



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

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**THE PLACE OF AFRICAN ANIMAL ETHICS WITHIN THE WELFARIST AND
RIGHTIST DEBATE: AN INTERROGATION OF AKAN ONTOLOGICAL AND
ETHICAL BELIEFS TOWARD ANIMALS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Ethics Studies at the School of Philosophy, Religion, and Classics, College of
Humanities, University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa**

2020

DECLARATION

I, Stephen Nkansah Morgan, declare that:

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- ii. This thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university.
- iii. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
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Date: 24-02-2020

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Date: 24-02-2020

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for His inexhaustible love and exceptional favour.

To my sweet little daughter, who had to endure her father's long absence—it is my hope that this study will serve as a testament for you to aim high in life and to know that with God and perseverance, you can attain greater heights beyond what we envisage for you.

To my dearest and industrious wife, who had to sacrifice a lot to afford me the time and latitude to pursue this study, I appreciate how much of yourself you had to give to take care of us.

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ABSTRACT

Scholars in the field of environmental and animal ethics have propounded theories that outline what, in their view, ought to constitute an ethical relationship between human and the environment and humans and nonhuman animals respectively. In the field of animal ethics, the contributions by Western scholars to theorize a body of animal ethics, either as an ethic in its own right or as a branch of the broader field of environmental ethics is clearly seen. Consequently, there are, notably, two main schools of thought in the field of animal ethics. These are the ‘welfarist’ and the ‘rightist’ approaches (Regan, 2006; Owoseni & Olatoye, 2014). Unfortunately, a clearly concerted effort to theorize on animal ethics from an African perspective is at the minimal, although there is a lot written in African environmental ethics, broadly construed. It is within this context that this study locates an African animal ethic within the two main theories in the global animal ethics, using traditional Akan ontology and ethics particularly, those that speak to their relationship with the environment and, especially animals. Thus, using Akan ontological worldview and ethics as foundational sources, alongside learnt principles from the emerging theories in African environmental ethics, the study seeks to find the place of Akan animal ethics within the rightist and welfarist debates.

Following qualitative research rubrics, the study collected primary data through one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions from traditional Akan leaders and experts, and young Akan adults. The data was then analysed using the study’s theoretical framework (welfarism, rightism, and the ethics of interrelatedness) in comparison with the literature to find corresponding answers to the study’s research questions. The findings indicate that the Akan perspective acknowledges the existence of an interconnection between humans and the rest of nature, and that it is an important connection that ought to be sustained. It is also evident that the Akan environmental ethics is anthropocentric in approach through its conferring of instrumental or extrinsic values on nature, instrumental values that go to the benefit of humans. This notwithstanding, Akan environmental ethics is not to be considered as individualistic in nature because it does not seek the interests or rights of individual human agents but instead, the common interest of the community through its goal to ensure the continuous progress and survival of the human community. Ultimately, the study’s findings reveal that Akan animal ethics shares closer affinities with welfarism (direct) than it does with rightism.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter is the introductory chapter to the whole study. Here, the study provides the background and motivation for the study; the study's research questions and objectives; the significance of the study; and the organisation of the chapters that make up the study. The chapter also provides a sneak preview of the study's theoretical framework and the method and methodology adopted.

1.1 Background and Motivation

Environmental ethics is the branch of ethics that is concerned with the human moral relationship with the natural environment. Rolston (2003: 517) defines it as a "theory and practice about appropriate concern for, values in, and duties regarding the natural world." It aims, among other things, to provide ethical justification and moral motivation for protecting, preserving, and respecting the natural environment. Animal ethics, which is generally regarded as an offshoot of environmental ethics, narrows its focus on providing moral justifications and motivations for the protection, preservation, and respecting the welfare or right of animals.

Whilst it is undeniable that animals matter, African scholars have done very little in terms of theorizing an African animal ethic that shows how traditional African cultures would or should relate to animals. There are indeed some references made here and there on human-animal relation in the emerging field of African environmental ethics, although it could be argued that very little conscious effort has been made to develop a theory of African animal ethics in its own capacity. Western literature has, however, made clear efforts and gains in theorizing a body of animal ethics, either as an ethic in its own right or as a branch of the broader field of environmental ethics. Consequently, there are notable authorities that can be named when it comes to animal ethics. Peter Singer (1975) is, for example, known for his arguments for animal liberation, while Tom Regan (2004) is known for his defense for animal rights. Consequently, there are, notably, two main schools of thought in the field of animal ethics. These are the 'welfarist' and the 'rightist' approaches (Regan, 2006; Owoseni & Olatoye, 2014).

Welfarists are usually depicted as holding utilitarian or pragmatic perspectives that acknowledge human's obligations prevent avoidable harm or undue loss of liberty to animals. Welfarists are known to promote the humane treatment of animals (Beauchamp, 2011: 200). In contrast, those who take the rightist position argue that animals, like humans, have interests that cannot be sacrificed or traded away just because it might benefit others. Animal welfare advocates allow the use of animals as long as "humane" guidelines are followed. Thus, the clear delineating difference between welfarists and rightists is that while rightists, on one hand, call for the total abolishment of all the use of animals, including for food, entertainment, sports, clothes, medical test, among others; welfarists, on the other hand, call for a more respectable treatment of animals (Regan, 2006). There are, of course, more nuances to both positions than the perspective given above. More insights on this is discussed in chapters two and three.

The African continent, as we know it, is home to a diversity of animal species. A report by African Guide indicated that there are over 1,100 different species of mammals in Africa, and over 2,600 species of birds (African Guide, 2019). Yet, many of these wild animals are considered endangered due to human activities of poaching, hunting for food, sports, leisure and entertainment and loss of natural habitat due to both natural phenomena like draughts and human activities that encroach their space.

Many African countries keep farm animals under poor and unhealthy conditions that do not only threaten the health of consumers, but the welfare and life of the animals themselves. The conditions of other domestic animals they keep as pets in their homes are no different. In Ghana, for example, one can easily observe that animals kept as pets are poorly fed (usually with leftover food). Such animals have poor or no designated place of accommodation, and hardly are they provided with veterinary services when sick or hurt. Many of them are not vaccinated in most cases, untagged, and allowed to move around unattended to on the streets and vicinities, feeding on whatever they find. As a result, many of these pets, besides looking scrawny and famished, tend to be vulnerable to speeding motorists. Unfortunately, the ill treatment of these domestic animals, including pets, usually go unrecorded and no one holds the owners or perpetrators accountable. Furthermore, some people in Ghana consume dog and cat as delicacies which in other places, are considered as pets and 'man's best friend'. While there are claims that some individuals in Ghana eat dog meat, evidence has shown that the practice is much more rampant in the upper east and northern regions of Ghana, where there exists dog meat markets. In such places, dog meat is considered a cultural delicacy and served

at weddings and other special occasions (Brown, 2017). Nii Addokwei Moffatt (2004) reports that the practice of eating dog meat is spreading widely in the capital city of Ghana where it is believed that people who eat dog meat cannot be spiritually harmed.

Mitchell (2013: 21) notes that several countries in Africa have laws that pertain to animals and their welfare or protection. Yet, he also acknowledges that in some African countries, there is no specific legislation dealing with animal welfare. Trent, Edwards, Felt, and O'Meara (2005: 74) note that though most African countries have wildlife protection acts, the majority of them have no federal protection laws for companion or domestic animals. Even in places that do have legislations, enforcement of the laws is a problem. Mitchell (2013: 21) acknowledges the problem of the lack of enforcement of the few existing laws that protect animals as well and further adds that there is also the problem of the lack of awareness of existing laws among the citizens. A similar situation exists in Ghana where one can find many laws and legislatures on the conservation and protection of wild animals. These include but not limited to the Wild Animals Preservation Acts of 1961 and Act 29 of Ghana Criminal Code. Nevertheless, there is a gross show of ignorance of the existence of these laws and a total display of apathy in their enforcements.

Theoretically speaking, many African scholars have attempted in recent times to capture indigenous African ethical responses to the environmental crises. The developing field of African environmental ethics now has notable names like Ojomo, Tangwa, Ogunbemi, Kelbessa, Ugwuanyi, Behrens, Bujo and Murove, among others. They have altogether made significant strides in advancing the African voice, which hitherto was missing in the global environmental ethics debate and discourse. Nevertheless, very few of these scholars mentioned above have deliberately written uniquely on African animal ethics. Most of these authors have tended to quickly, and some in few sentences, allude to animals in their examples of nature but rarely make concentrated efforts to create a theory of African animal ethics. Thus, while it is apparent that there is an emerging African environmental ethics, African animal ethics is not so much apparent.

It is against these backdrops that this study strives to locate Akan animal ethics within the two main theories in the global animal ethics debate. Thus, using Akan ontological worldview and ethics as foundational sources, alongside learnt principles from the emerging theories in African environmental ethics, the study seeks to find the place of Akan animal ethics within

the rightist or a welfarists debate. The study engages with questions such as: Would Akan ontology, ethics, and practices align with the emerging theories in African environmental ethics? Would the Akan environmental/animal ethics support an anthropocentric or non-anthropocentric worldview? Would Akan animal ethics argue for animal moral status? Is it possible that African environmental ethics will support the view that animals or some animals have moral status? Is the notion of animal rights consistent with Akan metaphysics? Does the Akan acknowledge animal pain? Etc. The overarching goal for this study is to provide answers to the question of whether Akan animal ethics takes after a welfarist approach or a rightist approach given Akan ontological worldview and ethics. Thus, placing Akan animal ethics in the global animal ethics debate and adding to the emerging literature on African animal ethics. The study sought answers to this and other related questions by relying principally on Akan ontological worldview, practices, and ethics as its first-hand sources and by also drawing from values, ideals and principles stemming from some of the emerging trends in African environmental ethics as secondary sources. It is observable from the literature accessed and reviewed for this study that very little has been said on African animal ethics in general, and much less when it comes to placing African animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist positions. This research fills this gap.

1.2 Key research question

What is the place of Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate?

1.3 Research sub-questions

1. What are the main theories in the global animal ethics debate?
2. What are the trends in the emerging theories in African environmental ethics and their relation to animal care and ethics?
3. How does Akan ontology and ethics help in placing Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate?

1.4 Key research objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To explore the major theories in the global animal ethics debate

2. To examine the trends in the emerging theories in African environmental ethics and their relation to animal care and ethics
3. To determine the place of Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate based on Akan ontology and ethics

1.5 Preview of methodology

To achieve its main goal of defining the place of Akan animal ethics within the animal welfarist and rightist debate based on Akan ontology and ethics, the study utilized the empirical research methodology. Following qualitative research rubrics, the study collected primary data through one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions. The data was then analysed in comparison with the literature to find corresponding answers to the study's research questions. Aside the empirical data, the study relied on information from relevant literature such as books, journals, and internet sources in the analyses.

The study's population is the Akan people of Ghana. The Akans are a group of closely related people found in West Africa. They live chiefly in Ghana and parts of neighboring Ivory Coast. In Ghana, they inhabit most of the southern and middle belts and account for close to half the national population. The study's sample is divided into two groups. One group is labelled as the 'Traditional respondents'. These are respondents regarded by members of the Akan community as gatekeepers of their traditions and as such are the repository of traditional Akan knowledge. These include Chiefs (*Ahenfo*), Linguists (*Akyeame*), Queen Mothers (*Ahema*) and Clan heads (*Abusuapanyin*). The other group is labelled as the 'young adult respondents'. Respondents in this group are the younger generations of Akans between the ages of twenty-two (22) and thirty-seven (37) years.

To interpret and analyze the data, the study used the grounded theory strategy of inquiry. This strategy of inquiry involves the constant comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical categories, and the theoretical sampling of different groups to compare the similarities and differences of information (Creswell, 2009: 13). The analyses and interpretation of data were also done thematically using pre-chosen themes that cover essential areas in the animal ethics debate.

Chapter 4 has a more in-depth presentation of the methodology and approach of the study.

1.6 Preview of theoretical framework

The study uses the two main theories in the global animal ethics debate, that is, welfarism and rightism as part of its theoretical framework. The identified dominant theory in the emerging trends of African environmental ethics labelled ‘the ethics of interrelatedness’ is the third theory used. The study used these three theories as expository, evaluative and descriptive tools. They are also used as tools for making comparisons with the collected data from the field. Ultimately, all the three theories help the study reach its objective of finding the place of Akan environmental ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate.

Tom Regan (2006: 208-209) identifies two possibilities of being a welfarist. The first group, he notes, are those who advocate for the humane treatment of animals only because it leads to human benefits, that is, it will make humans treat each other with kindness and with less cruelty. He labels this group as the indirect-duty account of the moral status of nonhuman animals. The study refers to this group as the *indirect welfarist* and their theory or approach as *indirect welfarism*. The second group are those who hold that humans owe direct duties to animals. According to Regan, this is the path preferred by utilitarians, starting with Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill, but given more force in the work of Peter Singer. Regan opines that those belonging to this group use utilitarian theories to criticize how animals are treated in contemporary industries (animal agriculture and biomedical research, for example). This welfarist group considers the duty not to cause animals to suffer unnecessarily as a duty owed directly to animals. The study subsequently refers to this group as the *direct welfarist* and their theory or approach as *direct welfarism*. Direct welfarism is the preferred welfarist theory in this study. It is however very important to note here, as Francione (2010: 5) acknowledges that there are many approaches to direct welfarism. Thus, it is possible to find some direct welfarist theories that do not agree, for example, with the utilitarian approach of Peter Singer. As such, in chapter 3, the study explores the different direct welfarist position of Peter Singer, Carl Cohen, and Robert Garner at length.

Rightism or animal rights theory is a theory that generally agrees that humans owe *direct duties* to animals because animals have at least some basic (moral) rights in the same way as humans do. Sunstein argues that animal rights advocates oppose all human use of animals by invoking and extending the Kantian principle that human beings should be treated as ends rather than as means to include animals as well. By this, the rightists challenge a wide range of current animal

uses including but not limited to agriculture (food), hunting (whether for food, sport or entertainment), zoos, circus and scientific experimentations (Sunstein, 2004: 5). Just like welfarism, there are different proponents of rightism. Tom Regan, a leading authority of rightism, describes animal rights theory to be abolitionist in its aspirations, seeks not to reform how humans exploit animals or to make what people do to them more humane but to abolish their exploitation and end it completely (Regan, 2001:127). The rightist or animal rights position is also referred to as the ‘abolitionist’ position. Francione (2010) explains that this alternative name is appropriate because the right theory, properly understood, agitates for the total abolition of animal usage. The study discussed the rightist views of Tom Regan, Bernard Rollin, Mary Anne Warren and Gary Francione extensively in chapter 3.

One common theme that runs through the emerging African environmental ethics is the notion of the interrelatedness of all things in nature and for some, even with manmade objects. Segun Ogungbemi calls this notion the ‘ethics of nature-relatedness’, which according to him, can be explained as “an ethic that leads human beings to seek to co-exist peacefully with nature and treat it with some reasonable concern for its worth, survival and sustainability (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270).” Godfrey Tangwa’s (2004) theory of African environmental ethics, which he calls ‘eco-bio-communitarian,’ underscores this ethics of interrelatedness. By eco-bio-communitarian, Tangwa meant that there is “recognition and acceptance of interdependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals and humans (Tangwa, 2004: 389).” There are identical expressions of this principle of interrelationship in the African environmental ethics identified by the likes of Munyaradzi Murove; Martin H. Prozesky; Mogobe B. Ramose; Bénédet Bujó, and Thaddeus Metz. Murove (2009); Prozesky (2009) and Ramose (2009), for example, independently employ the ethical principle found in the notion of *Ubuntu/Boto* and the Shona concept of *Ukama* to argue for environmental ethics of care and the virtue of the interrelatedness of humans with the entire ecosystem. It is this dominant principle found in the works of these African environmental ethicists/philosophers that the study subsequently refers to as the ethics of interrelatedness. Further details of this ethics are provided in chapter 3.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study’s goal to find the place of Akan animal ethics within the global animal ethics debate is significant in many ways. The study hopes that its findings will excite other researchers to

engage with the fast-growing field of animal ethics at the local level using principles born from the metaphysics and belief systems of the indigenous people. It will also contribute, on a broader scale, to the emerging field of African environmental ethics and the much less developed field of African animal ethics. Outside academics, the attempt to find a body of ethics that brings into discussion the complex relationship between humans and animals has practical relevance to Ghanaians and Africans. In the light of the growing numbers of animal right and animal welfare activism, Africans must define the relationship they want to have with animals. Similarly, given the part the farming of animal plays in greenhouse emissions and consequently climate change, it is prudent for Africans to engage the issue of the use of animals as food among other relevant concerns. Finally, there is a need for stringent laws to be made and enforced to protect wild animal species and domesticated animals. Given the evidence of the poor treatment of pets and other domestic animals in Africa, there is a need for existing laws to be enforced and new ones made to protect animals' interest. One can readily make a case for these laws when the ethics of human and animal relationship are well stipulated and understood.

1.8 Structure of the study

The study comprises of eight chapters described succinctly below:

Chapter 1: General Introduction to the Study

This chapter introduces the study and shows the organizational framework and overview of the thesis. This includes the background to the study; the study's motivation; its objectives; the significance of the study; and brief descriptions of the research approach and theoretical framework that the study adopts.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter is an exposition of relevant literature that informs the study. It introduces the reader to discussions on central themes, proponents and opponents in the animal ethics debate. The chapter briefly traces the history of environmental ethics in general and the history of animal ethics in particular. It also gives a brief look into the different approaches of welfarism and rightism. Other themes discussed in this chapter include the moral status of animals; the use of animals for food and vegetarianism; the use of animals in biomedical or scientific research; the use of animals as pets; and the hunting and trapping of animals. The Chapter

further identifies the ethics of interrelatedness as the common ethical principle found in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics. The metaphysics of the Akan people in connection with their relationship with the natural environment are discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

The chapter details the theoretical framework that guides the study. The theory of welfarism, rightism, and the ethics of interrelatedness are the three selected theories to help the study explore, describe and evaluate the data and literature. Various proponents of these three theories and their respective standpoints are considered. The chapter also discusses their strength and weaknesses and how they are employed by the study to reach its objectives.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology and Framework

Chapter 4 presents the methodology used in conducting the research, which includes the research design, the method of sampling, the sample size, and the type of interviews used. These are explained in details with explanation and justification given for the study's choice. The chapter further describes the strategy of inquiry, and methods used in the data collections, transcription, and analysis.

Chapter 5: Presentation of Findings

In this chapter, the study will present the findings from the fieldwork. These findings will help the study achieve its main research objective, which is to identify the place Akan animal ethics in light of the global animal ethics debate. The presentation and discussion of the findings are done under predefined themes that were mainly explored in the literature review. These themes are the moral status of animals, the interconnectedness of nature, and vegetarianism and the use of animals for food. The other themes are vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research, the use of animals as pets or companion animals, on the rights and interests of animals, and hunting and trapping of animals. These themes represent some of the main issues in the animal ethics debate.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

This chapter is dedicated to the discussion and interpretation of the data generated in the light of the literature and the theories guiding the research. Interpretation of findings helps to recognize and explain the primary implication of the data gathered on the field through the

demonstration of how the data agree or contradict with existing theories and literature. Just as it was done with the data presented in chapter 5, the interpretation and discussion of findings in this chapter will be conducted along with similar themes based on contestable issues in the animal ethics debate. These themes are the interconnectedness of nature, the moral status of nonhuman animals, vegetarianism and the use of animals for food, the use of animals as pets/companion animals, the hunting and trapping of animals, and vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research. The study analyses these themes using the literature and the three theories that constitute the study's theoretical framework.

Chapter 7: Akan Animal Ethics: A Progressive Relational Anthropocentric Approach and the Argument for Moral Status Based on Community Assimilation

In chapter 7, the study brings together a summary of the main findings under each of the key areas in the animal ethics debate and use the knowledge gained to argue for what the study calls 'progressive relational anthropocentric' approach to environmental ethics and for a theory of moral status based on community assimilation.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This chapter provides an overall summary of the study's findings and conclusions. It demonstrates how the study has met its objectives and answered its research questions.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has been the introductory chapter to the study. It outlined the study's background and motivation, research questions and objectives, and the significance of the study. The chapter also provided a preliminary overview of what is going to be the study's theoretical framework and its methodology. It also provided a concise outlook of each chapter of the study. The next chapter presents an extensive literature review of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is an exposition of relevant literature that informs the study. The previous chapter introduced the entire study by demonstrating why this research is important and relevant to society. It also gave a brief look into the structure of the thesis including the research questions, objectives of the study, a brief account of the research methodology, theories to be employed, and finally, a breakdown of each chapter. This chapter traces, briefly, the history of environmental ethics in general and the history of animal ethics in particular. It takes a momentary look into the different types of welfarism and rightism as approaches to animal ethics. In doing so, the chapter deliberately remained brief because the study provides more details to these two theories in chapter three, which focuses on the theoretical frameworks of the study. Nevertheless, many of the thematic subheadings in this chapter contain different aspects of the welfarist and rights view positions. One of such subheadings is the discussions on the moral status of animals. Here, there is a demonstration of how the notion of moral status is very crucial to the animal ethics debate since it plays an all essential role in determining how nonhuman animals are treated by humans. The discussions indicate that a particular position taken on the moral status of animals, influences immensely views from both the camp of the welfarist and the rightist. Some major arguments given for and against the moral status of nonhuman animals are also briefly considered in this chapter. From the discussions on moral status, the chapter reviews literature in some of the practical areas in animal ethics. These are the debates on the use of animals as food; the use of animals in biomedical or scientific research; the use of animals as pets; and the ethical debate on hunting and trapping wild animals.

In dealing with the issues in focus, the chapter dedicates two subheadings to look into these two questions—what are some of the emerging theories in African environmental ethics? What has been said so far on African animal ethics, especially in terms of the moral status of nonhuman animals? These two subsections help the study to identify the research gap and to point out what the study intends to add to the existing arguments and literature. Since the research is placed within the context of Akan metaphysical, ontological, and ethical beliefs and practices, the final subsections direct focus to the Akan people of Ghana, in determining who

they are; their metaphysical beliefs towards the environment and animals; as well as their ethical outlook. The chapter shows the inadequacies in the literature and how the study helps fill this gap.

2.1 Defining environmental ethics

Holmes Rolston (2003: 517) defines environmental ethics as “theory and practice about appropriate concern for, values in, and duties regarding the natural world”. Clare Palmer appreciates the fundamental difficulties that one faces in finding a definition for the word ‘environment’. She considers the environment generally as everything that surrounds people in the location they find themselves. Yet, in talks about environmental problems, the word environment, Palmer notes, is usually used to refer to problems faced by the natural part of the environment such as water bodies, forestry, animals, air and the likes (Palmer, 1997: 4). This is not a clear cut definition as Palmer herself rightly notes. Despite the fact that talks about care for the environment have existed throughout history and in many cultures, environmental ethicists generally agree that environmental ethics became a predominant branch in philosophy around the 1960s and 1970s. McShane (2009: 407), for example, notes that the rise of environmental ethics was partly as a result of the budding environmental awareness and social movements of the 1960s. This brought about intensification in public interest on questions about humans’ moral relationship with the natural world. Rolston (2003: 517) also claims that environmental ethics remained widely unknown until the mid-1970s. Since its inception, the field of environmental ethics has concerned itself with whether or not humans owe any moral duty to the natural world and if yes, the sort of duties that are owed them. Palmer notes that historically the wild (the wilderness, wild ecosystems, organisms and biodiversity) has been the main focus of environmental ethics, but that has soon changed in recent years with some environmental ethicists exploring human ethical relationships with domesticated animals and agricultural urban landscapes, as well as, other aspects of the environment considered less wild. She eventually defines environmental ethics simply as “the study of how humans should or ought to interact with the environment” (Palmer, 2012: 6). Tongjin Yang explains that the aim of environmental ethics is “to provide ethical justification and moral motivation for the cause of global environmental protection” (Yang, 2006: 23). Yang further identifies, what he calls, five distinctive features of environmental ethics. These include, the extension of the domain of ethics to include animals and nature; its interdisciplinary nature (it includes for example politics, science, economics and literature); the plurality of approaches; the global nature of the

issues it deals with and finally, its revolutionary nature to challenge dominant beliefs and methods (Yang, 2006: 23-25).

One major publication that brought attention to human's attitude to the natural environment was Aldo Leopold's "Land Ethic" in 1949 (Palmer 2012: 20; Light and Rolston 2003: 7). In this work, Leopold argues for the ecosystem to be included in human ethical consideration, stating that an action is only right if it preserves the integrity of the ecosystem. Since then, there have been several other theories in environmental ethics that are broadly categorized under anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric theories. McShane explains that anthropocentrism is based on the assumption that "human beings and/or their interests matter morally in their own right while everything else matters morally only insofar as it affects human beings and/or their interests" (McShane, 2009: 407). In other words, anthropocentric theories generally hold the view that the environment exists to serve and further human interests, and that the environment has no other value outside of that. Meanwhile, nonanthropocentrism states that "the natural world and/or its parts have value in their own right, independently of their effect on human beings/interests" (McShane, 2009: 408). Nonanthropocentric theories argue that the natural environment possesses its own intrinsic value and that the environment is purposeful whether humans existed or not. Nonanthropocentric theories include biocentrism and ecocentrism. Bryan G. Norton (1984) argues that the distinction and debate between nonanthropocentric and anthropocentric environmental ethics are far less important than it is assumed. He identifies two types of anthropocentrism namely, namely weak and strong anthropocentrism. It is his opinion that a weak anthropocentrism is good enough to support environmental ethics. He believes that it is a mistaken view to think that environmental ethics can only thrive if its principles are based solely on a nonanthropocentric theories, that is, on principles that presuppose that the natural environment has value in themselves independent of its value to humans. Norton states that:

Weak anthropocentrism [instead] provides a basis for criticizing individual, consumptive needs and can provide the basis for adjudicating between these levels, thereby providing an adequate basis for environmental ethics without the questionable ontological commitments made by nonanthropocentrists in attributing intrinsic value to nature (Norton, 1984: 131).

Another dominant debate in environmental ethics is the debate between holism and individualism. The fundamental question that these two sides seek to address is which parts of nature are valuable in their own rights. Individualism places value in individual persons,

animals, plants, etc. It is of the view that these individual persons, animals or plants are valuable in their own right, while the larger wholes that these individuals comprise, in terms of species, ecosystems, the biosphere, etc., have values that are only derivative of the value of their individual constituents. Theories generally considered forms of individualism are biocentrism (the view that each living thing matters morally in its own right) and animal rights (the view that some or all animals have moral rights). Holism, on the other hand, claims that wholes (species, ecosystem, biosphere, etc.) are to be the primary bearers of value while the value of individuals are made to depend on the contribution that those individuals make to the good of the wholes. An example of holism is ecocentrism - the view that ecosystems matter in their own right and individuals have value in virtue of the contribution they make to the functioning of the ecosystem. (McShane, 2009: 411). Palmer (2012) and McShane (2009) note that other more recent theories in the field of environmental ethics have emerged. These include environmental pluralism, deep ecology, environmental pragmatism and ecofeminism. These theories attempts to present alternative views to the mainstream theories.

2.2 Defining animal ethics

If environmental ethics is defined as theory and practice about appropriate concern for, values in, and duties regarding the natural world in the manner of Rolston (2003), then animal ethics can be defined as the theory and practice about appropriate concern for, values in, and duties regarding nonhuman animals. It can also be inferably defined in the manner of Palmer (1997) as the study of how humans should or ought to interact with nonhuman animals. For David DeGrazia (1996: 1), animal ethics is simply the ethical study of animals. Light and Rolston (2003: 5) hold that moral issues concerning the treatment of animals have a longer standing than any other debates in environmental ethics. Richard Sorabji (1993: 7) claims that talks on the treatment of animals in ancient Greece began as early as Pythagoras in the sixth century BC or even Hesiod in the eighth century BC. While it is said of Pythagoras that he was as a vegetarian, who called for animals to be treated with respect, mainly because he thought the souls of dead people abide in animals, Aristotle regarded animals to exist to serve the purpose of humankind (Aristotle, 1959; also in Singer, 1975: 188). It is also reported of Aristotle that he permitted meat-eating and seemed to have been opposed to vegetarianism (Dombrowski, 1981: 65-66). Stoic philosophers argued that animals cannot be considered as part of humans' moral community because they lack reason. (Boersema, 2001: 202-203). Plutarch, a Greek priest at Delphi, argued that it was indeed against the nature of humans to eat meat based on

human physical makeup and digestive system. He disagreed with the Stoics' position on animals and described the killing of animals for food as cruelty. He asked for a rethink into whether humans owe any justice towards animals (Regan and Singer, 1976: 112-117). Despite Plutarch's position, Armstrong and Botzler (2008: 3) claim that the general attitude in ancient cultures was largely dependent on whether they consider nature or specific animals as helpful or harmful to humans. The medieval period, however, they noted, brought with it an ambivalent reaction towards animals.

There has been a long held an established belief in Christendom that humans were created by God as superior entities over animals and other creations and were given the right to rule and use animals to their will and desire (Franklin, 1999: 11). St. Augustine, coming from the Christian perspective, agrees with Aristotle that animals are created to serve the needs of humans. He claims that animals do not have an immortal soul, they are not rational and only act based on instincts. Drawing on some biblical references, he concludes that it is not wrong for humans to make use of animals, whether for food or for any other purpose. He was, however, of the view that humans needed to show care and compassion to animals because doing so will help them show a similar disposition to other human beings. (Leahy, 1991: 80-83). Many have argued that St. Augustine's position and the Christian view, in general, influenced what has become the Western tradition of dominating nature. It is argued that this has led to the abuse of nature and animals by humans, and consequently leading to the many environmental crises the world is facing today including how animals are perceived and treated. (White, 2000: 19-26; Thomas 1983: 17-24).

Armstrong and Botzler (2008) note that the views of the philosopher René Descartes and the emergence of Protestantism came with it a gloomy period for animals. With the reduction in the power of the church, Descartes views were considered as the best possible rational explanation for humans' actual relationship with animals devoid of deification or appeal to the dictates of any higher being. The general view of the renaissance period was that animals were different from humans in terms of speech, reason, moral responsibility and immortality of the soul (Armstrong and Botzler, 2008: 4). Descartes claims that animals are not conscious and so cannot think, perceive, choose or feel. They are simply *automatas*, that is to say, they acted mechanically (Leahy, 1991: 84). Yet, as Armstrong and Botzler (2008: 4) report, there were some dissenting views from scholars such as Leonardo da Vinci; Michel de Montaigne; William Shakespeare; Martin Luther; John Calvin and Sir Isaac Newton. Regardless, Keith

Thomas (1983) demonstrates that the general common views held in the prevailing literature during this period were that man and animals were different, that animals were inferior to humans, and that even if animals could reason at all, they could only do so at a much lower level than humans.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brought much more positive gains for animal welfare and rights. Notable scholars including Voltaire, David Hume, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Charles Darwin, and Henry Salt individually have rejected either the claim that animals cannot be hurt directly or that they do not reason. Both Voltaire and Hume, for example, rejected Descartes claim that animals are mere brutes and machines without the capacity to feel or reason. Voltaire argues that the resemblance of organs of feelings in humans to that of animals should at least point to the fact that they can also feel as humans do. Hume also maintains that the behavior of animals that resembles that of humans comes from a reasoning that is not any different from those that are seen in humans (Regan and Singer, 1976: 67-71). The father of utilitarian theory, Jeremy Bentham, is also known to have given some consideration to the welfare of animals. In one of his famous quotes, he asserts that the question that should be asked is not whether animals can talk or reason, but whether or not they can suffer (Regan and Singer, 1976: 129-130). Bentham's work, many years on, became one of the important pieces that influenced the acclaimed founder of the 21st-century animal liberation author and advocate, Peter Singer. Works by the English naturalist and biologist, Charles Darwin, concerning the anatomy and mental powers of the lower animals also brought to light some misconceptions about animals and also demonstrated how humans are closely related to animals in terms of ancestry. Darwin noted, for example, that animals also do feel pain, pleasure, happiness, and misery. He also demonstrated that the difference between humans and animals in terms of mental capacity is only one of degree and not of a kind (Regan and Singer, 1976: 72-81).

Contemporary scholars (20th and 21st centuries) such as DeGrazia disclose that there have been a large number of contributions on animal ethics since the mid-1970s. It is generally noted in the literature that it was the publication of Peter Singer's book *Animal Liberation*, in 1975 that highlighted considerations for the moral status of animals (DeGrazia, 1996: 2; Pojman & Pojman, 2012: 58). Leahy (1991: 2) speaks of this publication as that which stimulated modern enthusiasm with a sizable history. The publication of *Animal Liberation* generated a lot of discussion on the place of animals in human society, calling on humans to reconsider their

attitude towards nonhuman animals. Singer, in *Animal Liberation*, argues that there is no moral justification for human's refusal to consider animals equal on the moral scale. He also argues against speciesism - an attitude of bias and favoritism towards members of one's own species - and urged all to become vegetarians. Another significant publication that came, in some part, as a critique of Singer's position is Tom Regan's book, *The Case for Animal Rights* published in 1983. As DeGrazia (1996: 5) notes, Regan's classic book continues to represent an important position in animal ethics. Regan notes in *The Case for Animal Rights*, that humans and animals are equal and all have inherent inalienable rights, thus, asking for the extension of moral consideration to include that of non-human animals. Other notable names in the contemporary animal ethics literature including but not limited to Bernard Rollin, Carl Cohen, Mary Midgley, Mary Anne Warren, Gary Francione, and Robert Garner.

2.3 The Welfarist and Rightist positions

Animal ethics has commonly been classified into two major types namely, Animal welfare and Animal rights. (Beauchamp, 2011: 200; Waldau, 2011: 95; Regan, 2006:208-209 & Sunstein, 2004: 4). Animal welfarists, generally, are those who believe that humans have obligations to protect the basic welfare interests of animals. Animal rightists, on the other hand, are those who believe that animals have certain inherent and robust rights. Beauchamp, for instance, notes that animal rightists are essentially those who are portrayed as endorsing rights for animals such as the right to life, the right to an uncontaminated habitat, the right not to be constrained in cages or pens, the right to an uncontaminated habitat, the right not to be used in biomedical research, and many other rights enjoyed by humans. In contrast, animal welfarists are those who are depicted as having utilitarian or pragmatic notions that acknowledge human obligations to not cause unnecessary or avoidable harm, undue suffering or loss of liberty to all animals (Beauchamp, 2011: 200).

Animal rights mean that animals are not for us to use for food, clothing, entertainment, or experimentation. Animal welfare allows these uses as long as "humane" guidelines are followed. Elizabeth Anderson, likewise, notes that animal welfare defenders hold that the basic criterion for a being to be morally considerable is 'sentiency' or the capacity to suffer, while animal rights advocates argue that the fundamental requirement is 'subjecthood'. A subject does not only require sentiency but the ability to have propositional attitudes, emotions, will, and an orientation of itself and to its future (Anderson, 2004: 277-278). Animal welfare theories

accept that animals have interests but would sometimes allow some of these interests to be traded away as long as there are some human benefits that are thought to justify that sacrifice. Meanwhile, animal rights theories defend the position that animals have interests that cannot be sacrificed or traded away just because it might benefit others.

Tom Regan notes that animal welfare and animal rights are the two main alternative theories that have come to be recognized in the study of animal ethics. Animal welfarists, he notes, accept, for example, the permissibility of humane use of animals as food and in biomedical research, provided such use does not cause unnecessary pain and suffering to the animals. Animal rightists, by contrast, deny the permissibility of such use, however humanely or painlessly it is done. According to Regan, it is the animal rights theories that attempt to offer a basis for a radical reassessment of how animals are treated because it is animal rights theories that call for the abolition of all forms of animal exploitation by humans (Regan, 2006: 208-209).

These two main positions, welfarism and rightism, led by the two main proponents, Peter Singer and Tom Regan respectively, have come under some criticisms. Critics include Raymond G. Frey (1980), Carl Cohen (2008), and Mary Anne Warren (2012). In the process of challenging these two main proponents, these critics present their own versions of either animal welfarism or animal rights view. Their criticisms and positions, in addition to some of the specific details offered by Singer and Regan respectively for welfarism and rightism, theories are treated in-depth in chapter three where the theoretical frameworks guiding this research are explained. In this section, the relevant literature reviewed shows the following as the main approaches to the animal ethics debate:

1. THE WELFARIST APPROACH: this approach is further divided into two subgroups.
 - a. The indirect approach: the approach that denies that animals have moral rights or interests at all. This approach holds that animals only exist to serve the desire, needs and purpose of man. They advocate for the humane treatment of animals just because it will lead to the good of humanity. We can place the positions of St. Thomas Aquinas, René Descartes, and Immanuel Kant in this category. Both direct welfarism and rightism reject this position. This approach shall henceforth be referred to as the ‘indirect welfarist’ approach and their advocates as ‘indirect welfarists’.

- b. The direct approach: this approach perceives animals as having moral worth in themselves or having some sort of interests worth protecting. Thus, for this approach, animals do not exist just to serve the interest of humans but can also have interests of their own. Those who favor this approach advocate for the humane treatment of animals and not necessarily for the total elimination of animal use by humans. They aim to seek the welfare of animals. They argue for animals to be better handled under better conditions that will minimize as much pain and suffering as possible. We can place the positions of Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Ingemar Nordin, Peter Singer, and Robert Garner in this category. This approach shall henceforth be referred to as the ‘direct welfarist’ approach and their advocates as ‘direct welfarists’.
- c. ANIMAL RIGHTS APPROACH: This approach to animal ethics argues that animals have moral worth and that this moral worth is an inherent right they have. They call for the total abolishing of animal usage in any form and not just for the humane treatment of animals to reduce their suffering and pain. Hence, they are sometimes referred to as ‘abolitionists’. We can place the theories of Tom Regan, Bernard Rollin, Mary Anne Warren, Gary Francione, and Ingrid Newkir in this category. This approach shall henceforth be referred to as the ‘rightist’ approach and their advocates as ‘Animal rightists’.

Despite welfarism and rightism being the two major approaches in the animal ethics literature, there are, what is considered, alternative approaches to these two main theories (Palmer and Sandøe, 2011). Palmer and Sandøe call these approaches generally as the contextual approaches. One of such contextual approaches is the ethic of care. Midgley (1983), a proponent of the feminist theory of ethics of care, for example, suggests that the idea of social-bondedness and the emotions associated with them are as worthy of consideration in human’s moral relationship with nonhuman animals. Feminist, Karen J. Warren, states that ecological feminism began to receive a fair amount of attention as an alternative feminist approach and also as an alternative environmental ethic since Francoise d’Eaubonne introduced the term *ecofeminism* in 1974 (Warren, 2000: 213). Even though there are many types of ecofeminism, many of them emphasize the ethical nature of human relationships to the nonhuman natural world (Warren and Cheney, 1991: 180). For Warren, ecological feminism, is the position that there are important historical, experiential, symbolic and theoretical connections between the domination of women and the domination of nature (2000: 213). Thus, the centrality of

ecofeminist theories is first, the commitment to challenge male bias in ethics, and second, to develop analyses which are not male-biased (Warren and Cheney, 1991: 180).

A notable challenge with ethics of care and possibly other contextual approaches is that, they are usually not clear in specifying whether the social relationships humans are to develop with nonhuman animals and its associated emotions should demand a humane use of animals (welfarism) or demand a complete abolition of all forms of animal usage by humans (rightism).

2.4 The moral status of nonhuman animals

According to DeGrazia (2008: 183), to have moral status is to bear direct or independent moral importance. A conception of moral status, according to Metz (2012: 389), is “a comprehensive and basic principle that purports to entail that, and explain in virtue of what things either have moral status or lack it.” Only a few will deny that animals matter, but it gets rather controversial when it comes to the reason why they matter. Thus, DeGrazia notes that the sort of mental capacities associated with animals plays a large role in how people believe they should be treated (DeGrazia 1996: 1). This is very important to the welfarist and rightist debate because, as will be immediately shown, the moral status of nonhuman animals plays a vital role in the arguments presented by both sides in the animal ethics debate. That is, how the moral status of nonhuman animals is valued often determines the kind of advocacy they give for animals, whether for their welfare or for their rights. It is also the main factor that divides the indirect welfarists from the direct welfarists. Do animals have any moral status or moral worth? Can they be given the status of a person? What do animals possess that makes them morally worthy? What are some of the essential things that animals lack but which humans possess that make animals unable to have a moral status or one that is on par with humans? These are perhaps the most important questions in the animal ethics debate which have led to varied conceptions of the moral status of nonhuman animals.

As already indicated in the brief history of animal ethics above, for some (Aristotle, St. Augustine, Descartes, Kant), animals matter only because they serve human interest in terms of food, clothes and other functions. This group sees any duty humans have towards animals as an indirect one. Descartes, for example, argued that animals do not have consciousness or soul and thus, cannot possess rights. Kant, on his part, argued that only rational people can have a ‘will’ and have moral worth. And since, according to him, animals have no ‘will’, they

are not rational and cannot have any moral worth. Kant only saw any duties humans have towards animals as an indirect one that is only meant to benefit humans in the long run (See Kant's "Duties to Animal and Spirits", in *Lectures on Ethics*, trans. Louis Infield, New York: Harper and Row, 1963). Those who hold such view are classified as indirect welfarists, as has been pointed out above. This view will fall under what Palmer (2017) regards as one of the two anthropocentric ways to look at animal moral status. She notes that one anthropocentric view is to consider only humans to have moral status such that everything else in nature matters only so far as it is useful to humans. The second of the two anthropocentric views on moral status, she points out, asserts that although humans have higher moral worth, there are at least some nonhuman beings or things moral significance albeit to a lower degree. These two views, which she notes are sometimes referred to as "strong" and "weak" anthropocentric views, are contrasted with a nonanthropocentric view of moral status that argues that there are that at least some nonhuman beings or things that have high moral significance; perhaps as high, or even higher, than human beings (Palmer, 2017: 194).

Perhaps Singer and Regan present us with a distinction between a weak anthropocentric view of moral status and a nonanthropocentric view respectively. Both Singer and Regan have rejected the position that tends to view animals as merely *automatas* or as having only an instrumental purpose. They argue that humans have direct moral duties towards animals and that animals matter because they have moral worth in of themselves. Yet, whilst Peter Singer (1975), on the one hand, argues from a utilitarian perspective to make the argument that animals have moral worth because they have interests; Tom Regan (1983), on the other hand, makes a case for animals' moral worth as a right animals possess. Regan holds that, even though animals are not moral agents, they should be considered as moral patients because they can have beliefs, desires and preferences in a similar manner as other human moral patients such as babies do. There is not a single homogeneous position concerning the moral status of animals among all the direct welfarists to warrant it being matched against a single or homogeneous position of all animal rightists. This is because even though all direct welfarists and rightists accept the fact that all animals or at least some of them have moral status, there are variations with, for example, which feature(s) make animals have moral status or the level of their moral status. For example, even though both Tom Regan and Mary Anne Warren are known rightists, Regan, on his part, holds that the moral status of animals are equal in all respect to the moral status possessed by humans, while Warren holds that the moral status of animals is not equal to that which is possessed by humans. As a result of this, instead of presenting a direct welfarist and

a rightist view positions on the moral status of animals as a single monolithic view, the succeeding paragraphs, will present some individual welfarists and rightists views on the moral standing of animals.

To better appreciate the debate on the moral status of animals there is a need to appreciate the distinction usually made between *moral patients*, *moral agents*, and *moral community*. According to Tom Regan (2004: 151ff.), *moral agents* are individuals who are known to have a variety of sophisticated abilities; especially the ability to apply various moral principles impartially in deciding in any given situation, what morally ought to be done (Regan, 2004: 151). They are also able to freely choose among given alternatives after considering all other things. Thus, moral agents can be held morally responsible for their actions because they have acted out of their own volition. Regan further noted that not only can moral agents do what is morally right and wrong but they can also be at the receiving end of other people's right and wrong actions. In contrast, *moral patients* are those that lack the requirement or criteria that make them responsible for their actions. That is, they do not have or are considered not to have complex mental competences to formulate and apply impartially basic moral principles to everyday situations and then go on to decide among given alternatives the best course of action (Regan, 2004: 152). In effect, their actions are not morally evaluated because they cannot discern between what is right and what is wrong. Nevertheless, moral patients can by their actions bring harm upon others even though their actions will not be regarded as morally right or wrong. Regan notes that human infants, young children, and the mentally deranged or enfeebled of all ages can be included as paradigm cases for human moral patients (Regan, 2004: 153). A more controversial example is that of human fetuses which persists in the abortion debate. A *moral community* is defined by Regan as the notion that comprises all the individuals who are of direct moral concern or the notion that consists of all individuals toward whom moral agents owe direct duties to (Regan, 2004: 153). Indirect welfarists' position remains that humans owe direct duties only to moral agents. In other words, indirect welfarists only include moral agents in their definition of a moral community. In consequence, any individual who is not a moral agent is considered as not within the boundaries of direct moral concern. According to this view, any duty that moral agents accord to moral patients is done only as an indirect duty which eventually ends up benefiting moral agents. Thus, it becomes apparent that to the indirect welfarists, animals do not fall within the ambit of their moral community. That is, since animals do not have the sophistication of human rationality, they are moral patients and not moral agents. As such, human moral agents owe them no direct moral duty.

Peter Singer, as a direct welfarist, supports the moral status of all sentient beings, including animals. As Singer would have it, animals are to be included in the definition of a moral community even though, animals can only be regarded as moral patients and not moral agents. Singer argues that it is a generally held view that all humans are equal. However, to say all human beings are equal is not to imply that human beings have equal reasoning capacities, strength or any other physical or mental attributes. This, Singer notes, would be unattainable as well as untenable and as such, cannot be the basis for claiming and demanding the equality of all humans. Although, human beings are different in various mental and physical capacities, Singer notes that these differences have nothing to do with their race, colour or sex. This is because a person's race, colour or sex, gives no guide to his or her abilities. Thus, he writes, "from the mere fact that a person is black, or a woman, we cannot infer anything else about that person" (Singer, 1976: 151). Singer further maintains that the basic principle of equality is simply equality of consideration and not all the factual differences humans possess. He concludes that it is arguing on shaky grounds if demand is made for equal consideration for women, blacks, or gays, despite the many factual differences that cut across sex, race or sexual orientation, while denying or rejecting equal consideration to animals.

Continuous denial of equal consideration to animals despite the lack of any tenable reason to do so only leads to the commitment of speciesism an act, which for him, needs to be condemned. A speciesist is anyone who allows the interests of his own species to override the greater interests of members of other species (Singer, 1976: 154). Singer considers a speciesist to have similar characteristics with a racist who violates the principle of equality by granting greater weight to the interests of members of his own race. Singer relies on earlier points made by Jeremy Bentham and the utilitarian, Henry Sidgwick, that the interests of every being affected by an action, are to be taken into consideration, to argue that concern for others ought not to be based on what they are or on the type of abilities they may or may not have. Hence, if being highly intelligent does not make one more human than others, then it should also not make human beings exploit nonhuman animals as well. Again, relying on Bentham's futuristic call on humans to one day, give moral consideration to animals because they too can suffer. Singer places his reason for arguing for an extension of moral status to animals on the fact that they can also experience pain. He held that having the capacity for suffering and enjoying things is a pre-requisite if one is to have interests at all (Singer, 1976: 154). In other words, Singer holds that a being or a thing cannot have interest if that being or thing cannot enjoy or

suffer. It is for this reason that a stone cannot have interest but a mouse can. This is because, according to Singer, nothing done to the stone will affect its welfare. On the contrary, what it is done or not done to the mouse can affect its welfare (Singer, 1976: 154). Thus, by this, Singer places the condition or criterion for moral consideration on being sentient, which is, having the capacity to suffer pain or experience pleasure.

Carl Cohen (2001) and Robert Garner (2010), both direct welfarists, will agree with Singer in the acknowledgment of the moral status of animals based on sentience. Cohen argues that animals are not stones but are beings that can experience pain and pleasure. Garner, similarly, maintains that the sentience of animals is a great deal, and that animals being sentient, should suffice for them to be accorded a moral status. The difference between Cohen's view and that of Garner's, however, is the implication that should follow from accepting that animals have moral status based on sentience. Cohen, for example, asserts that even though calls demanding humans put a stop to the use of animals in various respects are justified and perhaps possible, the call to abolish the use of animals in biomedical research is untenable and perhaps impossible. This is due to numerous advancements humans have made in the field of medical research from using animals in scientific research. Indicatively, both Cohen and Garner disagree with Singer that the moral status possessed by animals are one and the same as that possessed by humans. Closely related to Cohen's view are views expressed by Marry Anne Warren (2012) and David DeGrazia (2008), whom both hold the view that moral status is held in different degrees. Warren argues that 'Subjecthood' and sentience come in degrees, hence rights of different animals vary in strength. DeGrazia, relying on what he terms as the 'Unequal Consideration Model of Degrees of Moral Status', asserts that "it is generally worse to kill persons because they are due full moral consideration, whereas, mice are due some, but less, consideration" (DeGrazia, 2008: 186).

Tom Regan, as a rightist, also defends the moral status of animals and places their moral status on an equal scale with that of humans. He notes that individual moral agents are said to be equal not because of their intrinsic value but rather, because they have what he referred to as inherent value (Regan, 2004: 235). He defines intrinsic value as values that are attached to individuals' experiences including their pleasures or preference satisfactions. These intrinsic values of individuals, Regan posits, are neither reducible nor commensurate to their inherent value, which is to be regarded as individuals having value in their own rights. Thus, those who have a pleasant or happier life, for example, are not to be regarded as having greater inherent

value than those who have a less pleasant or happier life. For Regan, all moral agents possess this inherent value equally. Importantly, the inherent value of moral agents is not earned by the individual agent's efforts, and as a result, it is neither lost nor gained by what the agent is able to do or fails to do. In addition, one's inherent value does not reduce or increase based on his or her utility with respect to the interests of others. Lastly, individuals' inherent value is independent of them being the object of anyone's interest (Regan, 2004: 235-237).

Regan further posits that the notion of inherent value as described above applies also to moral patients, which in his view, should include nonhuman animals. For him, any attempt to restrict inherent value to only moral agents is done arbitrarily, and rationally defective. He is of the view that not only do moral patients possess inherent value in the same manner as moral agents do, they also have it in equal respect (Regan, 2004: 239-240). Regan maintains that any attempt to deny this for moral patients is arbitrary, for no physical features can be used to mark the relevant similarity; nor will species membership suffice or even the more general biological classifications, for example, being human. This is because, as Regan notes, "one characteristic shared by all moral agents and moral patients is that they are *alive*, and some thinkers evidently believe that it is the possession of this characteristic that marks off the class of individuals who have inherent value from those who do not" (Regan, 2004: 241). Regan thus employs what he terms, the 'subject-of-a-life' criterion to show why animals as well as other moral patients ought to have inherent value just as moral agents do. According to him, to be the subject-of-a-life, is to be an individual who has beliefs and desires, perception, memory, and a sense of the future, including their own future. They also have an emotional life that comes with feelings of pain and pleasure; they have preference and interest in their welfare, and they have the ability to initiate action in an attempt to reach their goals and satisfy their desires. In addition, a subject-of-a-life has a psychophysical identity over time, among other features. (Regan, 2004: 243). Thus, any being who meets the subject-of-a-life criterion has inherent value and that being is not to be treated as mere receptacles. Regan maintains that it is also the subject-of-a-life criterion that recognises a similarity that is valid for both moral agents and moral patients, a similarity which is more relevant rather than arbitrary. Regan further stipulates that humans must apply what he calls the *respect principle* to any individual who is a subject-of-a-life. This respect principle enshrines that "we are to treat those individuals who have inherent value in ways that respect their inherent value", whether they are moral agents or patients (Regan, 2004: 248). This call for equal respectful treatment, from the standpoint of Regan, is not a call to show acts of kindness to nonhuman animals but a strict act or demand for justice. Regan, thus,

thinks it is sound to conclude that animals have certain basic moral rights, particularly the fundamental right to be treated with respect because they have inherent value (Regan, 2004: 329).

Bernard Rollin is also a rightist who argues against the attempt to use rationality (more especially Immanuel Kant's approach to morality through rationality) as the basis for a distinction between humans and animals. Rollin believes that such an attempt is to be considered a major inadequacy in any moral theory since moral concern for people usually has nothing to do with their rationality. A great amount of human's moral concern for the other, Rollin reckons, is focused towards assuaging unnecessary suffering, despite their rationality (Rollin, 1992: 54). Rollin's statement may move one to think that perhaps, he is in accord with Jeremy Bentham or Peter Singer, in placing the criterion for moral status in sentience, yet that does not seem to be the case. Even though, Rollin holds pleasure and pain to capture most of the human's intuition about moral concern for others, he, like Tom Regan, rejects sentience as a criterion for granting moral status, describing it as not good enough. Rollin acknowledges that there are some instances that humans have strong moral intuitions towards others in various activities that do not involve pain or pleasure. He considers self-fulfilment and freedom as some examples of human pursuits, of which a deliberate impediment by another, would constitute an immoral act and yet has nothing to do with pain or pleasure. Rollin, however, concedes to the fact that using pleasure and pain as an additional criterion for moral status would not lead to the exclusion of animals from being morally considered. This holds, more especially, for the higher animals who can exhibit behaviours suggestive of pain and pleasure, and for whom there are good, sound, neurophysiological reasons to believe that they have nervous systems similar to that of humans (Rollin, 1992: 55).

Having found Kant and Singer's placement of moral status in rationality and sentience inadequate, Rollin attempts to find a better criterion to place moral status. He eventually concludes that a living thing has a moral status by virtue of it being alive and having interests in virtue of that life in accordance with its *telos*, that is, with its naturally given purpose or function. He asserts that a living thing's "interests that it has by virtue of its being a living being, and our ability to nurture or impede the fulfilment of these interests, not the pleasure and pain, that make it enter the moral arena" (Rollin, 1992: 74). For Rollin, this is what sets a living being apart from a stone. The living being is alive but the stone is not. It is also this that sets a living being apart from a machine. The living being has an intrinsic (nature-given) *telos*

but the machine has an extrinsic (man-given) *telos*. Another identifiable feature is that living things can and do have interests, whereas, a machine can have needs but not interests, according to Rollin. A car's needs, for example, can include a need for gas, oil and lubricants, but as Rollin argues, it does not make sense to say a car has an interest in being oiled or lubricated (Rollin, 1992: 74-76). Interestingly, Rollin is of the view that plants, bacteria, viruses, and cells, even though considered alive, only have needs and not interests, because, in his view, there is no single proof to show that they have any awareness or consciousness. As such, it is difficult to say that the thwarting or fulfilment of their needs matters to them (Rollin, 1992: 78).

2.5 The marginal case argument

The marginal case argument is an argument used by many defenders of the moral status of animals. It is employed to question the basis for valuing humans over animals when clearly some animals possess some qualities more or better than some humans and also to show, among other things, the arbitrariness in refusing to grant animals a moral status. In this argument, it is usually claimed that since one would not think it right to eat or kill humans who are imbeciles or babies, both of whom do not have the use of their rationality like a 'normal' adult human, then it should not be right, at the same level, to eat or kill animals who also do not have such sophisticated rationality. In other words, some humans to whom humans are inclined to extend the benefits of morality (that is, include in their domain of moral community) are less qualified than some animals who are excluded. So the question asked is, why is it that these humans are accorded this moral courtesy and not these animals.

Peter Singer alludes to the marginal case argument to show the absurdity or triviality in denying animal moral status based on some distinctive characteristics animals have with adult humans. He questions why similar calls are not made for human babies or infants and mentally derailed humans who also lack these distinctive marks that are set. Singer asserts that the attempt to find a characteristic that will distinguish humans from other animals without reconsidering human's attitude to other animals would entail that humans have the right to use retarded humans to perform experiments and kill them for food or trivial reasons (Singer, 1976: 160).

Jan Narveson is an indirect welfarist who is of the view that the marginal case argument presented by both Singer and Regan is insufficient. Narveson (1977: 174ff) argues from the premise of the ethical theory of egoism to show the inadequacy of the marginal case argument

and essentially to provide a basis or justification that will have humans exclude animals from their domain of a moral community and in effect, from their moral consideration. Narveson claims that the theory of egoism, which is a form of a contractarian¹ theory, can explain why humans have a direct duty to a severely retarded child, babies and/or enfeebles of all ages than they do for a nonhuman animal. He argues that, supposing the premise of egoism – the theory that every rational being acts in an attempt to maximize its utilities - be it to satisfy its interests, desire or happiness - is accepted to hold, it would mean that such a being would rationally be moved to accept a morality that will protect its interest against interference from others. He further argues that this self-interested rational being would only accept the terms or precepts of this morality only because he trusts that others involved would also do the same. This, according to Narveson, is only possible with other rational beings who are moral agents. Nonrational beings, on the contrary, cannot be trusted to be signatories to such a contract because, for them, there are no guarantees on what their actions would be. They cannot be relied upon to keep to their side of the contract. It is for this reason that Narveson is of the view that nonhuman animals are not included in human's moral community. Similarly, animals are not owed any direct moral duty because they cannot be part of a moral contract signed by rational beings who are egoistic.

It would seem from the foregoing argument that since Narveson is excluding nonrational beings from the moral contract, this will also include nonrational humans namely babies, retarded children and enfeebles of all ages since they also cannot make self-interested claims or enter into moral agreements. Thus, the marginal argument expressed by Singer and Regan comes up. Narveson, however, attempts to avoid this problem by suggesting that the ambit of moral consideration is extended to that of nonrational humans because doing so, will also be in human beings' interest as rational egoistic beings. He claims that there is a desire to extend the ambit of moral consideration to children, for example, because "most of us want to have our own children protected, etc., and have really nothing to gain from being permitted to invade the children of others" (Narveson, 199: 177). He continues that moral consideration is also extended to the enfeebled because "we ourselves might become so, as well as, out of respect for their rational relatives who have a sentimental interest in these cases" (Narveson, 1997: 177). Thus, it is apparent here that Narveson accords a sort of indirect duties (whether

¹ Any of the various theories that justify ethical principles and political choices because they are based upon a social contract involving certain ideal and hypothetical conditions.

consciously or otherwise) to nonrational human beings. Surprisingly, he employs similar lines of reasoning in excluding animals from humans' moral purview. Going by his egoism and his contractarian theory, animals will be excluded from human moral consideration. He was, however, of the view that respecting and treating animals well would make humans better people (Narveson, 1977: 178).

Regan rejects Narveson's attempts to show why human moral patients are to be included in human's moral community and not animals, in Narveson's attempt to get around the marginal case problem. Regan argues that Narveson is wrong to claim that humans who are mentally enfeebled are not to be treated like animals only because very human may become mentally enfeebled or that human babies are not to be treated as animals are treated because their human owners have sentimental interests in their being treated well. According to Regan, only rational adult humans can make rational decisions based on their interests and this will automatically exclude babies. Secondly, should a human owner of a baby or a mentally enfeebled person lose the sentimental interest in their baby or in a mentally enfeebled person, the implication will be that the baby or mentally enfeebled person will lose its moral worth and there will be no compelling argument to prevent the owner from using the baby or the enfeebled person for whatsoever he or she pleases (Regan, 2004: 160). This problem, Regan notes, arises because of Narveson's attempt to reduce morality to the dictates of rational egoism. As a result, Regan rejects both Kant's and Narveson's positions that animals exist merely as a means to serve humans' end. Regan posits that "animals have life of their own that fares better or worse for them, logically independently of their utility value for others" (Regan, 2004: 178).

For Carl Cohen, the objection raised by the marginal case argument is predicated in the misunderstanding of what it means to argue that morality is rooted only in the domain of humans. According Cohen, if what it means to argue that morality belongs to humans is properly understood, then it should apply to babies, toddlers and the mentally enfeebled or senile because they are humans. He held that rights are universally human and as such, are not doled out to individual human beings based on the presence or absence of some special capacity. They are applied to humans generally irrespective of their age and mental capacity. On the other hand, animals are exempted because they are simply not humans. They are of such a kind that rights do not pertain to them (Cohen, 2001: 37).

Robert Garner, in his response to the marginal case argument, firstly, agrees with Cohen that the marginal case argument underestimates the capacity of humans considered as marginal because, he was of the conviction that the capacities of even a severely damaged human being are still greater than the most mentally developed nonhuman (Garner, 2010: 115). Secondly, Garner agrees with DeGrazia's view that human lives are more important than that of animals because loss of life causes more harm to humans than it does to animals. A loss of human life means a loss of experiences which include, among other things, a loss of beliefs, desires, goals and projects. These lost experiences are qualitatively different from those that would be lost by animals should their lives be cut short (Garner, 2010: 116). Nevertheless, Garner maintains that the arguments above are not meant to say that animals do not lose anything at death, instead it is to argue that although it is wrong to kill animals, it is not as great a wrong as killing a human being (Garner, 2010: 117). Garner's conclusion, therefore, is that all things being equal, if there is a choice between saving the life of an animal and the life a human being, the life of the human being should be the best choice.

2.6 Vegetarianism and the use of animals as food

The use of animals as food is a controversial issue within the animal ethics debate. Should animals be removed from human diet? Answers to this question also brings to bear the division among the welfarists and rightists views. Nicholas Dixon notes that even though supporters of vegetarianism are many with varying arguments, two groups can be distinguished. The first group are made up of utilitarians such as Singer, whose argument is based on the suffering that factory farming brings to animals. This suffering, Singer argues, should override any human interest. This group is generally included in the broader direct welfarist position in this research. The second group is the animal rights view, as articulated by Regan who includes animals in his extension of Kant's principle of respect for persons to argue that killing animals for food is wrong because the act treats animals merely as means (Dixon, 1995: 90). Dixon identifies a third group; a group he tagged as 'human supremacists' whose position is that, humans may use animals as they wish in order to benefit from them, but they should not bring upon them needless suffering and pain. Whether or not, the human supremacist position grants animals a moral status will determine whether they are placed under direct welfarists or indirect welfarists.

Raymond Frey (1983) also differentiates between two types of vegetarianism namely moral and non-moral vegetarianism. According to him if vegetarianism is to be defined as the boycott of meat, then moral vegetarianism is the boycott of meat on the basis that it is wrong to eat meat (Frey, 1983: 6). Thus, without the moral justification, not eating meat for any other reason should not qualify as vegetarianism. People may choose to avoid meat in their diet for several reasons including aesthetics, religious, economic, and even on health grounds. Boycotting meat on any of these grounds does not make one a vegetarian (Frey, 1983: 6-14). Even if children are forced or trained to grow up not having a taste for meat, these children cannot be said to be vegetarians, for to be a vegetarian, Frey has in mind, a boycotting or abstinence from meat and the making of a conscious choice or deliberate policy with respect to one's diet" (Frey, 1983: 6). Thus, without a moral conviction that it is wrong to eat animals, all other justifications would not make one a vegetarian. Another word used sometimes interchangeably with moral vegetarianism is *veganism*. Frey (1983: 7) thinks that the term veganism is, in some sense, stricter than the term moral vegetarianism and vegans are noted to abstain from animal products such as cheese and eggs in addition to meat.

Frey (1983) identifies three main arguments that are employed to indicate that eating meat is wrong. These are the argument from moral rights, the argument from killing, and the argument from pain and suffering. He believes that all three arguments fail to make a good case for vegetarianism mainly because they attempt to show that it is wrong to eat meat by pointing that something else, instead of the meat eating in question, is wrong. For example, the argument from moral rights claims that it is wrong to eat meat because it violates the animal's alleged moral rights to life.

Peter Singer's general position on killing animals for food is that humans owe it as a moral duty to be vegetarians. Thus, for him, rearing animals for food is immoral when utility is not maximized for all sentient beings concerned including animals. He writes that "the utilitarian vegetarian is on strong ground in arguing that factory farming and the other cruelties involved in large-scale commercial animal production should end" (Singer, 1980: 334). Singer argues that killing animals for food is wrong since doing so subjects animals to pain and suffering, more so, in the way and manner animals are reared on large scale in modern farms. The amount of pleasure humans derive from eating meat cannot surpass the pain and suffering that animals are subjected to. It is also against the interest of animals to have their preference or desire to

continue living cut short, Singer opines. Thus, for Singer, it serves a better utilitarian purpose if all should aspire to become vegetarians.

A careful reading of Singer (1993; 1990), however, shows that even though Singer advocates for vegetarianism, he is not to be considered an abolitionist. Despite Singer's desire for all to become vegetarians, he asks that people draw their own line as to the limit of their vegetarian attitude. He recommends, for example, a rejection of meat from animals that have been reared in modern factory farms since, as argued by him, the animals go through lots of suffering and pain before they end up on food plates. Singer urges meat consumers to, instead consider meat from organic or free-range animals and buy from meat producers who are able to demonstrate that the animals were treated humanely and given a less painful or painless death. In addition, going by his own preference utilitarianism, Singer acknowledges that there is the possibility of justifying a killing of a being because other preferences outweigh that of the being. He also acknowledges that preference utilitarianism can imply that taking the life of a person will normally be worse than taking the life of some other being, since persons are highly future-oriented in their preferences. In other words, persons have more complex and varied desires and preferences compared to other beings. According to Singer, "to kill a person is therefore, normally, to violate not just one, but a wide range of the most central and significant preferences a being can have. Very often, it will make nonsense of everything that the victim has been trying to do in the past days, months, or even years." (Singer, 1993: 95).

Thus, for Singer, it is not wrong for an animal to be killed for food provided, the animal has lived a pleasant life and provided after killing, it would be replaced by another animal, who hitherto may not have existed if not for the death of the other animal (Claire Palmer and Peter Sandøe, 2011: 4). Frey also correctly notes that Singer's argument based on the suffering and pain of the animal will only demand that humans refrain from consuming meat from animals who have had or lived a miserable life. This, Frey notes, will not mean large-scale, technology-intensive, commercial farming should cease but only improve. Secondly, Singer's argument leads to what Frey calls 'the amelioration argument', which calls for the enhancement of the life of animals (Frey, 1983: 176). Thus, it is shown that Singer's utilitarian approach will sometimes allow the use of some animals for food in as much the animal is given a humane treatment during its life and during the process that leads to its death, and also if it is to serve a greater preference. James Rachels (2008), however, supports most of Singer's argument, especially Singer's position that it is wrong to cause pain unless there is a good enough reason.

Regan's (2004; 1980) position is that humans have a moral obligation to be vegetarians. His position is derived mainly from his conclusion that animals have inalienable rights that cannot be traded away irrespective of their utility. He challenges the basis for Singer's advocacy for vegetarianism, claiming that Singer's theory, devoid of an appeal to rights, fails to demonstrate a moral obligation to be vegetarian (Regan, 1980: 308). Furthermore, Regan believes Singer fails to demonstrate fully why the interests, desires and satisfactions humans derive in eating meat are to be considered trivial compared to the interests or preference (to avoid pain, preference to continue living, etc.) of animals. Considering how humans go through great lengths to prepare and eat tasty meals made from animals shows how important these meals are to them (Regan, 1980: 309). Similarly, Regan holds that Singer's preference utilitarian position makes it unclear how Singer supports vegetarianism. Considering how big the animal industry is, Regan argues that it is not obvious how being a vegetarian can maximise utility over pain. The industry players, apart from the farmer, include the wholesalers, retailers, the feed producers, cage makers and all the way down to the many families who rely on the meat product as food. The economic implication of a sudden or gradual shift to vegetarianism on any society is enormous. Thus, Regan believes that Singer again fails to demonstrate how a utilitarian approach can lead him to argue for vegetarianism as a moral duty for all.

Regan believes that the best available option to avoid these difficulties faced by Singer in defending vegetarianism as a moral duty is to argue from the premise of animal rights. Thus, he reiterates that, "it is only if [animals] have rights that we can give a sufficiently firm theoretical basis for [vegetarianism] the conviction in question" (Regan, 1980: 323). Regan identifies that some people who defend the use of animals for food may justify their position by appealing to the liberty principle, the principle that allows a person to do whatever is necessary to advance his or her welfare as far as it is subject to the same moral constraints that apply to all moral agents. Among these justifications are the claims that animal meat is tasty, eating a particular meat is part of one's habit or cultural tradition, and that meat is nutritious and healthy. Other reasons offered are that farming animals for meat has economic benefits, that animals are their owner's legal properties, among others. Regan rejects all these justifications claiming that an appeal to the liberty principle would in no way justify support for using animals for food (Regan, 2004: 330-349). Stuart Rachels (2011) expresses nearly similar position. He relies on statistics from industrial farming to argue that industrial farming has produced more pain and suffering than that which the Holocaust caused. Hence, for him,

animals should not be killed for food given the uncertainty about which creature possesses a right to life.

David DeGrazia (2009), on his part, challenges what he believes is the ‘standard mapping’ of views concerning the moral status of animals based on equal consideration (attributed to Singer and other utilitarians) and on rights of animal (associated with Regan and other rightists). This standard mapping, he argues, has led to a narrowing of the moral basis for certain appropriate reforms. This is because practical issues in the animal ethics debate such as vegetarianism is, for DeGrazia, defensible without appealing to equal moral consideration for both humans and nonhuman animals. DeGrazia’s position is that moral vegetarianism is defensible from a basis considerably broader than equal consideration. Thus, it is possible to argue for vegetarianism whether one subscribes to the equal consideration view or to the unequal consideration view (the view that accords animals some moral status but considers it of a lesser moral weight than persons or humans). DeGrazia, as a result, defends what he calls, both *a weak and strong thesis* for moral vegetarianism as follows: “The weak thesis is that all people with ready access to healthful alternatives are morally obligated to make every reasonable effort not to purchase meat, eggs, or dairy products from factory farms” (DeGrazia, 2009: 148). His *strong thesis* speaks of not only factory farms, but also the inclusion of ‘family farms’ to the moral obligation as dictated in his weak thesis. This moral obligation, DeGrazia believes, includes an effort not to provide financial support to institutions or practices that bring about undue suffering on animals (DeGrazia, 2009: 159).

2.7 Vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research

Vivisection comes from the combination of two Latin words *vivus* which means ‘alive’ and *secure* which means ‘to cut’. Vivisection is thus, defined as the practice of cutting and/or operating on live animals for the purpose of experimentation or scientific research (Regan, 2004: 363). While the use of animals for food and for clothes have been going on for many thousands of years, using animals for scientific purposes is relatively a recent development (Regan, 2001: 142). Regan reports that this practice was given serious attention, first by Galen in the second century B.C.E. Galen was well respected in the Rome of his time and for his theories of human disease based partly on the cutting of animals. Regan notes that it was the nineteenth-century French physiologist, Claude Bernard, who fervently promoted what is known in scientific research as the ‘animal model’ (Regan, 2001: 142). The use of animals as

models occurs in science when animals (model species) are used to test possibilities that would be difficult or impossible to test using human beings (the target species). Humans use animals as model because the two species have strong similarities in many particular ways (The Royal Society, 2004: 4). Furthermore, in using animals as models, humans frequently use animals in what is known in the scientific community as toxicity tests, a process where the likely toxicological (poisonous) harm a product meant for human use or consumption is first tried on animals. (Regan 2004: 369ff; 2001:145ff).

The use of animals in science has its benefits for humans. Many of the cures for numerous human diseases would not have been possible if not for this practice. The use of animal in science has led to developments in the treatment of many ailments such as diabetes, leukaemia and heart surgery transplants, amongst others (The Royal Society, 2004: 1). Reportedly, animals that are used in these scientific tests include mice, fishes, rats, birds, ungulates (hoofed animals that include horses, pigs, and cattle). 75% of these tests are done on mice while 82% of all procedures involves rodent species (Dempsey, 2016: 6). The many scientific and health gains made in the use of animals in biomedical research have not prevented the raising of many red flags in relation to the ethical dilemmas the use of animals in scientific research poses, regardless of the recognition of the moral status of animals. Thus, just as it was seen in the use of animals for food, the kind of moral status one ascribes to animals greatly influences the type of advocacy either for or against the use of animals in biomedical research. The delineating views of the direct welfarists and rightists are also highly observed here. Regan explains that, for utilitarians to determine whether the harm done to animals in scientific research is justified, depends on the balance of the overall aggregate of positive gains (happiness/pleasure) and negative gains (pain/suffering) for all sentient beings affected by the outcome. If it can be shown that the outcome of the use of animals in science produces greater positive gains than negative gains, then the act is considered a justifiable act and is encouraged. If it does not, then it is discouraged since the practice becomes unjustified (Regan, 2004: 392).

Carl Cohen (2001) is one of such utilitarian and direct welfarist who hold this view. He argues that even though he will support the cessation of animal use for many human ends, he would not support an abolition of their use in medical research due to the many benefits it provides for the advancement of science and consequently for humans. Some of these benefits as he highlights, include advancement in the study of heart failure, Alzheimer and other neurodegenerative diseases; advancement in the study of obesity, sleep disorders, organ

transplant, diabetes, development of vaccines including vaccines for polio and AIDS, and many other progress in the health sciences. (Cohen, 2001: 86-113). Cohen further emphasizes that the interests that animals have, should not be translated as rights they possess since rights qua rights are essentially human. For him, even though animals are sentient and their pain is worthy of moral consideration, it does not mean that their experiences are morally equivalent to the experiences of humans (Cohen, 2001: 63). Cohen believes that should experimentation with animals be forbidden, nearly all the opportunities of medical research openings would close and most could not be undertaken because “we certainly may not do with humans what we may do with animals” (Cohen, 2001: 86).

According to Regan, the rights view takes an opposite stance. For him, using animals in experimentation is treating animals as if they were mere receptacles or as if their value is reducible to their utility (Regan, 2004: 393). He further states that because the rightist finds the practice of harming an individual merely because doing so may bring about the best aggregate effect unacceptable, it is equally unacceptable for humans to abuse animals because it leads to some good outcome for humans and in some cases for the animals as well. “The benefits these tests [experimentations on animals] have for others are irrelevant, according to the rights view, since the tests violate the rights of the individual animals... it is morally irrelevant to appeal to how much others have benefitted” (Regan, 2004: 381).

Furthermore, Regan states that the rights view is not be considered antiscientific but instead to be seen as calling for the development and use of other alternatives that do not rely on the use of animals, that is, alternatives that do not involve animal models or toxicity tests. On this score, The Royal Society (2014) notes that some alternative methods that employ the use of computer models are available to science and these do not involve animals. These, as they note, may include the use of cell cultures when a specific mechanism can be identified. It also includes the use of molecular sensors to test the biological activity of certain particular substances. In situations where there is enough known about a complex system found in intact animals, computer simulations can be used in understanding the intricacies of that system. Nevertheless, even with these available options, The Royal Society notes that these alternative methods in general, suggest and demand further work on whole animals and do not completely replace experiments on animals. “Alternatives to whole animals are clearly versatile, but are as yet incapable of capturing the complexity of the living mammalian body” (The Royal Society, 2004: 16). This reflects the position of Cohen who strongly rejects the idea that there could be

alternatives available to science that can lead to the total abolition of animals in biomedical research as suggested by Regan and other abolitionists. He posits that, “Animals cannot be adequately replaced. Substituting non animal methods for testing in medical research is possible in a few limited contexts, but in most medical research it is wishful fantasy” (Cohen, 2001: 71). He, however, advocates for the use of alternatives animals where it is applicable.

Meanwhile, Animal Aid’s, Andrew Tyler, reports that there are scientific arguments against the use of animal models for disease research and drug development and testing because the method is not reliably predictive. This is because of the following four fundamental factors:

- There are key differences between species, as expressed in anatomy, organ structure and function, metabolism, chemical absorption, genetics, mechanism of DNA repair, behaviour and lifespan;
- A homogenous group of animals living in controlled experimental settings cannot predict the response of varied human patients living in natural conditions;
- Artificially created diseases in animals in laboratories do not reflect naturally occurring human illness;
- Some of the most common adverse reactions to drugs are not outwardly visible and therefore cannot be detected in animal tests. These include nausea, mental disturbance, dizziness, fatigue, depression, confusion and double vision. (Tyler, 2015: 4).

Tyler, as a result, calls on the scientific communities to embrace the numerous animal-free research alternatives currently available to help do away with “a waste of high-level human resources and needless animal suffering (Tyler, 2015: 11).

Regan, again, notes that the rights view does not entirely oppose the use of knowledge gained from what he calls “conscientious efforts to treat a sick animal (or human) to facilitate and improve the treatment tendered other animals” (Regan, 2004: 387). Regan agrees in so far as far as there is no intentional cause of harm on the animals. Rebecca Tuvel, on the other hand, argues against the permissibility of the use of knowledge gained from animal experimentation because, for her, it does not only disrespect the animal victims but also sustains the continuous use of animals in scientific experimentations. She, thus, considers the use of such knowledge morally wrong (Tuvel, 2015: 221).

2.8 The use of animals as pets/companion animals

Hilary Bok defines a pet as a nonhuman animal which is taken into a human's home and accepted as a member of the human's household (Bok, 2011:7 69). "A companion animal is any animal that shares a living environment and relationship with humans" (The New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc., 2016: 4). In most of the literature, pets and companion animals are often used interchangeably. Nevertheless, The New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc. reports that the use of the word 'pet' is gradually being replaced by the more preferable expression, 'companion animals'. Similarly, they note that the use of the term 'pet owner' is also being replaced by the use of 'carer' or 'guardian' since it is believed that these new terms depict the duty of care people have towards animals they keep (The New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc., 2016: 8). Examples of some of the first-recorded animals for pets are the cats that were kept by some Egyptian pharaohs. These cats, however, were kept for their religious significance rather than being primarily considered as companion animal (Spencer, Decoyer, Aerts & De 2006: 17).

Spencer et al. disclose that companion animals were largely the prerogative of rulers. They also note that evidence show some infrequent references to rulers and nobles having horses or dogs they regarded as favourites, but there is very little clue to point to the fact that these animals were given similar treatment and affection as pets are given today. This perhaps remained the case until probably in the 18th century when companion animals such as dogs started appearing in paintings commissioned by rich folks or members in the upper class of society. Furthermore, the large numbers of companion animals that exist in the world, according to the report by Spencer et al., is quite a recent occurrence that seems to have followed the course of industrialization. Even so, much of the practice is largely to be found in the developed world (Spencer et al., 2006: 17-19). New Zealand has well over 4.6 million companion animals. This means they have more companion animals than humans (The New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc., 2016: 9). The pet population in the United Kingdom, as of 2017, is estimated to be around 54 million (Statista, 2017). Australia with a population of 23.77 million reports of more than 24 million companion animals (Animal Medicine Australia, 2016). The types of companion animals owned worldwide include animals such as dogs, cats, fishes, birds, small reptiles, horses, rodents, among others, with dogs and cats being the most preferred species across board. Spencer et al. (2006: 18) note that the increase in the number of pets has brought

with a concomitant increase in concern over their welfare. The challenge in their welfare can perhaps be attributed to the unequal relationship that exists between the pets and their human owners. Hilary Bok (2011) identifies some of these unequal relationships. She notes, for example, that adult humans are generally physically stronger than all cats and many dogs. Humans can also use many ways to put animals in control including the use of cages and leashes. Pet animals cannot sue for the enforcement or implementation of laws for their welfare. Moreover, pets are highly dependent on their owners for their basic needs to survive including their need for water and food, shelter and health care. Bok's argument is that the fact that there exists an unequal relationship between humans and pets should not automatically mean that the act of keeping animals as pets is morally wrong. For her, proper laws can be enacted to address the problem while pet owners are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirement of the law. (Bok, 2011: 769-782).

Abolitionist, Gary Francione (2010; 2000) argues against the use of animals as pets. He claims that the current state whereby animals are considered personal legal properties afford their human owners the freedom to use these animals as they like, in the same manner they do to their inanimate properties. Spencer et al. expressed similar sentiments. They stated that "it is interesting that we refer to those who have companion animals as "pet owners"; this makes the pets into a commodity in the same way as a car is a commodity we own" (Spencer et al., 2006: 21). The name 'pet owners,' as used to describe those who keep pets, is considered to not depict companionship or equal status between the animals and their human hosts, but it is, instead, akin to slavery or perhaps domination by their human hosts (Spencer et al., 2006: 21). Hillary Bok demurs the conclusion derived from the property status argument. She considers it a mistake on the part of Francione to have concluded on the basis that because pets are considered as legal properties of their owners, it is wrong to keep a pet. Bok holds that if the existing laws protecting pets are inadequate then means should be found to change them instead of a total abolishment of pet keeping. (Bok, 2011: 769-782).

Spencer et al, believe that the use of animals as pets is wrong since the practice shares similar challenges with the use of animals in factory farming. For them, both practices use the animals for instrumental ends to the benefits of humans. They identified that some of the commonest reasons people have for keeping pets are "companionship, a conduit for giving affection (or a substitute source of affection lover substitutes), or as a token or statement of personal" (Spencer et al., 2006: 20). Paul Shepard also claims that pets are used in casual or institutionalized "pet-

facilitated therapy” to reduce human suffering. He calls this a medical miracle of which humans should be kind and grateful for (Shepard, 2008: 552). He describes pets as “civilized paraphernalia”, “deficient animals in whom we have invested the momentum of two million years of love of the Others,” and as “compensations for something desperately missing, minimal replacements for friendship in all of its meanings” (Shepard, 2008: 552-553). Spencer et al. believe that in all of these provided reasons for keeping pets, it is apparent that the animals are only used to project their owners’ view of themselves. If that is the case, then it is their conviction that the same bases used to reject factory farming should be applied to argue against the use of animals as pets. Keeping animals as pet in a confined home, they argue, infringes on the animals *telos* (natural purpose). Dogs, for example, naturally like to hunt in a pack and keeping them alone at home is contrary to their true nature. The infringement of animals’ natural behaviour, Spencer et al. observe, is no different from that which pertains to farmed animals (Spencer et al., 2006: 21).

2.9 Hunting and trap setting

Before *Homo sapiens* appeared on earth, that is, as far back as 40,000 BC, cave dwellers likely used foot traps, pitfall traps, and snares to catch animals. There is some proof of this from cave drawing examined by archaeologists. Trapping was cave dwellers’ means of survival. Not only did it bring in food such as mammals, birds, insects, and fish, but it also aided in protecting them against dangerous animals and pests. Stone Age Cro-Magnon people, armed with their unpolished chipped stone tools, may have perhaps used branches, plant fibres, and animal parts to creatively design and produce their snares and foot traps (Lemaigre, 2000: 3). From then, tools and traps gradually improved along the ages. Some of the traps currently in use include the mousetraps, snares, cage traps, killing box traps, the techniques of hiding and baiting a trap, leg-hold, and Conibear traps. There is also the more recently designed state-of-the-art technology such as the C120 Magnum and the Bionic traps (Lemaigre, 2000).

Nelson and Millenbah (2009: 33) believe that the moral aspect of hunting remains the topic of one of the most tenacious debates within the conservation community. Hunting and trapping are generally used to maintain animal wildlife population at a lower level than it would have naturally been. This is done by state and federal wildlife agencies to manage wildlife populations according to goals set by society. These goals may be to preserve a wildlife population at a level that: 1) creates the largest wildlife population; 2) is stable and immune to

periodic population crashes; 3) produces the maximum sustained yield; 4) maximizes environmental benefits for other valuable species; 5) reduces spread of infectious disease or parasites within the population; or 6) reduces wildlife damage to acceptable levels (Conover 2001:521). Conover observes that some reasons given in support of hunting and trapping include the claim that these acts are able to remove depredating (preying) animals or decrease wildlife populations below the levels that would otherwise occur or modify the conduct of animals in the wild. In addition, hunting and trapping happen to be at the moment, one of the cost-effective ways to manage the population of wild animals (Conover, 2001: 522). It also brings some amount of revenue to the state since those who practice hunting and trapping either for sports or recreational purposes, pay to get license to do so. Some of the animals that are hunted and trapped include deer, woodchucks, raccoons, coyotes, rabbits, beaver, foxes, skunks, waterfowl, prairie dogs, bears, and elk. For Conover, effective hunting and trapping should be encouraged because should they be stopped, “some wildlife populations would increase, animals would become more habituated to humans, wildlife damage would increase, landowner tolerance for wildlife habitat would be lost, and some rural property values would fail (Conover, 2001: 529). These negative effects, Conover posits, would eventually cause wildlife habitats to be lost since land owners would be confronted with greater wildlife risks which would in turn lead to a major loss of incentives on the part of the landowners to maintain wildlife habitats (Conover, 2001: 529).

Regan, although a rightist, did not entirely write off the hunting and trapping of animals. He writes, “Since animals can pose innocent threats and because we are sometimes justified in overriding their rights when they do, one cannot assume that all hunting or trapping must be wrong” (Regan, 2004: 353). What Regan is against, is the use of hunting and trapping for commercial profits, recreational purposes and for sport. For him and in accordance with his general position on the moral standing of sentient animals, such uses of hunting and trapping treats animals as mere receptacles and are used as means to an end. Animals have moral rights and as such must not be used to satisfy human needs and pleasures. In this regard, Regan rejects all the common arguments that are used as justifications in support of these practices, including the argument that those who practice hunting and trapping get to exercise; enjoy the communion with nature; enjoy the companionship of their friends; or the argument that the practice is an old age tradition. Regan will also reject the argument and reasoning provided by Conover that if some animals are not hunted or trapped, there will be too many of them in a given habitat, which will in turn pose a threat to humans. The practice of hunting and trapping,

according to Conover (2001), saves the animals from a possible starvation due to lack of enough food to feed their resulting large numbers if left unchecked. Regan believes such reasoning assumes that death by hunting and trapping is always better for the animals than death by starvation. He, consequently, highlights some of the slow and agonizing death experiences some animals go through from the activities of hunters and trappers.

Baird Callicott, on the other hand, believes an interpretation of Aldo Leopold's 'land ethic' (which Callicott considers to be "the paradigm of environmental ethics in general") points to the fact that a regulated and disciplined sport hunting is not inconsistent with the land ethic (Callicott, 1980: 315). Relying on the main principle of Leopold's land ethic which states that "a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community, and wrong when it tends to do otherwise", Callicott argues that the principle is in line with the purpose of hunting and trapping. Callicott writes:

Thus, to hunt and kill a white-tailed deer in certain districts may not only be ethically permissible, it might actually be a moral requirement, necessary to protect the local environment, taken as a whole, from the disintegrating effects of a cervid population explosion... In every case the effect upon ecological systems is the decisive factor in the determination of the ethical quality of actions. (Callicott, 1980: 320).

In agreement with the Callicott's view, The Wildlife Society calls for a properly regulated hunting and trapping instead of a blanket abolition of these acts. Part of their standing position reads:

The Wildlife Society supports regulated hunting, trapping, and fishing, and the right of people to pursue either consumptive or non-consumptive use of wildlife. The Wildlife Society is concerned that foundational elements of the animal rights philosophy contradict the principles that have led to the recognized successes of wildlife management in North America. (The Wildlife Society, *n.d.*)

As a result, the Wildlife Society claims to support an animal welfare approach when it comes to hunting and trapping. They state that:

[The Wildlife Society] Support an animal welfare philosophy, which holds that animals can be studied and managed through science-based methods and that human use of wildlife, including regulated hunting, trapping, and lethal control for the benefit of populations, species, and human society is acceptable, provided the practice is sustainable and individual animals are treated ethically and humanely (The Wildlife Society, *n.d.*).

Leopold himself, in a 1932 reply to one Mr. McCabe, identified himself as an intergrade who shares the goals of both protectionists and sportsmen (Leopold, 2008). As a result, Leopold advocates for the putting in place mechanisms that will ensure that hunting is done in a controlled manner instead of free hunting. Nelson and Millenbah share similar view. They believe that the argument between those who seriously oppose hunting and those who actively support it has been polarized with both sides taking intransigent positions. They argue that there is a middle ground alternative to the impasse. The alternative is when both sides of the debate recognize that, contrary to what has been generally assumed, the idea of animals having a moral status is not irreconcilable with hunting (Nelson & Millenbah, 2009: 33).

2.10 Emerging trends in African environmental ethics

For a little over a decade, there has been a growing interest in the study of African environmental ethics by African scholars. The agenda has been to formulate an environmental ethic which is essentially born out of indigenous African experiences. These scholars are perhaps of the view that such a home grown ethic can resonate well with the people and be more easily assimilated by the African people and hopefully impact the global environmental ethics at large. Notable names in the emerging African environmental ethics literature include among others, Godfrey Tangwa, Segun Ogunbemi, Workineh Kelbessa, Munyaradzi Felix Murove, Magobe Ramose, Bénézet Bujo, Kevin Behrens, Lawrence Ogbo Ugwuanyi, and Martin Prozesky.

Godfrey Tangwa, for example, thinks the traditional African metaphysical outlook can be described as ‘eco-bio-communitarian’ in character. For him, this should be taken to mean a “recognition and acceptance of interdependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals and humans (Tangwa, 2004: 389).” Tangwa believes that the Western theories on the ethics of the environment are anthropocentric and individualistic in nature and have driven them to explore, subdue, exploit and dominate nature for their profit. Tangwa held his eco-bio-communitarian metaphysical outlook (he describes of precolonial Africa), as nonanthropocentric in nature and in approach. This is because, Tangwa notes, human beings within the African traditional outlook tend to be more cosmically humble, more respectful of other people and also more cautious in their attitude to plants, animals, and inanimate things and to the various invincible forces in the world. Thus, according to him, traditional Africans are more disposed to what he calls “an attitude of live and let live (Tangwa, 2004: 389).” Within

the African traditional world-view, he maintains, there is a slim and flexible distinction between plants and animals, and inanimate things, between the sacred and the profane, matter and the spirit, the communal and the individual. Tangwa's project, as can be observed, was not to argue for an African animal ethics but rather present an African outlook of environmental ethics at large. He cannot therefore be faulted for not narrowing down on humans and animals relation in the African outlook and only mentioning animals as passing examples.

For Segun Ogungbemi (1997: 266-270), how natural resources such as land, water and air are used currently conflicts with the traditional practice of environment conservation in Africa. Ogungbemi argues that traditional African communities believed in the ethics of not taking more than you need from nature. This he labelled, the 'ethics of care'. In a bid to make this 'ethics of care' appropriate to present-day African condition, Ogungbemi develops the ethics of care to "ethics of nature-relatedness" To explain further, he posits that the ethics of nature-relatedness can be regarded as "an ethics that leads human beings to seek to co-exist peacefully with nature and treat it with some reasonable concern for its worth, survival and sustainability (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270)". In his view, there is no need to ascribe spiritual connotations to this ethics of care and ethics of nature-relatedness since they are naturally explainable. He points out that, "The ethics of nature-relatedness does not imply that natural resources actually have a spiritual nature. It does not attribute the creation of the natural resources to a Supreme Being" (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270). Philomena Ojomo thinks Ogungbemi's ethics of nature-relatedness is neither a preservationist approach nor a nonanthropocentric approach. She believes that Ogungbemi's ethics simply recognizes that humans necessarily depend upon the natural environment for existence and survival. According to her, the ethics of nature relatedness as explained by Ogungbemi, is not a reflection of traditional African metaphysics (Ojomo, 2011: 110). Even though there is no direct specific reference to animals in Ogungbemi's discussion of ethics of care or ethics of nature-relatedness, it is possible to infer from his ethics of nature-relatedness some principles that involve nonhuman animals. However, a central question he failed to answer or explore is the question of whether the ethics of care or ethics of nature-relatedness should lead to a humane use of animals or an abolition of animal usage in its entirety.

Lawrence Ogbo Ugwuanyi, on his part, claims to have identified two ways environmental ethics can be derived from the Africa worldview. The first derivation, he calls 'secular environmental ethics', which he claims finds its origin from the point of view of nature without

any supernatural influence (Ugwuanyi, 2011: 110-111). He identifies that Africans have great respect for life and celebrates life in all of its stages including after death in the recognition of ancestors. This respect for life, he noted, is not only about human life but also the natural environment that harbors life and makes human life possible (Ugwuanyi, 2011: 111). On this premise, he postulates that the environment has more than economic worth to the African person since it is the embodiment of life. Taking a cue from Kwame Gyekye, Ugwuanyi asserts that shared identity and good will are the basic principles which African morality tends to defend, and that what is moral is what connects lives together. He holds this to be a justification for his humanistic environmental ethics.

Ugwuanyi (2011:110) calls his second derivation of environmental ethics from the African worldview a 'religious humanistic ethics'. This, he claims, is born out of the religious attitude of the traditional African people. He identifies religion in traditional African societies to be a shared religion in which the entire community is expected to partake. He also identifies the acknowledgement of various spirits, ancestors and divinities as part of the African people's religious beliefs. These spirits, he notes, dwell in various aspects of the natural environment including hills, forests, rocks, trees, mountains and animals, and that whatever people considered to be home of the spirit is usually set apart as sacred places where the people offer worship to that particular spirit (Ugwuanyi, 2011: 112-113). Ugwuanyi identifies from his secular humanistic ethics, values of good will and identity for the environment. This, he holds, should lead to some form of reciprocity which African moral world demands. These values of good will and identity, and the terms of reciprocity Ugwuanyi projects, share some close affinity with the eco-bio-communitarian ethics or that of nature relatedness or the ethics of live and let live as posited by Tangwa and Ogunbemi. Ugwuanyi, like the others, sparingly directed the implications of their findings specifically to animals. Nevertheless, it is highly conceivable to extend Ugwuanyi's identification of the value of respect for life or the sacredness of life identified in the African worldview to the discussion of an African animal ethics.

Workneh Kelbessa (2005) speaks of the indigenous environmental practices of Oromo people in Ethiopia of whom he demonstrates that the religious beliefs they have towards the environment can offer valuable insights for redirecting the use of science and technology. Kelbessa draws examples mainly from the beliefs and cultural practices of peasant farmers and pastoralists, and other African cultures to urge an environmental ethics that respect nature for

what it is and not just to serve the purpose of humanity (a utilitarian end). He also held that nature is perceived by the Oromo people to have its own inherent value given to it by God (*Waaqa*) who is seen to be the guardian of all things. Thus, nobody is free to destroy nature just to satisfy his or her own needs. Here, it will be interesting to find out how Kelbessa's revelations of the traditional beliefs of the Oromo people concerning nature (more especially their view that nature has inherent value and as such a moral value) share affinity with that of the inherent values as used by Regan and other rightist theorists for animals. Would or should the Oromo's view of inherent value of nature and moral status of nature lead to welfarist or rightist approach, is a question worth exploring.

Other African scholars have made similar contributions toward African environmental ethics. Munyaradzi Felix Murove, Martin Prozesky and Mogobe Ramose have separately employed an amalgamation of Southern African ethical principle of *Ubuntu/Boto* and the Shona concept of *Ukama* from Zimbabwe to argue for an environmental ethics of care and virtue of interrelatedness of humans with the entire ecosystem (Murove, 2009; Prozesky, 2009; Ramose, 2009). Bénézet Bujo (2009: 283) also alluded to the value of human peaceful coexistence or interrelationship with nature, arguing that it is by doing so that humans reach total realization of the self. This interrelationship, Bujo asserts, is a network made up by the entire cosmos and God himself (Bujo, 2009: 285). He, in addition, claims that animals, plants and minerals and other inanimates are the forces that God has made available for human use. Nevertheless, this does not mean that human beings are allowed to treat the lesser from of beings arbitrarily (2009: 286). Martin Prozesky's believed that the ethic of relationality can be deduced from the Shona concept of *Ukama* which asserts that 'a person can only be a person 'a person can only be a person in, with and through not just other people but also in, with and through the natural environment' (Prozesky, 2009: 302). For Prozesky, this will in practical terms involve the acceptance that "all things have both some element of intrinsic value, because all things possess some spark at least, of experience and creativity, and some element of instrumental value, by virtue of the interrelatedness of all things whereby each serves all and all serve each" (Prozesky, 2009: 303). According to Murove, when the two concepts of *Ukama* and *Ubuntu* are synthesized, they produce an ethical outlook that suggests that human wellbeing is indispensable from their dependence on, and interdependence with all that exists (Murove, 2009: 315). Finally, Mogobe Ramose suggests the concept of *Botho* or *Ubuntu* is best translated as 'humanness' instead of 'humanism' for it is, to him, humanness that best describes the African condition. "The dignity and importance of the individual human being can best be

understood in terms of relations with other human beings as well as relations with physical nature” (Ramose, 2009: 312).

2.11 African animal ethics

From the review of literature above, there is an indication that animal ethics on its own has not been the primary focus within the emerging African environmental ethics, more especially in terms of placing animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate. However, the many African values and principles coming out from the emerging trends of African environmental ethics, which in turn is born out of the traditional African people’s worldview and ethics, provide more than enough to build a theory of animal ethics on. A few authors have also made direct reference to an African consideration of moral status.

In addressing the moral status of animals, Bujo (2009) rejects the Western view of according duties to animals based on the fact that they are sensitive to pain or the view of defending a being for its own sake because of an inalienable rights it is assumed to possess. He also rejects the Western view of sociability used in defending human’s duty to other beings. According to Bujo, Africans have a rather holistic understanding of the environment; “according to the understanding that is basic to the African community spirit, the human being is conceivable only in cosmic interwovenness. Minerals, plants, animals, and human beings form a whole and depend on one another (Bujo, 2009: 295)”. Bujo continues that such a holistic understanding does not defend a being for its own sake or for any Western sense of sociability, but it instead defends for the sake of unity, and also because in the African worldview, a being can simultaneously be an animal, a plant, and a mineral (Bujo, 2009: 295-296). How this plays out is a matter worthy of consideration in determining the place of an African animal ethics in terms of animal welfarism and rightism. Bujo nevertheless concludes by placing an urgent call on African scholars to continue dialoguing with Western rationality which he acknowledges, has the tendency to minimize or ignore African positions (Bujo, 2009: 296). Kevin Behrens, similarly argued that traditional African thoughts conception of moral considerability extends to all things that are part of the interconnected web of life, that is, all individual living things and groups of living things such as families, species, and ecosystems, including inanimate objects such as rivers and mountains (Behrens, 2014: 66). This interrelated relationship with all things nature and even non-nature is considered by Behrens as a nonanthropocentric

approach contrary to the accusation that African environmental ethics is deeply anthropocentric.

Chemhuru (2019) held that nature as a whole, including nonhuman animals, has moral status. He came to this conclusion by relying on African ontological conceptions of being and some teleological arguments for existence. According to him, “the teleological conceptions of existence in African ontology could credibly support the recognition of the inherent value and moral status of the natural world as a whole” (Chemhuru, 2019: 31). His teleological argument for moral status of nature takes a pluralist approach by relying on several teleological factors such as African biocentrism or vitalism, sentience, subject of a life, well-being, and degree of vital force to ground his position. Essentially, since nature, including animals, has a purpose of a sort, is interconnected with each other, sentient, has a vital force, and subject of life, among others then it must have a moral status and humans have a moral obligation towards it. In reference specifically to the moral status of nonhuman animals, Chemhuru claims that:

Within the African ontological hierarchy, nonhuman animals and plants are vital forces by virtue of possession of life. Despite being commonly referred to as ‘lower forces’ these nonhuman animals and plants that possess life have their own vital force such that they complement the teleological dimension of existence. These are beings that also live their own independent lives to those of human beings. Some of these beings such as animals could also even have independent goals, hopes and desires to those of human beings that human beings themselves may not necessarily be aware of (Chemhuru, 2019: 35-36)

It is for this reason that Chemhuru believes that animals should possess a moral status. But should this moral status identified in animals be equaled to that of humans? To this question Chemhuru held that although humans and nonhuman animals cannot be held to be equally morally accountable or assume to have similar purposive goals for existing, they are however “somewhat ‘moral counterparts’ in so far as these components have life and moral status just as human beings” (Chemhuru, 2019: 36). Furthermore, he considers animals and humans as ‘teleological counterparts’ because “all nonhuman living beings have been made in such a way that they are disposed to attain some purpose for existence” (Chemhuru, 2019: 36).

Thaddeus Metz (2012), on his part, explains that the dominant Western conception of moral status broadly divided into either a holist account or an individualist account is, for him, done arbitrary and does not account well for what he believes to be a widespread judgment of moral status; the judgment that even though animals and humans both have the same moral status animals’ moral status differs in degree. Metz argues that there is an underexplored modal-

relational perspective which does a better job of accounting for degrees of moral status. He, thus, argued for what he calls “a modal-relationalism grounded in salient sub-Saharan moral views”. In his opinion, this approach is far better able to account for the moral status of those things that are intuitively considered to have it than the other approaches. On the backdrop of traditional African account of placing personhood in an individual’s community participation, coupled with the traditional African conception of morality in terms of community, Metz proposes that “a being has moral status roughly insofar as it is capable of being part of a communal relationship of a certain kind” (Metz, 2012 :393). Thus, his preferred conception of moral status is that “the more a being is capable of being part of a friendly or loving relationship with normal humans, the greater its moral status” (Metz, 2012: 394). In other words, the greater a being’s capacity for communal relationship, the greater that being’s moral status. Such a conception of moral status, according to Metz, leads to two implications: Firstly, it demonstrates that moral status comes in degrees based on a being’s ability to participate in shared communal life and secondly, a being, capable of being both subject and object of a communal relationship, constitutes a higher status than merely one that is only the object. Applying this criterion of moral status to nonhuman animals, Metz asserts that “if by virtue of the nature of human beings, dogs and mice, humans were much more able to identify with and exhibit solidarity with dogs than with mice (upon full empirical information about both), then dogs would have a greater moral status than mice” (Metz, 2012: 394-395).

Kai Horsthemke (2015) is a key critic of the assumed nonanthropocentric nature of African ethics in general and African environmental ethics specifically. He argues that the usual and frequent interpretation of ethics of *ubuntu* and *ukama* to mean that African environmental ethics is relational and hence nonanthropocentric in approach is mistaken. According to Horsthemke, African environmental ethicists usually employed phrase *‘I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am’* is entirely human centered and speaks very little or nothing at all about the intrinsic nature of the environment or its moral worth. He writes that:

It would appear that the envisaged concern for nonhuman nature and the environment could be fostered on only the basis of human benefits and would therefore not amount to any acknowledgement of the intrinsic value of nature or the environment. Nor could the principle in question constitute a basis for ‘respect’ or a ‘harmonious relationship’ with members of nonhuman species (Horsthemke, 2015: 82).

For Horsthemke, the principle one can best gather from this relational ethics postulated by the likes of Ramose, Murove, Bujo, Behrens, and Metz is that of an ‘indirect-duty view’. That is,

a moral duty account that presents an indirect concern for nonhuman animals. In other words, African ethics interest in animal welfare is not for sake of the animal but because of how it will impact on human relationships (Horsthemke, 2015: 83). Horsthemke is also particularly critical of Metz's conception of the moral status of nonhuman animals as being of the same kind with humans but of different degrees determined by the capacity to participate in community. Among Horsthemke's challenge is his claim that, going by Metz's degree of moral status argument makes the idea of 'full moral status' an illusion since there could be a sense of a moral hierarchy even within the realm of those considered 'normal adults'. Horsthemke also demurs Metz's claim that his African modal-relationalism is neither anthropocentric nor speciesist. Horsthemke believes that inasmuch as Metz's theory justifies the sacrificing of animals for human benefits, then it remains anthropocentric, especially when the relational difference among individuals and species depends on human valuation (Horsthemke, 2015: 91-92).

Masaka (2019) attempts to find a compromise of a sort between the anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric polarity. He argues that African environmental ethics is neither decisively anthropocentric nor decisively nonanthropocentric in nature but instead can best be described as moderate anthropocentric in nature. He defines moderate anthropocentrism as:

An ethic that is significantly focused on promoting human interests but at the same time concerned about some interests and rights of non-human animals and the environment in general. In such an ethic, human interests are given preferential consideration while those of the rest of the environmental are albeit respected but may be set aside in pursuit of human interests. Indeed, the interests and rights of non-human animals and the environment are respected but may not necessarily be equated to human interests and rights (Masaka, 2019: 231)

Thus, for Masaka, African environmental ethics does not think only humans have intrinsic value to be respected but animals do. Nevertheless humans hold a higher moral status than that of animals. It is for this reason that he considers African environmental ethics and African notion of human relation with nonhuman animals as neither decisively anthropocentric nor decisively nonanthropocentric in nature.

By far, it is Oweseni and Olatoye (2014) who have made some direct attempt to produce an understanding of an African animal ethic in light of the welfarist and rightist debate, albeit their focus was on Yoruba ethico-cultural perspectives. The pair rightly noted that little consideration has been accorded to non-western framings of animal ethics within the welfarist

and rightist debate. Therefore, through a critical survey of wise sayings, proverbs, practices, adages, and relational attitudes found in Yoruba ethno-cultural settings, they sought to place Yoruba animal ethics within this debate. Owoseni and Olatoye concluded that Yoruba traditions do not display in clear terms the sphere of its ethical viewpoint regarding human-to-animal relationships. This is because they found out that some aphorisms, proverbs, and beliefs of the Yorubas appear rightist in pattern, or tend to represent a shift from a welfarist to a rightist concern for animals (Owoseni & Olatoye 2014: 108, 111-112). In the end, they settled that Yoruba understanding appears to occupy a ‘synthetic’ position between the rightist and welfarist positions, but also acknowledged that the Yoruba brings something extra to the fore - what they termed as ‘superstitious relational attitude’ (Owoseni & Olatoye, 2014: 112). This superstitious relational attitude, they maintained, stems from the people’s religious or metaphysical (mythical) perception and explanation of animals expressed in taboos, rituals, legends, worship practices and so on (Owoseni & Olatoye, 2014: 105).

This work considers Owoseni and Olatoye’s attempt as a laudable one. It represents, what can be considered, a bold attempt to couch an African animal ethics in its own right and place it within the rightist and welfarist debates of the West. Yet, it is unclear what they meant by their conclusion that Yoruba understanding of animal ethics occupies a synthetic position between the rightist and welfarist positions. It becomes difficult to tell, as Owoseni and Olatoye made no indication of this, whether it should lead to an advocacy for the humane use of animals for the advancement of human good or an abolition of animal use entirely. Secondly, and related to the first point, they were inconclusive as to how the ‘superstitious relational attitude’ (which they argue the Yoruba perspective added to the discussion) is to be interpreted in relation to some practical issues in the animal ethics debate such as vegetarianism, keeping animals as pets, hunting and trapping and the use of animals in biomedical research. It is perhaps in acknowledgement of this deficiency that the authors themselves called for further engagement on the subject matter (Owoseni & Olatoye, 2014: 112-113).

2.12 The ontology and ethics of the Akan people of Ghana

The word ‘Akan’ refers both to a group of intimately related languages found in West Africa and to the people who speak them. This ethnic group lives predominantly in Ghana and in parts of adjoining Cote d’Ivoire. In Ghana, they inhabit most of the southern and middle belts and

account for close to half the national population of over twenty four million². There are many Akan subgroups but the well-known ones among them include the Ashantis (most popular and largest), Denkyiras, Akims, Akuapims, Fantes, Kwahus, Wassas, Brongs, and Nzemas. All these groups share similar cultural traits in many details. Although the cultural affinities of the various Akan subgroups with the other ethnic groups of Ghana are not on the same scale as among themselves, any divergences affect only details. (Wiredu, 1996: 157). In substantiating his claims, Wiredu held that when compared with the distant cultures of the East and West, Akan culture can be seen to have some essential similarities with other African cultures as to be considered under the broader label of “African culture” as a general cultural type.

Traditional Akan people of Ghana may not have yet developed a concerted ethics of the environment or an animal ethics yet, they have a rich metaphysical belief of nature which has led them to develop a rich traditional set of practices that include a relationship with the natural environment. They also have a rich sense of moral rules and dictates that ensure peaceful coexistence with one another, thereby ensuring the social cohesion of all its members. This research hopes to tap from these metaphysical conceptions of nature and human existence, as well as, from their sources of moral principles to couch a theory of an animal ethics born out of the Akan experience in lieu of the welfarist and rightist debate. Below is a presentation of some Akan metaphysical beliefs and practices that relates to the environment and a look into the source of their moral code.

2.12.1 Akan metaphysical beliefs and practices concerning the natural environment

Kwame Gyekye (1995) reports that Akan ontology is clearly pluralistic (the belief in the existence of many beings) and panpsychist (the belief that everything is or contains a spirit) in nature. Gyekye claims that the Akan universe is regarded as being ‘essentially spiritual’ and endowed with varying degrees of force or power (Gyekye 1995: 72; Hagan, 1964: 59). In addition, Gyekye (1995: 69) contends that at least part of nature or the physical world is considered animated. He adds that in this [Akan] metaphysics, all created things, that is, natural objects have or contain *sunsum* (Akan word for spirit. In saying that the natural objects contain *sunsum* [spirit] or power, Akan thinkers mean to attribute to these natural objects, some intrinsic property, namely, the property of activity or an activating principle (Gyekye, 1995: 75). Whether this idea of intrinsic property should lead to a non-anthropocentric approach to

² The population of Ghana since the last official national population census in 2010.

nature, is something worth considering. Akans believe also in smaller gods or deities (*abosom*), and Gyekye asserts that deities are known to reside in natural objects such as trees, plants, rocks, mountains and hills, rivers and brooks (Gyekye, 1995: 73). J. A. Busia (1954 as cited in Gyekye, 1995: 73) collaborates this account. It becomes evident from Gyekye's accounts that Akan ontology is deeply rooted in metaphysics. How this metaphysical perception of nature affects the people's everyday attitude to the environment and which part of the physical world are considered animated, is worthy of investigation. Are there significant differences in treatment meted out to the parts of nature considered animated and those that are not? And how does this belief in an animated nature contribute towards a duty towards animals? These questions require to be addressed.

Furthermore, Gyekye holds African ontology to be hierarchical in nature, where humans are placed third on the hierarchy while the physical world of natural objects and phenomena are placed at the bottom. "Akan universe is conceived as a hierarchy of beings with *Onyame* [Supreme Being] at the apex, then the deities, ancestors, humans, and the world of natural objects and phenomena, in that order" (Gyekye, 1995: 75). Should one view this hierarchy as a hierarchy of importance in terms of value? Would this naturally or necessarily lead to a kind of anthropocentric theory towards nature or perhaps there is more to it than this? Gyekye argues that there are categorical distinctions among the entities on the hierarchy such that these entities are not considered to be on the same level (Gyekye, 1995: 69). This made Gyekye reject Parrinder's attempt to give a triangular relationship among the categories of beings. Parrinder places the Supreme Being atop the triangle and puts nature-gods (spirits that dwell in nature) and ancestors at the two sides of the triangle. He placed the lower magical powers at the base of the triangle (Parrinder, 1951 in Gyekye, 1995: 75). For Gyekye, Parrinder's triangular account is wrong because a look at the religious practices and attitudes of the Akans points to the fact that deities are considered more powerful than ancestors. Gyekye, therefore, believes a vertical line, instead of a triangle is a more appropriate figure to use in showing the ordered relations between the different entities within the Akan hierarchy of beings (Gyekye, 1995: 75). George Hagan, in corroborating the hierarchical structure of the Akan universe asserts that "with the good of man as the standard, the whole of nature forms a hierarchical structure according to the extent to which things can influence the life of man" (Hagan, 1964: 16). This appears to be an anthropocentric approach to nature, as well as, an inclination towards an indirect duty principle of the environment. To further show the difference in potency in the hierarchy of beings, Hagan asserts that "any existence or entity can influence and destroy any

other entity below it in the hierarchy of vital potencies (Hagan, 1964: 63).” Resultantly, spirits, belonging to the spiritual realm, can kill humans because of their higher potency; humans can also kill or destroy plants and animals because they possess a higher potency.

Hagan hints of the principle of interrelation existing in Akan metaphysics. He posits that in traditional Akan belief, there exists the notion that the destruction of relationship, which is considered necessary, between any two persons in a family, destroys the fabric of the family. In other words, there exists this “fabric of interweaving blood relationship” which when cut, leads to the disintegration of the fabric. Just as this is true of family relationships, Hagan believes that this is also true of individual entities in the universe. Thus, the relation of things in the universe are such that without these relationships the universe would not be as it is (Hagan, 1964: 50-51). An example of the interrelationship between animals and humans is that in many Akan homes, there is a belief that it is good to keep domestic animals because disasters or deaths may be diverted to these animals instead of coming onto members of the household. Through the behavior of a cat kept at home, it is possible to tell whether a sick person in the house will die or live (Hagan, 1964: 51). Hagan explains that there are many more examples that “show that between man and man, man and animal, spirit and matter, and man and plants, there are relations which pass into their beings” (Hagan, 1964: 51). Nevertheless, Hagan intimates that the Akan considers the whole world as a “plenum of mutually influencing existence”, making the Akan to think of the whole of nature as moral because they could interfere with man (Hagan, 1964: 16).

The Akans hold the belief that humans emerged out of the bowels of the earth. As such, the earth is considered as a deity and is given the name *Asase Yaa*³. *Asase* means ‘earth’, and *Yaa* is an Akan day name given to females born on Thursdays, for it is believed the earth deity was born on a Thursday. Thus, for traditional Akans Thursdays are sacred days for the earth goddess and no farming is to be done (Eshun, 2011: 30-31). Clare Macre (2001) prefers to describe *Asase Yaa* as the earth spirit rather than the earth goddess because, according to her, the *Asase Yaa* has no cult and no priests which is atypical for a divinity. Macre, however, notes that the earth spirit is considered important by the farmers and by the chiefs and elders (Macre, 2001: 24). The Akans also believe other spirits inhabits all aspects of nature including trees, animals,

³ The Fante Subgroup of Akans refer to it as *Asase Efua*. *Efua* is a Fante day name for females born on Friday (Macre, 2001: 24).

water bodies, mountains and every aspects of nature. This indeed affects how they relate with nature in many ways, and the roles different aspects of nature play in their lives (Gyekye, 1995; Hagan, 1964). One way the Akans relate with nature is through their totems. The word ‘totem’ is believed to come from a North American Indian language which refers to vegetables or animals which particular individuals, groups or a tribe regard as sacred and are accorded reverence (Lumor, 2009: 19). Totems are believed to have a certain ancestral link with a particular tribe, clan or family, and can be an animal, a plant or any other natural object. These totems act as tutelary spirits, protecting the group and shielding off any harm as well as, bringing to the group good fortunes. In return, the group respects and refrains from eating, killing or trapping their animal totems. At the death of an animal totem, the group mourns and buries it as they would a human being (Lumor, 2009: 19-20). The Akan word for totem is *Akyeneboa* or *Atweneboa*, which literally means ‘an animal that one leans upon or relies upon for spiritual inspiration (Eshun, 2011: 34; Lumor, 2009: 21). The Akans have eight clans and each of these clans has its own unique animal that it has adopted and of which they relate to as totem animals. Below is a list of the eight Akan clans, their totem animals, and what each totem depicts.

Table 2.12.1 Akan Clans and their totem animals⁴

Name of clan	Totem	Characteristics/Depiction
1. Aduana	Dog, Frog	Hardworking, clever, brave, friendliness, humility
2. Agona	Parrot	Eloquence, frankness
3. Asakyiri	Vulture, Eagle	Beauty, stamina, intelligence
4. Asenie	Bat	Bravery, diplomacy
5. Asona	Crow, Wild boar	Wisdom, purity of heart, eloquence
6. Bretuo	Leopard	Aggressiveness, exceptional bravery
7. Ekuona	Buffalo	Uprightness
8. Oyoko	Falcon, hawk	Patience, self-confidence

Apart from the belief in totems, the Akans also believe in *ntoro*. As part of the Akan conception of person, the Akans believe that *ntoro* and *mogya* (blood) is part of the physical make-up of a

⁴ Put together from <http://www.thekingdomofasante.com/clans-of-the-akan-people/> [Accessed 04 December 2017] and Lumor, 2009:22.

person. The *mogya* is given to person by the mother while the *ntoro* is inherited from the father. The *ntoro* is explained to be the sperm-transmitted characteristics that allow the father to pass on certain behavioural and possibly genetic features to the child. The *ntoro* also determines the buildup of a person, his personal magnetism, character personality, and power. This is expressed in various Akan proverbs one of which translates thus, ‘a crab does not give birth to a bird’ (Gyekye, 1995: 94). Akan *ntoro* has four major divisions with each having certain restrictions or taboos, which include the avoidance of certain animal foods. Below is the list of the four major Akan *ntoro* with their respective taboos:

Table 2.12.2 Akan *ntoro* and their taboo animals⁵

Ntoro Divisions	Taboos
1. Bosommuru	Python, Cow, Monkey, Wild dog
2. Bosomtwe	Monkey, Snail, tortoise, bush bug
3. Bosomptra	White fowl, Water yam, Monkey, Snail, Tortoise, dead animal
4. Nkatia-Adomakode	Dog, Wild dog

2.12.2 Akan ethics

Gyekye notes that there is some difficulty in finding an equivalent word in Akan for ethics. He claims that J. B. Danquah’s use of *obra* does not quite capture the meaning of the word ethics since *obra* which translates as ‘life’ or ‘manner of life’ is to him a much wider concept than ethics. For Gyekye, Akans generally use the word *suban* which means ‘character’ when referring to the ethical aspects of life. Thus, when the Akan want to say that ‘one has no morals’ they will say *onni suban*, which literally translates ‘he has no character’ (Gyekye, 1995: 147). Despite the embeddedness of traditional Akan beliefs in metaphysics, Wiredu and Gyekye argue that even though the Akan is highly religious, he does not find his or her source of morality in religion but rather in a *humanistic* attitude. Wiredu maintains that what is considered good in general is what promotes human interest, and not what conforms to the will of the gods (Wiredu, 1992: 194). For Wiredu, this ethics of humanism is clearly demonstrated in an Akan popular expression *onipa na ohia*. Wiredu explains that the English translation of

⁵ Put together from <http://www.thekingdomofasante.com/clans-of-the-akan-people/> [Accessed 04 December 2017].

this statement has a double connotation which are both important: Firstly, *onipa na ohia* implies that it is the human being which is valued, and secondly, it connotes that it is the fellowship with human being which is needed. Wiredu writes, “Through the first meaning the message is imparted that all value derive from human interests and through the second that human fellowship is the most important of human needs” (Wiredu, 1992: 194). Based on the above point, the Akan conception of the morally good, is argued to be what promotes human interests and that which is conducive to the harmonization of those interests (Wiredu, 1992: 194). Morality, for the Akans, is considered as intellectual, passionate, personal, and importantly social. “Morality is neither purely intellectual, for it has an irreducible passionate ingredient, nor purely personal, for it is quintessentially social” (Wiredu, 1992: 195). Gyekye also corroborates this humanistic ethics of the Akan people. He asserts that the sole criterion for determining the moral good in Akan moral thought is the welfare or well-being of the community (Gyekye, 1995: 132). The good is that which brings about human well-being or that which can evolve a common and harmonious social life (Gyekye, 1996: 57). This work will find out if this notion of human well-being can encompass the natural environment as well. Thus, this work will look into the humanistic moral attitude of the Akans to see if this humanistic attitude can be extended from person-to-person to person-to-animal as well.

In his discussion of the nature of Akan ethics, Hagan notes the following features; firstly, that the notion of the integrity of the human individual is paramount in such a way that no matter how closely an individual is connected with another, they should not do to each other things that can lead to pain or that can diminish the each other’s life. This is depicted by the Adinkra⁶ symbol *obi nka obi*⁷ which translates to ‘no one bites another’. Secondly, humans are held to be end in themselves and must not be used as means to any end (see also Gyekye, 1995: 20). This principle is found in an Akan proverb that says *wo tiatia obi die so hwehwe wo die a wonhu* which means ‘trampling on another’s right to seek your own ends in disappointment’. Thirdly, the Akans hold that the good of each is the condition of the good of all (Hagan, 1964: 118). Tellingly, Hagan adds that it is not the human society alone that is considered moral but the entirety of the Akan ontological order is also, as a matter of fact, moral, due to, what he calls, “the mutual vital influence exerted by all things”. He continues that the Akan metaphysics

⁶ Adinkra symbols are traditional symbols of the Akan people used to express thoughts, ideas, values and beliefs of the people. These symbols are artistically displayed in textiles, pottery, carved works, stools, umbrella tops, linguist staffs, gold weights, jewelleries, swords, architecture and many more (Agbo, 2011: ix). The symbols have different geometric designs and has proverbial meanings to them (Labi, 2009: 49).

⁷ The symbol has two fishes with each having the tail of the other in its mouth.

shows all entities existing in nature “as a plurality of coordinated potencies in which human society has a place”. He believes the world order, as the Akans will have it, is the essential condition of the wholeness of everything, including the wholeness of every human being (Hagan, 1964: 119).” Resultantly, Hagan asserts that any human behavior, attitude and customs which work against the increase of the hierarchy of vital potency, is to be considered morally bad. Inferably, any useless destruction of the beings that are found lower on the hierarchy of beings would constitute evil. Thus, for Hagan, “Akans consider the killing of animals and destruction of plants for no use at all as evil. So also is dishonor to spirits which are high in the scale” (Hagan, 1964: 119).

The notion of interdependency also resonates loudly in the communalistic attitude of traditional Akan societies. This communalistic character emphasizes on such communal values as shared social life, a high rate of interdependency and mutual aid and the maintenance of clan or kinship ties. On this, Gyekye (1997: 41) remarks that the Akan is never an isolated person but instead ‘inherently’ a communal being who is deeply rooted in social relationships and interdependence. He asserts that:

It is true, of course, that an individual human being is born into an existing human society and, therefore, into a human culture, the latter being a product of the former. As the proverb of the Akan people states, “When human being descends from heaven, he [or she] descends into a human society”. The fact that the individual human being is born into an existing community must, it seems to me, suggest a conception of the person as a communal being by nature. This communitarian conception of the person implies that, since the human being does not voluntarily choose to enter into a human community, community life is not optional for the individual. It also suggests that he cannot - perhaps should not - live in isolation from other persons, that he is naturally oriented toward other persons and must have relationships with them. It suggests, further, that the person is constituted, at least partly, by social relationships in which he necessarily finds himself. (Gyekye, 1997: 38).

Thus, it appears from the above quote that even the attainment of personhood in Akan tradition is based on how one can share in the communal life, which is attained through social interaction with others and being part of the whole. Closely attached to this social or communal status of the person, is the idea of the ‘common good’ which Gyekye understands to mean a good that is common to, or shared by individual human beings within a particular community, which is essential for the basic functioning of the individual in a particular community (Gyekye, 1997: 45).

Taboos and proverbs also form part of the sources of Akan moral codes (Gyekye, 1995). Taboos are known in the Akan language as *musuo* (uncommon evil or extraordinary evil) or *akyiwadea* (evils that are extremely abhorred, abominations or prohibitions). Some Akans believe that *musuo* can bring great suffering or misfortune to not only the perpetrator, but to an entire family, clan or even an entire community. Taboos in Akan communities include acts like suicide, incest, having sexual intercourse in the bush, rape, murder, stealing things dedicated to the deities or ancestral spirits, among others (Gyekye, 1995: 133). Gyekye notes that even though some of these taboos come with religious and supernatural connotations and explanations, they are not the ultimate reason for these taboos. The real underlying reason for regarding some of these acts as taboos is “simply because of the gravity of their consequences for human society” (Gyekye, 1995: 135).

With regards to proverbs, it is noted that one cannot come to an appreciation of the philosophy and beliefs of the Akan people without having to study their proverbs. From one short proverb, whole pages of philosophical discussion could be opened, (Appiah, Appiah & Agyeman-Duah, 2007: xii). Agbo also notes that proverbs contain lessons for moral and religious teachings, much of which deals with practical everyday concerns, of common sense and of good manners (Agbo, 2011: vii). Appiah et al. (2007: xiii) point out that proverbs are used by Akans when they do not want to be immediately and directly understood, or when a double meaning or a prevarication is required. Proverbs are also used to emphasize a statement or argument especially when there is a desire to show precedent of action. The Akan word for proverb is *abe*, and Gyekye notes that the etymology of this name is from the Akan word for palm tree which is also *abe*. As such, both *abe* as proverb and *abe* as palm tree, Gyekye notes, share similar characteristics. The palm tree has several uses for the Akan. From it, they get products like palm oil, palm wine, broom, palm-kernel oil, and soap. Similarly proverbs can be used in many ways and from it can be derived many philosophical and metaphysical ontology of the Akan people. Gyekye notes that one difference between Akan proverbs and Western maxims, is that authors of Akan proverbs are usually not readily known. He also notes that Akan proverbs are situational, which means they arise out of reflections of their experiences in the world. They also have metaphorical use and properties. (Gyekye, 1995: 13-24).

2.13 The Research Gap

Benjamin Nneji (2010) believes that the issue at hand when discussing the cogency of an environmental ethics in Africa is not whether or not humans can intervene in nature, but rather to what extent humans are both ethically and morally justified in intervening (Nneji, 2010: 39-40). Thus, Nneji is suggesting responsibility on the part of humans in the use of the environment and by extension, perhaps, suggesting a welfarist approach when it comes to animal ethics in Africa (he did not draw this conclusion). But would Akan ontology and ethics and the emerging theories in African environmental ethics agree with this view? Is it possible that Akan environmental ethics will support the view that animals or some animals have moral status? If yes, what will be the nature of this moral status? Would it be placed at par with the moral status of humans? Should the African (Akan) view of the moral status of animal vis-à-vis its other metaphysical and ontological worldview, and their ethics, ultimately call for a humane treatments of animals (welfarist approach) or call for a total abolition of animal usage (rightist approach)? It is the aim of this research to find answers to these and other related questions, by relying on the Akan ontological worldview, practices, and ethics as first-hand sources, as well as, draw from values, ideals and principles stemming from some of the emerging trends in African environmental ethics as secondary sources.

From the literature above, it is observable that little has been said about African animal ethics in general and much more less when it comes to placing African animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist positions. It is this gap that the research wants to fill. The ultimate aim is to answer the question, given the emerging trend in African environmental ethics and what is known of Akan ontological worldview and ethics, would an African animal ethics take after a welfarist approach or a rightist approach. Thus, placing Akan animal ethics within the global animal ethics debate and adding to the emerging literature on African animal ethics. Does the ethics of interrelatedness which dominates in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics require human beings to absolutely abstain from the use of animals? Should this subsequently lead to the embracement of an absolutist position? Surely, if humans and nature (including animals) are interconnected, then it implies that humans and nature rely on each other for survival. Is this to be translated to mean that this dominant ethics in in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics, which for the purpose of this study will be referred to as the *ethics of interrelatedness*⁸, will endorse a prudent use of animals? Thus, without going

⁸ This designation is used in order to avoid the use of a particular author's label of this identified dominant ethics in the emerging African environmental ethical theories.

further to suggest how the ethics of interrelatedness mandate or expect humans to relate with nonhuman animals, the theory falls short.

Kevin Behrens theory faces similar shortcomings. After an explanation of how his theory of African relational environmentalism either relates with or differs from holism, he moves to show how his theory applies in some practical environmental ethical cases, that is, human's responsibility towards endangered species and the over-population of elephants in the Kruger National Park in South Africa. Yet, he also fails to state in clear terms, the implication his view will have on some persistent issues in animal ethics such as the use of animals for food, animal as pets, animal in laboratory tests and mass production of animals in factories and closed pens other than open range farming.

Philomena Ojomo clearly identified and expressed the failure by these scholars to address the above questions fully in their theories of African environmental ethics in the following words:

In the accounts of both Ogungbemi and Tangwa, [including many other African environmental ethicists] some fundamental questions, which are critically essential to a plausible African orientation in environmental ethics, are left un-raised let alone discussed: *what should be the nature of African obligation and role of the relationship between Africans (non-Africans in Africa inclusive) towards the future generation in Africa, sentient beings, non-human animals, African environment in particular and nature in general? What is the need for an environmental ethics that is African in orientation? And much such be exclusionary of the existing known environmental theories from the West?* (Ojomo, 2011: 111). [Emphasis mine].

Thus, the burden of this work, among other things, essentially, is to address the question of the sort of ethical relationship that should exist between humans and nonhuman animals, given the metaphysics and ethics of the traditional Akan people, in view of the prevailing debate between the two major theories in animal ethics namely, animal welfarism and rightism.

2.14 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature that informs this study under some major thematic areas. It started with a brief introduction to environmental ethics where major theories and approaches in environmental ethics were explained. This was followed by an overview of animal ethics which highlighted some historical beginnings of animal ethics and how this branch of ethics developed along the way up to contemporary times. Major proponents and

arguments that prevailed during different eras were emphasized. After this was the introduction to the theories of animal welfarism and rightism which were presented as the two major approaches to animal ethics in the Western literature. It was mentioned here that there are two approaches to welfarism, i.e. direct welfarism and indirect welfarism. Rightism, as was shown, opposes both types of welfarism. It was shown that indirect welfarism does not recognize animals as having any moral status hence the theory argues that any human treatment that are accorded animals are done to benefit their human owners and not for the sake of the animal itself based on some intrinsic properties the animal may have. Direct welfarists, on the other hand, acknowledges the moral status of animals and believe we can morally wrong animals mainly because animals are sentient and as such experience pain and pleasure. Thus, humans owe direct duties to animals not just because of their human owners but for the animal's own sake, yet not because of a right that these animals possess. Here, it was shown that there are variations in viewpoints among the various proponents of direct welfarism, that is, while Peter Singer, for example, holds that animals are equal with humans in terms of their moral status, Cohen and Garner argue that moral status comes in degrees. Rightism argues that any animal ethics that does is not based on the rights of animals is inadequate. The theory holds that it is not enough to only argue for a humane use of animals. Animals possess inherent values like humans that needs to be respected.

The Chapter considered the controversial issue of the moral status of animals in some further details. Here, views from welfarists including, Singer, Cohen, Garner, and Frey were opposed with those of Rightists such as Regan, Francione, Rollin and Warren. It was noted that while indirect welfarists reject the idea of moral status all together, direct welfarists and rightists make a case for the moral status of animals. Nevertheless, there are disagreements among both direct welfarists and rightists in terms of whether the moral status of animals are to be considered equal with humans or to be regarded lower than that possessed by humans. This led to the section that brought out the debate on what is known as the marginal case argument.

Having shown the divergent arguments concerning the moral status of animals, the chapter applied the various positions in some practical issues in animal ethics namely, the use of animal as food/vegetarianism, vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research, hunting and trapping of animals in the wild, and the use of animals as pets/companion animals. The next three sections focused on the African experience in terms of the emerging trend in African environmental ethics. Here, it was noted that the ethics that emphasizes on an interrelationship

between humans and nature permeated through the literature from authors such as Tangwa, Ogungbemi, Behrens, Murove, Bujo, Ramose, Kelbessa, among others. The chapter noted that even though direct reference to animals was minimally mentioned, there are many principles therein that could be employed in the placement of an Akan animal ethics within the welfarists and rightists debate. Authors who have made contributions towards an African theory of a moral status including Bujo, Chemhuru, Masaka and Metz were mentioned. Horsthemke's criticism of the alleged nonanthropocentric nature of African environmental ethics and his rejection of Metz modal-relationalism were also looked at.

The metaphysics of the Akan people concerning the natural environment and human beings role in the universe were discussed. It was shown, among many others that the Akan universe is highly spiritual and believed in a hierarchy of beings. The Akans believed also in totems and taboos that required abstinence from the use of certain animals as food. Sources of Akan ethics were also highlighted. The literature showed that Akans have their ethics embedded in humanism where the sought for the welfare of others is the acceptable moral code. Proverbs and taboos were also seen as sources of moral codes that governs the everyday moral behavior of the Akan people. Finally, the research gap that is the focus of this study was stated. It was shown that the literature fails to demonstrate clearly the place of an African animal ethics within the main Western approaches to animal ethics and how this African animal ethics can be applicable to practical areas as vegetarianism, the use of animals in biomedical research, hunting and trapping and the use of animals as pets. Thus, this work intends to place African animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debates while relying on the principles from the emerging trend in African environmental ethics as secondary sources and on the traditional beliefs and practices of the Akan people of Ghana.

In chapter three, the three theories that will guide the research both in evaluation and in exposition will be discussed in depth. These three theories are animal welfarism, rightism and the African ethics of interrelatedness. Major proponents and arguments for each of these theories will be presented alongside their major opponents.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

The study explored and explicated on important literature related to the research in the previous chapter. Major disagreements that existed in the literature were also highlighted. The previous chapter brought to bear important themes related to this work including the moral status of nonhuman animals, the marginal case argument, the use of animals as pets, the use of animals for food, and the use of animals in scientific research. The chapter also looked at the emerging trend in African environmental ethics as well as a look into some features of Akan ontology, ethics, and metaphysics. In this chapter, the theoretical frameworks that will guide the study are detailed. Creswell (2009: 51) defines a theory in research as an argument, discussion, or reasoning that helps to explicate or forecast phenomena that occur in the world. The theoretical framework of research is a model of the framework of reference that researchers use to help them organise their observations and lines of thought (Delpont, Fouché & Schurink, 2011: 297). The three theoretical frameworks that will guide this research are *welfarism*, *rightism* and the *ethics of interrelatedness*.

In line with the main objective of this research to find the place of Akan animal ethics within the two main theories in the global animal ethics debate, that is, welfarism and rightism, the two are used as part of the theoretical framework for the research. The identified dominant theory in the emerging trends of African environmental ethics labelled ‘the ethics of interrelatedness’ is the third theory used. The study used these three theories as expository, evaluative, and descriptive tools. They are also used as tools for making comparisons with the collected data from the field. Ultimately, all three theories are going to help the study reach its objective of finding the place of Akan environmental ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate.

3.1 Welfarism Defined

The term animal welfare is widely used by many people in their attempt to argue for the protection of animals. Many of these people appear to be probably unaware of the many intricacies of the term. Animal welfare has a scientific usage where it tends to refer to the actual state of an animal rather than to the ethical duty to care or treat it well (Keeling, Rushen &

Duncan, 2011: 13). Keeling, et al. further mention that the term 'welfare' in the scientific sense, is considered as a feature of an animal rather than something that ought to be given to animals, as it is in the case of the ethical meaning of the word. With the scientific usage of the term, an animal in the wild is said to have poor welfare if it has no place to keep warm or is malnourished without people necessarily being responsible for it. Three questions come up when considering the scientific meaning of animal welfare, namely: is the animal happy or suffering from pain or other undesirable emotions; is the animal healthy and producing well; and is the animal able to perform its normal behavior and live a reasonable natural life. Keeling, et al. note that these three questions on the physical and psychological welfare of animals are part of official definitions of animal welfare including that of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) (2011: 13-14). They note that this is what veterinary or agricultural extension officers will be looking out for in animals in terms of animals' welfare.

In this work, the ethical meaning of the term animal welfare will be the focus of attention rather than the scientific meaning, although answers from the three questions raised above concerning the scientific usage of the term, inform animal ethicists in determining how humans ought to treat animals. Thus, DeGrazia rightly notes that the kind of mental capacities human beings associate with animals, play a very important role in how they believe they should be treated (1996: 1). In effect, if animals are considered to be merely made up of matter and nerves, people are less likely to think animals are owed any overly special responsibilities. However, if animals or some animals are regarded as self-conscious, rational, having emotions and beliefs, then people are more likely to reevaluate their attitudes towards them. The difference between the scientific and ethical use of animal welfare now becomes apparent; while in the scientific sense, animal welfare means a concern for the physical and psychological wellness of the animal, the ethical sense of the term deals with how humans ought to treat animals.

Tom Regan (2006: 208-209), in his contribution to animal ethics in the second edition of the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, identifies two possibilities of being a welfarist. The first group, he notes, are those who advocate for the humane treatment of animals only because it leads to human benefits, that is, it will make humans treat each other with kindness and with less cruelty. He labels this group as the indirect-duty account of the moral status of nonhuman animals. This study refers to this group as indirect welfarist and their theory or approach as indirect welfarism. The second group is made up of those who hold that humans owe direct duties to animals. According to Regan, this is the path preferred by utilitarians, starting with Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, and given more force in the work of Peter Singer. Regan

opines that those belonging to this group use utilitarian theories to criticize how animals are treated in contemporary industries (for example, in animal agriculture and biomedical research). This group considers the duty not to cause animals to suffer unnecessarily as a duty owed directly to animals. The study subsequently refers to this second group as the direct welfarist and their theory or approach as direct welfarism.

Direct welfarism, (the theory that holds that animals are owed direct duties) will be the preferred welfarist theory in this research over indirect welfarism. This is because, as it will subsequently be shown, traditional Akan ethics and beliefs concerning the treatment of animals align more with the tenets of direct welfarism than it does with those of indirect welfarism. It is however very important to note here, and as acknowledged by Francione (2010: 5), that there are many approaches even to direct welfarism. Thus, study will present some different proponents of direct welfarism below after the discussion on indirect welfarism. Even though indirect welfarism is not the study's preferred version of welfarism, it is necessary to briefly consider what its thesis is and why it is not preferable.

3.2 Indirect Welfarism

The indirect welfarist position is viewed as an indirect response to those who have argued that humans owe or have no moral duty towards animals. The likes of Aristotle and the 17th-century philosopher, René Descartes, as noted in the previous chapter, had denied any moral duty to animals mainly because they considered animals to lack reasoning or rational capabilities. Descartes, for example, had described animals as automata or mere machines. As Mary Midgley (1983: 53) notes, to say humans have no duty to animals, in general understanding, is to say that it does not matter how humans treat them. However, the indirect welfarist will argue that how animals are treated matter only because the interests of their human owners matter or that because it can affect how humans treat each other. Even though this remains an anthropocentric position, it can be considered as a 'softened' position from those who claim humans owe animals no moral duty at all.

Regan best captures the position of indirect welfarists in the following statement: "We have no duties towards animals; rather, animals are a sort of medium through which we may either succeed or fail to discharge those direct duties we owe to nonanimals, either ourselves; other human beings; or, as on some others views, God." (Regan, 2004: 150). Regan asserts that when indirect welfarists advocate for the preservation of endangered animal species they do so not

because of a duty owed to the animal species or for the respect of an inalienable right of the animal. Indirect welfarists, instead, advocates for the preservation of endangered animal species because they believe humans owe it to the present and future generations, to do what they can to ensure that animals that are currently regarded as endangered species continue to exist. This is to make it possible for future generations also to enjoy the benefits of these animals either through sightseeing or other beneficial uses the particular animal may provide.

Immanuel Kant (2012: 60-62) is well accredited as one of those who hold this *softened position* called indirect welfarism. Kant holds that only rational beings have absolute worth. According to Kant, for or a being to have an absolute worth, means that the being exists not as a means to an end but as an end in itself. In contrast, a nonrational being does not have an absolute worth and only exists as a means to an end. He refers to rational beings as *persons* and nonrational beings as *things*. It is from this hypothesis that Kant derives his famous categorical or practical moral imperative as follows: ‘so act as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end-withal, never as means only.’

According to Kant, animals are not rational beings, and so by inference, do not have absolute worth. They are therefore in the category of things. Thus, Kant sees animals as properties that humans use to meet their ends. Commenting directly on humans’ duties to animals, Kant claims, “Our duties towards animals are merely indirect duties towards humanity.” He further maintains that “our animal nature is analogous to human nature, and by doing our duties to animals in respect of manifestations of human nature, we indirectly do our duty towards humanity” (Kant, 2012: 61). By this, Kant means that humans only ought to seek the welfare or good of animals not because animals have any moral worth in themselves to make humans obligated in granting them any moral considerations, but rather because doing so will make humans behave morally towards their fellow humans. In Kant’s own words, “Such action helps to support us in in our duties towards humans where there are bounden human beings” (Kant, 2012: 61).

Kant further shows that animals cannot be wronged. In his analogy, he claims that if a man should shoot his dog for the fact that the dog is no longer able to serve, the man is not judged to have failed in his duty to the dog because the dog cannot judge. The man’s action would, however, be considered as inhuman and damaging to his own humanity, which is his duty to show towards humankind. Thus, we can judge the heart of a person by the way he or she treats animals. If an individual wants to be kind to his or her fellow human being, then that individual

must be kind to animals. In summary, our duties towards animals are indirect duties. Thus, the welfare of animals is sought just because doing so leads to the welfare of humanity. Regan calls this “duties *involving* animals rather than duties *to* animals” (Regan, 2004: 150).

There have been expressions of similar views even before Kant. The Judaeo-Christian tradition has in several times been accused of holding an anthropocentric view that puts humans at the centre of the universe and for giving humans absolute dominion over all of God’s creation⁹. It is generally argued that this anthropocentric view is part of what has informed the Western tradition of exploiting nature to further the needs and wants of humanity¹⁰. St. Aquinas, who attempts, in his *Summa Theologica*, to explain Christian theology, maintains that humans cannot sin against animals because God has subjected all things to man’s power. He considered animals as irrational beings of which humans owe no such obligation to seek their welfare except for that welfare that benefits humans themselves. He wrote, “If a man practised a profitable affection for animals, he is all more disposed to take pity on his fellow man.” This was his interpretation of the book of Proverb 12:10 (NIV), part of which says “the righteous care for the needs of their animals” (see Singer, 1990:1 93-196).

Thus, it can be seen here that St. Aquinas holds the position that the Christian has no direct regard for the welfare of animals. The Christian, in St. Aquinas theology, does not consider the good of animals because animals have rights that need to be respected or that animals have interests or experience pain and emotions that need to be considered. In the view of St. Aquinas and Kant, human consideration for the welfare of animals is done solely for the good of humanity. Being kind to animals makes humans beings kind to one another or at least, shows that particular human being as a kind person.

Jan Narveson (1977: 161-178) is another philosopher who expresses an indirect welfarist approach. Though he describes himself as a utilitarian, Narveson rejects the absolute conclusion of fellow utilitarian, Peter Singer and animal rights advocate, Tom Regan on the claim that there is no substantive argument to prevent the inclusion of animals in our moral considerations (moral community). Narveson agrees at some level with Singer and Regan that some of the arguments put forward by way of rejecting the moral status of animals are superficial and lack merits. The argument, for example, that animals are stupid, or that animals

⁹ See, for example, Lynn Whyte’s ‘The historical roots of our ecological crisis in James P. Sterba (ed.), 2000, pp. 19-26.

¹⁰ Whyte, Singer, and Regan held this position.

do not feel pain, or the argument that since [some] animals kill each other, humans can also do it to them, are immediately rejected by Narveson. He further posited that “we would be better people if we did respect animals, or that animals are really quite lovable and we would do better to treat them as pets than as potential meals, and so on. But none of this will get us to animal rights, as part of the fundamental apparatus of morality” (Narveson, 1977: 178). His view here represents the crust of his indirect welfarist approach. Narveson seems to be arguing that humans’ duty to nonhuman animals is that of an indirect one, mainly because nonhuman animals are not and cannot be a party to the moral agreement that seeks to protect self-interests and ensure others do the same. Because of this, when humans do show some form of moral courtesy to animals, they do so because they would be better people and not because the suffering of animals is of any [primary] importance (Narveson, 1977: 178).

3.3 Critique of Indirect Welfarism

Arguments by indirect welfarists are generally refuted by arguments that are able to demonstrate that animals or at least some of them do behave rationally and can employ nearly similar sophistication of their reasoning capabilities as humans do. This is because many of the arguments propounded by welfarists draw conclusions from the premise or assumption that animals are not rational beings or that they do not experience emotions. However, many years of scientific studies of the brain and nervous system of animals and the psychology and behaviours of animals have produced convincing data to show that some animals exhibit sophisticated rationality and emotions close to that of humans.

Mary Midgley explains that part of the reason the likes of Aristotle and Descartes deny rationality to animals is that they consider a person to be essentially his reason or intellect. That is, they hold that humans’ rationality is what differentiates them from other beings. This Midgley notes, made for a startling position that nothing non-intellectual mattered (Midgley, 1983: 11). Midgley is sceptical of this position. She asks whether reasoning, as an attribute, is really a single faculty in humans that is unshared by any animal (Midgley, 1983: 45). She concludes that the rationalist tradition to dismiss animals from the moral scene was done on the grounds that are obviously not acceptable today (Midgley, 183: 12). Voltaire also challenged Descartes’ claim that animals are mere machines. He claims that by observing the behaviour of animals, humans can identify similarities with the behaviour of animals that should make humans believe that animals do reason (Regan & Singer, 1976: 67). David Hume

echoes Voltaire's position. Hume argues that should the resemblance of the external actions of animals to those of humans be considered and should the internal organs of animals be judged to resemble that of humans, the only conclusion that could be reached will be the view that since humans and animals share these similarities then animals do reason like humans. Hume strongly believes that there is no truth that appears to be more evident than the truth that animals are endowed with thought and reason like humans (Regan & Singer, 1976: 69-70). The renowned naturalist and biologist, Charles Darwin, also notes that only a few people would dispute that animals possess some power of reasoning. He believes that animals can pause, deliberate, and resolve. He argues that the more animals are studied, the more it becomes evident of their capacity to reason (Regan & Singer, 1976:75). Even though Darwin admits that there are some differences in the reasoning capacities of humans and nonhumans animals (humans are, for example, able to engage in abstract thinking and self-consciousness) yet, this is only a matter of degree and not of a kind. He writes:

Of all the faculties of the human mind, it will, I presume, be admitted that reason stands at the summit... Nevertheless, the difference in mind between man and the higher animals, great as it is, certainly is one of degree and not of kind... If it could be proved that certain high mental powers, such as the formation of general concepts, self-consciousness, etc., were absolutely peculiar to man, which seems extremely doubtful, it is not improbable that these qualities are merely the incidental results of other highly-advanced intellectual faculties (Regan & Singer, 1976: 75-80).

Apart from the argument bearing on animal rationality, another basis for denying direct moral duty to animals, as expressed by some indirect welfarists, is the claim that animals are not conscious beings, in the sense that they do not have emotions or desires. However, even with the absence of hard scientific evidence, it is possible to infer from the observation of the overt behaviours of animals that animals do express pain, joy and other emotions. Jeffrey Masson and Susan McCarthy (1994: 42) believe that humans presumed, animals lack feelings to get an excuse for treating them badly. That is, if animals have no feelings, then there is nothing in them for humans to respect. They state, "It has always been comforting to the dominant to assume that those in subservient positions do not suffer or feel pain as keenly or at all, so they can be abused or exploited without guilt and with impunity" (Masson & McCarthy, 1994: 43). Masson and McCarthy further note that in science, the two things that serve as great obstacles in studying or acknowledging animal emotion are anthropomorphism (the ascribing of human characteristics such as thoughts, feelings, consciousness, and motivation to nonhuman animals) and anthropocentrism (the assumption that everything else matters morally only insofar as it

affects human beings and/or their interests). They continued that anthropomorphism was viewed with such negativity that it was considered a grave mistake and even a sin. This negative attitude made scientists avoid talking about the emotional lives of animals to avoid ridicule and to be taken seriously. Masson and McCarthy argued that animals do indeed express emotions in many ways; “Animals cry. At least, they vocalise pain or distress and perhaps call for help” (Masson & McCarthy, 1994: 11), they maintain. Similarly, Midgley, through the observation of animal behaviour and reports from ethologists, argues that human beings “are not just rather like animals; [they] *are* animals” (Midgley, 1973: 113).

Again, Charles Darwin, many years earlier, was of the conviction that young animals such as puppies, kittens, and lambs exhibit happiness when playing together just as human children do. Darwin, with many other instances, showed that animals demonstrate a variety of emotions including love, jealousy, fear, courage, pain, excitement, and sympathy (Regan & Singer, 1976: 72-81).

Specifically on Kant’s indirect welfarist position, Regan argues that even if Kant’s assertion that animals are not self-conscious or rational is interpreted to mean that animals cannot make moral judgment, it will not only be true for animals but also true for all other moral patients including human moral patients like babies (Regan, 2004:178). Thus, the marginal case argument comes up once again. That is, unless humans are ready to extend the same argument to human babies and to all other moral patients then there really is no justification in excluding animals from those to whom a moral duty is owed. This is because even though human babies cannot make moral judgment, they are generally not considered as things or objects without rights.

Peter Singer likewise rejects attempts by indirect welfarists to find a distinctive attribute that makes humans superior to nonhuman animals. He argues along similar lines of Jeremy Bentham to show that various arguments made by indirect welfarists to show why direct moral duty is owed to humans and not to animals are indefensible. He maintains that even if some of the distinctive marks that indirect welfarists allude to as those which set humans apart from animals are acknowledged, they are, to him, not relevant to the question of how animals ought to be treated unless they can be linked to the question of whether or not animals suffer. Pain or suffering, according to Singer (Singer, 1994: 68), is more primitive and seems to have nothing to do with language or any of these purported distinctive marks.

What have all these objections shown? As Regan noted, there appears to be some sort of arbitrariness on the part of indirect welfarists as to their reasons for excluding all animals or at least some animals in their definition of a moral community. These objections have shown that the criteria used as bases for refusing to accord nonhuman animals direct moral duties are flawed. The attempt to exclude animals based on their lack of rationality or lack of self-consciousness is refuted by showing through the study of animals' mental state and through ethological studies that some animals are rational and can have similar sophisticated mental states as humans. Similar studies have disproved the arguments that animals do not have emotions and therefore cannot suffer pain or experience joy. Through much scientific research, the emotional lives of animals have been made known and there have been studies that show that animals experience a wide array of emotions as well. Thus, animals also suffer pain, are self-conscious, have desires, hope, and preferences. The argument, therefore, is that if animals or some animals have similar mental and emotional experiences as humans, it can be argued therefore that there is no justification for denying a direct duty to them. There remains no viable reason except that of arbitrariness to continue to place animals outside the definition of a moral community. It is the only way to avoid the challenge posed by the marginal case argument, that is, to consider animals as not only purposeful to serve human interests but as beings with their own worth.

3.4 Direct Welfarism

Unlike indirect welfarism, which argues that humans have no direct duties to animals, direct welfarism position argues that there are good enough reasons to accord direct duties to animals. Singer reports that Jeremy Bentham, the father of utilitarianism, denounced humans' dominion over animals by describing it as a tyranny instead of legitimate government (Singer, 1990: 204). Bentham envisaged a time when humans would have no good reason to exclude animals from their moral calculations; the number of legs a being has, the villosity of the skin, the termination of the *os sacrum*, or the ability to reason or to discourse. All of these, according to Bentham, are not good enough reasons to exclude animals from being accorded some moral considerations (Regan & Singer, 1976: 130). This assertion by Bentham highlights the position of direct welfarists, who generally acknowledge the moral status of at least some animals, if not all. Direct welfarists generally hold that animals have interests that need to be respected. In other words, humans have some duties towards animals, not because doing so furthers humans' interests as such, but because animals have interests that need to be respected. Thus, direct

welfarists acknowledge direct duties to animals. Despite this acknowledgement of animals' interests, direct welfarists are, in certain circumstances, willing to trade away, or override, or negotiate these interests or at least some of them. Tom Regan, a staunch critic of direct welfarism, explains direct welfarist position as the position that recognizes at least some direct duties to moral patients. According to Regan (2004:195), the difference between the direct welfarist position and the rightist view is that direct welfarists hold that humans can give a good account of their duties to animals without necessarily appealing to rights of animals. Thus, direct welfarists do away with any talk of animal rights in the strict meaning of the word. Stephen R. L. Clark (1997: 9) was therefore mistaken to say that moralists who deny that nonhuman animals have rights generally mean that there is no moral reason to consider the feelings or wishes of those creatures. His claim may perhaps hold true for indirect welfarists but not for direct welfarists. This is because even though direct welfarists deny the claim that animals have rights, they accept that there are moral reasons to consider the interests of nonhuman animals. There are however different perspectives to direct welfarism. This is because advocates do not agree on which interest in animals is worth protecting and do not agree on when and how it is justified to override these or some of these interests. The direct welfarist positions of Peter Singer, Carl Cohen, and Robert Garner are presented below. The study purposely avoids choosing one over the rest because it wants to compare the data from the Akan respondents and knowledge from the Akan literature to see where and how traditional Akan viewpoints agree with and differ from these versions of direct welfarism.

3.4.1 The Direct Welfarist View of Peter Singer

Peter Singer's position is often referred to as the animal liberation position. Coming from a utilitarian tradition himself, Singer relied on the utilitarian theory of Jeremy Bentham (where the good is defined as pleasure and bad or evil as pain) to expand his theory of direct moral consideration of all sentient beings. Due to the popularity and strides Singer's utilitarian position has made in the animal ethics debate and in the animal rights movement all over the world, many in the animal ethics literature generally refer to the direct welfarist position as a utilitarian position which they usually contrast with Tom Regan's rightist position.

Utilitarianism is a consequentialist moral theory. And as with all consequentialist moral theories, it focuses on the end result as the ultimate decider of right and wrong. Utilitarianism, therefore, requires human actions to always aim at bringing about the best possible

consequences, all other alternatives considered. Jeremy Bentham explained that the best possible consequences should be measured in terms of maximizing pleasures and minimizing pain. As already indicated, Bentham had entertained the future likelihood of including animals in the moral calculation of utility in his widely quoted claim: “The day may come when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withholden from them but by the hand of tyranny. The question is not, can they reason nor Can they or talk? but, Can they or suffer?” (Regan & Singer, 1976: 130). Thus, Bentham was envisaging the possibility of including all sentient beings in the moral calculation of utility rather than the inclusions of only human beings. Peter Singer follows Bentham’s line of reasoning to advocate strongly for animal ethics that takes into account the interests of all sentient animals.

Singer (1976: 148ff.) brings to the fore the gains made by many past liberation movements in their fights against discrimination of different sorts; from the Black Liberation Movement against the discrimination and prejudice of blacks to the liberation movements for Spanish-Americans, gay people, and other minority groups. Singer also speaks of the liberation movements made by women to demand a stop to biases based on sex. According to him, the goal of any liberation movement is to see an expansion of prevailing moral purview and distension or the given of a different meaning to the basic moral principle of equality. Thus, Singer sees his own project as an advocacy for the inclusion of nonhuman animal species into our current existing moral purview. He states, “I am arguing that we extend to other species the basic principles of equality that most of us recognize should be extended to all members of our own species” (Singer, 1976: 149). Singer, perhaps, saw this as the next important step in the ever-continuous expansion of the boundaries of moral status and the moral principle of equality.

Singer, being a utilitarian, argues that when reference is made to all sentient beings that likely stand to be affected by the actions of moral agents, they should include animals, that is, animals should be included in any moral calculation. Singer’s direct welfarist position becomes apparent when his claims on the use of animals for food, killing of animals, and experimenting on animals are considered. As observed from the literature review, Singer’s position is not entirely an abolitionist stance since he would, given certain conditions, allow for some sort of use of animals to further other greater interests at the time.

Singer identifies himself as a preference utilitarian. He explains the position of preference utilitarianism as follows:

According to preference utilitarianism, an action contrary to the preference of any being is, unless this preference is outweighed by contrary preferences, wrong. Killing a person who prefers to continue living is therefore wrong, other things being equal. That the victims are not around after the act to lament the fact that their preferences have been disregarded is irrelevant. The wrong is done when the preference is thwarted (Singer, 1993: 94).

Peter Wenz also notes that the aim of a preference utilitarian's action is to maximize the satisfaction of preferences rather than the maximization of pleasure or happiness. Wenz maintains that one good thing about preference utilitarianism over its hedonistic counterparts is that instead of universally defining the good in terms of pleasure or happiness, it allows individuals to define for themselves what they deem to be good. Preference utilitarianism will then call for actions that promote the maximum satisfaction of the various preferences that individuals happen to have (Wenz, 2001: 100). Singer himself explains that going with the hedonistic approach, makes sentient beings to be regarded as mere receptacles of something valuable. When regarded this way, it will not matter if the receptacle gets broken, so long as there is another receptacle to which the contents can be transferred without any getting spilt (Singer, 1993: 121). The meaning of this metaphor is that since hedonistic utilitarians are mostly concerned with maximization of pleasure over pain, it seems that the recipients of these pain and pleasure have no value in themselves so far as the balancing of pleasure over pain is achieved. Thus, hedonistic utilitarianism approach would make it acceptable to have secret killings of animals if that will minimize pain or make it acceptable to kill one animal and replace it with another animal which has more possibility of a pleasurable life. This is because, by the hedonistic utilitarian approach, the subject has no value as such. What matters more is the pleasure or pain it experiences or can produce. So that by going for preference utilitarianism, Singer attempts to make killing a direct wrong done to the subject killed because it is something contrary to the subject's preference.

Tom Regan notes that Singer favoured preference utilitarianism over hedonistic or classical utilitarianism because, Singer perceived that the position of hedonistic utilitarianism, by placing moral status on the mere fact of being sentient, made moral agents and moral patients mere receptacles of positive values or negative values (Regan, 2004: 205). However, he argues that Singer falls into a similar problem faced by hedonistic utilitarianism of which he was trying to avoid. He asserts that going by Singer's line of argument will make it possible for the preference (interests) of animals to be traded off or disregarded if there are higher or stronger preferences (Regan, 2004: 210).

3.4.2 The Direct Welfarist View of Carl Cohen

Carl Cohen's direct welfarist position is more apparent than that of Singer's. He writes that:

Animals are not stones. They live and they may suffer. Every honest person will agree that treating animals in some ways is inhumane and unjustified. But the good that has been done by medical investigations that could not have been undertaken without animal subjects is so very great as to be beyond calculation; this, also every honest person must acknowledge (Cohen, 2001: 3).

Going by the above statement, Cohen demonstrates clearly his direct welfarist position. By asserting that animals are not stones and that they suffer, Cohen shows that he agrees with Singer in acknowledging a value in animals that need to be taken into account in the way they are treated. Nevertheless, Cohen does not hold the view that animals have intrinsic rights that should call for the total abolition of their use. He acknowledges humans' many uses of animals including for food, clothes, companionship, and transportation. However, his chief concern among all the various animal uses is their use in medical research. Cohen claims that the use of animals in medical research is more profound than their other uses because "investigators cannot do without animal subjects" (Cohen, 2001: 4). According to him, humans, however, can survive without animal food products or without companion animals or the use of animal skins for clothes, or the use of animals for transportation, but in the field of medical research, the use of animals cannot be avoided. It is based on the need to use animals in medical research that Cohen develops his argument on the moral status of animals.

Cohen agrees with Singer that animals are sentient, and that sentient animals must be treated with the consideration that they can suffer pain and experience pleasure. He notes that humans have an obligation to act humanely and to do that implies that humans refrain from treating animals in ways that can bring unnecessary distress upon them. He is however against the insistence on animals having rights as humans do and the categorical objection to any use of animals, more especially for medical research. He describes the defence of animal rights as "a gigantic mistake" (Cohen, 1997: 94).

Cohen's argument is that even though it is true that all rights entail obligation, the reverse of the statement is not true. Thus, not all obligations entail a right. He notes that many of the moral obligations humans owe to each other are not because the other person has a right to demand such an obligation. Obligations may arise from commitments that are freely made or from special relations (Cohen, 1997: 4). Obligations may also arise from the possession of authority,

faithful service, family connections, duties of care and an act of spontaneous kindness and many other circumstances (Cohen, 2001: 28-29). For example, should a son someday wish to become a veterinary doctor, it will be the parents' obligation to help him to achieve that wish [the parents are so obliged because of family connection] but Cohen opines that the son "has not the authority to demand such help as a matter of right." In the same light, humans may have certain obligations to animals but it does not in any way imply that animals have rights (Cohen, 2001: 94).

Despite Cohen's rejection of animals bearing rights, he emphasizes constantly that their lack of rights does not mean they should be treated without any consideration. It is silly, he says, to think of rats as the holders of moral rights, but this shouldn't mean it is silly to recognize that rats can feel pain, and that humans have an obligation to refrain from torturing them. He continues that humans owe to animals the obligation to act humanely towards them even though the concept of right cannot possibly apply to them (Cohen, 2001: 29). Based on this thought, Cohen believes there is no moral harm done in the use of animals in medical research to advance human knowledge and to find cure and vaccines for pertinent human ailments. For him, it will be justifiable to do so while the welfare of animals is considered.

3.4.3 The Direct Welfarist View of Robert Garner

Robert Garner presents himself as a staunch critic of Gary Francione's (2010) and any other radical abolitionist views on animal ethics. Garner's position offers a practical solution to the impasse that exists in the animal ethics debate between welfarists and rightists. Francione refers to Garner's welfarist position as 'new welfarism' (Francione & Garner, 2010: 25), while Garner himself would rather prefer to call his position as 'animal protectionism' (Francione & Garner, 2010: 104). It is Garner's hope that his animal protectionist position will either bridge the gap between welfarism and abolitionism or be seen as the necessary step or approach that can lead to attaining the ideals of the abolitionists. Thus, Garner claims that his theory will support whichever measures adopted that can lead to the protection of animal interests, irrespective of how the measure is labelled, be it animal welfare or animal rights (Francione & Garner, 2010: 104). It is for this same reason that he prefers his theory to be called 'animal protectionism' rather than 'new welfarism'.

Garner rejects claims by animal rights theorists (specifically those who label themselves as abolitionist) that the total abolition of the use of animals by humans is both ethically appropriate

and politically probable. He describes them as fundamentalists, not only because they hold strongly to a particular set of beliefs, but also because they are unwilling to compromise their beliefs even if to achieve incremental short-term goals that fall short of the ideal end they seek (Francione & Garner, 2010: 103). For Garner, it is important to distinguish between what is prescribed by ethics and what is politically or strategically achievable. This distinction, according to him, will help to avoid confounding ethical pronouncements concerning what the treatment of animals suggests to be done, with pronouncements concerning what is politically feasible at any given time. Thus, he sees his animal protectionism position to offer what is politically feasible now based on what is currently prevalent in societies.

Garner, just as the other direct welfarists considered, acknowledges the moral status of animals. Again, just as the other direct welfarists have posited, Garner believes the sentience of animals is something of a big deal that needs to be weighed when considering how to treat or use animals. He writes that, “the mere fact that animals are sentient ought to result in animals being accorded a higher moral status” (Francione & Garner, 2010: 115). The contention though, for Garner, is whether the acknowledgement of the moral status of animals should compel humans to regard the interests of animals at par with humans, and as such, give animals similar moral considerations as humans at all times. Here, Garner agrees with Cohen in challenging Singer on the view that animal interests ought to be considered equally with that of human interests (Francione & Garner, 2010: 112).

Garner asserts that merely pursuing a moral campaign on animal rights may not get the expected results unless it is backed by a political strategy (2010: 147-154). He claims that he is arguing for an animal right ethics based on the principle that animals have the right not to suffer. Welfare reforms, for him, can minimize animal suffering to a high degree without necessarily abolishing a particular practice of the use of animals. “Using animals per se, therefore, is not the problem. It is what they are used for that is the key”, according to Garner. He also maintains that goal of abolitionists to bring about a cessation of all kinds of animal use are highly unachievable looking at what currently pertains in societies today. Garner thinks that no country in the world has absolutely prohibited the use of animals in medical research or their use as a source of food rather, the industry continues to profit and consumers continue to rely on meat and use drugs that were developed and tested on animals. People also consistently rely on animals for entertainment and for clothing. With these said, Garner believes a movement (referring to the abolitionist’s movement) that appears to be promoting a cause that will, either rightly or wrongly, impact negatively on some human interests, could face some

serious problems. He held that because animals are unable to liberate themselves and must rely on humans and because humans benefit from animal exploitation, the animal protection movement must spend more time focusing on the question of agency. By this, he meant that more focus should be channelled by animal advocacy groups on *who is to do what* rather than *what must be done* (Francione & Garner, 2010: 126). Thus, Garner calls for reforms, regulations and incremental changes that can gradually take humans towards the ideals of animal rights in consonance with human needs.

3.5 Critique of Direct Welfarism

Regan is a major critic of direct welfarism. The main target of his criticism has been Peter Singer's animal liberation view. Regan generally believes that any animal ethical theory that does not acknowledge the moral rights of animals is inadequate. It is on this basis that he challenges Singer's utilitarian approach, fearing that such a consequentialist method will sometimes allow the rights of animals to be negotiated or traded off to further other utility that may seem prudent at a time. In Regan's view, "utilitarianism would sanction recognizable forms of sexism and racism, if the facts happened to turn out a certain way" (Regan, 2004: 227-228). Regan demonstrates that Singer fails in his attempt to avoid the challenge of hedonistic utilitarianism that made individuals of direct moral concern mere receptacles of value instead of valuing the individuals themselves. Regan holds that Singer's choice for preference utilitarianism commits a similar problem. To him, Singer's position does not avoid the problem of regarding individuals as replaceable receptacles because "self-conscious individuals are just as much replaceable receptacles given preference utilitarianism as they are given hedonistic utilitarianism" (Regan, 2004: 210). The only difference between Singer's position and that of hedonistic utilitarians, according to Regan, is that while individuals are replaceable receptacles with preferences in Singer's case, they are replaceable receptacles with pleasures and pains in the other. Thus, Regan sees no improvement made by Singer in going for preference utilitarianism.

Regan further attacks Singer's 'basic moral principle of equality'. Singer in *Practical Ethics* (1993) claimed that the basic moral principle of equality prescribes that the interests of every being affected by an action are to be taken into account and given the same weight as the like interests of any other being. According to Regan, Singer saw this principle to be prescriptive, basic, moral, concerns the range of interests to be considered, and prescribes that equal interests

be counted equally. Regan's argument is that if Singer's basic moral principle of equality is taken to mean a fundamental moral principle upon which he makes his claim for equal consideration for all sentient beings then Singer appears to be inconsistent and defying his utilitarian principle. This is because, according to Regan, rather than making the basic moral principle of equality dependant on utility (per utilitarian approach), Singer makes the principle of utility dependant on a more basic moral principle of equality (Regan 2004:212-214). Singer's allusion to the basic moral principle of equality, according to Regan, is inconsistent with utilitarian views and can find no place within utilitarianism.

Raymond G. Frey (1980) is one prominent critic of both Peter Singer and Tom Regan's positions. Frey challenges Singer's claim that animals can or do have interests like humans. Frey rejects this by pointing to two logically distinctive types of interests. He claims that animals can have interests in one but rather banal sense of the word interest, as in, for example, to say that it is in the interest of the dog to be fed hygienic food. However, animals cannot have interest in a second and a more important sense of the word interest, as in, for example, to say that the dog has the interest to be fed hygienic food. This, Frey notes is because the second sense of the word interest, will require that animals have desires. To have desires will further require that animals have beliefs. Frey continues that to say animals have beliefs implies that they are able to distinguish between true and false beliefs. This, he argues, requires language to make possible. As a result, since animals do not have a language, they do not have beliefs or desires and consequently, do not have interests.

Frey, in addition, challenges Singer's view of placing moral status in sentiency. Frey's asserts that if sentiency is taken to mean the 'capacity to feel pain', as Singer maintains, it would, among other implications, compel the exclusion of, for example, fetuses, individuals suffering certain types of brain damage, and individuals in a coma (comatose). Frey believes that the exclusion of this group of individuals is going to be highly objectionable to many people (Frey, 1980: 34). He also thought that the attempt to remove the discrimination of animals by appealing to sentiency is in itself discriminatory in character. This is because such a move condemns the entirety of non-sentient creatures, including the 'lower' animals, at best, to an inferior moral status or at worst, to a status entirely outside the purview of morality. So that, instead of the sentiency criterion removing discrimination, what it rather does, according to Frey, is to expand the category of people who can practice discrimination.

Frey furthermore demurs Singer's condition for ascribing interest to animals, that is, the condition of having the capacity to feel pain. To Frey, Singer fails to establish the truth of his condition for ascribing interests to animals, that is, the condition of being able to feel pain. Frey's view is that being able to feel pain is not a necessary condition or prerequisite for the possession of interests (Frey, 1980: 144-145). In his opinion, "Singer's prerequisite for having interests is dubious, if not false, since we can, and do speak of interests in cases where the capacity for feeling pain is muted in non-trivial ways and where this capacity is entirely absent" (Frey, 1980: 145). To demonstrate with an example, Frey refers to a soldier friend of his, who, while serving in Vietnam, encountered grave and extensive head, spinal and nervous injuries to such a degree that though he was conscious, he was no longer able to feel pain. Frey argues that it will be an error to think that since this soldier at that moment of injury did not feel pain meant that he did not have interests.

Frey, therefore, concludes that animals do not have mental state experiences and "in the absence of experiences or mental states, they are not themselves the bearers or repositories of value in their own right, they have, in one word, no value in themselves" (Frey, 1980: 45). He was of the conviction that animals lack that reflective awareness which enables humans, unlike animals, to see their experiences and act as their own, and as a result, be responsible for their acts (Frey, 1980: 109). Frey, however, did not deny the fact that animals do suffer. He rejects the position that they should be treated without any consideration for their suffering. To him, animals suffer because they are conscious, but they do not have interests because they are not self-conscious, an act that requires reflective awareness of once experiences (Frey, 1980: 109).

Carl Cohen (2001), although a direct welfarist himself, challenges the seemingly abolitionist position of Singer; seemingly because of the way Singer advocates strongly for vegetarianism and veganism, and for the cessation of the use of animals in medical research, even though he is arguing from a utilitarian point of view. Cohen's challenge on Singer's position is that Singer and other liberationists assume mistakenly that when calculating the balance of pains and pleasures on which to decide the best line of action, all sentient beings including animals ought to be considered as equal. In other words, when the interests of humans and animals differ, there is no reason to favour human interests over that of the animals. Cohen's position is that it is not the case that all species are equal. In his view, the fact that animals are also sentient does not imply, in any way, that the experiences of animals are morally equivalent to the experiences of human beings (Cohen, 2001: 63).

One can perceive from Cohen's position a discrimination against members of nonhuman species and can thus be accused of committing speciesism. However, Cohen believes that speciesism needs not be a bad thing after all. To him, speciesism cannot be equated to racism or sexism because in the instances of both racism and sexism, there exist discrimination against individuals who are humans. He states, "Racism is evil because humans really are equal, and the assumption that some races are superior to others is false and groundless" (Cohen, 2001: 62). Nevertheless, there is no instance of speciesism since the human species and the animal species are not in the same category. Humans, according to Cohen, are morally autonomous and can be part of a moral community yet, animals are not. Thus, Cohen maintains, "speciesism may be taken as one way of expressing the recognition of these differences." In that regard, he considered speciesism a correct moral perspective which is by no means an error or corruption (Cohen, 2001: 62).

The new welfarist approach by Cohen has also received some criticisms. It is described, for instance, as "a bizarre and confusing hodgepodge of traditional welfarism and animal liberation philosophy" (Uvearchives, 2007). The main crust of the criticism here is that as far as humans continue to regard animals as properties and as commodities, it will highly be impossible to balance animal interests fairly against human interests. The critics are of the view that regulations over the years have not helped and will not help the proper recognition of the moral status of animals. The new welfarist position, they argue, only endorses the continuous exploitation of animals and makes human feel good about it.¹¹

3.6 Rightism defined

It is important to state here at the beginning that the term animal right is often used loosely by many animal advocates, even when they are only calling for the humane treatment of animals. In the strict sense of the word, however, such advocates will be more correctly labelled as animal welfarists (in the manner described in the previous section) rather than animal rights advocates. Animal rights theory or rightism, as used in this study, holds a more technical or restrictive connotation. To argue that someone or a being has a moral right, is to make a very strong entitlement that those rights ought to be safeguarded or upheld (Palmer & Sandøe, 2011: 5). Often, rights are discussed only in the domain of humans and the most controversial has always been the question of whether or not human foetuses have rights to life. However, animal

¹¹ Also, see arguments by Gary Francione (2010) as discussed in section 3.6.3 below.

rights advocates want to extend the notion of rights to nonhuman animals as well. As Cohen notes, if indeed animals have rights, it follows that those rights deserve protection and laws and regulations must be enacted to preserve those rights whether it is convenient or otherwise (Cohen, 2001: 4; Cohen, 1997: 91).

Rightism or animal rights theory is a theory that generally agrees that humans owe *direct duties* to animals because animals have at least some basic (moral) rights in the same way as humans do. Sunstein argues that animal rights advocates oppose all human use of animals by invoking and extending the Kantian principle, that human beings should be treated as ends rather than means, to include animals as well. By this, the rightists challenge a wide range of current animal use including but not limited to agriculture (food), hunting (whether for food, sport or entertainment), zoos, circus and scientific experimentations (Sunstein, 2004: 5).

Just as welfarism, there are different versions of rightism. Tom Regan, a leading authority of rightism, describes rightism to be abolitionist in its aspirations. As a result, it seeks not to reform how animals are exploited or to make what people do to them more humane but to abolish their exploitation and end it completely (Regan, 2001: 127). The rightist or animal rights position, is sometimes referred to as the ‘abolitionist’ position. Francione (2010) explains that this alternative usage is appropriate because the right theory properly understood, agitates for the total abolition of animal usage. Yet, even though Francione admits to being a rightist, he maintains that his position is not the same as that of Regan (2004) and Rollin (1992). Thus, even though, Francione will support the call to bring an end to institutionalized exploitation of animals as well as the cessation of the breeding of domesticated animals and the killing of animals in general, he avers that his position is more radical than that of Regan or Rollin. Francione believes his position does not allow the use of sentient animals irrespective of how humane our treatment of them may be, neither does he make an exception for special cases as Regan and Rollin do (Francione, 2010: 1).

Below are expositions of the rightist views of Tom Regan, Bernard Rollin, and Gary Francione. The study, again, deliberately avoids choosing one version of rightism over the rest to allow it compare the information gathered from the key Akan respondents and knowledge from the Akan literature to see where and how traditional Akan viewpoints agree with and differ from the these versions of rightism.

3.6.1 The Rightist view of Tom Regan

Often regarded as the father of animal rights, Tom Regan is well known for his deontological arguments for animal rights. His book, *The Case for Animal Rights* (1983), since its publication, has influenced a considerable number of animal rights movements and advocacy groups all over America and the rest of the world. He is known to be a strong critic of Peter Singer's animal liberation arguments. Regan's main argument is that animals' lives matter because they have rights and because they have rights, animals are not to be used to further any human needs. As a result, he calls for the abolition of all animal uses. Regan argues that while the welfarist calls for the humane treatment of animals because they are sentient (direct welfarism) or because doing so will appease their human owners, or make humans better people (indirect welfarism), his position calls for the total abolition of the use of animals not only because animals are sentient but because they are *subject-of-a-life*. He further states that the animal rights movement are committed to three goals, namely the total abolition of the use of animals in science, the total dissolution of commercial animal agriculture, and the total elimination of commercial and sports hunting and trapping (Regan, 1985: 13).

Regan refers to the distinction made between moral agents and moral patients. As noted earlier in this section, moral agents are viewed as individuals who can determine, among alternatives, what morally ought to be done, and are freely able to choose which moral action to take, all options considered. They are, thus, regarded as agents of moral actions and as a result, considered morally responsible for their actions. Moral patients, in contrast, are considered to lack what is required to make them determine or control what actions. They cannot consider what moral action to take in any situation and hence cannot be held morally responsible for their actions since they have no sense of morality. Nevertheless, moral patients, even though cannot be agents of moral actions, can be affected by people's moral actions and thus can be morally harmed. Moral patients include babies, toddlers and the mentally enfeebled.

Regan argues that both moral agents and moral patients have inherent values that cannot be traded away. For him, the inherent value possessed by moral agents and moral patients is not considered valuable based on how the agent or patient is valued instrumentally. Both moral patients and moral agents possess this inherent value not because of their size, colour, race, age or even species they belong to but only because they are subject-of-a-life. To be a subject-of-a-life, according to Regan, is to have beliefs and desires, perception, memory and a sense of the future, and to also have an emotional life, at least the experience of pain and pleasure (Regan, 2004: 241-243). Regan notes that all beings who are subject-of-a-life do not only have

inherent values but they have it equally. Animals are moral patients and also subject-of-a-life hence, they also have an inherent value that is valid not because of how valuable or useful humans find them. They have their own aspirations, desires, memory, and experience emotional life as well. In view of this, Regan holds that animals are covered by the respect principle, which enjoins that all beings with inherent value are treated in ways that respect their inherent value, whether they are moral agents or patients (Regan, 2004: 248).

The implication of this, as Regan emphasizes, is that the animal rights view is categorically abolitionist. It is not just calling for refinement or reduction in the use of animals for biomedical testing or calling for larger and cleaner cages or a more generous use of anaesthetic or the elimination of multiple surgeries. The demand is not just to tidy up the system, but for a complete replacement. The rights view is not agitating for better ways to ameliorate the pain and suffering of animals or to give credence to their desires and preferences. The rights view position, according to Regan, is that our duty to animals is not to use them at all (Regan, 1985: 25-26). This is because, animals, even though are moral patients, have similar inherent values like human moral agents, due to the fact both animals and human moral agents are subject-of-a-life. This inherent value existing equally in both humans and animals implies that animals have rights which need to be respected, and if they have rights, then humans are not justified in using animals to further their own needs.

3.6.2 Bernard Rollin

Like other rightists and direct welfarists, Bernard Rollin's (1992) position is that it is impossible to draw a neat line between human beings and animals on the bases of language and reason, and many other bases that are regularly employed by animal rights deniers. He claims that it is not enough to simply cite some metaphysical or physical differences between animals and humans as a strategy to exempt animals from moral concern. According to Rollin, the important thing is that these differences identified between animals and humans must be shown to be a morally important difference that can be rationally defended. This is because there are also many differences among humans yet, individuals are not excluded from moral considerations due to these differences (Rollin, 1992: 29). Similarly, Rollin's view is that even if the religious position that God gave humans dominion over animals is accepted, it does not necessarily translate that animals are to be treated in whatsoever ways humans see fit (Rollin, 1992: 30). Rollin also rejects the claim of indirect welfarists that humans owe only indirect

duties to animals, such that unnecessary cruelty to animals is wrong not because animals are part of the definition of a moral community but because such cruelty to animals can affect their human owners psychologically and behaviourally (Rollin, 1992: 32ff).

Rollin's animal rights position is that there are not rationally defensible grounds to deny animal moral status. A criterion for determining moral status is not to be placed in rationality or sentiency but instead, ought to be placed on the fact that a thing is alive and has interests by virtue of their life's telos, interests that can be helped or harmed by a moral agent. Rollin thus believed that all animals have a basic right which is "the right to be dealt with or considered as moral objects by any person who has moral principles, regardless of what those moral principles may be" (Rollin, 1992: 83). The implication of this, as Rollin puts it, is that "regardless of what moral theories one holds, regardless of one's principles of right and wrong, one is logically compelled to apply these theories and principles to animals" (Rollin, 1992: 83). Further implication of Rollin's position on animal ethics is that if humans are believed to have rights to life, then animals also have rights to life. Again, if it is argued that it is wrong to use humans as food then a similar conclusion should hold for animals. Furthermore, Rollin states that after establishing the moral right of animals, there is the need to go further by granting animals legal rights. This, to him, will institutionalise their claim to moral status, and force humans to take their needs seriously (Rollin, 1992: 132). Rollin defines animal rights as "the demand for legal protection for fundamental aspects of animal need and nature in the face of high technology-based loss of husbandry in agriculture and infliction of suffering in research, neither of which counts as deliberate cruelty" (Rollin, 2002). Going by this perspective, Rollin may not be considered a strict abolitionist. In the use of animals for research, for example, he argues that humans may be justified in employing a utilitarian principle backed with what he calls the right principle which enjoins humans to conduct research on or with animals in such way that maximizes the animal's potential for living its life in accordance with its *telos* (Rollin, 1992: 140).

3.6.3 Gary Francione

Gary Francione describes his animal rights position as a stricter version than that of Tom Regan or Bernard Rollin. Even though like Regan, Francione also argues from a deontology position, he places moral status in sentiency rather than in Regan's subject-of-a-life criterion. Francione's position calls for a total abolition and cessation of all animal use. In his view, the

rights theory, if properly understood, calls for the abolishment of all humans' use of animals. This is how the theory, according to him, is distinguishable from the welfarist position, which primary focus is on the regulation of animal exploitations. He views the welfarist and rightist positions as theoretically and practically irreconcilable (Francione, 2010: 5). He claims that by animal rights, he speaks of only one right, i.e., the right possessed by animals not to be treated by humans as property. Recognizing this right in animals, Francione believes, would put an end to the institutionalized exploitation of animals, end human breeding of domesticated animals, and bring to an end the killing of non-domesticated animals and the destruction of their place of habitat (Francione, 2010: 1).

Francione argues that contrary to the position of the welfarist, who would want to consider the life of animals as less valuable to that of humans, all sentient beings are equal. Consequently, animals are not to be treated as resources to further any interests (Francione, 2010: 5). Francione, however, does not want to be interpreted as saying animals and humans ought to have the same rights because he believes many human rights will not even apply to animals (Francione, 2010:1). The rightist or abolitionist position, according to Francione, rejects the notion that differences that may exist between the minds of animals and humans are to be taken to mean that the sentient experiences of animals are less weighty than those of humans or that animals do not lose anything in death. Francione agrees with Regan in saying that all the distinctive marks employed by the welfarist in their attempt to show why human interests ought to be regarded above that of animals are, upon scrutiny, only arbitrary. As a result, there is no rational justification for the continuous denial of the rights of sentient nonhumans irrespective of how humanely they are treated. He writes that "as long as animals are property, they can never be members of the moral community" (Francione, 2010: 22). This, he argues, is because the interests of animals regarded as properties will always count for less when juxtaposed with the interests of their human owners (Francione, 2010: 22).

Francione conclusions are that firstly, the new welfarists aim to secure animals' interests through regulations, is for the most part, very limited. This is because, regulations, According to Francione, do not decrease animals' suffering in any important way. Secondly, consumers' demands for animal products are also not reduced by the making of animal exploitation more expensive (Francione, 2010: 26). Thirdly, the new welfarist reform approach will only tend to make humans feel more comfortable about using animals to further their own needs rather than make them seek the interests of animals as such. Finally, Francione maintains that reform campaigns do nothing to move animals away from the 'property paradigm' or to give value to

animal interests that goes beyond their value as human resources or commodities (Francione, 2010: 30). Given these, Francione believes strongly that:

If we took animals seriously and recognized our obligation not to treat them as things, we would stop producing and facilitating the production of domestic animals altogether. We would care for the ones whom we have here now; but we would stop breeding more for human consumption, and we would leave non-domesticated animals alone. We would stop eating, wearing, or using animal products, and we would regard veganism as a clear and unequivocal moral baseline (Francione, 2010: 22).

Francione posits that it is only a strict abolitionist position, the type of which he is advocating for, that can properly lead to the securing of the interests of animals and not a welfarist position of any kind. To him, this is the best way to reduce animal use and animal suffering in both the short and long term rather than an incremental abolitionist approach through welfare reforms that Robert Garner may be suggesting (Francione, 2010: 85).

3.7 Critique of Rightism

Cohen is a critic of the rightist view. He defines rights as “a valid claim, or potential claim that may be made by a moral agent, under principles that govern both the claimant and the target of the claim” (Cohen, 2001: 17). He also describes rights as legitimate demands made within a moral system and are objective and commonly enduring (Cohen, 2001: 18). Cohen holds that every genuine right has a possessor, a target and some content. In other words, for every claim of a right, there is the need to know who holds it, what it is, and against whom it is held (Cohen, 2001: 17). He asserts that animals cannot have rights because “the concept of right is essentially human, rooted in the human; it is rooted in the human moral world and has the force and applicability only within that world” (Cohen, 2001: 30). Cohen claims that one commits a ‘category confusion’ when one attempts to apply to the animal world a moral category that can have content solely in the human world. He believes this is why people are inclined to help prevent the death of a human baby than they are inclined to do so for a baby zebra, for example. He also believes that it is for the same reason that a person could commit a hit and run on a squirrel without any qualms but would feel guilty should it turn out to be a human toddler.

Carl Cohen rejects Regan’s position that animals have rights because they are subject-of-a-life. A subject-of-a-life, to recall, is to Regan, a being who is “believed to have some subjective awareness of their own lives, and for whom, as a result, it may be said that things ‘fare well or badly’” (Cohen, 2008: 26). Cohen notes that it is wrong to simply infer from the fact that things

fare well or badly for animals that they have the capacity to express it or to come to terms with it understanding in some “sub-linguistic way.” This does not form part of animals’ reflection, Cohen posits. He further claims that Regan erred in his thinking that animals, having an interest in the sense of avoiding pain, should translate into animals having rights. For Cohen, this has no moral foundation (2008:27-28). Regarding Regan’s argument on inherent value, Cohen believes Regan got it wrong in claiming that because it can be said of animals to have inherent value, it follows that they have moral value. Cohen argues that there are two senses of inherent value which Regan failed to take into account: there is the one sense which applies to animals and a second sense which does not. Inherent value, Cohen explains, when used to mean that “every unique life, not replaceable by other lives or things, has some worth in itself” certainly applies to animals. Yet, Cohen believes this sense of inherent value has no “awesome moral content.” He avers that the second sense of inherent value that has moral content “arises from the capacity to make moral judgments, the value of beings with duties and the consequences of duties.” Furthermore, he adds that it is the possession of this sense of inherent value that entitles the possessor to be treated as means in themselves and not as ends. Consequently, because it is only humans who have inherent value in the sense so explained, it is only humans who have rights (Cohen, 2008: 27).

Raymond Frey (1980) also challenges the rightists’ claim that a being with interest has moral rights. Frey notes that there are two different senses of having interests. He explains that to say that good health is in John’s interest, for example, is not entirely the same as saying John has an interest in good health. Frey believes the first sense of the statement means that good health is beneficial to John whether John knows it, wills it, or believes it. The word interest, as used in the second statement, however, means that John wants good health and believes good health is beneficial to him. Frey believes animals can have an interest in the first sense but not in the second sense. There are, indeed, some things that are in the interest of animals, which if present would make animals fare better than they would be in their absence. It is in the interest of a dog, for example, to be given regular exercise. Yet, it is erroneous, Frey will argue, to interpret animals having interests to mean they have wants that can be satisfied or left unsatisfied. Thus, for Frey, animals do not have wants that arise out of desires. His reason for holding this belief lies in his denial that animals can have beliefs. He denies this because he thinks that belief is not compatible with the absence of language and linguistic ability, both of which he believed animals lacked (Frey, 1980: 62-100).

Mary Anne Warren is a rightist who is a critic of Regan and, by extension, others who hold strict abolitionist positions. Warren asserts that Regan's claim that all mammals over the age of one have the same basic moral right is flawed and contains consequences that cannot be accepted (Warren, 2012: 89). She proposes instead, what she calls, a 'weak animal rights theory'. Warren does not deny that animals have rights. She extends the scope of rights to all sentient animals and includes in her definition of sentience, the experiences of pleasure or satisfaction and pain, suffering or frustration. Yet, she contradicts Regan in her claim that the moral rights of most nonhuman animals are *not* identical in strength to those of persons. She states that "the rights of most non-human animals may be overridden in circumstances which would not justify overriding the rights of persons" (Warren, 2012: 90).

Like Cohen, Warren contests Regan's use of inherent value to argue a case for animal rights. Warren holds that Regan only succeeded in showing what inherent value is not (negative account) but failed to show what it is (positive account). She argues that the absence of a positive account of inherent value makes it difficult to come to terms with how being inherently valuable and having moral rights link. It appears to Warren that values differ from rights, and that some things can have inherent value but have no rights (Warren, 2012: 91). Warren finds Regan's position on inherent value and subject-of-a-life problematic. She believes that if Regan's inherent value is based on some natural property an individual is to have then Regan should have identified that property and explained its moral significance without appealing to the notion of inherent value (Warren, 2012: 91).

Furthermore, Warren believes that Regan's position points to the fact that Regan would want a sharp line drawn between beings with a subject-of-a-life and beings without or a sharp line between beings with inherent value and beings without. From Warren's point of view, drawing of such delineating line may be impossible or even if impossible, done arbitrarily. This is because it appears 'subjecthood' or subjective experiences come in degrees. That is, some creatures have little self-awareness and ability to anticipate the future while some have more ability to do so (Warren, 2012: 92). Warren argues that it will be difficult to tell, for example, the exact amount of self-awareness of fishes or insects, spiders or even octopi. It is also difficult to tell whether some of these creatures can feel pain or have emotions, memories, beliefs, desires or a sense of the future.

In conclusion, Warren asserts that animals may possess rights but a weaker one compared to the rights of humans. This, as she explains, is because although both animals and humans

possess rational capabilities, “people are moved to action or inaction by the force of reasoned argument” (Warren, 2012: 93). Thus, Warren holds that humans’ ability to listen to reason to settle conflicts and cooperate in shared projects is that which sets them apart. This ability she believes, require human language (Warren, 2012: 93).

3.8 Ethics of Interrelatedness

As indicated in the literature review, several works have been done on environmental ethics from the African perspective by many scholars in recent times. Although quite little has been said on African animal ethics, more especially, in terms of placing it between the two main theories and showing how the African version relates or deviates from them. One popular theme that runs through the emerging African environmental ethics literature is the notion of the interrelatedness of all things in nature and for some, even with manmade objects. Segun Ogungbemi calls this notion, the ‘ethics of nature-relatedness’, which according to him, can be explained as “an ethic that leads human beings to seek to co-exist peacefully with nature and treat it with some reasonable concern for its worth, survival and sustainability (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270).” Godfrey Tangwa’s theory of African environmental ethics, which he calls ‘eco-bio-communitarian,’ underscores this ethics of interrelatedness. By eco-bio-communitarian, Tangwa means that there is “recognition and acceptance of interdependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals and humans” (Tangwa, 2004: 389).

Similar expression of this ethics of interrelatedness resonates in the African environmental ethics identified by the likes of Munyaradzi Murove, Martin H. Prozesky, Mogobe B. Ramose, Bénézet Bujo, and Thaddeus Metz. Murove (2009), Prozesky (2009), and Ramose (2009) independently employ the ethical principle found in the notion of *Ubuntu/Boto* and the Shona concept of *Ukama* to argue for environmental ethics of care and virtue of interrelatedness of humans with the entire ecosystem. Bujo also alludes to the value of human peaceful coexistence or interrelationship with nature, arguing that it is by so doing that humans reach the total realization of the self (Bujo, 2009: 281). Similarly, Behrens, in his attempt to reject the tag that African thinking is predominantly anthropocentric in nature, identifies the interrelatedness or interconnectedness of everything in nature within traditional African belief. He uses this identified interconnectedness of nature to propose what in his view is a non-anthropocentric environmental philosophy of the African people. He terms this non-anthropocentric environmental philosophy as ‘African relational anthropocentrism’ (Behrens, 2014; 2010).

Below are some further details of the dominant ethics of interrelatedness theory found in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics.

According to Godfrey Tangwa, traditional African metaphysical outlook can be described as 'eco-bio-communitarian' in character. By this he means, there is "recognition and acceptance of interdependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals and humans (Tangwa, 2004: 389)." Tangwa observes that the eco-bio-communitarian metaphysical outlook, he describes of precolonial Africa, is in contrast with the Western outlook of which he thinks can be described as anthropocentric and individualistic in character. This individualistic character, he argues, has driven the West to explore, subdue, exploit and dominate nature for their profit. Tangwa maintains that human beings within the African traditional outlook instead, tend to be more cosmically humble, more respectful of other people and more cautious in their attitude to plants, animals, and inanimate things, and to the various invincible forces in the world. Thus, he believes traditional Africans are more disposed to what he calls "an attitude of live and let live" (Tangwa, 2004: 389). Furthermore, he posits that within the African traditional world-view there is a slim and flexible distinction between plants and animals, and inanimate things, between the sacred and the profane, matter and the spirit, the communal, and the individual.

Segun Ogungbemi also holds that the how natural resources such as land, water and air are currently being used in Africa goes contrary to the traditional practice of environment conservation in Africa. He notes that in traditional African communities, there is the ethics of not taking more than you need from nature. He calls this the 'ethics of care' (Ogungbemi, 1997: 266-270). To make this 'ethics of care' applicable to contemporary African situation, Ogungbemi reformulated it to what he calls "ethics of nature-relatedness" (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270). The ethics of nature-relatedness, according to Ogungbemi, can be stated as, "an ethics that leads human beings to seek to co-exist peacefully with nature and treat it with some reasonable concern for its worth, survival and sustainability" (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270). He believed that the ethics of care and ethics of nature-relatedness are not to be given spiritual connotations because they can be naturally explainable.

Kevin Behrens (2010), on his part, presents what he deems, an African environmental ethic that emphasises the interrelatedness or interconnectedness of everything in nature. He argues that contrary to what some may think, the African position is best seen as a rejection of anthropocentrism. He labels his position or theory as 'African Relational Environmentalism'

and considers it as something similar in conception to, and yet distinct from *holist* perspectives. Behrens defines holism as “theories that locate moral value in groups, such as species, ecosystems or the biosphere” (Behrens, 2010: 466). He notes that such positions are marked differently from individualist positions, where value is placed in individual animals or organisms, usually by virtue of some property they may inherently possess such as sentience, reason, or the possessing of a life. They are also to be distinguished from anthropocentric views, where nature is only given instrumental value based on its usefulness or otherwise to humans. It is in these differences that Behrens believes that his African relational environmentalism theory shares some similarities with holism. Yet he claims his theory somewhat differs from holism in the sense that his African relational environmentalism position is relational in its approach.

Behrens explains that despite the many evidence that may suggest that African environmental ethics is anthropocentric in character, such a conclusion does not fully represent the entirety of African worldview. He points out that many African theorists do often claim that everything in nature is interrelated. This interrelation with nature calls for respect for nature. Behrens believes that this is best interpreted as humans having a harmonious relationship with other living things rather than using nature only to further human needs. His view is that the call to value the harmonious relationship with other living things is analogous with African communitarian family ties and community values, where there is neither the prioritisation of the interests of individuals nor that of communities over the other. There is also the understanding that individuals’ potentials are fully realised only through community relationships.

There are strains of the ethics of interrelatedness resonating through the theories of Munyaradzi Felix Murove, Magobe Ramose, Martin Prozesky, and Bénézet Bujo. Murove (2009) for instance, argues that using the concepts of *Ukama* (Shona) and *Ubuntu/Botho* (Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana). He mentions that there exist, within Africa, an ethic of the interdependence of individuals in the broader community and of the environment on which the people depend. He emphasises that when these two concepts, *Ukama* and *Ubuntu*, synthesize, they produce an ethical outlook that suggests that human wellbeing is indispensable from their dependence on, and interdependence with all that exists (Murove, 2009: 315). Murove further held that human beings interrelation with their natural environment should be seen as part of the reason for the strong dimension in African ethics (Murove, 2009: 330). Bénézet Bujo, likewise, argues along similar lines. In describing the African thinking as holistic in nature, he

points out that within African traditional thoughts, the total actualization of the human self cannot be possible without peaceful coexistence with minerals, plants and animals (Bujo, 2004: 281). In his view, the African person can clearly be understood as being characterised by interrelationship (Bujo, 2004: 285).

3.9 Critique of ethics of interrelatedness

Philomena A. Ojomo (2011) describes Ogungbemi's ethics of nature-relatedness as being neither a preservationist approach nor in any way a non-anthropocentric approach. Ojomo, instead, thinks that Ogungbemi's approach is rather an approach that simply recognizes that humans necessarily depend on the natural environment for existence and survival. Thus, Ojomo holds that Ogungbemi's call on humans to treat the natural world with respect is only to preserve the natural world for the sake of current and future human wellbeing (Ojomo, 2011: 110). Ojomo again, considers Ogungbemi's ethics of nature-relatedness as not grounded in the metaphysics of African cultural belief system. According to Ojomo, Ogungbemi's ethic of nature-relatedness shares little similarity or similitude with that of African cultural experiences and ontology, hence describing it as an "alienation of the African spirit and peculiar experiences" (Ojomo, 2011: 110).

Ogungbemi, perhaps, notes the inadequacies of his ethics of care, and poses the following questions: How do we know how much we need given the nature of human greed? Who judges whether we have been taking more than we need from the natural resources? If we have been taking more than we need, what are the penalties and how fair are they? (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270). The main problem here is that the acknowledgement of human and nature relatedness or interconnectedness is not enough, as it does not necessarily make clear how humans' relationship with nature ought to be. Thus, Behrens rightly noted, "It is quite possible to acknowledge the essential interdependence of nature and still to value it only instrumentally" (Behrens, 2010: 470). In other words, Behrens is asking that giving human relatedness to nature and consequently to nonhuman animals, what ought to be the proper relationship between humans and nonhuman animals. It is possible to respond that the relationship should be that of mutual respect or one that ensures mutual coexistence or as Behrens will prefer, one that leads to a harmonious relationship. However, doing so does not make clear what it means to have mutual respect for nature or to coexist mutually with nature, or to live in a harmonious relationship with animals or nature. Does it require an acknowledgement that animals have

rights or that there should be a consideration of their interests in moral decision-making? What appears to be apparent from the discussions by these scholars though is the suggestion that humans need to consider the interests of animals and not live their lives as if they are the masters of the earth since human survival depends a lot on the survival of the natural environment of which animals are included. Nevertheless, the question that is yet to be adequately answered is the question of the extent humans ought to regard the interests of nonhuman animals. This will be one of the preoccupations of the study.

3.10 Alternative theories to the welfarists and rightist theories

There has been the emergence of some alternative theories to the mainstream welfarist and rightist theories. Palmer and Sandøe, for instance, note the rise of alternative positions to the welfarist and rightist views. One of this alternative position is what they call the ‘contextual approaches’. They note that although there are various kinds of contextual approaches, all of them generally share the view that the welfarist and rightist approaches are narrow and not enough. They believe this is because the theories of welfarism and rightism focus on consequences and rights, respectively, but fail to appreciate the different relations that humans have with animals and the importance of such human emotions as empathy, sympathy, and care. The contextual approaches position is that although the consideration of animal capacities is important in the framing of an animal ethic, these animal capacities are solely not enough. Some of these contextual approaches, Palmer and Sandøe note, emphasize the *role of moral emotions* such as sympathy, empathy and care in human interactions with others, including nonhumans. (Palmer & Sandøe, 2011: 7). Mary Midgley for example, suggests the idea of social-bondedness and the emotions associated with them as worthy of consideration in our moral relationship with nonhuman animals. She argues that an emotional, rather than a rational preference, for members of our own species is part of our social nature as humans. Humans are bond-forming creatures (Midgley, 1983: 98-104).

Another alternative theory not related to the contextual approaches is environmental virtue ethics. Like virtue ethics, environmental virtue ethics emphasizes the making of a good character instead of what makes for a good or bad moral action. In the instance of environmental virtue ethics, the emphasis is on how to inculcate in people good character towards the preservation of the environment (Hourdequin, 2015: 53). In its application to the nonsentient environment, Thomas Hill Jr. notes that people’s “indifference to non-sentient

nature typically reveals absence of either aesthetic sensibility or a disposition to cherish what has enriched one's life and that these, though not themselves moral virtues, are a natural basis for appreciation of the good in others and of gratitude" (Hill, 1983: 216). In its application to sentient beings or nonhuman animals, Ronald Sandler (2005) observes that there are some attempts to extend certain human interpersonal values to include nonhuman animals. He notes that some environmental virtue ethicists may argue that if compassion, for instance, is a good moral character for humans to have towards the suffering of their fellow human beings and if it is agreed there is no relevant difference between human suffering and that of nonhuman animals then humans ought to be compassionate to animals as well (Sandler, 2005: 4).

Advocates of the contextual approaches are usually inconclusive on whether the social relationships of bondedness humans develop with animals and its associated emotions require humans to either seek the welfare of animals or for the total elimination of all forms of animal uses. A similar critique can be raised against environmental virtue ethics. Rolston challenges environmental virtue ethics on the basis that it is too much agent-centered. He claims that "you cannot become virtuous by putting this human concern first; you get such virtue by only by putting first, a respect for life's intrinsic value, which preceded, envelops, and surrounds us..." (Rolston, 2005: 73).

3.11 Justification for selected theories

The goal of this research is to locate the place of Akan environmental ethics within the two main theories of animal ethics, namely welfarism and rightism. It is, therefore, necessary to begin the search for the goal by using the theoretical frameworks of welfarism and rightism. The aim is to explore what the Akan position is or should be, given its ontological worldview and attitudes toward the environment. As noted in the explication of the welfarist and rightist theories, depending on which proponent one is looking at, there are different interpretations given to them. As a result, the study uses the theories of welfarsim and rightism as descriptive, evaluative, and prescriptive tools to help attain its objective.

The ethics of interrelatedness is identified as the dominant theory in the emerging literature on African environmental ethics. The study will compare this theory with the data from the Akan respondents to find out whether the Akans subscribe to the dominant theory in the emerging African environmental ethics literature. Consequently, the study also uses the ethics of

interrelatedness as descriptive, evaluative, and prescriptive tools to help attain its objective of finding the place of Akan animal ethics.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter has identified three theories that will guide this research, namely, welfarism, rightism, and the ethics of interrelatedness. The chapter showed that there are differences in terms of approach to each of these three theories and subsequently, different implications the adoption of each of these theories will lead to. Again, even though proponents of welfarism and rightism may be generally classified as welfarists and rightists respectively, individual proponents have come up with different analyses, as delineated in the foregoing, thus making it possible for two proponents of, for example, rightism, to disagree on the degree of moral status animals should have. The chapter also presented some criticisms raised against each of these theories.

Under welfarism, the chapter explained that there are two main types, namely, direct welfarism and indirect welfarism. Indirect welfarism does not ascribe moral status to animals since it holds that animals cannot be harmed directly. Views expressed by scholars such as St. Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, and Jan Narveson, were presented as examples of proponents of indirect welfarism. Direct welfarism, on the other hand, admits and accepts that animals are directly harmed and admits animals into the definition of a moral community. This is because they hold animals to be sentient beings that can experience pain and pleasure. The direct welfarist views of Peter Singer, Carl Cohen, and Robert Garner were presented. The chapter also highlighted the similarities and differences shared by these proponents of direct welfarism. What became apparent is that despite their minor variances, direct welfarists, in general, agree that animals have moral status. Their aim is to seek the welfare of animals and to advocate for the humane treatment of animals rather than to demand the total elimination of animal use. They, therefore, argue for animals to be better handled in a way that will minimize as much pain and suffering as possible.

Under the rightist position, this chapter presented three different positions held by three separate proponents, namely Tom Regan; Bernard Rollin; and ending with Gary Francione. Despite their differences, rightists, broadly speaking, argue that animals have moral status, and that this moral status can be translated to mean a right they possess. They are, generally, of the view that the moral status of animals is at par with the moral status of humans and as a result,

call for the total elimination of animal use in any form, and not just for the humane treatment of animals to reduce their suffering and pain. Thus, rightists are sometimes referred to as abolitionists. However, the chapter pointed out that there are different levels of strictness to the abolitionists' claim with Francione considering himself as holding the strictest view when compared to that of Regan and Rollin. A fourth rightist position was seen in Marry Anne Warren, who calls her position a 'weak rightist position', claiming that moral status comes in degrees and that the rights of animals are not to be equated to the rights of human beings.

Finally, the chapter presented the ethics of interrelatedness as the common underlying theory within the emerging African environmental ethics. It presented views from Kevin Behrens, who refers to his position as African relational environmentalism; from Godfrey Tangwa, who calls his ethics, eco-bio-communitarianism; and from Segun Ogungbemi, who labels his theory as the ethics of nature-relatedness. There are similar expressions of the ethics of interrelatedness in the works of Murove, Ramose, and Bujo. The chapter explained that the idea behind the ethics of interrelatedness is that humans and nature are interconnected in a way, that makes humans and nature depend on each other for survival. This concatenation of humans and nature should move human beings to coexist peacefully with nature in a way that leads to both the sustainability of humans and nature.

The next chapter (chapter four) presents the research methodology of the study. This chapter provides details of the study's research design, method of sampling and sample size, type of research questions, and interviews and focus groups choices. The strategy of inquiry that is used in the data analyses is also explained with justifications.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND FRAMEWORK

4.0 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the study gave fuller and detailed explanations for the three theories guiding the research. It was explained that the study will use the animal welfare theory, animal rights theory, and the ethics of interrelatedness as the expository and evaluative theoretical frameworks in discussing and assessing the data.

This current chapter presents an in-depth presentation of the research methodology and design used in this study with reasons and justifications. Research methods are the tools and techniques needed for conducting research (Walliman, 2011: 1). Research mostly includes the collection of data, the analyses of such data, and an interpretation of the data in order to understand a particular phenomenon or find a solution to a specified problem. As such, the researcher needs some kind of roadmap to help guide him or her through the process. Thus, Carrie Williams (2007: 65) rightly observed that a research design is that framework or plan for a study that serves as a guide in the gathering and the evaluating of the data. It is also considered as a blueprint that a researcher abides by in completing a study: a sort of a map that is usually worked out to guide the research (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 18). The research procedure is systematic in such a way that, outlining the research objective, organising the data, and communicating the findings occur within established frameworks and according to existing guidelines. The frameworks and guidelines help the researcher to know what to include in the research, how to conduct the research, and the kind of inferences that are more plausible based on the data and findings (Williams, 2007: 65). In addition, Pandey and Pandey (2015: 18-20) note that apart from the research design providing a blueprint and a map for the researcher, it helps the researcher to reduce the cost of expenditure, to collect the relevant data, and to save time.

In view of these, this chapter presents the methodology used in conducting the research, which includes the utilized research design, the method of sampling used, the sample size, and the kind of interview process adopted, with explanations and justifications. The chapter also contains the strategy of inquiry used in the data analysis. In addition, the research questions for the one-on-one interviews and focus group interviews are clearly spelt out.

4.1 Nature and Scope of the Study

As pointed out earlier in chapter one, the central purpose of this research is to identify and define the place of Akan animal ethics within the animal welfarist and rightist debate based on Akan ontology and ethics. To help achieve this, the study relied on empirical research methodology, which involves, partly, the collection of primary data through one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions. The data was then analysed in comparison with the literature in order to find a corresponding answer to the main research question, i.e. how does Akan ontology and ethics help in placing Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate. The study supplemented the empirical approach with a theoretical approach where it critically reviewed relevant literature such as books, journals and internet sources, coupled with the appropriate theoretical frameworks to underpin the study.

In effect, this study deals with the questions of what, how, who, and why in both theoretical and empirical aspects. Such questions includes: what are the theories of welfarism, rightism and the ethics of interrelatedness? Who are some of the main proponents and opponents of these theories? How is the moral status of animals assessed by these three theories, and why welfarists and rightists accept or reject animals as persons? Questions addressing aspects of Akan traditional ontology, ethical beliefs, and traditional practices are the main concerns of the empirical data collected through one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. The collection of primary data through interviews and focus group discussions was further divided into two parts. There was first, the one-on-one interviews and one focus group discussion with participants who are regarded by members of the Akan community as experts and as such, repository of traditional Akan knowledge. The objective here was to gain from them an understanding of Akan traditional perspectives on animals, their traditional uses, and their views on some ethical consideration for animals in relation to animal pain and the possibility of an animal right given the Akan beliefs, ethics and traditions. Their views were supplemented with a one-on-one interview with a professional academic who is an expert in Akan language and traditions. Secondly, there were two focused group discussions with the younger generations of Akans between the ages of twenty-two (22) and thirty-seven (37) years. This was done with the aim of getting the views of the younger generations concerning such issues as human uses of animals for food, clothes, medical research, among others. Their views were also sought on the moral issue of vegetarianism, what they make of animal pain, and whether

they will consider extending the notion of rights to animals. The viewpoints from the younger generations of Akans will be juxtaposed with those gathered from the Akan traditional experts in the final analysis, where a theory of an Akan animal ethics will be suggested. Overall, twenty-four (24) people were contacted in both the one-on-one interviews and the focus group discussions.

The study is qualitative in approach because it seeks to come to some understanding of the participants' experiences. The study, thus, adopts an open-ended inquiry method instead of one that seeks measurable and observable data where the research questions are specific and narrow, as it is done in the quantitative method. The study does not only narrate, describe or report on what pertains in traditional Akan communities but, it is also analytical such that facts or information gathered in the field are assessed to make a critical evaluation of the material (Kothari, 2004: 3).

4.2 Research Method/Approach

The type of research design that is used in this study is the qualitative approach. There are two main approaches to research, namely the qualitative and the quantitative approaches (Fouché, and Delport 2005: 73; Kothari, 2004:5). Fouche and Delport note that these two methodological approaches differ strongly from each other. Williams (2007: 65) and Moksha (2013: 23) identify a third approach known as the mixed method approach that employs features of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. According to Creswell (2009: 173), qualitative research shows, among other things, different perspectives ranging from social justice thinking to different ideological perspectives, as well as, to diverse philosophical positions. Qualitative research is also regarded as an approach that is concerned with developing explanations for social phenomena. In other words, its main goal is to help with an understanding of the social world of which we are a part of and helps to explain why things are the way they are. Consequentially, qualitative research method deals more with the social aspects of our world, and seeks to answer questions about why people behave the way they do, and the formation of opinions and attitudes. It is also deals with how people are affected by the events that go on around them, and how and why cultures and practices have developed in the way they have (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009: 7). John Creswell (2007: 40) explains that qualitative research is conducted when there is a need for an intricate and detailed understanding of an issue. Such details, he notes, can only be demonstrated by talking directly with the people

involved, going to their place of abode or even where they work, in order to listen to them, tell the stories unrestricted by what we expect to find or what we have read in the literature. Creswell adds that qualitative research is conducted to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address a problem or issue.

Since the study's aim is to identify an Akan theory of animal ethics based on the ontology and ethics of the Akan people, which require a study of the indigenous beliefs and practices of the Akan people, using a qualitative method will better help the study attain this goal than would a quantitative method. Thus, with the qualitative method, the study is able to go to individuals considered proficient in Akan traditions, to solicit their views on matters of Akan traditional beliefs and practices. Auerbach and Silverstein (2003: 25) explain further that qualitative research's advantage over its quantitative counterpart is that, qualitative research is able to circumvent interpreting difference because it presumes the existence of that difference, instead of assuming the existence of uniformity of behaviour as the norm. The qualitative approach, they argue, starts with naturalistic observation, that is, a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied. They also note that naturalistic observation is relevant, not only to recognize the lived experiences of the people under study, but also to understand the significant contexts (social, racial, economic, etc.) of the experiences. In addition, from the qualitative standpoint, scientific laws that can be universalized, if found to exist at all, can only be advanced after taking into consideration the diversity caused by dissimilarities in context. Thus, these descriptions resonate very well with the agenda and modus operandi of this work, which is to study and understand the lived experiences of the Akan people, traditional and contemporary, in view of how they relate and perceive nature and animals and the important role nature and animals play in their everyday lives. The use of qualitative approach also enables the researcher to give a critical evaluation of his findings rather than only noting similarities and differences that exist within the sample population chosen.

4.2.1 Strategies of inquiry

The use of the qualitative method provides the researcher with a plethora of methods or strategies to choose from, depending on researcher's criteria of classification. Fouché (2005: 269) notes that Tesch's (1990) mode of classification led him to identify twenty-eight (28) methods, while Miller and Crabtree (1992) identify eighteen (18) of them, using a different system of classification. Nevertheless, Fouché (2005) and Creswell (2007) identify five

research strategies they regard as the most important for any research in the human sciences namely biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study.

This study uses grounded theory strategy developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The theory is based on two concepts i.e., constant comparison and theoretical sampling (Fouché & Schurink, 2011: 318). Creswell (2009: 13) explains grounded theory as “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher derives a general, abstract theory of a process, action or interaction grounded in the views of participants.” He also notes that two main features of the grounded theory design are the constant comparison of data with emerging categories and theoretical categories, and the theoretical sampling of different groups to compare the similarities and differences of information. This strategy is apt for this research, since this research seeks to generalize and abstract from the information gathered on indigenous Akan practices, traditions, and ethics and compare them with the existing theories in animal ethics. This is to bring out the similarities and differences between the Akan perspectives and the ethics of interrelatedness as well as with the welfarist and rightist views. This is in accord with Mark (1996: 214) and Flick’s (2014: 40) observations that the grounded theory approach highly involves the generation of a theory, rather than the testing of a theory. Thomas Schwandt (2000) notes that grounded theory uses the skills of induction, deduction and verification or validation as part of its strategy. These skills of induction and deduction are going to help this research in doing a critical and analytical evaluation of data presented to me by my interlocutors.

4.2.2 Study Area

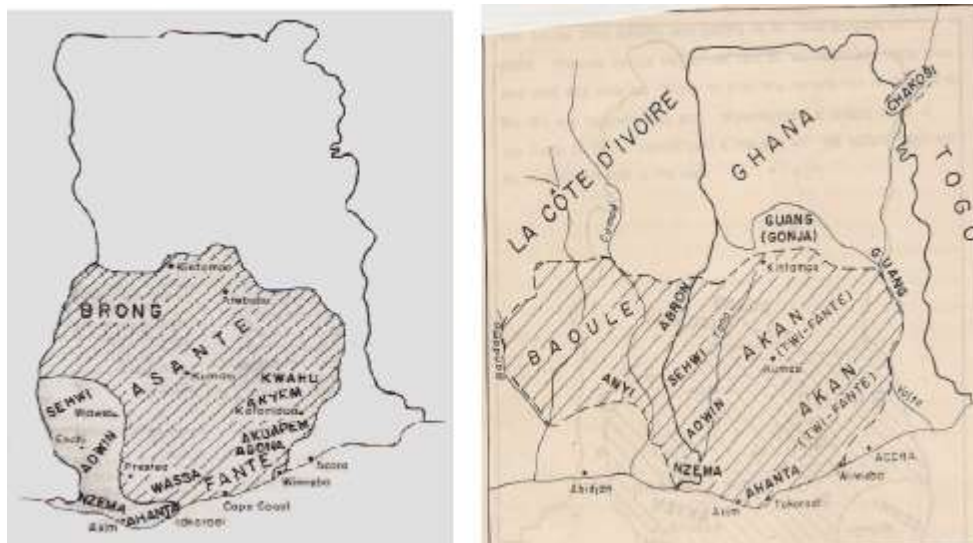


Fig.1 Map of Ghana, and part of La Cote D'voire and Togo showing the distribution of Akan (Twi –Fante) Language and some of its major dialects and Tano Language spoken by Akan ethnic group (Adapted from Dolphyne 1988:195,196 in Bosiwah, 2012: 166)

The empirical aspect of this work focuses on Akan people of Ghana. The Akans are a group of closely related people found in West Africa. They live mainly in Ghana and in parts of neighboring Ivory Coast (As seen in Figure 1 above). In Ghana, they inhabit most of the southern and middle belts and account for close to half the national population (see figure 2 below). Although the Akan subgroups are many, the well-known ones are the *Ashantis* (most popular and largest), *Denkyiras*, *Akims*, *Akuapims*, *Fantes*, *Kwahus*, *Wassa*, *Brongs*, and *Nzemas*. These groups, more or less, share similar culture both fundamentally, as well as, in details. They also speak a different dialect of the same Akan language that belongs to the Central Comoé language group. Every Akan belongs to one of the eight matrilineal clans (*abusua*) mainly because it is believed that all the Akan clans descended from a common ancestry, and is therefore bound together by a common tie. Thus, members of a particular Akan clan consider each other as relatives, making intermarriage within the clan a forbidden act. Although the cultural affinities of the various Akan subgroups with the other ethnic groups of Ghana are not on the same scale, as among themselves, any divergences affect only details. When compared with the distant cultures of the East and West, Akan culture can be seen to have some essential similarities with other African cultures as to be considered under the broader label of “African culture” as a general cultural type (Wiredu, 1996: 157; Labi, 2009: 43).



Fig. 2 Map of Ghana showing the five major ethnic groups. (From *Trading African Roots, n.d*)

In present-day Ghana¹², the Akans mainly occupy five of the ten regions of the country namely Brong-Ahafo Region, Ashanti Region, Western Region, Central Region, and Eastern Region. A small portion of Akans is also found in part of the Volta Region (see figure 3 below). Nevertheless, due to internal migration, Akans are found almost throughout all the ten regions of Ghana. Accra, the capital city of Ghana in the Greater Accra Region, is a cosmopolitan city where many Akans from the five major Akan regions have now settled. As a result, one need not travel to all the five ‘Akan regions’ to find Akans since they are easily found in the capital city. Akans currently make up 47% of the total population of Ghana and it is estimated that there are four million Akans living in Accra, the capital city of Ghana (World Population Review, 2019).

¹² The research was conducted before Ghana’s ten regions were further divided to make sixteen regions in February 2019. As such, the study uses and refers to the old map of Ghana with ten regions.



Fig. 3 Map showing the ten regions of Ghana

The study chose Akans of Ghana for the study because firstly, they constitute a greater part of the Ghanaian population. This makes reaching target participants for the study very easy. Secondly, Akans are known for their rich oral traditions. There also exists a vast written literature on the history and traditions of the Akan people. Finally, the researcher belongs to the Akan ethnic group and as such, makes communication with the research participants very convenient hence, no need for an interpreter. The study (that is, both one-on-one interviews and focused group discussions) involved Akan participants who are originally from the five main Akan dominated regions of Ghana namely Eastern Region, Central Region, Western Region, Ashanti Region, and Brong-Ahafo Region. These participants were sampled from three regions of Ghana, namely Greater Accra Region, Central Region, and Eastern Region. The participants also covered five of the Akan major subgroups, namely Akuapem, Akyem, Fanti, Denkyira, and Ashanti.

4.2.3 Study Population/Subject

A study population in research refers to a collective term that is used to designate the entire number of things or cases of the type that are the subject of your study. To this regard, a study population can be made up of certain types of objects, organizations, people or even events (Walliman, 2011: 94).

The population for this study is in two categories. One category is made of individuals from whom the study obtained information on traditional Akan beliefs, practices and ethics about animals and the environment. These included participants known to be holders and experts of Akan traditions and knowledge. These are the Akan Chiefs (*ahenfo*), queen mothers (*Ahema*), linguists (*akyeame*), and heads of clans (*abusuapanyin*). These groups, based on their positions, are recognised as the repository of the traditions and history of their people, which are believed to have been passed down to them by their predecessors and ancestors. This category also included one Akan academic expert on Akan language and tradition. An academic expert on Akan language and tradition was included to give further insight into the information reviewed in the literature. This proved to be very helpful as it gave further pointers on the most important questions to direct to the Akan traditional leaders. It is from this first category that the study accessed indigenous knowledge on beliefs, practices, and ethics of the Akan people. The second category provided the study with views and perspectives from the younger Akan generation in terms of how they consider the use and preservation of nature including animals were collected.

4.2.4 Sample and Sampling technique

Sampling involves the general process of selecting just a small group of cases or examples out of a large group called the population (Walliman, 2011: 94; Flick, 2014: 167). Sampling in research is important because usually, a thorough coverage of the whole population is quite impossible and even if possible, sampling saves time and cost of conducting the research (Strydom, 2005: 194). There are mainly two types of sampling methods, that is, random/probability sampling and non-random/non-probability sampling (Strydom, 2005; Walliman, 2011; Pandey & Pandey, 2015). Ranjit Kumar (2011) identifies a third type he calls the mixed sampling design that employs the use of both probability and non-probability designs. With probability samples, each element has a known probability of being included in the sample but the non-probability samples do not allow the researcher to determine this probability (Kothari, 2004: 15). Strydom (2005: 198) also notes that probability sampling usually relies on randomisation in the sample selection while non-probability sampling is done without randomisation.

In this study, the type of sampling used to identify the participants for both the one-on-one interviews and focused group discussions was a non-probability sampling. In a non-probability

sampling, the researcher identifies individuals or groups and settings where the specific process being studied is most likely to occur (Strydom & Delpont, 2011: 391). In the opinion of Kumar (2011), qualitative research is designed, either to have in-depth knowledge about a situation, event, or episode, or to learn as much as can be learnt about different features of an individual on the supposition that the individual is typical of the group and as a result will provide insight into the group. This applies directly to what was done in this study. Part of the goal of the study is to seek specific and in-depth knowledge on Akan indigenous practices and beliefs in reference to the natural environment and their human-animal relations and as such, some individuals who are considered authorities on the subject were the target of the study's sample. This is because even though many ordinary Akans may have some fair knowledge of what their beliefs and practices are, they may not be in the position to explain the reasons and historicity of these beliefs and practices. In the focus group discussion, the study selectively targeted a younger generations of Akans so as to contrast their views with that of what is held traditionally.

Strydom and Delpont (2005: 328-330) identify six different types of non-probability sampling when it comes to qualitative research. These are theoretical sampling, purposive samples, and deviant case sampling. The others are sequential sampling, snowball sampling, and volunteer sampling. For the one-one-interviews and focus group discussions done to access information on Akan traditional practices, ethics and ontology of the natural environment, the study adopted purposive sampling method to identify the participants to be included. Purposive sample is explained to be a type of sample which is based wholly on the judgement of the researcher, in that, the sample is made up of elements that have the most attributes, the most representative or typical features of the population under study (Singleton et al. as cited in Strydom 2005: 111). In accessing information on the traditional practices, beliefs and ethics of the Akans, the study followed the method of purposive sampling by deliberately choosing individual participants who are best placed, based on their traditional positions in the Akan communities, to provide the comprehensive information needed to reach the study's objectives. Resultantly, the targeted participants were Akan chiefs, clan heads, queen mothers, and traditional linguists. The same method was used in selecting the expert professional academics in Akan language and traditions. Snowball sampling method was also utilized to reach some of the chiefs, clan heads, linguists and queen mothers, based on the recommendations of some of the chiefs. Snowball sampling, as noted by Strydom and Delpont (2011: 393) is directed at identifying individual experts who may be hard to reach through referrals by other expert participants to

get to individuals who may have certain specific information that is not so much well known by the general population.

For the focus group discussions with young Akan participants, the study, again, used the purposive sample method. Since the target participants were young Akans between the ages of twenty-two and thirty-seven years of age, the study purposely targeted known Akan friends and former students and colleagues at different stages in their career and at different stages of their lives. However, all the participants had received some form of formal education. Again, this was intentionally done to assess the extent to which formal education may have influenced their perception and convictions.

The sample size for the entire study was twenty-four (24). This sample size, arguable, is representative of the population under study, namely the Akan people of Ghana. This is due to the homogeneity of the various Akan subgroups and the exclusive nature of the information that was sought. As indicated earlier, the various Akan groups, more or less, share similar culture both fundamentally as well as in details. They also speak different dialects of the Akan language which belongs to the Central Comoé language group (Wiredu, 1996: 157; Labi, 2009: 43). Thus, the study does not need a very large sample size in order to arrive at a conclusion that is generalizable, especially when dealing with information known by specific authorities. Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge (2009: 7) note that if the population under study is very homogeneous then a small sample will give a representative view of the whole. Patton (2002: 244 in Strydom & Delpont, 2005: 328) likewise pinpoints that in qualitative research, there are no hard and fast rules for sample size. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources.

4.3 Data Collection

A researcher using the qualitative approach employs the use of what Uwe Flicks (2014: 195) calls 'Verbal Data', which is the umbrella term that covers a wide range of data that largely consist of words. A researcher using the qualitative method, has many options when it comes to the method of gathering his or her verbal data. Some of these data collections methods are interviews, focus groups, observation, a collection of documented material such as letters, diaries, and photographs, a collection of narratives and open-ended questions in questionnaires

(Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009: 16). This study utilises the methods of interviews and focus group discussions. The study chose to utilize interview as part of its methods of data collection because, interview makes room for flexibility and adaptability. As Harding (2013: 22) rightly asserts, by using qualitative interview approach, the researcher gets the opportunity to listen to views or experiences of a particular respondent for a prolonged period, and to ask probing questions to explore ideas further. The study also opted for the focus group as part of its data collection method because, as noted by Greeff (2005: 286), some important information that is not likely to come out in the course of the one-to-one interview is more likely to surface in focus groups. This is because group dynamics, Greeff observes, can facilitate and accelerate the bringing of new information to the fore.

4.3.1 Interviews

Tim Rapley (2007: 16) regards interviews as social encounters where speakers collaborate in producing retrospective (and prospective) *accounts* or *versions* of their past (or future) actions, experiences, feelings and thoughts. Part of the features of an interview is that, it provides rich and detailed information rather than a yes-or-no, agree-or-disagree response. Secondly, answers are not pre-provided in categories and thirdly, questions are open-ended. Thus, this makes the interview a predominant method of getting data in qualitative research approach (Greeff, 2005: 287). There are two types of interviews namely one-on-one interview and focus group interview (Greeff, 2005). Both were used in this study. The interviews were audio recorded with the signed permission of the participants. Field notes were also taken where necessary. Interviews were chosen to attain direct first-hand information from the study's population sample.

4.4.1.1 One-on-one Interview

One-on-one interview in a qualitative study can be either unstructured or semi-structured. In an unstructured one-on-one interview, it is conducted without the use of the researcher's already gathered information, experience or opinions in a particular area. Meanwhile, the semi-structured one-on-one interview is conducted around areas of particular interest, while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and in-depth (Greeff, 2005: 292). This study conducted six (6) semi-structured one-on-one interviews to acquire information on Akan traditional beliefs, practices and ethics. The study decided on a semi-structured interview because this type of interview allows the researcher to prepare his or her own open-ended

questions ahead of the interview to guide the conversation. Since it is only semi-structured and not structured, it gives the researcher the flexibility to ask follow up questions. This helps the participant to present a fuller picture on the topic and helps the researcher to gain a detailed understanding of the participant's beliefs, perceptions or accounts on the topic (Greeff, 2011: 351-352).

The make-up of the six participants involved in the one-on-one interviews included one chief from the Eastern Region (Akuapem Clan), one clan head from the Central Region (Denkyira Clan), and one traditional Linguist from the Eastern Region (Akuapem Clan). The others were one Queen Mother from the Eastern Region (Akuapem Clan), one Clan head from the Eastern Region (Akyem Clan), and one Akan academic expert on Akan language and traditions (Asante Clan).

According to what the participants preferred, the language for the one-on-one interview was either Akan or English. In some instances, there was the use of both languages. All six participants were conversant in both the English and the Akan languages. This made communication very easy for both the researcher and the participants. The interviews lasted between thirty-two (32) minutes and sixty-eight (68) minutes.

4.4.1.2 Focus Group Interview

A focus group interview is simply a group interview. It is a research technique that gathers data by the use of group discussion on a topic determined by the researcher (Morgan, 1997: 6). Greeff (2011: 360) explains that focus groups interviews are used to better understand how people feel or think about an issue. It is called 'focus' because the participants share in common certain characteristics that relate to the research goals. Flick (2014: 198) notes that the expectation of using a focus group is the hope that the information acquired will go beyond what a succession of single interviews would produce. Apart from it being used to supplement other primary data, a focus group is valuable when several viewpoints or responses are wanted on an exact issue in a shorter period of time (Greeff, 2005: 300).

This study conducted three separate focus groups interviews for two different purposes. Firstly, one focus group interview was conducted to supplement the data received from the one-on-one interview on Akan traditional knowledge on their beliefs, practices and ethics towards nature

and animals. This was done with four (4) participants made up of three chiefs from the Central Region, and one queen mother from the Central Region. This took place at the Cape Coast Palace in the Central Region of Ghana. Secondly, two focus group interviews were conducted to gather data on the perspectives of the younger generations of Akans. Each of these two focus groups was made up of Seven (7) participants, made up of four (4) men and three (3) women. The aim here was to compare and contrast views that are considered traditional (collected from the traditional Akan experts) with the views from the younger Akan generations, whose worldviews arguably have been largely influenced by their exposure to globalization and formal education. Both Focus group interviews took place in Accra in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana.

The focus group interviews were also semi-structured which allowed for further probing where needed. The language used here was Akan and English. Again, participants were conversant in both the English and Akan languages making communication very easy for both the researcher and participants. The focus group interviews lasted between sixty-two (62) to ninety-two (92) minutes.

4.4 Data presentation and analyses

De Vos (2005: 333) defines data analyses as “the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data.” Data analyses can also be described as the interpretation and classification of linguistic or visual material (Flick, 2014: 370). Flick (2014: 375) again, considers this as the core of qualitative research that helps for elaborating, understanding or explaining what is in the data, both explicitly and implicitly.

To make analyses and interpretation of the data easy, the first or initial stages involved the literal transcription of the data (interviews) from audio to text. Interviews that the researcher conducted were first transcribed into the used language, that is, the Akan language, before they were translated into the English language for the sake of accuracy. A paid language expert did the transcription and translation. This led to the summarization of each interviewees’ responses to bring out the key points. According to Jamie Harding (2013: 56-57), summarising the transcript augments the validity of the study by making it more possible for the findings of the study to truly reflect the original data. In addition, because it is easy to get lost in the multitude of details from the transcribed data, summarising also helps to focus on the main issues raised

by the respondent and helps the researcher to identify similarities and differences in the interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994: 51 in Harding, 2013: 57). Flicks (2014: 317-372) and De Vos (2005: 336) regard the initial processes of transcribing and paraphrasing or summarizing of the data as data management.

The study uses the constructivist/interpretivist paradigm approach. This is because it includes, in part, the interviewing of participants to get to know their worldviews. Shramaatit Moksha (2013: 28) notes that qualitative research is the approach usually associated with the social constructivist paradigm where there is emphasis on the socially constructed nature of reality. Moksha further notes that social constructivism is essentially about recording, analysing and the struggle to unearth the proper meaning and significance of human behaviour and experience, which includes their contradictory beliefs, behaviours and emotions. Creswell (2007: 20-21) explains that the aim of research in the constructivist paradigm is to depend mostly on the participants' understanding of the situation. In most instances, these personal views are negotiated socially and historically. That is to say, they are not only imprinted on individuals but are formed through interaction with others and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives. Fouché and Schurink (Creswell, 2011: 309-310) likewise, highlight the fact that interpretivism comes with the assumption that reality should be given an interpretation through the meaning that research participants give to their own world. These described features of constructivism/interpretivism are in line with the study's objective, which seeks to conceptualize an Akan theory of animal ethics, from an understanding of how the Akans view animals, and their natural environment in terms of their ethics and traditional ontology.

The constant comparative method was also used in the analyses. This method, according to Harding (2013: 66), is a facilitatory approach that helps the researcher to identify similarities and variances between cases in a dataset, and can be used alongside summaries. Glaser and Strauss (1967) are reputed to be the first to refer to the constant comparative approach as part of their grounded theory approach. They are reported to have considered the constant comparative approach as an integral part of qualitative data analysis (Harding, 2013: 66). The use of the comparative analysis method, according to Harding, is advantageous because apart from helping to identify similarities and differences between interviews, it also helps to identify research findings once all the cases have been included in the analysis. Another related method that was used in the analysis of the data is memo writing or memoing. This is also an essential

feature in grounded theory method of data analysis. In memo writing method, references are made to the literature, diagrams, and even quotes from participants in interviews as evidence in linking, structuring, and contextualizing concepts. This helps to make the analysis more explicit and transparent for the researcher and other assessors (Flicks, 2014: 402-403).

4.5 Validity, reliability and Rigour

Validity is regarded as the extent to which a concept is accurately measured, while reliability relates to the consistency of a measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015: 66). Validity is also defined by Jupp (2006a: 311 in Harding, 2013: 5) as “the extent to which conclusions drawn from research provide an accurate description of what happened or a correct explanation of what happens and why.” Auerbach and Silverstein (2003: 32) argue that since qualitative research usually includes some element of subjectivity, one should not expect to find a single right way in data analysis. However, researchers need to be guided by key principles of validity (Harding, 2013: 5).

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the information gathered, the study relied on participants who are considered by the Akan societies as experts and authorities (gatekeepers) of Akan traditions. These are the chiefs, queen mothers, traditional linguists and clan heads. To supplement their claims, the study sought the view of a professional academic in the field of Akan language and tradition. The similarities and agreements in their accounts assure of reliability. In places where there appears to be irreconcilable accounts, both accounts were presented and the different possible implications are accounted for. In addition, interview questions were given to target participants ahead of meetings to afford them time to think through their responses and gather all the relevant facts before the agreed interview day. This allowed the participants to recheck their facts and even consult others on questions in which they may have lacked confidence.

To be sure my analysis of the data is reliable, with the consent of my respondents, all the interviewees’ responses were audio recorded and later transcribed first into the Akan language (for those interviews conducted in Akan) before translating it into the English language. This was done by a paid expert who is familiar with the Akan names for animals and other aspects of the natural environment the participants used during the interview. The audio-recorded

interview was played while following the transcribed text provided by the expert transcriber to ensure that nothing was lost in transcription or translation.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants, their actual names were not used. Instead the study referred to the first group of respondents as Traditional Respondent (TR) while using numbers from 1 to 10 represent each of them separately. Pseudo names were used for the young adult respondents. All participants, both for the one-on-one interviews and for the focus group discussions, signed consent forms written in the Akan and English languages.

4.6 Study limitations

One major challenge the study faced was the problem of the lack of exact vocabulary to capture accurately the essence of some of the terminologies in the research in the Akan language. Even though the researcher is a native Akan speaker, there were some difficulties in how to capture accurately some of the important research variables into the local language, especially where there were no direct local words for them. Irrespective of how one breaks these words down to the discussants in the local language, there was always the suspicion that the true essence of some of the words in English as used, may have been lost in translation. Words like moral status, intrinsic or inherent value, dignity, moral agent, moral patient, and animal rights are typical examples. To get around this, the researcher asked one question in a variety of ways to juxtapose the responses so as to judge the consistency of their responses.

Secondly, it was sometimes difficult, especially with the traditional respondents, to tell if they were responding according to known traditional views of the Akans as passed down to them or giving their own views on some of the issues. Similarly, many of the respondents in some instances, referred to biblical accounts as a response to some of the research questions making the researcher question how much of their Christian religion may have influenced their traditional worldview accounts. Thirdly, time and resource constraints did not allow the researcher to reach Akan traditional experts in all the five native Akan speaking regions in Ghana, whose views would have enriched the data. Nevertheless, the study is confident that the views gathered will not be entirely different from the views from other Akan speaking places due to the high commonality of values and traditions among the Akan speaking people of Ghana.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed report and explanation of the research methodology and design used in this research with justifications. The chapter has shown that the study involved both theoretical and empirical research approaches, whereas, in the theoretical approach, important literature was critically reviewed, and their bearings on the study shown. The empirical aspect included both one-on-one interviews and focus groups discussions that provided primary data on aspects of Akan traditional ontology, ethical beliefs, and traditional practices towards the natural environment and animals. It also included focus group discussions with young Akans to solicit their perceptions on human to animal relationship in comparison with the tradition views. The research design for the empirical aspect, as shown in the chapter, was qualitative in nature rather than quantitative because, qualitative method allows for the identification of specific individuals with expert knowledge on the subject of inquiry.

The population for the study was the Akan people of Ghana. The participants were attained from the three regions of Ghana namely the Greater Accra Region, Central Region and the Eastern Region. The participants also covered five of the Akan major subgroups viz. Akuapem, Akyem, Fanti, Denkyira, and Ashanti. The category made up of experts of Akan traditional beliefs, practices, and ethics was made up of Akan Chiefs (*ahenfo*), Queen Mothers (*Ahemaa*), linguists (*akyeame*), and heads of clans (*abusuapanyin*). The chapter explained that these constitute the traditional authorities of the Akan people as such are acknowledged to be the depository of their traditions and history believed to have been handed down to them by their predecessors and ancestors. This category of Akan traditional experts also included one academic expert on Akan language and traditions who gave further insights on the information reviewed in the literature. The second category of participants, the chapter mentioned, was made up of a younger generations of Akans between the ages of twenty-two (22) and thirty-seven (37). They gave insight on views and perspectives from the younger Akan generation in terms of their take on the use and preservation of the natural environment in general and their position on human-animal relation.

In the next chapter, the study presents the findings from the field under specific themes. This will pave the way for the discussion and analyses of the findings in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a detailed presentation of the research methodology and design used in acquiring primary data for the purpose of this research were provided. The choice of sampling style and the sample size as well as the kind of interview adopted with explanation and justification given were also included. In addition, the chapter expounded on the strategy of inquiry used in the data analysis.

In this current chapter, the study presents the findings from the field, which will pave way for the discussion of the findings in subsequent chapters. The purpose of going into the field, again, was to gather primary data through the direct interactions with traditional Akan authorities and with young Akan adults. This was to gain immediate information on traditional Akan metaphysics and belief concerning animals and the natural environment. The information gained is compared with those gathered from the younger Akan generation. These findings will help the study achieve its main research objective, which is to place African animal ethics in light of the welfarist and rightist debate in animal ethics based on Akan ontology, ethics, and practices.

As indicated in chapter four, the presentation and discussion of the findings in this chapter (five), has been grouped under predefined themes that were discussed in the literature review. These themes are the moral status of nonhuman animals, the interconnectedness of nature, and vegetarianism and the use of animals as food. The other themes are vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research, the use of animals as pets or companion animals, on the rights and interests of animals, and hunting and trapping of animals. These themes were chosen because they represent the breakdown of some of the main themes that welfarists and rightists generally disagree on in the animal ethics debate. Thus, it is important to consider the perception of Akans under these themes in identifying the place of Akan animal ethics within the broader global debate.

5.1 Study's respondents

5.1.1 The traditional respondents

The number of interactions with the traditional respondents, altogether, involved ten (10) participants. Of this number, six (6) participated in a one-on-one interview while the rest of the

four (4) were part of a focus group discussion. The breakdown of the six participants involved in the one-on-one interview included one chief, one queen mother, one linguist, two clan heads and one academic. The four participants who partook in the focus group discussion involved one queen-mother and three (3) chiefs. The language used for the interactions was predominantly the Akan language, with a mix of the English language in some places. The exception was with the interview with the academic which was rather predominantly English with the use of the Akan language in some few places. These respondents were given the interview instruments ahead of the interview date. This was to afford them time to cross check their facts to ensure they gave informed responses to the questions. As indicated in the previous chapter, the study referred to this group of respondents as Traditional Respondent (TR) while using numbers from 1 to 10 represent each of them separately.

5.1.2 The young adult respondents

In total, the study interacted with fourteen (14) participants in two separate focus group discussions. Thus, each focus group-meeting was made up of Seven (7) participants. The initial intention was to have eight participants in each focus group-meeting to consist of four males and four females. However, in each of the cases, one female participant could not show up in the final minute. As a result, each of the two focus group-meeting ended up having four males and three females. All the participants from both focus groups live in different suburbs of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. The language used for both group discussions was predominantly English with a little mix of Akan. The first focus group discussion was held at the campus of the University of Ghana in Accra. Going forward, this group will be referred to as the 'Campus Focus Group'. The second focus group discussion took place in Nungua, a suburb in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. This second group will henceforth be referred to as the 'Nungua Focus group'. The meeting with the Campus Focus Group lasted for about ninety one minutes while that of the Nungua Focus Group went on for about seventy seven minutes. It is worth mentioning here that participants for both focus groups were not given the interview questions ahead of the interview. This was done to ensure that they gave their true opinions on the issues and topics instead of researched answers which may not really reflect their true opinions. It was also to learn how much of their own Akan traditions they were abreast with without having to recheck their facts. Pseudo names are used to refer to participants of both groups.

5.2 Theme 1: The interrelatedness of nature

The notion that everything in nature is interconnected with each other was pointed out both in chapter two (literature review) and mainly in chapter three (theoretical framework) as an idea that stands out in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics. This interconnection of all things in nature, has led to a theory of ethics of which Ogungbemi, for example, calls ‘an ethics of nature-relatedness’. The study has, however, referred to this theory as the ‘ethics of interrelatedness’. This ethic of interrelatedness claims that a close examination of traditional African beliefs and practices will readily reveal the embeddedness of mutual dependency between humans, animals, plants, rivers, and other inanimate beings. This, the proponents have argued, should lead to an [African] environmental ethic where there exists, in the words of Tangwa (2004: 389), a “recognition and acceptance of interdependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals and humans.” Below is the presentation of the findings on this theme.

5.2.1 The traditional respondents’ views

Arguably, many of the interview questions for the traditional respondents had a remote connection to this theme, nevertheless, the following questions were directly asked towards the theme: Do the Akans believe in the preservation of nature and what are their reasons or motivation? Which aspects of nature are considered more important and are given more reverence and why? And in what ways are humans, animals, and the rest of nature connected or related?

All the participants classified under traditional respondents independently agreed that traditionally, Akans believe in the interconnection of nature. Traditional Respondent 1, a chief in the Eastern Region of Ghana, for example, in the following words explained the ways the Akans believe that nature is interrelated:

...man takes care of the rivers and other things so the animals in the forest provide meat and food for mankind. When the animals multiply in the forest they help the land to be fertile. Again, when the rivers flow through the land they help the crops to grow well and the animals get water to drink. Again, the droppings of the animals serve as manure to make the soil fertile. This enables the land to regain its fertility. So, I think there is always a sort of relationship between man and animals.

Traditional Respondent 3, a chief linguist from the Eastern Region of Ghana, also expressed his understanding of the interconnection of nature as follows:

...based on the dependency on one another, the forest facilitates rainfall. When you conserve the forest, it aids rainfall. When it rains and the rivers get flooded, it promotes farming. If we embark on reckless lumbering, it leads to deforestation and desertification. Again, when the animals in the forest have enough food to eat, they multiply. Then we are also able to get some for food. And there are some plants with medicinal value which when preserved can be raw materials for the manufacturing of drugs. The cocoa and other plants provide us with food. If we do not preserve coffee, plantain and others, it can affect our lives one way or the other.

Traditional Respondent 4, a Clan head from the Central Region of Ghana, was very emphatic in his claim that there is a definite interconnection among the constituents of nature. He stated that *....oh, definitely, we are interconnected, we are interdependent, he said. We cannot, man cannot exist when there is nothing, no forest, no trees, zoos and so on animals and so on. We are interconnected so we men, all to the benefit of man. But whatever it is the connection is there, we are in an interrelationship, he added.* Traditional Respondent 5, a Clan Head also from the Eastern Region of Ghana, was also of the view that there are all kinds of interrelationship with the constituents of nature such that it is even impossible to separate them. However, he was of the view that the relationship is of a kind that is beneficial to humans in such a way that if that relationship had not been in existence it would have affected negatively on humans. He mentioned that: *For instance, there are certain animals, like a species of catfish that prevents our streams from drying out at the upper course. Through them the water will spring up so that water is available all year round. So in sum, anything that was created is useful in a particular way. One would realize that had they not been created, life would not be complete.*

Despite this general agreement among the traditional respondents on the issue of interconnectedness of nature, the result of the findings also indicates a widely held position among them, which is that there is a hierarchy of beings in terms of importance. All the respondents believed that humans are on top of the hierarchy of beings, when it comes to the phenomenon of physical beings. That is, if you take out the Supreme God, the smaller gods and other spirits including the spirits of ancestors, human beings have been given a special position among the other beings. These include animal and plant lives, as well as, inanimate aspect of nature such as rivers and mountains. To this point, Traditional Respondent 4 mentioned that, *without human beings, rivers would not play any role, and so human beings, I mean, in God's own creation, human beings are superior to all. We were given authority to dominate, so nothing is above human beings. So they are all for our good. They all exist for*

the good of man. Yes, so man, human beings are superior to any other, any other thing in the ecosystem. According to Traditional Respondent 5, man is superior to all these things (that is nature) and all are beneficial to us [humans].

Traditional Respondent 2, a Queen Mother from the Eastern Region of Ghana, was also very clear about this. For her, *if one observes things carefully, one will find that human beings are higher than all other things.* Her reason was that: *when God created all things He created man to be in charge of all other things. Human beings were made the overseers of all God's creation so human beings are superior to all the things created by God.* She agreed that one can therefore say all other things are beneath human beings. Her position was also affirmed by Traditional Respondent 1, who was of the view that, with a close examination of nature, one will notice that human beings are ranked higher than all other things.

Again, despite the acknowledgement of human beings' special position at the top of 'physical nature', all the traditional respondents believed strongly that human beings' position does not give them a free pass to use nature in any manner that they deem fit, without some kind of circumspection, and the exercise of restraints and caution. Traditional Respondent 5 hinted that the protection of the natural environment is very dear to the heart of the Akan people, and so, they take a lot of measures to ensure this. He said:

...we protect and observe it, within our culture and tradition, we have certain norms that help us to do this, for instance, there are certain forests that the people are not allowed to clear for farming, or there are certain days that the people are prohibited from fetching water from particular rivers and streams; there are certain types of food that the people are not permitted to eat; the hunting for certain types of animals is prohibited at a period that we believe they are procreating. At that time, birds may have laid their eggs and brooding. Again, during certain particular seasons, such as the dry season... Because we are protecting the natural environment during the dry season, people are not allowed to burn the bush and the forest or hunt for animals.

The reasons given for this need and responsibility to preserve nature, as seen in their responses, are firstly, the fact that they are part of the creation of God, and secondly, because preserving them will be beneficial to human beings. Thus, they all agreed there was a need to preserve nature and it was part of the duty of humans for having to occupy such a special position at the top. To this, Traditional Respondent 3 opined that, Akans have to follow the traditions bequeathed to them by their ancestors, and to preserve what their ancestors left for them in

order to progress. Attaining this, he said, involves the preservation of the natural resources. He added that, *if we are unable to preserve what our ancestors have bequeathed to us, then what will become of our lives?* He asked. *So it is important that we preserve biodiversity.*

In addition, Traditional Respondent 4, pointed out that:

The Akans believe in preservation of nature because there is always this common saying that everybody knows when the last tree dies the last man dies, so our ancestors believe in that, hence the use of these environmental symbols, trees, as their totems, to preserve the environment. In some areas a whole village, a certain portion of the forest is declared a holy sacred forest to prevent people from farming, from depleting the land, including its resources, animals and so on. So as Akans, we attach a great deal of importance to that aspect of human existence. God said we should take dominance over it and at the same time we have to protect these items in our environment. We have dominion, but you could destroy everything, to your own disadvantage. So, you sustain them. You maintain them, to make sure you have something left for the next generation. So the fact that, it is at your disposal does not mean you should use it anyhow. We have to make sure our rivers are always up and coming, including the ecosystem. Everything, the forests are preserved as I was saying. All these things are for the sustenance of the environment.

Traditional Respondent 2 indicated that there are indeed rules governing the use of the natural resources. Explaining further she said:

For instance, we cannot do anything without water. Mountains are there to give us fresh air. We have animals. Mountains are the sources of rivers and streams. So as human beings we do not have to use machines to raze down our mountains flat. No we cannot do that. We should preserve the animals and use some of them for food and keep others to protect us. We do not also have to engage in reckless lumbering to degrade our trees. We have to preserve some trees to protect us.

In sum, she was of the conviction that human beings do not have to handle the natural resources around them recklessly because they have been put in charge of them. *Everything has its own use and usefulness. Our duty is just to keep them well,* she added.

The second set of the traditional respondents are the four traditional leaders who took part in the focus group discussion, and the Akan academic expert. The four traditional leaders who partook in the focus group discussion expressed similar convictions on this theme of the

interconnectedness of nature, but did provide some more details, reasons and further understandings. Responding directly to the question of interconnectedness of nature, Traditional Respondent 9, a Queen mother from the Central Region of Ghana, believed there was definitely an interconnection of nature. According to her, nature is interconnected because if one should take a cue from the biblical story of creation one notes that after God created everything He created man and told man to take dominion over all creation. Linking her point to science, the Queen-mother went on to demonstrate how the interconnection goes:

...but you see science, even science tells us that even chlorophyll in the tree, the sun draws the chlorophyll from the plants, the leaves and prepares the food for the plants, stores some under. We take some of the leaves, vegetables, we take some of the roots as medicine, for food and we also, the animals also eat some of these things. And we humans eat some of these animals so it is, we are interconnected.

Similarly, all the four participants in the focus group agreed with the rest of the traditional respondents that despite the interconnectedness of nature, human beings are regarded higher than the rest of nature. Traditional Respondent 7, a chief in the Central Region of Ghana, succinct response to this was: *obviously, the most ranked nature is human beings.*

The four respondents in the focus group, likewise, agreed with the rest of the traditional respondents that being highly ranked did not warrant an abuse of nature. They unanimously agreed that the Akans believed in the preservation of nature. Again, Traditional Respondent 7 gave this response to explain why this is the case:

The reason for preservation is that nature, by definition in our sense, is something that cannot be made by man. Human being is nature, the atmosphere is nature, the stars, the moon, the seas, the trees—all these are nature. And indeed from time immemorial, from the practices of our elders, from the proverbs, from the taboos, you will see that one way or the other, they preserve nature. From their way of life, everything that they do is to preserve nature, because they had been aware, we know currently that it is something that cannot be made by man. Therefore, the motivation to keep it for future people, yet unborn is higher than anything else.

Traditional Respondent 9 explained some of the things their people in the past did to preserve or conserve nature. She mentioned that they had a period when they did not fish in the local rivers and even in the sea. Every week, she continued, there was a day set aside for no fishing. There was also some sacred rules that prevented people from farming or clearing around the water bodies. According to her, the elders of the land strongly believed in that. In their own

sense, even though they did not explain to the younger ones why they conserved or preserved nature, they did it by way of taboos. According to Traditional Respondent 9, *If you do it, the gods will go against you, so people were afraid to do it, and because of that people never ventured to farm around the water bodies.* Furthermore, she hinted, there was a period during the festivals that, for a month or two, the people never fished in the water bodies around. All these, for her, were done as a way of letting the fish multiply and have time to mature for harvest. In addition, she mentioned that it was believed that by weeding around water bodies, one is exposing the nakedness of the water bodies, and in effect, exposing the nakedness of the gods of those water bodies. Adding to this Traditional Respondent 8, another chief from the Central Region of Ghana, also mentioned that in the past and even now, their ancestors considered some places, especially the source of a river, as sacred places and no one was allowed to cut trees or do anything there. According to him, those places were such that one could not even go. There were very quiet and considered sacred, unlike these days where you will find people washing and throwing things indiscriminately into them. Furthermore, Traditional Respondent 7 brought in a scientific explanation underlying their belief as stated by Traditional Respondent 9. According to the sub-chief, these things that their forefathers said were taboos with regard to nature have been proven scientifically to be a fact of life. He said he has done some personal research by talking to some of the elders of his people and came to the realization that majority of the things that their forefathers said were taboos have indeed some scientific bases. For instance, he exemplified, scientifically, if humans should degrade the source of rivers or degrade the rivers, if they should cut down the trees, the rays of the sun will dry the water. So it is better for humans to allow the trees to thrive. This will allow the trees to provide shade to the water bodies to prevent the water bodies from quickly drying up. This will in turn make water available all year round for the benefit of the people.

Also, on this theme, Traditional Respondent 6, an Akan academic expert from the Ashanti Region of Ghana, gave an account from his own experience as a born and bred Akan and as a trained and experienced academic in Akan language and traditions. He presented some very similar views and also interesting additional information for the study. On the question relating to the interconnectedness of nature, Traditional Respondent 6 responded in the affirmative that there is indeed some interconnection to be seen in nature. He stated that: *...they [that is the Akans] understand fully well that there is a strong connection between man and nature and the motivation is to make sure that that connection exist. So any attempt to do away with them, that is, nature and environment, implies causing some harm to mankind.* He held the belief that

humans are interconnected to nature because, human beings are born into the natural environment which is made up of the flora and fauna including the rivers and even the landscape. He added that nature is meant to satisfy the need of human beings. He consented to the view that what happens to each aspect of nature, in a way, affects human beings too. To demonstrate how this interconnection works out, Traditional Respondent 6 mentioned that it is this interconnection that explains why human beings are seriously affected when there is land degradation or soil erosion. This, for him, is part of the reason why the Akan people may want to preserve the land.

Addressing the question on the hierarchy of beings of nature, Traditional Respondent 6's initial response was: *I don't think they rank. But they feel that all aspect of nature are very important to their life.* Nevertheless, he agreed that the Akans would rank human beings first before plants and animals. He added that: *...they [that is the Akans] think that human beings can only exist if these things [natural resources] are there to satisfy their needs.* Traditional Respondent 6 also agreed that irrespective of where the Akans place humans on the hierarchy of beings, the Akans believed strongly in the preservation of nature. In his informed view, the Akans will, for instance, not destroy the forest in order to preserve the animals, they will not pollute the water so that they can get fishes out of it for consumption. They also want to live in a greenish atmosphere, an atmosphere that they constantly have something to eat, both in terms of crops and animals, including fish. He also indicated that: *...they [the Akan people] cherish the forest, they cherish the trees; they want to keep them; they want to keep the plants for food, because they eat some of the leaves. They want to keep it for medicinal purpose. They believe in herbs. Until orthodox medicine, they were relying on barks of trees, roots of trees, leaves of trees for their health. So why will they destroy the forest?*

5.2.2 The young adult respondents' views

Views from the young adult respondents were solicited through the use of two separate focus group discussions, that is, the Campus Focus Group and the Nungua Focus Group, with each made up of seven randomly selected young Akans. In this instance, although nearly all the questions asked, had some bearings on the theme of interconnectedness of nature, only one question was asked directly towards the theme namely: is there any relationship shared by the constituent of nature?

Majority of the participants classified under the young adult respondents independently agreed that there is, or there should be some relationship shared by all things considered part of the natural environment. In the Campus Focus Group, for instance, one of the participants identified as *Shadrack*, mentioned that the interdependency of nature exists because humans, depends on plants and animals and some animals also depend on humans for survival. This sentiment was generally shared by all in the Campus Focus Group. The general perception in the Nungua Focus Group was not that different. A participant identified as *Obed*, stated that there is some form of relationship among the constituents of nature in the ecosystem. He held that humans and the rest of nature live in an interrelated community such that there is an interdependency from humans to animals and to water bodies as well. Humans also use nature for several things to make their lives easy. In his view, *we [in reference to humans and nature] share a common focus. The animals feed on humans and humans feed on animals... Human beings have been made stewards over these elements and we also feed from both the animals and the sea as well. Likewise, we provide animals food.*

The rest of the participants in the Nungua Focus Group appeared to share similar view with the exception of one participant identified as *Claudia*. Claudia, initially, was of opinion that there is no such relationship between humans and the rest of nature. According to her, it is rather accurate to say that there are some differences between humans and nature. Rebutting Obed's position, she posited that: *Yes, sometimes they feed on us and we feed on them. Yes, but I don't think there is a relationship. I mean there is a difference, like the difference between we humans and animals. Seriously, I personally, I do not really like pets, and other things. The way I will care for a human being is different from the way I will care for my pet.* It appeared this respondent may have confused the use of the words 'relationship' and 'interconnection' because when she was asked further if she thought humans are interconnected with nature her reply was: *Yes, yes, there is a connection alright, but when it comes to relationship and for me, I don't think...* Upon further engagement with Obed, she came to accept that there may be some relationship in terms of interconnection between humans and the rest of nature after all.

5.3 Theme 2: The moral status of nonhuman animals

The theme of the moral status of nonhuman animals is to determine whether animals or at least, some of them have moral worth, that is, whether they are worthy of moral consideration as humans. As was indicated in the literature review (chapter 2), the kind of perception or

conviction about the moral status of nonhuman animals often plays a big role in determining the kind of support in terms of treatment and advocacy animals receive. It also plays a large role in whether one argues for a welfarist position or for a rights view position. As such, this theme remains one of the most important themes to the study. Some of the salient questions surrounding the issue of moral status of nonhuman animals as revealed by the literature include: Do animals have or should they be given a moral status? What do animals possess that should make them morally worthy? Are there any distinctive and morally relevant marks that can be used to differentiate animals from humans to deny them a moral status? Can animals be given the status of a person? Even if animals can be considered morally worthy, is or should their moral status be made equal to that of humans? If not, why not?

What follows is a summary of the relevant findings from data generated through one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions, first from the traditional respondents and second from the young adult respondents concerning this theme of the moral status of nonhuman animals.

5.3.1 The traditional respondents' views

Just like the first theme, almost all of the interview questions posed to the respondents, in one way or the other, had a connection to the theme of the moral status of nonhuman animals. However some of the direct questions that were asked towards the theme included: Where would you place the position of human beings and animals in nature? What makes an animal different from human being? What are some of the traditional customs and practices that include the use of animals? What are the beliefs, practices and importance of taboos, ntoro and totems in relation to animals? Other more related questions were: Do the Akans believe that animals can be wronged, why or why not? Do the Akans believe that animals can have pain and pleasure? Do the Akans believe that animals have souls or spirits and what happens to them when they die? To what extent does personal relationship with animals affect how Akans treat animals?

5.3.1.1 The place of humans and animals.

As already reported on the theme of interconnection of nature above, all the participants classified under traditional respondents independently agreed that in traditional Akan belief system, human beings are higher on the hierarchy of physical beings in nature. On the specific question of whether humans and specifically animals are ranked equally, the response was not

any different. All the respondents categorized under traditional respondents, without exception, were of the view that traditional Akans held human beings to be ‘definitely’ superior to nonhuman animals. Secondly, they held that animals exist for the use and purpose of humans. Traditional Respondent 4 said: *...so we (that is humans) are different [from animals], we were asked [by God] to use them when it comes to procreation. Animals procreate for us to consume... They are complementary to us. Yeah, they are there for us.* To further find out if nature could be appreciated for its own sake, a follow up question was made to one of the respondents asking whether nature would be any useful without the existence of the human species. His reply intimated a negative answer. Traditional Respondent 1 response was: *They are useful to man. Let us take the fish in the rivers that we consume. We hunt animals in the bush, we use the forest in farming, we use the timber to build houses... so everything that God created is useful to humankind.*

In a related response, Traditional Respondent 4 also gave a response which suggests that nature does not exist or is preserved for its own sake but for humans’ purpose and fulfilment. He asserted that: *Oh, no, [nature is preserved] for the sake of human beings. Nature can go extinct but it will not affect it. When in Sahara areas real vegetation turns out to be, you know, the encroachment came and is still coming. It is, I mean, it is to the detriment of men or of man. So nature has nothing to lose, but we have something to lose, yes.*

To explain why human beings are more important than animals, the respondents listed some of the things that set humans and animals apart. In some of their responses, there was a lot of reference to the biblical account of creation to the effect that God created the world and everything in it then placed man in the center of it to take dominance and control. Traditional Respondent 1, for example, stated that:

What makes mankind different from animals is that although God created us alike, it is God who created mankind, animals and the rest. According to historical account or the Bible, we are made to understand that God created all things before He created man, man came to meet all things in existence, and it is man who gave all of the names. For examples, trees and all others. But the difference between them is that man has certain senses that enable him to do certain things, and to control animals and change certain things to suit himself.

A similar claim was made by Traditional Respondent 2. According to her: *in all things, human beings are superior to every creation. Besides God, human beings take precedence over everything God created. God created man to be the overseer for all other creation.* Traditional

Respondent 4 also made an allusion to such biblical creation story while Traditional Respondent 3, went as far as citing the bible book of Genesis 1:28 to support his claim that all other things including animals, are inferior to humans in accordance with the will and purpose of God. Traditional Respondent 7 was the only respondents who gave this unique reason to explain why humans are placed higher than animals. He opined that: “*Obviously, the most ranked nature are human beings because human beings are human beings, we cannot be replaced*”.

Apart from these reasons provided above, there were, in addition, many other features mentioned by the traditional respondents as those which distinguish human beings from animals hence, making the former superior to the later. Among them included the following underlisted:

- The claim that human beings are created in the image of God and animals are not. To this, one respondent replied that: *...human beings, according to our elders, are closer to God. They have resemblance of God.* This response or something in relation to this was given by a minimum of five respondents.
- The claim that human beings can reason and have wisdom and intelligence that enable them to build towns, establish a university and conduct research, preserve things and manufacture items, and to become pilots and astrologers. They are able to attain great progress, achievement and advancement. Meanwhile, animals are not equipped with such wisdom and intelligence and so are unable to attain these feats. *Animals do not reason before they do anything,* claimed one respondent. This response or something in relation to this was given by a minimum of five respondents.
- The claim that human beings can talk or are endowed with the gift of speech while animals are not. In the words of one respondent on this: *Animals lack language.* Another respondent stated that: *when human beings talk some animals can understand it, but human beings cannot understand what animals say.* This response or something in relation to this was given by a minimum of two respondents.
- The claim that humans put on clothes while animals do not. This response or something in relation to this was given by a minimum of two respondents.
- The claim that humans can do whatever they choose to do but animals are limited in what they do.
- The claim that humans can care for others while animals cannot.

- The claim that humans are able to cook the food they eat and do chores such as fetching of water while animals do not cook their food or fetch water.
- The claim that humans have two legs with which they walk while animals do not.
- The claims that humans and animals see things differently.
- The claim that although some animals swim in rivers and in streams they do not use sponge and soap to bath but humans do.
- The claim that human beings have a purpose for whatever they do as their responsibility but animals do not.
- The claim that humans can do certain things in secret while animals cannot be discreet.
- The claim that humans are able to determine what is wrong and right, that is, they have a sense of morality but animals only do that through their actions. This response or something in relation to this was given by a minimum of three respondents.
- The claim that humans are able to control their feelings while animals cannot control their instincts. This response or something in relation to this was given by a minimum of two respondents.
- The claim that humans' behaviour is different from that of animals.
- The claim that humans can keep and rear animals but animals cannot keep or rear humans.
- The claim that human societies are guided by laws unlike the animal kingdom which only law is the survival of the fittest.
- The claim that human beings have spirit and soul different from that of the animals which may or may not have. To this, one respondent asserted that: *actually since human beings possess the spirit and soul they are superior to animals and all other things, living and non-living.*
- The claim that humans have a conscience but animals do not. One respondent pointed this out by saying that: *I think naturally, from our indigenous knowledge they [that is the Akans] know that human beings have conscience. Animals do not.*
- The claim that humans, unlike animals, know who gave birth to them and know who their relatives are no matter their age or level.
- The claim that humans have higher comprehension level than animals do.
- The claim that humans, unlike animals have a culture and live a social life including observing marriage ceremonies and ceremonies for the dead. A respondent pointed to this saying: *That is why we even spend money to perform rites for the dead. So we spend*

money to perform marriages, we spend money for naming ceremonies we spend on things in life that... on rites of passage, rites of passage, yes rites of passages.

5.3.1.2 Traditional and non-traditional use of animals

For the purpose of the theme on the moral status of nonhuman animals, the study sought from the participants, some of the Akan traditional or cultural uses of animals or practices that involved animals. The under listed are some of the responses given by the traditional respondents:

- Some animals are used in the making of rituals and sacrifices to the gods, sacrifice to pacify the gods for wrong doing and sacrifice to cleanse, purify and pacify a member of the community for defiling nature or going against a traditional norm or to purify the entire community against a curse or a calamity. According to one respondent, each case or situation determines the type of animals to use and this can even include the use of eggs. Animals are killed for other rituals and sacrifices to mark occasions such as child birth, calamities such as death, festivals, and the enstoolment and destoolment of chiefs. Each occasion and activity demand certain specified type of animals to be used and sometimes even the colour of the animal to be used. Traditional Respondent 3, mentioned that in the olden days when someone in the community committed a crime or did something ominous, incarnations were recited on a goat and the goat will be led deep into the forest and set free. This, when done, signifies that the goat has carried the evil or impending evil away from the community.
- Some animals are used as pets or companion animals.
- Dogs are used for hunting.
- Cats are kept at home to drive away mice.
- Some animals are kept at home to redirect an impending (spiritual) harm including illnesses and death. To this point, Traditional Respondent 6 pointed out that sometimes animals such as cats and fowls are kept at home to take away an impending death or harm. So that when a cat or a fowl dies out of the blue and without a cause the household is not so much worried because there is an Akan saying that translates that the cat or fowl may have died because someone was to die in that household. Thus, the animal has sacrificed its life for the intended person.
- Some animals are used as appeasements, that is, fines for wrong doing in terms of conflict among individuals in the community. Pointing to this, Traditional Respondent

6 asserted that: *Because the sheep symbolizes peace... So after an arbitration, if you have a very serious case and you are found guilty you are asked to pay some fine. Sometimes you are asked to bring a whole live sheep meant to satisfy or calm down the nerves of the offended and this will normally happen at the palace.* Traditional Respondent 5 independently corroborated this by adding that the sheep is also to the people a symbol of victory and true humility. Thus, in times of victory the sheep is the preferred animal of choice for rituals and sacrifices. According to him, cattle may be used at times depending on the situation. Traditional Respondent 6 also pointed out that if the conflict is only based in the family a fowl or their eggs are used for appeasement. *Sometimes a man offends the wife or the reverse, a wife offends the husband or so, they settle the case amicably and to make sure that we all understand that there has been a settlement they will say why not bring a fowl. Sometimes if it is not grievous, they end up bringing some eggs, either six or twelve.*

- Some animals are hunted for their game.
- Some animals are consumed for food.
- Some animals, through their cries, help them to tell the time of the day.
- Some animals such as the chameleon are used for sorcery.
- The skins of some animals are used for clothing, especially footwear and in the making of the paraphernalia of Chiefs.
- Horns and skin of some of the animals were used in the making of traditional instruments, such as traditional horns and drums found in the palace.
- At the palace, the Chief’s stool is placed on the skin of some animals, especially that of the sheep. Similarly, the dried skin of the sheep is used as a form of carpet for the chief even if there is already a woolen carpet.
- In the past, wars were fought with animal skins.

The table below shows examples of animals that are used by the different sub-divisions of Akans for various traditional and non-traditional purposes.

Table 5.4.1.2 Animals used by Akans and their purposes

Type of Animal	Purpose
Sheep	Food, sacrifices and rituals including pacification (white ones), clothes, hide placed on the stool of the chief, used as

	carpet for the chief, and possibly for chief's paraphernalia.
Fowls (cock, hen, including their eggs)	Food, sacrifices and rituals including pacification, kept in households to ward off evil including death.
Some types of fishes example mudfish	food
Duiker/Antelope/Deer	Food (game), sacrifices and rituals on special festive occasions, hide for sandals and possibly for chief's paraphernalia, to make traditional drums and in the past used in wars.
Elephant	Food (game)
Lion	Food (game)
Buffalo	Food (game), horn for instrument.
Goat	Food, used in some cases for rituals to ward off bad omen and evil.
Grasscutter (Greater cane rat)	Food
Dog	Food, sacrifices and rituals (regarded by some as a 'union meat' and in the past only eaten by royals by some Akans), pet or companion animals, for hunting.
Woodpidgeon, cock	Helps in telling the time of day.
Cattle	Food, sometimes used for sacrifices and rituals during festivals for some Akans
Chameleon	For medicine and sorcery
Cats	Pets or companion animals, to ward off mice and evil including death.

5.3.1.3 Taboos, totems and *ntoro*

The study sought information concerning the use of some animals by the various Akan clans as totems and what sort of animals are considered by them as taboo animals, why those animals are considered as taboos, and what it meant or done traditionally for these taboo animals.

The Akan word for taboo is *akyiwadea*. Traditional Respondent 6 stated that taboos are meant to bring about harmony in the society because they are more or less like the 'constitution' that we have in the modern society. Most of these taboos, he added, are based on the experiences of the people, it is what they have gone through, the predicaments and the unpleasant situations they have gone through. The taboos are their way of saying enough is enough, never again should this happen in the land or to the people. Children are, therefore, taught these taboos so that as they grow up, to avoid them. Traditional Respondent 4 held that taboos are used by the Akan people to primarily preserve nature and also to keep certain animal species alive. He further stated that: *Our ancestors were also wise like we were saying, they were also conscious*

of the environment. Even at certain times, they will prevent people from hunting all in the cause of preserving nature, so with time they become taboo to the people of that given area. Traditional Respondent 6 revealed that there are two categories of taboos, namely behavioural taboos and verbal taboos. The verbal taboos are those taboos that relate to things that should not be said. These also come in other sub-categories. For instance, we have what we call *ntam*, that is, the oath of the people. These oaths are based on some past unpleasant situation or epidemic or death of a king or warrior or of the people, which they do not want to be reminded of. Behavioural taboos, he explained, are those category of taboos that point to unacceptable behaviours in the community. Some of these, he said, are also in practice in other societies beyond Ghana. For instance, incest or having sexual relationship with a close family relation is a widely held taboo. However, for the Akans, behavioural taboos may include eating habits, such as not walking on the street while eating. A chief is also not allowed to play the game of draught because of the insults that comes with the game, among many others. According to Traditional Respondent 1, sometimes if one should break a taboo, it is the person alone who suffers the repercussions, and other times, depending on the weight of the taboo, the entire community suffers the ramifications. He mentioned incest or when someone defiles the community's rivers or shrine as some instances of a taboo which when broken can bring harm on the entire community.

The information obtained on the totem animals of the eight Akan Clans was not different from that which was discussed in the literature review. As such, table 2.12.1 from Chapter two is repeated below to show the different animal totems of the eight Akan Clans with the characteristics associated with the animals. All these animals named as a totem for each of the clans, are considered taboo animals by that particular clan, and that particular clan only. Thus, a totem animal of the Asona Clan may not be considered a taboo by the Agona Clan and vice versa. The study, for example, discovered that even though the dog is a totem and therefore considered a taboo to be killed or eaten by the Aduana Clan, it is regarded as a delicacy by the Akyem group of Akans who consider the dog meat as a 'union meat' or meat for the royals. As Traditional Respondent 1 noted: *there are some people who eat the bat, but those who have the bat as their totem do not eat it.*

The Akan name for totem is either *Agyinahyede*, *Akyeneboa*, *akrabo* or *Ahyensodze*. According to Traditional Respondent 7, these totems are not only used as a mere emblem of the Clan but they represent "the soul of the Clan." Traditional Respondent 1 noted that the totems were regarded as the soul and guardian spirits of the Clan and as a result, each clan has

to revere its totem animal as a symbol of the Clan. He thought this was very important because he believed that if each of the eight Akan Clans is protecting their totem animal, it will mean that these animals will live long and will in turn help the community and the environment. Traditional Respondent 1, again, mentioned that the Akans believe their totem animals protect the Clan because the power possessed by the animals will be on the Clan. As a consequence, if a member of a clan kills a totem animal, it would be regarded as a broken taboo. Such a person was required to perform some rituals to cleanse him or herself of the curse. The chief observed further that there is some sort of relationship between the clan and their totem animals, the kind of relationship that will not make for the members of the Clan to kill or hurt their totem animals. Traditional Respondent 6 reemphasized this point while intimating that there could be some sort of punishment on a member of a clan who knowingly kill his or her totem.

However, if the act was done mistakenly, the person needs to inform the adults of the Clan for some purification and prayers to the gods for forgiveness. Nothing will happen to someone from a different Clan who kills another Clans totems, he said. He restated the point that there is a strong link between the totem animal and the Clan that its spirit protects. According to Traditional Respondent 6, the Asona Clan which has the reddish snake as one of their totems, held a belief that should a Clan member meet a red snake, the implication may be that his or her relative may be dead or will die in the very near future. Thus, there was some kind of 'supernatural' connection between the totem animal and the Clan. This means that no one will kill their totem animals because doing so is tantamount to killing yourself or a member of your family, he added. For Traditional Respondent 5, sometimes some Clans can organize a funeral for their totem animal should it be killed mistakenly or intentionally. A panel will also be set up to try the perpetrator of the killing. He added that should a member of a particular Clan find its totem animal in an unsafe place, it was incumbent on the individual to guide the animal to safety.

The respondents reported that each Clan has a symbol of its animal totem on their traditional staff and umbrellas so that their Clans are easily identified. To this, Traditional Respondent 9 pointed out that the totem animals are considered by the Clan members as a brother or a sister and so, they will not do any harm to it. Rituals will be made should a Clan member mistakenly kill a totem animal. Traditional Respondent 7 added that in the past, this question will not even be asked because no one will even think of killing or eating their totem animal. Killing a totem animal is likened to killing a fellow human being and thus, a taboo, he emphasized.

Concerning the Akan totems, the study discovered that the exact history behind how these animals became the totems of the Clans was not well known by many of the respondents. The study gathered from the traditional respondents that that some of these totems were perhaps chosen to reflect the characteristics of the Clan or how the Clan wanted to be perceived. According to Traditional Respondent 3, the ancestors of the Akans observed certain lifestyle of some animals, and felt that if they should adopt these animals as their totem, people will associate with the character of these animals. Some of the factors they considered were the intelligence and behavior of the animals. Traditional Respondent 6, further explained that the Asakyiri Clan has the vulture as one of its totems. The vulture, to them, is a symbol to live life carefully and to preserve one's life. This is because the vulture is an animal that is known to live very long and is believed to always say "Mede me kwasea repe nyinkyey", that is to say, 'I am using my foolishness to gain long life'. So that, even though it looks dirty, it is calm and lives long. Another clan, he continued, uses the bald headed bird as a symbol to express longer life, maturity and wisdom. The Asona Clan has the crow as its totem to symbolize beauty just like the beauty of the crow bird. More so, the Asonas will usually boast that even the back of their head is more beautiful than the face of somebody. He added that the leopard as a totem for the Bretuo Clan is used to depict its characteristics. The leopard is known to be very ferocious, strong and smart in terms of running, bold, and not easily frightened by anything. Similarly, the Agona Clan uses the parrot as their totem to show how eloquent they are in communication and the Asakyiri Clan has the eagle as their totem to show intelligence and stamina of character. Traditional Respondent 5 hinted that totems are a Clan's identity that depict the character of the Clan, and are the spirit and backbone of the Clan.

The history of the totem of the Aduana Clan was, however, very well known by almost all of the traditional respondents, nevertheless, it was Traditional Respondent 3 who gave a more detailed account. Generally, the Aduana Clan chose the dog because it said that it was the dog that first brought fire to the world through their ancestor. According to Traditional Respondent 3, the patriarch of the Aduana, Ansa Sasraku, was a hunter who used to go to the jungle with his dog. One day he wanted to make fire but there was no fire to lighten the firewood. So the dog left him for a while and returned with fire in its mouth. Then they adopted the dog as their totem. Traditional Respondent 4 gave an account of the history behind the use of the buffalo as the totem of the Ekuona Clan as follows:

During the days of the tribal wars, the [buffalo] for instance, which is the totem of Ekuona Clan according to history, when our fathers were fighting, our great great fathers were fighting

at Ashanti at a certain point they had to cross a river. A head of [buffalo] transformed themselves like a bridge, they followed each other so the people walked over them to the other side of the river. That is how it became the totem. So no Ekuona citizen of sound mind should eat a [buffalo] as a delicacy. Not at all.

Traditional Respondent 6 narrated the history behind the Agona Clan's use of a parrot as their totem animal as follows:

Because you see, the parrot, there is a history about a hunter who went to the forest to hunt, and was being attacked by some other people and they asked whether he was alone in the forest. He said 'no' he came with some people. They asked, where are they? Then he heard the parrot speaking, because we believe that the parrot speaks. Then he said oh yes, is it true, and then one parrot started speaking. Then after some time that parrot was joined by other parrots. And then these assailants were now scared that oh they are many. So they say that "wohunu awidi koro a mmento no boɔ ebia na ɔfiri tutuom mu." Meaning if you see one parrot don't throw a stone at it, it might be coming from a multitude.

Traditional Respondent 7 had two different versions of the history behind the choice of a parrot as the totem animal of the Ekuona Clan. In his first account, he stated that history has it that a group of people call the Dishena, always travelled with host of animals. On one of these travels, when they got to a certain place, the parrot went ahead of them and noticed that there were some assailants on the path the people were travelling waiting to ambush them. The parrot used its ability to speak to scare the assailants to flee and ended up saving the people from the hands of the assailants. As the people went farther in their travel, the parrot, whose favorite food is the palm kernel, noticed a palm tree and went to perch on it to eat from it. As it was eaten, it noticed a pot inside the branches of the trees and made talking sounds which forced the people to climb the palm tree to find the pot. The realized that the pot was filled with gold dust. The gold dust made the people wealthy and as a result they decided to make the parrot their totem for protecting them and leading them to wealth. The second account, according to Traditional Respondent 7 is that anytime a member of the Clan had an issue with the law, the parrot will come to the person on a tree or on a building and tell the person the details of the issue or how he or she should defend himself or herself when called to answer. Hence, the people chose the parrot as their totem animal.

Aside the totems, other animals considered as taboos are snakes, monkeys, tortoise, and some species of snails. Others are ducks, whales, nightjars, and the chameleon. Traditional

Respondent 5 revealed that big animals such as the buffalos and whales were taboos because the people considered them to be kings in their own right. Traditional Respondent 3, also pointed out that some animals are not eaten or used for any rituals because they are considered unclean due to their lifestyle and place of feeding. These include rats, bats, owl, wagtail, sparrow, and other scavenger birds.

Table 5.4.1.3 Akan Clans and their totem animals

Name of clans	Totem	Characteristics/Depictions
9. Aduana	Dog, Frog	Hardworking; clever; brave; friendliness; humility
10. Agona	Parrot	Eloquence; frankness
11. Asakyiri	Vulture, Eagle	Beauty; stamina; intelligence
12. Asenie	Bat, bald headed bird	Bravery; diplomacy
13. Asona	Crow, Wild boar, red snake	Wisdom; purity of heart; eloquence
14. Bretuo	Leopard	Aggressiveness; exceptional bravery
15. Ekuona	Buffalo	Uprightness
16. Oyoko	Falcon, hawk	Patience; self-confidence

On the topic of *ntorɔ*, the study received some divergent views from the traditional respondents. Some thought the *ntorɔ* is the same as the *ntɔn* (family/clan) others thought the two were different Traditional Respondent 6, on his part, explained that the Akans believe in a kind of tripartite make-up of a person, made up of the spirit, soul and blood. The soul is believed to be given by God, the blood by the mother and the spirit by the father. The spirit shows the person's character, whether wise or foolish. He mentioned that there are about twelve of these *ntorɔ* with the prefix of 'bosom' (smaller god) such as Bosomtwe, Bosoma and Bosompra. Bosompra, for example, comes from the River Pra. He added that names of some Akans are based on these *ntorɔ* because it is the father who gives the name. Thus, it is likely to find people who share similar *ntorɔ* having similar names. Members of a particular *ntorɔ* are noted for not eating certain animals. For example, members of the Bosommuru *ntorɔ* are not to eat meat from a python, monkey and wild dog, while Bosomtwe people are to avoid meat from monkeys, snails, and tortoise.

For Traditional Respondent 5, the *ntorɔ* is something like a nickname, an honorific for the Clan. He saw it as a praise name, accolade or special appellation that depicts the position, the behavior and the character of the family or Clan. For him, the *ntorɔ* is just another name for Clan. Traditional Respondent 3, spoke of the *ntorɔ* as that which determines a Clans special abilities and characteristics. Again, there are some people among the Asantes who are believed to be offspring of the fetish shrines. They are children of the abosom (fetish shrines) so they observe certain taboos. Traditional Respondent 4 admitted that it was the first time he was hearing of the term *ntorɔ* and that he was only aware of the *ntɔn*. The *ntɔn*, he mentioned, is the same as the Clan symbol. In addition, he stated that the Ashantis, especially the Akyem people, call the clan the *ntɔn* and they explain that it comes from the father, that is, the spirit of your father given to you at birth.

The *ntorɔ*, for Traditional Respondent 1, is a type of family or clan that goes through the paternal line and it refers to the spirit that dwells in the human body. Every human being comprises three active parts, namely the visible human body and the intangible spirit and soul. As a result, the *ntorɔ* is the spirit that is derived from the father. Furthermore, he stated that it is the blood that is regarded as the clan and the *ntorɔ* is from the father which makes a spiritual being. The *ntorɔ*, he noted, are twelve, and each of them has a special water body, such as a river or lake, such as the River Pra and Lake Bosomtwe or a river such as Ankobra and the rest are all among the rivers, meaning that they bath in them. Thus, the Akans usually ask the question, ‘what is your clan or which ‘*ntorɔ*’ do you bath in?’ This means, what river do you bath with or what clan do you hail from? So the *ntorɔ* is like your clan from your father’s side. They have certain rivers they do not have to defile and taboos they need to adhere to. In Cape Coast, the four traditional respondents in the focus group discussion agreed unanimously that the *ntorɔ* is the same as the *ntɔn*. According to Traditional Respondent 7, these *ntorɔ* names are given to people as a way of showing gratitude to the oracle that helped the family to give birth. Traditional Respondent 9 reiterated that the *ntorɔ* or *ntɔn* is the spirit from the father given to the child at birth, as the blood is from the mother. Without it, the father would not have any stake in the child since the Akans are matrilineal. They also indicated that there are certain taboo animals that are to be avoided by each *ntorɔ*.

5.3.1.4 Animal Pain and Doing Animals Wrong

All the traditional respondents agreed that animals can be wronged in one way or the other. They gave some instances in which they believe animals can be wronged. Traditional Respondent 1 opined that there are times where a hunter will aim a gun at an animal, only to shoot and miss, but ends up shooting a smaller animal instead. Since the hunter has no use for the smaller animal he will leave it there to die of its wounds, he said. Similarly, he added, a hunter may want to kill a big animal such as ‘otwe’ (antelope) or ‘odabo’ (duker) but the mother may escape and the hunter will end up with a small one which he cannot bring home, so he would leave it in the bush. In his view, these acts bring harm to the animal because this young animal could have grown up and produced more offspring to replace the older ones. He continued by stating that, at times, an animal would be shot but it may escape with its gunshot wounds. At other times, traps are set to catch an animal but the traps end up cutting only the animal’s limb. According to Traditional Respondent 1, there is a type of trap called ‘dedefidie’ which can cut the hand of the animal while it escapes. For him, if the trap set is too strong, it ends up cutting the arm of the animal while it escapes from the trap and the hunter cannot bring the small arm home for anything except that it only makes the animal deformed. The animal may escape to a secluded place and may eventually die. Likewise, sometimes, a trap may be intended to catch a grasscutter but it ends up catching a snake instead. The owner of the trap will eventually kill the snake. He additionally explained that animals in the home are also harmed in a variety of ways. To this he said:

We rear animals such as the cat, the dog, fowls and others at home. Sometimes, you would be feeding your fowls and a stronger hen would come to consume the feed and you be tempted to throw something at it. Sometimes too, we can starve some of the animals. You may keep the dog in a pen and you will forget to give it food or water or because the animal is wild, we confine it and make it endure some suffering. It may feel hungry and has to struggle before it gets food to eat... In the olden days, sometimes when a sheep comes to someone’s house, they would throw something at it. Then the animal will run to its owner’s home. They make the animal feel pains. Sometimes, they would intentionally inflict pain on the animal and may confess that they had hit the animal or may deny it.

Traditional Respondent 1 explained that on the other hand, when one is good to animals, it is common to see such animals voluntarily gather around when one brings in their feed. According to him, a dog, for example, will come at your beckon and will outwardly show

affection towards you. However, if it is hit, it is aware that you are the one that caused it pain or harm. Thus, he said:

The animals have feelings, he asserted. Their scent and the way they look at you with their eyes, spiritually they are able to see certain things. A cat, for example, if it is regularly close to you, some spirits cannot reach you. If it happens that someone is about to die in the household the cat will leave the house because it does not like to be tainted with filth. So yes, humans can cause animals pain. Even sometimes they can be very sad, especially when they are hit with something. It shows. It shows that they really felt the pain.

Furthermore, Traditional Respondent 1 was of the view that how humans treat animals can affect humans' relationship with these animals. For him, it is possible for the animal, if it is a dog, to stop protecting its owner. It can also affect the animals by destroying their ability to give birth or break their bones.

Traditional Respondent 4 pointed out that animals are wronged when they are unjustifiably maltreated. According to him, the Akan people held a belief that spiritually, if one should continually mistreat animals, the animals have a way of getting back at the person. To this, he narrated a personal experience that occurred as follows:

Let me tell you a story that I saw when I was growing up. There was this hunter in our village who was always after monkeys and this man was attacked one day during his hunting expedition in the forest. He was attacked by a team of or hoard of monkeys and beaten mercilessly. He didn't learn from it. After recovery, he continued because at least every, week he has to kill one, sometimes twice in a week. Eventually, he gave birth to a girl who was an exact replica of a monkey. This is a true story, I know it, I saw it, and I'm talking about it. It is not hearsay. The child, girl child was just a replica of a monkey. The claws, the hand, everything, the face. She grew up to about her 20's and she died. She was called Amma Awua. I remember it vividly, Amma Awua, no boy will ever talk to this girl. What are you, aren't you afraid. So these are some of the things. This is an indication that animals can be wronged but they take their pound of flesh.

Traditional Respondent 3 stated that it is possible to offend animals but because humans have authority over them, they overlook it when they offend the animals. According to him, the tethering of animals, preventing animals from grazing and refusal to feed them in good time or starving them are some of the things that are done to wrong animals. Traditional Respondent 5 asserted that: *If for no just cause you kill the animal or you kill it not because you want to use*

it for food, it means you are subjecting the animal to an unjustified harm. Yes, you are causing unjustifiable harm to it, this should not be the case.... He also averred that treating animals badly can have some negative effect on the person, such as in the instance of the cat which is believed to have some special instincts, such that when treated cruelly, it could do something harmful to the person. He maintained that it was possible for the spirits to get hold of such a person, and he or she, as a consequence, could give birth to an animal as a form of punishment. He told of a personal story to this effect thus:

I remember, there was a story that a certain man used to catch catfish from a river very often. Sometime later his wife gave birth to a catfish. A real catfish that resembled a human being. It happened twice. I saw one. The shape of the head of one of them was just like that of the catfish. What happened in this town has confirmed that it was the river that caused that.

Traditional Respondent 6, on his part, claimed that Akans believe animals can be wronged: to this he said:

Yes, I think is true. They [the Akans] believe that even for some dogs, sometimes they will be in the house and they could be a little bit moody. So when you hit a dog and it is coming back, it comes in a very moody manner then you have offended it. So those are true. Yes, the behavior and even the wild animals, especially if you misfire them. You want to kill but you were no able to or you didn't succeed. When it is bouncing back. It comes to pounce on you...

When asked to explain why the Akans support the killing of animals for various activities despite the fact that they hold the belief that animals can be wronged, Traditional Respondent 6 responded that:

Okay, you see, even in the Bible if you go to the Bible, it says God said that I have given dominion over all the animals. So, even though they are created just like human beings by our nature we have dominion over them. We can use them to satisfy our needs. So killing them is nothing wrong. But you don't kill the one that is closely connected with you in terms of totem.

The four traditional respondents from the focus group discussion in Cape Coast likewise agreed that animals do feel pain. According to Traditional Respondent 7, a kind of mercy killing approach is adopted by the people because they believe animals feel pain. He explained that:

Before animals are killed, he explained, you must first give it water. Secondly, you must cover the throat so that no sound of pain comes out. The third thing you do is that the knife or cutting material you are using must be sharp enough to go through completely. That is the essence of

using a live animal for rituals. If you about killing the animal and you put a knife to the neck and it cries, the animal has become bad for the sacrifice... We are in the animal kingdom that is why we have transferred the notion of mercy killing from humans to animals. Even at home if they are slaughtering a chicken, they remove the feathers around the neck so that they can easily get to the skin so that the knife can easily go through. So we are not cruel to animals.

Traditional Respondent 9 also added that apart from the killing that can bring about pain to the animal, sometimes there is the belief among the traditional people that if you do something bad to the animal, it can turn on you. She offered a story she was told about someone who caused unnecessary pain to a goat as follows:

There was this story of somebody. It was said that there was this goat that frequently came to eat his stuff. One day, he caught it and inserted hot pepper into its anus and then turned it away after giving it multiple maltreatment. The animal continuously cried in agony for a long time because it was unable to pass feces and it eventually died. It is a true story somebody told me. They said it was not long after the death of the goat that the man became sick. He was also unable to pass feces or do anything. Eventually, he had to confess before he died. So we have this saying or belief that animals are not to be wronged. No cruelty to animals.

On the topic of animal pain, all the traditional respondents agreed that animals can experience pain. Traditional Respondent 6 was of the view that animals can experience both pain and pleasure. Traditional Respondent 5 maintained that animals are believed to experience grief. He asserted that: *Yes, you see it is just like what happened to the river. I have some belief that, that catfish was the offspring of the river. It is allowed to ask for permission to harvest some of the fish for food. But the use of DDT in killing her offspring is prohibited. Yes, it means you have killed its offspring. Do you understand it?* Traditional Respondent 4 was of the view that animals can experience both pain and pleasure. For him, it is because they can experience pain and pleasure that is why sometimes, in some areas after they plant and harvest corn and plantain, they leave some of the ripe ones for the animals because they also must eat. He stated that, *we have that pain, that feeling for the animals*, he said. He continued that, *they (the animals) should be happy and when they are happy they multiply. And for your own good for the good of man, when the time comes to go for them, you have to go for them, you have them all over.* Traditional Respondent 2 also reacted to the topic of animal pain as follows: *An animal can feel pain. If you harm an animal such as a goat, it can stand at a distance and stare at you.*

Hmm, they feel the pains. You may think you are punishing the owner of the animal but the animal also feels the pain.

Upon the study's enquiry to know if animals can be made happy, Traditional Respondent 3 responded by narrating his personal experience with some birds that have made the front of his house their home:

You know, there are some birds that come to make their nests in front of my house. They lay their eggs in the nests and hatch their chicks. They remain here till the chicks grow feathers and learn to fly, and if they fall in their early attempts, I pick them up. When they grow and they are leaving I bid them good-bye. They return during their next laying season because they have studied the situation to assure themselves that I will not do them any harm. Now I regard them as my companions so when they are leaving, I tell them that I would pray for them so that no child shoots a catapult at them and they keep coming year after year. A dove has made its nest in front of my house and it will lay its eggs at the appropriate time and hatch the eggs and they would live here till the chicks grow feathers and they will fly to and fro. When some of them come to my room, I pick them and send them to their 'mothers'. Now I can show you where some of them are. They study the situation and they are sure that I will not do them any harm. When I speak they understand it, they know when I am pounding 'fufu', when I turn on my radio, and do other things. Still they have a belief in me that... I do not do them any harm, so I have a catapult. Some of the birds fly far away so I refrained from shooting them with my catapult. Then I repented so I have desisted from killing birds with a catapult. It is a big problem.

Traditional Respondent 2 reacted that truly animals can feel happiness if they are treated well. According to her:

For instance, when you treat the dog and the cat well by feeding them regularly and playing with them, they feel your absence and become miserable when you are not around. As soon as you approach them, they feel happy, for instance fowls and sheep and others, if you treat them well and kindly. When you are not around, they realize it. So as soon as you come back they realize that their keeper is around. And they feel happy and excited.

The study further inquired from the traditional respondents whether all the aforementioned instances of pain that are caused on animals constitute a harm done directly to the animals or their human owners. To this, Traditional Respondent 7 was quick to answer that yes, the harm is directly to the animal. Traditional Respondent 9, on her part, thought it depended on the

situation. She stated that: *sometimes you may hit the animal out of spite for the owner but the hurt goes directly to the animal. Indirectly, it affects the owner because when the animal breaks a leg or a bone it is the owner that will be troubled. So yes we wrong the animal.* Traditional Respondent 3 also replied that:

No, if an animal is owned by somebody and you offend it, you indeed offend the owner. You know, if I offend you, I have equally offended your father. Hence, if you offend me, I have to report to your father. I need not retaliate unexpectedly. So, in the olden days it was a regulation that if somebody's sheep destroys your crops... It is stated in the Laws in Deuteronomy that the sheep would be arrested and sent to the owner and explain to him the damage it has caused for the owner to pay for the damage. It is not right to kill the animal... Since animals are unable to talk, sometimes we encroach on their rights.

Traditional Respondent 5 replied saying: *Yes, you have harmed the animal. You cannot mercilessly strike a fowl that you do not intend killing for food and cause it to writhe in pain. As a result of hitting it mercilessly, you have subjected it to pain. You see that you have caused harm to it.* Traditional Respondent 4 responded that:

Well, the domestic ones are not considered as being any spiritual significant like the wild ones. Well like you rightly said, when I hurt your goat, I come to you and I pay any fine, we sit down, we discuss then I pay for it. We don't care about the pain or the agony that the animal is going through. In some places they are healed. When you break the legs, they heal them, even chicken and so on, they heal them, they do them, that is, they protect them. Someone uses them as real pets, they don't kill them. You know, such a person, if you hit his pet you will be in trouble. But the wild ones we consider their health for their own sake, anything, any laws to preserve or to do anything is for the sake of the animals because we don't even know them, unless we luckily or by chance pounce on them in your expedition.

According to Traditional Respondent 1, hurting animals or causing them pain does not always constitute wrong doing on the part of the human perpetrator. He thought it depends on the reason that got the person to hit the animal in the first place. *For example, he narrated, if a cat should come for your meat, it may have to be punished to stop it from stealing meat. Other times, the cat may hide under the bed and defecate and so must be punished.*

5.3.1.5 Animals having spirits and/or souls

From the focus group discussion with the four traditional respondents in Cape Coast, it was found out that animals do not possess a soul. Traditional Respondent 8 stated that it is not mentioned anywhere in their tradition or belief that animals possess a soul. The Traditional Respondent 9, responded saying: *No as for animals they do not have souls. When they die, they die.* She believed that it was one of the differences between animals and humans. She went on further that: *None of the animals have souls. We do not know but we presume that once they are animals and we can kill them and eat them and you cannot kill a human being they do not have souls.* On whether animals have spirits, Traditional Respondent 8 was of the view that if animals do not have souls, then they cannot have spirits. However, some of the participants were also of the view that some animals can be possessed by spirits even though that is not for everyone to see except for people with ‘special’ eyes.

Traditional Respondent 1, on his part, believed that animals have souls. His position was that animals and humans share certain attributes such as growth, procreation, death, and the ability to walk. As a result of these similarities, animals too have spirits just as humans do. Below is an excerpt of his response:

Animals have spirits just as humans also do. Not all animals have spirits. The animals with spirits are divided into two... It is the life that gives the soul. The large animals such as lions, elephants, etc., the large ones in the forest have spirits. So that if a hunter goes to the forest and kills an elephant or kills a large animal such as a lion and he comes back to report to the elders of his kill, he is told there is a spirit behind him. If certain rituals are not done for him the spirit will continue to torment him. If this ritual is not done for the hunter the hunter goes to the forest fearing that the spirit of the animal he has killed still lingers there and as result a bad omen may befall him. So animals have spirits, especially the large ones. It is the smaller ones that do not have spirits... The meat of the elephant, for example, is eaten but in the past, if a hunter kills it, there was a ritual called ‘Abofosi’ that was done for him to glorify him. All those who will attend are made to bath a special water that is meant to sack the spirit of the animal... That is why some animals are buried when they die... When they die we do not know where their spirits go even though we know where the human soul goes to.

Traditional Respondent 2 held that animals can possess both spirit and soul. *They also possess spirit. They have soul. You know that we sometimes refer to both human beings and animals as “animals” (mammals) but each of us have different characteristics. So they also possess spirit,* she offered. On the question of what happens to the animals’ soul after death, the Queen Mother

replied saying: *Theirs perish. They do not go anywhere. We ourselves kill them for food.* According to Traditional Respondent 4, animals only have spirits but not souls. He answered saying: *No, no, no, animals have spirit, they don't have souls. They do not have souls because the soul... our soul goes back to the owner, God our creator... the Bible says we should pour... don't eat the blood of the animal, it is the spirit of the animal. It is life, the life in the animal is the spirit, not the soul. The soul accounts to the creator, but the spirit hovers. You understand? ...So, that is why God warned the Israelites not to eat the carcass of the dead animal. The blood is still there.* Traditional Respondent 3 claimed that animals have both spirits and souls. He stated that: *"Yes, animals have spirit just as God endowed them with it. They have their way of life by which they study things and they can be more intelligent than human beings... Animals have soul, so if the soul leaves the body the animal dies.* He held that when the animal dies, the soul goes back to where it came from, that is, to God who created it. God provided the animal with it. For him, *all things came from the Lord so it would go back, but I do not know whether there is judgment for them.*

Furthermore, Traditional Respondent 5 also claimed that animals only have some 'God-given spirit' but not a soul. He believed that it is this spirit that made it possible for them to be tamed and trained to follow certain instructions. He also stated that when animals die, that is the end of it, their soul does not go anywhere. He held this to be true for both small and large animals alike. In contrast, Traditional Respondent 6 held that the larger wild animals in the bush or forest possess a soul and not the smaller ones. He asserted that:

When it comes to the bush, looking at the wild ones, we can group them into smaller ones such as the rat, okusie, grasscutter, adowa and those smaller ones, antelope on one side... And others, the wild big ones, such as the buffalo, the duiker and of course, the topmost will be the elephant. We call them 'sasaboa'. Sa-sa-boa: boa, 'aboa' is an animal because the Akans believe that they also have souls and spirit just like human beings.

Concerning the smaller animals, Traditional Respondent 6 stated that: *you just kill them and you are free*". Traditional Respondent 2 indicated that the Akans believe that some wild animals possess spirits hence, killing them require special skills. According to her, an animal like the buffalo is one of such animals. There is a saying, she continued, among the Akans that to kill this buffalo or after killing it, the hunter must bath the *saasa* (ghost or spirit) medicine. If this is not done, the *saasa* of the animal will haunt the hunter all the time. This, she said, is captured in a popular saying which in English means that *to kill a buffalo which will require a*

bath with the saasa medicine then let it go away. Sometimes, she added, some people say, they kill an animal in the forest but before they approach and examine the animal they killed, the animal metamorphoses into a human being. Hence, for her, so many things are involved and it takes courage to kill animals. This view is made to reinforce their beliefs and convictions that certain animals possess a spirit in them.

5.3.1.6 How human-animal relationship affects how animals are treated

Concerning how the human-animal-relationship affect human treatment of animals, Traditional Respondent 6 mentioned that a close relationship with animals changes one's outlook towards the animal. He said:

Your outlook towards the animal will change, I mean you become so closer to the animal. That is why some people have dogs who have stayed in the house... Any time a dog dies, it is just like a funeral. Everybody, especially kids in the house, everybody becomes so gloomy and they are of themselves. So the longer you become associated with the animal the more friendly the relationship becomes. And sometimes some people treat them as human beings.

He believed this to be also valid for wild animals which have been domesticated. Thus, he said: *...the moment you bring it home. You domesticate it and it becomes like any domestic wild one and becomes as a pet.* Traditional Respondent 5 also responded that a good close relationship with animals establishes a bond-like that of siblings between animals and humans. He held that: *You see that when you establish a relationship with it and allow it to do what you also do then you become like a sibling. You are no more enemies. No one fears the other anymore, so definitely... Yes, it has become part of the owner. ...their presence in your house means you have some service to render for them.* He was also of the belief that a close relationship with an animal makes it difficult and painful for the owner to kill it. Traditional Respondent 2 also expressed similar sentiments saying: *...When there is an occasion that you should kill your own animal for food, you feel reluctant to do that. So, sometimes you have to engage a neutral person to kill it for you. But at any rate, you have to kill it for food.* Traditional Respondent 2 indicated that it is those animals that are kept at home particularly, those that that are kept as pets that the human relationship with them makes it difficult to kill. She said: *Someone may have reared a fowl or goat, it is very difficult or painful or hurts for them to kill the said animal. Because the way they relate to the animals, it is very difficult for the animals to be killed.*

5.3.2 The young adult respondents

On the theme of the moral status of nonhuman animals, the study similarly engaged the young adult respondents. The young adult respondents, as indicated, comprised two focus groups namely, the Campus Focus Group, and the Nungua Focus Group. Again, while almost all the questions asked of the respondents in this group had some implications on the theme at hand, the following are the questions asked directly towards the theme - What Clan do you belong to and what are their animal totem and taboos? Explain why you may or may not believe that some aspects of nature including animals can be or have spirits? Do you think animals have souls, why or why not? In what ways do you think animals can be wronged? Do you think animals can feel pain and pleasure, why or why not? How are animals treated or not treated well in Ghana?

What follows in this section are the responses from the young adult respondents based on the above questions.

5.3.2.1 The place of humans and animals

Under the theme of the interrelatedness of nature, it was reported that the young adult respondents acknowledged the fact that humans, and the rest of nature including animals, are interconnected and depended on one another for survival. They also intimated that despite the interconnection, humans are to be regarded superior to other living things in nature. The study sought to find out more in terms of what, in the view of the young adult respondents, distinguishes humans from nonhuman animals that should make humans merit the top position in nature.

Starting with the Campus Focus Group, there was no agreement regarding what should constitute the distinctive mark between humans and animals. The participants from the Nungua Focus Group were also faced with similar situation. Some of the suggested attributes that participants from the Campus Focus Group thought set humans apart from animals are as follows: One participant identified as Kwame thought, it was '*communication barrier*'. To this view however, another respondent by name Benjamin raised *doubt*. He contemplated that what if animals can actually communicate, but humans have not yet developed the capabilities to comprehend. Relatedly, Shadrack thought it is the inability to enter into some sort of social or moral contract with animals that sets animals apart from humans. He stated that: *You know for the sake of survival we humans have made laws not to kill each other, that is, for survival, but*

we cannot have that laws with animals. Because if the animal gets me, it can eat me. When pressed further with the point that similar laws cannot be made with babies, yet it is considered morally wrong to eat babies, Shadrack retorted that babies are considered to be part of human species. He added that: *even if we can't make laws with them [babies] directly, we still have laws with their parents, their families, so it covers them.* Aboraa agreed with him on this point. Shadrack, again, suggested that another mark of difference is that humans have higher rationality than animals.

The participants from the Nungua Focus Group also made the following submissions: Obed identified 'intuition' as a key distinctive mark between animals and humans. Explaining what he meant he said: *Our capacity to think is like vast, like wider, as compared to the animals.* Majority of the participants agreed with him on this score. Obed, later on in the discussion, described humans as 'super animals' and that nature has been fashioned such that humans are made to eat animals. His exact words were: *...but a human being is a super animal. What he can do as compared to the whole animals, it takes individual animals to do a number of things but one human can do a combination of work...that is how we are made. We are made to feed on animals; that is how we are created.* Osei, however, suggested that it was the fact that humans had souls and animals do not. For him, animals and humans are equal in every respect except for this fact. Thus, he stated: *Animals do not have souls but humans have souls. Apart from that everything is the same. Some animals are fast, they think faster than humans. So I believe only the soul. When they die there is no soul, everything remains on earth.*

5.3.2.3 Taboos and totems

The study gathered that participants from the two focus groups were not familiar with the specific details under this theme. Many of them did not know or were unsure the Akan Clan they belonged to, not to mention their affiliated totem animals, the taboos, and reverence traditionally required for their totem animals. Aborowa, a participant from the Campus Focus Group, for example, when asked about her totem mentioned that: *I think I have heard but I am not so sure. Biretuo or Asakyiri. I don't know. I think Biretuo or Asona, One of them. I'm not so sure.* Shadrack replied: *the last time I asked I believe I was told Oyokuo.* Benjy's response was: *I think the Ashantis call it, the Twi call it Asona and in Fante it is Agona.*

The situation was not any different with the Nungua Focus Group participants. Although, few of them such as Obed, Opambour and Osei were confident of the Clan they belonged to, the

other four participants did not share that confidence. Pius, for example, claimed he had forgotten. Priscilla, on her part, mentioned that she belongs to the Bretuo Clan but admitted she didn't know the totem. *I think it's a lion or so*, she said. However, almost all of them were aware that traditionally, they were not supposed to harm, kill or consume their totem animal as food.

5.3.2.4 Animal Pain and the wronging of Animals

Generally, the young adult respondents believed that animals can be wronged in a variety of ways. They accepted that anything that brings about unnecessary pain to the animal can be classified as a wrong to the animals. This, they mentioned, include throwing stones at them; beating them; hitting or running them over with a car; among others. Claudia, for example, stated that: *I think we can always wrong them, of course, even humans wrong humans, so how much more animals?* Pius thought animals can be wronged but not all killings of animals constitute wrong doing. For him, it depends on the purpose of killing. Benjamin, on his part, queried if asking whether animals can be wronged, is not stretching morality to cover animals. For him, he was not sure about the possibility of that. He, however, agreed that animals can be wronged if they are harmed for no reason. Aboraa, on her part, stated that:

Yeah, I think they can be wronged, like I feel even our everyday attitude towards animals such as killing, we are wronging them but just that we cannot feel what they are feeling, we just ignore them. But I think they can be wronged, like the instance Shadrach gave that somebody deliberately throws a stone at a pregnant goat just to be happy. In that instance you are wronging the animal.

They also generally accepted that animals can experience pain. Nevertheless, for many of them, the fact that animals experience pain does not suggest a total abolishment of their use whether for food, pets or for biomedical research. They will, instead, support a more humane way of killing them or giving them better treatment to reduce their pain. Shadrach, for example, mentioned that:

I think that with this new information or with we knowing or bearing in mind that animals feel pain, the only thing we can do for them because we have higher rationality we cannot act as they will, so we know what pain is or we can actually understand what pain is, so the only thing we can do to them is to try to decrease or reduce the pain we take them through but for the eating we still have to.

Osei, who did not support the use of animals for human consumption said, he has always had the pain of the animals in mind. For Pius, even though he agrees animals experience pain, he only considers the animal pain if the animal is his pet. If not, then he does not think about the animal's pain so much. He claimed that: *I think we think about the pain when the animal is your pet. Unless it is my pet, if it is not my pet then no, no, no, no, if I am using it for something that I will benefit.* To this end, he believed, it was only pets that can be wronged. Opambour held that animal pain does not really matter if a human life is at stake or if it will serve a greater purpose.

The respondents identified some other practices and treatment of animals that they thought brought undue or unjustified pain to animals. These included trophy hunting and killing animals for the mere fun of it; indiscriminate killings of wild animals for their horns and ivory; having sexual intercourse with animals; making animals fight each other as a game; and using animals for farmland labour (example, to plough the land). Others are the starving of animals; hitting animals for no apparent reason and the way and manner some animals are killed.

5.3.2.5 Animals' inhabitation of a soul or a spirit

On this theme, views were divided. Participants were not sure if animals have souls or spirits or if they have souls and not spirits or the other way around. Opambour thought animals have spirits but they do not have souls. Obed thought that if we are associating soul with life then animals can be said to have souls, but they do not have spirits. The respondents, however, agreed that animals can be possessed by spirits. Generally, most of the participants were more inclined to believe that animals have spirits than souls. Kwame, for instance, noted that: *I don't know animals have spirits but spirits inhabit them. That is my belief. I believe in the creator, I don't think the creator made them with spirits but spirits can possess them to use them because spirits are not embodied, they don't have body, you know, so they can use them. I don't think animals have spirits.* Despite this view, participants were however of the view that with the exception of their totem animals, they did not think the fact that animals have spirits or can be possessed by spirits should affect how humans treat them.

5.4 Theme 3: Vegetarianism and the use of animals as food

Questions on whether animals have rights or interests, and about whether it is morally right or wrong to hunt and trap animals, bear some affinity to the theme of vegetarianism. However,

the more direct questions asked towards this theme were: Is there anything wrong with the eating of animals, why or why not? Is becoming a vegetarian the ethical thing to do? What are some of the animals used as food (delicacies) and for sacrifices and rituals? Is it permitted or conceivable that an Akan should become a vegetarian? First, the study presents the responses from the traditional respondents followed by the young adult respondents.

5.4.1 The traditional respondents' views

From every indication, the use of animals as food forms part of the daily diet of the traditional Akans. Table 5.4.1.2 above indicates some of the animals that are regularly used for their meat and other food products such as eggs. In the interactions with the traditional respondents, the researcher discovered that there is no Akan word for a vegetarian or vegetarianism unless one explains it in a sentence as 'someone who does not eat meat or animal products'. It was evident that one of the major reason why animals are important to the Akans is for their food. Traditional Respondent 2, for example, stated emphatically that *we should preserve the animals and use some of them for food and keep others to protect us*. However, many of the traditional respondents indicated that it is possible for one to find individual Akans who abstain from meat and animals product, even though it is likely they do so for health and other personal reasons, rather than for a moral reason that considers the interests of animals. Traditional Respondent 2 mentioned that such people are not considered strange at all. She indicated further that there some people who are of the belief that eating meat can cause some illness. Such people perceive animals as potential carriers of diseases or germs. Such individuals, as a result, avoid meat in their diets and do not eat eggs either. These individuals may make it a point to eat only vegetables such as cabbage, carrot, onion, and tomatoes all the time. She, however, indicated that there are some who may regard animals as human beings and as such do not want to kill them.

The Chief linguist of Aburi traditional area, Traditional Respondent 3, also stated that it was possible to find individuals who have made it a personal decision to consume only fruits and vegetables. He however indicated that the abstinence from meat product entirely may make one lack some essential nutrients and fall sick as a result of the likelihood of an unbalanced diet. Nevertheless, there was no law or taboo against anyone who decides to follow that path. For Traditional Respondent 5, the Akan customs do not really say anything specific on vegetarians or vegetarianism. He stated that: *There is no specific rule in our culture; however, traditionally, if you look carefully, we use both the vegetables and meat together. But there is*

no specificity here. For some traditional rituals, one has no choice but to use meat to fulfil the demands of culture. Furthermore, he indicated that the Akan customs do not prevent anyone from abstaining from meat. He, however, mentioned that it will be difficult for a chief to decide to use only vegetables and fruits for rituals in place of the animals that are used. Traditional Respondent 1 mentioned that he had not come across any chief who has stated that he does not eat meat. Meat, he claimed, forms part of the chiefs rituals and certain portion of the animal are reserved only for the chief, and others for specific individuals occupying specific traditional positions. In addition, there are men called *osodofoo* (male cooks) who cook for the chief and treat his meat as tradition requires. Again, the chief of every town had a particular animal that was used as food for him for his spiritual upliftment. As such, if a chief does not eat meat it may only be known by close members of his household and not publicly. Despite this, he agreed there was nothing in the Akan culture barring an ordinary person from deciding to abstain from meat.

According to Traditional Respondent 4, not until recently, it was almost impossible to hear of an Akan who was a vegetarian. He stated that:

Seriously, because meat and fish is what we live on. Your trap catches a game, fresh, you come and you try to prepare it, cut it into pieces, put hot pepper and so on, and you are on your way going, and what are you talking about – vegetarianism? The probability of the Akan in those days to come and tell you he is a vegetarian is very, very, limited, seriously. From my experience, I do not think so, if there were some of that maybe under the instructions from the gods, not voluntarily wanting to be a vegetarian. That will never be possible, yeah.

For Traditional Respondent 6, traditionally, it is impossible to find someone who does not eat any meat at all. One may find individuals who may detest one particular meat or the other for various personal reasons, but not one, who does not eat meat entirely. He mentioned that some hunters may not eat blooded animals because of their experiences, but may eat fish, crabs and snails. Others naturally were born not liking certain foods.

The position of the four traditional leaders who partook in the focus group discussion in Cape Coast was that traditionally, no one was prevented from becoming a vegetarian, although meat eating formed an essential part of the Akan custom. Traditional Respondent 9 stated that:

There are some people who do not like meat right from birth. For instance, I do not eat fufuo. I have not eaten some before. Therefore, I can't eat it. Some people too when they eat meat, it is not good for them; it is not good for the person's body constitution. However, these days,

due to civilization and enlightenment we are admonished not to eat meat, otherwise, for meat, we eat. Because we eat game and sometimes kill domestic animals for food.

She added that this was also true for a chief since eating meat is not part of the requirement of becoming a chief. She said: *...so if you're a king today, and you were once a child, what you didn't like back then you can't be forced to like it today. What can stop you from becoming a king is when you are physically challenged but apart from deformity, no one can force you to eat something you do not like.*

5.4.2 The young adult respondents' views

All the seven participants in the Campus Focus Group did not have any problem with the killing and using of animals as food. It was only one person out of the seven, who identified himself as a partial vegetarian, and seem to sympathize somewhat with the killing and using of animals as food even though, he thought it was a personal decision to be made. There were two participants in the Nungua Focus Group who identified as vegetarians. Osei claims he became a vegetarian first, upon doctor's advice (health reasons), but later developed love for animals. He, as a result, claims to be a vegetarian now on moral grounds. Priscilla, the second person in the Nungua Focus Group to identify herself as a vegetarian, said she is a vegetarian not on moral or health grounds but just a decision that she made. She personally never really liked eating meat, she said.

Obed claimed he sees nothing wrong with eating animals as food, because it is for human sustainability. He also thought it is a subjective decision to be made. To this he said:

I think all these things boil down to subjectivity. Is more of individual perception whether to feed on this [animal] or not, whether to have a mixed diet or not. For example, since birth nobody told you what to eat and what not to eat, but as you are growing up and learning and observing your environment, and also as you said moral and health reasons you choose to eat this or that. But on the normal grounds, I will go back to the ecosystem and say it is a cycle, they have to feed on each other.

Pius believed there was nothing wrong with eating animals because God has cleansed all animals for human beings. For him, notwithstanding the fact that animals have life, their life is meant for a specific life span. According to Clara, there is nothing wrong with eating animals because animal food is nice and are a major source of protein. Efua as well, did not did not see

anything wrong done with the consumption of meat because for her, everything in nature, depends on each other for survival.

Kwame, who was the only one in the Campus Focus Group who believed using animals for food is wrong, and identified himself as a 'partial vegetarian', did not agree with Clara that it is justifiable to eat animals because they are a source of protein. His reason for not supporting this is that he believes animals have their own way of communicating, and because they have life just like humans. Shadrack did not agree that animals are consumed only for their protein. He thought they are eaten also for their taste and aroma. Aboraa mentioned that some animals such as the hen are meant to be eaten, that is their purpose. She stated that:

I disagree. Everything has a purpose to serve and you cannot tell me not to pluck a mango to eat because it is a living thing, but its purpose is for me to eat and feel free. Some animals are meant to be killed and eaten, like the hen. They are purposed in our tradition setting... We rear chicken for people to come and buy, to go and kill and then eat. Nobody will say I'm rearing this flock or chicken for a very long time without touching them. So, their purpose for us is to eat them. So, you can't tell me that nobody should kill animals and eat because it is a living thing.

She further thought that it was up to individuals to determine the purpose for which they want to keep an animal, whether for food or as pet.

Benjamin thought that for the purpose of survival and sustenance it was ok to consume animals. He said:

I think in the cycle of life, the few examples you mentioned, human beings, animals and trees depend on each other for sustenance and survival. Animals and trees depend on each other for sustenance and survival. Now, people eat plants and animals to sustain themselves. When animals and human beings die they go back to the soil and restore the trees to grow. So within nature's own mechanism, it is these three elements that sustain themselves. But now with regards to whether it is right or wrong to eat animals, I think again for the purposes of sustenance, so far as the animals we are eating is not hazardous to your health and is not illegal, and for survival or sustenance why not.

Osei also did not think eating animals was the right thing to do. He explained that:

When I see an animal slaughtered, it hurts and goes down to my heart for some time now, every animal. Yes, even the wild ones because there is a way you can get closer to wild animals

so, personally I wish we can keep them and not eat them. The vegetables are there, the fruits... Animals have blood. There is blood flowing in humans as well as animals.

He also believed God created animals so that they coexist with humans but not for consumption. His comments attracted a lot of laughter from the other participants who mainly shared a different view.

Priscilla, even though a vegetarian by choice, claimed she did not see anything wrong with other people using animals for food. Her major concern, however, was what she described as the brutal way they are killed before they are eaten. Thus, she said:

Yes, I don't see anything wrong with it but it shouldn't be so brutal... Sometimes it is sad, like they will just kill the animal, especially the way they kill the cat, it is just sad. I have actually experienced one. They put the cat in a sack and just be hitting it on the ground or something and it will be striking and all of that, I mean it is quite pitiful. And how they kill hens and cocks, they will struggle before they die, it just bad... I won't eat, but I'm cool with those who eat it.

On the question of why we cannot eat human beings, some respondents argued that it was because humans can understand each other but they cannot understand animals. Others were of the view that it is because humans can make laws with each other and not with animals. Some respondents also pointed out that it was because humans belong to the same species. For Obed, eating humans is cannibalism, it is just not the way because humans were brought up. Pius, Efua and Opambour insisted that humans cannot eat humans because, if you observe the natural order of things in the animal kingdom, a tiger, for example, does not eat a fellow tiger, a chicken will not eat a chicken either. Consequently, they held that there is no way humans should be allowed to eat their fellow humans.

Again, when asked whether any of them foresees themselves ever becoming vegetarians or if becoming a vegetarian is the moral way to go, almost all the participants responded in a way that suggested such scenario is close to an impossibility. Benjamin, for example, said not in this lifetime. He could not imagine life without pork and beef. For Efua and Pius, it is a big no. Pius pointed out that: *if we all are vegetarians, the leaves and all those things, they will all die. We will not get enough oxygen... So, it is not possible for us to become vegetarians.* (Obed, Efua and Claudia agreed with him). According to Clara, to be given food without meat an insult. She does not only eat the meat for the protein but it because she just loves it. Claudia believed becoming a vegetarian is a bad choice because, “we must eat and enjoy.” Priscilla’s

position was that so far as God has given humans the permission to eat animals, she did not see anything wrong with doing so. Becoming a vegetarian, for her, should be a personal decision. Edwin retorted that he can only become a vegetarian for medical reasons but not consciously. According to Shadrack, if he can get access to variety of food that are very tasty he can become a vegetarian. For him, so many factors must be considered before he can become a vegetarian, such as taste, affordability and health. For Aboraa, although she does not see herself becoming a vegetarian now, she wishes to become one in the future mainly for health reasons (to lose weight) and not on moral grounds. Kwame, however, thought it was possible to become a vegetarian because there are many vegetarians surviving. For him, it all has to do with how one “programs” the mind.

5.5 Theme 4: Vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research

Under this theme, the study sought to find out from the target respondents, their position on using animals for biomedical research. The study only directed this theme to the young adult respondents since the practice was not a traditional act.

5.5.1 The young adult respondents

With the exception of one, all the young adult respondents held that there was nothing morally appalling with the use of animals in biomedical research. The general positions were firstly, that humans are superior to animals. Secondly, God has given humans the authority to use and subdue animals for human’s good and then thirdly, the use of animals in research serves a greater utilitarian purpose. Efua, for instance, thought that it is ok to use animals for research for the safety of humans. She said:

I think looking at the safety of us the human beings, I think it is good. Yeah, we don’t give so much respect to animals, as you said, we feed on them. ...the medicine we try on them is to be sure that if we put it on we the human beings it will be good for us. Because human beings, I mean, you can’t go and take someone’s daughter or son to go and experiment on that person, it is unlawful. Okay, so using animals for experiment, for me, I don’t see anything wrong with it. That is my take on it.

Obed also believed it was all right to use animals in biomedical research because ‘obviously’ everything was created for human’s use. Pius and Opambour supported this position. Pius added that: *the Bible even said when God created the world, He said we should subdue the*

earth, meaning everything is under us. You don't expect me to go and use a living being for test, it is not possible. So I have to go and take the monkeys. He thought it was perhaps because monkeys are closely related to humans genetically that is why God created them, such that when there is any experimentation to be done, animals can be used instead of humans. On this score, Benjamin emphasized that humans are, at the moment, on top of the food chain, and that position gives humans the prerogative to exploit things below them for their sustenance and survival, and that for him include using animals for biomedical research. Thus, he said:

I think, look, the point of the argument is this; there is always something or somebody who will be on top of the food chain. And the person or the thing on top of the food chain will decide, will always exploit the other thing to make sure that thing sustains itself. At the moment human beings sit on top of the food chain and no matter how human rights or animal rights people think, we still need people to exploit the things around us to make sure that we survive, to make sure that society goes on.

Obed, additionally, thought that for the furtherance of research, it was acceptable to experiment on animals. According to him, *we can't do trial and error on the human beings, but rather we can do trial and error on animals and plants*, he said. Opambour, on his part, commented that: *when it comes to a test that is to be carried out for the purpose and the benefit of human beings, I think that if animals are being used it is line with God's own purpose of creation.*

For Priscilla, using animals for biomedical research “is not something bad.” Her concern was that the practice needed to be regulated so that people do not do it indiscriminately. She stated that: *I think that it is not something bad but then there should be a regulation for such thing, for I know that for some countries they are very particular about their animals. We can't just go about using animals for our research. There has to be a regulation for that so that people don't just use animals for any other purpose. So for me, there should be a regulation.* When asked why she thought regulations were important, she intimated that it was due to the pain the animals go through, which in turn is mainly due to the fact that some biomedical research requires several testing on animals before a solution is found. *I feel for them as well*, she added. Shadrack suggested that using animals instead of humans constitutes a lesser harm, unless it is argued that animals and humans are equal. He added that:

Some research about medicine you don't actually know the effect. If you give it to a person, the person might die, so it's better for animal, like a mouse to die than human being... even in the real life experiences, sometimes when it comes between choosing between two humans,

sometimes we choose one and let one die. Even to our fellow humans we do it to them when we have to. So, for the animals it is the same. When we have to we even do it to our fellow humans.

It was only Osei who stated that the use of animals for biomedical research was wrong. He didn't agree with all the reasons and justifications provided by the other participants. He was convinced that there are other means and ways to conduct these biomedical tests without using animals. He stated that:

There are many other means, there are many other ways. For the plants I don't have a problem. Since we can't use humans, I don't think we can also use animals... Animals also have their rights just as humans, so I believe they should take their rights also into consideration. So, I believe it is about time we found our way of doing our research without hurting these animals.

When asked why he thought using animals in biomedical research was wrong, he responded saying: *For me, only the killing, the pain, I think about the pain more, yeah.*

5.6 Theme 5: The use of animals as pets/companion animals

On this theme, the study sought to find out from the participants their perception on the use of animals as companion animals. From the traditional respondents, the study sought to know the historical and cultural position of traditional Akan beliefs and practices on the use of animals as pets. From the young adult respondents, the study's goal was to find out from them whether they consider anything ethically wrong with the keeping of animals as pets. Below is a presentation of what the study gathered first, from the traditional respondents followed by that of the young adult respondents.

5.6.1 The traditional respondents' views

It was discovered from the traditional respondents that the Akans do not have a specific name for pet. Pets are classified under domesticated animals, as the Akans used the same term, *efie mmoa* (household animals) or *ayjnboa* (reared animals). This places pets as part of animals kept at home which includes animals that are reared or kept at home for their meat rather than companionship. According to Traditional Respondent 2, pets are called by the same name as Akans use for all domesticated animals. She mentioned that some examples of animals usually kept as pets are dogs, cats, and parrots. For her, people keep these animals as pets simply because they like them or have interest in them.

Traditional Respondent 5 mentioned that pets are all part of animals the Akans referred to as domestic animals. For him though, God in his own wisdom created some animals to be in the forest or bush and others to be at home, He said:

...the domestic animals have counterparts in the bush..., the domestic cow for instance, you can find its counterpart in the bush. We have the counterpart of the dog. It is called 'Odompo'. It lives in the bush. There is also the counterpart of the cat in the bush. It is not as if humans converted them to be domesticated animals. That is how God Himself created them. He created some to be wild animals and others domestic animals. That is how it is. It is the nature of things.

Some examples of domestic animals he mentioned include hen, sheep, goats, cats, cattle, birds such as the dove, and many others. He also did not see anything wrong in keeping animals as pets and killing them later for food. He thought it was up to the individual to decide what to do with the animal. He gave an instance of a friend who finds it difficult to kill his own animals and has resorted to selling them instead. Again, for him, one of the differences between the wild animals and those at home, is in their behavior towards humans. Those kept at home have been influenced by humans, and have become fond of humans while those in the wild will run away at the sight of a human.

Traditional Respondent 1, on his part, claimed that, it is the 'Whiteman' that differentiates between pets and reared animals but among the Akans, pets are part of the animals generally referred to as reared animals. According to his account, humans came to meet these animals at home as per God's creation and order of things. He stated that:

When you look at God creations, those who are in the forest stayed in the forest. So if you take a look, when God created the universe, those animals at home were at home and others went to stay in the wild. Humans came to meet those at home at home and built their own place of abode. Based on their character the wild ones went away and the others stayed at home.

Traditional Respondent 1, examples of animals kept as reared animals or pets include - cattle, sheep, dogs, goats, hen, guinea fowls, turkey, dove and the likes. For him, these reared animals or pets are more important to humans than those that are in the wild because 'they are close to us, and we take care of their needs'. He added that: "*The belief, I think, is that, the domesticated animals live with us. They are very important to us than those in the wild. For the domesticated animals, we live with them and anything that affects them affects us. Hence, we don't allow someone to come and kill them indiscriminately.*" For Traditional Respondent 6, a pet is known as *efie aboa* (household animal), a term used generally for all domesticated animals. He

explained that, these have existed with humans been for a long time. They include the dogs, cats and even the hen, which can also be killed for food. He added that it is only the dogs that are sometimes given names. These names, he notes, are usually proverbial or insinuating. To him, the act of giving names to cats is a recent thing. On the history behind domesticated animals, the four traditional leaders from Cape Coast in the focus group discussion agreed with Traditional Respondent 7 that: *there are several histories because firstly, the domestication of animals- initially, they were in the wild and they had one time or the other assisted hunters in one way or the other in their trade and they send them home. So that is the history.* They listed dogs, fowls, cats, parrots, monkeys, and rabbits as examples of animals that are kept as pets. On the killing of animals kept as pets for food, Traditional Respondent 9 mentioned that: *initially we were told to kill them and eat. So there is no problem in that regard. But the relationship sometimes makes it difficult.*

5.6.2 The young adult respondents' views

Generally, most of the young adult respondents did not find any moral problem with the use of animals as companion animals. There were a few respondents who said they did not like animals, so would not like to have animals as pets, but they nevertheless, did not see anything wrong with others keeping animals as pets.

Claudia, Priscilla, Shadrack, and Dorcas claimed they do not like pets or animals as companions, but did not find anything morally wrong with others keeping them for pets. Priscilla, for example, held that even though she does not like animals around her, she does not mind if others decide to keep them around. For her, people should only use tame animals as pets so that the animals are not dangerous to others. Her view was echoed by Abora who stated that:

I think it's okay to have animals as pets, I mean like the very tamed ones and there should be no possibility of them harming its host or its owners in any point in time. Because there are some pets that at a point in time they become very dangerous to their host. So if like you have a cat or a parrot, these things are at a point in time very calm and tame so you can always have them.

For Opambour, there is nothing wrong in keeping animals as pets because he has been told that keeping animals around the house can help divert some misfortunes away from their owners. He explained that this is because, some of these animals can perceive misfortunes such as death

and ailment even before they come. Thus, he said: *Sometimes it is also protective when an ailment or something, a calamity or something is coming into your household or the family, these animals will be able to take that thing, that unfortunate thing that is supposed to happen to you, the human being. They can see it.* Both Pius and Efua agreed to this. Efua added that there have been countless occasions where animals kept by her mother have died out of the blue without her mother knowing the cause of their death. According to Efua, her mother would attribute the sudden death of the animal to the belief that perhaps, something bad was about to happen to some of the family members, and the dead animal took it away in death. Thus, she believed that if humans keep animals as pets and treat them well with care the animals can sacrifice their lives for them.

Pius, on his part, believed it was okay to have animals as pets, because the animal as a pet can be a friend to the owner and provide companionship. In addition, the pet can also provide protection to the owner, he added. For Kwame and Osei, who throughout the interview, have been against many forms of animal uses, this time, were in support of the use of animals as pets. Osei thought animals are more suitable or that it is more acceptable to use animals as pets rather than eat them. He advised that people keep as many pets as possible. Kwame also thought it was a “fantastic” idea to have animals as pets and would not mind having a zoo at his house one day. For Obed, there is nothing wrong in keeping companion animals, but once anyone decides to keep them, they should be ready to take responsibility of the animals. Thus, he said:

You made that commitment to keep a pet, so you have to put everything in check, overseeing to its security as well as... That is the commitment that you have made. You don't feed the pet, you don't take the pet to the veterinary, you leave it scot-free and it is just knocked down by a car, you the owner you are not being responsible, so to me you are wronging the pet.

Shadrack held a similar view with Obed which he expressed saying:

...but for those we select to domesticate them, we have, once we decide to take the animal to your house then you have the obligation to feed the animal. To this view, Edwin also said: I think I side with Shadrach because in every instance, the superior class owes the inferior class a responsibility of taking care of them. If we are not killing them and we are domesticating them in your homes, then why not? Their welfare should be your responsibility.

The participants did not also consider the keeping of animals as pet as an infringement on the freedom of the animals. Opambour, for example, concurred to this because, in his view, the

animal tacitly shows consent through the way it shows affection to the owner and response to the affections it gets. To this he said:

The animal comes, keeps on coming to your house and you give it food or something, then it, begins to show likeness for the thing you are doing for it that means that in one way or the other. He is agreeing to the relationship. Yes, because there is no way to measure or to tell whether the animal agrees or not but the way he attaches, the animal attaches itself to you that shows.

Similarly, for Pius, there is no infringement of animals' freedom in keeping them as pets because he believed the animals are better off in terms of care with human owners than by themselves. Thus, he believes pet owners are rather helping the animals they keep as pets. For Efua, there is no infringement on the animals' right to freedom because they are allowed to roam about during the day and allowed back in the house in the evening. Clara believed no harm is done in terms of infringing on the animal's freedom. Sharing her personal experience with her dog she asserted that:

I think we are not infringing on their rights because my dog expresses herself. When she is hungry you see her making noise with her bowl and you will go and feed her, and when she is not happy or you beat her when you call her she wouldn't come, or when she gets close to you she won't lick your feet. When she licks your feet you know she is happy. That is one thing I got to know with her. She is free to move around, just that she does not go outside. She wouldn't even go. She expresses herself very well and I don't think I am infringing on her right.

Concerning the killing of pets for food as it pertains in some places in Ghana, there were mixed reactions from the respondents. Although, majority of the respondents were not inclined to the idea of killing and eating their pets as food, a few of the respondents such as Obed and Shadrack said they will not mind eating their pet, or saw no wrong in doing so. Aboraa thought that if one should kill and eat his or her pet, then it means the initial purpose for keeping the animal close was not for petting. As a result, she believes it is wrong to kill and eat a pet because people develop some attachment to their pets. She noted that: *From my side there would be that attachment with the pet. You know you have kept somebody for five years, six years and then...even killing it will be problematic. I wouldn't do it.* Clara agreed with Aboraa on this score, and narrated an instance where her security man, who is a lover of dog meat could not bring himself to eat the house's dog (pet) when the dog died, because he felt the dog was family. According to Kwame, the definition of a pet does not allow the owner to kill it for food. For

him, the only time this may be allowed is when there is famine. Benjamin agreed with Kwame on this point. For Shadrack, there is nothing wrong in someone killing and eating one's pet, since one decided to make the animal their pet and so can decide to take that right from the animal at any time. *It's a pet so long as you are keeping it as a pet*, he emphasized.

5.7 Theme 6: The hunting and trapping of animals

What are the traditional Akan practices in terms of hunting and trapping of animals? What does the Akan tradition say concerning hunting? Do young Akan adults see anything morally repulsive with the practice of hunting and trapping of animals? These, among others, were some of the concerns of this theme.

Below are the responses gathered from the two groups of participants beginning with the traditional respondents.

5.7.1 The traditional respondents' views

The traditional respondents pointed out that traditionally, hunting was a serious trade for the Akans, and that a hunter may have to undergo certain rituals and purification rites before he sets out into the wild for game. Also, the killing of some animals required special rituals before the game can be brought home for consumption. Nevertheless, similar conditions were not demanded when it comes to trapping of animals.

According to Traditional Respondent 4's account, the Akans believed that there were evil spirits in the forest, so a hunter needed to equip himself spiritually before venturing on a hunting expedition. He posited that:

...like I was saying earlier on with the belief that some animals, people can transmit to animals and so on. There is evil in the forest and so on, you can meet... an animal can transform itself into anything. There was the belief that you need to fortify yourself. They had some concoction or rites were made or conducted before you even think of becoming a hunter, and continuously use as protection. Against evil and all those things in the forest, and also the problem of killing a bull before you come back to do the cleansing, a painful cleansing and so on. So they prepared, they call it spiritual preparation. Everything was spiritual any way. It is still in the villages.

Traditional Respondent 6, in relation to this, also confirmed the need for hunters to perform some rituals on themselves before embarking on a hunting expedition. He pointed out that there is the belief that there are all kinds of spirits hovering around in the forest at night. The people also believed that some animals such as the duiker or a species of it can easily turn into a human being. Thus, a hunter needs to protect himself from all of these. Traditional Respondent 6 also noted that certain rites were performed by the hunter upon killing certain big wild animals considered to have souls. He stated that:

...So the elephant for instance is called 'sasaboa'. The 'ɔtoromo', the buffalo, they are called 'sasaboa'. So if you kill them and you don't perform the rite, it is assumed and believed that certain predicaments can befall you. If you are hunter and you don't do that you may go hunting the whole night and you will never chance on a single animal... Or you may be attacked by any of these wild animals... So there is a proverb that says that wobekum ɔtoromo na woadware sasaduro deɛ, ennee gyae no ma no nkɔ na ɔmfa ne mmerantesem nenam kwaee ase (To kill a single animal and go through all these rites, you may as well leave it to go.

Traditional Respondent 4, Traditional Respondent 5 and Traditional Respondent 9 also made reference to this same proverb in their independent accounts. Traditional Respondent 6 further narrated the manner some of these rituals took as follows:

There are some that should be done at the spot. Right at the spot, you have to cut the limbs. All the four. Yeah, so cut the limbs to disarm it and then you shout around the forest for other hunters, if they are around, to come. When they come, you can do a smaller one [rituals] by picking some herbs, either you chew them or you put some in the form of libation or something like that. Then, if it is an elephant, you have to come home and inform the public. Whilst you are on the way home, getting home, you have to fire gunshot about three times for people to know that something big has happened. The chief will ask some people to go and accompany you to slaughter it there, because you can't carry the whole thing. Yes, so these are some of the things.

Traditional Respondent 1 in his account also reaffirmed these spiritual beliefs and rites that hunters go through. He noted that in ancient times, a hunter protects himself in two-ways. Firstly, he is supposed to be clean or sacrosanct or abstain from things that taint his image, such as stealing or sleeping with someone's wife or participating in promiscuous and lascivious affairs. He must also not do things that do not conduce to the wellbeing of his soul. More so, the wife of the hunter must remain faithful to him while he is away to hunt so that nothing evil

will endanger him in the forest. If these things are not done, the hunter, it is believed, may bring upon himself some bad omen. That is to say, a misfortune will follow him into the wild. So he starts protecting himself right from the house. Secondly, when he goes into the wild, he needs to know the sort of animal he kills. He needs to know their behaviour, character, countenance, among others. For example, if a hunter is going into the wild to hunt, he needs to know the behaviour of a lion, how it works, how it roars and the like. If the animal is an elephant, the hunter should have the skill required to kill it. The hunter, again, must look for objects and ammunition that he will need for hunting. Traditional Respondent 1 added that usually, when hunters are going for hunting, they carry a sagging-sack bag, a knife, water, among other things to protect themselves from many things.

According to the account by Traditional Respondent 9, sometimes, before hunters go on their expedition, they strip themselves naked. They sometimes do this depending on the history about the said forest they venturing into. *She said: Some of the animals, like the buffalo, when you kill it, you ought to bath the saasa medicine, if not the ghost of the animal, called saasa will continually haunt you. So those who know, know.* For her, it is for this reason, that hunting is considered a special skill and a trade. As a result, one must know the trade and must fortify himself as a hunter before he is able to do it, she posited.

Additionally, Traditional Respondent 4 mentioned that some hunters could spend days or even weeks in the forest before they return with their game. Furthermore, he stated that tradition required that some part of the killed animal goes to the chief of the land. To this, Traditional Respondent 4 stated: *And before, earlier on, it was a law, in or common practice in the villages when you kill certain animals you have to send part of it to the chief's house. It was a common practice. Either one thigh, or the arm, or including the intestines and the heart, how do we call it, or the lungs attached for the chief, Yeah that was the law. But now I don't know if it works anymore.* This was also mentioned in Traditional Respondent 6's account in which he claimed that at times a big game caught is for the entire community to share after the chief of the land has been given what is traditionally due him as the owner of the land. At other times, the hunter sells part of the game to the community Traditional Respondent 6, furthermore, recounted that the Akans used to consider the best hunters to be those who have been able to kill the most number of elephants. Thus, hunters were classified in an ascending order according to the number of elephant kills they have made. He continued that:

Because the elephant stands tall you have to be encouraged to move to kill the second one and in each of these there would be purification rites. All the friends will gather and they will have an orchestra. They meet and sing songs and in these songs some of the songs are insinuating. Where they will be telling those who haven't killed any elephant that you are just small boys. They also applaud those who have been able to kill two and three and pour libation. They do all these to help them to aspire to the highest point. The highest point is somebody who has been able to kill three. When you kill one there is rite, there is purification, there is enjoyment, more or less like a party. When you are inspired to kill two and you do, they will elevate you. Then the highest is the 'PhD', which is the three. So people who kill two and don't go forward to kill three, when they die they think that they were lazy. Yes, so at their burial they have some thorns that they will prick into their feet to punish them for not moving forward...

On trapping animals, Traditional Respondent 4 explained that traps are not set to maim the animals but to kill them. He however admitted that sometimes, the animal caught in the trap struggle for a while before it dies, and at other times, the hunter comes to meet the animal not yet dead in the trap and must strangle it to kill it. Traditional Respondent 6 stated that hunters set traps deep in the forest and some closer to home. For those closer to home, it is easier for the hunters to check on the trap every morning for a catch. For those traps in the forest, however, the hunters may visit them in every three days or so and as such, the hunter cannot monitor the catch. This makes it possible for an animal caught in a trap to struggle, die and even get rotten before the hunter finds it.

5.7.2 The young adult respondents' views

On the whole, the young adult respondents believed that, if it is acceptable by them to kill and eat animals, then there should be nothing wrong with hunting and trapping animals for food. They, however, did not support indiscriminate or unregulated hunting and trapping of animals.

According to Opambour, once he believes that animals can be killed for food, it should not matter if they are hunted and trapped for that same purpose. What he does not endorse is hunting them just for fun or for their horns which is sold for money. Obed shared similar sentiments. He posited that:

Some people go hunting for fun, for antics; like they kill and they make it a milestone, I have killed twenty deer, thirty lions, like by self-glorifying and expeditions. Those are some of the

things that we have to regulate or in the long run there will be extinction of such animals. That's my problem with that killing...

He was also of the opinion that it would be better for humans to farm animals than to hunt animals as he thought farming animals is more sustainable than hunting. To this he said:

I think they should replace them. It would be better to farm the animals than just to hunt for it. Do you understand? Yes, you have to procreate, of course, if you are making room for procreation then you can kill. If not, don't hunt them at all...they are not plant that their seeds will fall and germinate. They have to procreate. So maybe you hunt them down, a male and a female, you allow them to procreate then you will kill one. If you want something to keep on running you have to be strategic about it. Being strategic means you have to look at it from sustainability angle. You can't continually kill animals without doing something in return and expecting them to still be alive. Sustainability is what is keeping us here.

Related to this, some of the participants were against traditional Ghanaian festivals that require the hunting of animals as part of the celebration although, others thought it was okay since it was done just once in a year, affording the animals some time to procreate.

5.8 Theme 7: The Rights and Interests of animals

Despite everything that has been said about the place of animals in Akan ontology and their use of animals in various traditional and nontraditional purposes, the study, under this theme, aimed to find out if the idea of animals' rights or animals having interests is accommodated. That is, to ask, if Akan traditional ontology, beliefs, practices, and ethics will support the notion of animal rights, and what the position of the young adult respondents will be on this matter. The study first presents responses from the traditional respondents before presenting that of the young adults.

5.8.1 The traditional respondents' views

Most of the traditional respondents did not speak directly to the question of animals having rights or interests even though many indirect questions had been asked of them towards this theme. The few who spoke to this directly were of the opinion that the notion of animal rights is foreign in the traditional Akan context. For them, the only right animals have is the right not

to be suffered undue harm. To the question of whether the idea of animal rights is conceivable in traditional Akan setting, Traditional Respondent 7 responded that:

No. The animal rights rest with an individual person's perception. Let me explain, like you are talking about domestic animals, if I see you are being cruel to a domestic animal, I will tell you because I feel what you don't feel. Do you understand? That is the right that I can do... Like in our culture, it doesn't allow the animal to suffer any agony, just kill it once. Don't go and do like something for the animal to suffer. These are the rights... We know the Europeans have animal rights but we are not talking about the Europeans here. Traditional Respondent 9 added that: The right they [animals] have is that don't be cruel to them. However, to say they have rights and so, rear it and don't kill it, is an indefensible right.

5.8.2 The young adult respondents' views

The question posed to the young adult respondents in relation to this theme was: In what ways do animals have rights or interests? Views expressed here were diverse however, quite a good number of the participants agreed that animals have rights albeit, a limited one.

Osei, for example, strongly believed that animals have rights just as humans, and as such their rights should be taken into consideration. He believed animals have rights because they have a life span and as a result, they had a right to live out that life span. Efua also agreed animals have a right to live. Opambour, on his part, claimed animals have a right not to be molested, abused or overused. Claudia responded that animals have rights, but those rights are only what humans give them. In other words, humans determine the sort of rights animals should have. Pius thought that animals do not enjoy any rights but rather have what he calls 'privileges'. These privileges, for him, are conferred on them by humans. Efua eventually agreed with Pius on this. For Obed, when animals are by themselves, they cannot be said to have rights but when humans take them as pets, then the animals are due of certain rights. He mentioned that: *...if you go in for them as pets they have rights. You have to feed them, they have right to take them to the veterinary. So you will confer that right on them. But as they are on their own, I don't think they have any constitution.* Clara held similar views. She claimed that, if we take animals as pets then the animals have a right to be fed and to be taken very good care of. She also held that the rights of animals were a little inferior to that of humans. Kwame posited that animals have rights, but felt that those rights are not to be equaled to those possessed by humans. He stated that: *yes, they do have rights, but obviously of course, even among humans some people*

have higher rights than others so with those things, obviously it is not going to be fair, you know.

Shadrach's position was that animals cannot be given equal moral rights as humans. For him, humans need to benefit from animals because "humans automatically are ahead of animals." Thus, he stated:

Okay, as I said, earlier we are automatically ahead of animals and once someone is up there, you are down there, at least you will not expect to have the same, let's say, the same right with the person... I believe that we humans have rights by virtue of society, but for animals they don't have rights as animals but we humans have rights as just being humans, we have rights, but the animals we decide to give them some considerations so they don't have those rights as being animals. But humans, for the virtue of being humans, we have rights. But they don't have rights unless we decide to give them something.

Benjamin did not think animals have any rights. He held that animals' rights end where human survival is at stake. Abora, similarly, thought animals do not have any rights.

5.8 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to present the primary data that was gathered on the field through the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. The data was presented under seven different themes as follows: 1, the interconnectedness of nature; 2, the moral status of nonhuman animals; 3, vegetarianism and the use of animals as food; 4, vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research; 5, the use of animals as pets/companion animals; 6, the hunting and trapping of animals; and 7, on the rights and interests of animals. The study's respondents were divided into two main groups namely, traditional respondents and young adult respondents. The traditional respondents group was made of individuals who are considered experts of Akan traditions, practices, and ethics. They included Akan Chiefs, a traditional linguist, Queen-mothers, Head of Akan Clans and an academic expert on Akan language and culture. This group of respondents provided various insights into the traditional practices, beliefs and practices of the Akan people on the environment and more especially on human-animal relation. The young adult respondents group was made up of younger generations of Akans who shared their positions on the above-mentioned themes. Thus, for each of these themes, responses from the two groups of respondents were presented under separate sub-sections.

The next chapter will be a thematic discussion and interpretation of the findings in light of the literature review and theoretical framework. This will pave the way for the study to identify the place of Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debates.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the discussion and interpretation of the findings in respect to the literature and the theories guiding the research. Interpretation of findings helps to recognize and explain the primary implication of the data gathered on the field through the demonstration of how the findings agree or contradict with the existing theories and literature. In chapter five, the findings from the field investigations gathered through one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were presented under specified themes. Findings from both the traditional respondents and the young adult respondents were presented under important themes in the animal ethics debate. Just as it was done with the data presented in the previous chapter, the interpretation and discussion of findings in this chapter will be conducted along these themes considered salient in the animal ethics debate. These themes are:

- i. The interconnectedness of nature
- ii. The moral status of nonhuman animals
- iii. Vegetarianism and the use of animals for food
- iv. The use of animals as pets/companion animals
- v. The hunting and trapping of animals
- vi. Vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research

These themes are analyzed with the literature and the theories of animal welfarism, animal right theory, and the ethics of interrelatedness. The discussions that will ensue under these themes will help the study attain its main objective, which is to locate the place of Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate.

6.1 The interconnectedness of nature

The study has shown the theme of the interconnectedness of nature to be an emerging theme in the developing African environmental ethics literature. This theme, which this study has preferred to call, the theory of ‘the ethics of interrelatedness,’ emerges in the African environmental ethics literature by different names. Godfrey Tangwa (2004) expressed it as ‘eco-bio-communitarianism’ which, for him, meant that the African people acknowledged and take into cognisance the interdependence and peaceful coexistence between humans and the

rest of the natural environment. This, for Tangwa, leads to an attitude towards the environment that can be best described as ‘live and let live. Segun Ogungbemi (1997) referred to this theme of the interconnectedness of nature as the ‘ethics of nature relatedness’, an ethic that requires humans to pursue a peaceful co-existence with nature, and treat nature with some judicious concern for its worth, survival and sustainability. Martin Prozesky (2009) labels his expression of this theme as ‘ethic of relationality’, which he deduced from the Shona concept of Ukama, applied towards not only human-to-human relations but also in, with and through the natural environment. A similar expression of this theme can be found, as indicated in the literature review, in the works of Ugwuanyi (2011), Kelbessa (2005), Murove (2009), Ramose (2009), and Bujo (2009).

The findings from the respondents clearly indicate that the traditional Akans hold a similar notion of the interrelatedness of nature. Respondents agreed that there exists some form of connections between humans and the rest of nature and that it is an important connection that needs to be sustained. All the ten participants classified under traditional respondents independently agreed that traditionally, Akans believe in the interconnection of nature. Traditional Respondent 4, for example, affirmed the interconnection of humans and nature. He mentioned that: *“Oh definitely, we are interconnected, we are interdependent.”* Traditional Respondent 7 pointed to the indispensability of the connection between humans and the rest of nature because for him, humans, just like the atmosphere, stars, moon, seas, and trees, are all part of nature and therefore must be interconnected.

Similarly, all the fourteen young adult respondents subscribed to the view that nature and humans are interrelated. It was also clear from the views of the respondents that they understood this existing interconnection of nature to mean the interdependency of the constituents of nature on each other for survival. For example, Traditional Respondent 3 expressed his understanding of the interconnectedness of nature as that which is based on nature’s dependence on one another. Thus, to him, humans taking care of the forest will, in turn, lead to a good amount of rainfall. Consequently, the rainfall will fill the rivers, and farmers will use the water from the rivers to promote plant growth. Furthermore, the animals in the forest will also have enough to eat from the plants and then they will multiply for humans to kill some for food and use the plants for medicine as well. Their position coincides with much of the literature on Akan ontology and ethics. Hagan, for example, had pointed out that the existence of what he calls the ‘fabric of interweaving blood relationship’ among the Akans. He argued that this interweaving blood relationship also extends to individual entities in the

universe in a way that without these relationships the universe would not be as it is (Hagan, 1964: 50-51).

With this understanding of the interconnectedness of nature, the traditional respondents maintained that traditionally, Akans hold a strong belief in the preservation of nature, and they consider it an essential and absolute necessity for humans to do all they can to keep the cycle of nature sustained. Traditional Respondent 5 concurred that the protection of the natural environment is very dear to the heart of the Akan people. As such, they take many measures to ensure this. They do this through norms and taboos observed within the Akan culture and tradition. Traditional Respondent 5 pointed out that people are not allowed to clear certain forests for farming and that there are some days that no one is permitted to use the rivers. There were also taboos that prohibited the people from the use of certain animals for food and that hunting was forbidden during certain times of the year. To him, all these were done as a way of protecting the natural environment.

Traditional Respondent 9 explained that the Akans believed that the gods were able to punish people who flouted these prohibitions so much that the fear of the gods' punishment deterred people and ensured their compliance. Similar sentiments were expressed by Traditional Respondent 7 who added that the notion of nature preservation was also reflected in the way of life of the traditional Akan people and in their proverbs. The young adult respondents also acknowledged the normative call, to take care of the natural environment based on their assessment and acceptance of the interconnectedness of nature. Obed from the Nungua Focus group discussion pointed out that the interconnectedness of nature meant that humans and nature share a *common focus*. This common focus is on the fact that humans are able to feed on animals and some animals can feed on humans. In his view, based on this common focus, humans have been made stewards of the elements of nature.

Noticeably, this understanding of the interconnectedness of nature and its associated normative principle to preserve and sustain the natural environment, agrees with most of the emerging literature in African environmental ethics. It is evidently seen in what Tangwa (2004) expresses as an ethics of 'live and let live' or in Ogungbemi's (1997) 'ethics of nature relatedness'. This, according to them, is an ethic that places a moral duty and responsibility on humans to ensure a peaceful co-existence with nature, and to treat nature with some thoughtful concern for its worth, survival and sustainability. Thus, from the findings from the respondents, the study can confidently conclude that the theory of interrelatedness, a dominant theory in the emerging

literature in African environmental ethics, is applicable in Akan traditional thoughts, beliefs, ethics, and practices.

6.1.1 The anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric debate (intrinsic vs. extrinsic value of nature)

A notable factor about this theme of the interconnectedness of nature in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics is that many of its proponents understood it to be a positive deviation from what they call, the Western anthropocentric approach in theorizing environmental ethics. Tangwa (2004) was very explicit in expressing this; he posited that Western environment ethics are anthropocentric and individualistic in nature. Furthermore, he thought that their conception of nature is what has driven them to explore, subdue, exploit and dominate nature for their profit. Thus, he held his eco-bio-communitarian theory as a non-anthropocentric ethical approach to nature. As it was noted in the literature review, a non-anthropocentric approach to the environment implies a belief in the natural environment as possessing its own intrinsic value and purpose, whether humans assign it an instrumental value or not. However, do the Akans consider nature as having intrinsic value worthy of appreciation for its own sake? The findings point to a negative response to the question as will be explained below.

The findings revealed that although both traditional and young Akans uphold the interconnectedness of nature to be true, and despite their agreement with the emerging literature in the African environmental ethics on the preservation and sustenance of the natural environment, the Akans do it for a reason other than for nature's own sake or for nature's own intrinsic value. From the information gathered from both the traditional and young adult respondents, it will be correct to say that the notion of nature having an intrinsic worth or value appears to be a foreign notion to the Akan. Such a notion does not exist in their traditional expressions or in their thoughts as unmistakably articulated in the responses of the traditional respondents. Similarly, the young adult respondents mentioned that such a notion of nature ought not to be the case at all. Rather, as the findings revealed, the Akans only see and recognize an instrumental value in nature, and this instrumental value of nature inures ultimately to the benefit of humans. In other words, the Akan holds the belief that the preservation and sustenance of nature are good and desirable because it serves the needs and interests of humankind. It is not for any intrinsic worth identified in nature but for humans' continuous survival on earth. This was patently expressed in Traditional Respondent 3's rhetorical question: *if we are unable to preserve what our ancestors have bequeathed to us,*

then what will become of our lives? Traditional Respondent 4 emphasized that even though, there is an interconnection in nature the interconnection exists to the benefit of humans such that without human beings, rivers and other aspects of nature would play no role. Likewise, Traditional Respondent 5 pointed out that human life is not complete without animals and water bodies, and everything created, is created to the benefit of humans.

This renunciation of nature's intrinsic value by the Akan people is notably in contravention with the view expressed by Gyekye. Gyekye (1995), as reported in the literature review, had argued that the Akans perceive at least some part of nature or the physical world to be animated. The Akans, he again observed, view all created things, that is, natural objects to have or contain *sunsum* (spirit) or power. These observations made Gyekye conclude that Akan thinkers intend to attribute to these natural objects, some intrinsic property, namely the 'property of activity or an activating principle'. The study notes that this interpretation does not agree with the responses gathered from the traditional Akan respondents, neither was it intimated in the views expressed by the young Akan adult respondents. What is however clear from the findings is that although the Akans generally agree that nature or some aspect of it, can contain a *sunsum* or a force, they do not consider that to mean that these 'spirited nature' are worthy of respect for their own sake. This became more apparent, when the direct question was asked to the respondents to find out if they will consider nature to be appreciable for its own sake, that is, if nature could be useful without the existence of the human species. To this, Traditional Respondent 1, for instance, gave a reply that intimated a negative answer. He asserted that *they [nature] are useful to man. Let us take the fish in the rivers that we consume. We [humans] hunt animals in the bush, we use the forest in farming, and we use the timber to build houses... so everything that God created is useful to mankind.* In a related and more perceptive response, Traditional Respondent 4 suggested that nature is not perceived to exist or to be valued for its own sake but for humans' purpose and fulfilment. He admitted that nature is indeed preserved for the sake of human beings. He explained that *nature can go extinct but it will not affect it. When in Sahara areas, real vegetation turns out to be, you know, the encroachment came and is still coming. It is, I mean, it is to the detriment of men or of man. So nature has nothing to lose, but we [humans] have something to lose.* It is therefore evident from the quote that the Akans do not consider nature for its intrinsic worth despite the fact that they consider part of the environment animated with spirits.

On the question of whether animals possess soul, the findings revealed that views were not homogeneous. Most of the respondents such as Traditional Respondent 5, Traditional

Respondent 8, and Traditional Respondent 9 disaffirmed the possibility of animals having a soul. Traditional Respondent 5, for example, stated that it is not mentioned anywhere in the traditional beliefs of the Akans that animals possess a soul. He was of the view that the death of animals is their end, and that their souls do not go anywhere. Traditional Respondent 9 believed that the lack of a soul in animals was one of the key differences between animals and humans. Meanwhile, other respondents including Traditional Respondent 1, Traditional Respondent 2, and Traditional Respondent 3 believed that animals, or at least some of them do possess a soul. Traditional Respondent 6 and Traditional Respondent 1 explained that not all animals are considered by the Akans to possess a soul. According to Traditional Respondent 6, it is the larger wild animals in the forest that can possess a soul and not the smaller ones. Thus, such wild large animals such as the buffalo, the duiker, the lion, and the elephant can be said to have a soul and not the smaller animals or domesticated animals.

The traditional respondents were however in agreement on the question of whether animals possess spirit. The position of Traditional Respondent 1 was that animals and humans share certain attributes such as growth, procreation, death, and the ability to walk. As a result of these similarities, animals, just like humans, have spirits. Traditional Respondent 5 also claimed that animals only have some ‘God-given spirit’ but not a soul. He believed that it is this spirit that makes it possible for animals to be tamed and trained to follow certain instructions.

Although the respondents did agree with Gyekye that animals possess a spirit and some a soul, there were no other remarks made by the respondents that pointed to the fact that they considered animals as having intrinsic worth for the mere fact that they possessed a spirit. All indications from the respondents rather pointed to the fact that they considered animals as having a good that benefits human needs. Notwithstanding this, the respondents did indicate that in some instances, some animals that are considered to have souls (that is, the big wild animals) such as the elephant or buffalo are given special treatment after they are killed for their game. Traditional Respondent 6 and Traditional Respondent 1 separately explained that hunters who kill such animals perform certain rituals to ward off evil spirits that can follow and bring upon them some future misfortunes. Thus, it is evident that even for these highly respected animals, the Akans are permitted to hunt them for food, and the rituals that are done after they are killed are not done out of respect for the intrinsic worthiness of the animal, but to protect the human being from spiritual consequences resulting from the killing. Again, this notwithstanding, the ritual done after killing these animals presumed to have souls, is also an

indication of the respect the Akans have for the soul of the animal. This, as indicated by Traditional Respondent 1, is why some animals are buried after they die.

Arguably, it is possible for the Akans to give some high level of reverence to animals they consider as their totems. As was said in the literature review, one way in which the Akans relate to nature is through their totems. Totems are believed to have a certain ancestral link with a particular tribe, clan or family and can be an animal, a plant or any other natural object. These totems serve as protectors, guardians, or patron spirits that protect the group and shield them from any harm as well as bring to the group some good fortunes. In return, the group respects and refrain from eating, killing or trapping these animals they take to be their totems. At the death of a totem animal, the clan associated with it mourns and buries it as they would a human being (Lumor, 2009: 19-20). The responses from the traditional respondents on totems cohere with much of the literature. As seen in the literature, the Akan word for totem is *Akyeneboa* or *Atweneboa*, which literally means ‘an animal that one leans upon or rely on for spiritual inspiration’ (Eshun, 2011: 34; Lumor, 2009: 21). Each of the eight Akan clans has its own designated animal or animals that have been accepted and related to as the clan’s totem. On the authority of Traditional Respondent 7, totems are not only used as mere emblem of the Clan but they represent “the soul of the Clan.” Traditional Respondent 1 also noted that the Akan people regard totems as the soul and guardian spirits of the Clan. As a result, each clan has to revere its totem animal as a symbol of the Clan. On the account of Traditional Respondent 9, the totem animals are considered by members of the Clan as their brothers or sisters and so, they will not do anything to harm it.

Despite this high regards the Akans give to these totem animals, it is still not accurate to describe the relationship they have with the totem animals as one that leads to a recognition of the animals’ innate or intrinsic value. If one should consider what the Akans consider as the role of the totem animals, (which is to protect, guard, and bring good omen to members of the clan) one would note that it is not for nothing that the animals are so much revered. There is still the element of instrumental or consequential value placed on these totem animals. Additional facts to emphasize this point are observable in the historical accounts given for how and why these animals are taken on as totems. According to their accounts, some of these animals were perhaps chosen to become the totems of the Akan clans because, their ancestors or founding patriarchs, observed the behavior of the animals to reflect the very characteristics they wanted to associate their Clans with or how the Clan wanted to be perceived by outsiders. According to Traditional Respondent 3, the ancestors of the Akans observed certain lifestyles

of some animals, and felt that accepting these animals as their totem will make others associate their clan with the character of these animals. Some of the factors they considered were the intelligence and behavior of the animals. Traditional Respondent 6 also explained that the Asakyiri Clan, for example, has the vulture as one of its totems, which serves as a symbol of living carefully to preserve one's life. This is because the vulture is an animal that is known to live very long. Likewise, the Asona Clan has the crow as its totem to symbolize beauty just like the beauty of the crow. Even more telling, is the story behind how the parrot became the revered totem of the Agona Clan. From the independent accounts of both Traditional Respondent 6 and Traditional Respondent 7, the Agona Clan chose the parrot as their totem, when in the past a certain parrot helped their great ancestors to escape from the hands of some assailants. The story is also told that the parrot had in the past led the ancestors to a pot of gold, which became the source of wealth for the clan. In another account given, it was said that the parrot was known to help the clan by informing members of the clan on what to say when they are faced with a traditional legal case. Similar stories are told of the dog of the Aduana Clan, of which it is known to have brought fire in its mouth to the clan back in days when a fire had never been seen before. Furthermore, the Buffalo of the Oyoko clan, at one point in history, helped the clan to cross a river during a great war. A consideration of all these accounts demonstrates that even the reverence and respect given to totem animals are not given to them as a recognition of their intrinsic worth as spirit-filled animals, but because of their instrumental value and their power to affect the course of human lives.

The Akans' denial of intrinsic value of nature concurs with the positions of Bujo, Murove, and Horsthemke. The Akans' denial of intrinsic value of nature is also a rejection of the non-anthropocentric approach to environmental ethics advanced by the likes of Tangwa, Ogungbemi, and Behrens. As already indicated, Tangwa (2004), for example, had argued his eco-bio-communitarian environmental ethics to be a non-anthropocentric approach and as a contrast to the Western environmental ethical theories which he accused of being both anthropocentric and individualistic. Kevin Behrens (2010) had similarly described his 'African relational environmentalism' as a rejection of anthropocentrism. However, the Akan position agrees with Horsthemke (2015), who had pointed out that the attempt by some African environmental ethicists to interpret the ethics of *Ubuntu* and *Ukama* as a non-anthropocentric relational approach is mistaken. According to Horsthemke, if the language employed by these African environmental ethicists is critically observed in their interpretations of the African based knowledge, it will be seen that African environmental ethics is undeniably human-centered.

Thus, the evidence from the Akan respondents appears to agree with Horsthemke's position and disavows the non-anthropocentric position of Tangwa. It is also notable that the Akan position coheres with Murove's interpretation of *Ubuntu* and *Ukama* in his philosophical application to the natural environment. Murove claimed that when the two concepts of *Ukama* and *Ubuntu* are synthesized, they produce an ethical outlook that suggests that human wellbeing is indispensable from their dependence on, and interdependence with all that exists (Murove, 2009: 315). This interpretation aligns with the claim made by Traditional Respondent 5, who similarly intimated that the natural environment exists to make human life complete. In addition, it appears that the Akan position, by placing value in nature in terms of nature benefits humanity as a whole, will be in accordance with non-individualistic claims by the likes of Behrens and Tangwa in regards to the nature of the ethics of interrelatedness. Consequently, what appears to be true of the Akan environmental ethics is that even though it is anthropocentric in approach, it is also not individualistic. Akan environmental ethics does not set out to seek the interests or rights of individual human agents or individual natural species but, the interests of the human species as a whole.

It is also apparent that when the Akans speak of preserving nature for the sake of humanity, they do not have only the current generation in mind but also the future generations as well. Traditional Respondent 4 expressed this view saying: *We have dominion, but you could destroy everything, to your own disadvantage, so you sustain them. You maintain them, to make sure you have something left for the next generation.* This view coincides with the position of the indirect welfarist, which calls for the preservation of animal species. This is because they believe humans owe it to the present and future generations to do what they can to ensure that animals continue to exist for future humans to enjoy their benefits as well, through either sightseeing or other beneficial uses that particular animal may provide (Regan, 2004).

It should also be noted that for the Akans, a consideration of the natural environment as having only instrumental value that benefits humanity is not regarded as a design put in place by humans themselves to usurp authority and control over the rest of nature, but regarded as a natural design of things put in place by God himself. This was unequivocally expressed by Traditional Respondent 4 that in God's own creation, human beings are superior to all and as such, God has given humans the authority to dominate nature. This is in line with the Judeo-Christian tradition, which as was highlighted in the literature review, holds an anthropocentric view that puts humans at the center of the universe and confers on humans an absolute dominion over all things. Similarly, when the Akan position is applied directly to nonhuman

animals, the link it bears with those expressed by the *softened position* of the indirect welfarists is clearly made manifest. The softened position of the indirect welfarist is exemplified in the views of Kant, who posited that animals are not rational beings and so are properties that exist to serve the needs of humans. As a result, Kant held that humans do not owe any direct duty to animals except indirect ones. Thus, for Kant, we seek the good of animals, not for their own sake but for the sake of humans. However, the Akan position can also clearly be seen to differ from the views of, what may be called, the *radical* indirect welfarist position, which holds that humans owe no duty whatsoever to animals. The Akans, instead, hold it as their duty to take care of nature, including animals albeit, they do so for their own sustenance. This position resonates well with the position of Bujo (2009: 286), who also saw that the interrelationship that the African understands to exist between human and nature, is one that makes humans consider animals, plants, minerals, and other inanimate beings as the forces that God has made available for human use. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that this does not mean that human beings are allowed to treat the lesser form of beings arbitrarily.

In effect, what the findings from the field have shown in regards to the theme of interconnected of nature is that Akan environmental ethics supports the theory of ethics of nature-relatedness. Akan environmental ethics, as deducible from the findings, is in line with much of the emerging literature in African environmental ethics that there is some interrelationship between nature and humans. It is also evident that the Akan environmental ethics is anthropocentric in approach, through the conferring of instrumental or extrinsic value to nature, an instrumental value that goes to benefit human needs. This notwithstanding, Akan environmental ethics is not individualistic because it does not seek the interests or rights of individual human agents but, the common interest of the community (humanity). That is, it seeks that which ensures the continuity of human community and survival. In so doing, Akan environmental ethics calls for judicious and sustainable use of the natural environment in such a way that maintains what the Akans consider the natural cycle of the interdependency. To this extent, there is a metaphysical aspect to the Akan environmental ethics, on the account that the instrumental value they ascribe to the natural environment is a natural design established by God himself. Thus, it was mistaken for Ogungbemi (1997) to have argued that the ethics of nature-relatedness cannot be given a spiritual interpretation. Yet, there is also the non-metaphysical aspect in light of the Akan's belief that taking care of the environment is something needed for the sustenance of humans' mundane needs.

6.2 The moral status of nonhuman animals

The theme of the moral status of nonhuman animals was noted as a major theme that the many arguments and debates in animal ethics rest upon. It was mentioned in the literature review that one's particular position on the moral status of animals is a major determinant of one's line argument, that is, whether one will accept or reject a welfarist or rightist position. As DeGrazia (2008) claims, for a being or a thing to be considered to have moral status, is for that being or thing to be considered to bear direct or independent moral importance. Identifying or acknowledging that a thing or being has a moral status is to identify or acknowledge that thing or being as worthy of consideration in moral decision-making or that the thing or being is to be considered as part of humans' moral responsibility.

The literature revealed various positions on the question of the moral status of animals. There are the likes of Aristotle who denied moral status to animals because they considered animals as incapable of reasoning. Descartes, on his part, held that animals do not have any moral status because they do not possess a soul or consciousness. Thus, for him, animals cannot think, feel, perceive or choose for they were simply *automatas*. The lack of all these distinctive human attributes, from the point of view of Descartes, made it impossible to speak of animals as possessors of rights. Kant had also argued against animals having a moral status based on his claim that animals are not rational thus, denying them a 'will' and a moral worth. St. Augustine, coming from the Christian perspective, had also failed to grant direct moral status to animals on the bases that animals do not have an immortal soul, not rational, and only act on instincts. Beyond these scholars who denied any sort of moral status for animals based on what they considered to be the distinctive marks that separated animals from humans, there are scholars such as Voltaire, Hume, Bentham, Mill, and Darwin who rejected the claims that humans and animals are entirely different. Voltaire had argued that animals can feel pain like humans based on the resemblance he saw in the organs of humans and animals. Hume, on his part, thought that based on observable animal behavior, animals and humans may not be different after all. Bentham had directed our attention away from the consideration of animals' ability to talk or reason, to consider instead the question of whether or not they are able to suffer. Darwin had also claimed that the difference between humans and animals in terms of mental capacity is only one of degree and not of a kind. This is because for him, animals are capable of feeling pain, pleasure, happiness, and misery.

Based on these acknowledgements of some shared similarities and features between humans and animals, some scholars either argued for a partial or full moral status of animals. Peter

Singer (1976) and Tom Regan (2004) had both argued for the inclusion of animals in the definition of a moral community even though, for them, animals are to be treated as moral patients and not as moral agents. This notwithstanding, while Singer argued for the inclusion of animals based on their sentience (their ability to feel pain), Regan, on his part, argued for the inclusion of animals based on animals having inalienable inherent value. From this ascription of inherent value, Regan, as we saw, argued that animals have rights, which can be equaled to the rights possessed by humans. Another notable difference between Singer and Regan is that Singer's position led him to argue for the humane treatment of animals while Regan, upon granting animals similar rights as humans, called for the total abolition of animal use.

On this theme, a number of conclusions can be drawn from the data presented in chapter five. How the participants in the one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions responded to this theme is presented under the following subsections.

6.2.1 The place of humans and animals in Akan ontology

From the first theme, it was shown that the Akan generally holds the view that humans and the natural environment are interconnected. As a result, the Akans believe in the judicious use of the environment, not for the sake of any intrinsic value possessed by nature or given to nature by God, but because it benefits humans themselves. Akans perceive this as a natural order of things established by God the creator himself. The reason Akans hold this view perhaps lies in their ontological worldview of the place of humans in the natural scheme of things. This is important because where the Akans place animals in their ontological conception of nature plays a vital role in determining the moral status they place on animals.

6.2.1.1 Humans' place within Akan hierarchy of beings

In the literature review, it was established that the Akan ontological worldview pointed to the belief in the hierarchy of beings as indicated by Gyekye and Hagan. According to Gyekye (1995), the Akan world is perceived as composing of a hierarchy of beings with God, the Supreme Being, placed at the apex. This is followed by the smaller gods or the deities, ancestors, humans, and the world of natural objects and phenomena, in that descending order. Hagan observed that the hierarchical structure of the Akan universe affirms the good of humanity as the ultimate goal of nature. Thus, "the whole of nature forms a hierarchical

structure according to the extent to which things can influence the life of man” (Hagan, 1964: 16). This, in the view of the researcher, constitutes a profound statement by Hagan, because, it underscores the very humanistic nature of Akan ontology and ethics. The data gathered from the traditional respondents reiterated the Akan belief in the hierarchy of beings and the Akans’ central placement of humans in the natural scheme of things.

All the traditional Akan respondents agreed without an exception that the Akans considered humans superior to animals. According to Traditional Respondent 7, humans are the most ranked in nature. This, for him, is because “human beings are human beings” and cannot be replaced. The claim that human beings are human beings is an appreciation of human’s innate worth. Something that the sub-chief thought, made humans indispensable and at the same time much worthier than nonhuman animals. Traditional Respondent 1, on his part, suggested that a close examination of nature reveals that human beings are ranked higher than all other things in nature. Furthermore, Traditional Respondent 4 and Traditional Respondent 2 made the following more profound assertions: According to Traditional Respondent 4, without human beings, rivers and other aspects of the natural environment “would not play any role.” For him, human beings, in accordance with God’s own creation, are superior to everything else. Human beings have been “given authority to dominate” hence, making nothing in nature above human beings. He stressed that *yes, so man, human beings are superior to any other, any other thing in the ecosystem*. Relatedly, Traditional Respondent 2, stated on authority that if things in nature are observed carefully it will be possible to reach the conclusion that human beings are highly ranked above all other things in the natural order. Her reason for coming to this conclusion was that *when God created all things, He created man to be in charge of all other things*. She maintained that human beings were made the overseers of all of God’s creation thus, making humans superior to all the things created by God. As such, all other things are beneath human beings.

Remaining true to their belief that humans are regarded as superior to animals, the Akan uses a variety of animals to fulfil different existential needs. As disclosed by the respondents, the Akans use animals for food, for sacrifices during festive occasions, and for rituals for pacification and warding off bad omen and evil. Skins of some animals are used for clothes including sandals. Some of these hides are also placed on the stool of chiefs to sit on. Some others are used as foot mat for the chief, and possibly to make some of the paraphernalia won by the chiefs. Some animals are kept in households, to ward off evil including impending deaths. The horns of some animals are used for musical instruments, while some animals are

kept at home as pets or companion animals, for hunting and to ward off mice. Animals used for these needs include sheep, fowls (cock, hen, including their eggs), elephants, duikers/antelopes/deer, and some types of fish such as the mudfish. Others are lions, buffalos, goats, grasscutters (greater cane rat), dogs, woodpigeons, cattle, and cats, among others.

6.2.1.2 Human and animal distinctiveness

The respondents referred to certain attributes and qualities that in their view, set humans apart from animals, and at the same time give to human that special place in nature over and above all other physical beings. Some responses such as the claim that humans are able to clothe themselves while animals are not able or that humans bath with soap and water while animals do not can easily be said to commit what Regan (2004) calls the arbitrariness with regards to the reasons given to exclude animals from our moral community. As such, the study did not discuss these responses. However, the study discusses some of the major distinguishing marks the respondents gave, as that which sets human and animals apart.

6.2.1.2.1 Humans as created in the image of God

At least five traditional respondents believed that humans are special because they are created in the image of God. As one respondent puts it, *human beings, according to our elders, are closer to God. They have the resemblance of God.* This view aligns with the Judeo-Christian perspective wherein it is believed that humans were created by God in His image and given dominion over the earth and all that are therein. It is, however, unclear whether the Akans came by this position from a Judeo-Christian influence or from their own handed-down belief. Scholars such as Lynn White (2000) have argued the Judeo-Christian mindset has led to the over-exploitation of nature by humans. However, as it has been shown under the first theme, the Akans do not subscribe to an exploitation of the environment. Instead, they believe in the prudent use of the environment. This is in accordance with Bernard Rollin's (1992) claim that even if the Judeo-Christian position is accepted, it does not necessarily translate that humans are to treat animals in whatsoever ways they see fit.

6.2.1.2.2 Animals' rational capabilities

Another differentiating attribute between humans and animals given by the traditional respondents was wisdom or display of intelligence in humans. *Animals do not reason before they do anything*, claimed one respondent. A related response given by, at least two respondents, is the belief in the notion that while humans act, based on a rational decision and so, are able to control their 'feelings', animals act solely on instincts. Also closely linked to this view is the response that humans have a purpose for doing what they do while animals do not. Furthermore, other respondents chose to express this belief through the claim that humans have a higher comprehension level than animals.

The denial of rational thinking, reason, or consciousness to animals by the respondents relates to what the study observed in the literature review as one of the major reasons given by many as a basis for denying animals a moral status. Stoic philosophers, as has been pointed out in chapter two, had argued that animals could not be included in our understanding of a moral community because they lack reason. Armstrong and Botzler (2008), as well as Keith Thomas (1983), indicated that the general view of the renaissance period was that animals were different from humans (inferior) in terms of many factors including reason. They also held that even if animals could reason at all, they could only do so, at a much lower level than humans. One notable renaissance figure in the period was Descartes who alluded that animals act mechanically (*automatas*), and are not conscious to think, perceive, choose, or feel (Leahy, 1991: 84). In connection to this, the denial of rationality and reasoning capabilities to animals concurs theoretically with the position of the indirect welfarist. It was the position of Kant, for example, that animals are not rational beings, and as a result, have no absolute worth. Animals are, therefore, to be considered in the category of things. Thus, Kant considered animals as properties that can be used as means to humans' end. Consequently, Kant argued, as it is generally done by indirect welfarists, that humans have only indirect duties towards animals.

This argument to deny animals a moral status based on rationality has been rejected by many scholars. The basis of some of these rejections has been more compelling with the advancements made in the science of animal research. Charles Darwin (as cited in Regan and Singer 1976), for example, noted from his studies of animal nature that only few people would dispute the fact that animals possess some power of reasoning. He held that the more animals are studied the more it becomes evident of their capacity to reason. The difference, according to Darwin, is only in the reasoning capacities of humans over animals, that is, humans are for example, able to engage in abstract thinking and self-consciousness while animals cannot. This difference, Darwin believed, is only a matter of degree and not of a kind. Masson and McCarthy

(1994) demonstrated in – “*When elephants weep: the emotional lives of animals*” - that animals do express emotions in many different ways: they cry, they vocalise their pain and distress, and can even call for help.

Scholars such as Peter Singer, Tom Regan, Bernard Rollin, and Mary Midgley, including nearly all direct welfarists and rightists have argued against the attempt to use rationality (more especially Immanuel Kant’s approach to morality through rationality) as the basis for drawing a distinction between humans and animals. Singer and Cohen, for example, believed that such an attempt is a major inadequacy in any moral theory, since moral concern for people usually has nothing to do with their rationality. They, instead, argue that animals be accorded moral considerations because animals are capable of pain and suffering, and that humans owe to animals the moral duty of ensuring that they do not go through unnecessary suffering irrespective of their rationality.

6.2.1.2.3 Animals’ language and communication capabilities

A third notable difference the respondents observed between humans and animals is the view that human beings can talk or, are endowed with the gift of speech while animals are not. At least two of the traditional respondents alluded to this claim. The use of language as a distinguishing mark between humans and animals is also a commonplace as seen in the literature review. It is also, perhaps, linked to the distinction made on the basis of rationality. Again, Armstrong and Botzler (2008) had pointed out that one of the reasons given for the belief that animals were different from humans during the renaissance period, among others, was the lack of speech in animals. Raymond G. Frey (1980) had also argued that animals could not have interests mainly because they lacked language. For him, to say that animals have interests, is to mean that they have wants that can be satisfied or left unsatisfied. This, to him, is not possible because animals do not have wants. For Frey, wants only arise out of desires, which animals do not have, because to have a want is to imply having a belief, which he thinks, is not compatible with the absence of language and linguistic ability, something which animals do not have (Frey 1980). Frey’s position coincides with Davidson’s (1982), who had also claimed that a creature could not have thought unless it has a language. Davidson argued that for one to be regarded as a thinking or rational being that being should be able to express many thoughts, and above all, be able to interpret the speech and thoughts of others. Similarly, Warren’s attribution of a weaker type of rights to animals laid mainly in what she considers

their lack of a language. She explains that despite the fact that both animals and humans possess rational capabilities people are stirred to action or inaction by the force of reasoned argument. She further claims that humans' ability to listen to reason in order to settle conflicts and cooperate in shared projects is what sets them apart. This ability, she believes, requires human language (Warren, 2012: 93).

Language remains one of the resolute distinguishing marks identified to separate humans and animals. Although it is easily shown scientifically, and through the observation of animals' outward behavior that animals do possess their own way of communication, some of which appear to share at least, some properties of language, as language, in its strict sense, for now, appears to be exclusively human. Nevertheless, the argument remains whether the inability of animals to use language warrants their denial of moral status.

6.2.1.2.4 Sociality and moral capabilities

Another important dissimilarity between humans and animals, as indicated by the respondents, lies in the belief that humans are able to determine what is wrong and right while animals are not. In other words, it is believed that only humans have a sense of morality. A minimum of three traditional respondents alluded to this claim. According to one respondent, laws guide human societies, unlike the animal kingdom that goes by the law of the survival of the fittest. Another respondent in one of the young adult focus group thought that what sets animals and human apart is animals' inability to enter into some sort of social or moral contract with humans. In this respondent's view, humans, for the sake of survival, have made laws for themselves to keep them living peacefully with each other yet, such laws cannot be made with nonhuman animals. A third respondent posited that humans could care for others while animals cannot. In regards to sociality, respondents claim that humans, unlike animals have cultures and live a social life, including observing marriage ceremonies and ceremonies for the dead. A respondent pointed to this saying: *That is why we even spend money to perform rites for the dead. So we spend money to perform marriages, we spend money on naming ceremonies we spend on things in life... on rites of passage.*

Evidently, any argument claiming an absolute lack of sociality in animals is easily falsified, with the help of evidence from the many research into animal behavior that has been made available to us. Even though Waser (1988: 109) had argued that only small populations of mammal species are gregarious, and even fewer live stable cooperative groups. We do know

that animals, such as the male Herring gull, ground-dwelling squirrels, some spiders, termites, bees, and the naked mole rat, among others, exhibit different levels of sociality and cooperation. According to Slobodchikoff and Shields (1988: 3-4), social behavior includes any behavioral interactions among members of social groups, which can include a show of selfish, spiteful, cooperative or altruistic behaviors, directed at group members. So that even though animals may not be social in all the ways humans express themselves socially, such as seen in the way humans observe rites of passage, there are observable social behaviors among some animals. Animals can form many kinds of groups varying from temporary fish schools to highly unified honey bees colonies (Wilson, 1975 as cited by Armitage, 1988: 131). Similarly, Tinbergen (1990) has shown the sociality of animals in terms of their family and group life, mating behavior, and their relation with other species, among others. For him, the study of social behavior is simply the study of cooperation between individuals (Tinbergen, 1990: 2).

The supposed inability of animals to engage in human's moral community or their lack of a sense of morality when relating among themselves or with humans has been a strong position used to reject or deny animal equal moral status with humans. Darwin (as cited in Ayala, 2010), had consented that of all the argued differences between humans and animals, it was the argument based on the moral sense or conscience that he found to be by far, the most important. Many who have argued that animals cannot be moral have done so on the basis that only rational beings can be moral, and since animals are not rational, they cannot be moral beings. Ayala (2010: 9019) argues that 'moral sense', comes about as a necessary implication of humans' high intellectual capability, which gives to them, not only the ability to anticipate the effects of their actions, but also helps them to evaluate these possible effects and decide on which way to act accordingly. He maintains that the human moral sense is an "exaptation", not an adaptation. That is to say, "the moral sense consists of judging certain actions as either right or wrong, not of choosing and carrying out some actions rather than others." For Ayala, these three features which are embedded in, what it means to have a moral sense, makes morality the prerogative of only rational human beings.

Sapontzis (1980) has argued against this attempt to deny animals a sense of morality based on some human conditions of what it means to be moral. For him, in as much as we can recognize that animals do sometimes act morally, it should not matter whether animals are able to distinguish moral values from other kinds of values or whether animals recognize the moral goods and evils of situations they respond to. Thus, the notable, compassionate and courageous actions of some animals should be enough to meet the common sense condition for moral

action. As such, the justification for linking reason and moral action, to him, is flawed. Subsequently, he finds it erroneous the argument that animals are unqualified for moral action because some amount of intelligence is required for identifying moral values and motivating moral action (Sapontzis, 1980: 49).

Tom Regan (2004) has also argued that animals, even if they cannot be moral agents because of their lack of a sophisticated ability to reason, should at least be regarded as moral patients. This is because animals can have beliefs, desires, and preferences in such a similar manner, as other human moral patients such as babies. As a result, animals are to be considered part of our moral community and must be accorded full moral consideration. This is in line with his rightist position. Arguing on a similar line of thought, Mark Rowlands (2011) also argued that animals, in order to be regarded as moral agents, should be regarded as moral subjects even though they may lack conceptual and cognitive ability to comprehend what moral responsibility means. For him, animals do exhibit moral emotions such as compassion, tolerance, sympathy, patience, and kindness as well as a display of a sense of fairness.

One should not be entirely surprised that there is a strong sense of focus on sociality and the ability to engage in a moral community among the Akans. The Akans' use of sociality and morality as distinguishing features between humans and animals is rooted within their sense of communal life, of which traditional African communitarian societies like theirs are noted for. Sociality and living an ethical life that promotes the wellbeing of the community are core values of the traditional Akan people, and the impact and implication of this communal life reflect in their notion of personhood, belief in ancestors, and their meaning of a fulfilled life.

6.2.1.2.5 Animals' inhabitation of a soul or a spirit

Another important distinctive mark between humans and animals pointed to by the respondents was in relation to the Akan belief in the inhabitation of spirits and souls in animals. On this view, one respondent posited that it is actually the possessing of spirit and soul that makes humans superior to animals and all other living and non-living things.

The Akans perceive the human being to be made up of a body, soul, and spirit. The body, they hold, perishes at death, while the soul goes back to God the Creator. The spirit is however responsible for the character disposition of the person and can be inherited or given to the person by the father like a gene. The existence of a soul or a spirit may not be established philosophically or scientifically nevertheless, it remains an entrenched view in the traditional

Akan worldview. As already mentioned, the Akan ontology is highly metaphysical in nature, and there is a strong belief in the existence of spiritual beings. These spiritual beings are revered and even worshipped as a conduit to the Supreme Being. Gyekye (1995) reported that Akan ontology is not only pluralistic (the belief in the existence of many beings) but also panpsychist (the belief that everything is or contains a spirit) in nature. It, thus, becomes understandable, why the Akan would place importance on the possession of a soul or spirits. Based on this belief, one is, therefore, justified in questioning what made Ogungbemi to state that the ethics of nature-relatedness, as observed from the traditional African experience, does not imply that natural resources do have a spiritual nature. (See Ogungbemi, 1997:270). In this regard, perhaps Ojomo was right to have said of Ogungbemi's ethics of nature-relatedness as not being a true reflection of traditional African metaphysics (Ojomo, 2011:110). More so, Hagan had explained that there are many examples to "show that between man and man, man and animal, spirit and matter, and man and plants, there are relations which pass into their beings" (Hagan 1964:51). Despite this, and as indicated earlier, the respondents did not agree on the question of whether animals possess souls or spirits. While some answered in affirmative, others were not too quick to admit. However, what became clear is that animals that are perceived by Akans to possess a soul are given special treatment in terms of respect, honour, and reverence.

A notable implication of placing importance on the possession of a soul is that for the Akan, merely being a subject-of-a-life is not enough to grant you a moral consideration. Plants, as well as animals, have a life but, it is those beings who are perceived to have souls that are likely to be given some amount of moral consideration. Regan (2004), on the contrary, will have us believe that being a subject-of-a-life alone is enough to make a being the possessor of an inherent value, and such a being is not to be treated as mere receptacles. However, by considering Regan's definition or understanding of his subject-of-a-life criterion, some similarities may be found with his view and the views of the Akans regarding the granting of moral status to an animal based on that animal possession a soul. We learnt from Regan that to be the subject-of-a-life is to be an individual who has beliefs and desires, perception, memory, and a sense of the future, including their own future. They also have an emotional life that comes with feelings of pain and pleasure, they have preference and interest in their welfare, and they have the ability to initiate action in an attempt to reach their goals and satisfy their desires. In addition, a subject-of-a-life has a psychophysical identity over time, among other features (Regan, 2004:243). It is perhaps likely that for the Akan all these requirements listed by Regan are made possible by the possession of a soul. If this is taken to be the case then it

will appear that the only difference between Regan's subject-of-a-life criterion and the Akan's possession of a soul criterion will be in the kind of animals that get to be given a moral status. Obviously, there is the need for more inquiry to be made to either affirm or deny this seemingly similarity. This is because, from the data solicited from the Akan respondents, only few animals (the large ones such as the elephant or buffalo and perhaps all totem animals) are regarded as possessors of a soul. Nevertheless, Regan's subject-of-a-life criterion will also leave out some animals such as insects and others that may not meet his subject-of-a-life requirements.

6.2.2 Animal Pain and the wronging of Animals

The acknowledgment that animals, or at least some of them, can experience pain or suffer has been a compelling factor for almost all direct welfarists in acknowledging the moral status of these animals. In the words of Garner, "the mere fact that animals are sentient ought to result in animals being accorded a higher moral status" (Garner, 2010: 15). The same can be said of some animal rightist advocates such as Francione and Warren, whom both acknowledged that animals have some basic moral rights because they are sentient. Thus, the recognition that animals can be made to suffer through human action is a compelling force that should make anyone reconsider their position on the moral status of animals even though various conclusions have been drawn from this acceptance of the sentience of animals. While for most direct welfarists the admission of animal pain does not necessarily translate into a recognition of equal moral status for both humans and animals. Animal rightists such as Francione (2010), on a similar basis, argued for equal moral status for humans and animals alike. Francione was of the view that despite the differences that may exist between the minds of animals and those of humans, these differences are not to be taken to mean that the sentient experiences of animals are less weighty than those of humans.

The data from the field suggests that both the traditional and young adult respondents recognize that animals can suffer pain and be wronged. They acknowledged this by providing various instances and examples of things that are done to animals, which in their view, cause pain in animals. These include but not limited to hunting and trapping animals, throwing things at animals, starving animals, tethering of animals, and killing animals for no reason at all or the mere fun of it. The respondents recognized that animals could go through various types of emotions depending on how they are cared for or treated. They used words such as pain,

pleasure, sad, moody, grief, excitement, and happiness to describe the various emotions they consider animals to have at a given point in time.

Traditional Respondent 1 observed that humans could cause pains to animals, and even make them very sad especially when animals are hit with something. For him, the way animals react show that they can feel pain. Traditional Respondent 6 similarly mentioned that by observing the behavior and the cry of animals, it is possible to tell that animals go through pain. Traditional Respondent 4, Traditional Respondent 5, and Traditional Respondent 9, all acknowledged that causing pain to animals could bring negative repercussion on the perpetrator, both physically and spiritually. According to Traditional Respondent 4, the Akan people hold a belief that spiritually, if one should continuously mistreat animals, the animals have a way of getting back at the person. As reported in the previous chapter, the three respondents independently gave different stories they have either witnessed or been told, where such spiritual consequences befell some individuals who were cruel to some animals. Traditional Respondent 5, on his part, averred that if for no just cause you kill an animal or you kill it not because you want to use it for food, it means you are subjecting the animal to unjustified harm.

According to Traditional Respondent 7, it is for the acknowledgment of the pains that animals go through that the Akan people adopt a kind of mercy killing whenever they have to slaughter an animal for food or a ritual. To do this, before the animal is killed, it is first given water; next, the throat of the animal is well covered so that the sound of the pain is suppressed. The final step is to make sure to use a very sharp knife or cutting material so that the cut goes through quickly and completely. This process is done to assuage the pain the animal goes through, as he explained.

For Traditional Respondent 4, making animals happy is to the advantage of both animals and humans. This is because when animals are happy they increase in offsprings, and humans benefit from their use. The majority of the respondents also pointed out that establishing a close relationship with animals can affect how they are treated. Traditional Respondent 5 posited that a good and close relationship with animals could establish a strong bond between animals and humans like that which exists among siblings. Furthermore, Traditional Respondent 2 held that a close relationship with an animal makes it difficult and painful for the owner to kill it. Similarly, Traditional Respondent 1 posited that when someone is good to animals, such a person can see the animals voluntarily gather around when, he or she brings in their food.

According to him, a dog, for example, will come at your beckon, and will outwardly show affection towards you when you are good to it. However, if it is hit, it takes to notice and may shun your company. Traditional Respondent 2 added that truly, animals could feel happy if they are treated well.

Some respondents were of the view that any harm done to animals is not a direct harm done to the animals but, to their human owners yet, others were of the view that these harms were done directly to the animals. Traditional Respondent 7, for example, stated that any harm or pain inflicted on an animal is done directly to the animal. Traditional Respondent 9, on her part, thought it was dependent on the prevailing situation. She stated that *sometimes you may hit the animal out of spite for the owner but the hurt goes directly to the animal*.

How are we to interpret this acknowledgment of animal sentience by the respondents? Does the acknowledgment of sentience of animals mean the Akans consider animals as having a moral status? I should think so, to some extent. Garner (2010) was right to point out that the mere fact that animals are sentient ought to result in animals being accorded some form of moral status. When issues of good care, kindness, compassion, and various emotions and state of mind come to play, there is no doubt that ethics and morality are at play. The mere fact that the Akan judges his or her actions or inactions as good or bad based on the possibility of their action to cause pain to sentient beings, including animals, suggests therefore, that animals are somewhat considered as part of their moral community. Nevertheless, the Akan does not think the inclusion of animals in the definition of moral community makes the interests of animals at par with humans in a way that gives animals similar moral considerations as humans at all times. An evaluation of the view gathered from the respondents seems to suggest that animals are considered moral subjects in accordance with Rowlands (2011) view. Rowland had argued that animals, in order to be regarded as moral agents, should be regarded as moral subjects even though they may lack conceptual and cognitive ability to comprehend what moral responsibility means. It is evident from the respondents that even though some acknowledge that pain can be caused directly to animals, they do not think that ameliorating this pain is done solely to the benefit of the animal but rather to the benefit of their human owners or humans in general. Again, from the evidence, it is apparent that the Akan will not support an abolitionist or rightist position but rather support a direct welfarist position. This is seen in their attempts to reduce the suffering the animals go through when being killed and their disgust towards various acts of cruelty to animals. Shadrach, one of the young adult respondents, surmises the position of the Akans as follows:

I think that with this new information or with we knowing or bearing in mind that animals feel pain, the only thing we can do for them... because we have higher rationality we cannot act as they will. So, we know what pain is or we can actually understand what pain is, so the only thing we can do for them is to try to decrease or reduce the pain we take them through but for the eating, we still have to.

6.3 Vegetarianism and the use of animals for food

The question of whether to continue to use animals for food remains a controversial issue within the animal ethics debate. On this issue, the delineating line between the direct welfarist and the animal rightist positions is felt. In general terms, animal welfarists accept the humane use of animals for food as long as such use does not cause unnecessary pain and suffering to the animals. Animal rightists, conversely, deny the permissibility of such use, however humanely or painlessly it is done.

Singer, who generally advocates for animals' welfare, on the matter of using animals for food calls for all to be vegetarians, and will only allow the killing of animals for food only upon some strict conditions. Thus, for Singer, it serves a better utilitarian purpose if everyone becomes vegetarians. Nevertheless, it appears Singer's main challenge with killing animals for food has to do with how animals are kept and bred on large scale farming. This is mainly because of what he perceives to be the undue suffering those animals go through before they end up on people's plate. Singer (1980: 334) stated that "the utilitarian vegetarian is on strong ground in arguing that factory farming and the other cruelties involved in large-scale commercial animal production should end." Singer urges meat consumers to instead, consider meat from organic or free-range animals and buy from meat producers who can demonstrate that the animals were treated humanely and given a less painful or painless death.

In sharp contrast with Singer's position is the rightist position of Tom Regan (2004), whose position is that humans have a moral obligation to be vegetarians. He held that animals have inalienable rights that cannot be traded away irrespective of their utility. He challenges the basis for Singer's advocacy for vegetarianism, claiming that Singer's theory, devoid of an appeal to rights, fails to demonstrate a moral obligation to be vegetarian (Regan, 1980: 308). For Regan, it is only when animals have rights that we can have a sufficiently firm theoretical basis for vegetarianism.

From the findings gathered, the Akan will have nothing to do with any theory that requires an absolute elimination of animals from their diet. It can be inferred from what was gathered from the respondents that although there are no explicit laws or taboos against vegetarianism, it is highly unlikely that a person will opt to be a vegetarian. The few who are vegetarians are more likely to be vegetarians based on health or personal taste rather than on the acknowledgment of animals' moral status.

According to Traditional Respondent 4, not until recently, it was almost impossible to hear of an Akan who was a vegetarian. For Traditional Respondent 6, traditionally, one is likely to find someone who does not eat any meat at all. In his opinion, it is possible to find individuals who may detest one particular meat or the other for various personal reasons but not one who does not eat meat entirely. He mentioned that some hunters, for example, may not eat blooded animals because of the experiences of their trade, but may eat fish, crabs, and snails. Others naturally were born not liking certain foods. Traditional Respondent 3, however, stated that it was possible to find individuals who have made personal decision to consume only fruits and vegetables. Traditional Respondent 2 added that such individuals are not considered strange at all. She further indicated that there some people who believe that eating meat can cause some illness. Such people perceive animals as potential carriers of diseases or germs. Such individuals, as a result, avoid meat in their diets and do not eat eggs either. These individuals may make it a point to eat only vegetables such as cabbage, carrot, onion, and tomatoes all the time, she mentioned.

The participants in the focus group discussions generally did not have any problem with the killing and the use of animals for food. Two, out of the fourteen focus group participants identified themselves as vegetarians while one other person identified himself as a partial vegetarian. Yet none of these three vegetarians was a vegetarian based on the respect of the moral status of animals. One was a vegetarian by choice while the other two were vegetarians for health reasons. Osei claimed he became a vegetarian first from a doctor's advice (health reasons) but later developed love for animals. Consequently, he claims to be a vegetarian now on moral grounds. When asked whether any of them would consider themselves becoming vegetarians in the future or whether becoming a vegetarian is the moral way to go, almost all the focus group discussants met the question with doubtfulness. Benjamin, for example, said becoming a vegetarian himself is something that will not happen in this lifetime. According to him, he could not imagine a life without his pork and beef.

From the findings obtained in the responses by the traditional respondents, it turned out that the use of animals for meat forms part of the people's culture. It was gathered from the four traditional leaders who participated in a focus group discussion in Cape Coast that even though traditionally, no one was prevented from becoming a vegetarian, meat eating formed an essential part of the Akan custom. Similarly, Traditional Respondent 5 intimated that although, the Akan customs do not have any specific rule when it comes to vegetarianism, for some traditional rituals, one has no choice but to use meat to fulfil the demands of culture. Furthermore, he indicated that though the Akan customs do not prevent anyone from abstaining from meat, it will be difficult for a chief to decide to use only vegetables and fruits for rituals in place of the animals that have been used for years. To emphasize this point, Traditional Respondent 1 mentioned that he had not come across any chief who has stated that he does not eat meat. Meat, he claimed, forms part of the chief's rituals, and certain portions of the animal are reserved only for the chief and others for specific individuals occupying specific traditional positions. In addition, there are men called *osodofoo* (male cooks) who cook for the chief and treat his meat, as tradition requires. Again, the chief of every town had a particular animal that was used for food for him for his spiritual upliftment. As such, if a chief does not eat meat, such information may only be known by close members of his household and not publicly.

The implication of the findings on the topic of vegetarianism and the use of animals for food is that even though the Akan culture does not prevent an individual from abstaining from meat, meat eating forms an essential part of the people's culture and customs. The responses from the participants demonstrate that a theory that calls for the total abolition of meat eating, as per Regan's animal rightist view, will not be in concordance with the Akan people's ethics, beliefs, and practices. Nevertheless, giving the fact that the Akans recognize animals' pain, and attempt to ameliorate animals' suffering just before they are slaughtered, it is arguable that the Akans' view will support a direct welfarist position. This is the position that calls for the humane treatment of animals during their lifetime and at the point of their killing, as expressed tersely in the words of Priscilla, one of the focus group discussants, as follows: *Yes, I do not see anything wrong with it but it should not be so brutal*. Indicatively, given the fact that traditionally, animals are generally reared on a free-range, the Akans' view may escape some of the criticism Singer has against commercialized animal farming although, the Akan position ought to be guided by Singer's arguments to ensure that animals live a humane life.

6.4 The use of animals as pets/companion animals

Concerning the use of animals as pets or companion animals, animal rightists, on the one hand, take an abolitionist view. Abolitionist, Gary Francione (2010; 2000), for example, argued against the use of animals as pets. He claims that the current state whereby animals are considered personal legal properties afford their human owners the freedom to use these animals as they please in the same manner they do to their inanimate properties. Similarly, Spencer et al (2006) were of the view that the use of animals as a pet is wrong, since the practice shares similar challenges with the use of animals in factory farming. For them, both practices use the animals for instrumental ends to the benefit of humans. Since welfarism, on the other hand, is about providing care and humane treatment to animals, pet keeping can present a good instance where humans can express this care and humane treatment to animals at a more direct level. Thus, welfarists are not against the use of animals as pets or companion animals, as far as, the welfare of the animals is well considered and the animals receive humane treatment from their keepers.

The study discovered from the traditional respondents that the Akans do not have a specific name for a pet. Pets are classified under domesticated animals as the Akan uses the same term, *efie mmoa* (household animals) or *ayenboa* (reared animals). These names denote that pets are traditionally regarded as part of the animals kept at home, including animals that are reared or kept for their meat rather than for their companionship.

According to Traditional Respondent 1, the 'Whiteman' differentiates between pets and reared animals but among the Akans, pets are part of the animals generally referred to as reared animals. According to him, humans came to meet these animals at home as per God's creation and order of things. Similarly, Traditional Respondent 2 maintained that pets are called by the same name Akans use for all domesticated animals. For her, people keep these animals as pets simply because they like them or have an interest in them. For Traditional Respondent 6, a pet is known as *efie aboa* (household animal), a term used generally for all domesticated animals. He explained that these pets have existed with humans for a long time.

The respondents did not seem to think there was anything morally wrong with keeping animals as pets or as companion animals. Some respondents encouraged the keeping of pets while others thought that keeping animals as a pet did not constitute an infringement on the freedom of the animals. Opambour, for example, did not think there is any wrong done in having animals as a pet. He held that keeping animals as pets can benefit the human owners. One of such benefits, he identified, was that animals kept at home could help divert some misfortunes away

from their owners due to some animals such as the cat ability to perceive impending misfortunes such as death and ailment before they come upon their owners. He also believed that animals tacitly show consent to be petted through the way they show affection to their human owners and from the response they give to the affections they receive. According to Pius, there is no infringement of animals' freedom in keeping them as pets because he was of the view that animals are better off in terms of care with their human owners than on their own. Thus, in his opinion, pet owners are rather helping the animals they keep as pets. In addition, he felt that these animals could be friends to their owners and provide companionship as well as protection to their owners.

The study noted that in some instances, animals that are kept as pets are later killed by their owners for food. When asked about this, Traditional Respondent 5, for example, did not see anything wrong in keeping animals as pets and killing them later for food. He thought it was up to the individual owner to decide on what to do with the animal. Traditional Respondent 9 pointed out that animals were initially created to be eaten. As a result, she did not see any problem with pet owners killing their animals for food. She, was, however, quick to admit that the relationship that is built between the animal and its owner sometimes makes it difficult for it to be killed for food. Although the majority of the young adult respondents were not so much inclined to the thought of killing and eating their pets, some few respondents such as Obed and Shadrack, saw no wrong in doing so. Aboraa and Clara thought that if one should kill and eat his or her pet then it means the initial purpose for keeping the animal was not for petting after all. As a result, she believes it is wrong to kill and eat pets because people develop some attachment to their pets. In contrast, Shadrack believed that there is nothing wrong in eating pets. For him, since the individual decided to make the animal his or her pet, he or she can decide at any time to take away that right from the animal. Thus, he emphasized that *it is a pet so long as you are keeping it as a pet*.

Again, the respondents were of the view that even though there is nothing inherently wrong in keeping animals as pets, pet keepers or owners take upon themselves the responsibility of caring for the animals they keep as pets. Thus, Obed and Shadrack, for instance, posited that there is nothing wrong in keeping animals but once anyone decides to keep them they should be ready to take up the responsibility for their upkeep. In line with this standpoint, Edwin thought that it was the responsibility of the 'superior class' (humans) to take care of the inferior class (animals). He posited that *if we are not killing them and we are domesticating them in our homes, then why not? Their welfare should be our responsibility*.

A first notable point from the findings is about how a pet is accurately defined. As was said in the literature review, Bok (2011: 769) defines pet as a nonhuman animal that is taken into a home and accepted as a member of the human's household. This definition does not precisely reflect the Akan understanding and practice, although the definition of a companion animal by The New Zealand Companion Animal Council Inc. (2016: 4) as any animal that shares a living environment and relationship with humans may arguably come close enough. Furthermore, it is observable from the findings that the Akans' perception about the keeping of animals as pets or as companion animals is against everything the rightists or abolitionists will stand for. The Akans keep animals as pets for instrumental purposes, i.e. for company, protection, fondness of the animals, hunting, to fend off evil and death, and in some cases, for food. They also regard animals kept as pets as the properties of their human owners who have the powers of discretion in deciding what purpose they serve. Despite this, it is also observable that the Akan considers it a responsibility of pet owners to provide proper care and maintenance for their pets thus, making their position share some affinity with the position of the direct welfarism. Consequently, Akans believe they have greater responsibilities to animals kept at home than to animals in the wild.

6.5 The hunting and trapping of animals

Going with the animal rightists' abolitionist position, will mean that animal right theory will call for a total cessation of hunting and trapping of animals. Nevertheless, Regan, who is an animal rightist, did not entirely write off the practice of hunting and trapping. He writes, "Since animals can pose innocent threats, and because we are sometimes justified in overriding their rights when they do, one cannot assume that all hunting or trapping must be wrong" (Regan, 2004: 353). Regan, however, appears to be against hunting and trapping of animals for commercial profits, recreational purposes, and sports. For him, and following his general position on the moral standing of animals, hunting and trapping for these purposes, treats animals as mere receptacles used merely as means to an end. Animals have moral rights and humans must not use them to satisfy their needs and pleasures. In this regard, Regan rejects all the common arguments that are used as justifications in support of these practices, including the argument that those who practice hunting and trapping get to exercise, enjoy the communion with nature, enjoy the companionship of their friends, or the argument that the practice is an old age tradition.

In likewise manner and in conformity with the welfarist general position, welfarism will support the hunting and trapping of animals as long as due diligence is taken to protect the welfare of the animals and reduce their suffering. Relying on the main principle of the Leopold's land ethic that states that a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community and wrong when it tends to do otherwise. Callicott (1980) argues that regulated and disciplined sport hunting is consistent with Leopold's land ethic. In agreement with the Callicott's view, The Wildlife Society calls for a properly regulated hunting and trapping instead of a blanket abolition of these acts. They state, as part of their standing position, that they support a regulated hunting, trapping, and fishing, and the right of people to pursue either consumptive or non-consumptive use of wildlife. They also claim to support an animal welfare approach when it comes to hunting and trapping rather than an animal rightist position. To this, they assert that The Wildlife Society backs an animal welfare ideology that holds that humans can study and manage animals through science-based methods. They also find the human use of wildlife acceptable, including regulated hunting, trapping, and lethal control for the benefit of populations, species, and human society provided the practice is sustainable and individual animals are treated ethically and humanely. (The Wildlife Society, *n.d.*)

Responding to the practice of hunting, the traditional respondents pointed out that traditionally, hunting is a serious trade for the Akan, so much that hunters had to undergo certain rituals and purification rites before they set out into the wild to hunt. In addition, the killing of some animals required special rituals before their meat are brought home for consumption. Traditional Respondent 6 recounted that the Akans used to consider the best hunters to be those who have been able to kill the most number of elephants. Accordingly, hunters were ranked in ascending order according to the number of elephants kills they have made.

The position of most of the respondents was that since they accept the kill and use of animals for food then they see nothing wrong with hunting and trapping animals for food. They, however, did not support indiscriminate or unregulated hunting and trapping of animals. For instance, Opambour posited that once he believes that animals can be killed for food, it should not matter if they are hunted and trapped for that same purpose. What he does not endorse is hunting them just for the fun of it or for their horns, which are sold for profit. Obed shared similar sentiments. He was generally against unregulated animal sports and trophy hunting. He called these acts as 'hunting for self-glorifying and expeditions'. He feared that if these self-glorifying acts were not regulated, they would lead to the extinction of those animal species.

He was also of the view that it would be better for humans to farm animals rather than hunt them, since he believed farming animals is more sustainable than hunting. Concerning this, some of the participants were against traditional Ghanaian festivals that require the hunting of animals as part of the festivities. Other respondents did not concur with this because they believed that since the festivals are held only once a year, the period affords the animals enough time to procreate. Traditional Respondent 5 hinted that although hunting is an important occupation for the Akans, hunting some types of animals is prohibited during those parts of the year that the animals are believed to be procreating. Traditional Respondent 4 also pointed out that Akans use taboos primarily to preserve nature and to keep certain animal species alive.

On trapping of animals, Traditional Respondent 6 stated that hunters set traps deep in the forest and some closer to home. For those closer to home, it is easier for the hunters to check on the trap every morning for a catch. For those traps in the forest, however, the hunters may visit them every few days thus, making it difficult for the hunter to monitor the catch. This makes it possible for animals caught in a snare or a trap to die and even get rotten before the hunter finds it. Traditional Respondent 4 explained that traps are not set to maim the animals but to kill them. He admitted, however, that sometimes the animal caught in the trap struggles for a while before it dies and at other times, the hunter comes to meet the animal not yet dead in the trap and must strangle it to kill it.

From the respondents' claims, it is inferable that the Akan practice and philosophy of hunting and trapping lean towards a welfarist position rather than a rightist or abolitionist position. In considering the respondents' call for regulated hunting, the traditional use of taboos to control and restrict the hunters, and their abhorring of indiscriminate hunting, it is, perhaps, safe to argue that the Akan supports a protectionist view when it comes to hunting. This is gathered from the fear expressed by Obed concerning the possibility of the animals becoming extinct if hunting and trapping are not controlled, and the views expressed by Traditional Respondent 4 and Traditional Respondent 6 on the placement of taboos to restrict the hunters during the mating seasons of the animals. Despite this, there was no evidence from the respondents that point to the fact that animal trapping is done by the Akan in such way that ensures that the animals do not go through pain and suffering before their death. The respondents did not also give any indication that the Akan hunters practiced their trade in such a manner that was meant to reduce animal pain and suffering.

6.6 Vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research

Under this theme, the divergent views of direct welfarism and rightism were observed as follows: Animal welfarism accepts the permissibility of the humane use of animals in biomedical research provided such use does not cause unnecessary pain and suffering to the animals. Rightism, by contrast, denies the permissibility of such use however humanely or painlessly it is done.

Regan (2004: 392) explains that welfarists decide whether the harm done to animals in scientific research is justified by applying the utilitarian approach of balancing the overall aggregate of positive gains (happiness/pleasure), and negative gains (pain/suffering), for all sentient beings affected by the outcome. In effect, if it can be shown that the outcome of the use of animals in science for biomedical research or vivisection produces greater positive gains than negative gains then the act is considered a justifiable act and is encouraged. In concordance with this welfarist position, Cohen (2001) held that there is no moral harm done in the use of animals in medical research to advance human knowledge and to find cure and vaccines for pertinent human ailments. For him, it is justifiable to use animals in biomedical research in as much as the welfare of animals is considered. Cohen postulates that the use of animals in medical research is more profound than their other uses because researchers cannot do without the use of animal subjects. Humans, however, can be able to survive without animal food products, they can survive without companion animals or the use of animal skins for clothes, but in the field of medical research, Cohen was of the view that the use of animals cannot be avoided. Again, Cohen is against the total abolition of animal use in medical research due to the many benefits it provides for the advancement of science and consequently, for humans. Cohen believes that should animal experimentation be forbidden, nearly all the opportunities of medical research openings would close and most of these researches could not be undertaken.

The animal rightist view presents a contrasting position. Regan (2004: 393) held that using animals in scientific experimentation amounts to treating animals as were mere receptacles or, as if their value is reducible to their utility. He notes that because the rights view generally finds the practice of harming a human merely because of an aggregate effect unacceptable, it makes it equally unacceptable for humans to abuse animals on a similar basis.

As Regan (2001: 142) correctly noted, while the use of animals for food, clothes, companion animals, etc, has been ongoing for thousands of years, the use of animals for scientific purposes is relatively a recent development. Accordingly, the study directed queries on this theme only

to the young adult respondents, since the use of animals in biomedical research is not a traditional act. Nonetheless, given what has been said by the traditional respondents under the other themes and sub-themes above, the researcher can extrapolate that the traditional Akan view will endorse the use of animals for scientific research, if doing so would further human advancement. This conclusion seems valid due in part to the traditional Akan belief that humans are naturally placed higher than animals on their hierarchy of beings. This higher position, humans hold, affords them the right to use those beings below them to further their needs. Secondly, it is also safe to postulate that traditional Akans will advocate for a regulated or humane practice of the science of using animals in research due to their acknowledgment of animal pain and suffering.

Except for one, all the young adult respondents held that there was nothing morally appalling with the use of animals in biomedical research. The widely held positions were that firstly, humans are superior to animals, and secondly, God has given humans the authority to subdue and use animals to meet humans' need. Thirdly, they believed that the use of animals in biomedical research serves a greater utilitarian purpose. Efua, for instance, thought that it is right to use animals for research for the safety of humans, since it is inconceivable for humans to be used. According to Obed, Pius, and Opambour, the use of animals in biomedical research is permissible because 'obviously' everything was created for humans and because it helps in furthering scientific research. Opambour, on his part, thought that the use of animals for biomedical research aligns perfectly with God's purpose of creation. For Priscilla, using animals for biomedical research is not to be considered bad, although she thought that the practice needed to be regulated so that it is not done indiscriminately. She felt regulation is important because of the pains animals go through when they are put through various tests. *I feel for them as well*, she added. For Shadrack, unless it is argued that animals and humans are equal, using animals instead of humans for these researches constitutes lesser harm. His claim coheres with Cohen's welfarist position. Cohen (2001: 63) had expressed the view that the interests that animals have should not be translated as rights they possess, since rights are essentially human. For Cohen, even though animals are sentient and their pain are worthy of moral consideration, it does not mean that their experiences are morally equivalent to the experiences of humans. Based on this, Cohen supported the use of animals in biomedical research albeit, with due consideration for the pain and suffering of the animal.

In general, one can sense that the Akans' view on the use of animals in biomedical research corresponds immensely with the welfarist position. The responses show that the Akans do not

consider the use of animals for scientific research as constituting moral evil. Just as Cohen, they encourage the act on the utilitarian ground that it helps advance scientific research of which humans stand to benefit. The respondents' view also show that they reject unregulated or indiscriminate research on animals due essentially in the fact that they recognise that the practice can cause suffering in animals.

Osei was the only respondent who thought that it was wrong to use animals for biomedical research. He did not agree with any of the reasons and justification provided by the other participants. He was convinced that there are other methods to conduct these biomedical tests without using animals. This was also the position of Regan, who had argued that the rights view is not to be considered as antiscientific, but to be regarded as calling for the development and use of other alternatives in scientific research that do not rely on the use of animals, alternatives that do not involve animal models or toxicity tests. On this score, The Royal Society (2004) notes that some alternative methods that employ the use of computer model rather than animals are available to science. These, as they note, may include the use of cell cultures when a specific mechanism can be identified. It also includes the use of molecular sensors to test the biological activity of certain particular substances. In situations where there is enough known about a complex system found in intact animals, computer simulations can be used in understanding the intricacies of that system. Nevertheless, even with these available options, The Royal Society (2004) notes that these alternative methods, in general, suggest and demand further work on whole animals, and do not completely replace experiments on animals. The Royal Society thus, asserts that: "Alternatives to whole animals are clearly versatile but are as yet, incapable of capturing the complexity of the living mammalian body" (The Royal Society, 2004: 16). Similarly, Cohen did not think there could be alternatives available to science that can lead to the total abolition of animals in biomedical research, as suggested by Regan and other abolitionists. Thus, he claims that: "Animals cannot be adequately replaced. Substituting non-animal methods for testing in medical research is possible in a few limited contexts, but in most medical research it is wishful fantasy" (Cohen, 2001: 71). He, however, encouraged the use of other alternatives besides animals where and when it is applicable.

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the findings gathered from the respondents with one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were discussed and analysed. The main arguments or positions of the

respondents were compared and juxtaposed with the literature and analysed through the lens of the theories of welfarism, rightism, and the ethics of interrelatedness. The discussion was done thematically under six main themes. These themes represent the major arguments in the animal ethics debate. They are the theme of the interconnectedness of nature, the moral status of nonhuman animals, and vegetarianism and the use of animals for food. The others are the use of animals as pets or companion animals, the hunting and trapping of animals, and vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research.

The findings gathered through the respondents indicate that the Akans' view of nature and their relationship with nature correspond with the ethics of the interrelatedness of nature. Respondents agreed that there exists some form of connections between humans and the rest of nature, and that it is an important connection that needs to be sustained. It was also clear from the views of the respondents that they understood this existing interconnection of nature to mean the interdependency of the constituents of nature on each other for survival, which is much in agreement with the emerging literature on African environmental ethics. It is also evident that the Akan environmental ethics is anthropocentric in approach, through the conferring of instrumental or extrinsic values on nature, instrumental values that go to benefit humans. This notwithstanding, the Akan environmental ethics is not to be considered as individualistic in nature because it does not seek the interests or rights of individual human agents but instead, the common interest of humanity through its goal to ensure the continuity and survival of the human community. In so doing, Akan environmental ethics call for judicious and sustainable use of the natural environment in such a way that maintains what the Akan considers the natural cycle of the interdependency.

On the moral status of animals, it was shown that the Akans consider humans higher than animals on their hierarchy of beings, which forms part of their ontology. This higher position of humans, they maintained, made humans superior to animals. As a result, the Akans hold the view that animals exist for human use. The Akans, therefore, use animals for various purposes including food, clothing, and sacrifices. Furthermore, the Akans believe that animals and humans are not the same because humans possess some distinguishing attributes that set humans apart from animals. Among these attributes is their belief that humans are rational beings while animals are not; their perception that humans are made in the image of God; their conviction that animals do not have a language; their observation that animals do not have a moral sense and not social beings and the possible lack of a soul or spirit in animals. The study

discussed the strength and weaknesses of these attributes in the light of the literature on these subjects.

In the next chapter, the study will use the observations and conclusions reached here to argue for the place of the Akan animal ethics and rely on same to propose, what the study will call a 'progressive relational anthropocentric' approach, and the argument for a theory of moral status based on community assimilation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

AKAN ANIMAL ETHICS: A PROGRESSIVE RELATIONAL ANTHROPOCENTRIC APPROACH AND THE ARGUMENT FOR MORAL STATUS BASED ON COMMUNITY ASSIMILATION

7.0 Introduction

The Akans' position on key areas in the animal ethics debate was explicated under the discussion and interpretation of findings in the preceding chapter. The goal of this current chapter is to bring together a summary of the main findings under each of the key areas in the animal ethics debate, and to use what has been learnt to argue for what the study calls 'progressive relational anthropocentric' approach to environmental ethics, and for a theory of moral status based on community assimilation. The connection between these two and why it is important to discuss both is that having a sense of the anthropocentric position of the Akan people helps to understand and appreciate their position on the moral status of nonhuman animals. Thus, as it will soon be shown, the progressive relational anthropocentric worldview of the Akans highly inform their ethical attitude towards nonhuman animals.

7.1 Towards a progressive relational anthropocentric approach

Under the theme of the interconnectedness of nature, the conclusion reached by the study in the previous chapter was that Akan environmental ethics support the theory of ethics of interrelatedness which, as was shown, is the predominant theory emerging from the African environmental ethics literature albeit, it is referred to by different names. To say Akan environmental ethics endorses the ethics of interrelatedness is to say that Akan environmental ethics recognises the interdependence and peaceful coexistence between humans, and the rest of the natural environment. This recognition calls for an attitude towards the environment that can be best described as an attitude of 'live and let live,' Tangwa (2004). Again, this recognition of human interconnectedness with nature obligates humans to treat nature with some judicious concern for its worth, survival and sustainability as seen in Ogunbemi (1997).

On the debate on anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric approach to nature, the study observed that although, Akan environmental ethics identifies with the ethics of interrelatedness with its accompanying moral imperative for environmental preservation and sustenance, it does not consider nature valuable for its own sake. Instead, following the information gathered from

both the traditional and young adult respondents as detailed in chapters 5 and 6, it is reasonable to say that Akan environmental ethics imputes instrumental value to nature, an instrumental value that ultimately benefits humans. In other words, the Akans hold the belief that the preservation and sustenance of nature are good and desirable because they serve the needs and interests of humans. It is not for the sake of any intrinsic worth identified in nature, but for humans' continuous survival on earth. Most of the traditional respondents strongly expressed this position. Traditional Respondent 3, for example, subtly pointed to this in a rhetorical question: *if we are unable to preserve what our ancestors have bequeathed to us, then what will become of our lives?* More evidently, Traditional Respondent 4 affirmed that even though human and nature are interconnected, this interconnection exists to the benefit of humans in such a way that without human beings, rivers and other aspects of nature would have no role to play. Likewise, Traditional Respondent 5 posited that human life is not complete without animals and water bodies and that God created everything to benefit humans. The study also revealed that the Akan sees this perceived ontological arrangement of nature as divinely inspired. The Supreme Being, as the creator of the world and everything in it, placed humans higher than nature and animals on the Akan hierarchy of beings. Again, the Akans believe that it is in accordance with the design and will of the Supreme Being that everything was made to serve the purpose of humanity. Traditional Respondent 4 unreservedly expressed this particular view; for him, in accordance with God's creation, human beings are superior to all beings and as such, God has given humans the authority to dominate nature. This position, as the study showed in chapter six, echoes the view of Bujo (2009), who similarly recognized that the interrelationship that the Africans understand to exist between humans and nature, is one that makes humans consider animals, plants, minerals, and other inanimate, as the forces that God has made available for human use. He, however, acknowledges that this does not imply that humans are allowed to treat the lesser beings arbitrarily.

Furthermore, we learnt from chapter 6 that even though Akan environmental ethics is anthropocentric in approach, it is not to be regarded as individualistic. This is because Akan environmental ethics, as the findings showed in chapters six and seven, do not seek to promote the interests or rights of individual human agents but the common interest of the collective. In other words, Akan environmental ethics seeks to ensure the continuous progress of the human community and its survival. Consequently, Akan environmental ethics calls for careful and sustainable use of the natural environment in a way that maintains what the Akans consider to be the natural cycle of the interdependency of nature.

In addition, it was made apparent from the findings that when the Akans speak of preserving nature for the sake of humanity, they do not have only the interest of the current generation at heart, but that of the future generations as well. As was shown in the previous chapter, this position was articulated by Traditional Respondent 4, who mentioned that: *We have dominion, but you could destroy everything, to your own disadvantage, so you sustain them. You maintain them, to make sure you have something left for the next generation.*

7.1.1 The progressive relational anthropocentric approach

These aforementioned points are the defining features of the progressive relational anthropocentric approach that the study is proposing. Here, the study explains the choice for each of the three nomenclatures that describe the proposed approach. First, the reason for choosing ‘anthropocentrism’ is made apparent from the discussion above. Akan environmental ethics, as the study has shown, is fundamentally human-centred. It does not acknowledge that nature can exist or be valuable for its own sake but instead, considers nature instrumentally valuable. That is to say, nature exists to further human needs and survival. Evidence for this view has been extensively shown succinctly in the section above and more extensively in the previous chapter. This position was made self-evident when the more direct question was posed to the respondents, in a bid to determine whether they will consider nature to be beneficial for its own good. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, Traditional Respondent 1, for instance, responded that: *they [nature] are useful to man. Let us take the fish in the rivers that we consume. We [humans] hunt animals in the bush, we use the forest in farming, and we use the timber to build houses.... so everything that God created is useful to mankind.* Traditional Respondent 4, likewise, mentioned that nature is indeed preserved for the sake of human beings. For him, *nature can go extinct but it will not affect it..., it is, I mean, it is to the detriment of men. So nature has nothing to lose, but we [humans] have something to lose.*

Still on the anthropocentric attribution, the study showed in section 6.1.1 of the previous chapter that the Akans’ rejection of nature’s intrinsic value stands in contrast with the view of Gyekye (1995), who thought that the Akans attribute some intrinsic property to nature because they perceive, at least, some part of nature to be animated (containing *sunsum* (spirit)). It is also a repudiation of the non-anthropocentric approach to environmental ethics ambition of the likes of Tangwa, Ogungbemi, and Behrens. As indicated, Tangwa (2004), for example, had argued his eco-bio-communitarian environmental ethics to be a non-anthropocentric approach

and as a contrast to the Western environmental ethical theories which he accused of being both anthropocentric and individualistic. Kevin Behrens (2010) had similarly described his ‘African relational environmentalism’ as a rejection of anthropocentrism. Nonetheless, the Akan anthropocentric approach corresponds with the positions of the likes of Bujo, Murove, and Horsthemke. Horsthemke (2015) had argued that the attempt by some African environmental ethicists to couch out a non-anthropocentric relational approach to environmental ethics based on the ethics of *Ubuntu* and *Ukama* is unsuccessful. As Horsthemke notes, if one should critically observe the language employed by these African environmental ethicists in their interpretations of the African based knowledge, it will be perceived that it is undeniably human-centered. Thus, the evidence from the Akan respondents appears to agree with Horsthemke’s position and therefore, renounces the non-anthropocentric interpretations. It is also notable that the Akan position coheres with Murove’s philosophical application and interpretation of *Ubuntu* and *Ukama* to the natural environment. Murove claimed that when the two concepts of *Ukama* and *Ubuntu* are synthesized, they produce an ethical outlook that suggests that human wellbeing is indispensable from their dependence on, and interdependence with all that exists (Murove, 2009: 315). This understanding supports the claims made by the Akan respondents. Thus, the human-centeredness of the Akan ontological beliefs is made apparent hence the study’s employment of anthropocentrism in its proposed approach.

The second nomenclature in the proposed approach is ‘progressive’. Again, this is made evident from what was deduced from the findings in the previous chapter, and briefly presented in the section above. As indicated, information from the respondents clearly showed that the Akans subscribe to the ethics of interrelatedness theory, a theory alluded to by most African environmental ethicists. This means that Akan environmental ethics recognises the interdependence of humans and nature, and that it is an important relationship that needs to be sustained. Traditional Respondent 4, for example, undoubtedly affirmed the interconnection of humans and nature. He stated that: *Oh definitely, we are interconnected, we are interdependent*. Similarly, Traditional Respondent 7 emphasized the essentiality of the interconnection between humans and the rest of nature. For him, humans, just like the atmosphere, stars, moon, seas, and trees, are all part of nature and must, therefore, be interconnected. Furthermore, it became evident from the views of the respondents that they understood this existing interconnection between humans and nature to mean an interdependence which was necessary and indispensable for human survival. For example, Traditional Respondent 3 expressed his understanding of the interconnectedness of nature as that which is based on nature’s

dependence on one another. Thus, to him, humans taking care of the forest will lead to a good amount of rainfall in return. Consequently, the rainfall will fill the rivers and water bodies for farmers to use. This will promote plant growth. Furthermore, the animals in the forest will also have enough to eat from the plants and will multiply for humans to kill some for food and use the plants for medicine as well. Thus, we can see the relevance of the studies' choice of using the interconnectedness in its proposed approach.

Finally, why 'progressive' as used in the proposed approach? The study describes its proposed relational anthropocentric approach as progressive, based on three observations made from the findings:

1. Akan environmental ethical approach, even though anthropocentric in nature, advocates for attitudes and relationships with the natural environment that ensure sustainability and preservation of nature;
2. Akan environmental ethical approach, even though human-centred, is not individualistic but communalistic;
3. Akan environmental ethical approach does not advocate only for the sustainability and preservation of nature for the current generation but also for future generation.

Anthropocentrism, as it is generally known, regards only human beings as intrinsically valuable while regarding all other things as being only instrumentally valuable; all other things are valuable only to the extent that serve human purposes (Callicott, 1984: 299). On this score, the Akan environmental ethical perspective is anthropocentric. Nevertheless, the Akans view goes beyond this by acknowledging the interconnectedness of humans with nature. Consequently, it strongly advocates for the preservation and sustenance of nature although, it does this for the interest of human survival rather than for a recognized intrinsic value found in nature. The Akans, therefore, consider it an essential and absolute necessity for humans, to do all they can to keep the cycle of nature sustained. The Akans ensure this, as Traditional Respondent 5 noted, through the use of taboos and prohibitions that come with dire consequences on those who flout them. People, for example, are not permitted to clear certain forests for farming and there are some days that they are not permitted to use the rivers. In addition, there were taboos that prohibited the people from using certain animals for food as well as the forbidding of hunting during certain times of the year. Again, as was mentioned in chapter six, Traditional Respondent 9 explained that the Akans believed that the gods were able to punish people who flouted these prohibitions, so much that the fear of the gods' punishment deterred people and

ensured their compliance. The Traditional Respondent 7, added that the notion of nature preservation was reflective in the way of life of the traditional Akan people and their proverbs. Thus, noticeably, the Akan understanding of the interconnectedness of nature comes with a normative principle to preserve and sustain the natural environment. This keeps the anthropocentric part in check.

In addition, it appears that the Akan position, by placing an instrumental value on nature based on its benefit to humans, is in accordance with the non-individualistic claims by the likes of Behrens and Tangwa regarding the characteristics of the African theory of ethics of interrelatedness. Behrens, for instance, notes that “unlike many Western moral theories that place a strong emphasis on respecting individual autonomy, or promoting utility for individuals, Africans place a high value on the group: the family, the clan, the community (Behrens, 2010: 472).” This position also remains valid for the Akans, such that Akan environmental ethics, despite being anthropocentric in approach, is not to be considered individualistic. Akan environmental ethics does not seek the interests or rights of individual human agents or individual natural species but the interests of the human species as a whole. This, evidently, would be in line with the general communitarian character and ethics of Akan societies of which many writers have made reference to.

Finally, it is also apparent, as mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, that when the Akans speak of preserving nature for the sake of humanity, they do not only have in mind the interests of the current generation, but also that of the future generations as well. Traditional Respondent 4 articulated this in his claim that: *We [humans] have dominion, but you could destroy everything, to your own disadvantage, so you sustain them. You maintain them, to make sure you have something left for the next generation.* This view coincides with the position of the indirect welfarists, who call for the preservation of animal species because they believe humans owe it to the present and future generations to do what they can to ensure that animals continue to exist. This is to ensure that future humans also get to enjoy the benefits of these animals, either through sightseeing or other beneficial uses the particular animal may provide as Regan (2004) pointed out.

In effect, the progressive relational anthropocentric approach is an approach to environmental ethics that recognises that human and nature are interconnected and because of this interconnectedness, humans have a moral responsibility to take care of the environment by ensuring its preservation and sustenance. This normative responsibility, according to this

approach, is not because of an identified intrinsic quality or value found in nature but mainly for the continuous survival of humans and human communities. The study believes that this approach adequately reflects the worldview of the Akans. The progressive relational anthropocentric approach agrees with Norton (1984), who thought that it is a mistaken view to think that environmental ethics can only thrive if its principles are based solely on a nonanthropocentric theories, that is, on principles that presuppose that the natural environment has value in themselves independent of its value to humans. Remarking on his proposed weak anthropocentrism, Norton held that:

Weak anthropocentrism provides a basis for criticizing individual, consumptive needs and can provide the basis for adjudicating between these levels, thereby providing an adequate basis for environmental ethics without the questionable ontological commitments made by nonanthropocentrists in attributing intrinsic value to nature (Norton, 1984: 131).

Thus, the study strongly agrees with Norton's position, and believes that the progressive relational anthropocentric approach serves similar purpose for the Akans as Norton's proposed weak anthropocentrism. That is to say, the fact that the Akans have an anthropocentric outlook towards the environment does not mean they do not have a sense of responsibility towards the environment.

7.2 The argument for a theory of moral status based on community assimilation

From the discussions in the previous chapter, the study noted that the respondents were in consensus about the fact that human beings have a higher value to nonhuman animals. The claim made by Traditional Respondent 7 that "human beings are human beings and cannot be replaced", leads the study to conclude that the Akans consider human beings as having intrinsic value. Meanwhile, animals are only valued instrumentally as shown in the above discussion. The Akans, as the study learnt, use a variety of animals to fulfil various existential needs. These, as we saw, include the use of animals for food, sacrifices, ritual pacifications and warding off bad omen. Other uses of animals are for clothes, foot mat for chiefs, some paraphernalia won by the chiefs, musical instruments, companion animals, and hunting. Given the ontological position the Akans give to nonhuman animals, where do the Akans place the moral status of animals? To answer this, the study considered what the Akans hold to be the important distinguishing marks that set humans apart from animals. The most salient of them considered were the following: that humans are created in the image of God, whilst animals are not; that humans have higher rational capabilities than animals in general, and that only humans can

communicate using language. The others are that humans have a sense of morality whilst animals do not; that animals are not social beings, at least, not in the sense that humans are; and that animals, unlike humans, do not have souls. The discussions in the previous chapter considered some of the strengths and weaknesses of these noted distinguishing features.

Despite these distinguishing features that the Akans observed between humans and animals, the Akans acknowledge that animals can suffer pain and can express various emotions based on how humans treat or relate to them. The Akans use words such as pain, pleasure, sad, moody, grief, excitement, and happiness, to describe the various emotions they consider animals do have at a given point in time. Traditional Respondent 1 observed that humans can cause animals pain, and even make them very sad especially, when animals are hit with something. For him, the way animals react show that they can feel pain. Traditional Respondent 6 similarly mentioned that by observing the behavior and the cry of animals, it is possible to tell that animals go through pain. Traditional Respondent 5, Traditional Respondent 4, and Traditional Respondent 9 independently acknowledged that causing pain to animals could bring negative repercussion on the perpetrator, both physically and spiritually. For Traditional Respondent 4, making animals happy goes to the advantage of both animals and humans. This is because when animals are happy, they increase in offspring and humans get to benefit from their use.

Does the acknowledgment of animals' sentiency, mean that the Akans consider animals as having a moral status? It appears so, at least to some extent, for as Garner (2010) noted, the mere fact that animals are sentient ought to result in animals being accorded some form of moral status. When issues of good care, kindness, compassion, and various emotions and state of mind come to play, there is no doubt that ethics and morality are at play. The very fact that the Akans judge their actions as good or bad based on the possibility of their action causing pain or harm to animals should suggest that animals are, to some extent, regarded as part of the moral community. However, considering the ontological position of animals on the Akan hierarchy of beings and the distinguishing features the Akans identify between humans and animals, should suggest that animals are, at best, regarded as moral patients, rather than as moral agents. It will also imply that if the Akan should grant moral status to animals at all, it will be one that is inferior to the moral status of humans. Hence, it is logical to say that the Akan position will not endorse an abolitionist or rightist position, but will instead be closer to the direct welfarist position that calls for the amelioration of animal pain in humans' use of animals to further their essential needs.

7.2.1 A theory of moral status based on community assimilation

Among the distinguishing marks that the Akans identified as those that set humans apart from animals, the study considers the ones based on the beliefs that animals lack a sense of morality and their lack of sociality very profound. Although arguments, as shown in the previous chapter, have been made by some to suggest that animals do exhibit certain behaviors that can indicate they have a moral sense, this evidence has not been conclusive enough to deal with the skepticism about the lack of moral sense in animals. Hence, the perceived lack of a sense of morality among animals remains a strong position used in denying them a moral status completely, or an equal moral status with humans. In terms of animal sociality, again, the study showed in section 6.2.1.2.4 of chapter six that there is indeed evidence to suggest that some animals are social and have well-organized social structures. Tinbergen, for instance, has shown the sociality of animals in terms of their family and group life, mating behavior, and their relation with other species, among others. Nevertheless, he defines animal social behavior simply as the study of cooperation between individuals (Tinbergen, 1990: 2). In a way, sociality, in the Akan context, is also about cooperation, but also more than that. It is about the ability to engage and sustain a meaningful and productive family and social relationships. It is also largely participatory, as it requires individuals to share in communal activities.

One should not be entirely surprised that the Akans put premium on sociality and the ability to have a moral engagement. The Akans' use of sociality and a sense of morality as distinguishing features between humans and animals is rooted within their sense of communal life, which traditional African communitarian societies like theirs are noted for. Sociality and living an ethical life that promotes the wellbeing of the community are the core values of traditional Akan people, and the impact and implication of this communal life influence their notion of personhood and their understanding of what it means to live a fulfilled life. As it is common knowledge now, traditional Akan societies, just like many other traditional African societies, are very communal in character. Wiredu (2011: 3) defines communalism as “a social system in which kinship relationships are made the basis for interconnecting the well-being of the individual with that of the group.” This leads to a lot of shared social life and shared common values. These communal societies prioritize the promotion of this shared social life, and values over and above individual goals and personal aspirations, although scholars such as Gyekye have argued that the community does not completely eliminate individual expressions. Nevertheless, the Akan individual is never an isolated person but instead, perceived as

‘inherently’ a communal being, who is deep-rooted in social relationships and interdependency (Gyekye, 1997: 41). Thus, the Akans uphold social interactions and ethics that promote such communal living. True to this, Akan ethics has been described as a humanistic ethic. That is an ethic that considers the moral good as that which promotes human interest or that which can advance a common and harmonious social life (Gyekye, 1996; Wiredu, 1992). As Wiredu (1992: 195) puts it, Akan ethics is ‘quintessentially social’.

Relatedly, the connection that the Akans make of individual personhood with the quality of one’s social interactions with others, and one’s ability to display humanistic attitudes are telling. Gyekye (1992: 109) explains that “the pursuit or practice of moral virtue is held as intrinsic to the conception of a person.” Consequently, in the Akan language, should an individual fail to live by the expected moral codes of the community, it is usually said of the individual that he or she is not a *person* (*onnye nipa*). Menkiti thought this moral requirement of the self, made achieving personhood a matter of progression in which an individual can succeed or fail. He notes that: “One conclusion appears inevitable, and it is to the effect that personhood is the sort of thing which has to be achieved, the sort of thing at which individuals could fail” (Menkiti, 2004: 326). Gyekye has, of course, spurned Menkiti’s view that personhood is something that is conferred on someone by the community. Nevertheless, Gyekye concedes that there are some expressions in the Akan language, judgments or evaluations, made about the life and conduct of people, which give the impression that it is the community that defines and confers personhood. Implied in this judgment, he maintains, is the notion that there are certain basic norms and ideals to which the behavior of a person (if he or she is to be regarded a person), ought to follow (Gyekye, 1992: 108-109). These norms and ideals, by elaboration, are actions that foster and sustain cherished shared values, goals and aspirations of the community. Thus, this Akan communal practice with its associated moral undertones tend to underscore the importance of human-to-human interrelationship, and can explain why the respondents chose sociality and having a moral sense as weighty distinguishing marks between humans and animals.

Evidently, we can see that community participation and living by the ethic of promoting the common good of the community are the defining features of traditional Akan communities. As such, individuals that exhibit these features are regarded as *persons*, while those that do not, are considered as *not persons*. Thus, given an Akan community, some individuals, although humans, may not be considered persons if, they do not participate in the shared community life and seek the common good as supreme and over and above their personal goals. As a result,

we can extend this conception of personhood to cover an understanding of moral status in terms of nonhuman animals. The study, therefore, formulates a theory of a moral status based on community assimilation following these highly valued features therein in traditional Akan communities, that is, the value for community participation (a shared social relationship) and the promotion of the common good.

As shown from the previous chapter, many of the respondents pointed out that establishing a close relationship with animals can affect how they treat them. Traditional Respondent 5, for example, posited that a good and close relationship with animals can establish a strong bond between animals and humans like that which exists among siblings. Traditional Respondent 2 also held that a close relationship with an animal makes it difficult and heart-rending for the owner to kill it. More tellingly, Traditional Respondent 6 mentioned that a close relationship with animals changes one's outlook towards the animal. He stated that:

Your outlook towards the animal will change; I mean you become so closer to the animal. That is why some people have dogs who stay in the house... Any time a dog dies, it is just like a funeral. Everybody, especially kids in the house, everybody becomes so gloomy and they are of themselves. He continued that the longer you become associated with the animal the more friendly the relationship becomes and sometimes some people treat them like human beings. For him, this is also the case even for wild animals that have been domesticated. To this, he said: ...the moment you bring it home. You domesticate it and it becomes like any domestic wild one and becomes like a pet.

The study deduces from the claims by these Akan experts that animals that have been *assimilated* in the lives of the people, receive some higher moral considerations compared to those that have not. This makes it possible to argue for a theory of animal moral status, based on *community assimilation*. By community assimilation, the study implies, animals that have been taken in by individuals into their homes, considered to be part of the family and establish some social-relational connections that go beyond owner and owned. When this happens, such animal should be considered as assimilated into the shared social life of the community. They are no more to be considered as isolated animals without some sort of social connection with humans. By being brought into a home, loved by one or more people of the community and sharing in the social life of this person who is part of the community, the animal is to be considered part of the larger community whose interest or welfare must be respected because whatever happens to it, affects the interest of its human keeper.

This argument, by extension, will also include all animals regarded by a given community as their totem animal. This is because the community regards totem animals as part of the community who are able to bring good or bad fortunes to the community. Totems, as we have observed, are understood to have an ancestral link with the tribe, clan or community and are the people's protectors, guardians, or patron spirits that keep and shield the group from any harm. They also bring to the group some good omen. In return, the group respects and refrains from eating, killing or trapping these animals they take to be their totems. At the death of a totem animal, the clan associated with it, mourns and buries it as they would a human being, as Lumor (2009) observed. Thus, these totem animals are part of the people's social life, they have been assimilated into the community of the people, and form part of their history, culture and metaphysical and spiritual affairs. Now, because animals cannot or do not participate in the social lives of the people in the way that humans do, they must be considered moral patients rather than moral agents.

It is easy to see how this placing of moral status on community assimilation mimics the position of the indirect welfarist, especially where it is suggested that animals' interests ought to be respected because doing so will translate to seeking the interests of their human owners. However, the thesis of the theory of moral status based on community assimilation goes beyond the thesis of the indirect welfare approach. It is rather in conformity with the proposed progressive relational anthropocentric approach discussed above. As a result, it acknowledges animal pain and more importantly, the interconnectedness of animals and humans as well as the importance of sustaining and preserving this interconnection. However, because it is anthropocentric in nature, it does not advocate for a theory of a moral status that affirms an intrinsic value of animals. Thus, the theory of a moral status based on community assimilation is admittedly anthropocentric and as a consequence, does not argue for equal moral status for humans and animals. For this theory, and following the Akans belief in the hierarchy of beings, animals are not equal with humans. In addition, not all nonhuman animals are equal in terms of their moral status. Animals who have been assimilated into the human community, will have a higher moral status than those who will remain in the wild. Again, admittedly, this theory of moral status based on community assimilation is guilty of speciesism in granting animals some moral status based on how they are assimilated in a human community. The theory can only defend itself against this charge at this moment by alluding to the arguments offered by Cohen (2001) presented in chapter three. Cohen, in defence of his version of direct welfarism, argued that all things considered, speciesism is not necessarily a bad thing. To him, speciesism ought

not to be equalled to racism or sexism because both racism and sexism are acts of discrimination against individuals who are humans. To this, he states that “racism is evil, because humans really are equal, and the assumption that some races are superior to others is false and groundless (Cohen, 2001: 62).” Meanwhile, this is not the case with regard to speciesism, since the human species and the animal species are not in the same category. Humans, according to Cohen, are morally autonomous and can be part of a moral community whilst animals are not. Thus, Cohen maintains that “speciesism may be taken as one way of expressing the recognition of these differences (Cohen, 2001: 62).” In that regard, he considered speciesism a correct moral perspective, and by no means an error or corruption.

In addition, the proposed theory of moral status based on community assimilation, coheres, to a large extent, with the Metz (2012) proposed theory of moral status in terms of a being’s ability to share in community relationship. Following traditional African account of placing personhood in an individual’s community participation, and the traditional African conception of morality in terms of community, Metz proposes that “a being has moral status roughly insofar as it is capable of being part of a communal relationship of a certain kind” (Metz, 2012 :393). For Metz this means that “the more a being is capable of being part of a friendly or loving relationship with normal humans, the greater its moral status” (Metz, 2012: 394). In other words, the greater a being’s capacity for communal relationship, the greater that being’s moral status. Such a conception of moral status, according to Metz, leads to two implications: Firstly, it demonstrates that moral status comes in degrees based on a being’s ability to participate in shared communal life and secondly, a being, capable of being both subject and object of a communal relationship, constitutes a higher status than merely one that is only the object. Applying this criterion of moral status to nonhuman animals, Metz asserts that “if by virtue of the nature of human beings, dogs and mice, humans were much more able to identify with and exhibit solidarity with dogs than with mice (upon full empirical information about both), then dogs would have a greater moral status than mice” (Metz, 2012: 394-395).

Having argued for the theory of a moral status based on community assimilation, the study, in the ensuing sections, will consider how this theory, in conjunction with the progressive relational anthropocentric approach, will hold in the discussions on vegetarianism, the use of animals as pets, hunting and trapping of animals, and the use of animals in biomedical research.

7.3 Akan position on vegetarianism and the use of animals for food

We know from the analyses of the findings in the previous chapter that the Akans do not endorse an absolute elimination of animal meat from their diet. It was realized that although there are no explicit laws or taboos against vegetarianism in the Akan tradition, it is highly unlikely that the Akan will choose to be a vegetarian. It is, however, possible to find some who are vegetarians because of reasons related to health or personal taste, rather than based on the acknowledgment of the moral status of animals. Furthermore, the findings showed that the use of animal meat forms part of the Akan people's culture. Thus, although the Akan customs do not really have any specific rule when it comes to vegetarianism, for some traditional rituals, there is certainly no choice but to use meat to fulfil the demands of culture, as hinted by Traditional Respondent 5. He mentioned that Meat forms part of the chief's rituals, and there are certain portions of the animal that are reserved only for the chief and other portions for specific individuals occupying specific traditional positions. In addition, there are male cooks for the chief who are skilled in treating and cooking the meat for the chief exactly, as tradition requires. Again, the chief of every town had a particular animal that was used for food for his spiritual upliftment.

How do the study's proposed moral status theory based on community assimilation and the progressive relational anthropocentric approach inform us regarding vegetarianism or the use of animals for food? First, the progressive relational anthropocentric approach tells us that humans and nature, including animals, are interconnected, an interconnection that goes more in the favor of humans. Nevertheless, the approach will strongly be against an unregulated use of animals for food. Thus, using animals for food must be done in a way that ensures their sustainability and their preservation for the interconnection to be maintained, as well as, for future generations to also benefit. Secondly, the application of the moral status theory based on community assimilation will, in general sense, allow for the use of animals as food. Nevertheless, animals that have been duly assimilated into the community are not to be used for food, since they are considered part of the community. Only animals that are reared for the purpose of food or those that are hunted for food should be used as such, and not animals that have been assimilated into the community. Such assimilated animals belong to a home, are loved, and partake in the social life of their keepers. Thirdly, because both the progressive relational anthropocentric approach and the moral status theory based on community assimilation acknowledge animal pain, there is a need to employ good methods of animal rearing and killing that do not cause pain and stress to the animals.

7.4 Akan position on the use of animals as pets/companion animals

As the study has already established under this theme, the Akans do not consider anything morally wrong with keeping animals as pets or as companion animals. They do not think the keeping of animals as pet, constitutes an infringement on the freedom of the animals and even encourage it. What is also known is that the Akans consider it the responsibility of pet keepers to provide proper care and maintenance for their pets. In addition, the Akans believe they have greater responsibilities to animals kept at home than to animals in the wild. This coincides with the position of the proposed moral status theory based on community assimilation. Animals kept as pets or companion animals fit the very definition of animals assimilated into the community. Companion animals belong to a home, are loved and cared for, and play an essential part in their keepers' social life, which, in turn, affects, in many ways, the shared social life of the keepers in the community. As a result, the theory of a moral status based on community assimilation endorses the use of animals as pets mainly because it based on the progressive relational anthropocentric approach. The theory also considers humans, although interconnected with animals, higher beings. The approach permits humans to use animals to further their needs, and keeping animals as companion animals, is one of those needs.

The requirement here is that the animals are kept in a way that is sustainable, and upholds the interconnection that exists between them and humans, and for the benefit of future generations. Since the approach acknowledges animal pain, pets should be kept in the best of conditions that ensure they are not subjected to pain. It is also important to mention here that by this theory of moral status, the practice of using companion animals as food is definitely not permitted. This is important because responses from the participants showed that some people consume animals such as dogs and cats they keep as companion animals and find no wrong in the act. As noted above, by being assimilated into the community, pets are considered part of the community and cannot be used for food.

7.5 Akan position on hunting and trapping of animals

What the study gathered under this theme is that the Akan, having regarded the use of animals for food, consequently finds nothing wrong with hunting and trapping animals for food. However, in line with the progressive relational anthropocentric approach, the Akans do not endorse indiscriminate or unregulated hunting and trapping of animals. Obed, for instance, was

generally against unregulated animal sports and trophy hunting. He called these acts as ‘hunting for self-glorifying and expeditions’. He feared that if these self-glorifying acts are not regulated, they would lead to the extinction of those animal species. He was also of the view that it would be better for humans to farm animals rather than, hunt them as he thought farming animals is more sustainable than hunting. These sentiments comply with the progressive relational anthropocentric approach, which as has been mentioned, recommends best practices that take into cognizance the human-nature interrelationship and best practices that are environmentally sustainable and preserve the animal species for both current and future generations. The Akans already acknowledge the latter part of this recommendation through their use of some precautionary measures to avoid abuse by hunters. To this, Traditional Respondent 5 hinted that although hunting is an important occupation for the Akans, hunting for certain types of animals is prohibited during those part of the year, that the animals are believed to be procreating. Traditional Respondent 4 also pointed out that the Akan people use taboos primarily to preserve nature and to keep certain animal species alive.

The proposed moral status theory based on community assimilation permits hunting and trapping of wild animals. The theory, based on the given definition of what it means to be assimilated into the community, will argue that wild animals, by remaining in the wild, are yet to be assimilated into the community and as such, have not acquired the moral status that those who have been assimilated have. Nevertheless, care must be taken in how these hunting and trapping are done to ensure the use of best methods that do not cause the animals any undue pain.

7.6 Akan position on vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research

The study sought the views from the Akan respondents on the practice of vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research even though, these practices are not to found in Akan traditional practices. The findings revealed that Akans find nothing morally appalling with the use of animals in biomedical research. In keeping with the progressive relational anthropocentric approach, Akans consider the use of animals for research purposes to be acceptable because they regard humans as superior to animals and because God has given humans the authority to subdue and use animals to meet their needs. It is their view, that the use of animals in biomedical research serves a greater utilitarian purpose for humans, since it leads to scientific breakthroughs in the constant search for cures for human illness and diseases.

Furthermore, following the progressive relational anthropocentric approach, the respondents rejected unregulated or indiscriminate research on animals due essentially in the fact that they recognise that the practice can cause animals to suffer.

Going by the thesis of the moral status theory based on community assimilation, it will naturally be considered unacceptable to use animals that have been assimilated into the community for biomedical research mainly because these animals, having been assimilated, are now part of the community. Since it is unacceptable to use any member of the society for research, it will not be acceptable to use animals that have been assimilated into the community as well. This, notwithstanding, because the theory and approach acknowledge that the act can bring undue pain to animals, it will back the call for alternative methods that do not include animals altogether, if such alternatives are available.

7.7 Conclusion

The chapter has brought together findings from the Akan experience obtained through the Akan respondents on the thematic issues in the animal ethics debate to make two proposals; firstly, for a progressive relational anthropocentric approach to environmental ethics as an alternative to the anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric approaches. This progressive relational anthropocentric approach essentially acknowledges that human and nature are interconnected and due to this interconnectedness, humans have a moral responsibility to take care of the environment by ensuring its preservation and sustenance. This normative responsibility, according to this theory, is not necessarily due to an identified intrinsic quality or value found in nature but mainly for the continuous survival of humans and human communities. Secondly, the study proposed a theory of animal moral status based on community assimilation. By this theory, the study argues that animals that have been assimilated into the community obtain a moral status, which even though is inferior to the one possessed by humans, makes them moral agent whose interest ought to be protected. By community assimilation, the study means animals that individuals have taken into their homes, made part of the family, and have established some social-relational connections with their keepers.

Finally, the study applied the progressive relational anthropocentric approach and the theory of animal moral status, based on community assimilation to themes in the animal ethics debates to show how the two proposals will address them. These themes are vegetarianism and the use

of animals for food, the use of animals as pets, hunting and trapping of animals, and the use of animals in biomedical research.

The next chapter is the concluding chapter of the study, where the study will demonstrate how it has met its objectives and how it has responded to its research questions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

8.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study's findings and conclusions. The main goal was to identify the place of Akan animal ethics within the global animal ethics debate, based on the Akan ontological worldview, beliefs, practices, and ethics. The study essentially used a qualitative research method to achieve this goal, through the gathering of firsthand information from two groups, namely traditional Akan leaders and young Akan adults. This was after reviewing relevant critical works on Western and African environmental and animal ethics in chapter two, which brought into perspective, the delineating lines between the animal welfare theory and the animal rights theory. Following the study's objective, the thesis relied on the theories of welfarism, rightism, and the ethics of interrelatedness as its theoretical framework. In chapter three, the study examined the different positions of these three theories and their proponents. The theories were used in describing and evaluating both the primary (information gathered from the interviews) and secondary data (articles and book review), and for prescribing the study's proposed progressive relational anthropocentric approach, and the argument for a theory of moral status based on community assimilation in chapter seven. In chapter four, the study detailed the research design, methods, and methodology of the study, while chapter 5 presented the findings from the field based on the one-on-one interviews and focus group interviews conducted with the two groups of respondents. The study reported the findings thematically under headings chosen to cover the essential arrears of contention in the animal ethics debate as follows:

- i. The interconnectedness of nature
- ii. The moral status of nonhuman animals
- iii. Vegetarianism and the use of animals for food
- iv. The use of animals as pets/companion animals
- v. The hunting and trapping of animals
- vi. Vivisection and the use of animals in biomedical research

In chapter six, the study discussed the findings under similar themes above. This chapter summarizes the findings for the study's three research questions as follows:

2. What are the main theories in the global animal ethics debate?
4. What are the trends in the emerging theories in African environmental ethics and their relation to animal care and ethics?
5. How does Akan ontology and ethics help in placing Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate?

8.1 The main theories in the global animal ethics debate

The study revealed that there are two major approaches when it comes to the classifications of the study of animal ethics, namely animal welfare theory and animal rights theory. (Beauchamp 2011; Waldau 2011; Regan 2006; Sunstein, 2004). The general position of animal welfarism, on the one hand, is that humans have obligations to use animals in such a way that protect basic welfare interests of animals. Animal welfarists generally have utilitarian or pragmatic notions that acknowledge human obligations not to cause unnecessary or avoidable harm, undue suffering, or loss of liberty to all animals (Beauchamp, 2011: 200). More so, animal welfare theories accept that animals have interests but would sometimes allow some of these interests to be traded away, as long as, some human benefits are thought to justify that sacrifice. Thus, animal welfare theory may permit all sort of animal use, as long as, what may be considered as ‘humane’ guidelines are followed due to their recognition of pain in animals. As a result, animal welfare defenders hold that the basic criterion for a being to be morally considerable is ‘sentiency’ or the capacity to suffer. Animal rights theory, on the other hand, holds that animals have certain inherent and robust rights that need to be respected and upheld. Animal rights theory essentially endorse rights for animals, such as the right to life, the right to an uncontaminated habitat, the right not to be constrained in cages or pens, the right to not be used in biomedical research, and many other rights similarly enjoyed by humans. Animal rights theories defend the position that animals have interests that cannot be sacrificed or traded away, just because it might benefit others. Animal rights mean that animals are not ours to use for food, clothing, entertainment, or experimentation. For this theory, ‘subjecthood’ is the fundamental requirement for moral consideration. Thus, a subject does not only require sentiency, but the ability to have propositional attitudes, emotions, will, and an orientation of itself and to its future (Anderson, 2004: 277-278).

The study further revealed that there are two main types of welfarism, namely, direct welfarism and indirect welfarism. Indirect welfarism does not assign moral status to animals since the theory holds that animals are not harmed directly. The study presented views expressed by

scholars such as St. Aquinas, Immanuel Kant, and Jan Narveson as examples of proponents of indirect welfarism. Direct welfarism, on the other hand, admits and accepts that animals are morally harmed directly and admits animals into the definition of a moral community. This is because they hold animals to be sentient beings, which can experience pain and pleasure. The study presented the views of Peter Singer, Carl Cohen, and Robert Garner as proponents of direct welfarism. The study also pointed out the similarities and differences shared by these proponents of direct welfarism. What became apparent was that despite their minor variances, direct welfarists, in general, agree that animals have moral status. Theirs is to seek the welfare of animals and to advocate for the humane treatment of animals rather than to demand the total elimination of animal use. They, therefore, argue for the better handling of animals, under better conditions that will minimize as much pain and suffering as possible.

Under the animal right theory, the study examined the positions of Tom Regan, Bernard Rollin, and Gary Francione. Despite their differences, rightists, broadly speaking, argue that animals have moral status and that this moral status is translatable into a right they possess. They generally are of the view that the moral status of an animal is at par with the moral status of humans and as a result, call for the total abolishment of animal use in any form, and not just for the humane treatment of animals to reduce their suffering or pain. Thus, animal rights theorists are sometimes referred to as abolitionists. The study further showed that there are different levels of strictness to the abolitionist claim, with Gary Francione (2010), considering himself as holding the strictest view as compared to that of Regan and Rollin. A fourth rightist position was seen in the position of Marry Anne Warren (2012), who calls her position a ‘weak rightist position’, claiming that moral status comes in degrees and that the rights of animals are not to be equated to the rights of human beings.

Despite these two being the major theories in the animal ethics debate, there are, what is considered, alternative approaches to these two main theories. Palmer and Sandøe (2011) generally call these alternative approaches as the contextual approaches. One of such contextual approaches is the ethic of care. Mary Midgley (1983), a proponent of the feminist theory of ethics of care, suggests that the idea of social-bondedness and the emotions associated with it, are as worthy of consideration in human’s moral relationship as with nonhuman animals. Feminists, Karen J. Warren states that ecological feminism began to receive a fair amount of attention as an alternative feminist approach, and also as an alternative environmental ethic, since Francoise d’Eaubonne introduced the term ecofeminism in 1974 (Warren, 2000: 213). Even though, there are many types of ecofeminism, they commonly

emphasize the ethical nature of human relationships to the nonhuman natural world (Warren and Cheney, 1991: 180). Warren (2000: 213) considered ecological feminism as the position that holds that there are important historical, experiential, symbolical, and theoretical connections between the domination of women and the domination of nature. Thus, the centrality of ecofeminist theories is first, the commitment to challenge male bias in ethics, and second, to develop analyses that are not male-biased (Warren and Cheney, 1991: 180).

8.2 The trends in the emerging theories in African environmental ethics

After a survey of major works in the evolving field of African environmental ethics, the study identified, what it labelled as ‘the ethics of interrelatedness’, as the shared trait within the emerging theories of African environmental ethics. The ethics of interrelatedness, as the study showed, is the general position that there is an interconnection between humans and nature. Thus, humans and nature are dependent on each other for survival. This interrelationship between humans and nature, therefore, should move human beings to co-exist peacefully with nature, in a manner that leads to the sustainability of humans and nature alike. The study, to this effect, presented views from Kevin Behrens (2010), who refers to his theory as African relational environmentalism; from Godfrey Tangwa (2004), who calls his ethics eco-bio-communitarianism; and from Segun Ogungbemi (1997), who labelled his theory as the ethics of nature-relatedness. The views of Munyaradzi Murove (2009), Mogobe Ramose (2009), Workineh Kelbessa (2005), Lawrence Ogbo Ugwuanyi (2011), Martin Prozesky (2009), and Bénézet Bujo (2009), similarly expressed this ethics of interrelatedness.

Tangwa, for example, describes the traditional African metaphysical outlook as ‘eco-bio-communitarian’ in character. This, in his view, means a “recognition and acceptance of interdependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals, and humans (Tangwa, 2004: 389).” He further holds that the Western theories on the environment are anthropocentric and individualistic. This, he continued, has induced them to subdue, exploit, and dominate nature. Tangwa however, believes his eco-bio-communitarian metaphysical outlook, borne from features of pre-colonial Africa, as nonanthropocentric in character. Tangwa observes that human beings within the African traditional outlook, are more cosmically humble, more respectful of other people, and more cautious in their attitude to plants, animals, inanimate things, and the various invincible forces in the world. Thus, he

believes that traditional Africans are more inclined to “an attitude of live and let live (Tangwa, 2004: 389).”

Ogungbemi, on his part, perceives that the current use of environmental resources such as air, water, and land stands in contrast with the known traditional practice of environment conservation in Africa. A typical traditional African community, Ogungbemi argues, believes in the ethics of not taking more than you need from nature. He called this attitude as the ‘ethics of care’. To make the ethics of care appropriate to the current African situation, Ogungbemi formulates his ethics of nature-relatedness using the principles found in the ethics of care (Ogungbemi, 1997: 270). He defines the ethics of nature-relatedness as “an ethics that leads human beings to seek to co-exist peacefully with nature and treat it with some reasonable concern for its worth, survival and sustainability”. To him, there is no need to attribute any spiritual undertone to either the ethics of care or the ethics of nature-relatedness since there are natural explanations for both of them.

The study further revealed that the environmental ethics of Murove, Prozesky, and Ramose, independently incorporated the Southern African ethical principle of *Ubuntu/Boto/Ukama*, to argue for environmental ethics of care and virtue of interrelatedness of humans with the entire ecosystem (Murove 2009; Prozesky 2009; Ramose 2009). Bujo, similarly, appeals to the value of human peaceful coexistence or interrelationship with nature. This interrelationship, Bujo affirms, is a network made up by the entire cosmos and God himself. He believes that living in mutual coexistence is how humans can reach a total realization of the self (Bujo, 2009: 283). In addition, Bujo maintains that animals, plants, minerals, and other inanimate objects are the forces that God has made available for human use. Nevertheless, this does not mean that humans treat lesser beings arbitrarily (Bujo, 2009: 286). For Prozesky, *the ethic of relationality*, as he calls it, is facilely derivable from the Shona concept of *Ukama*, which asserts that ‘a person can only be a person in, with and through not just other people, but also in, with and through the natural environment’ (2009: 302). Prozesky, therefore, holds that this will practically involve a recognition that “all things have both some element of intrinsic value, because all things possess some spark at least of experience and creativity, and some element of instrumental value, by virtue of the interrelatedness of all things whereby each serves all, and all serve each” (Prozesky, 2009: 303). For Murove, integrating the two concepts of *Ukama* and *Ubuntu* will bring about an ethical outlook that suggests that human wellbeing is indispensable from their dependence on, and interdependence with all that exists (Murove, 2009: 315). Finally, Ramose suggests that the best translation of the concept of *Botho* or

Ubuntu is ‘humanness’ instead of ‘humanism’. In his view, the word humanness best describes the African condition. He further declares, “The dignity and importance of the individual human being can best be understood in terms of relations with other human beings, as well as, relations with physical nature (Ramose, 2009: 312).”

The above accounts demonstrate the centrality of the ethics of interrelatedness in the emerging theories of African environmental ethics. This ethics of interrelatedness is generally an ethic that underscores the interdependency of humans and the natural environment and as a result, calls for a normative approach to the environment that ensures mutual coexistence and respect.

8.3 The place of Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate

To answer this question, the study relied principally on the primary data received from the Akan respondents, in addition to the literature reviewed in chapter two. Using the theories of welfarism and rightism, the study assessed the evidence from the respondents and knowledge gained from the literature, to identify where to place Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate. The study used the ethics of interrelatedness, the identified dominant ethics in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics, to assess the findings in order to understand the parallelism between the Akan view and the dominant views in the African environmental ethics literature.

The discussion of the study findings in relation to the accessed and applied literature, and the three theories, revealed that Akan animal ethics shares closer affinities with welfarism (direct), than it does with rightism. For instance, both Akan animal ethics and animal welfare theory, acknowledge that some animals have moral status even though, they have lesser moral status compared to humans. In contrast, animal rights theories mainly argue for an animal moral status that is at par with humans. In addition, while animal rights theories argue for animal moral status mainly based on the belief that (some) animals have inherent values, both welfarism and the Akan position defend animal moral status based on animal sentience (their capacity to feel pain). Thirdly, both the Akan and welfarist positions advocate strongly for a protective and humane use of animals, rather than a ubiquitous abolishment of all animal use, which is rather the stance of the rightist positions. This said, the table below presents a tabulated representation of where the Akan view agrees or disagrees with welfarism and rightism, considering the different aspects of contention in the animal ethics debate. The positions of contention presented in the table may not be exhaustive. The table is based on the general views of

welfarism and rightism. The study is not oblivious of the fact that the different existing views of welfarism and rightism are not those that nicely fall into an agree-or-disagree demarcation. Yet, the study is convinced that the table is a fair representation, if viewed in line with the general abolitionist position of animal rights theories, and the general protectionist position of animal welfare theories.

Table 8.1 Similarities between the Akan view and the theories of welfarism and rightism

Position of contention	Welfarism (direct)	Rightism	Akan view
Recognition of animal pain/sentiency	X	✓	X
Animals (some) have intrinsic value	✓	✓	✓
Recognizes the interconnectedness of humans and nature	X	X	✓
Abolish all animal use	X	✓	X
Humane use of animals	✓	X	✓
Animals (some) have moral status	✓	✓	✓
Animals (some) have equal moral status with humans	X	✓	X
Animals (some) have lower moral status	✓	X	✓
Animals (some) are moral patients	✓	✓	✓
Laws to protect and preserve animals	✓	✓	✓
Advocates for vegetarianism	X	✓	X
Abolish the use of animals in science	X	✓	X
Abolish hunting and trapping	X	✓	X
Abolish the use of animals as pet	X	✓	X

KEY

✓ Means Agree

X Means Disagree

As evident from the table above, the Akan view aligns more with the welfarist position than it does with the rightist position. The Akan view shares similar ticks and crosses with welfarism, except for the recognition of the interconnection of humans and animals. This is the point of divergence between the welfarist position and the Akan position. The Akan position shares this attribute of the recognition of the interconnection of humans and animals, only with the dominant position in the African environmental ethics, that is, the ethics of interrelatedness. The Akan position point of divergence with the dominant position in African environmental ethics, is the fact that the Akan position is anthropocentric in approach. Nevertheless, Akan anthropocentrism and the anthropocentrism of the West, are not equal. The Akan anthropocentric approach is progressive in character. This implies that despite its recognition of instrumental value in animals or nature as a whole, Akan anthropocentrism is not individualistic but rather recognizes the interrelationship that animals and humans share. By this, it seeks the community's good and advocates for the judicious and humane use of animals and nature as a whole for both current and future generations.

8.4 Proposed animal ethics approach and theory of moral status

In chapter seven, hinging on the expositions from the discussion and interpretation of the data, and the findings that emerged, the study recommends the progressive relational anthropocentric approach to animal ethics. The study argues that the progressive relational anthropocentric approach to animal ethics is an approach that, though imputes an instrumental value to nature (anthropocentric), it is not individualistic in nature. Rather, it acknowledges the interconnection that exists between humans, and the rest of nature (relational) and through this, defends a human and nature relationship that sustains this interconnection for the good of the current and future human community.

Similarly, relying on the accounts from the discussion and interpretation of the data, the study proposed a theory of moral status based on community assimilation. The study notes that though the Akans give regards to animal pain, sentiency of animals is not enough to warrant moral consideration. Based on claims made by some Akan experts (who were part of the study as participants) that animals that have been integrated into the lives of the people receive some

higher moral considerations compared to those that have not, the study proposed a moral theory based on community assimilation. By community assimilation, the study has in mind, animals that individuals have taken into their homes, considered to be part of the family, and have established some social-relational connections with them that go beyond owner and the owned relationship. The study argues that when this happens, such animals are no more to be regarded as isolated animals without some social connections with humans. In other words, bringing such animal into a home, loved by one or more people of the community, and sharing in the social life of this person who is part of the community, the animal becomes part of the larger community, whose interest or welfare ought to be respected. Such an animal is a moral patient that is to be duly regarded as part of the moral community.

8.5 Conclusion

The chapter provided a summary of all the major findings of the research. It has shown how the study was successful in responding to its three research questions, namely:

1. What are the main theories in the global animal ethics debate?
2. What are the trends in the emerging theories in African environmental ethics and their relation to animal care and ethics?
3. How does Akan ontology and ethics help in placing Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate?

Concerning the main theories in the global animal ethics debate, the study found animal welfare theory and animal rights theory, as the two major competing theories. Whereas animal welfare theory advocates for the humane use of animals, animal rights theory argues for the total discontinuation of all animal use. Whereas animal welfarism argues for a minimal animal moral status based on its recognition of animal pain, animal rights theory argues for a full moral status for animals based on an intrinsic or inherent value it ascribes to animals. The study considered the welfarist views of Peter Singer (1975), Carl Cohen (2001), and Robert Garner (2010). Likewise, the study discussed the rightist views of Tom Regan (1983; 2004), Bernard Rollin (1992), Mary Anne Warren (2012), and Gary Francione (2010).

Concerning the emerging theories in African environmental ethics, the study discovered what it termed as the ethics of interrelatedness, as the dominant ethical principle found in the emerging literature in African environmental ethics. Many writers, as the study revealed, refer to this ethics of interrelatedness by different names such as the ethics of nature-relatedness of

Ogungbemi; the eco-bio-communitarianism of Tangwa; African relational anthropocentrism of Behrens; and the ethic of relationality of Prozesky. This identified ethics of interrelatedness states that traditional African metaphysics and practices towards the environment recognize the interconnections that exist between humans and nature. As such, humans are to show mutual respect, coexist peacefully, and care for nature. Similar expressions of this ethics of interrelatedness were seen in the works of Murove (2009), Ramose (2009), Kelbessa (2005), and Bujo (2009), among others.

Regarding the place of Akan animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate, the study established that the Akan view shares more similar features with the welfarist position than it does with the rightist position. However, the study discovered that the acknowledgement of the interconnectedness between humans and animals by the Akans, distinguishes their view from the welfarist position. The Akan position shares this attribute of the recognition of the interconnection of humans and animals, only with the dominant position in the African environmental ethics, that is, the ethics of interrelatedness. In addition, the Akan position has some anthropocentric features although, not in a similar manner the West understands anthropocentrism. The Akan anthropocentric approach is progressive in character in a way that, although it values animals instrumentally, it does not primarily set out to seek the individual good, but instead seeks the overall good of the community. More so, the Akan anthropocentric approach progressiveness is seen in it advocates for the judicious and humane use of animals and nature as a whole, for both current and future generations.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE TRADITIONAL RESPONDENTS

1. Do the Akans believe in the preservation of nature and what are their reasons or motivation?
2. Which aspects of nature are considered more important and are given more reverence and why?
3. Where would you place the position of human beings and animals in nature?
4. What makes an animal different from a human being?
5. In what ways are humans, animals, and the rest of nature connected or related?
6. What are some of the traditional customs and practices that include the use of animals?
7. What are some of the animals used as food (delicacies) and for sacrifices and rituals?
8. What is the general purpose of taboos in the Akan tradition?
9. What is the history behind the totems of the eight Akan clans?
10. What are the religious and non-religious rules duties and taboos associated with animals that are considered totems or sacred?
11. What is the history behind Akan *ntoro*?
12. What are some of the taboos associated with the *ntoro*?
13. What happens should someone kill, eat or hurt an animal considered as a totem or forbidden for his *ntoro*?
14. Do the Akans believe that animals can be wronged, why or why not?
15. Do the Akans believe animals can have pain and pleasure?
16. Do the Akans believe animals have souls or spirit and what happens to them when they die?
17. To what extent does personal relationship with animals affect how Akans treat them?
18. Is it permitted or conceivable that an Akan should become a vegetarian?
19. At what point in Akan's history did the keeping of domestic animals start and why?
20. What are some of the animals that are kept as domestic animals?
21. Are there any special beliefs towards domesticated animals that is different from those in the wild?
22. Are there any rituals or rules that hunters must observe in hunting, killing and trapping animals?

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE YOUNG AKAN RESPONDENTS

1. What is the relationship shared by the constituent of nature?
2. Do you find anything wrong with the eating of animals and why?
3. What is your take on keeping animals as pets?
4. What is your take on the use of animals for biomedical research?
5. Is it right for animals to be hunted or trapped for entertainment or for food, why or why not?
6. What is your view on the use of animals for other human benefits apart from food, like using their skin for leather and clothes, selling their body parts for profit, riding them, and using them for labour, keeping them in a zoo? (Is there any use of animals that you dislike or abhor?)
7. What Clan do you belong to and what are their animal totem and taboos?
8. Explain why you may or may not believe that some aspects of nature including animals can be or have spirits?
9. Do you think animals have souls, why or why not?
10. In what ways do you think animals can be wronged?
11. Do you think animals can feel pain and pleasure, why or why not?
12. How are animals treated or not treated well in Ghana?
13. In what ways do animals have or do not have interests or rights?
14. Based on all that we have said, would you agree that becoming a vegetarian is the ethical thing to do, why or why not?

APPENDIX 3: ETHICAL CLEARANCE

9 July 2018

Mr Stephen Nkansah Morgan
217055150 School of Religion,
Philosophy and Classic
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Morgan

Protocol Reference Number: HSS/1318/017D

Project title: The place of African animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate: An interrogation of Akan ontological and ethical beliefs towards animals and the environment

Full Approval - Expedited Application

In response to your application received 2 August 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

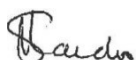
Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully



**Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee**

/pm

cc Supervisor: Dr Beatrice Okyere-Manu
cc. Academic Leader Research: Professor P Denis
cc. School Administrator: Mr Alleyne Coleman

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics
Committee Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

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APPENDIX 4: LETTER REQUESTING CONSENT IN ENGLISH



January 3, 2017

Dear Sir,

My name is Stephen Nkansah Morgan. I am a Ghanaian doctoral student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. The title of my research is **‘The place of African animal ethics within the welfarist and rightist debate: an interrogation of Akan ontological and ethical beliefs towards animals and the environment’**. The research looks into Akan traditional beliefs, practices, and values towards the environment in general and their relation with animals specifically, as such, I require information on practices and customs of the Akan people that involve the natural environment generally and animals specifically.

I am hereby seeking your consent to meet with you at your own convenience to discuss issues on the above mentioned areas. I have attached a copy of the interview questions that is meant to guide our conversation. Further follow-up questions may arise from the responses you will provide. Our interaction is estimated to last for one hour. I look forward in hearing a favourable response from you soon.

If you would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on my number below:
Cell phone number: 020 822 5193.

You can also confirm my credentials with my project supervisor as well as my school’s research office. See their details below:

Supervisor:
Dr Beatrice Okyere-Manu
Telephone number: +27 (033) 260 5582
Email: okyere-manu@ukzn.ac.za.

HSSREC Research Office:
Ms Phumelele Ximba
Telephone Number: 031 260 3587
Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Nkansah Morgan

School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics

Postal Address: Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0) 33 260 5540 Facsimile: +27 (0) 33 260 5858 Email: Mchunua@ukzn.ac.za Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

APPENDIX 5: INFORMED CONSENT IN ENGLISH

School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics,

College of Humanities,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Pietermaritzburg Campus.

Dear Participant,

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Stephen Nkansah Morgan. I am a PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg campus, South Africa.

I am interested in Akan traditional beliefs, practices, and values towards the environment and animals. I will need information on practices and customs that involve the natural environment generally and animals specifically. I am studying cases from Akan communities. To gather the information, I am interested in asking you some questions.

Please note that:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about 1 hour and may be split depending on your preference.
- Any information given by you cannot be used against you, and the collected data will be used for purposes of this research only.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims at knowing principles in Akan ethics and beliefs that can inform what Akans perceive ought to be human relationship with the environment as well as the with animals.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.
- If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		

I can be contacted at:

Email: greatmorgan2003@yahoo.com

Cell: +233 020 822 5193

My supervisor is Dr. Beatrice Okyere-Manu who is located at the School of Philosophy, Religion and Classics, Pietermaritzburg campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Contact details: email: okyere-manu@ukzn.ac.za. Phone number: +27 (033) 260 5582

You may also contact the Research Office through:

Ms Phumelele Ximba

HSSREC Research Office,

Tel: 031 260 3587 E-mail: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

APPENDIX 6: INFORMED CONSENT IN AKAN

Osom, Nyansape ne Atetesem Mapa Sukuu
Adasa Kolegyi
KwaZulu Natal Sukuupɔn
Pietermaritzburg, Suapɔn Peteem

Owurapa,

AKWANSRE HO ASUTRE NWOMA

Me din de Stephen Nkansah Morgan. Me ye PhD osuani a ewɔ KwaZulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg Sukuupɔn a ewɔ South Africa ɔman mu. Me pe se menya suahunu wɔ Akan amammre ne amannea a efa abodea ne mboa ho. Mehia nsem efa Akanfo amammerɛ eni abakosem a efa abodea ho ne mboa ho titirew. Mere sua adee fa Akanfoɔ man mu ho. Se dea ebeye na metumi aboaboa nsem a efa dea mehwehwe no ho nti, mebisa wo nsem kakra.

Mesre, hunu se:

- Yebo wo nipaban ne nsem a wobeda no edi akyere yen no ho ban se obiaa ntumi mfa nsem no mbata wo ho. Mmom ebe da edi se ɔmanba adwenkyere.
- Nsembisa no bedi donhwere baako nanso yebetumi akye mu sɛdea wope no.
- Nsem a wobeda no edi no, obiara entumi enfa ntia wo dabiara. Nsem a yebe boaboa ano no yede bedi nhwehwe mu yi nkoa ho dwuma.
- Yedi nsem a y'atwere no besie beebi yie na nfi anum akyiri no y'asei no.
- Wo wɔ ho kwan se wo de wo ho hye dwumadie yi mu, wo po, anaa se wo gyae ewɔ mpenpensoo biara a asotwe biara enni ho ma wo se wobetu saa anamon.
- Nhwehwe mu yi botae ne se ebeku sɛdea Akanfoɔ amanye ne won gyedie ma wo susu sɛdea nipa atenaee ne mboa nkitahodie etee.
- Wo ho a wo de hye dwumadie yi mu yi ekɔ ma adesua botae nkoa. Wonnya Sikafam nfasoo biara.
- Se wo pene so ma yen nsembisa yi a. Ti yei mu baako ase sɛdea wo pe no, se wo pe se yede nsembisa no ne wanoyie go efidie yi so.

	Me pene so	Menpene so
Akasamu fidie		

Wonsa beka me wɔ:

Email: greatmorgan2003@yahoo.com
Telefon: +2330208225193

Me Hwefo ye Dr. Beatrice Okyere-Manu a ɔwo Nyansape, osom ne Atetesem mapa Sukuu a ewɔ Pietermaritzburg suapɔn petee mu wɔ KwaZulu Natal Sukuupɔn.

Wonsa beka no wɔ

Email: okyere-manu@ukzn.ac.za
Telefon: +27 (033) 2605582

Wonsa betumi nso aka ye wo Nhwewwemu ofese enam:

Phumelele Ximba

HSSREC Nhwewwemu ofese

Telefon: 0312603587

Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Yedawoase wo wo ntoboa wo Nhwewwemu yi mu.

MPAEMUKA

Me..... (twere wo din nyinaa) si so dua se mete nwoma yi ne Nhwewwemu Dwumadie yi mu nsem ase, na me ti de boa se me de meho behyem.

Me te ase se mewo ho kwan se metwesan ewo Dwumadie mu eber biao me pe.

Kratahyeases

Deeti

.....

.....