PASTORALISM AND VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN GHANA: SOCIALIZATION AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENT

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ABSTRACT

The paper analyses the nature of pastoral activities and socialization processes and how these are associated with violence and crimes in Northern Ghana. The paper focuses on the professional requirements of pastoralists and how these are perceived and misinterpreted by the local people. The study combines socio-anthropological approaches of observation, focus group discussions and interviews with more structured in-depth and key informant interviews. The paper found that formal education results in a decrease in the numbers of local herd boys. Pastoral Fulani herdsmen have gradually replaced the local herd boys to herd cattle at very flexible terms of conditions. However, they have been perceived to be violent and this affects their relationship with the local people. The study concludes that the work of the pastoral herdsmen is very important for the cattle industry and there is the need to regulate their activities to ensure reduction of crop destruction and conflicts. This can promote a harmonious relationship between the pastoral Fulani herdsmen and their Ghanaian hosts. The paper recommends some kind of education for the herdsmen and the crop farmers, as well as demarcation of grazing land. There is the need to also control the free penetration of nomadic herds to control cattle rustling and cutting down of economic trees.

Key words: Pastoralist, Fulani, Cattle, Violence, Socialization

BACKGROUND

This paper focuses on how local people misinterpret the professional requirements for pastoralism as a threat. It also describes the processes that Fulani herdsmen are socialized into doing which are contrary to local people’s expectations of what herdsmen should do. The paper was inspired by the fact that, despite the several scholarly works conducted on pastoralism, especially on the Fulani herdsmen and their relationship with indigenous crop farmers in Ghana, few empirical studies have been conducted, especially by sociologists and anthropologists, on the culture of herding and the socialization of herdsmen. For instance Tonah has studied state policies, local prejudices and cattle rustling along the Ghana-Burkina Faso border [1], Fulani pastoral migration, sedentary farmers and conflict in the Middle belt of Ghana [2], migrant Fulani herdsmen, indigenous farmers and the contest for land in Northern Ghana [3], the expulsion of Fulbe pastoralists from Ghana [4] and conflict and consensus between migrant Fulani herdsmen and Mamprusi farmers in Northern Ghana [4]. Oppong [5] also examines social life and ethnic association of Fulani along the coast of Ghana. These studies, however, do not shed light on the herding culture and socialization of pastoral families.

Pastoralists¹ are people who base their livelihoods by depending on the well-being of their livestock. In Ghana, the types of livestock kept by pastoralists are mostly cattle and small ruminants. Pastoral systems take many forms and are adapted to particular natural, political and economic environments. Mobility is a key feature of pastoralism, because here cattle depend on natural pasture. The work of a pastoralist involves keeping the livestock together as a group while in search for pasture and water. They also try to retrieve animals that wander off, separate fighting animals, watch over their safety and protect them from going astray and from being attacked by

¹ Pastoralists are people who derive more than 50 per cent of their incomes from livestock and livestock products [9].
wild animals or stolen by raiders or cattle rustlers. They also form searching team to look for lost livestock in the bush.

Apart from these, pastoralists also take up various other activities with regard to livestock care; constructing and cleaning the kraals, caring for sick animals, collecting water and fodder, milking the cows, castrating the bulls, etc.

There are several types of pastoralism in Ghana. These include agropastoralism\(^2\) where families or communities combine crop farming and animal rearing. Under this system, there is a kind of division of labour in the family where the adults concentrate on farming activities and leave the care of the animals in the hands of children. Herding is an important activity involving children between the ages of 5 to 15 years used as herd boys/girls. Children typically herd either for an employer or for their own household or relatives, and may either be paid or unpaid [6].

Another type of pastoralism is the system where the local people entrust their cattle to Fulani herdsmen, either paying them or allowing them to use the milk [7]. This is a kind of loose arrangement where the contract is reached and agreed upon verbally and usually is not backed by any formal documentation. Under this system, the herdsmen can do backyard farming to supplement the milk products obtained from the cattle and food stuffs may be given to them by the cattle owners [8].

The third form is nomadic pastoralism. This is a system where only livestock are kept. It involves irregular patterns of movement, sometimes transhumant, to several locations. In Ghana, most of the nomadic pastoralists are said to be alien Fulani herdsmen who move their cattle from neighbouring Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria in search for pasture and water during the dry season [7].

Contrary to IFAD’s [9] assertion that pastoralists inhabit zones where the potential for crop cultivation is limited due to low and highly variable rainfall conditions, steep terrain or extreme temperatures, in Ghana, pastoralism is carried out where crop cultivation is an integral part of the landscape. Under this circumstance, crop destruction by cattle is very common leading to attacks and counter attacks between herdsmen and farmers.

Consequently, there is a general public furore about the annual destruction of crops by cattle under the care of pastoral herdsmen. For example, on Wednesday 7\(^{th}\) December 2011, Fulani herdsmen in a village call Waduli near Gushiegu in the Gushiegu District of Northern region were attacked by Konkomba crop farmers. Thirteen (13) pastoral Fulani were killed and 11 were injured, whilst their homes and properties were destroyed. Most of the Fulani herdsmen fled the district for fear of their lives [10]. The following week, another Fulani herdsman was killed at Malshegu Duu near Tamale.

In recent years, issues surrounding pastoral herdsmen dominated public discourses. Even on the floor of Parliament, matters pertaining to herdsmen are debated fiercely, sometimes with acrimonious emotions. Such discourses are often dominated by perceptions of herdsmen’s destructive tendencies.

Herdsmen are often accused by the local people of leading cattle to destroy farm crops and the environment and polluting sources of drinking water. In some cases, they are accused of rape and rustling cattle belonging to the local people [1,2,3,4]. These activities often lead to violent clashes between the herdsmen and crop farmers [4].

Though are no empirical data, anecdotal evidence showed that until somewhere in the year 2000, the pastoral Fulani herdsmen lived peacefully with their Ghanaian hosts and crop farmers. The question is why there has been an upsurge of violent attacks and alleged crimes perpetrated by the pastoral herdsmen? This paper examines the culture\(^3\) of herding and how it has been associated with violent tendencies of herdsmen in northern Ghana. Specifically, the paper examines perceptions of violence associated with the various pastoralists and the possible link of these with their cultural traits and socialization processes. The paper contributes to the ongoing debate on farmer-herder conflicts and interrogates the widely held views of many farmers that herdsmen are violent.

**Theoretical consideration**

\(^2\) Agropastoralists are people who derive less than 50 per cent of their incomes from livestock and livestock products, and most of the remaining income from cultivation [9].

\(^3\) The way of life of pastoralists and their socialization processes
This paper draws from the rational choice theory and the classic rational choice theory. The rational choice theory for instance argues that physical and social environmental conditions are more likely to make an individual violent especially when they are placed at greater risk of violent victimization, such as spending time in the bush alone,) or when there are fewer guardians capable of protecting them from victimization, e.g. when they travel alone at night [11]. Violence could also be used as means or strategy to obtain resources, for example through robbery, disregarding the consequences of any punishment and risks such as possible incarceration by the state [12].

Similarly, classic rational choice theory focuses on the potential marginal deterrence effect of state justice institutions on criminal behavior. In fact, some rational choice theories are influenced by evolutionary psychological theories of violence. These theories use the idea of human nature to make predictions about individuals based on how they are assumed to respond to their environmental. For instance, individuals will consider risks and benefits associated with violent predatory behavior such as robbery or cattle rustling, including the risk that the state will punish them. It stresses that human nature (e.g., preferences to use violence to protect property or acquire property) is assumed by the evolutionists to have been shaped by natural selection over the long-run. Some rational choice theorists are influenced by Simon’s [13] bounded rationality approach, which argues that culture and institutions influence human behaviour. However, cultural factors are exogenous to rationality itself in this regard.

Methodology
The study adopts a qualitative approach. It employs socio-anthropological approaches; interviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and observations. The bulk of the information for this paper is based on research work conducted in the Northern and the Upper East Regions of Ghana from December 2012 to April 2014. Particularly, the study was conducted in Garu-Tempah and Zebilla Districts in the Upper East Region. In the Northern Region, data were collected in West and East Mamprusi, Karaga, Nanumba North and Central Gonja Districts. Data was collected from crop farmers, herdsmen, traditional authorities, District Coordinating Directors, District Directors of Agriculture, Assembly persons, Police, and cattle owners. The research also benefitted from over 10 years of experience carrying out empirical research on the herdsmen of Northern Ghana; spanning from 2001 and 2014 when the researcher conducted studies for his bachelor and master of philosophy degrees respectively.

Traditional Herding in Northern Ghana
Herding of cattle and small ruminants predates colonialism in Northern Ghana. It is one of the oldest agricultural practices where families’ toil was converted into cattle as means of wealth. During the period prior to the middle of the 19th century when wild animals like hyenas, wolfs and lions were common in Northern Ghana, young men were tasked to take care of herding and were expected to be heavily armed to provide security to the cattle. In the Upper East region, animals were housed in the inner compound of the house to avoid being stolen or attacked by wild animals at night. In the Northern region cattle were housed in kraals made up of thorny branches of trees and logs. At night men were alert and constantly checked the animals when they noticed any disturbance in the kraal. In many cases, they set up fire by the kraals to ward off mosquitoes and to serve as warning to potential attack.

With the growth of population and expansion of family sizes, the need for cultivation of more crops to feed families became imperative. This required family labour, especially that of the strongest individuals, to cultivate crops. The advent of guns, traps, snags, and other dangerous weapons meant that the incidence of wild animals attacking domestic animals reduced drastically and no longer posed any danger. This paved the way for families to leave the care of their animals to boys and girls, usually between the ages of 5 and 15 years, releasing the stronger adults for cropping activities.

According to the cattle owners, “herd boys were taught and encouraged to be brave to be able to take care of the animals, protect and defend them in the bush” This is part of their socialization processes, they stressed. Herd boys were taught how to handle cows and bulls that went wild and could attack anybody who came close. They applied their bravery and skills in controlling dangerous domestic animals as herdboys. A former herd boy in Ghushiegu remarked that as part of the culture of their profession, “they were constantly expected to be on guard at all times”. This means that they needed to be armed with sticks, machetes, bows and arrows, and later with guns. Informant at Garu mentioned that “This was necessary because the success of the...
herds and for that matter the wellbeing and wealth of the family depended on these herd boys”.

The duty of the herd boy was to ensure that the animals were sent to the bush daily for grazing and water. They were also to ensure the protection of the animals from wild animals and thieves, to separate fighting animals, and to prevent them from destroying farm crops and going astray. They were also supposed to treat animals with minor ailments, and injuries and clean the kraals. In most cases, they were in charge of milking the cows, ensuring that the calves were fed and provided fodder and water for sick animals that could not go to graze. When animals went missing, they were to form search parties to look for them in the bush.

Their reward was that they were constantly praised and commended by their parents and family members for their kills in handling and protecting the animals. They were also praised and commended for their bravery. The fact that they could stay in the bush alone for the whole day was a sign of bravery. As they were in charge of milking the cows, they had access and control over the milk. On the other hand, they were heavily reprimanded and sometimes beaten or sanctioned if anything untoward happened, such as loss of animals or crop destruction.

In pastoral communities, three or more herd boys could graze their animals together but separate the cattle to their various kraals when they return from the pasture. Grazing cattle in this way provides herd boys with companionship and security.

In most cases, herd boys were teased by non-herd boys as ‘bush boys’ because they spend all their daily life in the bush. They did not have time for socialising except in the evening. Even on festive occasions, they were expected to send the animals for grazing. Generally, most herd boys did not have the opportunity to attend formal school as the period they served as herdboys coincided with their school going age. Therefore, the majority of them are illiterate.

There is a smooth transition from herding to farming in agropastoral families. Before herdboys graduate from herding to join their fathers and brothers in farming, they might have transferred their skills to their younger brothers who understudied them.

The use of local herd boys in herding cattle gradually dwindled with the advent of Western education. Since Ghana’s Independence in 1957, successive governments have stressed the need for every child to go to school. Educational facilities were expanded and more schools were built in rural communities where parents were entreated to send their children to school. To further encourage parents to send their children to school, the first government of Ghana after Independence introduced free education policy in Northern Ghana. This encouraged more parents to send their children to school. The 1992 constitution of Ghana further introduced free compulsory universal basic education. Other policies such as the Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals, and the role of some NGOs such as School for Life, provided formal education to most children who were hitherto used as herd boys. All these contributed to the reduction in the use of children as herd boys.

The advent of Pastoral Fulani herdsmen

The advent of the pastoral Fulani herdsmen in Ghana and their relationship with crop farmers are well documented by Tonah [7, 4,2]. The knowledge and skills of the Fulani herdsmen in handling livestock was more advanced compared with the local Ghanaian agro-pastoralists. As a result, the District Commissioner of the South Mamprusi District as late as 1932 recommended an energetic recruitment of the Fulani herdsmen to boost the livestock industry [7]. This official recommendation for massive recruitment of Fulani herdsmen, coupled with other factors such as the Sahelian drought, encouraged the Fulani to move in large numbers from the Sahelian countries such as Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso to Ghana in search for herding opportunities [14].

Tonah [7] deposited that by the beginning of the 20th century only a small number of Fulani pastoral herdsmen had settled in northern Ghana. Their numbers kept on increasing and official census figures of Fulani population in Lawra-Tumu District alone as at 1911 census was about 100 persons. This figure increased to about 302 in 1921 census and then to 784 in 1931 [7].

With the increasing numbers of Fulani herdsmen in Ghana looking for opportunities to herd and the increasing demand for all children of school going age to be sent to school, the use of local herd boys gradually gave way to the pastoral Fulani herdsmen.

Formal Education and the decreasing use of local herd boys

Recruitment of pastoral herdsmen

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The pastoral Fulani herdsmen are easy to hire. Both the cattle owners and the pastoral Fulani herdsmen interviewed indicated that they did not sign any formal contracts. Four ways of identifying and recruiting pastoral herdsmen were mentioned.

First, depending on the number of cattle; if they are less than 15, a farmer may either negotiate with an existing Fulani herdsman in the community or any Fulani herdsman in the neighboring communities, mentioning that they have cattle they want him to take care of. The herdsman may direct that the cattle owner inform the one whose brought him to the community, i.e. those who own cattle are already under the Fulani’s care. If that person agrees, agrees, the new cattle owner can add his to the herd. On the other hand, one can start the negotiation with the owner(ies) of the cattle kraal/the the Fulani is already herding. If they agree, they will then lead you to the herdsman and say ‘this is my/our brother or uncle or friend or whatever who has cattle and wants to add them to your herd’. If the cattle are not too many for the herdsman, he may accept.

The second way to recruit herdsmen was to appeal to friends, relatives and existing pastoral Fulani herdsmen to look for a good pastoralist. The pastoralists are well connected with their friends and relatives everywhere and they quickly send word around to their friends and relatives asking for herdsmen. Through this, they can recommend a pastoralist to come and take charge.

The third way is that some pastoral Fulani herdsmen roam around from village to village in search of herding opportunities. Such herdsmen could be engaged by those who need their services. Under such arrangements, the pastoral herdsman in question will have to bring one or two respectable people to vouch for them. Such sureties could either be a notable local person, a known cattle dealer or a known pastoral herdsman. When the cattle owner is convinced, he goes ahead to negotiate with the Fulani and engage him.

The fourth way is that the pastoral herdsmen themselves can sub-contract another herdsman to assist in the herding. According to our informants, there are young Fulani pastoral herd boys who are moving around in search of herding opportunities. Elder Fulani normally engage such boys after due diligence and background checks. They also engage a relative for a specified period of time and agreed terms of payment.

Working conditions and tenure of office
As indicated earlier, the majority of the pastoral Fulani herdsmen we interviewed were engaged through verbal contracts, sometimes with one or two guarantors. In these cases, cattle owners will have to help the herdsmen set up his accommodation, usually huts on the outskirt of the community and close to the kraal. Some cattle owners especially in West Mamprusi District indicated they provide food stuffs until the herdsmen harvests his own crops. They assist the pastoralist to planting, weed and harvest. Assistance in farming could be an annual affair. However, the herdsmen is allowed to milk the cows and sell the milk or use it [7]. Other responsibilities of the cattle owners include supporting the herdsmen to cut thorny branches of trees and logs to prepare the kraal and buying ropes to thither calves and some other difficult cow at night.

The terms are different for those young Fulani herd boys who are sub-contracted by other herdsmen. Depending on the terms of agreement, they could either be paid in cash, kind or cattle. As at the time of this study they were paid between GHC 40 and 50 (UDS 11 and 13) per month. When paid in cattle, they receive a bull of between 3 to 5 years old for six months service or a cow of same age for one year. They are also given accommodation and feeding. Their health and clothing may also be provided.

There is no fixed tenure of office for pastoral herdsmen hired locally by Ghanaians. Herdsmen could be engaged for life under the following conditions: i) if they are considered trustworthy and hardworking; ii) if they do not frequently allow cattle to damage others’ farm crops; iii) if they have established a good relationship with the cattle owners and traditional authority in the community; iv) if they are satisfied with their working conditions and social environment and do not get better opportunities elsewhere, and v) if other members of the community, especially non-cattle owners and crop farmers, are not hostile to them.

For instance, in the West Mamprusi District, 7 pastoral families claimed they were 2nd or 3rd generations in their communities. Their grandfathers were originally engaged and handed over to their fathers, who were now handing over to them. At Wungu in West Mamprusi District, Alhaji Iddrisu, who is in his late 70s, said he has been in the community for over 50 years. Those who are sub-
contracted by other herdsman may decide to leave or renew their contract after collecting their benefits.

**The Nomadic Pastoral herdsman**

Nomadic pastoral herdsman are also found in Northern Ghana. They are seasonal migrants mostly from Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Detailed research on them has been conducted by Tonah [1,2,3and7]. This category of herdsman has little interaction with the local people. They remain in the bush grazing their cattle and try to avoid camping close to human settlements to avoid interruption with their cattle. Those we interacted with in West Mamprusi and Central Gonja Districts were only men. They said they rarely move with women because of their transhumant nature.

**Fulani herdsman relation with Crop Farmers in Ghana**

In the various ethnographic studies of Fulani in Ghana, it is clear that their presence and activities are common across the length and breadth of Ghana. Tonah [4,7] and Oppong’s [5] studies show that their presence predated independence. In Ghana they are found in small numbers throughout the country but are concentrated in the north and southeastern parts of the country. Many of them are immigrants. Some are descendants of immigrants from the Sahel region ‘but are nevertheless still considered by the state and by many Ghanaians as ‘aliens’, even though a sizable number of them are third-generation descendants of immigrants’ [3].

In communities where their population is fairly large, they try to form associations which bring them closer to each other. For instance, [8] and [7] reported that the Fulani at Wungu in the West Mamprusi District formed an association known as “Bantari”, literally meaning ‘help me to rise’ or ‘help me to grow’. This association gives various kinds of support to its members. Oppong [5] also mentioned an association of the Fulani in the Greater Accra region known as suudu-baaba that included all the Fulani in the region. Following the violent clashes between crop farmers and Fulani herdsman in Brong-Ahafo and Eastern Regions, a National Association of Cattle Farmers, made up of mostly Fulani, was formed to serve as a conduit between crop farmers and cattle farmers. Fulani are therefore not isolated individuals but are connected and linked together in groups and in associations. This is often a characteristic feature of migrants who form associations to serve the interest of their members. One could cite the Ghanaian communities in various countries in Europe and America as examples of such associations.

**Growing up and Socialization in pastoral Fulani family**

Pastoral family life revolves around livestock. Livestock is critical for the survival and wellbeing of the family. The pastoral Fulani cultural identity is intricately linked with cattle [5]. According to the Fulani informants, cattle are part and parcel of their life from cradle to the grave. At birth, pastoral Fulani shave the hair of the newly born child and bury it in the kraal to signify that the child should grow up to be imbued with cattle rearing in mind. At about age five, young pastoral Fulani are literally given cows if the family has their own cattle or assigned some if they are taking care of others cattle. This is done to inculcate the habit of rearing in their minds. They believe that the expansion and growth of their herd depends largely on luck. Since one does not know ‘which child has that luck, it is a common practice of those with cattle to ‘give’ some to their wives and children to try their luck.

According to our pastoral Fulani informants, children who are given cattle before they reach a mature age (usually 15 years and above) are much more interested in taking good care of them for their own prosperity. They take particular interest in the wellbeing of these cattle and subsequently grow up with this habit. This practice is intended to give the child an emotional attachment to the cattle and ensure that he will do everything to ensure their expansion and good health.

Cattle are not only essential to daily life and survival in pastoral communities. They also have material and prestigious value and spiritual and political importance. Cattle shape the kind of relationship people have with their family, friends and their neighbors. According to the pastoral herdsman, men who have cattle have the privilege of marrying as many women as they want, as they can provide for the needs of their family. They also command respect among their friends and neighbors and have more influence in society and control over resources than those without cattle.

To further prove their emotional and sentimental attachment to cattle, pastoral families give special

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4 When members have naming ceremonies, weddings, funerals, sickness, legal or court cases, etc.
names to cattle in their kraals and refer and identify to them using these names [7]. They can trace the genealogical roots of some of the cattle in their kraals, usually to the female cow. This shows the extent to which they are psychologically and emotionally attached to the cattle. Some of the pastoralists have given some special training to their cattle in such way that they can command them to attack any intruder or run away from trouble. This provides them not only with protection but also emotional satisfaction. Some of the bulls are also trained and are ridden as means of transportation.

Pastoral Fulani Perception about those without Cattle

Pastoral Fulani accord a person without cattle little respect in society. During the focus group discussion with the pastoral Fulani at Buipe, one of the participants remarked that ‘in pastoral society, people without cattle are worthless since they cannot boast of any cattle’. This view was shared by many other herdsman and underscores the importance of cattle to the pastoral communities. They went further to indicate that young men may even find it difficult to get married since, in their view, they cannot afford to pay the bride price and provide for their wife and children.

According to the respondents, young male pastoral Fulani whose families have no cattle may have to work for the rich in society in return for cattle. Through this process, they can gradually build their own herds. Others may have to move out of their family/community in search for opportunities to herd cattle.

Professional Requirement: Weapons as working tools

For every pastoral herdsman it is absolutely necessary to carry sticks and machetes as part of their set of working tools. These tools are used to control the cattle. The sticks are used in turning the cattle and also in separating fighting cows. According to our key informant at Wungu, “any herdsman who sends the cattle to graze without carrying a machete is considered as an irresponsible herdsman”. He went further to explain that carrying machetes serves a number of purposes; first, herdsman can use the machete to slaughter any cow which is at the point of dying. He indicated that it is irresponsible for any herdsman to allow his cow to die without slaughtering it. It will mean double loss to the owner; first, they have lost the cow and second they cannot use the meat since they are Moslems5. They can also use the machete to cut down leaves and shrubs to feed the animals, if necessary. Pastoral herdsman are fully aware of the dangers of cattle rustlers. According to our informants, cattle rustlers are more dangerous than wild animals like lions, hyenas and wolves. They can kill and carry all the cattle away. Consequently, many arm themselves with dangerous weapons such as machetes, bows and arrows, pistols, and rifles guns. For the majority of the pastoralists, these weapons are necessary professional equipment for their.

Another cultural practice of the pastoral Fulani that requires the usage of arms is their seasonal transhumance movement. This requires wandering about with the livestock in search for water and pasture during the dry season. In most cases, they leave their countries of origin by November/December and return by May/June when the rains set in and the vegetation begins to rejuvenate. They are aware of the danger6 associated with being in the bush for months and this requires arming themselves.

It is normally just the men7 who are involved in this transhumance, since their destination is usually not certain. They keep on moving with the cattle from one place to another in search for pasture and water.

The pastoralists find that during the dry season, when the temperature is high in the day time, the cattle find it uncomfortable to graze properly. This is the period the grasses are also dried and unpalatable to the cattle. Thus, during the day time, the cattle are rather found resting under shades of tress and not grazing. This may result in loss of weight and market value. Some may even die as a result. To prevent this, most pastoral Fulani herdsman resort to also grazing their livestock at night. This practice requires that they carry weapons with them not only to control the cattle but also to protect themselves.

Pastoralists and Violence: Perceptions and Stereotyping

5 Muslims do not eat any animal died without slaughtered by a Muslim. Such meat is not halal and must not be consumed by Muslims.
6 Cattle rustlers, wild animals’ attacks and crop destruction are examples of some of the dangers.
7 Because they do not have specific places to graze the cattle they wander about. This makes it difficult to involve women.
The perception of most local Ghanaians about pastoral Fulani herdsmen is that they are violent and always commit crimes. The local people frequently alleged that cattle rustling and some highway robbery are committed by Fulani herdsmen. Over three quarters of the local people interviewed claimed the pastoral Fulani are violent and have the penchant when they suspect danger. The Fulani admitted that they are always armed, but claimed that this was for professional purposes.

Generally, local Ghanaians perceived the local herd boys as less destructive. The reasons they imputed to this are that they are usually minors (5-15 years old) and do not have the strength to attack anybody. They cannot also steal cattle, because at their age, they may not be able to negotiate prices and the buyers. They also herd cattle belonging to their parents or relatives which they considered as their own property. Secondly, they herd small number of cattle they can easily control. Thirdly, as indigenes they know the terrain very well and can navigate through it without entering into people farms with the cattle. They can easily be traced if they destroy crops. Lastly, they have specific places they feed their cattle.

Crop destruction by cattle is a bane, and one of the major causes of conflict between farmers and herdsmen [1,2,3 and 7]. While crop farmers often accused the herdsmen of negligence and indiscipline, the herdsmen often maintained that it was never their intention to lead cattle into people’s farms. They claimed that, in some instances, a few cattle stray into farms and feed on the crops. They also admitted that it is difficult to control the cattle, especially when the grasses are tall. According to the herdsmen, the cattle can easily hide behind the grasses and later go into people’s farms. When crops are destroyed, affected farmers get angry and may inflict wounds on the cattle or attack the herdsmen.

The local people frequently alleged that cattle rustling and some highway robbery are committed by Fulani herdsmen. Interviews with the Ghana Police Service at Walewale and Gushiegu revealed that out of the 11 highway robbery cases arrested between December 2011 and June 2014, seven of them were of Fulani extraction. Our Fulani respondents indicated that armed robbery does not pertain to only Fulani but is a universal problem. With regard to cattle rustling, they claimed it is sometimes done with the connivance of the local cattle dealers. The Fulani considered that stereotyping them as violent robbers by crop farmers and cattle owners as an attempt to set them against the state (the District Assemblies and the police).

The Fulani herdsmen indicated that they also suffered from cattle rustling, which they suspected is committed by aliens and the nomadic Fulani who do not permanently stay at one location. They added that the nomads in particular usually do not know the terrain as they keep on moving in search for pasture and water.

**Discussions**

It is an undeniable fact that herding cannot be done without weapons, especially sticks. These are used to control the cattle. However, when there is a scuffle between the herdsmen and the crop farmers over crop destruction, they naturally use the weapons to defend themselves. As rational choice put it violence could be employed because the herdsmen spend time in the bush alone and any least danger could be counteracted by attacks [11]. Violence could also be used as means or strategy to obtain resources, such as grazing land and water for the cattle as the meander through farmers to get these resources.

The tendency of herdsmen to attack could also be due to their cultural life as pastoralists. The fact that they are conscious that criminals can also attack them and carry away their cattle makes them approach any unsuspected person with caution. Perhaps, this could be a mechanism use for self-defense. Furthermore, because the nomads are always on the move they do not carry property that can pin them down to one place. Thus, they can easily attack and move away with their cattle to a different place. To avoid reprisal attacks, they quickly move away because any delay may spell doom to them.

The practice of moving from one place to another in search for pasture is a rational choice that the herdsmen always make, but this strategy is misconstrued by the local people as a means to rustle their cattle. The nomads considered their movement as a means of getting pasture for their cattle. The nature of the transhumance is such that herdsmen cannot carry enough food that can last this period. The herdsmen claimed they sell their own cattle to buy food and other daily needs as they move on, but the local people frequently claimed that as the nomads move, they carry cattle belonging to the
local people along and quickly sell them to cattle dealers.

Ignorance of the terrain
Ignorance of others’ culture often leads to ethnocentrism, cultural shocks, misunderstanding, disregard to others sensibilities and even xenophobic tendencies. Situation where the herdsmen are accused of polluting water bodies and cutting down economic trees such as the shea to their cattle to feed on could be an example of destruction of the environment. As the cattle sometimes cannot graze during the day time under high temperatures, the Fulani cut down the shea tree and other economic trees they come across for the cattle to feed. They also drive their cattle into ponds and other water bodies which provide drinking water to the rural people.

As cattle are sometimes grazed in the night, it is possible that they run into farms without knowing. Ignorance of the terrain and grazing the cattle at night leads to destruction of farm crops. As they are always on the move looking for pasture and water, they move into unfamiliar territories where they find it difficult to navigate their way safely without leading the cattle into farm crops. Crop destruction by cattle is one of the major sources of conflicts between the Fulani the local Ghanaians farmers [2,3and7].

Conclusions and recommendations
This paper has analysed the herding cultural and the socialization processes of pastoral herders. The role of the pastoral Fulani herdsmen is important for the livestock subsector. It is important for cattle owners who want to engage the services of the pastoral Fulani to investigate their background very well and enter into formal contract with them. Herdsmen should be paid to motivate them to take good care of the cattle. There is the need to demarcate grazing land and cattle routes to minimize crop destruction. Alien pastoral nomads should be made to register before entering the country and District Assemblies should regulate their movement and activities.

References

10. Daily Graphic, 8 December, 2011

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8 The shea is an important economic tree that provides livelihood and income to the majority of the rural poor women.