

GENDER STRATIFICATION: A STUDY OF DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION IN SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Stratification is a concept that often features in many social sciences literature. In spite of general improvement in living standard and the integration of the world into a ‘global village’, shades of discrimination and oppression which are aspects of stratification are still very evident in Africa. Stratification of humans into groups with varied unequal assess to social reward in forms of power, prestige, valued resources and personal freedom (among men and women) in social positions bring about discrimination and oppression. The radical feminist theory is employed to discuss why and how stratification manifests and the possible ways to reduce the degree of gender inequality and its attendant consequences. This paper establishes that stratification, discrimination and oppression are intense and severe in developing economies where patriarchy is practiced. Patriarchy is that phenomenon which makes men to occupy positions of decision making and they in turn ascribe status and prestige to their members. A very important factor to the continued existence of stratification is self-Image which is an emotional phenomenon. The men deliberately ensure that women are excluded from decision making positions which would improve or enhance the latter’s social image. The women because of socialization of submissiveness recycle whatever social disadvantage some have suffered in the past. For an egalitarian society to be attained, both men and women should deliberately alter their self images.

Keywords: gender, stratification, discrimination, oppression, socialization