



## DYNAMICS OF GENDER CONFLICT IN SOCIETY

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### **Abstract:**

In sociological texts, the definition of gender conflict is still at novice stage due to its nature in the society. This research paper attempts a holistic understanding of Gender Conflict. The term 'Gender Conflict' is new in sociological research and it is discussed here thoroughly. The research paper describes sexuality, roles, social construct and also explains phases of social change in the context of Gender. The gender and conflict are described in diagram and pictorial formats with step-by-step process of dynamics of gender conflict in society.

**Keywords:** gender, constructs, roles, conflict, violence

### **1. Introduction**

Gender is a recent invention of modern intelligentsia. The definition of gender is the product of modern world however ancient world has no basic understanding of Gender. The use of gender has increased greatly in the last two decades of twentieth century.

Scientifically, Gender is not in real existence but sexes do exist. The two major sexes are male and female. Male and female are defined on the basis of their biological structure and sexual organs. Sex is biologically defined according to their physiological and reproductive capabilities. These two sexes are considered in reference to social constructs. A social construct is something that exists not in objective reality, but it exists because people make it into existence. Social constructs are results of human interaction and their agreement to it. Sexual orientation is different than gender. Sexual orientation is to who are attracted sexually however gender identity is who you are. Female is a Gender when imposed social constructs but when she is attracted towards female gender sexually or prefer female gender partner is considered Lesbian. Similarly, a male is a gender but if he is preferring male as sexual partner known as Gay.

Sex is usually preferred as the determining factor rather than gender. Sex is referred to biology however Gender is socially constructed norms which are more open

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to interpretation and dispute. Julie Greenberg states that although gender and sex are separate concepts, they are interlinked in that gender discrimination often results from stereotypes based on what is expected of members of each sex.

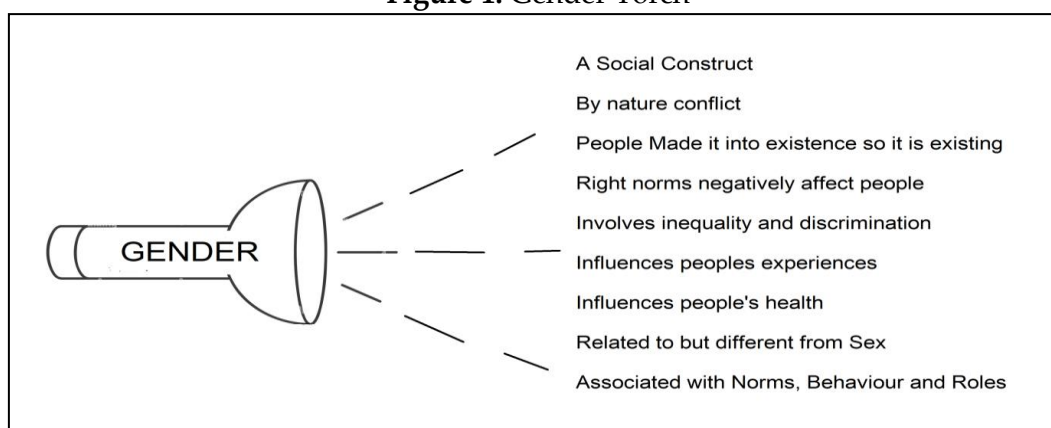
Gender in universal domain refers to the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being women and men. It is defined socially that a woman or a man varies among cultures with a change over time. Gender is a socio-cultural term of particular characteristics and roles that are associated with certain groups of individuals with reference to their sex and sexuality.

There is a Gender in between male and female known as transgender. It is an umbrella term referring to individuals who do not identify with the male or female sex category and whose identity or bodily expression falls outside of stereotypical gender norms. Transgender encompasses a diverse array of gender identities and expressions, including identities that fit within a female/male classification and those that do not. It is not the same as intersex, which refers to biological variation in sex characteristics, including chromosomes, gonads and/or genitals that do not allow an individual to be distinctly identified as female or male at birth.

The method of review of literature was adopted in this research. Sociological literature reviewed to study the family structure. The human biology literature reviewed to understand the individual sexes. The literature on Indian social problem reviewed to define gender conflict in the context of social pathology. The survey reports have been reviewed. United Nations population survey literature reviewed.

## 2. Understanding Gender Conflict

Figure 1: Gender Torch



The Gender Torch explains characteristic of gender. It is a social construct<sup>ii</sup> and people made it into existence. The people constructed it to divide sexes and assign roles in the society; for example, woman is to care young and old family members while man is to earn bread by different means including job, trade, profession business and services external to the family. In other words, woman is to within four walls of family and man

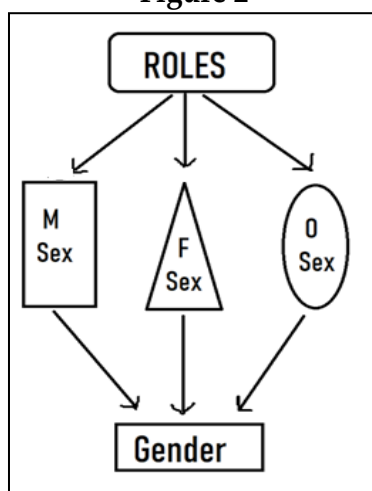
<sup>ii</sup>Social constructs don't represent objective reality but instead are meaningful only because people within the society or group developed and accept that they have meaning. In other words, social constructs do.

is to society. Gender by nature is a conflict ridden because it discriminates the sexes by assigning roles; it causes inequality between sexes. Literarily, gender is synonym of sex but it is related to sex only. When sexes are assigned the roles, they are defined as genders. Individuals recognized with sexes never bring inequality and discrimination. Sex is merely a biological entity while gender is a construct controls norms, behavior and roles.

According to me “Gender conflict is disharmony between two genders either belongs to same gender or opposite gender. The conflict can be intergender or intragender. Intergender<sup>iii</sup> is conflict between opposite gender while Intragender<sup>iv</sup> conflict is within same genders.”

Gender is based on role assignment on sexes. A gender has to follow the assignment from womb to tomb; therefore, gender conflict does follow from womb to tomb. If a fetus is female then there is a chance of abortion exist while if fetus is male then parents prefer 100%.

Figure 2



The above diagram explains when roles are imposed on sexes gender come into existence. According to John Money<sup>v</sup>, the founder of Gender Role<sup>vi</sup>, defined it as “all those things that a person says or does to disclose himself or herself as having the status of boy or man, girl or woman.”

There are qualitative analyses those summaries the representations of gender however one's biological sex is directly linked to specific social roles and the expectations. Male and female differential into social roles creates conflicting mentality for some individuals who feel they must identify themselves as man or woman, rather than being allowed to choose a section in between. In general human societies interpret biological

<sup>iii</sup> The example of intergender conflict is conflict between male and female.

<sup>iv</sup> Within two male genders or two female genders.

<sup>v</sup> John Money was a New Zealand psychologist, author and sexologist popularly known for his research into sexual identity and biology of gender and his conduct towards vulnerable patients. More details: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Money](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Money)

<sup>vi</sup> not have inherent meaning like sex. It exists because people created and gave a meaning. There are different social constructs (Appendix-5). Gender roles are one of them.



differences between men and women to create common social goals. Many cultures have different social goals based on gender, but there is no any specific universal standard to a masculine or feminine role across all cultures. Social roles of men and women, in relation to each other are based on the cultural norms of that society, which lead to the creation of gender systems that initiate conflict between genders.

Gender itself causes discrimination and inequality between sexes. The conflict is germinated from discrimination and inequality. The gender conflict remains in seedling stage even though a victim accepts the condition and compromises with it. So, in a society where sexes are divided on the basis of gender the conflict take a deep root. Gender Conflict slows the social development and universal peace process. The Gender torch (Figure 1) says Gender consists of all negative elements that effect development of a society. Male and Female genders have been involved in conflict. Unlike modern times where gender discrimination and inequality are taken as primary issues by many governments, the world history doesn't read it.

Why doesn't the world history read the Gender conflict in a revolutionary level? It so because the history was male dominated where gender inequality and discrimination were ignored. The Gender Conflict existed in sapling form. In the present world, the gender inequality/discrimination is considered at revolutionary level; Gender Equality is added in the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals in Goal-5.

## 2.2 Gender Based Social Constructs

**Table 1: Gender Based Social Constructs**

Constructs	Male	Female
Roles assignment	Husband, Father, Son, Grandfather, Uncle, Brother, Nephew etc.	Wife, Mother, Daughter, Grandmother, Aunty, Sister, Niece, etc
Minimum clothing	One Piece to Cover Genital 	Two Piece: Cover Genital and Breasts 
Outfit	☉Frock, Gown, Skirt, Saree, Salwar	♣Frock, Gown, Skirt, Saree, Salwar
Sex urge	Can Demand Anytime	Cannot say <b>No</b>
Role in family	Leader/Head	Server/Obedient
Birth preference	First Preferred	None or Next Preferred
Colour	Blue Personify strength and unity, and are considered masculine.	Pink Personify sweet, lovely, beautiful and romantic

Roles assignment: A gender is recognised within different roles assigned by society. A man as husband, father, son, grandfather, uncle, brother and nephew while woman as wife, mother, daughter, grandmother, aunty, sister and niece. As a husband/father in a

patriarchal society man is the breadwinner and a woman as a wife/mother is a homemaker. These assigned roles are the roots of conflict between two opposite genders in family life. A woman, in the role is usually under the control of man. A Male as a son is to be obedient to parents, so is the role of female as a daughter. Both son and daughter are to be under the control of parents. This is the root of gender conflict. Both man and woman in different roles are in conflict state because they are either in role of a controller or controlled.

Construct related to clothing for male and female states that male needs minimum one piece clothe to cover genital while woman need minimum two piece to cover genital and breasts. A woman who walks in the streets with one piece is convicted for her deviant behaviour<sup>vii</sup> or act of obscene. If a man covers his breasts but not his genital with clothes, is convicted for his deviant behaviour or an act of obscene. The outfits are different for man and woman. If a man walks around with frock, he is considered a non-masculine male.

In patriarchal social system a husband can urge his wife for sex anytime while woman cannot deny her husband's urge. A denial of women for sex with husband is a kind of deviant behaviour in patriarchal rule. A husband is in role of a 'controller' where as a wife is in role of 'submission'.

Male child preference is much common in conservative societies like India. Because of male child preference there has been prevalent of female foeticide and female infanticide. Mother-in-law insists Daughter-in-law to produce a male child. If later produce a girl child then she loses endearment of mother-in-law. In a joint family where two or more daughter-in-laws live; the one who produce male child is given high status in family.

The assignment of colours onto specific gender is a social construct. A man who wears pink clothes is not considered as gentleman clothing in formal ceremonies. Man is to wear blue and grey related clothes in formal occasions or meetings. Blue is symbol of masculinity, the strength and courage. Pink is symbol of femininity; represent sweetness, romance and loveliness etc. In social gatherings and business parties if a man wears pink dress he may receive social shame for not following masculine colour. A woman in blue/black dress may not be regarded in social gathering or business parties however in pink dress she will be admired by man.

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<sup>vii</sup> In sociology the behavior that violates the social norms or rules.

### 3. Symbolic Definition

Figure 3

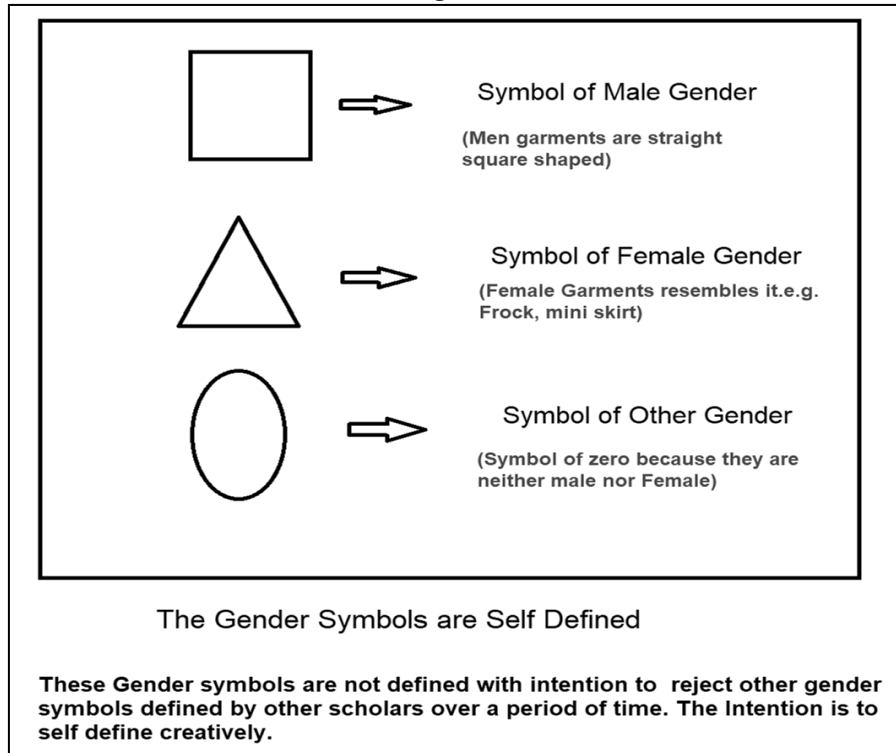


Figure 4

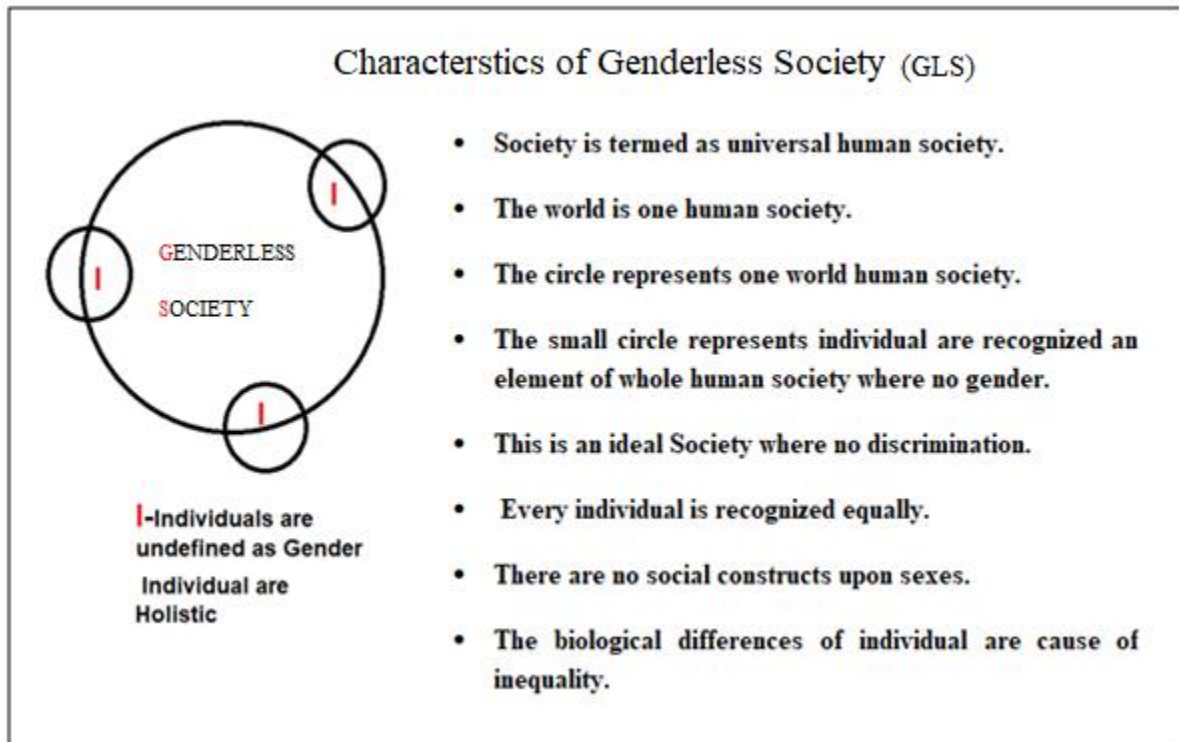




Figure 5

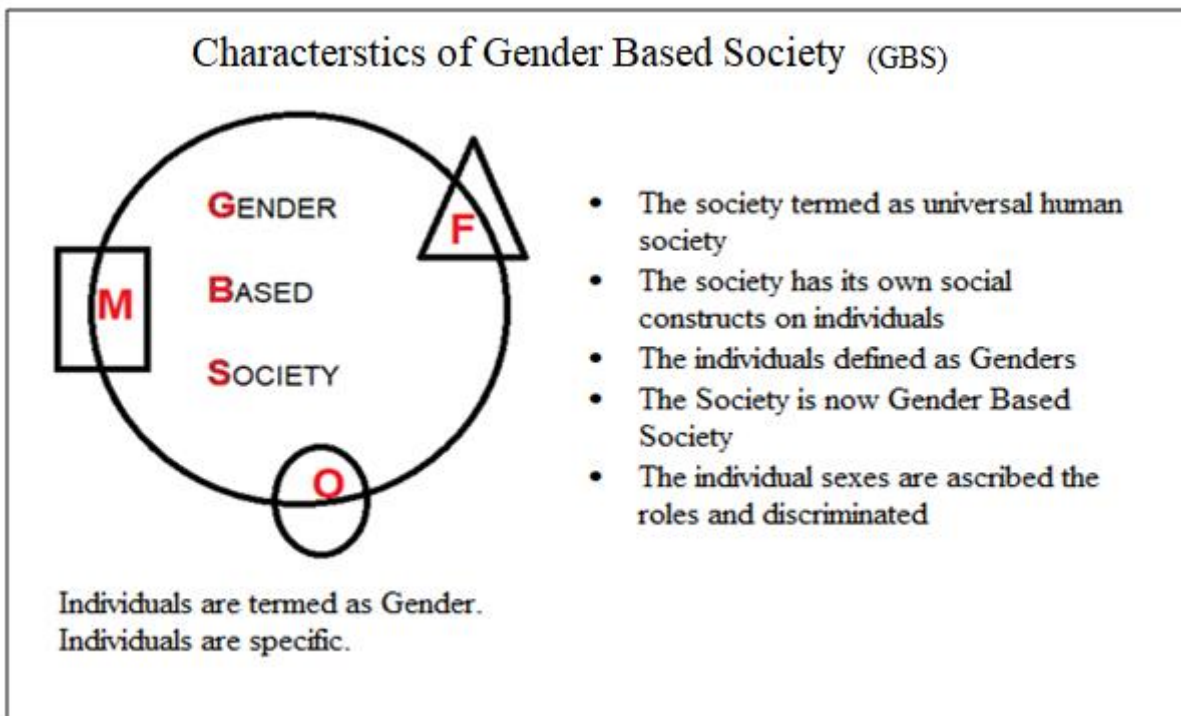


Figure 6

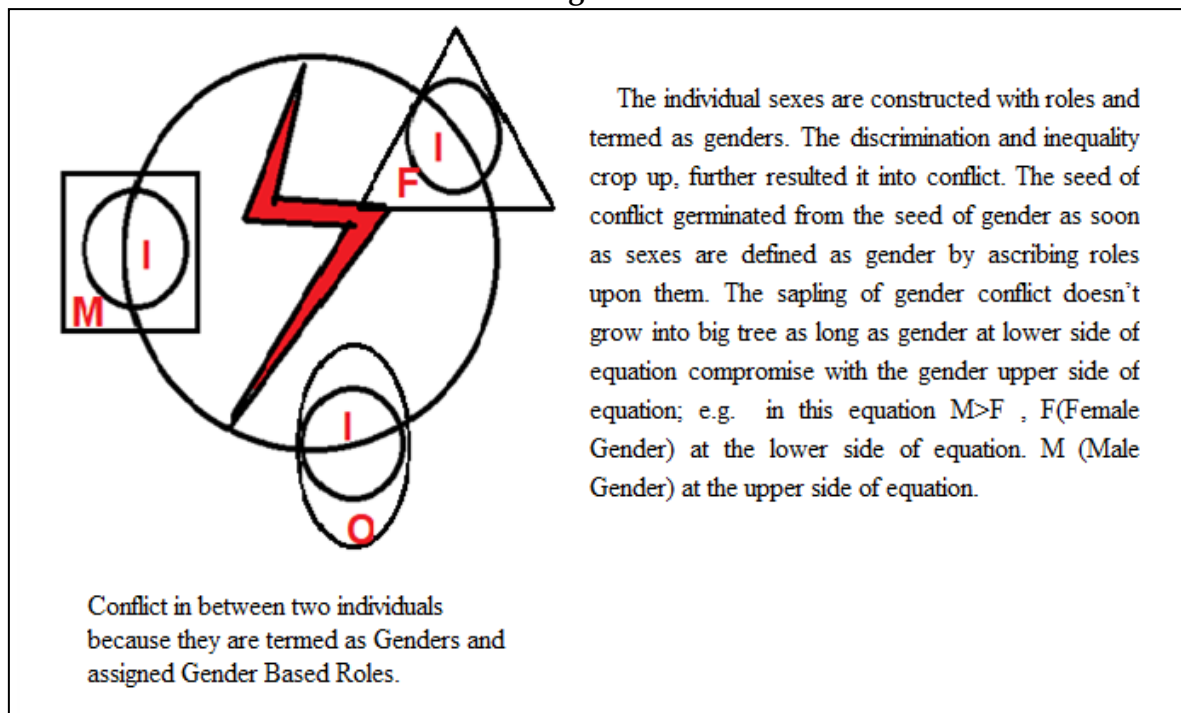
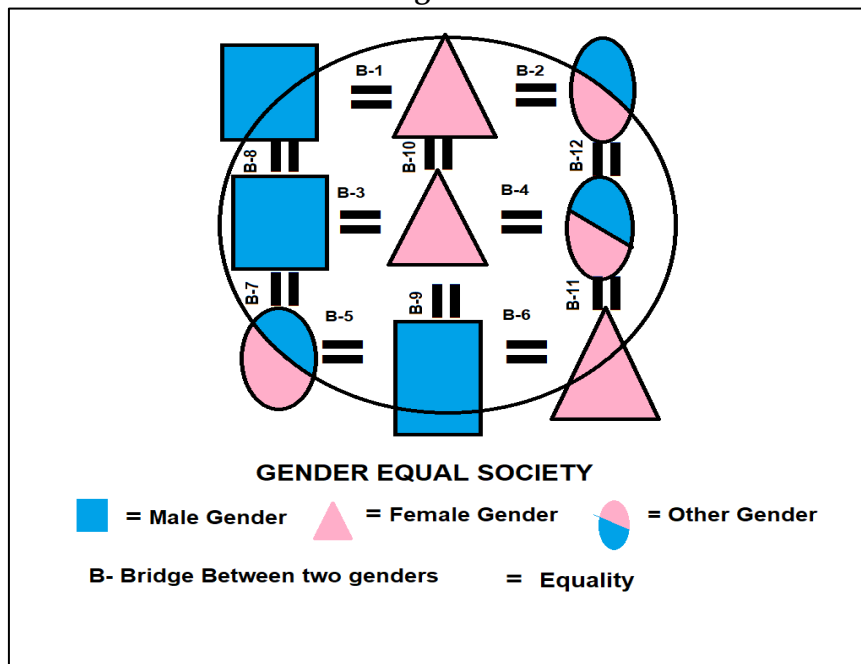


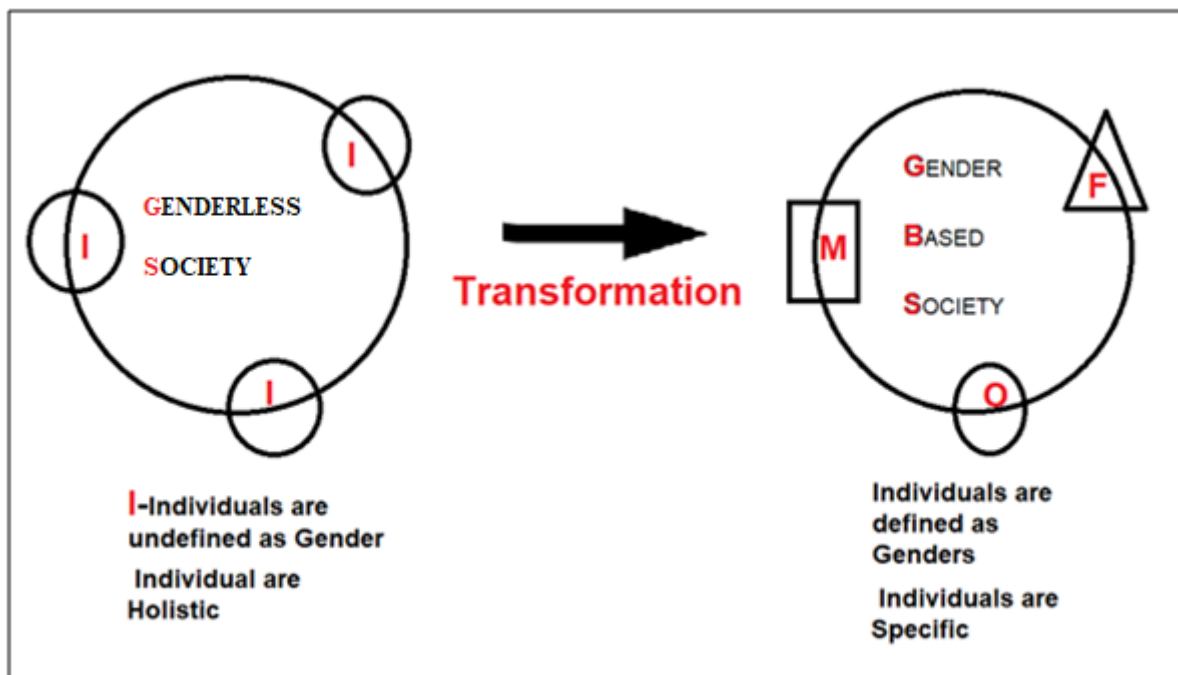
Figure 7



Gender Conflict leads to Gender Equality movement. The symbol shows all Intergender and Intragender equality between all three genders Male, Female and Other, the equation shows equality between

### 3.1 GLS to GBS Transformation

Figure 8: GLS-Genderless Society to GBS- Gender Based Society

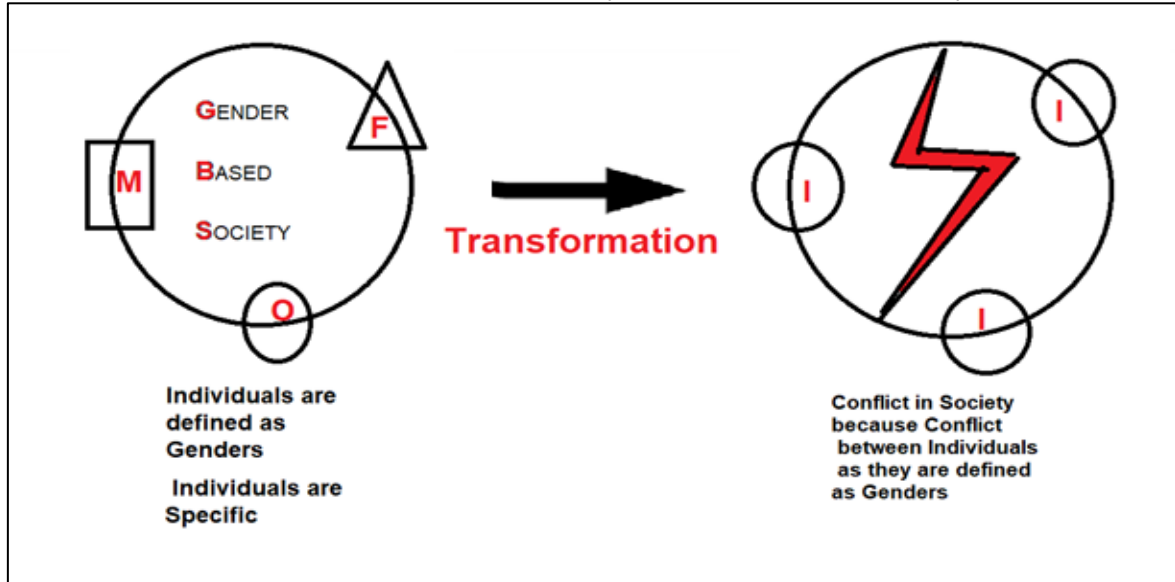


The figure shows a society is transformed from Genderless society to Gender Based Society. The figure represents a society where individuals live. The individuals are



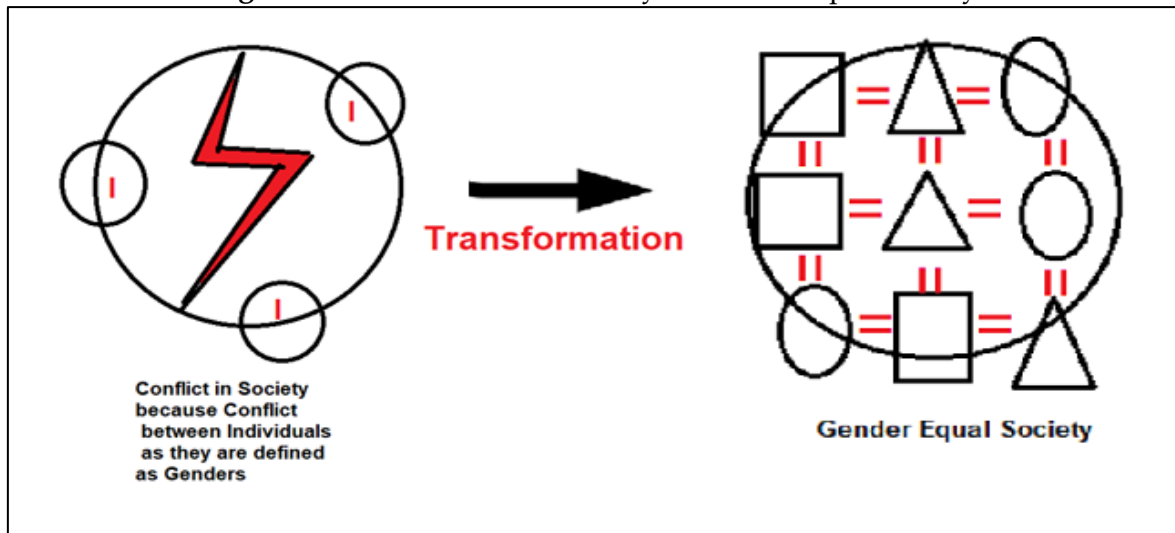
having different sex<sup>viii</sup>. The main reason of this transformation is social constructs. The gender role is one of the social constructs that transform individual sex into an individual gender.

**Figure 9: Gender Based Society to Gender Conflict Society**



The figure shows Gender based society transform into Gender conflict society following the inequalities and discrimination between two genders. Our present society is in the gender conflict; witnessing high rise in atrocities against female gender.

**Figure 10: Gender Conflict Society to Gender Equal Society**

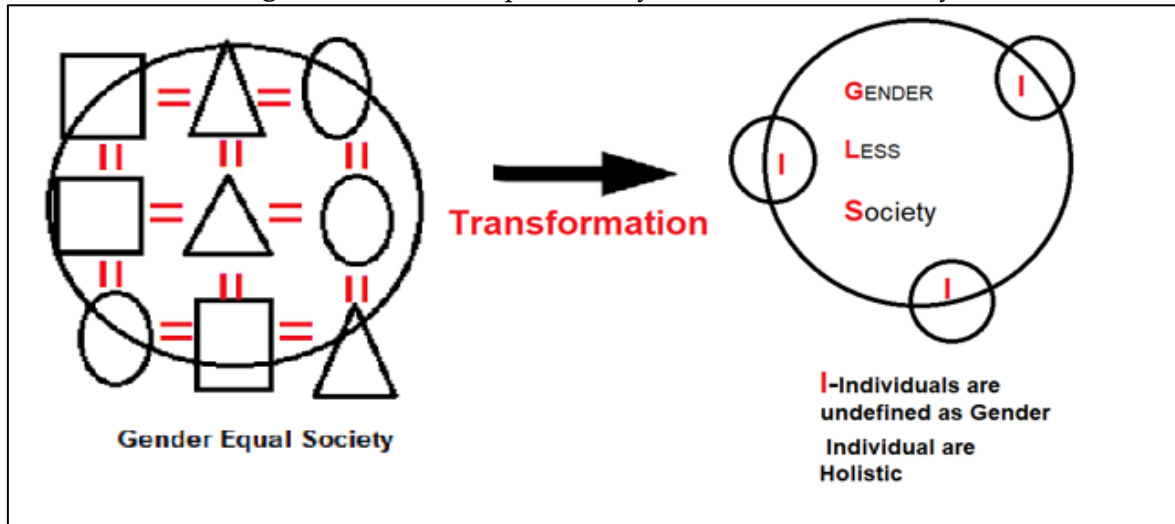


The symbol is promising one, shows transformation of gender conflict society into gender equal society. When there is high rise of gender conflicts, the struggle for establishment of gender equality begins. Our world societies are now making different

<sup>viii</sup>Sex is a biological attribute based on sex organs.

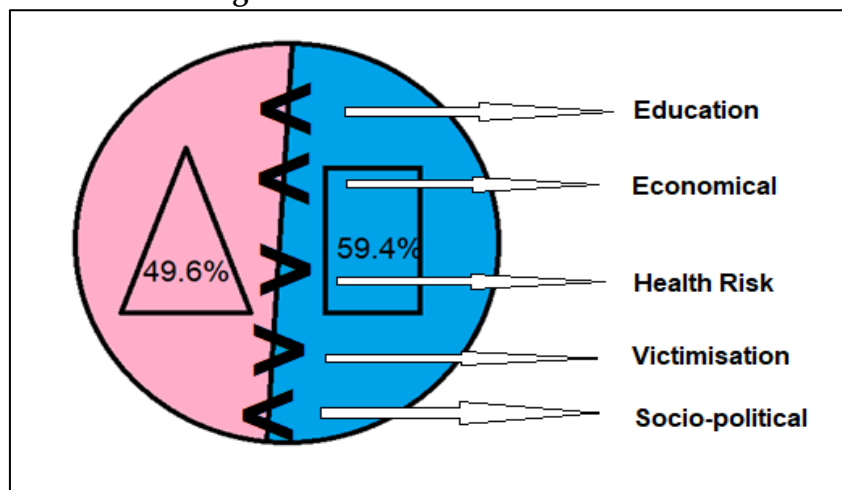
laws to achieve gender equality. Different countries are making stringent laws against violence against women. There are various new policies are introduced by the governments of different nations to achieve gender equality.

**Figure 11: Gender Equal Society to Gender Less Society**



This is last stage of gender in society transformation. The figure shows when society achieve gender equality (Every gender realize equality to its opposite gender in every aspect then the society returns back to first state know age Genderless Society which is an Ideal Society.

**Figure 12: Gender Conflict World<sup>ix</sup>**



**Note:** Male and Female gender taken into consideration

The figure shows that male and female population share nearly equal. However, female gender is educationally, economically and socio-politically at weaker side while male gender is at greater side. Female gender is subjected to health risk and victim of violence. There is a giant gap of development in between male and female gender. When

<sup>ix</sup> The data of Population 2020 World Census by World Bank

almost half of the population i.e. female gender is undeveloped then the claim that the world is developing is hoax. The development of male gender cannot lead the world into a developed world. There are many regions in world i.e. Africa and Middle East where women are yet to be brought into the main stream. The world is suffering from Gender Conflict and in result the peace and development of the world is slow. In other worlds development of man society alone cannot be considered as world is developing.

#### 4. Conclusion

Gender conflict will continue in society as long as individual sexes are recognized as gender. The assignment of roles on sexes in order to define them as gender is a problem of gender conflict. I don't blame the role assignment is overall wrong. There is discrimination in between set of roles; for example, role of a housewife is diminished and husband role as a breadwinner is applauded. Infact nursing a child is more tougher than working in a multinational company but in society a wife engaged in child nursing is not recognized as a great job; further it considered as much lower in stand within the domain of economy. The conflict in gender-based society is due to discrimination in roles assigned to the genders. If the roles assigned to the genders are given equal merit, then gender conflict will be eradicated. A wife's roles in a family should be given equal merit of husband who earns money for family.

The P factor of 3P Theory describes the cause of gender conflict. P1 factor is personal or Psychological factor that describes why a particular gender dominates other gender; P2 factor describes the People or Social factor of conflict between two genders. P3 factors describes source of power that empower of a gender and lack of that source make a gender victim to gender conflict. P3 factors are divided into E1 (Education), E2 (Economy) and E3 (Energy).

P1 = Personal (Its individual factor where a person's own opinion, decision and psychological construct.)

P2 = People (Person plurality is People, and People do form a society. It is Social psychology based constructs, law, belief etc.)

P3 = Power the source of power Education, Economy, Energy (Emotional/physical)

E1 = Economy

E2 = Education

E3 = Energy

Formulation of husband control/dominant wife:

H = Husband

W = Wife

H + W = Spousal Relationship

Each Spouse is influenced by 3P elements so:

$H = HP1 + HP2 + HP3$

$W = WP1 + WP2 + WP3$

#### Dominant Factors:

- HP1 > WP1 psychologically husband thinks self the superior the wife and simultaneously the wife thinks that she is weaker than her husband.
- HP2 > WP2 = society considers husband is mightier or superior and wife is to be controlled by husband.
- HP3 > WP3 = It is again divided into three following its 3E elements thus,
  - HP3E1 > WP3E1, HP3E2 > WP3E2, HP3E3 > WP3E3
  - HP3E1 > WP3E1 = When husband earns more than wife or husband is the only earner,
  - HP3E2 > WP3E2 = Husband's Earning level is more than wife,
  - HP3E3 > WP3E3 = Husband's Energy (Emotional / Physical) Level is more than wife.

#### Acknowledgement

All the above-mentioned figures are the author's creation.

#### Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

#### About the Author

Yadam Ram Kumar is a well-known Indian author and social scientist, founder of 3P Theory and Gender Conflict. His research is based on Gender conflict in society and it describes the term intergender and intragender conflicts. He is a founder of Yadam Institute of Research, a well reputed human rights and gender research center, and also Editor-in-Chief of THE RIGHTS Journal.

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