Making, Unmaking, and Remaking Peace: The Kasuwan Magani Crisis and the Fragility of Inter-Group Relations in Kajuru, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the transformative impact of the Second Kasuwan Magani crisis of October 2018 on inter-group relations within Kajuru Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Rooted in escalating criminal activities such as kidnapping, cattle rustling, and banditry, the conflict reflects broader socio-political fault lines in Nigeria. In response to insufficient state interventions, communities resorted to self-help mechanisms, heightening tensions and divisions across societal, political, and economic spheres. This research, underexplored in current literature, employs frustration-aggression and structural functionalism theories to unravel the crisis's complex causes and dynamics. The research adopted a qualitative method of data collection through oral interviews and focus group discussions using a purposive sampling technique in choosing participants, alongside narrative and descriptive analyses, and the study reveals how the governmental imposition of a 24-hour curfew significantly curbed violence, while non-governmental organisations played a critical role in providing humanitarian relief to displaced populations. The findings also highlight the role of security agencies in exacerbating inter-communal discord, particularly between the Adara and Fulani ethnic groups, due to lapses in communication and trust. This research contributes to broader discourses on conflict resolution and peace-building in Africa by focusing on making, unmaking, and remaking

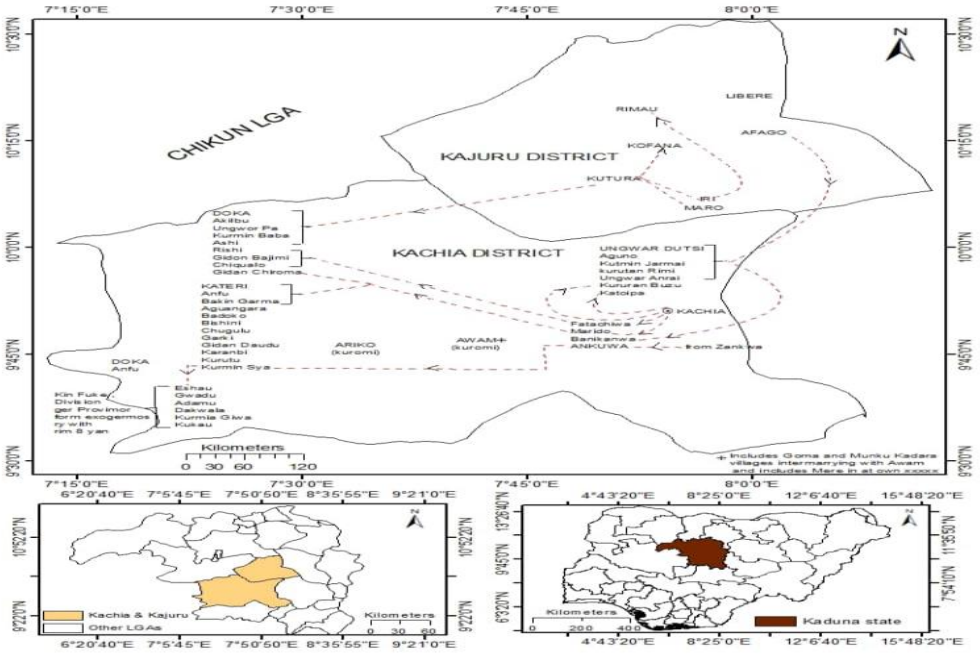
fragile inter-group relations. It underscores the urgent need for state accountability, community engagement, and sustained reconciliation efforts in remaking conflict-prone regions.

Keywords: Kasuwan Magani, Crisis, Conflict Resolution, NGOs, Curfew, Adara, Fulani

Introduction

Kasuwan Magani is a town in the present Kajuru Local Government area in Kaduna State, Nigeria. The area was officially established as a local government council in March 1997, when it was carved out from the larger Chikun Local Government Area during the administration of General Sani Abacha. The establishment of Kajuru L.G.A. marked a significant administrative change aimed at enhancing governance in the area.

Figure 1: Colonial map of the Kajuru area



Source: by the Authors, 2023

During colonial rule, Kajuru province had fourteen districts and thirty-four recognised villages with village heads, which complemented the activities of the two districts, Kajuru and Kufana (Stanley, 1935). Currently, it is divided into ten electoral wards, namely Rimau, Idon, "Kasuwan Magani", Tantatu, Afogo, Buda, Maro, Kajuru, Kufana, and Kallah. In recent times, the local government administration comprises the executive and legislative arms of government (Kaduna State Government. 2012). The Chairman serves as the head of the council, while the legislative arm consists of the leader of the House and other councillors elected to represent the various wards.

The history of crises in the North, particularly in Kaduna, presents a pattern of recurring conflicts that have significantly impacted ethnic and religious interactions in the area. The Adara and Fulani communities have coexisted for over 40 years. The conflicts in Kaduna, as well as those in the broader Northern region, suggest that the Kajuru people have largely avoided the negative impacts of these crises, maintaining peaceful relations with local settlers and neighbouring groups. The Adara people, residing in the current Kajuru Local Government Area, have continued to uphold amicable relations with their neighbours and settlers, indicating that the ongoing conflicts around Kaduna have not altered the inter-group dynamics in this area.

However, the Kasuwan Magani crisis occurred within a context of ongoing banditry attacks, abductions, and other criminal activities in the Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Despite receiving intelligence reports indicating the potential for conflict, security forces did not implement preventive measures before the incident. The response of the Kaduna State Government to the crisis was effective in mitigating further loss of life and property, particularly when compared to previous crises in the state. This response was important due to the extensive social, political, and economic implications that such crises can have on the Kajuru L.G.A. and Kaduna State overall.

The Kasuwan Magani Crisis

The Kasuwan Magani crisis emerged against a backdrop of persistent banditry, frequent abductions, and a host of other criminal activities plaguing the Kajuru Local Government Area in Kaduna State. Despite receiving multiple intelligence

reports that hinted at an impending crisis, the security reactions to these calls were insufficient to the rampant banditry attacks and rising incidents of kidnapping plaguing the area. This negligence was pivotal in escalating the situation into a full-blown crisis.

For example, on July 27, 2017, a conflict occurred between the Fulani community and local indigenes, resulting in multiple casualties and property damage. After consultations with stakeholders, the Nigerian Police explained the events leading to the violence. According to the Kaduna State Commissioner of Police, Agyelo Abeh, on July 28, 2017, the conflict began when local youth attacked a young Fulani boy who was grazing cattle (Blueprint, 2017). His father was also assaulted when he intervened and later succumbed to his injuries in the hospital. Additionally, Ibrahim, a leader of the Fulani community in Kajuru, identified a prior incident of kidnapping affecting both the Adara and Fulani communities as a potential underlying factor of the conflict (Blueprint, 2017).

In October 2018, a disagreement broke out between the Adara people and Hausa/Fulani in the Kajuru Local Government Area of Kaduna State. What initially began as an issue concerning ethnic and settlement problems quickly turned into a severe ethno-religious crisis that affected numerous villages and urban areas throughout Kaduna State. As a result, properties were destroyed, and countless lives were lost, with no regard for any particular faith or belief system. The situation left those caught in the middle feeling uncertain and unsafe. Therefore, to restore peace and order, the Governor of Kaduna State promptly enforced a dusk-to-dawn curfew, allowing people to move around during the day but not at night (Punch, 2018). Although the curfew reduced physical hostilities, it nonetheless created a vacuum, especially of suspicion, after the kidnapping and the gruesome murder of the first-class chief of the Adara people (Premium Times, 2018).

Amid this security intervention, a series of violence was recorded in various parts of Kaduna towns that resulted in the death of some people, with over 44 others injured on October 21, 2018. Another incident occurred, where suspected gunmen dressed in Military camouflage allegedly killed people in Narayi Community, Chikun LGA of Kaduna State. Preliminary investigations revealed that the

attackers claimed to be Vigilante members from the Barnawa community (Stingo, 2018). The victims were reportedly arrested, with their dead bodies later found in the area. However, fighting continued in the Local Government, but a halt to the spillover of the conflict was achieved thanks to the 24-hour curfew imposed by the Kaduna State Government.

Government's Response to the Kasuwan Magani Crisis

The response of both the Federal and State Governments to victims of violence in Kajuru Local Government Area received a dismal acknowledgement from respondents. The respondents indicated that adequate security was only provided during the conflicts, but in other events that acted as a precursor to the full-blown crisis in the Kajuru L.G.A., the security agencies (especially the police) acted in laxity (FGD, 2018). However, the vulnerability of the people to conflicts in this area was highly anticipated because the various attacks of both the locals and other ethnic groups by criminal elements were allowed with little or no effort in bringing the perpetrators to book.

When contacted, Caino (2018) Chairman Kajuru L.G.A., stated that the State and Federal Governments worked on an existing plan towards ensuring peace in the affected community and the Local Government in general in the course of the crisis. He stated further that the State government set up a Reconciliatory Committee, led by Bishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, as one of the processes to achieve a lasting solution to peace in the affected areas. The committee was made up of Adara and Fulani Associations to negotiate peace within the spectrum of discussing with their various people. The constitution of the committee was such that it had representatives of various groups, such as Dahiru Abubakar (Jama'ani Nasiru Islam) and the Southern Kaduna People Union (SOKAPU). Patrick Maigari and Makama Danjuma, the representatives of these groups, were mainly to proffer solutions to future peace arrangements and also to instil a sense of belonging among the various warring groups to douse the tension that already existed in the area (Caino, 2018).

In condemning the response of the State government and security agencies, Kuzamani (2019) the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Southern Kaduna People Union (SOKAPU), has described the government as biased and taking sides with

the Fulani settlers. He especially hinged his claims on the Kidnap and eventual death of the Agom Adara, His Royal Highness Maiwada Galadinma, who was murdered by suspected kidnappers on 26 October 2018 after a paid ransom of N10 million (Punch, 2018). He stated further that the circumstances of the murder had a connection with the state government, which had invited the chief for a meeting on 17 October 2018 in regards to the reaction to the 16th October 2018 Kasuwan Magani crisis. He concludes that the state government was an accomplice; however, the later arrest of the kidnappers and murderers does not correlate with this claim (Kuzamani, 2019).

Waziri (2019), the National Secretary of Adara Development Union, refers to the government's response to the crises that rocked the local government area as rather slow. This, he claimed, was by dismissing the assertion that Kajuru L.G.A. had been most peaceful and that the people had lived peacefully with one another. There had been pockets of attacks coming from criminal elements that they didn't know or have much information about. Whenever these issues are reported to the appropriate authority, there is little or no response from them. For example, the 2017 Kasuwan Magani crisis was caused by an argument over marriage between Fulani and Adara youths; people were killed, and properties were destroyed (Waziri, 2019). Even though the Nigerian Police came to restore order, they failed to arrest those who caused the conflict. In another case, he stated that where there was an attack by bandits and kidnappers, the police were either too slow to act or did not make enough efforts to rescue the abductees from the snare of these criminals.

The response of security operatives during the crisis was characterised by challenges, as acknowledged by the then Kaduna State Commissioner of Police (Abdurahman (2019). Following the declaration of a 24-hour curfew, an increased presence of security personnel contributed to the prevention of further bloodshed and property destruction. Yahaya (2019) noted that the Nigerian Armed Forces implemented measures aimed at resolving the conflict, primarily employing a conventional approach rather than a social security strategy, which typically involves dialogue between conflicting parties. This approach may reflect the existing training and expertise in managing internal security issues.

A senior police officer, speaking anonymously, highlighted certain limitations faced by the police force, including inadequate training facilities, reliance on outdated methods for conflict prevention and detection, insufficient funding, and a lack of comprehensive support for officers injured or killed during operations. Additionally, the politicisation of security agencies, particularly the police, during times of unrest, was mentioned as a concern. The officer advocated for enhanced funding and professionalisation through regular training and unbiased postings to new assignments (Mohammed, 2019).

This perspective aligns with findings from Ibrahim's (2005) study, "Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Nigeria: A Case Study of the 2001 Crisis in Kano State." Ibrahim argued that it is essential to have a sufficient number of security personnel with appropriate training ready to be deployed promptly when ethno-religious crises arise. He emphasised the need for modern resources, such as communication devices, vehicles, and proper equipment, to improve operational effectiveness. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of instituting and enforcing strict laws and regulations to ensure that offenders face appropriate consequences (Ibrahim, 2005).

Abdu (2019) provided insight into government responses to conflict, noting that they are often insufficient. The government's approach to conflict management and prevention tends to be militaristic and institutional, focusing on immediate responses to violence rather than addressing the fundamental factors that contribute to conflict (Abdu, 2019). This pattern results in a cyclical tendency: violence is addressed as it arises, but underlying issues remain unaddressed until the next outbreak.

Table 1: Government's Response

Response	**Rating of Response**	**Percentage %**
Provision of Adequate Security	**52**	**22**
Provision of IDP camps	**128**	**56**
Assisting the Displaced Persons Find their Families	**52**	**22**
Total	**232**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The table above shows that the persons interviewed and other sampled opinions indicated the role security agencies played (especially the police), which was adjudged as rather slow, which made them culpable of the aggravated suspicion that both parties nursed, resulting from attacks by bandits and kidnappers. That is, their inability to perform adequate investigations that may have led to the arrest of suspected bandits or kidnappers and even conflict entrepreneurs caused the escalation of the conflict. Also, government agencies especially the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the State Emergency Management Agency, which were supported by other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), such as Centre for Leadership and Strategic Studies (Center-LSD), Agape Mission, TY Danjuma Foundation, Zamani Foundation, Red Cross Foundation, Rescue Mission Foundation, Orphans Should Look Good Foundation, Volunteer Teachers Association and Gurara Network Foundation provided victims of the crises alternative living arrangement in camps set up to house them temporarily (Arisuku, 2018).

The above position shows that the response by the government to conflicts has been a lack of effective action to reduce the vulnerability of women and children. One of the social effects of ethno-religious violence has on the very vulnerable of society, i.e. is the loss of lives of women and children.

The wider theoretical exposition on the possible and long-term viability of democracy and related institutional solutions under conditions of intense ethno-religious conflict is yet to fully evolve or resolve explicitly. This is because, in the aftermath of most ethno-religious conflicts, the state government's response has been *ad hoc* and ineffective as far as conflict resolution and management are concerned. It has been established that force is not the answer to conflicts. Preferably a deterrence approach built on good governance, periodic inter-religious dialogue and the political zeal to bridge the gap prominent in the society without prejudice to social, economic, ethnic or religious orientations.

The government's effective handling of the Kasuwan Magani crisis was crucial, as the impacts reverberated through the social, political, and economic landscapes of Kajuru L.G.A. and the wider Kaduna State. The event starkly underscored the urgent need for more robust security measures, better intelligence-gathering

practices, and proactive strategies to prevent future conflicts in Nigeria. This crisis served as a sobering reminder of communities' challenges and the imperative for comprehensive solutions to ensure lasting peace and stability.

The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations and Other Groups after the Kasuwan Magani Crisis

Please find below a table that shows the names of various NGOs and groups that assisted the victims of the conflict, along with the rate of their response and the corresponding percentage. The data is taken from a field survey conducted in 2019.

Table 2: Names of NGOs and Groups that Assisted Victims of the Conflicts

NGOs	**Rate of NGOs' response**	**Percentage %**
Centre for Leadership and Strategic Development (Center-LSD)	156	20
Agape Mission	43	08
TY Danjuma Foundation	132	17
Zamani Foundation	43	08
Red Cross Foundation	89	12
Rescue Mission Foundation	122	15
Orphans Should Look Good Foundation	35	07
Volunteer Teachers Foundation	54	09
Gurara Network Foundation	23	04
Total	774	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The table above indicates that various NGOs have made significant contributions to alleviating the effects of the crises experienced by the Kajuru people, particularly during the Kasuwan Magani crisis. The Centre for Leadership and Strategic Studies (Centre-LSD) provided materials valued in the millions of Naira, coordinated by Arisuku (2018). Additionally, Uchenna (2019) from the Christian Aid Foundation delivered relief materials worth millions of Naira to Mahmoud, the Coordinator of the Kaduna State Emergency Agency (SEMA), for distribution to displaced persons.

Responses from individuals' highlighted issues related to the conditions of the IDP camps. Many reported that the camps were poorly managed, lacking adequate security arrangements and sanitary facilities. Concerns were also raised regarding the absence of medical facilities or counselling services to address the trauma experienced by victims, particularly children orphaned by the conflict.

Supporting this perspective, Waziri (2019), a member of the Ungwan Barde community in Kaduna, reported that environmental hazards such as rain, cold, heat, and various epidemics in overcrowded camps contribute to the mortality of women and children. It was noted that women have died due to insufficient maternal healthcare in the IDP camps, and the rate of infant mortality has increased due to malnutrition.

The Impacts of the Conflicts on Inter-Ethnic Relationships

Numerous reports have surfaced from families that lost their livelihoods during a series of conflicts in Kajuru L.G.A. For example, Sanni (2019), an Adara native, reported the loss of her properties and some family members during the Kasuwan Magani crisis, which influenced her decision regarding returning to her ancestral home. Many interviewees indicated that even if they attempted to return, they would face housing shortages due to the destruction of homes and properties. Some respondents expressed a desire to return to their villages, while those involved in farming or agricultural activities have called for government intervention to address the ongoing crisis and assist with their return (FGD, 2018).

Table 3: Effects of the conflicts on the socio-economic activities of the area

Effect of the Crisis		**Percentage %**
Destruction of the Fulani/Hausa properties	88	30
Destruction of the Adara and other ethnic groups' properties	89	30
Increasing Poverty and Social Dislocation	90	35
Youth Violence	32	05
Total	210	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019

The table above highlights the impact of ongoing conflicts in the area, indicating that they have significantly increased poverty levels and caused social dislocation among residents. One account provided by a respondent, Yakubu (2019), describes her experience following the violence. She noted, "After my husband and my two grown sons were killed during the Kasuwan Magani crisis, I returned to Zaria, our ancestral home. I am faced with the challenge of supporting my family alone, as I do not possess marketable skills to earn an income. Additionally, my children and I have been separated for extended periods, as we currently reside in Falladam village, which is distant from one another" (Yakubu, 2019).

Yakubu's heartfelt testimony resonates deeply with findings from previous studies, which highlight a strong correlation between ethno-religious mobilisation and conflict with the rise of poverty, rampant unemployment, and the social upheaval triggered by economic crises and inadequate policy responses. This pervasive cycle of deepening poverty has prompted many to abandon rural life in search of opportunities in urban areas, leading to the development of sprawling urban slums and precarious living conditions. This transformation carries severe implications for community safety and the potential for inter-communal harmony, creating an environment fraught with tension and uncertainty.

Focus group discussions revealed a consensus among respondents that the state government should implement a conflict resolution mechanism aimed at reducing violence through grassroots negotiations and compromise between Christian and Muslim communities in the Local Government (FGD, 2019). There was also a suggestion for proper education regarding the rights of individuals, regardless of religion or ethnicity, to promote respect and tolerance. Establishing dialogue among religious and ethnic groups, alongside government officials, was recommended as a means to pursue lasting peace in the region. Others suggested that compensation should be paid to individuals who lost their properties during the crisis, and that logistical support be provided to internally displaced persons to assist their return and healing process.

The Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders' Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) stated in a newspaper report that at least 54 Fulani individuals were killed, with 15 others unaccounted for, during a conflict between the Fulani and Adara groups in the

Kajuru local government area of Kaduna state (Blueprint, 2017). A representative from the association noted that calls to security agencies for justice regarding these incidents went unanswered, leading to further loss of life and property damage. As of July 21, 2017, it was reported that over 54 corpses, primarily of Fulani individuals, were buried following attacks attributed to the Adara community in Kajuru, with around 15 individuals still missing (Blueprint, 2017). Thousands of cows were reported as unaccounted for, and over 500 displaced persons, mostly women and children, faced challenges due to the loss of their husbands. The association claimed possession of a full list of the deceased and expressed openness to discussions regarding the conditions of those displaced. Concerns were raised about perceived biased media coverage that may portray the Fulani as aggressors, suggesting that the actual circumstances could be misrepresented or distorted (Ganai, 2019).

Additionally, Ganai (2019), a Fulani community leader, has expressed the view that the government should establish special courts to handle the prosecution of individuals involved in violence during the Kasuwan Magani conflict. He suggests that delays in the judicial process regarding the prosecution and punishment of offenders could exacerbate tensions between groups and potentially lead to further conflicts. This perspective is shared by many who advocate for the establishment of effective measures to reduce ethno-religious conflict and violence. There is a call for authorities to refrain from allowing political influences to affect decision-making related to arrests and prosecutions. Timely prosecution and judgment are emphasised as essential to achieving justice.

Moreover, Ardo (2019), the coordinator of Kajuru IDPs Camp, has noted the need for the state government to conduct thorough and independent investigations into the actions of security agents during past violence, particularly the ethno-religious conflict in October 2018. This is aimed at exposing potential human rights violations and issuing a white paper on the findings. He also suggests that the government should provide compensation to victims and families affected by the conflict, which could help mitigate the risk of retaliatory attacks.

Similarly, Stingo (2019), a Fulani community leader in Kajuru L.G.A, stated that the state government should actively listen to various groups during and after

conflicts. This approach is believed to address the concerns and recommendations of those affected, considering that ethno-religious conflicts often stem from historical issues. Understanding the root causes of these conflicts is deemed necessary for preventing their recurrence.

The overarching conclusion is that religion has emerged as a significant political force in contemporary society. It is suggested that Nigeria should recognise this reality and focus on supporting peacebuilding efforts among its diverse religious and ethnic groups. To facilitate this, it is important for leaders from various communities to foster an environment of peace and harmony by promoting principles of kindness, justice, and respect for different religious and cultural orientations.

What is important here is that the strengthening of security forces' capability to anticipate early warning signals and adequately respond to ethno-religious conflict can assist in assailing the spread of violence. There is a need for a Security Sector Reform (SSR) to address allegations of security sector complicity in ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria.

A section of respondents indicated that implementing a youth empowerment strategy could help prevent the recurrence of conflicts in the area, while others advocated for a more comprehensive security approach to address issues such as banditry, kidnapping, and ethno-religious conflict. The study highlights the significant impact of ethno-religious conflict on youth, noting that young people often become involved in violent activities during such conflicts. It underscores the importance of government participation in youth empowerment as a means to secure the future of the nation by investing in its youth.

In response, Abdu (2019) stated that there is a lack of strategic investment targeting the underlying causes of these issues. An initiative during the administration of Alhaji Balarabe Musa in Kaduna State, known as the Integrated Rural Development Project (IRDP), aimed to empower youth by creating employment opportunities in rural areas, benefiting many young individuals in Kaduna State. This administration was reported to have established several industries across major regions of the state.

Similarly, the security measures implemented by the Kaduna State government under Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi from 1999 to 2007 were noted for their effectiveness in mitigating conflict. Although his approach was primarily political, focusing on fostering mutual trust among communities, it contributed to a reduction in ongoing conflict situations within the state. Addressing conflict in Kaduna State may be more effectively achieved through the equitable distribution of social infrastructure, the strengthening of political power by enhancing traditional institutions, and granting autonomy to these institutions. In contrast, the current administration led by Governor Ahmed El Rufai has been critiqued for the limited development of social infrastructure. The conflict resolution strategy related to the Kasuwan Magani crisis under the current government has led to increased suspicion, particularly regarding its handling of bandit attacks and kidnappings before the crisis.

Impacts of Kasuwan Magani Crisis on Kaduna State

The relatively peaceful Southern Kaduna zone in Kaduna State witnessed renewed tension that assumed a religious dimension. Amid widely reported communal clashes in Nigeria, Kaduna State has been identified as one of the most volatile in Northern Nigeria where ethnic and religious identities are often used as rallying points to mobilise and perpetuate acts of violence, which resulted in extensive destruction of properties/livelihoods, high fatality and break down of socio-cultural values. This has negative effects on the country's national security, stability and integration.

The prevailing security challenges in the State are indicative of an existing mutual suspicion between ethnic and religious groups that has strained inter-group relations and degenerated into violent conflicts. There is no gainsaying that violence on the premise of "ethnic brethren" attracts intense emotions and a sense of existential threat, owing to the dominant thinking that killing rival ethnic or religious groups appears a reasonable and justified action. Despite significant progress made by the Kaduna State Government in improving the security environment and countering extremist tendencies, the need to minimise the intensity and impact of the recent violence becomes imperative, as affected communities are still counting their losses. However, windows of opportunity exist to foster collaborative peacebuilding by State and non-state actors towards

transformation and regeneration of the zone, as Military intervention alone targeted at resolving conflicts with ethnic and religious undertones may lead to further escalation of the conflict situation.

It is also pertinent to mention that the ensuing violent conflict in Kaduna State further heightens its vulnerability to extremist attacks. Over the years, the trend in the *modus operandi* of Boko Haram (BH) in Northern Nigeria suggests the exploitation of such vulnerabilities in communities to perpetuate their violent attacks and recruitment. Akin to this, since the current violent conflict in Kaduna is largely underpinned by religion, it offers an opportunity for BH to develop narratives to enhance their recruitment drive and attacks.

Conclusion

The response of the Kaduna State government was swift, especially with the immediate introduction of 24 hours curfew and this became a life-saving factor of the crisis. Thus, most of the respondents indicated that effective security arrangements should be enhanced to curtail future re-occurrence of ethno-religious crises in the Local Government Area. This study has shown that security agencies such as law enforcement officers formed a major part of the conflicts in the local government area. This could be seen from their roles in the build-up to the October 2018 Kasuwan Magani crisis, particularly its failure to address issues of banditry, kidnapping and pockets of conflicts in the area. In the course of the crisis, the study further showed that there was are serious shortage of required equipment, planning and ethics on the part of security agencies, especially the police force, having serious consequences on how they discharge their roles as law enforcement officers and violent preventive agents during the crisis.

Furthermore, the study established that the Kaduna State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) reacted satisfactorily and were duly supported by several non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The NGOs augmented government efforts in reducing the sufferings and pains of the victims of the crisis by providing relief materials to displaced and injured persons. Finally, it was established that the October 2018 Kasuwan Magani crisis in the area has created a rift between the

major actors (Adara and Hausa/Fulani) that were once living in peace and harmony.

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