

Transsexuals essay

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Transsexuals Societies are experiencing a drastic change in rituals, policies and beliefs. Gender based issues and sexual aspects of different genders were considered to be a stigma in the society. In today's world these issues are discussed freely and people have broadened their horizon of thinking.

In this paper we would discuss the issues related to transsexuals and how they are portrayed in different cultures. Furthermore, a cause and treatment analysis is used to identify the causes and treatments associated with 'Transsexualism' (Raymond). Introduction Transsexual can be defined as a person who is transgendered and wants to change his/her gender and sex on permanent basis in order to live in a new sexual status (Heath). It is basically a condition in which an individual experiences discomfort because of his/her desires to become an element of opposite sex. Medical diagnosis is made if an individual feels impaired functioning and elements of distress in the process of gender identification. In the late 90's this issue was stigmatized by many cultures and traditions but in the current era people are changing their preferences and in the western culture people are recognizing this issue due to certain aspects like sexual revolution and medical surgeries. Still this issue remains to be a controversy because people show prejudice and discriminating behavior towards transsexuals.

Similarly, certain cultures and religious beliefs are against it. Certain tribes in Latin America consider the transsexuals as two-spirit people (Meyerowitz). Many forms of expression are associated with homosexuality. The psychological and emotional conception of this phenomenon is related to an aspect that sexual gratification would be in some sexual activity with the gender having the same sex (Meyerowitz). The phenomenon of cross-

dressings cannot be linked with Transsexualism because just changing the outer self and wearing makeup cannot transform a male to a female. Medical alterations in Transsexualism People who are transsexuals sometimes desire to alter their bodies through medical treatments and these medical treatments and surgeries are referred as sex reassignment therapy (Brown and Rounsley). This transformational phase from one gender to another gender is known as the phase of transition and this would take several years. Because of its expensive nature many transsexuals do not opt for this reassignment therapy.

Individuals who do not opt for this therapy are known as 'pre-operational' and those who opt for this therapy are known as 'post-operational' (Heath). Multiple procedures and sessions are required in a proper sex-reassignment surgery. In a male to female transsexual surgery the penis is inverted to form a vagina and the testicles are removed from the body. Similarly, in a female to male transsexual surgery the penis is constructed and then it is attached to the body (Brown and Rounsley). Transsexualism in different cultures Transsexualism is accepted to a certain extent in non-western cultures and before the Islamic revolution in Iran this issue was never addressed officially by the government of Iran. However, in the mid 1980's individuals with transsexual attributes were recognized by the government and they were allowed to undertake the sex reassignment therapy. Brazil and Thailand show similar kind of acceptance to transsexuals. Thailand is a country that shows maximum amount of pervasiveness to transsexuals.

That is the reason why there are many surgeons in Thailand that who specialize in sex reassignment surgery. Magnus Hirschfield and Harry

Benjamin both agreed that transsexuals can be defined as a form of neurological intersex (Heath). People are becoming transsexuals in western countries like Netherlands, United States etc. Transsexualism is considered as a taboo in developing countries of the world and people of these countries describe this phenomenon as a disease, mental illness, psychological problem and a conditional lifestyle. Transsexual people are generally referred as a collective pronoun and they are usually considered as a targeted gender. People who are transsexuals feel that other people must understand this issue and they must understand the fact that this phenomenon has nothing to do with sexual orientation. Criticism on Transsexuals Many scholars and medical doctors believe that the entry of male to female transsexuals to just women only created a scenario in which women feel violated. Janice Raymond in her book *The Transsexual empire* in 1979 argued that men should remain men and they must take the challenge to society and the fact that what is makes to be a male.

People in 1960's and 70's that changed their gender and become a transsexual were previously living as gay men who apparently changed into heterosexual women. April Ashley was considered as the first British transsexual who was figured out by the media. She was a famous underwear model but once her friend disclosed her identity to the press she even can't find a job in a coffee shop (Raymond).

The biggest criticism on transsexuals was raised when Thomas Beatie give birth to a child. Beatie used a frozen sperm to impregnate himself and he becomes the nation's first "pregnant father" (Trebay). Religious scholars

and people from different walks of life criticized this event and raised their voice about this issue.

Transgendered people are prejudiced in the society because they are affecting the religious and cultural heritage of many societies and that is the reason why they are alienated from others. Similarly, the negative consequences of sex reassignment therapy have increased the level of criticism on transsexuals. Since, it is considered as a disease in many societies therefore the label of diagnosis is used to obtain sex reassignment theory.

But, people who are diagnosed with a gender identity disorder in certain cases have no desire for sex reassignment (Coleman, Bockting and Kirk). Furthermore, the increased usage of the word disorder with transsexuals has resulted in developing a mindset among them that there is something really wrong with them. Issues related to Transsexualism People who are transsexual sometimes regret their decision of transition. In number of cases they transform back to their original gender. Critics believe that after the transitions phase the individual face problems like depression, anxiety etc (Ekins). Similarly, a fear of being stereotyped in the society is always present in transsexuals.

Most of the people who are labeled as transsexuals are quite modest about their bodies and they are found in every walk of life. Most of the transsexuals live in stealth because they believe that they would not be accepted by the society. Sometimes sex reassignment therapy results in infertility and in this

scenario these individuals adopt children who are transgendered (Meyerowitz).

Families and friends of transsexuals in many cases are confused because they are not sure what pronoun they have to use. The problem of ‘ he’ or ‘ she’ might seem to be a minute issue but this issue can create serious problems. Transsexualism in many cultures and traditions is linked with lesbians and gays and they often are misinterpreted in most of the societies.

Transsexualism in Today’s worldThe recent studies on transsexuals evaluate their brains and found out that their brains actually resemble the sex they always insisted to be. This study clearly shows that feelings of being a male or a female are set in the brain and they cannot be altered. It can be assumed that these feelings might be developed due to abnormalities in hormones before the birth. This research cannot be treated as a viable source because very few numbers of brains have been examined in this research.

Similarly, upbringing of an individual plays a very important role in this phenomenon. However, criticism and hostility on this issue has reduced a lot but suspicion is still present. Transsexualism is mostly not accepted by women and they feel threatened by transsexuals who are male to female because their space of privacy is in danger.

Furthermore, studies suggest that lesbians that were accepted by the society are living as transsexual and they have transformed themselves to males (Ekins). In the current era people might not face difficulties in changing their gender because the doctors are supportive and interested.

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Similarly people are slowly and gradually accepting this new norm that has entered into our societies. In many countries it is considered illegal to discriminate or harass transsexuals at work or at any other place (Coleman, Bockting and Kirk).

Although the law has admitted this situation and these transsexuals have different rights in the society. But it is difficult for a lay man to understand this confusion on genders. That is the reason why people depict their prejudicial behavior against them and they won't support them.

If a transsexual person is working in an office than its quite obvious that he/she will be targeted through office gossips or sarcastic behavior.

ConclusionTherefore, we can conclude that people from centuries have felt that they can be the members of opposite sex. Many individuals have taken a step ahead and they have transformed their genuine identities. Medical world is used by these individuals to achieve their desired outcomes.

Transsexuals in our current society can enjoy the same level of living like other individuals and laws are present to protect transsexuals from any stereotyping, biasness and unlawful activities.

Transsexualism still is considered as a stigma in the society and people usually associate these transsexuals from psychological patients. In the media they are stereotyped and usually presented as call girls in pornographic works. These individuals are referred as 'shemales' (Raymond) when they aren't undergone through a vaginoplasty. Shemale is usually considered to be an offensive word by many transsexuals. Besides being a social stigma religious scholars of nearly all the major religions of the world

are against this phenomenon and Christians believe that God has created the genders therefore changing the natural gender would clearly be a violation of God's will. There are only two sexes that are male and females and people cannot initiate a new norm just because of the fact that they are not comfortable with their gender. Works Cited Brown, M and C Rounsley. True Selves: Understanding Transsexualism–For Families, Friends, Coworkers, and Helping Professionals .

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