

TRANSFORMATIVE HORIZONS: HANDLING SEX REASSIGNMENT SURGERY IN THE TRANSGENDER PATH

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Abstract

Transgender people's lives are greatly impacted by sex reassignment surgery (SRS), which enhances their sense of identity and general well-being. Through a process of transformation, SRS enables a congruence between an individual's physical traits and gender identity. The operation can have significant psychological effects in addition to physical ones, such as easing gender dysphoria and fostering a positive self-image. Furthermore, because SRS facilitates a more seamless transition into society, it may result in increased social acceptance and integration. This enhances mental health and lessens the discrimination and stigma that transgender people frequently experience. Although SRS is not the best option for every transgender person, it is important because it gives those who choose it a realistic and transformative alternative. A society's dedication to inclusivity and acknowledging the different needs of its members is reflected in its ability to provide supportive healthcare, including sex reassignment surgery.

Keywords: Transgender Individuals, Sex Reassignment Surgery, Gender Dysphoria, Hormone Replacement Treatment, Identity, Social Acceptance.

INTRODUCTION

Over time, there has been a dramatic shift in the perception and acceptance of transgender people, which has challenged social norms and sparked a more inclusive conversation about gender diversity. People who identify differently as gender than the sex they were assigned at birth are considered transgender. Beyond simple binary classifications of male and female, this intricate and multidimensional component of human identity invites a nuanced examination of the struggles, resilience, and experiences of transgender individuals in other cultures and countries. Recognising the differences between gender identity and biological sex is necessary for defining transgender identity. An individual's fundamental sense of being male, female, or another gender entirely is referred to as their gender identity. It is an internal and deeply embedded concept. On the other hand, observable physical characteristics like genitalia are what determine biological sex at birth. Therefore, transgender people navigate a road towards self-discovery, acceptance, and frequently, societal understanding as a result of the misalignment between their gender identification and the sex given to them at birth. The acceptance of transgender identity has roots in many historical societies and transcends the current discourse. Historical narratives and anthropological data demonstrate that gender nonconforming people occur in many communities, frequently in distinctive and esteemed positions. For instance, hijras hold a unique social and spiritual space in South Asia and have a rich cultural heritage. Some Native American tribes held the Two-Spirit people in high regard because of their capacity to combine aspects of both femininity and masculinity. These historical instances demonstrate the variety of gender manifestations and the acceptance of transgender identities outside of the binary paradigm in culture.

Developments in the fields of psychology, medicine, and sociology have an impact on the understanding of transgender identity that is currently available. Remarkably, major mental health organisations, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA), have recognised the concept of "gender dysphoria." The discomfort people feel when their gender identity and the sex assigned to them at birth are not consistent is known as gender dysphoria. This acknowledgement highlights the significance of taking a nuanced approach to transgender identity and stresses the inherent and valid nature of gender variance. A process known as "transition," which entails matching their gender presentation with their affirmed gender identity, characterises the path of transgender people. A transition can involve social, medical, or legal aspects, among other types. Changes in name, pronouns, attire, and other external gender expressions are examples of social transition, which helps people portray their identities in a more genuine way. Hormone replacement treatment (HRT) is one kind of medical transition that can cause physical changes in accordance with one's affirmed gender. Another option for certain individuals is sex reassignment surgery (SRS). The process of altering identifying documents to match one's affirmed gender is known as legal transition. Given that people can identify with a variety of gender identities outside of the dichotomy of male and female, it is critical to acknowledge the diversity within the transgender community. Those whose gender identities defy conventional binary classifications use terminology like agender, non-binary, genderqueer, and genderfluid. These identities subvert social norms, which calls into question the established conventions that have historically disadvantaged people of colour.

Examining the social obstacles transgender people frequently encounter is also necessary to comprehend their experiences. Around the world, there is still violence, stigma, and discrimination against transgender people. According to the National Transgender Discrimination Survey conducted in the United States, transgender people experience significant rates of discrimination, including housing insecurity, healthcare inequities, and unemployment. The Trans Murder Monitoring Project records cases of transgender people being killed or subjected to violence around the world because of their gender identity. These depressing figures highlight the critical need for public awareness-raising, education, and advocacy in order to break down the structural barriers that support violence and prejudice against transgender individuals.

The accomplishments, tenacity, and courage of transgender people must be highlighted while society struggles with changing gender stereotypes. Transgender individuals have made noteworthy contributions to a wide range of disciplines, including the arts, sciences, politics, and activism. Their inspirational tales of overcoming hardship, standing up for equality, and claiming their identities upend stereotypes and spur change.

In gist, there are many historical, cultural, medical, and sociological facets to the knowledge of transgender people. Promoting inclusivity and equality requires addressing the difficulties faced by transgender people in modern society, recognising the range of gender identities outside of the binary, and appreciating the historical relevance of gender-diverse individuals. With this investigation, we hope to lay a thorough foundation for future research on transgender identities, experiences, and the movement to make the world a more accepting and encouraging place for all people, regardless of gender identity.

Medical Reasons behind transgender people being the way they are:-

Investigating the intricate interactions between genetic, hormonal, and neurological variables is necessary to comprehend the medical underpinnings of the transgender experience. It's critical to recognise that being transgender is a deeply embedded component of one's identity rather than a choice. According to scientific studies, there are several factors that contribute to the emergence of gender identity, including both genetic and hormonal influences throughout foetal development.

The function of genetics is one important field of study. Certain genetic markers have been linked to transsexual identification through studies. Variations in the Androgen Receptor gene, have been linked to a susceptibility for transgender identification, according to research from experts at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) (Fernandez Rosa et al., 2014). This shows that an individual's gender identity is shaped by hereditary characteristics, which impact their sense of self from a young age. Another important factor in the formation of gender identity is hormones. The exposure of developing fetuses to sex hormones, such as oestrogen and testosterone, is critical in determining the neurological and physiological characteristics of gender. These hormones drive sexual differentiation in the brain, and disruptions or imbalances at this crucial time can lead to a mismatch between a person's biological sex and gender identity (Hines Melissa, 2011). Further understanding of the biological foundation of transgender identity can be gained from studies on the structure and function of their brains. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) was employed in a study at the Netherlands Institute for Neuroscience to look at the brain anatomy of transgender people, and the results showed patterns different from those of their cisgender counterparts (Burke Sarah M. et al., 2017). In particular, the researchers discovered differences in the connection and size of specific brain regions linked to gender identity, lending credence to the theory that transgender people might have unique neurological characteristics.

It's important to remember that gender identification has profound neurological roots. The way the brain works and is structured is fundamental to a person's sense of self, which includes gender identification. Gender dysphoria, or the distress caused by the mismatch between one's assigned sex and gender identity, is recognised as a medical condition by major medical and psychiatric organisations, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA). This highlights the importance of the brain in understanding transgender identity. Furthermore, the dynamic interplay between genes and environment in determining gender identity is highlighted by new developments in the field of epigenetics. Epigenetic modifications are alterations in gene function resulting from exposure to hormones and environmental stimuli, without changing the underlying DNA sequence. According to a research in the journal Nature Communications, transgender people's genes have different epigenetic changes than cisgender people's, indicating that epigenetic factors may play a part in the formation of gender identity. Even though research into the biological foundations of transgender identity is still ongoing, it is crucial to approach this information with caution and respect for the varied and complex experiences of transgender people. Hence, a complex interaction of genetic, hormonal, and neurological elements underlies the medical explanations of transgender identity. Genetic indicators, hormonal effects throughout foetal development, and unique brain structures and functions linked to transgender identity have all been found through scientific studies.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(De Cuypere Griet et al., 2006) have revealed in their paper titled 'Long-term follow-up: Psychosocial outcome of Belgian transsexuals after sex reassignment surgery' that even after a longer time, SRS continues to be a helpful therapy for transsexuals, mostly due to its beneficial effects on gender dysphoria. Even after a few years, they are content, have no regrets, and are able to socially adjust. In contrast to earlier studies, we did not find any discernible differences in terms of well-being, complaints, or social life between males and females. Males are more likely than females to attempt suicide as a coping mechanism for stress. Compared to people without a prior psychiatric diagnosis, those with pre-operative psychiatric issues complain more and are less satisfied with SRS. Positive prognostic factors include sexual orientation, being younger while applying for SRS, and having an attractive physical appearance. The psychological outcome improves with improved surgical results. After SRS, a larger percentage of patients can benefit from psychiatric treatment, and this should be promoted. (Colizzi Marco et al., 2014) have mentioned that the current study compared mental suffering associated with the hormonal intervention in a one-year follow-up evaluation and assessed the presence of mental illnesses or symptoms in transsexual patients. Prior to and around 12 months after beginning the hormonal therapy, they looked into 118 patients. To identify significant mental illnesses and functional impairment, they employed the SCID-I. To assess self-reported anxiety and depression, they employed the Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale (SAS) and the Zung Self-Rating Depression Scale (SDS). The global psychological symptoms that the participants self-reported were evaluated using the Symptom Checklist 90-R (SCL-90-R). A mental comorbidity on DSM-IV-TR axis I was seen in 17 patients (14%). The mean SAS score was higher than average at the time of enrollment. With the exception of the SCL-90-R anxiety subscale, the mean SDS and SCL-90-R scores fell within the normal range. Patients with statistically significant differences reported reduced SAS, SDS, and SCL-90-R ratings after receiving treatment. Before beginning the hormonal treatment, a considerably higher proportion of patients had psychological distress and functional impairment than did so after 12 months (50% vs. 17% for anxiety; 42% vs. 23% for depression; 24% vs. 11% for psychological symptoms; 23% vs. 10% for functional impairment). The majority of transsexual patients did not exhibit psychiatric comorbidity, according to the results, indicating that transsexualism is not always linked to serious concomitant psychiatric conditions. However, psychological symptoms, functional impairment, and subthreshold anxiety/depression appeared to be linked to the illness. Additionally, individuals who received treatment reported decreased mental distress. Consequently, the mental health of transsexual patients appeared to benefit with hormonal therapy. (Lawrence Anne A., 2003) has revealed that his study looked at variables related to satisfaction or regret after sex reassignment surgery (SRS) in 232 male-to-female transsexual patients treated by a single surgeon using a standardised method between 1994 and 2000. All of the participants had undergone surgery at least a year prior, and they answered written questions on their attitudes and experiences. The vast majority of participants expressed satisfaction with their SRS results and noted that SRS had significantly raised their standard of living. Only a handful indicated even occasional sorrow, and none expressed unequivocal regret. Unsatisfactory surgical outcomes in terms of appearance and functionality were most significantly linked to discontent. The majority of transsexual typology factors, including sexual orientation, age at surgery, and prior marriage or parenthood, did not significantly correlate with subjective results. There

was no correlation found between meeting the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association's minimum eligibility requirements for SRS and better subjective results. For predicting postoperative satisfaction or regret, the physical outcomes of SRS may be more significant than preoperative variables like transsexual typology or adherence to prescribed treatment plans. (Weyers Steven et al., 2009) have revealed that the most severe kind of gender identity disorder is transsexualism, and the majority of transsexuals eventually get sex reassignment surgery (SRS). This includes the removal of the male reproductive organs, the development of a clitoris and neovagina, and frequently the implantation of breast prosthesis in transsexual women. After transition, studies have indicated that sexual satisfaction is high. Long-term follow-up data on sexual, mental, and physical functioning are, nevertheless, scarce. to compile data on the health-promoting behaviours, contentment with gender-related physical traits, and mental, physical, and sexual well-being of transsexual women who have undergone SRS.

(Murad Mohammad Hassan et al., 2010) have emphasised that to ascertain the benefits of hormonal therapy administered to people with GID as part of sex reassignment, they conducted a thorough assessment of the literature. They located 28 trials that showed improvements in gender during a reasonably extended follow-up period. A decrease in suicide rates, an increase in sexual pleasure, dysphoria, psychological functioning and comorbidities, and an overall improvement in life quality. Those who exhibit homosexual tendencies and transsexual expressions at an early age may fare better. People who already suffer from psychopathology typically have a worse prognosis. There is insufficient evidence to imply that Male to Female transsexuals will fare worse than their Female to Male counterparts. (Dhejne Cecilia et al., 2011) have mentioned that after sex reassignment, transsexuals are far more likely than the general population to die, act suicidally, and experience psychiatric morbidity. According to our research, sex reassignment may not be enough to treat transsexualism, even though it can lessen gender dysphoria. This should lead to better mental and physical care for this patient population following sex reassignment. (Buncamper Marlon E et al., 2015) have stated that their study shows that the group of transsexual women is extremely happy with the functional and aesthetic outcomes of neovaginoplasty employing penile skin inversion, despite having relatively low FSFI ratings. (Lawrence Anne A, 2005) in her study has revealed that Male-to-female (MtF) transsexuals' sexual attitudes and behaviours have not been thoroughly studied. The 232 MtF patients of one physician who participated in this study provided information about their sexuality both before and after sex reassignment surgery (SRS). Utilising self-administered questionnaires, data were gathered. At the time of SRS, participants ranged in age from 18 to 70 years old, with a mean age of 44. 54% of subjects reported being more attracted to women than males prior to SRS, whereas 9% reported being more attracted to men. These percentages were 25% and 34%, respectively, after SRS. Prior to SRS and in the 12 months following SRS, the participants' median numbers of sexual partners were 6 and 1, respectively. (Djordjevic Miroslav L. et al., 2009) have stressed on the fact that a quick and easy one-stage operation is metoidioplasty. In the case of female transsexuals who prefer not to engage in sexual activity, it can be a substitute for complete phalloplasty. Additionally, it serves as a starting point when further augmentation phalloplasty is necessary. (Gooren Louis J.G. & Giltay Eric J., 2008) have revealed that certain cardiovascular risk factor markers changed to a more negative risk profile, but not all of them. Because of this, androgen effects on cardiovascular risk markers are not always detrimental, and it is logical to

anticipate that these effects won't be bad at the considerably lower dosages that are appropriate for giving to women. (Hage J.J & Karim R.B., 2000) have revealed that patients with gender dysphoria who are not transsexual are teaching us that gender is not necessarily binary and that identities can change over time. Identity and behaviour frequently show startling inconsistencies with accepted notions. GIDNOS requires us to construct or remove normal primary and secondary sex characteristics in order to create some sort of bisexed, intersexed, or asexual phenotype, thereby transcending the binary concepts of sex and gender, as opposed to optimally changing the patient's physical appearance to that of the opposite sex. (Monstrey Stan et al., 2008) have shown that the algorithm takes into account skin elasticity and extra skin when determining the best procedure for subcutaneous mastectomy. Secondary aesthetic adjustments are commonly necessary despite the low prevalence of complications and great patient satisfaction. (Wiepjes Chantal M. et al., 2018) have shown that in recent decades, there has been a notable surge in the number of individuals seeking professional assistance for gender identity concerns. The proportion of patients who regretted having a gonadectomy stayed low and did not trend higher.

Complex Interplay between Gender and Sex in Transgender Individuals:-

The intricate interplay of biological, psychological, and social elements underlies the multifaceted phenomenon of the complex interaction of sex and gender non-alignment in transgender individuals. It is important to understand the difference between gender, which is a deeply established and self-identified experience of being male, female, or another gender entirely, and sex, which a classification is given at birth based on physical traits, in order to fully appreciate this intricacy. The mismatch between a transgender person's gender identification and the sex given to them at birth causes them to go on a journey of self-affirmation and self-discovery that defies conventional binary conceptions.

Both sex and gender identity are greatly influenced by biological factors, such as hormones during foetal development and heredity. Genetic markers linked to transgender identity have been found recently, offering new perspectives on the biology underlying gender variance. As an illustration of the complex interaction between genetics and gender identity, a study conducted at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) discovered polymorphisms in the Androgen Receptor gene connected to transgender identification (Fernandez Rosa et al., 2014). This supports the idea that being transgender is a basic component of one's identity rather than a choice by implying that genetic variables play a role in the propensity for a transgender identity.

The intricate relationship between sex and gender identity is further complicated by hormonal effects throughout foetal development. The differentiation of the brain and other physiological features associated with gender are influenced by exposure to sex hormones, such as oestrogen and testosterone. A person's gender identification and given sex at birth may not line up if there are any changes or abnormalities in hormone exposure throughout this crucial time (Hines Melissa, 2011). This highlights the biological foundations of transgender identity and emphasises how crucial it is to take hormonal and genetic factors into account while attempting to comprehend the intricate relationship between sex and gender non-alignment.

Sex and gender identity are intricately intertwined, with the brain serving as a key organ in the regulation of both the physical and psychological components of gender.

Neurological research employing methods like magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has uncovered anatomical and functional variations in transgender people's brains. According to a study done at the Netherlands Institute for Neuroscience, transgender people have unique neurological characteristics because of differences in the size and connection of specific brain areas linked to gender identity (Burke Sarah M. et al., 2017). These results emphasise the importance of the brain's function in determining gender identity as well as the intricate interactions between neurological variables and the assignment of sex-based gender identity.

The idea of gender dysphoria emphasises even more how sex and gender non-alignment are intricately intertwined. The discomfort people feel as a result of the mismatch between their assigned sex at birth and their gender identity is known as gender dysphoria, according to mental health organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA). The recognition of gender dysphoria as a medical disorder highlights the psychological aspects of the intricate relationship between gender identity and sex and the significant influence this has on a person's mental health and overall wellbeing.

Social and cultural factors also have an impact on the complexity of the relationship between sex and gender non-alignment in transgender people. Transgender people may face obstacles in their quest for acceptance and acknowledgment due to societal standards and expectations, which are frequently based on binary gender conceptions. The suffering that transgender people endure may be made worse by discrimination, stigmatisation, and a lack of understanding in society, which highlights the necessity of a thorough and inclusive approach to gender diversity.

Legal and policy frameworks further complicate the intricate relationship between sex and gender non-alignment. A vital component of validating transgender people's identities is the legal acknowledgment of gender identity through the modification of identification documents. Legal and legislative issues, which represent the larger social framework in which transgender people negotiate their identities, have an impact on access to gender-affirming healthcare, such as hormone therapy and gender confirmation surgery.

In summary, a complex interplay of genetic, hormonal, neurological, psychological, and social factors contributes to the complicated interaction of sex and gender non-alignment in transgender individuals. The biological foundation, which includes hormone effects and genetic indicators, emphasises the fundamental aspects of transgender identity. Neurological research highlights the role the brain plays in determining gender by demonstrating certain brain characteristics linked to gender identification. The idea of gender dysphoria draws attention to the intricate interaction's psychological components. The social, cultural, legal, and legislative contexts have an impact on the complex nature of gender non-alignment. Understanding this complexity is crucial to helping transgender people on their particular paths of self-discovery and identity affirmation by providing them with understanding, acceptance, and support.

Meaning and Purpose behind Sex Reassignment Surgery:-

A medical procedure called sex reassignment surgery (SRS), sometimes referred to as gender confirmation surgery or gender-affirming surgery, is something that some transgender people seek out in order to match their physical attributes to their gender identification. The main objective of SRS is to lessen gender dysphoria, a disturbing psychiatric disorder that results from a person's gender identity not matching their

given sex at birth. By bringing a person's body into harmony with their gender identity, this revolutionary surgery seeks to promote congruence and enhance overall wellbeing.

Beyond the obvious physical changes, sex reassignment surgery represents a significant milestone in the self-affirmation and self-discovery paths of transgender people. An individual's desire for authenticity and congruence with their genuine gender identity is reflected in their deeply personal decision to undergo SRS. Though not everyone who identifies as transgender chooses to have SRS, for those who do, it's frequently an essential part of their overall process of gender affirmation.

Resolving gender dysphoria-related suffering is one of the main goals of sex reassignment surgery. Psychiatric majors like the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) acknowledge gender dysphoria as a legitimate medical illness. It includes the psychological and emotional suffering resulting from a person's gender identity not matching their assigned sex at birth (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). By allowing an individual's physical appearance to correspond with their gender identity, SRS provides a chance to reduce this suffering and pave the way for a more authentic and satisfying existence.

Depending on the confirmed gender of the patient, different physical components of sex reassignment surgery apply. Vaginoplasty, which creates a neovagina using scrotal and penile tissue, is one treatment that may be performed on transgender women (assigned male at birth but identifying as female). A procedure to become more feminine may also include breast augmentation. Men who identify as transgender despite being designated as female at birth may have neophallus creation treatments like phalloplasty or metoidioplasty, as well as chest surgery such as mastectomy. By attempting to match a person's physical attributes to their gender identification, these surgical procedures can promote a more congruent sense of self.

Acknowledging that sex reassignment surgery is a highly personal decision and that not all transgender people seek out or want these operations is crucial. Medical factors, societal norms, and personal preferences are just a few of the factors that can affect an individual's decision regarding SRS. Furthermore, some people choose treatments that are in line with their unique requirements and objectives and undergo particular gender-affirming operations instead of undergoing full-sex reassignment surgery.

When debating the significance and intent of sex reassignment surgery, it is imperative to take the larger social context into account. Societal expectations and standards regarding gender identity can make transgender people's suffering worse. The difficulties faced by people seeking SRS may be made worse by stigmatisation, discrimination, and a lack of knowledge. Thus, sex reassignment surgery serves a larger goal than just helping the patient; it also aims to change how society views gender and promote greater acceptance and inclusivity.

In summary, sex reassignment surgery is a significant milestone in the gender-affirming path of transgender people, and for them, it has great significance. By bringing a person's physical attributes into line with their acknowledged gender, SRS aims to reduce gender dysphoria and promote general wellbeing by helping the individual feel more congruent. It is imperative to acknowledge the profoundly subjective essence of this choice and the varied trajectories individuals may pursue in their quest for gender affirmation. The way that society and medicine see transgender

healthcare is changing, and it is important to provide an environment that is welcoming and encouraging while also honouring the autonomy and dignity of transgender people as they explore their identities and self-awareness.

METHODOLOGY

For executing this study, qualitative analysis has been done with the in-depth interviews from 06 transgender people living in Patna, Bihar. The interview was centered around their identity they had by birth and the identity they had changed into after opting for Sex Reassignment Surgery. The objective was to understand the difficulties, challenges and outcome they face pre and post sex reassignment surgery. Hence these discussions.

Respondent's Profile

Changed Name	Age	Birth Gender	Gender after SRS
Roohi	26	Man	Transwoman
Anurag	31	Woman	Transman
Shikhar	32	Woman	Transman
Ratan	28	Woman	Transman
Manasi	27	Man	Transwoman
Rakesh	30	Woman	Transman

❖ **Roohi (Changed name)**, a transwoman was asked about her experience of being the woman now and enjoying the perks of being the women. The sole objective to start this conversation and go in detail regarding the same was to getting the correct information about the pros and cons of sex reassignment surgery from the person who has actually experienced it. Roohi, then started explaining her experience and shared the layered information regarding this.

She stated that – “I had a very personal and life-changing experience when I started the process of having sex reassignment surgery. I knew it would be a difficult and demanding process; therefore, I did not make the decision to align my physical body with my real gender identity lightly. The actual operation was a difficult process with inherent risks that was the result of years of both physical and psychological suffering. Still, I was determined to overcome the obstacles because of my resilience. I came out of the experience with a strong sense of honesty and self-acceptance after enduring the physical agony and facing social stigmas.

I felt an incalculable sense of liberty following surgery. I now live genuinely as a woman, embracing my true self and appreciating the ability to express who I am without limitations. Even though the path has been difficult, it has helped me to overcome social expectations and come out stronger, happier, and more confident. It's a celebration of the bravery to live life independently of others and the victory of self-discovery. The suffering and dangers served as stepping stones to a life that was more satisfying, and now I relish the happiness that comes from being the person I've always known myself to be”.

Hence, here the surgery proved to be liberating and exhilarating and the incidence proved to be life changing for Roohi in a very positive way.

❖ **Anuraag (Changed name)**, a transman, residing in Patna, similarly shared his experience of being the way he is now and how the surgery proved beneficial not only for him but also for his family.

According to Anurag,- “Having sex reassignment surgery to change my gender identity from woman to man has been a major life turning point for me. It has opened up a world of advantages that have favourably impacted many areas of my life. My physical identification now matches my true gender, which has given me a renewed sense of confidence and congruence and allowed me to concentrate more on my academic goals. My transition has given me the freedom to pursue my education without the burden of gender dysphoria, enabling me to achieve academic success. Moreover, the benefits go beyond my academic path because it has made it easier for me to transition smoothly into the business world. Adopting my true self has given me a strong sense of self-assurance, perseverance, and resolve—qualities that are highly prized in the workplace. My job success has resulted from this newfound authenticity, allowing me to make a significant contribution and providing a secure financial basis for my family.

My family's understanding and support have been invaluable during this life-changing experience, and as I make my way through the corporate world, I'm not only achieving my own goals but also keeping my promise to elevate and support my family. Beyond just making me feel better about myself, sex reassignment surgery has impacted my academic and professional paths and, in the end, improved the health and well-being of the people I care about”.

❖ **Shikhar (Changed name)**, a transman has shared some horrible experience regarding the journey of her sex reassignment surgery and how the scary experiences has induced her to be suicidal at some point of her life, which she somehow escaped, and now she is thankful to her God.

According to Shikhar- “My terrifying encounter in a high-crime area while looking for sex reassignment surgery, which plunged me into a dark pit of vulnerability and hopelessness, has forever changed my life. I was duped by dishonest people who took advantage of my weakness and ended up stuck in a circumstance that was totally different from the sincere help I needed on my path to self-awareness. The red-light district, which had at first been portrayed as a heaven for people going through gender transformations, was actually a terrifying experience full of fraud and abuse. In addition to shattering my confidence, the deceitful promises and manipulation I encountered during this horrible event caused me to undergo severe emotional distress and almost consider suicide. The betrayal of looking for comfort and understanding only to become entangled in a dangerous and exploitative atmosphere caused scars that didn't seem to heal.

Seeking assistance from mental health specialists and encouraging friends and family members throughout the dark times proved to be the lifeline that progressively lifted me out of the abyss. Despite leaving me scarred, the traumatic event strengthened my resolve to spread the word about the essential need for secure and morally sound support networks for members of the transgender community and about their vulnerability. I work to promote a more caring and safer atmosphere for people travelling the difficult route of gender transition, and I'm dedicated to making sure that others do not fall victim to the same false traps”.

❖ **Ratan (Changed name)**, a transman has disclosed various layers regarding sex reassignment surgery and how this whole procedure has become a taboo of cheating and fraudism, as has been perceived by the transgender community because of their low education and unawareness about what is happening in reality.

They lack the appropriate knowledge of contacting the right person due to which they fell prey of being cheated and frauded by several unauthentic people.

According to Ratan- "Due to my lack of awareness and inadequate education, I was the victim of fraud, which was a sad experience that negatively impacted my path towards sex reassignment surgery. I became entangled in a web of lies and manipulation after placing my trust in the process of looking for help with gender transition. Some unscrupulous people preyed on my ignorance and fragility, taking advantage of my sincere wish to be true to my gender identity.

The deception broke my heart on an emotional level, but it also brought attention to the widespread problem in the transgender world, where many people, including me, are used because there is a dearth of knowledge and understanding. The dishonest practices in the field of sex reassignment surgery consultations disproportionately affect people who might not have the resources or expertise to handle such complex procedures.

This traumatic experience has strengthened my commitment to educating the transgender community about the potential risks and ensuring that others have the knowledge and resources required to make wise decisions. Promoting easily accessible educational and support resources, my goal is to enable people on their path to gender affirmation by creating an atmosphere that values morality and sincere aid. By telling my story, I wish to raise awareness of the difficulties that many members of the transgender community encounter and to contribute to the development of a more secure and knowledgeable environment for people looking for assistance in pursuing authenticity".

❖ **Manasi (Changed name)**, a transwoman has similarly mentioned her view and experience regarding sex reassignment surgery. She has mentioned that how her knowledge and education has saved her from being betrayed by the fraud people in the name of helping them. These people very cunningly manipulated the unaware transgender people and force them to succumb their life like anything and cursing their existence. She has narrated her experience as follows

According to Manasi- "Resilience, education, and the search for authenticity have all played key roles in my transforming quest towards accepting my actual identity as a transwoman. Like many others, I was concerned about the possibility of being duped or taken advantage of when I first started looking into getting sex reassignment surgery. But in the face of possible deception, my dedication to literacy and education proved to be a ray of hope.

Equipped with information, I skillfully traversed the intricacies of the sex reassignment surgery terrain. I carefully investigated and sought information from reliable sources because I was aware of the potential hazards that could lie ahead. This gave me the ability to distinguish between legitimate and dishonest activities, ensuring that the rules of legitimacy and ethics would guide my path to becoming a Manasi. In addition to protecting me from possible exploitation, my literacy was used as a weapon for advocacy within the transgender community. Having seen how vulnerable people with no access to education are, I'm determined to raise awareness and share my knowledge. Through outreach and education programmes, my goal is to enable people to pursue true gender affirmation and make sure they may do so with confidence and clarity.

After making contact with a credible facility that specialised in sex reassignment surgery, I had a great sense of release as I changed from Manav to Manasi. In addition to being a physical transformation, the operation represented a symbolic rebirth that gave me the freedom to live really and unhindered by social norms. As Manasi, I stand as a witness to the transformational power of literacy and education today, fighting for a time when everyone, from all backgrounds, can start their journey towards gender affirmation with hope, security, and the promise of an authentic existence”.

❖ **Rakesh (Changed Name)**, a transman, too has expressed his curiosity of sharing his experience regarding sex reassignment surgery and has applauded the government for being supportive in the best possible way to the transgender community and letting them being the way they are or they choose to express themselves. Regarding this, he has given his comments as follows:-

According to Rakesh, - “For transgender people like me, the steadfast backing of governments in granting access to sex reassignment surgery has ushered in a new era of freedom and self-expression. The recognition of gender identity as an essential component of human rights has made room for laws and programmes that actively encourage and assist the transition to gender affirmation.

In my own experience, the government's commitment to inclusivity and acceptance of a variety of gender identities has greatly aided my ability to express myself truthfully. In addition to removing financial barriers, the availability of accessible and reasonably priced sex reassignment procedures has also helped people feel more validated and accepted by society. Because of the government's aggressive efforts to de-stigmatise transgender experiences, people can now pursue their gender identity without worrying about prejudice or marginalisation.

Moreover, one revolutionary component of the government's assistance has been the legal acceptance of gender identity. The capacity to amend identifying papers to reflect one's gender affirmation has significant effects on social acceptability and one's sense of self-worth. This simplifies a number of daily tasks and conveys a strong message of respect and acknowledgement from the highest echelons of government.

The dedication of the government to education and awareness initiatives has been crucial in breaking down prejudices and promoting a more diverse and inclusive community. Governments help create a culture that values diversity and upholds everyone's right to live freely by actively combating societal conventions and biases regarding transgender identities.

Government assistance also goes beyond surgery; it includes mental health treatments, anti-discrimination laws, and full healthcare coverage. Together, these actions establish an ecosystem that supports transgender people's holistic well-being and upholds their rights to mental, emotional, and physical health.

I can personally attest to the significant influence that receiving this kind of government assistance has had on my life. Being able to express myself for who I truly am without social pressures has improved my own wellbeing and given me the ability to make a more significant contribution to society. I am a citizen of a country whose government embraces and acknowledges the multiplicity of gender identities, creating an atmosphere in which everyone may prosper regardless of their gender journey. I am not just a person who has had sex reassignment surgery. The continued dedication to promoting inclusivity and transgender rights is a ray of hope for a time when each

person can fully embrace their human rights and navigate their gender identification with dignity”.

Gist of the Qualitative Study done:-

The transgender community's stories of sex reassignment surgery are varied and capture a range of emotions, including happiness, vulnerability, exploitation, and thankfulness. Every narrative serves as a distinct illustration of the difficulties involved in the quest for social acceptability and self-affirmation.

The choice to have sex reassignment surgery is often filled with a deep sense of joy and liberation for transgender people. The sense of authenticity and fulfilment that results from being able to physically match their gender identity is unmatched. These people are thankful that they have the freedom to live a life that is in harmony with their deepest selves, free from the pressures of conformity to society or the burden of dysphoria. The procedure turns into a life-changing event that is essential to leading a life that truly feels like theirs.

But among these stories of happiness and strength, there's also a darker side that's characterised by deceit and exploitation. In their quest for sex reassignment surgery, some transgender people become vulnerable to fraud and exploitation due to a lack of understanding or education. Those who are seeking gender affirmation are vulnerable, and unscrupulous people take advantage of this, often leading them down roads of financial abuse and dishonesty. Being deceived not only causes financial damage but also produces long-lasting emotional scars that erode trust and compound the difficulties transgender people already encounter.

People have horrifying stories of being duped into going to dangerous places under the pretence of having sex reassignment surgery in certain upsetting situations. These tales of people falling victim to dishonest actors show how extremely vulnerable people who are navigating the complex terrain of gender transition are. The deceit contributes to the general climate of suspicion and anxiety by endangering transgender people's physical safety as well as causing severe psychological suffering.

Those who have benefited from government assistance have expressed thanks and hope among these difficulties. Aware of the fundamental rights of transgender people, governments around the world have moved to lower the cost and increase accessibility to sex reassignment surgery. Awareness campaigns, inclusive healthcare practices, and legislative actions all help to foster an atmosphere that supports and honours transgender people as they pursue their true selves.

There are several reasons to be grateful to governments. First of all, transgender people gain power when their gender identity is legally recognised, since it enables them to amend identifying documents to reflect their confirmed gender. The consequences of this seemingly mundane act for social acceptance and individual dignity are significant. Second, the government's efforts to make sex reassignment surgery financially accessible break down financial barriers, making these necessary operations available to people from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Thirdly, in order to promote a more accepting and understanding society, government-backed education and awareness initiatives are essential in questioning cultural conventions and prejudices.

It is clear from navigating the transgender community's narratives that there are a wide range of complex experiences related to sex reassignment surgery. Every narrative adds to the rich tapestry of transgender experiences, highlighting everything from the delight of self-discovery and authenticity to the dangers of exploitation and deficiency. Some thank the government for their newfound freedoms, while others express their pain at being taken advantage of or deceived. The collective sharing of these experiences highlights the difficulties transgender people face as well as the need for ongoing support, advocacy, and education to guarantee that the path to gender affirmation is one of safety, empowerment, and authenticity.

CONCLUSION

Sex reassignment surgery (SRS) has evolved as an important component of gender-affirming care for transgender people, allowing them to match their physical appearance to their gender identity. Transgender people find considerable benefits from SRS when used with caution and in conjunction with comprehensive psychological and medical examinations. Studies have demonstrated improved mental health outcomes, quality of life, and body image satisfaction among individuals with SRS. For many transgender people, SRS is an important step towards self-realisation and honesty. However, we must approach SRS with caution and adhere to established criteria to achieve the best results and minimise potential hazards. Comprehensive pre-operative examinations, psychological assistance, and continued post-operative care are all essential components of the SRS process, assisting individuals with the physical, emotional, and social elements of gender change. Furthermore, access to competent and affirming healthcare practitioners who are familiar with transgender health issues is critical to ensuring that people receive adequate care throughout the surgical process. While SRS is not the best option for every transgender person, it can be a life-changing and affirming event that benefits their general well-being and sense of self.

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All techniques in studies involving human subjects followed the institution's ethical guidelines. The study was conducted while carrying out the data collection process for the research; therefore, prior consent was obtained from the Department of Humanities and Social Science, NIT Patna, as well as the respondents who were contacted during this study.

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Informed consent was obtained from all the individual respondents before executing this study.

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