

The Insecurity of Inequality in Africa: A Review of Recent Developments

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Abstract. This article examines the paradoxical and problematic relationship between inequality and insecurity. Leaning on Karl Marx's structural approach in explaining social inequality and conflicts, a discussion of specific inequality-propelled conflicts that have made the continent to be plagued by a broad spectrum of traditional and non-traditional security threats was made. The inequality-insecurity nexus is particularly made daunting by constant intimidation of the lower-class by powerful rich which drives the socially excluded into conflict, terrorism and other behaviour that threaten security. Indeed, the cycle of insecurity occasioned by socioeconomic inequality can only be broken by deliberate policy interventions with political commitment.

Keywords: Africa, Conflict, Development, Gender, Inequality, Insecurity

1. Introduction

Inequality is a global problem that has continued to rise, attaining a mind-boggling gap between the rich and poor, and between men and women. Its growth has seen to the surging sense of disenfranchisement which has culminated into alienation and anger, and even facilitated nationalism and xenophobia (Rustad 2016; Oduola 2017; AUC/OECD 2018). Observations of Oxfam International (2017), indicate that the world's eight richest people now own as much wealth as the poorest 3.6 billion. This observation is in tandem with human development indices and some other measures used to determine the rate of inequality across the world (UNDP 2017; AUC/OECD 2018). There has been a continuous struggle by the masses all over the world to hold on to their share of social wealth which has been shrinking, as their anxiety has generated a political opening for opportunistic populists, and in the process, shaking the world order.

Indeed, the African continent has been bearing the consequences of being the most unequal in the world (UNDP 2017; AUC/OECD 2018). According to UNDP (2017), ten of the nineteen most unequal countries in the world are from Africa. All over the continent, inequalities within the socioeconomic realm manifest in the conspicuous consumption by a few, together with the majority of people being in state of poverty (Solomon 2015). This is further exacerbated by infrastructure deficits and dysfunctional schools and healthcare have led to deep feelings of injustice and hopelessness among Africans, especially the youths. Meanwhile, lack of opportunity, pervasive corruption and a capricious political culture have destroyed institutions and entrenched a climate of impunity in the continent (African Union Commission 2015; Anyanwu, Erhijakpor & Obi 2016; Rustad 2016). An avalanche of these challenges across the continent has resulted into an attitude of self-help by Africans and unprecedented insecurity.

At present, the security environment of Africa is a dynamic one, characterized by a volatile mix of conflict, instability and state weakness. The continent is being plagued by a broad spectrum of traditional and non-traditional security threats whilst at the same time has been witnessing an array of regional and international security consciousness and activism (Solomon, 2015). The insecurity challenges across several African countries have been identified as one of the major impediments of development across the continent (Ewetan & Urhie 2014; African Union Commission 2015). The continent's security concerns span from urban crime to terrorism by insurgents groups like Boko Haram and Al-Shaabab, from political instability in Libya and Somalia to civil wars in South Sudan. Aside from affecting all aspects of production and growth, the consequences of insecurities in the continent also include massive displacement of people, loss of lives and investments, as well as scaring away investors. Consequent on this

realization, there have been persistent calls by stakeholders for the need to improve security in the continent.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the security implications of widening income and social inequalities across African states. Specific inequality-propelled conflicts and security threats within the continent at the national, sub-regional and regional levels will be reported and analyzed. The article starts by providing an analysis of the income gaps that pervade in modern African states, which often serve as a catalyst for security issues to manifest. The second part of the article is devoted to emergent factors that are widening the gap of inequality across the continent and the inequality-insecurity nexus in different regions of Africa. It concludes by suggesting measures that can be taken by various governmental and intergovernmental bodies in and outside the continent to stem the growth of inequality and, by extension, solve security problems.

2. Problematising Inequality in Africa

In its Human Development Index (HDI) report on inequality in Africa, UNDP (2017) stated that the continent, for the African masses, is currently less equal than it was in 2010. This implies that the trickle-down effects of growths in economy experienced in several countries within the continent have been relatively small. Specifically, countries like South Africa, Rwanda, Tanzania, Morocco, Ghana have witnessed economic growth and are among fastest growing economies in the continent, yet the inequality gap of these countries have continued to grow (African Development Bank 2018). Though the problem of inequality in Africa is pervasive, its effects from one country to another vary with its different degrees of security threats and manifestations across the continent.

In recent years, Nigeria, which is the most populous country in the continent, has been climbing through the ranks of the Human Development Index of the UN, a global index of key development indicators such as literacy, income and life-expectancy. However, the success of the country in the HDI shadows a widening gulf between the haves and the have-nots in the country. In fact, by the time the country's current placement in the index is checked against income inequality, it fell behind by nine places – three more than in 2010 (UNDP 2018). By implication, Nigerian elites' standards of living have further moved ahead of the quality of life of the majority. Recently, based on a report by the Brookings Institution, the World Poverty Clock's

data shows that the people living in poverty in Nigeria is now over eighty-seven million, this makes that country to have the highest number of poor people in the world, taking over from India (Punch 2018). This is quite ironic for a country that has as one of its citizens, Africa's richest man, Alhaji Aliko Dangote, with a fortune estimated at \$14.1 billion (Africa News 2018) and one of the richest black women in the world, Folorunsho Alakija, with an estimated wealth of \$1.6 billion (Forbes 2018).

For South Africa, the statistics of income inequality in the country between 2011 and 2016 point to a rising trend in the phenomenon. Ketton (2014) discovered that income inequalities in South Africa are aggravated by two factors: high wage disparities in the workplace and the gap between those employed and unemployed. The findings of the survey conducted by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) also attested to the grappling effects of income inequality on South Africa in which it reported that the country has not made any significant progress in reaching income equality after apartheid (OECD 2013).

Kenya is reported to be experiencing an out-of-control extreme inequality in spite of the impressive economic growth that the country has been having since 2005 (Shifa & Leibbrandt 2017). Less than 0.1% of the country's population (8,300 people) own more wealth than the bottom 99.9% (more than 44 million people) (Africa Development Bank 2018). The richest ten percent of people in Kenya earned on the average twenty-three times more than the poorest ten percent (AUC/OECD 2018). The number of mega rich people in the country is one of the fastest growing in the world (Oxfam International 2017b), which implies a steady growth of income inequality in the country.

Morocco, in a 2018 report released by OECD in collaboration with the African Union's Department of Economic Affairs, was identified as the country with the highest inequality index in North Africa (AUC/OECD 2018). This is in spite of the commendable progress recorded by the country on its socio-political reforms. The report, highlighting Africa's performance in relation to African Union's Agenda 2063 initiative, focused on growth, job opportunities and social inequalities. Morocco's Gini Coefficient of 40.3 percent, was found to be the highest in North Africa, above Algeria (23%), Egypt (30.8%) and Tunisia (35%). This measure made Morocco to be North Africa's highest income-unequal country, having the largest gap between the

top and bottom placed on socioeconomic ladder within the region (AUC/OECD 2018).

In the entire continent, the challenge of tackling inequality has been identified as one of the key impediments to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 of the African Union (African Development Bank, UNDP and OECD 2015; African Union Commission 2015; Igbuzor 2017). Specifically, in its study on income inequality in sub-Saharan Africa, the United Nations Development Programme stated that African countries cannot achieve decisive progress towards poverty reduction and the SDGs except the challenge of income inequality across the continent is addressed (UNDP 2017).

3. Theoretical Consideration

Sociological-inclined studies that examine inequality have often been categorized into three main traditions, which are, structural, intermediate and quantitative. While the origin of quantitative tradition has been attributed to economics and its development in sociology was by Talcott Parsons' school of thought, Karl Marx was credited as the main proponent of the structural tradition. As against the quantitative tradition that is more descriptive, the main approach of the structural tradition is theoretical. The intermediate, which is the third strand, tries to connect empirical research with theory, and this can be connected to the work of Max Weber, though it does not constitute a homogenous school.

The main argument of the structural tradition in sociology centres on the notion of class and that inequality exists and persists due to unequal access to socially relevant resources that different social groups possess (Dahrendorf 1979). The persistence of this unequal distribution is as a result of the passing of resources from a generation to the next, so that power and resources "remain in the family" (Chambliss & Seidman 1971). The acclaimed originator of structural tradition, Karl Marx, developed the idea from the theory of Adam Smith as it relates to an unalterable utility-maximizing individual (Quinney 1970). The position of Marx is that inequality in societies leads to a situation where only some segments of a society interacts with the world as labour, while the rest merely benefits from the profits without performing labour.

Consequent on the negative effects of inequality in capitalist societies, Marx and Engels perceived crime, conflict and insecurity to be a self-evident social

phenomenon (Dahrendorf 1959). Marxism submitted that capitalism, like other socioeconomic systems of the past, would inevitably lead to internal tensions that will cause its own destruction (Shantz 2012). He postulated about radical change, advocating proletarian revolution and freedom from the ruling classes. For Marx, the division between social classes will widen and the condition of the exploited worker will deteriorate to the extent that social structure will collapse: the class struggle is transformed into a proletarian revolution (Marx & Engels 1848). This position has made several Marxists in their literature to submit that the high rate of insecurity in African countries is a factor of the high level of inequality within the continent (Amzat & Olutayo 2009; Ewetan & Urhie 2014; Solomon 2015; Rustad 2016). Their position is given credence by reports and studies that have suggested that higher levels of insecurity are observed in income-unequal societies than those relatively equal (TIME 2011; Oxfam International 2017).

At present, Africa is witnessing new reactions and new revolutionary pressures from civil society organizations, representing labour unions, mass protests, as well as the left wing of the petty bourgeoisie to confront the excesses of the state by demanding for the remaking of the state through reforms and restructuring. To this end, modern Africa can be described as a new emergent, un-integrated, multi-ethnic region and its key threat to stable democracy and socioeconomic development is social disintegration occasioned by conspicuous gaps in its social classes. Therefore, different forms of ethnic, political, religious and industrial conflicts have pervaded the entire continent, while extreme cases of terrorism are recorded in West and East Africa. In the year 2011, Northern Africa witnessed democratic uprising known as Arab Spring which arose independently and spread across the Arab world, originating from Tunisia in December 2010 and swiftly took hold in Egypt, Libya and other Arab countries outside Africa.

Inequality Drivers and Factors Widening the Gap of Inequality in Africa

Africa's inequality story is one that is more complex than a mere widening gulf between the very poor and the very rich. In the continent, there are various facets of social stratification that border on 'life chances', as propounded by Max Weber (Dahrendorf 1979), which eventually impact on income inequality within the continent. Some of these determinants of life chances are gender, ethnicity, social class and religion. In most African communities, the identified factors are very potent determinants of opportunities

and possibilities that individuals can access in the quest to move up the socioeconomic ladder. The strength of these factors within the continent has often gravely limited social mobility both at inter- and intra-generational levels. Some studies have identified the constraining effects of these factors as one of the key reasons for the widening gap of inequality in Africa and why the continent has continuously being tagged as the most unequal region in the world (Anyanwu et al. 2016; Rustad 2016). However, aside from the aforementioned factors that impact on life chances within the continent, there are other factors responsible for the widening of gaps of inequality in the continent.

There is the problem of retrogressive taxation across the continent. The tax system in Africa is hardly designed to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. While the poor are made to bear the brunt of tax payment, the rich and powerful have their ways in engaging in unfair tax practices, bypassing payment of tax, and in some cases, they are granted unnecessary tax waivers (Aiko & Logan 2014). Corruption in tax administration has been identified as a fundamental barrier to effective and fair taxation and to building trust between African governments and their citizens (Martini 2014). Most African tax laws have loopholes that allow for tax avoidance by influential business people, made possible by the pervasive corruption that prevails in these countries. The ineffectiveness of tax administration in many African countries has been perceived to be responsible for successive failure of governments within the region to bridge the inequality gap (Africa Renewal 2017).

Traditional discrimination against women is a problem that cuts across African countries. Women and girls are not accorded the same recognition as their male counterparts and this goes far in affecting the life chances of feminine gender in the continent. Transparency International (2018) reported that women in Africa are disadvantaged in land ownership due to strength of cultural and customary traditions. In a study covering Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zimbabwe, TI reported that women are often excluded from negotiation on land deals, not made aware of their rights to own property and land, vulnerable to sexual extortion and are often forced to trade sexual favours for land deals. Similarly, in Nigeria, the lives of women are negatively impacted by a number of discriminatory traditions and sociocultural practices that restrict and impede their social mobility in a number of areas when compared to the male folks. According to Oxfam International

(2017), Nigeria fell further down the rankings of the Global Gender Gap Index, as it dropped nine places from its 2014 position to rank 125 out of 145 countries in the 2015 ranking.

The fact that the rate of unemployment in Africa is very high is no longer new. However, current discussion on employment in Africa centres on how it is equally a factor that widens inequality gap in the continent. These include unstable wages, insecure jobs, no access to pensions or health insurance, arbitrary treatment on the job. The factors all impact on income equality that pervades in the continent, as it is very prominent in Africa industries. For instance, there have been a wide range of reports of ‘secret employments’ of children and relatives of influential people into ‘juicy’ jobs like Central Banks of Nigeria (CBN), Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), and other Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), while children of the poor are left to grapple with the problem of unemployment (Nigerian News Direct 2016; Premium Times 2016).

One of the factors that widen inequality gaps in Africa is the astronomical cost of governance in the continent. This is quite visible in many African countries where large percentages of annual budgets go into paying huge earnings to a small fraction of public office holders and political elites. For example, lawmakers in Nigeria gets one of the highest remunerations in the world, with an average annual salary of \$118,000 which is equivalent to sixty-three times the country’s GDP per capital in 2013 (Oxfam International 2017). In addition, maintenance costs of government’s machineries are usually inflated by the staff, which themselves are excessive in number. Issues like inflated salaries and benefits, hidden allowances, oversized retirement packages, excessive increase in government’s committees and agencies, as well as padded budget often prevail (Anyanwu et al. 2016; Odusola 2017). These large payments constitute a drain of public resources for the benefit of a few while the majority grapple with high rate of maternal mortality, out-of-school children, youth unemployment, and multi-dimensional poverty. Standard of living of millions of Africans could have been improved by these sorts of resources in the form of healthcare and education funding, in addition to providing potable water, sanitary materials, and other non-negotiable infrastructure. Inequality is effectively reinforced by prohibitive governance’s cost which implies that inadequate resources will be left to cater for the essential basic services to Africa’s wider and growing population.

Unlike what obtains in other climes in the world, there is an unusual overlap between economic and political power in Africa. This enables vested interests to favour the rich by tilting allocation of opportunities, wealth and income, and biasing policy-making to favour them (Odusola 2017). Those that occupy political positions often ensure that they acquire economic advantages by arrogating resources to themselves taking advantage of their political power (Amzat & Olutayo 2009). In the continent, a lot of people aspire for political positions with an ulterior motive of amassing wealth for themselves (Anyanwu et al. 2016). Therefore, they spend lots of money during the electioneering process, which they perceive as ‘investments’ to attain the political position and ultimately economic power that accrues. This explains why a number of such politicians are corrupt and enrich themselves corruptly in order to recover the amount they must have expended during the campaign and election. In most African communities, the management of public resources is subjected to corruption and rent-seeking, as well as elite capture, which facilitates the reproduction of inequality and compromising opportunities for inclusive growth (Oxfam International 2017). Empirical studies and analysts have argued that inequality and poverty in Africa are not as a result of the continent lack in resources, but the misuse or misappropriation and misallocation of such resources (Africa Renewal 2017; UNDP 2017). There is indeed a history of inequitable distribution of resources across the African continent. What this implies is that more African people are unable to access basic services which translate into negative outcome in human development. A syndrome of the rich growing richer while the poor continues to be poorer. For instance, in allocating infrastructural development projects and incentives, the urban areas continuously get favoured over the rural areas, while within the urban areas, the highbrow areas that accommodate the rich continue to get more state presence over and above the suburbs dominated by the poor (Odusola 2017). This leads to higher rate of social exclusion, which breeds criminals and criminalities that negatively impact on the security of such society. The Tangled Web: The Inequality-Insecurity Nexus in Africa

Empirical studies, opinion leaders, government and nongovernment agencies both at local and international levels have been unequivocal in their submissions that social inequality is a major cause of conflict, crime and insecurity in Africa (Solomon 2015; IMF 2016; Rustad 2016; AUC/OECD 2018). Recent studies have pointed out that social cohesion suffers reduction in society with social inequalities,

especially as it concern interpersonal trust between different groups which is due to economic equality and equality of opportunities (Khambule & Siswana 2017). In some developed countries such as Japan and those in Scandinavia, which have the lowest levels of socioeconomic inequality, people living in these countries also enjoy overall greater life expectancy, lower heart diseases, infant mortality, reduced obesity and mental illness, and lower rates of addictions and murder, as against nations with high inequality like the U.S., U.K., and even more so, African countries (TIME 2011). It will be pertinent at this juncture to examine case examples of some African countries with specific insecurity challenges borne out of social inequality.

4. Intergroup and Xenophobic Violence in South Africa

A prime example of a country that is mired in intergroup violence occasioned by high level of inequalities is South Africa. In particular, the violence that trailed the apartheid regime which was believed to be caused by social inequality suffered by the Black majority was expected to abate when the country transited to democracy in 1994 (Mashele & Qobo 2014; Tshishonga 2015). However, the country has been facing socioeconomic challenges of inequality, poverty, and unemployment which have continued to impede economic growth with an unemployment rate of over twenty-seven percent and a youth unemployment rate of over fifty percent (Khambule & Siswana 2017). This has implied that the promises that followed the demise of apartheid which has to do with ‘better life for all and equal opportunities’ have not been met. The disparities that accrued have led to retrogression or undermining of reconciliation projects that South Africa is committed into achieving after 1994 due to the fact that privileges are still drawn along racial lines (Ketton 2014).

Recent xenophobic attacks in addition to pockets of violence across South Africa have also been attributed to the problem of social inequality in the country (VOA 2010; Van der Westhuizen & Swart 2015). Though, widespread xenophobic violent attacks have been recorded since 1994 in provinces such as Western Cape, Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal, recent surge of the violence has generated appreciable global concern (Khambule & Siswana 2017). Human Sciences Research Council (2008), in its report identified four broad causes for the violence. These are relative deprivation, which borders intense competition for jobs, housing and commodities; the second is group processes, which

include psychological categorization processes that are nationalistic rather than superordinate; third, South African exceptionalism, or a feeling of superiority in relation to other Africans; and finally, exclusive citizenship, or a form of nationalism that excludes others. Several attacks involving maiming, arson, destruction of properties, and killings of foreign nationals have been carried out by youths that blamed influx of immigrants for the high rate of unemployment and crime in the country (VOA 2010). In the last twenty-three years, over 200 foreign nationals have been killed while thousands have been displaced (Khambule & Siswana 2017).

5. Terrorism, Militancy and other Insurgencies in Nigeria

More severe violence has been experienced in Nigeria as a result of social inequality and its derivatives like poverty, relative deprivation, and social exclusion. Both the North and Southern parts of the country have witnessed severe effects of terrorism, ethnic, communal and religious violence as well as political upheavals (Akinbi 2015; Fawole 2015). The rampage of Boko Haram, Niger Delta Militants as well as other violent groups in the country has led the government identifying national security as a major issue and expending huge resources and budgetary allocations to security. The growing awareness of the masses on the disparities amongst the citizens has led to grievances by a large number of people (Fawole 2015; Aborisade & Adedayo 2018). Large proportions of the Nigerian population, especially the youths and ethnic minorities, are frustrated and have lost faith in social cohesion of the Nigerian community (Aborisade & Adedayo 2018). Consequently, they have in different ways, expressed disillusionment about socioeconomic and political inequalities in the country, which they deemed pervasive and unfair.

There are a number of militant and insurgency groups that have come into existence in the quest of aggrieved youths and ethnic sects to violently attract attention and make government authorities to accede to their demands. For example, Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Niger Delta Vigilantes (NDV), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta Avengers, Niger Delta Revolutionary Crusaders are some of the Niger Delta militants that have caused a lot of havoc of blowing up oil installations, kidnapping expatriate workers of oil firms, thereby, reducing the output of exploration and production of oil to an abysmal level (Rustad 2016). Their main agitation has been to have total control of natural resources within their region,

as they are miffed by what they perceive as unfair revenue allocation to their states in spite of the location of the resource that amounts to national wealth in their locality (Moses & Olaniyi 2017). The development of the region is believed to have been neglected by successive governments, while people living within the areas have to grapple with deplorable conditions of the physical environment as a result of oil exploration in the region.

Similarly, the perception of marginalization has been attributed to be the main factor that has continued to fuel the agitation of the people of the South-Eastern parts of the country for secession, to form a country of their own. In recent activities of the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB), and the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), there has been huge uproar of violence with several casualties and wanton destruction of properties (Achumba et al 2013; Enuokora 2015; Nwabueze 2015). Though, the agitation for free and sovereign state of the Republic of Biafra dates back to 1967, the cause of the agitation at that time and now remains relatively unchanged (Nwabueze 2015). The demands of secessionists include the creation of additional states borne out of perceived abnormal imbalance in the federal structure (the Eastern region has five states as against six of other regions in the country). Also, the composition of political leadership and top Federal civil servants are believed to be lopsided with indigenes of the region at a numerical disadvantage. They are also advocating for resource control, acceptable formula that will arrive at equitable share of nation's revenue and several others.

Although, terrorist groups perpetrating violence in the North Western and Eastern parts of the country have not directly claimed being marginalized or fighting against social inequality, there are widespread beliefs amongst scholars that the activities of Boko Haram and other ethno-religious insurgency groups are fuelled by high rate of socioeconomic inequalities and neglect suffered by the region. For instance, the poverty rate in the country's northeast (the centre of Boko Haram activities) is seventy-six percent, while that of the Northwest is eighty percent (Usman 2015). Meanwhile, UNICEF report also indicated that the Northern region has the world highest number of children not going to school, with a particularly low girl-child school enrolment rate of twenty percent in the North-East and North West twenty-five percent (New Telegraph 2018). This invariably leaves many out-of-school children as vulnerable pool for recruit by Boko Haram and other insurgent groups to

perpetrate violence within the region and beyond. This is in consonance with the position of a body of literature on the development of violence within Northern Nigeria (Tella 2015). As Akinbi (2015) argued, Boko Haram is deeply entrenched in the social and economic marginalization of a large section of the Northeast region.

Ethnic Contests, Electoral Violence and Terrorism in Kenya

Kenya has been one of the scenes of violent attacks and acts of terrorism in Africa within the last two decades. One of the most conflict-prone areas of the country is the northern part, which hosts two counties of Isiolo and Marsabit that are often at war with each other (Osamba 2001). Being a region that is largely semi-arid, in which most residents are pastoralist nomads, the main cause of the constant violent strife in these counties are access to scarce pasture and water. In addition, local political competition between the two counties emanated and became intensified from a new devolved system of government, especially for the powerful elected governor positions (Obala & Mattingly 2014). This has made general elections to also be prone to occasional intercommunal fighting. Main impediments towards achieving peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups in the country have been identified as political structures, which imply 'winner-takes-all' for the presidency, regional marginalization, and inequitable development (Schilling, Scheffran & Weinzierl 2012). Although devolution brought services closer to the people, it has also deepened ethnic schisms in counties and galvanized communities to install one of their own into the many elected county-level seats. In March 2013, the outcome of election in the region was devastating, leading to bloody intercommunal clashes that claimed dozens of lives and 38,000 people forced to leave their homes, with many fleeing to Ethiopia (Obala & Mattingly 2014).

Terrorist attacks in the country date back to 1970s, with a significant incident being that of 1975 twin bombing of central Nairobi inside the Starlight nightclub and in a travel bureau near the Hilton hotel (Aronson 2013). After this incident, there were series of bombings in the country which included 1980 Norfolk Hotel attack that claimed twenty lives, 1998 United States' embassy bombing that killed 213 people, with an estimated 4,000 people wounded. There was also the 2002 Kikambala Hotel bombing and Arkia Airlines missile attack, Mombasa targeted at Israeli tourists, 2012 Al-Shabaab attacks, 2013 Westgate Mall shooting, 2014 Mpeketoni attacks and 2015 Garissa attack (Nyongesa 2017).

Analysts have identified poverty, marginalization, state neglect of large number of communities, and inadequate police presence as some of the main factors that led to the emergence and development of terrorism in the country. In particular, Lowen (2014) posited that the high rate of poverty in rural Kenya creates fertile grounds for terrorist groups to recruit members, mostly youths. According to Oxfam International (2017), "less than 0.1% of the population (8,300 people) owns more wealth than the bottom 99.9% (more than forty-four million people)." Ten percent of the country's richest people earned on average twenty-three times more than the poorest ten percent. There is also unequal access to opportunities, such as healthcare and education, which leaves many youths to be vulnerable to be criminal or other violent activities.

6. Manifestations of Inequality that Facilitates Insecurity across Africa

The daunting role that inequality plays to jeopardize the security and order of Africa is diverse and pervasive. There are certain manifestations of inequality that often spur grievances among the poor and socially excluded in the continent. These are signs and evidences of the gaps that exist between the rich and influential in the society and the low-income poor. In Africa, social classes are overwhelmingly visible with the lower class constantly intimidated. This makes social cohesion difficult to attain as the division between the poor and the rich are made evident in every facet of the society with little or no effort from the state to bridge the gap. Consequently, the demonstration or exhibition of this social division often spurs the poor and socially excluded into conflict, industrial action, civil unrest, violent crime, and other behaviours that threaten the security of their communities.

In Africa, the desperate drive for wealth is submerged in a materialistic culture where those that flaunt their riches are distinguished and respected. Ostentations often accompany corruption by the elites. They throw extravagant parties, own fleets of expensive vehicles and tastefully built mansions (Konadu-Agyemang & Panford 2006). Many of them are given chieftaincy titles by traditional rulers while some gets national awards as well without recourse to how they came about their wealth. The practice is widespread and institutionalized and has gone on for decades. The ostentatious lifestyles of wealthy Africans have been quite influential in driving many people into acquiring wealth through dubious means in order to enjoy such lifestyle (Odusola 2017). Many youths have taken to both violent and nonviolent crimes for

the sake of making such money as they are aware that official income from legitimate job or business cannot bankroll extravagant lifestyle (Ewetan & Urhie 2014). Violent crimes like armed robbery, political thuggery, assassination, kidnapping for ransom, ritual killing, and less violent crimes like internet scam, money laundering, and drug peddling are some of the activities that desperate people turn to for acquisition of wealth.

Generally, law enforcement agencies and other instruments of the law have been rendering unbalanced service to African societies based on social classes. This has encouraged impunity as many people in the lower-class now take laws into their own hands because of the perceived failure of the state in entrenching rule of law and practicing its tenets (Shifa & Leibbrandt 2017). For example, in Nigeria, the continuous poor handling of herdsmen and farmers' conflicts have degenerated into massive killings and maiming in the country's middle belt. At present, the farming population are of the belief that the destructive activities of the Fulani herdsmen on their farmlands are orchestrated and supported by security forces since the president of the country is of Fulani extraction (Ajibefun 2018). This has made many of the farmers to take laws into their hands to attack the herdsmen, while there are retaliatory attacks as well from the herdsmen, culminating in endless chaos and gruesome killings.

Rural areas in most African countries suffer neglect and absence of state apparatuses. Basic amenities like roads, potable water, electricity, telecommunication services, as well as social facilities like healthcare, education are often inadequate in these areas (Oduola 2017). This makes such communities to serve as fertile breeding grounds for crime and criminalities as criminals take advantage of uneducated youths to perpetrate evil (Osamba 2001). The inadequacy of state controlled security in such areas also make them vulnerable to terrorists' attacks and other nefarious activities as witnessed in the case of Nigeria and Kenya where substantial attacks are carried out in rural areas (Aronson, 2013; Obala & Mattingly 2014). In Nigeria, Boko Haram has taken over a number of such rural areas in the north eastern parts of the country. Meanwhile, communities engage in intercommunal conflicts in northern parts of Kenya as a result of limited resources (Nyongesa 2017; Shifa & Leibbrandt 2017). These conflicts could have been averted if there are adequate provisions of resources for agriculture and other wellbeing as visible in urban areas.

The strife for wealth and desperate bid to escape from poverty that pervades in Africa has often exposed the sentiments that overshadow merit in the offering of opportunities for financial and materially-related incentives. The gross inequality experienced in the continent is often aggravated by high sense of injustice felt by the masses when they are confronted with nepotistic patterns of allocating societal scarce resources. There have been several reported cases where job opportunities, contract award, government incentives like scholarship and other state benefits are awarded to people based on their class, ethnic, religious, political and other social affiliations rather than merit (Ewetan & Urhie 2014; Van der Westhuizen & Swart 2015; Premium Times 2016). This has heightened the rate of social exclusion, especially among the poor in the continent, leading to violent reactions in most cases (Moses & Olaniyi 2017). The multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of Africa in this case, has been seen to be an albatross to development rather than an opportunity to create unity in diversity.

7. Conclusion: Addressing Inequality and Insecurity in Africa

The article set out by examining how inequality has occasioned high rate of insecurity in African state. Discussions on how the continuous rise inequality in Africa has tampered with social cohesions and posed huge threats to the unity and growth of the continent have been done. It is evident that measures taken by African governments to bridge the inequality gaps in their different countries have failed to materialize. However, the cycle can only be broken by policy interventions that are purposeful, supported by enlightened proactive citizens as well as active and vibrant civil society. Economic growth across the continent that has been applauded will mean nothing to the larger population, until the time that governments in the continent initiate strategic transformation in policy development, management, implementation/enforcement and evaluation. It is the belief of this author that remarkable transformations will be achieved and visible if governments understand the imperatives of wealth creation and ensure the distribution gets to African masses who are in the majority.

There is a need for the countries in the continent to pursue progressive taxation in order to put a stop to the present state where taxes are disproportionately fixed, making the middle and lower-income earners to bear the brunt. In order to bridge the current gap in inequality in the continent, there should be the strengthening of tax mechanisms, to make sure that

every citizen, sector and institution complies with prompt tax payment. Corrupt practices in this system will have to be addressed; questionable tax waiver and tax holidays should be checked.

In addition, policies and laws that are targeted at promoting and engendering gender equality in the continent should be strengthened. Bills on Gender and Equal Opportunity that have to do with protecting women's rights, outside and within marriage, should be considered across Africa. This bill will also cover areas of inheritance, punishing violators and providing women with equal access to services and opportunities in education, healthcare and employment, as well as political and social participation. This legal protection, and ensuring its implementation across the continent, will help to bridge the gender dimension-gap of inequality across the continent.

Targeted action is required to encourage women participation in political spaces in the continent; at present, this is very low. The possibility of amending constitutions to effectively adopt the proportional representation of women in lower and upper parliaments can be explored. African women need to be empowered to be free from discrimination and violence, participate in decision making, as well as exercise their full economic rights to make their contributions to nation building. There is a need for a common realization in the continent that in order for nations to grow to their full potentials, concerted efforts of men and women in an equal social environment is required.

Serious and sustained efforts should be taken by African countries to address the problem affecting the continent especially as it relates to its youthful population. More importantly, state-based employment agencies should ensure fairness and equity in the recruitment process into government establishments. Nepotism needs to be addressed in the continent to reduce the high level of social exclusion which is inimical to social cohesion and security. Also, conscious efforts should be made to ensure that those that are unemployed gets to work under safe conditions and receive minimum wage that can sustain healthy living. Equally important, the governments should harness the spirit of entrepreneurship of African youths.

The high cost of governance, money laundering and corruption needs to be checked in the continent as these constitute the conduits for illicit financial flows out of Africa. Evidently, African cannot record considerable success in fighting corruption in the

absence of strong political will from its leadership. It is imperative for African governments to lead and exhibit examples in the show of zero tolerance to corruption. Attentions should be given to the establishment of special courts to see to the possibility of speedy prosecution of corruption cases in the continent. It is a common belief in the world that the slower the wheels of justice, the more the judicial processes become open to manipulation. If ill-gotten wealth are not paraded on the streets of Africa by corrupt politicians and public servants, there will be less temptation for potential offenders to disrupt the peace and security of African society in a bid to make money at all cost.

Equitable distribution of resources between the rural and urban areas of the continent should also be paramount in any effective effort to ensure equality. Indeed, in empowering rural communities, there will be a reduction in the vulnerability of the youths in these areas to be recruited for criminal activities. Meanwhile, there is a strong potential for agriculture to speedily transform the mono-product economy of many African states into multiple products with large-scale agricultural industrialization that will ensure food security, boost employment, reduce social exclusion, and promote equality, particularly for the youths and women. In order for this to be achievable, committed political actions of governments across the continent is important.

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