the difference between the Fulani and Ghanaians.

2.7.2 Immediate ‘Triggers’ of the Conflict

As much as increased competition on resources driven by remote causes can result in animosity among competing groups, these causes themselves are not sufficient enough to lead to the escalation of violence as witnessed between the crop farmers and herdsmen. Some factors rapidly escalate existing conditions into violence. Stanley and others (2017) term these factors as ‘Triggers’. Furthermore, Stanley and others describe these ‘Triggers’ as the curve that leads to violence. These triggers include, the destruction of crops, killing of cattle, pollution of water bodies, harassment or social vices and the perceived collusion of authorities.

a) The destruction of crops

At the centre of this conflict is the destruction of crops by cattle. The herdsmen either intentionally or unintentionally, drive or leave their cattle herds to wander onto farms to feed and destroy crops in the process. Out of anger, the farmers retaliate in revenge attacks, killing the cattle that wander into their farms. Others also spray the crops with pesticides that kill the cattle that graze through their farms. The herdsmen view the killing of their cattle as an act of aggression against them and consequentially attack the farmers. This results in a cycle of violence through a series of revenge attacks by both parties. In a study conducted by Stanley et al, (2017), on the perception of factors among stakeholders that included, farmers,
herdsmen, traditional authority, civil society and security agencies, ranked the destruction of crops as the primary trigger of violence. In addition, Stanley and others (2017), note that even herdsmen respondents acknowledge that the destroying of crops by cattle is the single most important factor that leads to violence. Furthermore, others such as Aliyu (2015), Mortiz (2010) and several others add to the argument when they note the destruction of crops by cattle as the profound precipitator of violence between crop farmers and herdsmen.

b) The pollution of water bodies

Water bodies are an essential and necessary feature for the survival of every society or community. Unlike in urban areas where water is collected from pipes and tanks, in the rural areas water is fetched directly from springs, streams, rivers and lakes. Communities located along the banks of rivers and lakes such as the Afram River and Volta Basin rely on fishing as an economic activity. In areas where there are inconsistent rainfalls, dams are built to store water for domestic use and irrigation. The herdsmen also, depend on these water bodies for their herds. In fact, the availability of water all year around was one of the factors that first motivated them to migrate further south of the Sahel (Dosu, 2011). However, the manner through which the herdsmen do this is what is unacceptable to the people. According to the studies conducted by Tonah (2006) and others note that the herdsmen allow the cattle to step into the water bodies and muddy the water bodies making the water unusable for domestic activities. Furthermore, the cattle defecate into the water bodies contaminating it and making the water bodies prone to diseases. In an effort to stop these acts, the people forcefully
prevent the pastoralist from accessing the water bodies through blockades (Opoku, 2014). The herdsmen retaliate by forcing their way through with guns.

c) The criminal activities of the herdsmen

Another trigger of the conflict is the perceived criminal activities of the Fulani herdsmen. The Fulani herdsmen have been widely accused of engaging in criminal activities such as robbery, murder, assault and sexual harassments (REGSEC, 2012). Several studies, attest to these accusations that even though the Fulani primary occupation is the rearing of cattle and migrate with the sole purpose of doing that, the firearms they carry give them the means to indulge in criminal activities against small communities. The pastoralist are believed to have acquired these weapons through their existing links in Sahara deserts where there is a proliferation of weapons possibly from the intra-state conflicts in countries in that region (Moritz, 2010).

d) Collusion between the herdsmen and authorities

The perception of the collusion of authorities is from both parties of the conflict. According to the members of the community, the traditional authorities are in collusion with the herdsmen due to their economic interest or stake in the cattle business (Baidoo, 2014; Olaniyan et al, 2015; Opoku, 2014 and Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015). It is suggested that, the traditional chiefs are beneficiaries of the herdsmen due to the rent the herdsmen pay to the chiefs and therefore the chiefs are reluctant to expel them even after all the trouble the herdsmen are causing.
Furthermore, the various studies claim that the chiefs themselves, other influential individuals or public officials are cattle owners and therefore there is a conflict of interest when dealing with the herdsmen. This deepens the notion that state authorities are on the side of the herdsmen, urging the local people to take matters into their own hands such as the killing of cattle found on their farms.

Moreover, the wide condemnation of the Fulani menace nationally forced government to act by deploying an armed security contingent of both police and the military. Their mission was to quell the spate of attacks and drive the herdsmen out of the area. The herdsmen view this action as bias and as declaration of war on them by the state. Therefore, they arm themselves to protect and defend themselves from what they believe to be an unfair position of the state.

2.8 Consequences of Farmers and Herdsmen conflicts

Several authors acknowledge that the conflict has the ability to have an immense effect on not only the social and economic livelihoods of both crop farmers and Fulani communities across the country but can have spill over effect and affect national security as a whole. Aliyu (2015) opines that conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen poses a greater risk to the security of West African nations more that terrorism.

The agro-economists such as Adelakun and others (2015) detail the economic effects of the conflict on the community. They note that conflict reduces the output of production of the pastoral industry and especially that of crop farmers. On the side of the farmers, the destruction of the crops by grazing herds reduces their overall output of produce, therefore
indirectly reducing their incomes. Therefore, it is widely suggested that the activities of the herdsmen threaten the very means of economic livelihoods of the crop farmers. With their economic livelihoods under threat, it hampers their ability to participate in other activities within the community. Additionally, Opoku (2014) and others add to the argument where they opine that the conflicts, impedes agriculture expansion or extension programs designed for agricultural development. The development of commercial farming has been the vision of successive government and farmers alike with programs such as the GSGDA and CAADP (Akunzule, 2014). For instance, to accelerate this vision the Government of Ghana has further initiated programs such as ‘The Planting for Food and Jobs’, which are intended to create employment opportunities. However, the menacing activity of the herdsmen seems to threaten the realisation of these visions, ideas or concepts due to their encroachment on lands under cultivation.

A comparative analysis of the conflict areas and non-conflict areas by Opoku (2014) shows that on the average, farmers in conflict areas earn low income (GHC 827.00) than farmers in non-conflict areas (GHC 3,600.00). Furthermore, Baidoo (2014) notes that on a personal front, the destruction of crops affects the ability of crop farmers to repay the loans they have secured to invest in their farming business. Therefore, from all accounts the economic effects of the conflicts on farmers and their communities can have larger implications for national programmes or policies intended to boost economic growth and development.

Secondly, scholars such as Adelakun et al (2015), Moritz (2006) and others highlight the displacement of families as one of the pressing issues of crop farmers and herdsmen conflict.
The cycle of violence between the two parties forces hundreds of families to flee their communities becoming internal refugees. Olaniyi (2015), details how herdsmen and crop farmers conflicts resulted in the displacement of thousands in northern Nigeria leading the government to declare a state of emergency in that area. In most cases, crop farmers are the victims but in some instances, the herdsmen have been forced to move from their settlements. In Ghana, herdsmen in Berekum and Sene West were the victims of attacks from the youth of the community. In these areas, the houses and properties of the herdsmen were burnt and destroyed forcing them to move from these areas.

Another serious effect of the conflict is the environmental pollution of herding activities. The herdsmen burn the vegetation with the aim of allowing fresh vegetation to grow. This leaves the land bare and susceptible to erosion and land degradation, making the land unsuitable for agricultural purposes (Baidoo, 2014). In addition, the pollution of the water bodies is of high concern to surrounding communities and the environment campaigners generally. Water is a necessity not only for human consumption and use but also important for other living organisms and other environmental process that depend on the availability of water for survival.

Lastly but most importantly is the human cost of these conflicts. Across the literature, it is a common feature of crop farmers and herdsmen conflict to have human casualties. Some countries such Nigeria have recorded the highest death rate in the conflict across Africa and perhaps the world (Adelakun et al, 2015; Aliyu 2015; Blench, 2010; Olaniyan, 2015; Tukur, 2013). In countries such as Tanzania, Cameroun, Burkina Faso and Ghana have recorded
lower deaths but still a concern given the increasing numbers that are falling victim to this conflict annually (Moritz, 2006; Mwamfupe, 2015; Opoku, 2014). In Ghana, the exact death figures related specifically to the conflict is not known with figures disputed by the communities (Baidoo, 2014)

2.9 Strategies to Manage Transhumance Activities

There are a number of legal and institutional frameworks purposely instituted to manage and prevent pastoral activities from causing conflicts at the international and national level of governance. Several legislative instruments, policy frameworks and protocols are meant to regulate the movement of livestock within and across the borders of Ghana and to further enhance conflict management institutions and mediation processes.

2.9.1 International Level Response

Due to the prevalent and persistent nature of crop farmers and herdsmen conflict in West Africa, on the 21st Ordinary Session of the Conference of Heads of State and Government the organisation established the Decision A/DEC.5/10/98 to govern the cross border activities of herdsmen. Currently, ECOWAS has two protocols regarding transhumance activity namely; “The Regulation on Transhumance between ECOWAS Member States 1998” and “The ECOWAS Regulation on Transhumance between ECOWAS Member States 2003” (Akunzule, 2014). The objective of these protocols is to regulate the movement of cattle herds across member states whiles creating defined corridors reserved for grazing. Akunzule (2014) further stresses that ECOWAS established these protocols because it recognises that
the conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen can possibly threaten food self-sufficiency and security, economic and political stability of member states. Moreover, in order to ensure that the protocols are implemented, ECOWAS advised member states to issue the International Transhumance Certificate (ITC) to herdsmen in order to facilitate their movements and ensure they receive the appropriate reception within member states.

However, Akunzule (2014) report highlights some key challenges of the ECOWAS Protocol. Firstly, Akunzule (2014:32) opines that decision making of the ECOWAS is taken by high-level bureaucrats, who do not involve grass-root stakeholders. The grassroots stakeholders such as farmers, herdsmen and the chiefs are essential to the decisions themselves. He further argues that:

Such arrangement of institutional framework and low capacity of stakeholders in terms of functional organizations and funding are not allowing for sustainable management of conflicts related to transhumance in host countries such as Ghana.

Hence, stakeholders such as farmers, herdsmen, security officers and chiefs are unaware of these regulations and therefore fail to adhere to them.

Secondly, another challenge of ECOWAS is that the protocol fails to take into consideration the spread of livestock disease through transhumance activities. Livestock disease is easily transmittable through water bodies that serve both human populations and cattle within member states. Animal diseases such as pest foot and mouth(FMD), Peste des Petits Ruminants(PPR), Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), trypanosomiasis and anthrax or blackleg are the most common diseases spread through transhumance activities (Teko-
Agbo et al., 2005 cited in Akunzule, 2014). Herdsmen fail to submit their cattle herds to veterinary checks before crossing the borders. With the unregulated movements of cattle across borders, an outbreak of disease can be catastrophic because diseases can easily transfer from one country to another.

Lastly, ECOWAS fails to clearly define the corridors of grazing within member states. Akunzule (2014) argues that if the corridors of grazing are well defined within member states, this could improve the access to livestock such as cattle in coastal countries and consequently contributing to their social and economic development.

2.9.2 National Level Response

At the national level, the Government of Ghana has instituted some policies to address the current conflict between crop farmers and herdsmen in the country. Initially, the Government of Ghana instituted a stakeholders committee in 2001. The mission of the committee was to visits all the hotspot of conflict, conduct investigation and make recommendations to government on the best method to manage the conflict. Key members of the committee included the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, The Police Service, Armed Forces and Traditional chiefs.

a) The ‘Operation Cow Leg’

Notable among the policies to address the farmers-herders violence is the ‘Operation Cow Leg’. The objective of this operation was to expel the herdsmen and their cattle from areas in the Afram Plains and Volta Basin due to their menacing activities (GAF, 2016). This policy
is carried out through the collaboration with District Security Council (DISEC), Regional Security Council (REGSEC), the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) and support from the central government. However, several authors including Baidoo (2014), Kuusaana and Bukari (2015) and Olaniyan et al (2015) note that the operation has so far failed to expel the herdsmen from the area since herdsmen continue to terrorise citizens in those areas. Nevertheless, it must be noted that recently in January 2018, the Government of Ghana launched a renewed and intensified operation against the illegal activities of the herdsmen. Whether the current operation has been successful or failed will be further discussed through the findings of this study.

b) The Ghana Cattle Ranching Project (GCRP)

Following an outbreak of conflict in Kintampo in the Brong-Ahafo Region in 2017, the Government of Ghana under the auspices of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) and National Security, set up the Ghana Cattle Ranching Project Committee (GCRP, 2017). The objective of this committee is to seek and recommend a sustainable and long-term proposal and strategy to address the perennial crop farmers and herdsmen conflicts that were terrorising Ghanaian citizens and affecting agricultural production (ibid). Membership of the committee is made up of various stakeholders and experts in the field of transhumance and agricultural affairs including several leading experts from various universities nationwide, directorates under MoFA, agencies under national security and representatives from the key stakeholders such as crop farmers and herdsmen associations.
Currently, the success of the committee cannot be fully assessed since it began its work not long ago. Moreover, the needed funds and logistics are yet to reach the committee for it to work expeditiously. However, the committee is conducting a series of stakeholders meetings and discussions in order to fully address the interest of parties and successfully implement the ranching project in Ghana.

2.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature review outlines the history of relationship between farmers and herdsmen, the suggested causes and effects. Across the discourse regarding farmers and herdsmen conflict, the various literature centre on the history, causes and effects and do not extensively examine the reasons behind its protracted nature. This study attempts to address this lacuna by conducting a field study to gather data and present findings on the reasons behind the recurring and persistent situation of conflict between farmers and herdsmen.
CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Framework

The study adopts the ‘The Protracted Social Conflict Theory’ and ‘The Human Needs Theory’ to analyse crop farmers and herdsmen conflict.

3.1 The Protracted Social Conflict Theory (PSC)

When discussing the literature on prolonged conflicts it is beneficial to highlight the work of Edward Azar. As one of the early scholars of conflict resolution, he was the first to describe the underlying factors responsible for protracted conflicts especially in developing countries. His seminal work (1978, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986a, 1986c, 1988& 1990) provides a solid foundation from which several PSC scholars have developed a theoretical conceptualisation of PSC. Azar, describes PSC as:

Conflicts that occur in communities where communal groups are deprived of the satisfaction of their basic needs on the basis of their communal identity (Azar, 1990).

In the conceptualization of Protracted Social Conflicts, Azar highlights the three phases through which non-conflict situation develops into a conflict.

Under the first phase known as ‘Genesis’, he argues that the communal content of a society is the most significant of all the factors that result into a protracted conflict. According to Azar,
a community with diverse identity groups with distinct interest are suitable grounds for conflicts to prolong over long periods. Moreover, others such as Chojnacki and Engels (2013), Martin (2011), Patel and Burkle (2012) and Tsikata and Seini (2004) subscribe to the position that identity is a dominant social theme that drive, protract and escalate conflicts. Identity fault lines can exploit the grievances among societal groups, subsequently fuelling conflicts. In fact, numerous examples of conflicts over identity where foreigners or migrants are referred to as ‘enemies’, have recently been witnessed in Cote D’Ivoire, Sudan, and South Africa (Peluso & Lund, 2011). In Ghana as Tsikata and Seini (2004) observe, the struggle over land and its control between farmers and herdsmen is an important aspect of identity politics. Furthermore and more importantly, Azar and others add to the argument with the submission that the satisfaction of the basic human needs of these communal groups is a determining factor of the conflict. While, one group may enjoy the satisfaction of their needs, they may be doing so at the expense of others. Hence, the victims of deprivation may rely on the collective use of violence to register their grievances.

Another component of Azar’s concept relevant to this study is the action of the state or government. Ideally, the state has the responsibility to ensure that all persons under its jurisdiction are able to attain their basic needs without obstruction from others. However, Giordano et al (2005) observe in countries experiencing protracted conflicts this is not the case. There is a gap among state institutions in delivering their mandates or protecting the rights of ownership of citizens over resources. Thus, in conclusion this situation exacerbates an already volatile and competitive condition.
Secondly, the next phase of Azar’s protracted conflict is the ‘Process dynamics’. This stage comprises mostly of violent confrontation. At this phase Azar, observes that communal actions and strategies can escalate a dormant situation into a violent conflict. In the context of farmers and herders conflict, Stanley and others (2017), share a similar view with Azar in their study titled “Triggers of Farmer-Herder Conflict in Ghana: A Non-Parametric Analysis of Stakeholders Perspectives”, where they conclude that actions such as the destruction of crop farms and killing of cattle are the most significant and immediate causes of this conflict. Furthermore, Azar also notes that response or actions of the state can lead to an increase in violence within the community. In most cases of conflicts, the state is known to adopt hard line strategies as a response. This strategy equally invites a militant response from groups who feel victimised. This is evident in Ghana, as the intensified operation against the herdsmen has resulted in a militant response from the herdsmen against state security institutions.

The last of Azar’s component of protracted conflict is the ‘Built in Mechanism of Conflict’, which relates to the effects that a prolonged conflict can have on the communities including socio-economic effects and the perception communal groups can develop concerning each other. These effects can directly inhibit belligerents to reach an amicable solution and further, prolong the conflict. Azar concludes by distinguishing protracted conflicts in which the recommended solutions do not meet the core interest of parties therefore resulting in the parties returning to a state of conflict. Hence, the outcome of the solution is a negative sum output where there are no winners and no clear end-point.
Some proponents of this concept include Friedman (1999, 2002), Goertz and Diehl (1992), and Schrodt (1983). Others such as Beaudoin, (2013) present, test and justify the theoretical conceptualization of the components of PSC in her studies titled “Protracted Social Conflict, A Re-conceptualisation and Case Analysis”.

The concept of PSC is essential in understanding contemporary social or communal conflicts. Since the end of the Cold War, conflicts have increasingly become ‘internalized’ within communities rather than ‘internationalized’ among states. These trends of conflict indicate that civilians instead of being accidental casualties are intentionally the targets in the conflict. Therefore, because PSC deals with violence at the social or communal level, the concept provides the framework to identify the components that fuel and sustain the conflicts and applying the appropriate intervention to prevent conflict.

Nevertheless, Beaudoin (2013) highlights a very important critique of Azar’s concept of PSC. She argues that Azar’s concept lacks a clearly theoretical timing that a conflict must endure before it is considered a protracted conflict. The pattern or tendency of the academic work regarding PSC is to describe or define the conditions that create or contribute to prolonged conflicts rather than identifying the length of time that a conflict must endure or exist before being considered a PSC. Thus, conflict researchers have no parameters of time from which they can determine whether a conflict is protracted or not. Therefore, a clear theoretical parameter of minimum range of time is required in order to correctly consider conflicts whether they are PSC or not.
3.2 The Human Needs Theory

One theory that analyses the roots causes of conflict is the Human Needs theory. The Human Needs theory offers an insightful understanding of the underlying factors responsible for the conflict and thus assists practitioners in reaching a possible resolution. This study analyses the theory of Human Needs within the context of the farmer-herders conflict in Ghana.

It is widely agreed that in order to survive, all humans depend on certain fundamental essentials or needs. These essential needs of humanity are the key for survival irrespective of status, age, location and gender. These essential needs are what are referred to as ‘The Basic Human Needs’. The theory posits that individuals or groups will explore every option to obtain their needs including the use of violence or coercion.

Human needs theorist contend that one of the fundamental factors responsible for protracted conflicts is people’s unyielding drive to meet their unmet needs at the individual, group and societal level (Burton, 1990). One of its proponents, Rosenberg suggests that; violence is the ‘tragic expression’ of unmet needs, indicating that all actions undertaken by humans is an attempt to satisfy their needs (Danielsen, 2005:3).

Furthermore the theory postulates that fundamental to the resolution of conflicts is the view that any arrangements with the objective of fully ending conflicts should include arrangements that fully satisfy the basic human needs of the actors. Hence, the basic human needs of the actors are not negotiable if any resolution is to be reached.
To explain further, one of the early proponents of this theory John Burton opines that in addition to common and imperative biological needs of food and shelter, there are basic social human needs such as recognition, security and participation that are relevant to the well-being and livelihoods of the people (Burton, 1990).

In using Human Needs as a theory in conflict studies, its proponents argue that conflict arises where the needs of a particular group are not recognised and even if recognised its attainment are frustrated or not satisfactorily fulfilled. According to Burton, in order to avoid conflict, society must address those needs. This is because as much as people are eager for new opportunities for the improvement of their well-being, they will protest measures and conditions that deny them of needs they deem relevant to their survival. As a result, any relationship, system or condition that denies these human needs eventually generates protest and if not managed appropriately, escalates in to conflicts.

In addition, D. Pirages contributes to the argument by distinguishing between needs and wants. He implies that “Basic human needs are physiologically determined while wants are socially determined.”(Pirages, 1976, cited in Burton, 1990:39). Hence, if some controlling resources are the need of an individual or society, then the absence of this control leads people to adapt anti-social behaviour including violence, which ultimately may lead into conflict.

Some scholars renowned for their application of the Human Needs theory are: Abraham Maslow, Marshall Rosenberg, John Burton and Manfred Max-Neef. Others such as Danielsen (2005) applied the human needs theory in his study of the conflict in Sri Lanka between the
Government and the Tamil Tigers. In Africa, scholars such as Frempong (1999) adopt this theory in his studies, where he examines the “Sub Regional Approach to Conflict Resolution in Africa”. Specifically, in farmers-herders conflict, Ahmadu (2011) employs the human needs theory in his study where he explores the causes and management approaches to farmers-herders conflict in the Lake Chad Region.

In the context of this research, the pursuit of basic needs by farmers as well as herdsmen is the precipitator of the conflict especially in circumstance where the same resources such as land are increasingly limited and controlled. In addition to land as the fundamental need, other needs such as recognition, security and participation are essential to farmers and herdsmen. The herdsmen desire recognition within a society that regards them as ‘foreigners’. In addition, both farmers and herdsmen must be assured of their security rather than living under the fear of attacks. Lastly, in finding an amicable solution to the conflict both groups must equally participate in the resolution process. The study argues that satisfying these basic needs is indispensable to resolving the conflict.

Therefore, there is the notion that measures that fully satisfies basic human needs can effectively resolve the conflict is indispensable to conflict resolution. This study shares the consensus that in order to reach a successful resolution, any strategy with the aim of finally resolving this conflict must include the satisfaction of the basic interests of both farmers and herdsmen that are being hindered by prevailing conditions.

The Human Needs theory is very useful in the context of violent conflicts. First, it is a widely applicable theory in various forms or dimensions of conflict. The theory is applicable at all
levels of society such as intra and inter-personal conflicts, inter-group conflicts and in the international stage (Danielsen, 2005:6).

Secondly, the theory focuses on the root causes of the conflict rather than the triggers of the conflict. In Human Needs theory, practitioners identify the fundamental needs of the parties and look at the best environments through which the parties can peacefully meet their needs.

Thirdly, the Human Needs theory underlines the common elements of humanity. In global affairs where differences among the various groups of people are emphasized, the human needs theory attempts to unify all peoples from different regions and cultures, under a common understanding that irrespective of who we are; we all have the same basic needs (Danielsen, 2005:6).

The fourth advantage of the human needs theory is that it makes it very clear that human needs are non-negotiable. Hence, basic human needs cannot be traded, suppressed or bargained for.

However, there are some drawbacks in applying the human needs theory in conflict studies. Firstly, across the conflict studies literature there are disagreements on what exactly are the basic needs of the human needs theory. How do we really identify the human needs? Among the various theorists, there are discrepancies over what are the basic human needs. For example, Maslow identifies food, shelter and water among his basic needs. Burton identifies distributive justice, safety and security as human needs. Rosenberg identifies physical nurturance and interdependence as human needs and Max Neef identifies subsistence and
protection as human needs. With these various definitions, there are no universally agreed set of basic human needs therefore creating gaps when applying this theory.

Secondly, another source of disagreement is the importance of the needs. Which needs are more important than others? Should some needs be prioritised than others? For instance, should food and shelter be met before considering security? Or are protection, recognition and self-fulfilment equally important?

However, irrespective of what the basic needs are their deprivation by one groups against another can lead to the use of violence to attain those needs. This theory permits the assumption that the conflict between farmers and herders centres on the opposition of one group against the other in the pursuance of fundamental needs. This results in frustrations on both sides and consequentially the use of violence to satisfy those needs.

In conclusion, these two theories reinforce each other in the sense that the denial of fundamental essentials for man’s survival could lead to resorting to conflict for self-preservation. Conflicts that are rooted in self-preservation are more likely going to be protracted, particularly, where the denial is rooted in the differences in identity.

3.3 Research Questions

From the theories, the research considers the following vital questions:

1. Why have successive governments failed to solve farmers-herders conflict?

2. What is the position of farmers?
3. What is the position of herdsmen?

4. To what extent are herdsmen integrated into the society?

5. Do security organisations provide effective mechanisms for resolving farmers-herders conflict?
CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

In every research study, the accuracy of the findings depends solely on a proper method of data collection process. Therefore, a robust process of gathering information enables the researcher reach a substantive and accurate conclusion in the study. This study employs the qualitative method of data collection. Understanding social phenomenon such as conflict cannot be measured in quantitative analysis such as amount or frequency. Understanding conflicts focuses on the relationship between actors and their social experiences. Qualitative method of research offers the researcher the space to study real world situations as they occur naturally. This research method is imperative to this study because it provides an elaborate and detailed descriptive analysis of the research data. Hence, offering an in-depth understanding to research problem and study.

4.2 The Study Area: Asante Akim North District (AAND)

The study adopts an area as a case study because case studies provides the researcher and readers, the opportunity to experience events in a more concise and practical manner (Castro & Nielson, 2003). With the case study, the researcher has the opportunity to identify primary and secondary stakeholders, explore the historical background, examine the contemporary
causes, review the role of the local and external actors in the conflicts and assess the past and present attempts at management and resolution. For the audience, the case study provides real-life experience in an exemplary manner, which can contribute and sharpen their understanding of the dynamics of the conflict study.

The study selects the Asante Akim North District (AAND) because it records frequent cases of farmers-herders conflict in Ghana (Baidoo, 2014; Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015; Olaniyan et al, 2015; REGSEC, 2012). The AAND is a hotbed of farmers-herders conflict for over a decade. In spite of all the attention given to this area by the government and its security agencies conflict between the two groups is still persistent. Therefore, the AAND is a classic example in understanding crop farmers and herders conflict.

The AAND covers a total land area of 1,217.7 square kilometres (472.4 sq. miles) (MoLGRD, 2012). The district lies south of Kumasi the Ashanti region capital at approximately 80 kilometres. The district was established as a District Assembly on February 6th, 2012 by Legislative Instrument (L.I) 2057 as stipulated in the sub- section(1) of section 3 of the local government act, 1993 (A462) (ibid). The Agog town is the district capital of the AAND. The district shares borders with the Kwahu East and the Sekyere Afram Plains North districts, which also record similar farmers and herdsmen conflict. A major attraction of the herdsmen to this area of the Afram Plains is the Afram River, which borders the AAND in the north.

The district has a wet semi-equatorial climate and experiences a bimodal rainfall, within a range of 1,250mm and 1,750mm per annum (Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015:55). The district
records its rainfall from May to July and from September to November (ibid). The geography of the area is that of plains and low-lying areas bordered by a unique hilly landscape. The vegetation is mostly tropical rainforest and savannah grassland. In infrastructure development, the district boasts of modern infrastructure, including senior high schools and tertiary institutions, hospital, roads and a market centre all located in the district capital but serves all constituents of the district.

4.3 The Study Population

According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, The AAND has a population of 140,694 that represents 2.9% of the Ashanti Region’s total population (GSS, 2012:98). Furthermore, the area has the population of 32,400 households with an average of 4.3 persons per household (ibid). In addition, 42% of these household populations live in the rural and remote parts of the district (ibid), where the conflict is frequent. The majority of the population are Akan, with significant minority groups such as the Fulani, Kusasi, Ga, Dagomba, Nzemas, Frafra and Ewes who are there mainly to work on farms. The predominant religion is Christianity followed by Islam and Traditionalists. The primary occupation of most of the population is farming and trading, specifically trading in farm produce. Agriculture employs as much as 72.7% of the population (GSS, 2014 cited in Kuusaana & Bukari, 2015:55). Most of the farmers are small holders cultivating crops such as tomatoes, cassava, plantain, yam, groundnuts, cocoyam, water-melon and maize. Additionally charcoal making and lumbering are also active occupations in the area. The population of the herdsmen in the district are not known because of their mobility life style.
However, the Fulani presence in district is not a recent development. According to reports, the Fulani were first spotted in the area between 1996 and 1997, even though they have been operating in the Afram Plains portion of the Asante Akim area longer than that (Tonah, 2006). Subsequently, over time the Fulani herdsman population has significant presence in areas such as Nyamebekyere, Bebuso, Brahabome, Mankalia, Abrawapun, Onyemeso, and Pataban (Olaniyan et al, 2015). The presence of herders in these areas results in conflicts between them and local residents.

Figure 4.1 Map of Asante Akim North District (Source: Asante Akim North District Assembly)
4.4 The Research Design

A semi-structured interview is used to record data from respondents. All interviews are face to face interactions with respondents in the study area. This is an opportunity for respondents to provide immediate evidence to back their arguments and claims. The questions are mostly open-ended questions, structured to give the respondents the liberty to respond in such a manner that will generate further conversation or discussion. The semi-structured questionnaire also provided the researcher the opportunity to explore other salient topics that might not have been considered but respondents may raise such topics. The objective of the interviews is to capture the responses of the respondents on certain salient issues. These include, why governments have failed to find a lasting solution to the conflict, the entrenched position of farmers, the entrenched position of herdsmen, the integration of herdsmen into the society, the consequences of the conflict and in their own opinion the what the best solution method is. The nature of the interview aides the researcher address these questions and other issues not captured on the questionnaire.

Primarily, the interviews include farmers and cattle owners due to their activities, which are at the centre of the conflict. In addition, traditional leaders are interviewed because they have a responsibility in the leasing of lands, which is under contention. Furthermore, traditional leaders are the first line of arbiters in local disputes in rural communities and lastly but not least as they are historical sources of events that occur in their communities. Furthermore, interacting with security officials enables the researcher gather first-hand experience in managing farmers-herders conflict and the challenges facing the operation and security
personnel. The interview includes police officials at the district headquarters and personnel of the joint military and police personnel. Local government officials, assist with an in-depth knowledge into how the government manages or finances operations against the activities of the herdsmen. Lastly, the study includes the discussions with experts in this field of study specifically and purposefully from the academic sphere.

The secondary sources include court records, reports and intelligence gathered by the District Crime Investigation Division of Ghana Police Services of their investigations or inquiry into the subject of study. In addition, the study also relied on committee reports submitted to the Regional Security Council and the media investigation.

4.5 Sampling and Sampling Procedure

Within the district, a purposive approach is used to select three (3) villages or farming communities. This selection was based on information provided by the Asante Akim North District Assembly and the District Police Headquarters that identified these areas as reporting a high frequency of cases involving herdsmen. These areas are Ananekrom, Bebome and Munkalia.

Five (5) farmers were interviewed from each of these villages, thus an overall number of fifteen (15) farmers are interviewed. In the case of herdsmen the objective was to follow the same pattern used to interview the farmers, however as a result of the intensified operation against their activities, they have been forced to evacuate the district to neighbouring districts, thus the cattle owners and executives of the Fulani association were interviewed to
fill the remaining vacuum. In all, a total of nine (9) respondents are interviewed, including three herdsmen (3), three (3) cattle owners and three (3) executives of the Fulani association. Other stakeholders interviewed include, five (5) security officials, three (3) members of the traditional council and five (5) local government officials and one (1) academic expert in the area of study who is also a member of the GCRP committee. In total, thirty-eight (38) respondents were interviewed for the study.

**Table 4.1 Sample Size of Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herdsmen</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Owners</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herders Association</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Leaders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Officials</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government Officials</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Expert</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 Methods of Data Collection

First of all, the mode of administering the semi-structured questionnaire is through face-to-face interactions or interview in either the working or living environment of respondents. Majority of the respondents prefer the local language Twi as the language of communication. Others respondents such as government and security officials preferred English, while others such as the cattle owners and Fulani association occasionally expressed themselves in Pidgin language.

Data collection begins at the District Assembly Office with a series of interviews. The interview sessions at the District Assembly proves very vital because the researcher was furnished with documents such as minutes of meetings that provided evidence of the efforts and challenges of the district office. Furthermore, the district office also provides key information such as the areas within the district that have recorded the highest cases of conflict. These areas are confirmed by the police at the District Headquarters of the police.

The other respondents especially the farmers are interviewed within their homes and communities where the researcher observes the general culture of the people notably their social way of life and economic activities. For example; during the course of the fieldwork, I observe that truck transport loads of crops mostly plantain out of Agogo regularly. This observation is a testament to the information by respondents about the thriving agro-economy in the area and its viable economic potential. Also, in another instance with a cattle owner the researcher experienced at first hand the sight of killed or wounded cattle with bullet wounds as a result of the security operation against their activities. This is evidence of the
effectiveness of the operations of the police and military. Before interviews begin the researcher requests the permission of respondents to record interviews on tape for easy analysis afterwards. The recorded interviews are transcribed and responses categorized into thematic areas for effective analysis and discussions.

4.7 Methods of Data Analysis

During the process of data analysis, the first stage of the process involves the documentation and summary of the data collected. The researcher reformulates the stories of the respondents and takes into account the different experiences and comments of the respondents that can give the readers the opportunity to experience the cases in a practical manner.

The next method involves a content analysis of the data. At this stage, the researcher organises or categorises the data into concepts or thematic areas for further analysis. At this stage, the data collected is classified under topics for the proper organisation and presentation of findings. Furthermore, the relationship between the data is connected to highlight how one concept influences another.

The ensuing stage of data analysis involves a discourse analysis of the data. At this stage, the researcher corroborates the stories of the respondents by evaluating and explaining the data. The researcher highlights the various similar and contradictory experiences and comments relevant to the particular concepts under discussion.
4.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical in research broadly refers to as conducting a research study within the rightful moral and legal framework. It is vital for the integrity of every research work to observe the appropriate ethical practices at all stages of the research. The significance of embracing research ethics is mainly due to the use of human participants as respondents or subject of the research. According to Akaranga and Makau (2016), the necessary ethical concerns for consideration includes voluntary participation, deception, privacy concerns and harm to others’.

In respondents’ participation, the researcher must first and foremost seek to obtain the consent of the respondents and inform the respondents that their participation in the research is voluntarily. Before seeking the consent of the respondents, the researcher must responsibly explain the objective and purpose of the research and its findings respectively. With this in mind, the researcher dutifully explained the objective and purpose of the study to prospective respondents and seeks their full consent for participation. It was only after the respondents agreed voluntarily did the researcher conduct the interview.

Secondly, in research study it is unethical for a researcher to conceal or deceive the respondents about the purpose of the research. Even, revealing only a part of the truth or omitting certain necessary information could amount to deception. Therefore, the researcher must always endeavour to be entirely truthful with information regarding the research study especially during fieldwork. During the fieldwork, the researcher was entirely truthful with information, introduced himself as a student of the University of Ghana and informed
respondents that research is for academic purposes and not for other purposes such as governmental or journalism.

Furthermore, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality are essential methods of gathering information especially where the revelations of the study could negatively affect or influence the situation. In this regard, the researcher promised to protect the identity and information provided by respondents. Furthermore, the researcher refrains from referring to respondents by name and does not divulge any personal information about respondents.

Lastly, the researcher thoughtfully considered the harmful effects the research might have on the research respondents. Due to the human contact in research, assessing the harmful effects of the research on the respondents is very necessary. Whether, the respondents are the victims, accusers, offenders or the general public the researcher should take into account the physical, emotional or social harm the research might cause. During the fieldwork, the researcher was cognizant about the emotional pain of the victims of the conflict and how some of the questions might remind them of some bad experiences they have encountered due to the conflict. Therefore, the questions concerning the modes of attacks or if any members of their households have been victims were strategically reframed or skipped.

4.9 Challenges and Limitations of the Fieldwork

The major challenge encountered during data collection was access to Fulani herdsmen. As a result of the operation against their activities, they have been forced to evacuate the district to neighbouring districts. Furthermore, the police and district office cautioned my intention to
interview the herdsmen at their kraals in the bush. According to the police, the killing of the cattle by the security has left the Fulani agitated and consequentially more dangerous in the current situation. However, this did not in any way affect the quality of the data as cattle owners and representatives of the Fulani association were interviewed to fill the vacuum.

In addition, due to the security protocol of the operations, some information was regarded as classified intelligence and is deliberately withheld by the security officials. However, this does not affect the study as relevant information with regards to the research questions were fully ascertained in the data collection process.
CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Introduction

Commercial farming and cattle rearing are lucrative economic activities with the potential of contributing immensely to the economic growth of Ghana. These industries provide employment and the export of their produce provides foreign exchange revenue for the economy. However, the conflict between the people of farming communities and Fulani herdsmen threaten the developmental prospects of the two industries and undermines government’s agenda for rural development. In an effort to contribute to the discussions concerning farmers and herdsmen conflict, the study gathers data from the primary and secondary sources in relation to this conflict.

The objective of this chapter is to present and discuss the findings from the data collected from the fieldwork. With these findings, the study aims to contribute to existing research and the academic discussion pertaining to the topic. To achieve this, the chapter discusses and highlights certain key thematic areas and compares findings with others in the existing literature in order to highlight the similarities and differences in findings.
5.2 Demographic analysis of AAND

In the area, the farmers are within the age range of 30 – 39 years while those below 20 years were the lowest. Among the cattle owners the ages were above 40 years and older but for the herdsmen the ages begins from 20 and above. Furthermore, consistent with previous researches by various scholars, farming and cattle rearing are male dominated occupations with farming having a significant presence of females mostly as farm owners. This may be due to the culture of the Fulani where cattle rearing are reserved for men whiles women engage in other activities such as trading. Moreover, farming as an occupation is easier to females as compared to the rigorous practises and mobility of cattle rearing among the herdsmen. The findings further reveals that farmers are better educated than their Fulani counterparts. Most herdsmen obtain some level of Quranic studies as the highest form of education whiles farmers acquire at least primary education. The dependents of both farmers and herdsmen range from 1-5 children with herdsmen having more dependents. Observation on the field reveals that among the Fulani their dependents are not living with them. This is possibly due to their transhumance lifestyle, which moves them from one place to another. On the other hand, farmers live in close quarters with both their nuclear and very often one or two members from the extended family.

The rearing of cattle is a very lucrative venture with more and more people investing in the cattle industry. In farming, the community’s agro economy is promising during peak seasons with monthly average revenue of over GHC 5,000. Some respondents attest to the lucrative
nature of cattle rearing as one of factors responsible for the conflict. They argue that the profitable business of raising cattle attracts investors with wealth and influence which in itself is a contributor to the prolonged nature of the conflict. According to one farmer:

Rearing cattle is the easiest and most profitable of all livestock rearing. Unlike other livestock where you buy feed, for cattle you do not buy feed as they animals graze in the bush. Therefore, all you need to do to start the cattle business is buy a cow and it will feed itself. (fieldwork, 2018)

5.3 Background to the Herdsmen in the AAND

The herdsmen were first spotted in the district in 1997, particularly in Munkalia and Abewerapong. Residents of these mainly farming communities reported the presence of the herdsmen and their large cattle, which they described as ‘huge’ and ‘fearful’. In addition, the residents reported isolated cases of harassment from the herdsmen. According to the District Agriculture Department, a letter was sent from the Osu Castle then the seat of government to the district agriculture office to determine the following questions;

1. Are the animals in question indeed cattle?

2. If they are cattle, what was their entry point into Ghana?

3. If they are cattle, are they vaccinated?

The district agriculture officials managed to meet the herdsmen at their kraals in the very remote areas of the district. The officials identified the animals as cattle, specifically the Sokoto and Zebu breed. Through the cattle breeds, the agriculture officials were able to determine the origin of the herdsmen. The herdsmen with Sokoto and Sokoto Gudale breed
migrated from Benin and Nigeria respectively. The other breeds such as the Zebu originated from Burkina Faso and Niger. Additionally, their point of entry was the borders in the north from Burkina Faso and the northeast border close to the middle belt of Togo. Lastly, the veterinary officer reported that the cattle were not vaccinated.

From there, the officials visited the chief palace in Agogo to notify them about the presence of the herdsmen on lands under their jurisdiction. The sub-chiefs led by the Krontihene informed the officials that they were already aware of the presence of the herdsmen in those areas and an agreement to lease the land to the herdsmen had already been reached. Per the agreement, each Fulani kraal would make a payment of one cow to the chiefs annually. The chiefs leased fallow lands to the herdsmen that were located far from the farming communities. These areas were previously cocoa producing areas until the bushfires in 1972. The vegetation that developed afterwards was rich and suitable for grazing, which attracted the herdsmen to settle in the area.

The agricultural officials in their report to government suggested some recommendations to manage the Fulani herdsmen. Firstly, government must block entry points on our borders to prevent any further entry of the herdsmen into Ghana.

Secondly, with those already in the country government must construct demarcations between the farming communities and the Fulani herdsmen to restrict the movement of their herds. However, government failed to implement any of the recommendations.
In the years to come, there was a peaceful co-existence between the people and herdsmen until in 2000, when there were accusations of crimes allegedly committed by the herdsmen. Amid the accusations, the residents demanded the eviction of the herdsmen from the area. Their protest was unsuccessful as the herdsmen continued to reside in the forest areas surrounding their communities. Over the years, the residents have reiterated the demand for the eviction of the herdsmen accusing them of criminal activities such as murders, damages, assault, robbery and sexual abuse. On the other hand, the defence of the Fulani against the allegations is that, the herdsmen from different ethnic groups who commit these crimes are all categorized as Fulani resulting in discrimination against them. These accusations resulted into feelings of antagonism between the residents and herdsmen leading to reprisal attacks between the Fulani herdsmen and the residents especially farmers resulting in the deaths on both sides.

After a series of demonstrations and court order in 2012, the government commissioned a joint police and military operation to expel the herdsmen from the area. However, the herdsmen continued to operate in the area and their presence and activities raised concerns that led to agitation among the people. Therefore, there were a series of negotiations and meetings including all stakeholders to find the best amicable solution to the crisis. It was first suggested that the herdsmen would be pushed further away from the farms. The youth protested and demanded that the court order was to evict the herdsmen from the district and not push them away from farms. In a meeting held on 13th December, 2017, some measures were agreed by all stakeholders as the initial steps into a permanent solution. Firstly, the
agreement was for a fund to be setup from which compensation will be paid to farmers whose crops have been damaged.

Secondly, the cattle owners were advised to implement some form of identification for their herds in order to easily identify or distinguish the foreign cattle herds. Initially, all stakeholders supported this agreement but the cattle owners after their own internal deliberations, withdrew from the agreement stating that the arrangements were unfair and biased against them.

On the 8th January, 2018 the fate of the herdsmen turned for the worse when three soldiers and a police officer were attacked at Serebuoso by one herdsman that left the soldiers and police critically wounded. The government treated this attack as an attack on the state and declared ‘war’ against the herdsmen. In response, government deployed a joint police and military force of about 200 personnel aided with three military helicopters. The security forces were ordered to ‘Shoot to Kill’ every cattle sighted and ruthlessly deal with the herdsmen.

Currently, the intensified operation against the activities the herdsmen has been successful in expelling the herdsmen from the area. The operation has dispersed the high concentration of herds in the district to neighbouring districts and other areas of the country. Since their eviction, there have been no reports of the damages to crops or any other crime allegedly committed by the herdsmen. The security services have been able to restore an atmosphere of peace within the district.
5.4 Causes of Farmers and Herdsmen Violence in AAND

Most of the responses regarding the causes of the conflict are consistent with various studies conducted in this field.

5.4.1 Climatic conditions

Firstly, the fundamental factor that seems to be a recurring theme across all the findings is the severe change in climatic or weather conditions. In spite of the low level of literacy among farmers and other respondents in the area, they are able to identify climatic condition as a contributor to the protracted nature of the conflict and understand the complexities of this factor. They testify that the irregular patterns between dry and wet seasons increase the frequency of social conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Farmers and herders conflict are recorded at particular periods of the year, consistent with the dry or harmattan season. The dry and harmattan period in West Africa is between November and March. The police provide records which confirm that it is within these periods that most farmers and herders cases are recorded. An official at the district office confirms this assumption. According to him:

There is a high concentration of Fulani herdsmen in the area between November and March annually (fieldwork, 2018).

This is possibly due to the harsh climatic conditions in the Sahel region, the Fulani herdsmen migrate further south in search of greener vegetation for their herds (Tonah, 2006). Their search leads them to the Afram Plains and the Asante Akim North in particular. The cattle
owners testify that during this period their herdsmen report sightings of ‘Unknown’ Fulani herdsmen they encounter on grazing routes. These ‘Unknown’ Fulani herdsmen are suspected to be the foreigners who have migrated south of the Sahel in search of greener vegetation for their herds. Coincidentally, they disappear when the dry season is over and the rainy season begins.

Even though, most of the vegetation withers during the dry period, crops such as plantain have stronger resistance to the harmattan season therefore maintaining green leaves. Cattle in general do not feed on withering vegetation rather they feed on green vegetation thereby feeding on the cultivated crops and destroying them in the process. To prevent damages to crops, a district official noted that during these periods, the district office and district police requests for the deployment of extra security personnel to patrol the district and monitor the activities of the herdsmen.

Environmentalist researchers such as Flavel (2010) and Martin (2011) highlight the effects of climate change on conflicts and predict that worsening climatic change or conditions indirectly results in the increasing spate of conflict particularly over fertile lands and water. Other researchers, including Dosu (2011) and Ubelejit (2016) subscribe to the position of climate change as the fundamental factor of farmers and herdsmen conflict. Furthermore, in recent times, the weather conditions are severe than previous years (Butler & Gates, 2012; Dosu, 2011).

Hence, Fulani herdsmen who previously were not migrating to the Afram Plains region now do, resulting in a high number of herds located in the Afram Plains area during the dry
season. The high rate of Fulani movement into the Afram Plains region increases the frequency of encounters with farmers thereby increasing the incidence of conflict. From the above discussion, it is argued that farmers and herders conflict is partly due to the severe weather patterns in the north and the Sahel region that influence herdsmen to migrate further south in increasing rates. From these findings, it can be argued that as the climatic conditions worsens in the Sahel, a high rate of Fulani migration to south of the Sahel is expected. This will further deteriorate an already tensed situation and prolong the conflict. As one cattle owner remarked:

As the weather conditions continue to get worse each year, preventing farmers and herdsmen’s conflict will increasingly be a challenge unless we find a way to manage the weather also (fieldwork, 2018).

5.4.2 Rapid population growth

Secondly, from the fieldwork it is observed that rapid population growth is a major contributor to farmers and herdsmen conflict. The human population growth coupled with the increasing number of cattle in that area or space inevitably leads to competition over the resources which can precipitate into conflict. The population of AAND has increased rapidly over the years. According to statistics, the population census of Asante Akim North area in 2010 was 68,186 (GSS, 2014). In 2012, a report published by the Ghana Statistical Service placed the population of the district as 140,694 (GSS, 2012). Due to the increasing population growth rate, it will be the principal need of local residents to encroach into new areas formerly allocated to the Fulani herdsmen by the chiefs. On the other side, the concentration
of cattle in the area is on the increase gradually over the years. This is mainly due to the rich vegetation of the area. The rich vegetation of the Afram Plains attracts several herdsmen to the area. According to the Fulani, the rich vegetation of Asante Akim North District is close to perfect for their herds. For instance, due to the vegetation a cow is able to reproduce twice a year instead of the normal once a year. This makes the area a desirable grazing area for herdsmen because the vegetation can contribute to the rapid increase of the size of their herds.

According to cattle owners, the population of herds in the area range from a thousand (1,000) to over ten thousand (10,000) per herd. With increasing size of herds, there is the desire of herdsmen to expand into larger grazing areas which will include already existing farms. The population increase on both sides leads to competition within a confined space. Scholars such as Opoku (2014) Stanley et al (2017) and Tonah (2006) assert population growth as one of the most fundamental causes of farmers and herdsmen conflict. Martin, (2011) argue that the steady population growth in developing regions prolongs natural resource based conflicts.

5.4.3 Crop damages by cattle herds

From the findings, respondents strongly agree that crop damage by cattle is the major source of the conflict. Even cattle owners acknowledge that the destruction of one’s farm is a major source of conflict even though they argue that their actions are not intentional. Agriculture in the district is an active commercial activity. Therefore, there is the salient need for tracts of land to develop plantations. The plantations expand into areas that herdsmen use as grazing routes for their herds of cattle. With farms consistently spreading across the Afram Plains, the
herdsmen take advantage and drive their herds through the farms that are along grazing routes. These farms provide feeding grounds of green vegetation especially in the dry season where the vegetation in the plains is withering or fallowing. The close approximation between farmers and herdsmen in the Afram Plains leads to the competition over limited spaces available. As one cattle owner remarked:

The conflict between the farmers and herdsmen is not surprising, what do you expect when you put your hens and corn under one roof? (fieldwork, 2018).

According to one farmer, the herdsmen deliberately cut the leaves of the crops for their cattle as feed. In instances where farmers have witnessed the herds grazing through their farms, the herdsmen pretend not to notice or admit the damage they cause. Consequently, the farmer confronts the herdsman and in the midst of anger threatens to kill the cattle grazing through the farm. The Fulani herdsman, sensing the anger of the farmer and assuming the farmer can be of harm to him or the cattle, retrieves his hidden firearm and shoots the farmer.

On the other hand, the cattle owners give some explanation as to why their herds damage crops. According to an explanation giving by a cattle owner, usually there are two or three herdsmen attending to a particular herd at a time. One is in front of the herd and the others at the rear. With the large size of the herd, it is difficult for the herdsmen to control the actions of the cattle especially the ones in the middle of the herd. They claim that the herdsmen notice damage to crops only after the herds have moved ahead. Moreover, they also stress that the farms have expand on to the grazing routes, which they have being using for decades.
Hence, it is not intentional or deliberate on their part when their cattle strays onto a farm and damages the crops.

According to the farmers, to avoid any witnesses to their activities, the herdsmen graze their herds at dawn or the very early hours of the day. Farmers only notice the damages when they visit their farms in the morning. The destruction of crops leaves farmers in a state of distress. Recounting his experience one farmer notes that;

To wake up in the morning to see months of labour destroyed by cattle is one of the most ‘painful’ and ‘discouraging’ feelings in the world (fieldwork, 2018).

The destruction of crops as the most important cause of farmers-herders conflict is congruent with the several studies including Moritz, (2006), Shettima and Tar, (2008), Stanley et al, (2017) and Tonah, (2006).

**5.4.4 The killing of cattle**

Even though, the cattle owners acknowledge the destruction of crops by herds together with the defiance attitude of the herdsmen is a recipe for conflict, they identify the strategy of aggression by the state particularly the ‘Shoot to kill’ command of security forces as also a major source of strife. Not surprisingly, the cattle owners and members of the Fulani association were the only respondents to claim that the killing of cattle was a major source of conflict. They highlight the importance of cattle rearing as the sole economic activity of the Fulani culture. To stress that important position of cattle rearing in the Fulani society, one member of the association notes that;
The cattle are important to the Fulani as much as a family member is. (fieldwork, 2018).

Furthermore, another cattle owner quoted a proverb in the Fulani tradition that states that, “If the cattle die, the Fulbe\(^1\) will die also”. (fieldwork, 2018). The police further back these findings as they have witnessed Fulani herdsmen weep bitterly because their cattle were killed in the ‘Shoot to Kill’ operation. Several scholars including Aliyu, (2015), Moritz (2010), Olaniyi, (2015) and Tukur (2013) highlight the primary position of cattle ownership among the Fulani culture or traditions. From adolescent age to the whole of their adult life, the Fulani dedicate their lives to the sole activity of cattle rearing.

With the above knowledge as an indication of the importance of cattle rearing to the Fulani, the Fulani consider the shooting of a cow as dreadful or a curse. Hence, where farmers kill cattle found on their farms, the Fulani herdsmen return to the particular farm to emit vengeance. The herdsmen suggest that instead of killing cattle found on farms, cattle owners can pay compensation to farmers for the damages. As both farmers and herders are upset over their losses, an altercation ensues that regularly results in the murder of the farmers since the Fulani herdsmen arm themselves with guns.

5.4.5 The vices of the herdsmen

Besides the damages to crops, the alleged criminal activities of Fulani herdsmen are also notable factor responsible for the agitation of residents towards the herdsmen. Some of the

\(^{1}\)’Fulbe’ is the name of the ethnic group of which members are the Fulani
acts of crimes the people accuse the herdsmen are murder, assault, robbery and rape. Some farmers even argue that, the crop damage is similar to the destruction of property, which in itself is a crime. Hence, the state must treat the destruction of crops by herds as a crime as well.

With the reported cases of murder, the scenario is that after an altercation between a farmer and Fulani possibly over crop damage or the killing of a cow, the Fulani fetches his gun which he hides in the bush and kills the farmer. One farmer gives an instance, where after an argument ensues between a Fulani herdsman and another farmer, the Fulani herdsman goes into the bush, returns with a gun and shoots the farmer in front of the farmer’s mother. The killing of residents such as this is a major concern to residents and creates an alarming atmosphere of insecurity that can result in a general unrest in the area. According to a news report, Nana Akwasi Badu a popular priest in Agogo was allegedly murdered by a Fulani herdsman in 2016. This case led to protests and disturbances in Agogo to the extent that the District Police Command had to request the assistance of the Regional Security Command to restore calm and order (Tawiah, 2017)

In addition, to the murders, there are also cases of assault, robbery and rape allegedly committed by the Fulani herdsmen. Houses or settlement on the outskirts of the district capital of Agogo, are the victims of the robberies. All robbery cases allegedly involving the herdsmen take place during the early hours of the day. The Fulani herdsmen are the main suspects because they are usually grazing their animals around those times. The victims also claim their attackers communicate in the Hausa language, a language commonly spoken by
the Fulani herdsmen. However, from our interviews with the police they maintain that these claims of robbery and rape are still allegations and investigations to substantiate them are still on-going. Nevertheless, the people are confident that it is the Fulani herdsmen who are the culprits of these crimes against their communities.

In the cases of rape, the herdsmen reportedly attack women who they find alone on their farms. Not to underestimate the gravity of these reports, the findings notes that, the accusation of murder, assault, robbery and rape are sporadic and not as rampant as the damage to crops, which has become a very frequent occurrence.

These findings are consistent with the works of Baidoo, (2012), Olaniyi, (2015) Stanley et al, (2017) and Tonah, (2006), who all attribute the social vices of the herdsmen as source of conflict between Fulani herdsmen and the various communities they migrate in between.

5.4.6 Distinguishing between the local and foreign Fulani

On the side of the herdsmen, the cattle owners and members of the Fulani association did not entirely deny the accusation. However, they make some clarification on the issue of criminal activities and stress that herdsmen in Ghana should be distinguished between the local ones and foreign ones. They stress that there is difference in attitude between the local Fulani herdsmen and foreign Fulani herdsmen. They state the fact that the local Fulani herdsmen are Ghanaians and have no interest in committing crimes against other Ghanaians. As member of the Fulani association remarked;
I am a Ghanaian, why would I kill my Ghanaian brother over cow and besides even if I kill or rob any Ghanaian, where will I run to, Ghana is the only country I know (fieldwork, 2018).

The local herdsmen argue that the foreign Fulani herdsmen are the persons behind the crimes. The foreign Fulani herdsmen are from Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali and Nigeria. Allegedly, among all these foreigners the most dangerous and likely perpetrators of the violence are the herdsmen from Sokoto in Nigeria. Almost all stakeholders, namely the farmers, district officials, police and military officers and cattle owners confirm this assumption. The others from other countries are mostly non-violent and at times even engage in friendly relationships with local Fulani herdsmen. Furthermore, the ‘errand boys’ of an ‘Oga’ Fulani are sometimes the suspects behind these crimes. These young Fulani, under the influence of alcohol and drugs engage in unacceptable activities.

As one cattle owner notes;

The foreigners’ do these things because they are not monitored and because our system is porous and ineffective; the bad ones have infiltrated the good ones and are exploring our weak system (fieldwork, 2018).

Furthermore, according to one cattle owner, in the customs of some of the foreign Fulani it is acceptable to murder a fellow herdsman in order to possess his cattle and wife. The cattle owner further remarks that; “If they do this to themselves, how about you and me who are foreigners to them” (fieldwork, 2018).

In order to distinguish between themselves and the foreigners, the local Fulani note that they assist the police and residents to investigate and arrest Fulani culprits. The police and some
farmers acknowledge the assistance of the local Fulani herdsmen. The local Fulani further stress that due to their efforts to assist the police root out the offenders among them they branded as traitors by the other Fulani groups, making them targets of attacks and killings by the foreign Fulani groups. Unfortunately, the Ghanaian society does not distinguish between the local ones and foreign ones and tend to group all of them in accusing them of perpetrating violence.

5.4.7 The Militant herdsmen

According to the District Police Command, the foreign herdsmen are able to perpetrate the crimes due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the district police note that the herdsmen reside in the remote parts of the district out of the reach of regular patrols. The interviews and observations confirm this challenge in areas such as Ananekrom, Bebome and Munkalia. Due to the absence of any form of security in those areas, the herdsmen carry out their activities with impunity. It is only with police patrols that these areas have a sense of security for very brief periods. Moreover, even in some areas due to the bad nature of the roads, the police are unable to conduct patrols there at all. The police only move in to such areas only after a distress call reporting an incidence. The culprits are able to escape because the police arrive very late. It is one of such patrols that a lone herdsman at Serebuoso attacked the police and military personnel in January 2018. According to one of the soldiers, they had received a call over herds of cattle rampaging through farms. At the scene, the security fired warning shots to drive the cattle away from the farm. Suddenly, one security personnel yelled for all personnel to fall to the ground to warn them of the armed herdsman aiming at the security
team. Unfortunately, not all the security personnel heard the warnings and as a result got injured by the bullets of the herdsman. During this attack four (4) security personnel including three (3) soldiers and one (1) police officer were shot leaving them in critical condition.

Secondly, the police and military believe the foreign herdsmen receive some level of security training in handling weapons. To back this, they cite for instance, the herdsman who attacked them did so in a manner that they believe he has had some form of military training. The police explain that some of these herdsmen are former soldiers or militants coming from some very unstable or volatile areas such as Northern Nigeria and Northern Mali. After the failure of their militant campaigns in their countries, they move to other places to find employment. When they find employment as herdsmen, they employ their military training as their means of survival and in other places as an advantage in rustling cattle from other herdsmen.

Lastly, the use of weapons by the herdsmen gives them advantage and firepower to instil fear in people and perpetrate their crime. Weapons usually seized from herdsmen include AK-47 and pump action guns. These weapons are possibly the ones given to them during their spells as militants. According to one local Fulani, these weapons are from wars in Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone and Northern Nigeria where some of these herdsmen were soldiers or militants. In addition, the police and military officers note that another source of these weapons is the cattle owners who procure the weapons for their herdsmen. When the cattle owners were quizzed concerning this matter, they argue that the weapons are not intended to attack people
or cause any trouble but rather to defend herdsmen and the herds against wild animals that attack them in the forest. However, majority of the respondents, including farmers, security and district officials doubt this claim.

5.5 Consequences of farmers and herdsmen conflict in AAND

As expected, the conflict has had some effects on the farmers and herdsmen as the central actors, and the other stakeholders such as the traditional leaders, security and district offices. The study categorizes the effects under the main thematic areas of economic, social and the distrust towards traditional leaders.

5.5.1 Economic and Financial implications

The prevailing effect among all respondents was the economic or financial cost of the conflict on the livelihoods of farmers, herdsmen and district in general. From the findings, the study stipulates that the financial cost of the conflict is hardest on the farmers. According to the farmers, they secure loans from creditors to invest in their farms. Therefore, the damage of their crops is a huge financial loss to the farmers, as the damage to their crops means their capital is lost as well. The creditors do not sympathize with them for their loss and demand they pay the monies within the term period they are given. This affects the farmers in every other aspect of their lives. Due to their inability to repay their loans, it affects their credit status with the creditors thereby hindering their opportunity to secure loans in the future. Their inability to secure loans to invest in their farms results in the collapse of their economic activities that sustains their lives.
On the other side, financial loss for the herdsmen was hardly felt until the ‘Shoot to Kill’ operation in January 2018. Previously, the killing of cattle by farmers or security personnel rarely occurred. With the operation against their activities, cattle owners are witnessing the rampant killing of cattle by security personnel. Some cattle owners express shock by the way the security personnel are indiscriminately shooting the cattle and complain as to why government is attacking local businesses while the foreign Fulani herdsmen escape with their herds. According to the cattle owners, the sizes of their herds are small in comparison to that of the foreign owners. They argue that government is collapsing the local cattle business because the local owners have no other place to move their herds to while the foreign owners who own larger herds are able to leave for their respective countries. The cattle owners highlight their maltreatment in the country and demand compensation for the killing of their cattle.

In the case of the economic implications on the district, the conflict indirectly hinders some developmental projects of the district. The District Assembly notes that due to the expenditure on managing the conflict, some projects are on hold because the district assembly diverts the funds into sustaining the security operation. The 2017 budget figures show the district spends 2.5% of its common fund, which is approximately GHC 300,000 on farmers and herdsmen conflict annually. The assembly can use these funds to develop educational, health, social and communal projects that will improve the social well-being of people within the district. Furthermore, the recent operation in January 2018, which lasted close to three

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2The common fund is a development fund that is intended to ensure equitable development of the various Assemblies in the country.
weeks cost the district a total of GHC 1,000,000. The accommodation and feeding of security personnel, fuel and maintenance of vehicles and the aviation fuel for the helicopters during the operation were all the responsibility of the District Assembly. Due to the emergency of the situation and on an austere budget, the district acquired some of these services such as accommodation and feeding on credit. During the interview at the district office, I observe creditors demanding their monies to be paid as soon as possible. Even though the central government promise financial support for the operation, the district is yet to receive that support.

5.5.2 Social effects of the conflict on the community

Socially, the conflict has an immense effect on the relationship between farmers and herdsmen. Among the farmers, the attitude towards the herdsmen is that of fear and mistrust. This is mainly due to the activities of the herdsmen such as the murders, robbery, rape and crop damages towards the residents. In addition, according to the residents the herdsmen treat them with disrespect and disdain and disregard their farm properties. Occasionally, the conflict creates an atmosphere of fear and panic when a murder case involving the herdsmen is reported. Furthermore, there are families who have been victimised by the conflict either through the death of a relative, robbery or rape against a female member of the family. These families stress that they yet to see justice for those who have been victimised. Generally, even though the local herdsmen reside within the communities, the violence has deteriorated relationship between them and their hosts.
4.4.3 Distrust towards Traditional Authorities

Furthermore, there is also general mistrust towards the traditional leaders. The people believe that the traditional leaders are the ones who invited the herders to settle and graze their herds in the area and are local beneficiaries of the herdsmen. The Agogo Traditional Council (ATC) dismisses these claims and accusation of colluding with the cattle owners. The ATC further notes that there is no official agreement between the cattle owners and the traditional council. They explain that the unofficial agreement was initially between the sub-chiefs and the cattle owners without the approval of the Traditional Council and the Paramount Chief (Omanhene), Nana Akuoko Sarpong. To support this argument a member of the ATC notes that, at a meeting organised by the District Chief Executive (DCE), the cattle owners or herdsmen were not able to provide documents certifying their claim over any lands through a lease agreement. These claims, contradict the studies of the several authors of crop farmers and herdsmen conflicts. Several of these publications detail the agreement between chiefs and herdsmen. Others such as Acheampong (2017), provide evidence of land leasing agreements between cattle owners notably Alhaji Grusah and the chiefs. Hence, it is quite interesting for the chiefs to deny any agreements and they are possibly doing so due to the controversy surrounding the presence of the herdsmen in AAND. Moreover, the traditional council reiterate their support for the court verdict and the current operation to expel the herdsmen from the land under their jurisdiction. Additionally, Nana Akuoku Sarpong has on many occasions refused to lease lands to cattle owners citing their behaviour towards the people as grounds for his refusal.
5.6 Challenges of Managing the Conflict in AAND

The challenges involved in managing the conflict centres on the challenges facing the institutions involved in managing the conflict.

5.6.1 Lack of confidence in AAND Traditional Authorities

Surprisingly across the responses, the traditional council, which usually is the first point of arbitration, is not an effective partner in managing the conflict. This is possibly due to the perceived collusion between the chiefs and Fulani. Ayee et al, (2011) and Campion and Acheampong (2014), note that the chieftaincy institution is most at times the origin of conflicts within communities. In farmers and herders relationship, Tonah (2006) highlights the important role chiefs played when the herdsmen first arrived in Ghana. As custodians of the lands, the chiefs leased to the herdsmen when they first arrived in the area. Traditionally in the Ghanaian society, usually in rural areas the chiefs play the leading role in arbitration within the community. However, their connection with herdsmen questions their position as unbiased arbitrators of this conflict. Therefore, the use of other means of arbitration by people rather than the chiefs is increasing across communities. One of such leading institutions in the farmers and herders conflict is the police service. Both farmers and herdsmen recognise the police as the foremost body in managing the conflict. Even though people accuse the police of being involved with herdsmen at times, the people acknowledge the leading and effective role of the police. From the interviews with officials at the District Police Headquarters, the routine patrol operations and the special operations against the activities of the herdsmen face some challenges that hinder its efficiency. These challenges
are namely financing, provision of logistics and intelligence gathering. The police are heavily
dependent on the district assembly to finance the operations.

5.6.2 Challenges facing institutions at AAND

In financing, aspects of the operations such as accommodation and feeding for personnel the
police rely on the District Assembly to finance the operation. However, the cost of sustaining
the operations is a major drain on the District Assembly Common Fund (DACF). In terms of
logistics or tools, the police are below par to deal effectively with the menacing activities of
the herdsmen. For instance, there is only one vehicle for the operation of the police
throughout the District. The District Assembly supports the effort of the police with the
provision of the assembly’s vehicle for operations.

Secondly, the police lack protective gear such as bulletproof vest and ammunition. This
makes police officers easy targets and vulnerable to attacks. In intelligence gathering, the
police are heavily reliant on the community for information, which at times are not reliable,
verifiable and false. In addition, the human resource capacity is below standard with 35
personnel posted to the district and only 21 joint police and military personnel assigned to the
‘Operation Cow Leg’ throughout the entire district.

5.7 The protraction of farmers-herders conflict in AAND

Determining the fundamental reason for the protracted nature of farmers and herdsmen conflict
is very essential in answering the central question of the study. In view of this, during
interviews respondents were asked to give their opinion regarding the fundamental factors responsible for the protraction of farmers-herders conflict in Ghana.

5.7.1 The Politics of ‘Big Men’ and State Institutions

Most respondents stress that in Ghana, state institutions are largely deficient in the discharge of their duties. The failure of state institutions in their responsibilities creates an institutional gap, which coupled with other factors can precipitates into conflicts. State institutions such as the District Security Council (DISEC) and Regional Security Council (REGSEC) are held responsible over their lacklustre management of the conflict. Some respondents argue that if these state institutions had given much attention to the conflict when it began, it would have been a thing of the past.

For instance, even though, in 2012 the Kumasi High Court ordered the expulsion of the Fulani herdsmen from the Asante Akim North area, the herdsmen continue to execute their activities with impunity in the area. This is a testament to the weakness of state institutions to enforce its own laws or uphold the law. Therefore, this study accuses state institution of their tepid attitude towards solving the conflict.

Moreover, the deficiency of state institutions is contingent on some factors. Firstly, there is the controversial issue of the influence of ‘Big Men’ and the politics associated with their role. Some respondents especially the security and district officials stress the influence of the so-called ‘Big Men’ who sabotage the efforts of the state institutions to promote their self-interest. These ‘Big Men’ come into play in farmer-herders conflict mostly as cattle owners
themselves. They exploit their social status, position or wealth to influence state institutions involved in managing the conflict to protect their interest, contrary to the interest of the ordinary person. One farmer poses a rhetorical question that;

If the ‘Big Men’ are not behind the herdsmen, then why the herdsmen are still around after the court ordered them to leave (fieldwork, 2018).

These ‘Big Men’ include politicians, chiefs, wealthy business persons and at times either close associates or relatives of key members of the ruling government. Those close to people in power are often under the illusion that they wield power also. Hence their status, wealth or ‘connections’ gives them some amount of power to influence institutions in order to protect their interest that subsequently inhibits these institutions to fulfil their mandates.

Furthermore, because the herdsmen are fully aware of the status of their employers they engage in negative activities and rely on the influence of the employers to protect them. To explain further, when DISEC is given the mandate to drive out the herdsmen, these ‘Big Men’ use their power or connection to pressure the institutions to exclude their herdsmen from the expulsion. Therefore, the herdsmen continue to reside in the region under the cloak of power of their employers.

The politics of the issue is that the politicians allow the influence of these ‘Big Men’ in their government in exchange for political capital. In the case the ‘Big Man’ is a chief, a wealthy business person or a person of influence, their endorsement either at the constituency or national level is huge political gain especially for elections. In additions, some of these ‘Big Men’ contribute to the political campaigns of politicians. Thus, it will be in the interest of the
politician to further protect the interest of these ‘Big Men’ because in doing so then the politician’s political ambitions will be secured.

Moreover, because the institutions such as the DISEC are weak and corrupt they easily give into the pressures of these ‘Big Men’. The factor of ‘Big Men’ influencing institutions compounded with an overburdened and corrupt bureaucracy of state institutions prolongs the conflict. For instance, from the findings, there is a perceived collusion between the chiefs and Fulani herdsmen. It is widely believed within the community that the Fulani herdsmen are in the area at the behest of the local chiefs, other bigger paramount chiefs and kings. These traditional leaders exploit their relationship with those in the corridors of power to protect their cattle business at the expense of the ordinary farmer.

5.7.2 The Politics of Land Distribution

Better weather condition south of the Sahel translates into better vegetation. Hence, the good nature of the soil that positions the Afram Plains as the breadbasket of the Ghana is a contributing factor for the high concentration of herdsmen in the area and therefore a causal factor to the protraction of the conflict. This clearly is a case of a natural resource (fertile land) being a ‘blessing and a curse’.

The politics here is that the conflict then becomes a competition over resources in determining who gets what when and how. In the face of the limited land natural resources, the control over land is believed to be the driving force for years of conflict between farmers and herdsmen. Both groups depend on land as the major contributor to their economic
livelihoods. The soil of the land is suitable for good agricultural output for farmers and for the herdsmen the vegetation is the best for their herds. The herdsmen even attribute the encouraging growth rate of the cattle population to the vegetation of the Afram Plains.

Therefore, when farmers or herdsmen attempt to excludes one another from freely accessing the available natural resources, it results into conflicts as they will employ alternative violent means to attain a share of the resources.

Furthermore, another political issue of land is that the herdsmen acquired these lands from the chiefs and used cattle as a mode of payment. Therefore, the chiefs themselves became cattle owners and this raises the issue of a conflict of interest. As chiefs and leaders of the community, it is in their responsibility to ensure the social and security welfare of their people, therefore they must protect the lives and properties of their people against the violent acts of the herdsmen. Then again, as cattle owners themselves who have hired these herdsmen there is controversy as to where their true interest lie. Therefore, there is a conflict of interest as to where their allegiance lies, whether with their people or are they seeking to reap profits from their cattle trade at the expense of their communities. Due to this controversy their position as arbiters of farmers and herders conflict has been questioned by people of the community and several scholars as well.

5.7.3 The Economic livelihoods of farmers and herd

Another major finding reveals that the conflict is based on the economic interest of crop farmers and herdsmen. Both groups intend to use all means possible to protect their interest
such as crops for farmers and cattle for the herdsmen which serve as the source of economic revenue for both parties. There is a clear linkage between the satisfaction of these economic interest or needs and social harmony. It can be argued that if both parties are able to achieve their economic interest without disruption for the other parties then the conflicts could be checked as the source. The suppression or frustration of these needs creates conditions for conflict. Hence, this study argues that if these basic economic needs are satisfied, no conflict will arise. Thus, the community should reduce their dependency on farming by introducing a diversity of employment opportunities.

For instance, the study highlights cattle rearing as a more lucrative venture when compared to farming. This study argues that the profitable cattle trade is one of the underlying reasons for the expansion of the cattle trade in the Afram Plains and subsequent protraction of the conflict. Due to the stronger economic interests of herders, they are prepared and more willing to engage in all manner of activities including the use of violence to protect their interests. This information is also congruous with various herdsmen studies. For instance, in the study on herdsmen and crop farmers in Oyo state in Nigeria, Olaniyi (2015) details how the economic interest of cattle rearing has resulted in conflicts and subsequently cattle rustling.

5.8 Response to farmers and herdsmen conflict

For the farmers, the current ‘Shoot to Kill’ operation is the best option in dealing with the activities of the herdsmen. They argue that, since the courts order is to expel the herdsmen, government should heed to that order and if the herdsmen refuse to leave, then the killing of
their cattle is in the right direction. Since the start of the operation ‘Shoot to Kill’ there have been no or very rare sightings of cattle in the affected areas. Some people claim to have seen only one cow in the bush and not in herds. This can be a strategy of the herdsman to stop moving in large herds, which are easy targets to kill. Possibly, the herdsman may scatter their large herds into single numbers to avoid detection. The farmers strongly suggest that the killing of the cattle is long over-due and accuse government of a lacklustre attitude until the military and police officers were injured, prompting a fiery reaction from that state. The traditional council also join the ranks in support of expulsion. The people acknowledge that the operation has been a success in comparison to previous efforts to expel the herdsman. Some express optimism that the herdsman will never return. However, others are more sceptical noting that the operation pushes the herdsman to neighbouring districts and not totally out of the country. According to a farmer,

As far as the herdsman are not entirely out of the country, the conflict is not entirely over (fieldwork, 2018).

5.8.1 The Ranching Policy

Nevertheless, others such as cattle owners and some district officials suggest an alternative system such as the ranching system. The ranching system is the practise of rearing grazing livestock for the production of meat and other related products at a specific location. The importance of this system include the production of healthier animals, production of better products, provision of employment, adding value to farm produce and the promotion of peaceful co-existence. According to district officials, the process of implementing the
ranching system is underway. The office of the Attorney-General has forward a bill to Parliament to pass it into law. When successfully passed, ranching will be the sole practice of rearing livestock in Ghana. Therefore, cattle owners will have no other choice than to develop ranches for their herds.

However, cattle owners raise some concerns over this process. They stress that, acquiring large tracts of land for ranching will be the first challenge. They argue that no chief will be willing to lease them lands given their history with the various communities they settle in. For instance, Nana Akuoko Sarpong’s refusal to grant them lands very recently for their activities confirms this assumption.

Secondly, as studies suggest, in order to have a good production of meat every single cattle requires approximately one acre of land to move about. This means, for cattle owners with very large herds they will have to acquire large acres of land. Furthermore, in ranching, the cattle owner must demarcate the land, develop on-farm water system and brand their cattle for easy identification. In addition, ranching will introduce regulations into the cattle rearing industry such as veterinary checks to vaccinate animals.

In view of all this, the ranching system is a capital-intensive project that will come at a very high cost for cattle owners. Hence, the cattle owners are requesting partnership from Government of Ghana when the implementation begins. They suggest that it can be a policy of Public Private Partnership (PPP) where government can support the cattle owners in land acquisition and ranch management. District officials are off a different view. Even though they are in favour of the ranching system, they hold the position that government cannot
involve itself in the ranching business. They note that cattle’s rearing is a private and profitable enterprise everywhere in the world and cattle owners should view the acquisition of lands as an expenditure of their business similar to all other business. One official remarked that

If all persons rearing livestock were to request government intervention, then government business will solely be rearing animal taking into consideration the number of people rearing livestock in the country. (fieldwork, 2018)

Various scholars within this field have suggested the ranching system as a solution to farmers and herders conflict. Antonio and Silva (2009), Mwamfupe, (2015) and Opoku, (2014) recommend ranching or what is popularly referred to as ‘cattle colony’ across the literature for several farmer and herders conflict in Africa. During interviews with cattle owners, they refer to successful ranching practise in Brazil, Germany, and the United States. However, as expected there is staunch opposition against ranching system by farmers and residents. One resident retorted;

With the ranching system, who is going to police them in the bush? Does government have the resource to monitor the herds? They must be driven out especially the foreign ones(fieldwork, 2018).

5.9 Summary of Discussions

From the findings of this study, there is no single factor as the sole reason for the prevalent and persistent nature farmers and herders conflict in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa. The conflict is as a result of a potent mix of natural and human factors. The natural factors are the worsening climatic and environmental conditions in the Sahel which forces the herdsmen to
migrate further south to the Afram Plains and the population explosion which results in the expansion of settlements into the forest areas. Consequently these natural factors lead to competition over the land resources in AAND and the entire Afram Plains. The human factors are the proliferation of weapons by the herdsmen, the politics of land distribution and the incapability of institutions to tenaciously deal with the situation, therefore emboldening the herdsmen to commit atrocities without fear.

To address the central question of this study and contribute to existing literature, farmers and herdsmen conflict is protracted in Ghana as a result of three factors. Firstly, the interest and politics of so called ‘Big Men’ in institutions is a contributing factor to the protraction of this conflict. Hence, this study postulates that successive government interventions in the fourth republic have failed because these same governments are influenced by ‘Big Men’ to pursue their own selfish interest. They wield their power to influence state institutions charged with expelling herdsmen to protect their interest in the cattle business. Therefore, the public officials out of pressure kowtow to the demands of the ‘Big Men’ rather than risk upsetting them and fear of losing their jobs. The herdsmen with the knowledge of the status of their employers regard themselves as ‘untouchable’ and commit acts of violence with impunity.

The second factor for the protraction of this conflict is the fact that farming and cattle rearing is the sole economic livelihoods on which farmers and herders respectively depend on to survive amidst limited resources. Both farmers and herders depend entirely on farming and herding as the sole economic activity for income. The income from these occupations is used to meet their basic needs such as food and shelter. Hence, when these livelihoods are
threatened it is seen as threat to their basic needs and survival as well. Therefore, farmers will attack herdsmen they encounter on their farms and vice versa. Unfortunately, for the farmers the herdsmen have the upper hand in such confrontations due to their use of firearms. This is why farmers are mostly the victims of farmers and herdsmen conflict.

The third factor is the politics and insecurity associated with land distribution. The competition over the fertile land vegetation of the Afram Plains precipitates conflicts amid issues such as migration of herdsmen due to climatic conditions and the explosion of human and cattle population in the area.

In the academic discipline, the general pattern of debate on crop farmers and herdsmen conflict attributes environmental and natural causes such as climate change and population growth which all results in resource scarcity that fuels conflict between the two parties.

However, Ghana or West Africa is not the only region affected by these environmental and natural phenomena. The difference in other areas is the independence of institutions dealing with the issue. It seems that in Ghana, the institutions responsible tackling the conflict such as DISEC are not entirely independent in their approach and are influenced by some key members of government or society. Moreover, besides the interference the institutions lack the capacity in terms of logistics, funding and personnel especially at the rural level of governance.

At the international level, the objective of ECOWAS to create grazing corridors through the protocols to manage transhumance activities is still theoretical and yet to be a reality. This is partly due to the lack of political will by member states and simply lack of institutional
capacity to implement these protocols collectively because most resources are rather directed towards national objectives than regional objectives. At the national level, even the resources available for national objectives are inadequate and insufficient to address the mountainous challenges of African states. Hence, border and security agencies do not have sufficient capacity in terms of human resource and logistics to monitor the borders for herdsmen movement and to evacuate herdsmen even when a court order has clearly stated so.

In spite of the accusation of crimes against the Fulani herdsmen, the most pressing issue of concern to the farmers and residents is the damage to their crops. This is mainly because agriculture is the main economic activity of the residents. Beneath the accusations and counter-accusations lies the economic interest of both farmers and herdsmen. In an area, that regards agriculture as the main economic activity, the destruction of their crops will certainly have negative impacts or repercussion in the area. On the other side, among the Fulani, the cattle are symbolism of an individual’s wealthy status within their society. Therefore, the Fulani will harbour deep grievances when their cattle are killed which in turn can urge them to retaliate and therefore resulting in cycle of violence. Therefore, this study suggests that the key or fundamental interest of both farmers and herdsmen is their economic interests. This interest drives both parties to employ every means possible to attain their respective goals.

Another salient issue of discussion is the perceived discrimination against the Fulani. The herdsmen argue that there are cattle owners of various ethnic groups but are all categorised as Fulani when they commit crimes. They cite the media coverage of their activities as the explanation for their discrimination. However, it is noted that the status or position of the
Fulani within the Ghanaian community is widely recognised, and not challenged or singled out for discrimination. Within the AAND for instance, there are no signs of discrimination. The local herdsmen live and interact among the community members whiles the foreign herdsmen live on the outskirts of the communities. The residents acknowledge that they are aware of the existence of foreign herdsmen and have social and economic interactions with the local herdsmen. Moreover, apart from the Fulani, there are several ethnic groups, which have settled in the area. None of these groups has reported any discrimination against them by the indigenes. Therefore, there is no evidence of ethnic discrimination against the Fulani in the area.

The operation ‘Shoot to Kill’ has proven to be a success, however another concern is that the operation is only pushing the Fulani herdsmen of this district to neighbouring areas such as Sekyere and Kwahu, where their activities are already a matter of concern. The Fulani menace is not only peculiar to the AAND. There are several areas in the country witnessing this conflict such as Berekum, Kintampo, Kwahu and Sene. Thus, driving the herdsmen out of the Asante Akim area to another area does not solve the problem but rather exacerbates it across the country. In view of this, it is imperative for government to institute some measures in dealing with the issue permanently. For instance, agencies must monitor our porous borders for the movement of cattle and arms across countries in the West African Region. It seems our institutions are inadequate at various levels of administration and operation thus creating gaps that are explored by not only foreign Fulani herdsmen but also other
malevolence persons. This conflict is a consequence of years of institutional neglect especially in rural Ghana.

5.10 Conclusions

Conflicts between farmers and herdsmen have become a recurring event annually. The activities of the herdsmen are a matter of concern, which have frequently culminated into the outbreak of conflict between them and farmers across the country.

The lack of efficiency from state institutions in areas such as security, land tenure and agriculture to act urgently in solving the conflict has compounded the issues of the conflict.

Hence, institutions must develop or evolve to cope with a rapidly changing political, economic, social and geo-spatial environment and the issue of scarcity that accompanies these changes in our contemporary world. The success of the intensified operation by Government is proof that government commitment is essential to restore order and enhance the confidence of the people in their government. Finally, it is imperative to develop, strong and independent state institutions not only to resolve this particular conflict but for the maintenance of law and order in Ghana.
CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This study was conducted in the AAND with the central purpose of understanding why farmers and herdsmen have become protracted over the years. The following sections contain a summary of the findings which highlights the contribution of this study to existing literature.

6.2 Summary of Findings

The conflict encapsulates Beaudoin (2013) and Azar (1990), description of protracted conflicts. In the literature, protracted conflicts are defined as conflicts that last over a prolonged period, which withstands all efforts at an amicable and permanent solution. Similarly, in the context of farmers and herders conflict in Ghana, since the early 90’s the efforts of consecutive governments to find a permanent solution to this crisis have proved futile repeatedly. Therefore, in the definition of protracted conflicts, the findings of this research are consistent with the existing body of knowledge.
6.2.1 Contributing Factors to the Protraction of Farmers-Herders Conflict in AAND

In addressing the central question as to why the conflict has been a recurring feature in Ghana in spite of the intervention of successive governments, the study identifies three main factors responsible for the protraction of farmers and herders conflict in Ghana. First of all, the politics and influence of ‘Big Men’ in institutions managing the conflicts affects the performance of these institutions in solving the conflict. The PSC theory adopted in this study supports these findings. This theory stipulates that the diverse interest of groups and the actions of the state can transform a non-conflict situation into a conflict situation. This assumption is situated where the ‘Big Men’ who are cattle owners have diverse interest from that of farmers. Therefore, they employ their ‘connections’ to influence institutions to protect their interest instead of that of the farmers. Furthermore, the corruption of the state institutions in protecting the interest of the ‘Big Men’ raises suspicion among those affected which ultimately leads to the mistrust of state institution which affects the ability of the state to act independently in resolving the conflict.

The second factor focuses on the conflicts as a means to protect the economic livelihoods of both farmers and herdsmen. This is congruent with the Human Need Theory of this study. The theory contends that one of the fundamental factors responsible for protracted conflicts is people’s unyielding drive to meet their unmet needs at the individual, group and societal level (Burton, 1990). Hence, in order to protect their sole source of income through farming or
cattle rearing, which is used to meet their basic needs, farmers and herdsmen adopt all means necessary including the use of violence.

Lastly, this study highlights the politics of land distribution as major factor responsible for the protraction of the conflict. This finding embodies both the PSC theory and Human Needs theory. In farmers and herders conflict, the communal actions of both actors in determining who gets what, when and how in land resource allocation is a fundamental indicator of protracted social conflict. If the competition is not properly managed by the state then the conflict will continue to be perennial issue. Furthermore, this finding is also consistent with the Human Needs theory where the agenda of the communal actions employed by both actors is to attain their basic needs that are essential for their survival.

6.2.2 The Business of Cattle Rearing versus Farming

Furthermore, another particular finding of this study consistent with the literature is the argument that highlights cattle rearing as a more lucrative venture when compared to farming. Scholars such as Adelakun et al, (2015) and Kuusaana and Bukari (2015), through their studies identify cattle herding as a very profitable business, which attracts far more investors than farming. Similarly, from the findings it is noticed that the cattle trade in Ghana is profitable since owners do not buy feed and sell cattle at very good prices. Furthermore, this study argues that the profitable cattle trade is one of the underlying reasons for the expansion of the cattle trade in the Afram Plains and subsequent protraction of the conflict. Due to the stronger economic interests of herdsmen, they are prepared and more willing to engage in all manner of activities including the use of violence to protect their interests. This information
is also congruous with various herdsman studies. For instance, in the study on herdsman and crop farmers in Oyo state in Nigeria, Olaniyi (2015) details how the economic interest of cattle rearing has resulted in conflicts and subsequently cattle rustling.

6.2.3 Natural Factors driving the conflict

About the causes of farmers and herders conflict, the findings of the study are in accordance with the various causes identified in the literature. For instance, from the findings, the important contribution of climatic and environmental factors is very much noted. Similarly within the body of literature, environmentalist researchers such as Flavel (2010) and Martin (2011) highlight the effects of climate change on conflicts and predict that worsening climatic change or conditions indirectly results in the increasing migration to better environment which consequently results into conflict particularly over fertile lands and water. Furthermore, other researchers, including Dosu (2011) and Ubelejit (2016) subscribe to the position of climate change as the fundamental factor of farmers and herders conflict. Furthermore, others scholars highlight the conducive environment of the Afram Plains that makes the area the priority region of competition for both agriculture and cattle rearing.

In addition, in accordance with population increase as noted in the findings, scholars such as Opoku (2014) Stanley et al (2017) and Tonah (2006) assert population growth as one of the most fundamental causes of farmers and herders conflict. Furthermore, others such as Martin, (2011) argue that the steady population growth in developing regions prolongs natural resource based conflicts.
Moreover, another salient issue natural factors is the political question of who gets what when and how in the distribution of land resource of the Afram Plains. The herdsmen keep returning to this area in spite of the several expulsion of government because of the fertile lands that is near perfect for their herds. The low lying plains with plush vegetation and water bodies attracts herdsmen to the area every year especially during the dry periods of rainfall. As noted earlier the profitable business of cattle rearing motivates the herdsmen to travel over long distance in search of the ideal vegetation that will increase their cattle production. Hence, in the Afram Plains which includes AAND the herdsmen will resist every attempt to deprive them of a share of the land and vegetation resources present in that area.

### 6.2.4 Collusion of Traditional leaders

From the findings, there is a perceived collusion between the chiefs and Fulani herdsmen. It is widely believed within the community that the Fulani herdsmen are in the area at the behest of the traditional authorities. This finding is supported by several studies within the field of study. On the other hand, the chiefs refute this claim and argue that there is no collusion between them and the herdsmen. The chiefs argue that the agreement with the herdsmen were contingent on some conditions that the herdsmen failed to carry out therefore rendering the agreement null and void. This argument is widely refuted across the literature. Several scholars detail the agreement between chiefs and the herdsmen upon the arrival of the latter. Authors such as Agyemang (2017), provide further evidence of documents testifying the agreements between chiefs to lease lands to the cattle owners. Furthermore, Ayee et al,
(2011) and Campion and Acheampong (2014), note that the chieftaincy institution is most at times the origin of conflicts within communities.

6.2.5 Distinction between Local and Foreign Fulani

However, one issue that varies from the findings is the perceived ethnic discrimination against the Fulani. From the literature, some authors highlight the prejudice of the local people against the members of the Fulani ethnic group. However, within the Asante Akim North District for instance, there are no signs of discrimination. From the interviews, none of the Fulani reported any form of discrimination against them by residents of the towns and villages. The local herdsmen live and interact among the community whiles the foreign herdsmen live on the outskirts of the communities. The residents acknowledge that they are aware of the existence of foreign herdsmen and have social and economic interactions with the local herdsmen. Furthermore, the residents testify that the local Fulani even assist them locate the foreign herdsmen who perpetuate the killings and the crimes. They note that these herdsmen are particularly from Nigeria. This information is encapsulates the fact that Nigeria has recorded the worst and most violent cases of herdsmen violence in the world in recent times where thousands have been murdered. Hence, residents likewise the local Fulani people are fearful of the foreign Fulani herdsmen. However, it must be noted that the issue of discrimination may differ from place to place. Therefore, if discrimination is not present in the Asante Akim North District, it does not necessarily signify ethnic discrimination against the Fulani does not exist elsewhere. This study is not refuting the issue of discrimination
against the Fulani. The study or findings observe that the issue of discrimination varies among countries and places.

In conclusion, most of the findings are congruent with the body of knowledge. Subjects such as the historical accounts of farmers and herdsmen relationship, the causes and consequences were confirmed during the fieldwork of this study. However, the traditional leaders deny the existence of an agreement between them and herdsmen. This is inconsistent with the existing literature and even data gathered from the fieldwork.

6.3 Conclusions

In conclusion the study addresses the following research questions.

6.3.1 Why successive Governments have failed to solve farmers and herdsmen conflict in Ghana

From the findings, this study concludes that successive government have not been able to solve the conflict due to the politics and interference of ‘Big Men’ in government institutions. The politics of ‘Big Men’ is the major hindrance in the effectiveness of state institutions particularly the DISEC in managing the conflict.

The deficiency of state institution stems from the interference of the ‘Big Men’. The relationship between the politicians and the ‘Big Men’ is a system of political ‘clientelism’. Politicians allow the interference of these ‘Big Men’ and employ state institutions to pursue the interest of the ‘Big Men’ rather than the interest of the ordinary citizenry. Politicians allow this influence in exchange for political capital from the ‘Big Men’ who are wealthy and
influential citizens of the country. Therefore, politicians see it in their own interest to protect the interest of the so called ‘Big Men’ because in doing so then they are preserving their political careers.

6.3.2 What is the position of the farmers

From the findings, the position of the farmers is for the Fulani herdsmen and their cattle to leave their lands and they are not willing to share the lands with the herdsmen at any cost. They argue that farming is their sole economic activity which earns them their income they use to cater for their families. However, the activities of the herdsmen such as the destruction of crops threatens their economic livelihoods which translates into a loss of income and threatens their survival as individuals and families. Therefore, the crop farmers strongly advocate that the only solution to this conflict is the expulsion of the herdsmen from their communities in order for farmers to peacefully engage in agriculture as an economic activity as the agricultural industry thrives in a peaceful environment. Moreover, the crop farmers highlight the court verdict in 2012 as their justification for their stance on expulsion of the herdsmen and assert that it is the responsibility of the state to execute the verdict without fear and favour to the last detail.

6.3.3 What is the position of the herdsmen

On the side of the herdsmen, their position is similar to that of the farmers in noting that cattle rearing is the sole economic activity in raising revenue for themselves and family to cater for their basic needs. Therefore, when they are been driven out of lands they have
legally acquired or their cattle is been killed, it leaves them no option than to resist.
Furthermore, they stress that the reason why they have not sought redress at the court is that they believe the Ghanaian society regards them as the culprits in the conflicts. Therefore, a case in court will be an unfair hearing for them. Besides the Fulani herdsmen also claim right to land through legal agreements with the traditional leaders and stress their equal rights to the lands as citizens of Ghana. The herdsmen argue that they are also Ghanaians and have the right to land as much as any other group. Therefore, they request the proper allocation of land for their activities and highlight the importance of cattle rearing and production to the economy. Their position is that cattle rearing is their sole economic activity and since they are Ghanaians and acquired the lands legally, they deserve to do business in Ghana in peace.

6.3.4 To what extent are herdsmen integrated into the society

In discussing the integration of the herdsmen in the society, it is prudent to discuss and distinguish the integration of the local herdsmen and foreign herdsmen. The local herdsmen are integrated with the society. They worship, trade and generally socialise with members of the community. Furthermore, their children attend the same schools as the people of the community. Even within the ATC, the Fulani have a chief who represents their interest at ATC meetings and mediates on behalf of the Fulani with the rest of the community. Moreover, the Fulani present today argue that they are third to fourth generation Fulani who were born and raised in Ghana therefore regard themselves as Ghanaians very much.

However, the foreign Fulani people are not integrated with the local people and due to their mobility with their cattle live in the remote parts of the society which is secluded from the
communities. They reside in kraals located in the forest isolated from communities. They do not socialise either religiously or culturally with the community. Furthermore, the foreign herdsmen are the ones deemed violent. The district police, district assembly officials and the local herdsmen testify that the foreign herdsmen particularly those from Sokoto in Nigeria are the culprits in committing acts of violence against the farmers and community.

6.3.5 Do security organisations provide effective mechanism for resolving farmers and herdsmen conflict

Findings reveal that state institution have the knowledge or skill on how to address the issue. It must also be noted that aside from the influence or politics of ‘Big Men’, in institution, the various institutions such as the DISEC lacks the necessary support in terms of logistics, finance and personnel to effectively manage the conflict. Even though, several Government agencies are involved in finding a solution, the progress of work has been slow and lacklustre. Hence, the influence of ‘Big Men’ coupled with the lack of institutional capacity to address the problem renders mechanisms by state institutions such as the DISEC and REGSEC ineffective.

6.4 Recommendations

The socio-economic consequence of the conflict on the ordinary people of the district, its impact on the development of the district and its nationwide implications presently and in the future makes it essential for the national security infrastructure of Ghana to implement expeditious strategies or policies that can prevent the recurrence of this conflict. In
consideration of this, the study presents recommendations with the aim of contributing to the efforts in resolving this conflict permanently.

6.4.1 Early Warning Mechanisms

The police and military can strategize their operations to be proactive rather than reactive to the conflict. One proactive measure they can initiate is the development of Early Warning Mechanisms. Early warning comprise of the collection, analysis and communication of relevant information and recommendation to enable policy makers to make strategic choices. The ability to predict or anticipate conflict can immensely contribute to peace building. In this instance, the process will require the careful monitoring of the indicators of rising tensions between farmers and herdsmen such as crop destruction and rapidly recommend measures to mitigate the potential for the violence to escalate. Furthermore, intelligence gathering is essential to the success of the Early Warning Mechanisms because it provides security forces the relevant information in order to respond. Hence, security forces have the responsibility of developing a robust intelligence scrutinize framework in order to gather concrete information. Thus, the role of all stakeholders to provide information and support is prominent. However, early warning without early response is counterproductive.

6.4.2 Establishment of an Independent Special Task Force

The establishment of this committee is purposely to oversee the mitigation, relocation and monitoring of ‘transboundary transhumance’ in Ghana and the compensation of victims of this conflict. This committee should be comprised of stakeholders including crop farmers,
herdsmen, agriculture and security sector ministries and agencies and traditional authorities.

This should be independent in order to prevent the influence or interference in their strategies in dealing with the conflict. It must be noted that government in 2017 established a committee with a similar agenda and composition. This committee is the Ghana Cattle Ranching Project Committee. The objective of this committee is to recommend sustainable proposals and strategies to immediately resolve the challenge of transhumance and improve domestic cattle production in general nationwide. In addition, the committee can establish a compensation fund to ease the process of mitigation between the two groups. Farmers whose crops have been destroyed can be compensated through the fund. The fund can be financed by levying cattle owners depending on the quantity or size of their herds.

6.4.3 The Establishment of ‘Cattle Colonies’

The permanent solution to the conflict is the establishment of cattle ranches popularly referred to as ‘Cattle Colonies’. The cattle ranching system is the standard practise of rearing cattle across the globe. The practise of roaming cattle in search of grazing areas is an ancient practise that can no longer cope with prevailing conditions of the contemporary world such urbanisation and population growth. Therefore, it is essential for the herdsmen to evolve and adopt modern ways of rearing cattle in order not to be overtaken by the rapid changes in socio-economic events. The creation of cattle ranches or cattle colonies can provide the avenue of evolution of cattle rearing, eliminate conflict and improve the production of the livestock industry in Ghana. Areas with medium forest cover can be converted ranching areas creating the cattle colonies within these areas. In Ghana for example, areas within the
Northern and Brong-Ahafo regions can be demarcated for such purposes. The local ecosystem in these areas is capable of sustaining cattle herds throughout the year even if they are confined within a specific space, that is, a fenced-off in a ranch. On these ranches, the cattle can be properly fed with foliage produced specifically to feed the cattle. In addition, water systems can be developed on these ranches to provide water to the herds at all times.

The establishment of cattle colonies has a wide range of benefits. First of all, proper ranching system will improve the quality of meat production. Furthermore, with the roll out of the ‘One District One Factory’ programme, the cattle rearing can develop into the industrial production of meat and dairy products such as canned beef, milk and cheese. This will certainly expand the agricultural economy of Ghana. In addition, goods such as canned beef, milk and cheese can be easily affordable since they are home manufactured. These industries can create employment for the youths of this country. Furthermore, the ranching system can reduce wastage in the agricultural sector. The agro by-products such as the peels and leftovers of crop harvested can be used as feed for the livestock. In addition, farmers can also grow foliage to feed the livestock during the off peak seasons, hence this becomes a source of revenue for them whiles they wait for their harvest.

Furthermore, other advantage of the ranching system is that pastoral activities can be properly monitored and regulated. Ranching will provide the opportunity to be taxed appropriately, undergo veterinary regulations and contain diseases, proper land administration and make livestock research easier since they are located in one location. In general, the creation of grazing reserves may in the end be the formidable solution to the crises. Through this project,
policy-makers can encourage sustainable livestock production and at the same time establish clear restrictions on land use, identify critical areas that should be protected and use a variety of taxes, regulations, incentives and other policy instruments to discourage deforestation (van den Brink et al. 1995). Parliament must pass the ranching code or law in order to legally enforce ranching as the sole means of rearing cattle in the country and the practice of roaming cattle herd prohibited and illegal.

However, the question still remains as the extent of government involvement, whether it should be a partnership between government and cattle or solely the responsibility of cattle owners. The popular consensus is that, cattle rearing is a private enterprise undertaken by individuals to make profits. Thus, the cattle owners must finance their own projects and leaving services such as veterinary and security to government.

Lastly, the expansion of commercial farming and establishment of cattle colonies will increase the environmental pressure especially in the forest areas and it is our responsibility to protect our forest reserves. Therefore, it is imperative to create a legal, institutional and financial framework to support payment for environmental services. Farmers and herdsmen must contribute to the environmental ‘public good’. They must be encouraged to protect and restore forests and to adopt more sustainable grazing systems on their pastures. In addition, another means to control this is the introduction of tax policies to discourage large-scale cattle rearing. Levying higher taxes on fields and pastures can discourage cattle owners to expand and encourage or restore forest cover on watersheds and marginal lands.
Bibliography


