

TRANSGENDERISM, AGENCY AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to those who have suffered and are still suffering from depression. May your mind find peace, as you rediscover yourself, and reestablish your human dignity.

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ABSTRACT

Transgenderism, a condition in which a person's gender identity is different from the person's biological sex at birth, has become a source of philosophical discourse. Previous studies on transgenderism have approached it mainly from the physiological perspective by applying curative measures aimed at realigning a person to their choice of gender. Little attention has however been paid to ontology of being and the place of agency-regarding gender codes and categories. This study was, therefore, designed to interrogate the ontological and agency-regarding issues in transgenderism discourse. This is with a view to determining how these curative measures relate with the individual's personal essence or identity.

John Locke's notion of personal identity, which insists that identity lies in the sameness of continual life located in conscious memory, served as the framework. The interpretive design was used. Texts examined in Ethics included Carol Rovane's *The Bounds of Agency* (TBA), James Doyle and Michele Paludi's *Sex and Gender: The Human Experience*, (SGTHE), Lynn Conways *Vaginoplasty: Male to Female Sex Reassignment Surgery* (VMFSRS), Richard von Krafft-Ebings *Psychopathia sexualis* and Talia Bettcher's *Understanding Transphobia: Authenticity and Sexual Abuse* (UTASA). In Metaphysics, John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (ECHU), John Perry's *The First Night* (FN), Nicholas Fearn's *Philosophy: The Latest Answers to the Oldest Questions* (PLAOQ), Diana Kendall's *Sociology*, and Sharon Brehm and Saul Kassins *Social Psychology* (SP) were interrogated. These texts deal extensively with transgenderism, personal identity and human agency. The philosophical tools of conceptual clarification, criticism and reconstruction were employed.

The SGTHE and VMFSRS reveal that hormonal abnormalities, gender dysphoria and genderphobia translate to the experience of living in a 'trapped body'. *Psychopathia sexualis* and UTASA proffer physiological and surgical attempts to realign a person's body to their choice of gender. The TBA show that people have agency-regarding relations, which interferes in the formation of their self-image and identity. The crisis of agency exposes the individual to different self-enhancing and self-handicapping theories of individuality. This demonstrates that society influence a person's self-image by compelling people to align to gender codes and categories (SCG, LIP). The PLAOQ critically underscores the fundamental issue of personal identity in the determination of how a person endures through time. Whereas the human body plays a significant role in the specification of individuals, identity demands more than bodily attributes (ECHU, FN). Critical intervention revealed that personal identity is innate and that sex change surgeries and other curative measures aimed at realigning the anatomy not only fail in changing a person's identity but often lead to transgender regret, depression and suicide.

Transgenderism implicates ontological and agency-regarding issues of personal identity more than the physiological and curative processes that fail to understand the compelling nature of gender codes and categories.

Keywords: Gender identity disorder, Personal identity, Transgenderism and agency

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The question, “Who am I?”¹ is an inquiry that every human being ought to answer at one point in his or her life. It is a philosophical question that should lead them to self-analysis, as they ponder on their existence. As recent concerns about body presentation and gender identity reveal genderphobia and transgender tendencies, thus necessitating a review of the ancient mind and body question, in a new way, as people are wondering whether they should be identified with minds or their bodies. In the process of self-examination, the vital question used to be “where will I spend eternity?” But the query changed; it is now “with what body will I live on earth?” Is it biological or a surgically enhanced one? The reason for this query is that many people are wondering about the congruence between their minds and their bodies, hence they ask “why or how is my body connected to my mind?”² They also wonder how their minds influence their bodies.

The question is, “does my body mirror my mind?” “Can I influence my mind to reflect my body?” “Can I change my body to reveal my mind?” For many, these speculations reveal emotional conflicts between their minds and their bodies. The lack of proper approach towards addressing the situation can lead to people questioning their identities, boomeranging to sex change surgeries; and this raises many questions, the ethical and metaphysical ones being critical to this work. Attempts at analysing these concerns result in arguments and counter arguments about transgenderism, and such debates, ideas, concepts, and notions could be philosophical, psychological, medical or technological in nature.

In this light, cases like those of Chris Jenner’s (now Caitlyn Jenner) transgender saga, Caster Semenya’s gender status, transgender concerns of “Elizabeth”³, and “Bobrisky”⁴ cross-dressing comes to fore. Therefore, these attempts or acts of changing one’s body, and making one’s body behave in a certain way, necessitates reviews in philosophy.

¹ Nicholas Fearn (2005), *Philosophy: The latest answers to the oldest questions* (London: Atlantic Books). 1-71

² Gary L. Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels and Robert C. Solomon (2004), *Twenty questions: An introduction to Philosophy* (Ohio: Wadsworth Pub), 164.

³ Katie Flesch (2016), <http://abcnews.go.com/transgender/lifestyle>. Accessed on 8/25/2016.

⁴ Bobrisky (2018) Five-photos-bobrisky-made-us-forget-gender. <https://www.36ng.ng> Accessed 2018/01/30/

Transgenderism refers to “the notion of being able to change one’s sex, most radically through surgical intervention, this has increasingly become a part of public awareness and social discourse. The boldness of the gender ideological movement has now brought it to the forefront”⁵. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* defines transgendered individuals as referring to “people who do not conform to prevailing expectations about gender, by presenting and living genders that were not assigned to them at birth or by presenting and living genders in ways that may not be readily intelligible in terms of more traditional conceptions of gender”⁶. Similarly we are told that:

Trans or transgender is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transwoman (male-to-female), transman (female-to-male), transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer⁷.

Transgenderism and related terms engineer different reactions and debates about its rightness or wrongness. There are calls by different bodies, for protection from harm, awareness against stigmatization, and provision of the rights of transgendered persons, an example of such a body is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Organisation. Other views on transgenderism portray terms like genderphobia, that is, fear of performing ones gender expectation. Also, there are accusations of homophobia and counter accusations of gender treachery. The belief is that transgender people ‘rape’ women’s body by attempting to steal their consciousness.

In attempting to resolve the predicaments leading to transgenderism, Ann Fausto-Starlyn argues that ‘two sexes were not enough’. Also Sandra Bem insists that the solution to genderphobia lay with the “expansion of the number of genders”⁸. Margaret Whetherall, on

⁵ www.The National Catholic Bioethics Center/ethicist, (2017) *Brief Statement on Transgenderism*.

⁶ See. The Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy. (2014) metaphysical research’ library of congress catalog. Issn1095-5054.

⁷ <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/gender-identity-and-gender-expression-brochure>

⁸ Charlene L. Muehlenhard (1998), *The importance and danger of sexually aggressive women* (London: Routledge) 27.

the other hand, opines that the gender categories were “flexible, and could be negotiated”⁹, while Judith Butler, advocates for the inclusion of ‘non identity’ in the gender categories.

Is expanding the gender categories the solution to the identity crises? Could just the expansion and addition to the gender categories resolve the incongruence. The feeling of incompetence a person feels in relation to his/her gender? Perhaps, expanding the genders could resolve the problem, since people would no longer bother about fitting in, or struggle to meet some gender expectations. Nevertheless, discourses in transgenderism resurrects the mind and body controversy, as they raise questions about human identity, compelling us to re-examine the connection between mind and body. For instance, am I a mind being or a body being? Must there be congruence between mind and body? And, when there is none, can this connection or disconnection be explained?

Exploring transgenderism necessitates these metaphysical questions, as they impact on personal identity. A very significant question in personal identity is: what should identify a person through time? Philosophically, the idea raises concerns about the real essence of persons. Ontologically, the question compels us to re-examine the idea of being or the notion of personhood. For instance, how can a person become different just by losing a body part? In this discourse many people claim that when they remove a body part, a new being materializes, however, insisting that a new being emerges requires its definition and a compulsory analysis of the connection between both beings, that is its past, present and future.

Theories in personal identity indicate personhood, persistence, population and evidence as common themes addressed in the discourse. However, there are three main arguments in the personal identity debates; they include: psychological approach, somatic approach and anticriterialism. On the one hand, John Locke’s the psychological approach insists that “memory”¹⁰ should serve as the best form of identity through time. He supports his position by proposing a memory switch between the prince and the cobbler, to which he concluded that identity consist in the sameness of consciousness, that “whatever has the consciousness

⁹ Margaret Wetherell (1997), Linguistic repertoires and literary criticism: *New direction for a social Psychology of gender*. Gengen, M. M and Davis, S. N. (Eds) towards a new psychology of Gender (New York: Routledge) 150-167.

¹⁰ Nicholas Fearn (2005), Philosophy: The latest answers to the oldest questions p. 10.

of the present and past actions is the same person to whom they both belong”¹¹. But Locke’s theory failed to answer about how to identify an impersonator. In this light, Thomas Reid shows that the loss of a body part does not affect the person; he claims that the body part is lost but the person remains the same.

On the other hand, John Perry believes that identity is a function of the body, and William Bernard supports the Somatic theory by insisting that a change of body would change a person. To support his position he proposes an experiment, inviting people to submit their bodies to the ‘mad’ scientist whose intent is to torture them, but mercifully he allows a mind switch where it would be Napoleon suffering instead of them. After wondering about the number of people who would take up the offer, Bernard concludes that “we identify more closely with our bodies than our minds”¹². Nevertheless, this theory has a short fall, this can be seen in the parameters for determining dual identity or what psychiatrist call DID (Dissociative Identity Disorder), that is when a strange mind possesses a person’s body or when a person has two more identities. The theory does not also explain how to tell the difference between two people with the same body type, like identical twins and identical siblings. To bridge the gap Fearn Nicholas says “these thoughts experiments shows that while memory, personality, emotions, and other psychological traits may be indicative of personal identity, they are not constitutive of it.”¹³ Hence, he recommends anti-criterialism which acknowledges the relevance of both mind and body in identifying a person through time.

However, the ethical questions cannot be ignored, just as the place of agency, and ‘others’, cannot be overemphasized, which bring to fore the cultural challenge, where what is right differs from one society to the another. The study reveals that the moral evaluation, acceptance, and/ or rejection of transgenderism is culturally subjective, as many societies have dealt with issues of like thoughts in ancient times. Examples abound of ancient and contemporary rendations of transgenderism or people transiting from their biological sex and social gender, like the Katoey or the lady boy, the Zenith, the transvestite, the Mahu and the Bardaches. There are many similar terms in Africa, like the Oronpontonyun, Sango, and Ozakaye.

¹¹ Fearn, (2005)168

¹² Fearn, 9

¹³ Fearn, 10

The cultural subjective approach is revealed, when no one blinks an eye at the ancient cross dressing tendencies associated with Sango, or the historical discovery that Yorubas once had a transgendered Alafin. Yet, many people cannot stand contemporary expressions of transvestism, alter egos, and dual identities, while many developed and developing societies turn a blind eye to the trending issues of alter egos of popular artist like “Nikky Minaj”¹⁴ and “Shakira”¹⁵. These concerns raise many questions, like the metaphysical and ethical ones amongst others. It is apparent that many societies have discreetly dealt with transgender questions, like the Isokos, yet, people who engage in crossdressing, or display dual identity are approached with suspicion, in some other places those who display such tendencies were considered evil practicing “witchcraft”¹⁶.

Therefore, transgenderness raises several concerns about morality, thus necessitating an ethical examination of people practicing transgenderism with unclear motive, many of them need to answer the ethical question about their value consideration, their idea of obligation, the question of benefit and the concern for the natural law, as many strongly believe that there is a ‘sex assigned at birth’.

Ethics explores the values of human conduct, by examining debates about how values were justified or how they were created, and distinguishing ‘what is’, from what ought to be. It brings to fore the need to evaluate individual conducts, analysing the conduct of groups and social morality. Also, it allows a review of the cultural pattern of national and racial groups, as it seeks to explain why people act the way they do. Authority for such actions or reactions, vary from “the will of a deity, to the pattern of nature, or the rule of reason”¹⁷. In this wise, when confronted with the consequences of their choices, many transgendered people cite their right to choice and others appeal to nature.

It is important to note the exploration of sociological and social psychological approach to the notion of self and self-schemas, as man is a social animal and gender is perceived as a social construction that could be interpreted culturally. Many societies are organised on

¹⁴ [www.http//udiscovermusic.com](http://udiscovermusic.com) Accessed on 10/29/2018.

¹⁵ [www.http//udiscovermusic.com](http://udiscovermusic.com) Accessed on 10/29/2018

¹⁶ James Welch (1934), The Isoko tribe of Africa, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Cambridge University Press. Apr., 1934), 160-173

¹⁷ Julian Baggini. and Jeremy Stangroom (2005), *Great thinkers a-z: 2500 years of thought that shaped the western world*, (New York: MJF Bks) 10.

differentiated scales, including the sexist male/female, age and organisational leadership. Hence socio-psychological theory emphasises that the idea of personhood defers from one culture to another, that while individuals from more developed world were very independent, those from Latin America, Africa and Arabs were inter-dependent. Hence, the cultural perspective become relevant, not just for comparative analysis but because many documented view on transgenderism stem from the more developed world. Consequently, a more rounded perspective led to the introduction of African view, thus anticipating how African indigenous societies were likely to perceive and approach the idea of sex change. As many Africans believe in determinism, for them biological sex is destined by the gods.

However, Peter Coetzee in *African Philosophy Reader* suggests that African philosophy should be done with “strategic cultural particularism approach”¹⁸. By this, he means that all the different African cultures should not be grouped together. So, instead of asking how an African would handle transgenderism? The question should be how the Isokos approach transgenderism, thus, the importance of Isoko ethnographical approach. The “ethnographical research”¹⁹ reveals that Isokos are not conversant with the concept of transgenderism, instead they are familiar with its synonymous notion ‘*Ozakaye*’ (male/female), that is intersex. Here, speculations and conclusions were drawn from Isoko metaphysical world view, gleaned from the work of James Welch. In his article of 1934 “*Isoko Tribe of African*”²⁰, Welch claimed that the Isokos, just like the ancient people of Calabar, were used to the killing of twins, the reason was that they saw unclear phenomenon as an abomination or witchcraft, especially, when it was outside the normal occurrence, like hermaphroditism. The research insists that those who were aware of “*Ozakaye*”²¹, viewed it as an aberration. Other people called them the double gender, that is male/female or female/male depending on the more dominant biological feature and character traits. Hence, in this culture hermaphrodites were treated with awe and repulsion resulting in ostracism and stigmatisation. Therefore, their hermaphroditic status was hardly discussed, as it was perceived as an abomination or a taboo.

¹⁸ Pieter H. Coetzee and A.P. Roux (2003), *The African philosophy reader* (New York: Routledge) 4.

¹⁹ An interview Felix.Ovuwonre, (2016), Oleh, Isoko South LGA. 08033885857.

²⁰ Welch (1934), 6.

²¹ Ovuwonre, (2016),

The stigmatisation and repulsion with which the idea had been approached did not allow much awareness, as shame compels those with the condition to keep their status a secret. In this vein, intersexism is a very complex situation for an Isoko person. This is so because there is a clear “*Otu*”²² gender divide among the Isokos, there are codes and rules for each biological sex and social gender. Obaro Ikime observes that the Isokos are organized according to age grade and gender. Therefore, they have a clear gender divide, the sexes operates division of labour, penis has a superior place in social hierarchy and for the Isokos biology is destiny, therefore people change their biological sex, like many transgendered people are prone to, they might as well quarantine themselves, as social relationship would become a dilemma, and almost impossible, their family may consider the act of sex change embarrassing, disgraceful, and shameful.

Consequently, the question then arise about what ‘*otu*’ or gender meeting they are qualified to attend, as the age grade and gender meetings still hold sway among the Isokos. Since the Isoko people are yet to successfully place the intersex, how will they handle the idea of transgenderism? This shows that gender identity amongst the Isokos inclines heavily to social construction, and bad behavior, or criminal acts could never be explained away as identity crises, or blamed on dual identity, such as dissociative identity disorder, like it is done in developed countries. Rather, it is termed as witchcraft and could easily be wrongly, judged as people can still take the law into their own hands.

The reason for this Isoko approach is that culturally, Isokos are perceived as beings in the society. All their acts are important and interconnected; they are perceived as beings, with a past, living in the present, with a future to build. This shows the importance of family history and social relationship of each person. What this means is that when an Isoko person approaches a stranger for the first time, after the preliminary greeting, the most important thing the individual would want to know is ‘*Weh omo ono*’ whose child are you? The answer to this question leads the inquirer to consider the social history of such a family. It is on this platform that the person is accepted or rejected. By indication then, the onus lies with each Isoko person to act in ways that will bring honour to the family name. Hence, the Isokos

²² Obaro Ikime (1970), *The history of the Isoko People* (Ibadan: university press), 30-42.

would say "*orie ruo ovboma vio orie guo*"²³ that is, 'behaving well is better than explaining well', therefore, Isokos like many African cultures, do not seem evolutionary enough to accommodate new ideas like transgenderism.

The implication for the above means that rather than focus on the mind and body crises, a complication more difficult to resolve, self mastery would serve as a better approach. Self mastery is a recommended response to difficult and stressful situation, it comes with a person's ability to conduct self evaluation to know their strengths and weaknesses; they should deemphasis their weaknesses and focus on their strenghts. This attribute does not require a congruence of any sort, as the person would then live intentionally, focusing on their essences, that things that makes them unique humans, that thing the makes them stand out.

1.2 Statement of problem

Previous studies have examined transgenderism from physiological and biological perspective, as the 'body in the wrong', in need of 'correction', leading to sex change surgeries, an approach which pays inadequate attention to the metaphysical and ethical perspective in transgenderism. This work examines transgenderism from the ontological and agency concerns, insisting that man is a being with a mind and a body, that paying attention to the 'body concern' in transgenderism, to the detriment of the mind, does not bode well for the transgendered person. This was done with a view to establish that going by the identity discourse; earlier transgendered person and the present transgendered person were one and the same being, in terms of John Locke's psychological theory of personal identity. Transgenderism being a result of a psychological condition, Gender Identity Disorder or Gender Dysphoria Syndrome, and the biological condition, intersex. Its hedonistic nature manifest as people choose transition based on emotions, concluding that the body is 'in the wrong'. Hence, the physiological and medical cure which employs surgery as a tool of correction. This approach fails to recognise a more in-depth aspect of transgenderism, which is the metaphysical nature of the problem embedded in personal identity. Therefore, the gap in literature.

²³ Agbada, E. O. Umokoro, M. E. and Itiveh, J.O., (trans) (2008), *Ubuhre umubora isoko:Teach yourself Isoko*. (Efurun: Xs printing and publishing co). 79

The reason for the above is that transgenderism and its practice raises many concerns about human identity. This makes it important to critically review personal identity, and to speculate on the true status of a transgendered people. Also, it becomes necessary to explore what motivates people who allude to transgenderism and to examine the significance of anatomical surgeries resulting in sex change or sex reassignment. The consequences of these surgeries are too severe for anyone to engage in them without first taking into account their implications. Hence, there are several people who need to answer the ethical questions, people such as the surgeon, those who opt for surgery just because they can, the cosmetic and enhancement industries which benefit financially, and the society which dictate only two gender categories, ignoring other abnormal biological conditions, which make it difficult for people to fit into gender lines. It appears that the demand of these gender categories and gender code lead to genderphobia, that is, the fear that people have of performing the traits associated with their genders, which this work suspect as one reason why people seek to escape the social demands of biological sex and social gender.

Also, the place of the 'other' could not be overemphasized here, the reason is that no matter their claim to fundamental human right, transgendered people are not an island on their own. That is why it is inevitable, to explore the challenge of their social relations. Carole Rovane did this by emphasising that people ought to show proper regard for the agency of the other. She observes that many persons wish to escape the pressure that comes with the ethical choices that involves the other, which she terms as agency-regard, "yet they cannot escape the ethical pressure except by escaping the choice itself, and they cannot escape the choice, as long as they recognize other persons as such."²⁴.

The debate in transgenderism reveals that many people believe that a new person emerges after the sex changing surgery. This position is contentious for not dealing with the concern about responsibility and the issues of personal identity, as the work explores the controversy about what should identify a person through time. In addition, Susan Brison claims that trauma resulting from bodily mutilation shows that "one can no longer be oneself even to

²⁴ Carolyn Rovane (1998), *The bounds of agency* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 7.

oneself, since the self exists fundamentally in relation to others."²⁵ For Carole Rovane a purely psychological analysis of personal identity may not secure identity. Hence, the work examines the condition of personal identity through a review of the ethical nature of persons leading to "engage in agency-regarding-relation"²⁶. Therefore, she opines that people have relationships that could be influenced by others and this influence would lead them to make choices which were of ethical significance. Yet the Stoics claim that "it is not what happens to you, but how you react, that chiefly determines if you live a contented or miserable life."²⁷

This shows that contentment is very subjective. Yet, Aristotle insists that "if happiness is an activity, in accordance with virtue, it is reasonable that it should be in accordance with the highest virtue, and this will be that of the best thing in us... that which is proper to each thing by nature best and most pleasant for each thing."²⁸ But this sort of happiness has been proven to be questionable, as both the concept of value and the idea of happiness could be questioned by the 'other' who perceives the action as a source of un-happiness. Therefore, necessitating this exploration.

1.3 Statement of Thesis

The work insists that a person is not only a biological being but an ontological one, hence, it employs John Locke's understanding of personal identity as a theoretical framework to posit that the source of personal identity could be found in each person's individual essence which has little or nothing to do with their biological sex. Hence, insisting that, no amount of surgery or application of hormonal drugs could change the essence of the person; this is so as the character traits, emotions and consciousness of a person play a vital role in identifying the self. Locke was right in his theory of identity, as no amount of accident and medical manipulation could change the person. Even when memory loss occurs, the individual would have to rely on the memory of others or persevere until they get their own memory back. It is very contentious to posit that drug would change innate attributes. Even more debatable, is

²⁵Susan J. Brison, (2002), *Outliving oneself: trauma, memory and personal identity. Gender struggles: Practical approaches to contemporary feminism.* Mui C. L. and Murphy, J. S. (Eds). (New York: Rowman & Littlefield pub. Inc), 138.

²⁶ Rovane (1998), 5.

²⁷ Baggini and Stangroom (2005), p. 10

²⁸ Peter Singer (1994), Aristotle: The end for Human Nature, *Ethics* (Oxford : Oxford University Press) 186 - 187.

the claim that a person's thought pattern may be altered just by changing his/her sexual organ. Therefore, the crises of identity could easily be resolved only when those involved conduct self-evaluation and self-re-examination. This way they would adopt the traits necessary for their humanity, and they can concentrate on their personal strength, to fulfill their personal purpose in life. As self-perception usually affect self-esteem, born out of self-image, which then influences a person's identity and mindset to determine who they are.

Transgenderism raises numerous questions in social identity, psychological identity and biological identity, especially, in the light of many who regret their decision to go for sex change surgery? The gender divide and gender codes are controversial as it identifies certain traits to be masculine, and others as feminine, by this identification it stigmatizes people who could not conform to the characteristics traits expected of their gender, since it is clear that there are women who display traits associated with men, and there are men who portray traits associated with women. In like manner, there are men who do not care about being macho and there are women who cannot 'suffer to be beautiful, thereby encouraging androgynous traits, no doubt the failure of people to meet the acceptable traits for both genders leads to discontentment, depression and sometimes suicide.

It also insists on anticriterialist theory of identity, on the ground that personal identity should include memory embedded in consciousness and a body to act out conscious thought, as each 'body' requires consciousness to give it meaning. Commendably therefore, is Paul McHugh's position, which frowns at hormonal replacement and sex re-assignment surgeries, as the surgeries did not resolve the gender crises. He strongly believed that the surgeries served to complicate people's life, and tied them in a knot. He must be right, as John Hopkins Hospital discontinued sex change surgeries. Hence, anyone feeling that they were falling below their social gender expectations, such as genderphobia and gender identity disorder ought to seek therapy, the solution to incongruence between their minds and bodies. Experts will then help with psychological therapy, aiming to apply mind developmental theories. This act should help resolve the mind and body challenge, as they deal with questions of identity, by identifying their special gifts and endowments, then, seeking skill to employ the talents for self development. It is apparent that everyone one have special endowment, each person needs to discover their talents, as this has little or nothing to do with what gender one

identifies with, it has a lot to do with living a purposeful life, leading to self attainment and fulfillment.

Research shows that people with gender incongruence and gender discomfort existed from the ancient times; some examples include Katoey of Thailand, Zenith of Arab, Yoruba Sango and “Alafin Orompotoniyun”²⁹, including Isoko Ozakaye. Since these people found a way of self-projection, why couldn’t others with similar concerns do the same? The answer to this question is vital, since it reveals that personal identity has cultural and social undertones. For instance, Isokos see a person as a fusion of a spiritual being and a physical being. The Isoko metaphysical conception of the human person reveals that the Isoko person is seen as an individual-in-the-society, as the action of each person reflects on their families, and boomerangs to their natural wellbeing.

Hence, each Isoko person is expected to behave in a way that will bring pride to his/her family. Keeping in mind notions like gender divide, division of labour of the genders, penis superiority and the idea that biology is destiny. Among the Isokos, a person with dual personalities is called a witch, it is not termed a crisis or disorder, it is perceived as evil. This is why when faced with difficulties, Isokos seek help from their deities, along with emploting their special abilities, not engaging in sex change surgeries, as many people in the same condition from more countries would want to do. Many Isokos have clear notions of gender roles. This shows that the idea of sex change or transgenderism may likely attract repulsion, stigmatism and ostracism among them. It also revealed that when moral issues and values are neglected, they often result in tragic human loss of lives and breakdown in societal norms.

Yet, when ethics tried to guide us, the lack of definite guideline became lamentable as Ayn Rand noted. Also, technological developments in the medical sciences have assisted in aiding these fantasies to the extent that many ignore the consequences. Hence, it became inevitable that ethical theories which points to happiness as a virtue, such as hedonism, be investigated, since the search for happiness is often the excuse people give for wanting to transit or escape from unsatisfactory and tormenting body trap. Ususally, dissatisfaction with ones biological sex and social gender is reason enough to transit to another gender. There is an urgent need to

²⁹ http://Face2faceafrica.com/article/the_little_known_story_of_the_first_transgender_royal_of_this_nigerian_empire_who_ruled_in_1540/amp/. Accessed June 2020.

investigate human conduct and value that translate to transgender trends. Undauntedly, whether people take on androgynous traits, and genders are expended, or a position is created for none identity, the emphasis here is, people are human, and they ought to find their own special niche, since the true self is more psychological than physiological, and physiology only plays a minor role in the question of personal identity. This conclusion was deduced from the term ‘transgender regret’. According to Johnson Heyers "People don't change gender, he said, it's the biggest medical fraud in the nation's history, it's simply a masquerade."³⁰ Paul McHugh supports this position by insisting "that sex change surgeries harm the body, rather than treat the mind."³¹. Finally, parents should pay less attention to gender categories while upbringing of their children, as we discover that many parents groom their children along with the gender codes, emphasising what a boy and girl, ought to, and/or ought not to do. This kind of training may stigmatise a child who couldn't meet a standard, making them feel like failures. This is biological determinism, as biological determinism should not be employed as an excuse to promote one gender over the other, since everyone is special, and as both genders are essential for the continual survival of the human race. Therefore, children should be encouraged to discover themselves through mind development; they should be encouraged to aspire to get to whatever height they desire. The focus should be on their essence, that special thing that makes them unique, and not on their performance. However, statistics has shown that one in every one thousand five hundred person have an abnormal hormonal condition, this situation is very compelling as it requires a review of the binary.

1.4 Aim and Objectives of Study

This work aims to re-examine the concept of Transgenderism, from the metaphysical and ethical consequences angle for a human being, rather than the physiological and medical perspective from which it have been proposed.

1. To explore the idea of Transgenderism along with debates for and against sex change surgery, including other possible alternative approaches to gender categories.
2. To interrogate the ontological notions of personhood and it implications on

³⁰ Michael Wiering (2013), Mmwiering@CatholicReview.org . Accessed 11/17/2018

³¹ <https://www.heritage.org/gender/.../sex-reassignment-doesnt-work-here-the-evidence>

transgenderism.

3. To re-examine the body problem that transcends into transgender discourses, and its influence on cultural concerns.
4. To discourse the idea of agency and cultural concerns in transgenderism.
5. To speculate on the future of humanity in accordance with biotechnological revolution.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology of this discourse involved literature review, critical elucidation and philosophical analysis of Transgenderism. Through literature review the work revealed the problem of personal identity which is at the heart of transgenderism. It also analysed the social agency debate as it affects the gender categories leading to genderphobia and the search for escape. It revealed that not much attention has been paid to the implication of excusing personal identity crises on the ground of dual personalities, and that when people complain about determinism, they cannot identify the jailor. That rather than focusing on limitations, they should work on their unique essence by building focused mindset.

1.6 Justification of Study

The major justification for this study is the need to critically analyse the place of agency in producing an ontological person. This work attempts to resolve body and personal identity concerns which evolved into genderphobia, and resulted in sex change surgeries. The work emphasized that the true source of conflict could be resolved once those susceptible to the condition access professional self-examination, to reveal their true essence.

1.7 Significance of Study/Contribution to knowledge

This work seeks to pave the way for a new conceptualisation of gender categories. It offers new ways of understanding, analysing and reviewing transgenderism. The research seeks to fill the vacuum created by the lack of the study of the issues of Transgenderism from the ontological and agency perspective. It seeks to create an understanding of transgenderism philosophically, psychologically, socially and medically.

1.8 Chapter Analysis

This research is divided into six chapters. Chapter One is the general introduction. Chapter Two titled; This chapter called ‘The idea of Transgenderism’ examines transgenderism, determining why there were transgendered people, and to know whether gender dysphoria syndrome must necessarily result in sex change surgeries. Attempts to answer these questions led to exploring the dissimilarity between sex and gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation. It examines both the philosophical and social psychological aspect of these concepts by considering the possibility of expanding the genders and gender categories in search of a place for none-identity. Hence the sections are, the Idea of Transgenderism; Biological Foundations for Transgenderism. Transgenderism and Gender Foundationalism; Argument in Transgenderism; and Transgenderism and Alternative Approaches.

Chapter Three, ‘The Ontology of a Person’ explores Transgenderism and the Ontological theories of being, along with Transgenderism and Personal Identity theories to answer questions about the true source of identity and what should identify a person through time. Also, it interrogates the condition for personhood along with possibilities for identity swap, or how the loss of one part of the body influences its identity, like the significance of past, present and future acts on identity. It also considers Transgenderism and the Theories of Determinism, Transgenderism and the Social notions of Self and Transgenderism in African Cultures.

Chapter Four titled ‘Transgenderism and Personal Identity’ did a critical exposition on Transgenderism and Body types, to debate about how people and society employ the body for performance. The purpose is to determine the metaphysical implication for a gender that could be ‘put on’ or ‘put off’ at will. Transgenderism and Sociological Notions of Self, making a distinction between Gender Identity and Personal Identity. This led to Transgenderism and Gender Identity issues, Transgenderism and Bioethical concerns. Finally, Transgenderism and possible Cultural Response. It reviews the Isoko persons, their view on dual selves and whether Isokos have identity crises. It also reviews the place of gender and ‘Agency Regarding’ relationships.

Chapter Five titled ‘Moral Agency and Transgenderism’ interrogates the place of agency and culture in defining a person. It explores Transgenderism and the interconnectivity between Ethics and Culture. It deliberates on ethical issues like the pain, harm and suffering in the discourse. Chapter five has two sections; the first section reviews; Transgenderism and Value Consideration, Transgenderism and the Idea of Obligation, Transgenderism and the Theory of Benevolence, then Transgenderism and the Natural Law Theory. The second section debated the idea of agency, by looking at the Cultural Implication of transgenderism, on a traditional African (Isoko) person.

Chapter Six titled ‘Transgenderism and the Future of Humanity’ speculates on the future of humanity with transgenderism in view. Also, it evaluates Transgender Thoughts and Technological Evolution, along with Transgenderism and Sexual Evolution. Then, proposes Transgenderism and the Idea of Mind Immortality by exploring issues about life elongation. Finally, Transgenderism and the Theory of Repugnance, wondering if the ‘yuck’ factor serves as enough hint for caution?

1.9 Conclusion

Man is made up of substances called hormones, said to be responsible for biological sexes, which indicates the genders given at birth, of which only two were identified, male and female, yet hormonal abnormalities reveal the need to reconsider the gender categories and gender divide, this means that, while we maintain the traditional positions, consideration should be given to those with other biological conditions, categorised as abnormalities, but normal to them, since they did not have any control over their condition. Those abnormal condition have been said to be the cause of the feeling of being trapped in some people, and other feel less human, especially, when they were expected to embark on surgery to become ‘normal’. Rebelling against the mold, many people in this ‘normal’ but abnormal condition want to be accepted the way they are, without having to consider sex realignment surgery, an expectation which may not be fair to them, considering that they are humans, and their human identity ought to be stronger than gender identity.

It is apparent that agency monitoring, and keeping a stronghold on the gender line, brought about genderphobia, that is fear of performing the gender codes, hence, less attention should be placed on gender characteristic traits, and more emphasis be placed on identifying ones

talents and life purpose. The reason for the above position stems from the work of Paul Mchugh, and the resulting conclusion, which required John Hopkins hospital to stop sex change surgery, on the ground that it did not resolve the gender identity disorder; rather it helps complicate the situation of those who chose surgery.

The above is the reason why anyone having incongruence between his/her mind and body should first seek psychological therapy before thinking of medical intervention. However, exploring transgenderism and the crisis of personal identity reveals ethical paradox of choice, of choosing one's sex, as against natural law's guide, especially, when many of them do it for pleasure; hedonism. This move is on collision course with the natural law theory, as many people have discovered that it is better to cooperate with nature than fight against it. In reality these surgeries play a very minimal role as a solution to the predicament faced by intersex and persons whose mental sex conflict with their anatomic sex. This is because social agency did not create a middle way, yet, nature did; by producing abnormal conditions like intersex. The belief is that nature assigns sex and gender at birth, and people should align with nature, even when there are several unexplainable natural acts, these people are in the middle of the divide, while some would align themselves, others do not want to be bothered, they want agency to allow them be. Those accepting surgery are going against nature, and reaping the consequences. Hence, persons with these biological conditions and those professing that they have any form of disorder, deserve our pity not attack.

However, anyone having this feeling of incongruence, need to answer the identity questions, aimed at realigning them with their purpose, and leading them to self discovery. They need to answer the who am I question, including questions like what am I doing? Where am I going? When am I planning to get there? Or how do I plan to get there? The answers to these questions could help in resolving the crises. These are the more essential questions in life as discovering their answers would lead to a more fulfilled life, and less discontentments. The onus then, lies with philosophers to lead a revolutionary change in people's mind about the rigidity of the gender codes, and the flexibility of the characteristic traits, which will help whip up sympathy for the condition, allowing an openminded approach to Transgenderism, even if they find it difficult to expand the genders. The reason for this expectation is that philosophy serves 'as a mirror of nature and arbiter of truth', even when the search for an

absolute 'is no longer thought to be possible'. Philosophers need to rethink their positions on mind and body, be 'less rigid' about the biological sexes, and 'more accommodating' of other gender expressions, to allow more people enjoy their humanity, since body appearance has little to do with finding life purposes.

Philosophy as a discipline has expanded to include other voices, like the voice of the transgendered being. This is not the first time that science would intervene in the affairs of man, but it must apply principles and submit to its own code of conduct, as a guide to circumventing conflicts with natural law, which can result in self-destruction. This work concludes on the need for people to take self-ownership, though, taking self ownership is a two edged sword, as those seeking surgery can also claim that they are taking self ownership, this is where professionalism comes in, to help them work through their minds, and to discover their individual essence, which will in turn give them a sense of purpose.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSGENDERISM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Recent events in gender debates have resurrected new issues in transgenderism, but this time, the focus is on genderphobia, as individuals are seeking to escape either their biological sex and gender, or the gender given to them at birth, by engaging in sex change surgeries, also known as transgenderism. Hence transgenderism reflects dissatisfaction with one's biological sex and gender, or the gender assigned at birth. Some of these events include the story of Iyabo Abade, a former member of a Nigerian female football club, who was later discovered to be hermaphroditic, a sex change surgery enabled her to become male, James Johnson. But with the challenge of acceptance, she could not find a male football club. The popular Bruce Jenner, changed gender at the age of sixty five, from male to female. He excused this action on the claim that he had always felt like a woman, he is now Caitlyn Jenner.

Also, Internet is filled with news of people who are making the same claim about incongruence with mind and body. They insist that they were born with the wrong bodies, while others claim that the gender assigned to them at birth was a wrong one. One of such examples is the seven year old "Elizabeth"³². Katie Flesch reported that her daughter 'Elizabeth' was assigned the male gender at birth, that Elizabeth portrayed trait of the opposite gender (female) as a child. Flesch's child was only four years old when he insisted he was a girl. Flesch explained that whenever they allowed Elizabeth to make a choice of toys, he always chose toys and colours designed for girls, hence she (the mother) insisted on sex change surgery to transit him from boy to girl. Pleading for acceptance of her child, she appealed that "Transgender people just want to have the same rights and freedom as everybody else."³³

The organizing committee of the 2016 Olympic Games had to address similar issues of body type, when they were compelled to determine the biological sex and social gender of Caster Semenya, chose female gender, but had a very muscular body. It was also reported that

³² Katie Flesch (2016), <http://abcnew.go.com/lifestyle>. Accessed on 8/25/2016.

³³ Courtney J. Cole (2016), <http://www.wric.com/news/ohio-mom-shares-story-of-7-year-old-transgender-daughter-she-was-always-elizabeth/1093816162>. Accessed 5/12/2018.

Semenya had internal testes, resulting in the presence of testosterone in her blood. In speculation several of her critics believe that Semanya is “intersex”³⁴, a condition which Semanya neither confirms, nor denies. Eventually, she was allowed to compete in the female category, on the condition that she should take hormonal drugs, to suppress her body natural testosterone production, because the presence of testosterone in her body, gave her unusual advantage over the other female athletes, these and many more are ethical questions which shall be explored in chapter five.

These issues and challenges necessitate a re-examination of transgenderism. However, transgenderism and transgendered people have always been in existence. The awareness for the right of transgendered people started in the 1950s, and could be traced to Christine Jorgensen and Virginia Prince. While many transgender advocates would recommend surgery to correct the body condition, not everyone involved in transgenderism desires the sex change surgery. The second approach is insisting that body alteration may not be necessary, as advocates of the no-surgical approach like Paul McHugh, Johnson Heyers and Laura Amato are insisting that gender dysphoria syndrome as a mental condition may only require counselling, and not necessarily result in sex change surgery, which seeks to correct a psychological state with medical procedures, hence transgenderism,

This chapter aims at exploring answers to the following questions: such as, why should a person be assigned a gender at birth, was their biological sex not clear? Or why are there transgendered people in our society? And, what are the possible reasons for gender discontentment, also called gender dysphoria, gender identity disorder or genderphobia? The necessary questions are; are the genders negotiable, that is, is there a position for non-identity? Why is the notion just gaining attention, since it is clear that the idea is not new? Hence, to seek answers to the transgender concerns in this chapter, the work examines the idea of transgenderism by attempting to clarify the notion and related concepts, with a view to removing vagueness and ambiguity. It shall explore the biological condition that resulted in transgendered practices, it shall investigate the idea of gender foundationalism; and it shall examine the different arguments and counter arguments for transgendered practices, and also

³⁴ Melisa Block (2016), <https://www.npr.org/.../south-african-star-raises-sensitive-questions-about-intersex-athlet...>

explore the possibility for alternative approaches. The work clearly establishes the fact that individuals, who are involved in transgendered practices, do it for any of the three reasons: the condition of intersex, gender identity disorder or gender dysphoria syndrome and for hedonism. Hedonism is the theory that says seeking pleasure is the greatest good, it shows that they were seeking pleasure, like tranvesti where people cross dress for sensual pleasure. But of outmost importance is its challenge in trying to address the recommended change and approach to gender categories, code and perceptions.

2.2 THE IDEA OF TRANSGENDERISM

Transgender is a term which refers to people who “do not conform to prevailing expectations about gender. It is an umbrella term targeted at different groups of sexual behaviour, for example: the transsexual, drag queens, butch lesbians, male cross-dresses, transvestite, transmen, transwomen, gender queer and the like. The term generally refers to persons who are living in a gender not assigned to them at birth”³⁵. Transgendered persons have had reasons to use the term in political debates, especially, when these individuals have to agitate for their rights and privileges. At this point, the umbrella becomes wider to include androgyny, polygender, dysphoria gender variant, dual gender, gender diverse, intersex and non-gender identity. Many persons, who are susceptible to transgenderism, indicate gender dysphoria syndrome, intersex or choice as a reason for their status. However, not many intersex people feel that they should be included in this category, since their situation has to do with biological sex rather than social status of gender, notwithstanding, they are very much part of the gender debate.

It is also a common practice for the term transgender and transsexual to be lumped together, or used interchangeably. Hence, Susan Scutti in her article *What Is The Difference Between Transsexual And Transgender? Facebook's New Version Of 'It's Complicated'* attempt to clarify both. She says:

Transgender, unlike transsexual, is a term for people whose identity, expression, behavior, or general sense of self does not conform to what is usually associated with the sex they were born in the place

³⁵ See. The Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy (2014) '*Metaphysis Research*'. Library of congress catalog. Issn1095-5054.

they were born. It is often said sex is a matter of the body, while gender occurs in the mind. Gender is an internal sense of being male, female, or other. People often use binary terms, for instance, masculine or feminine, to describe gender just as they do when referring to sex. But gender is more complex and encompasses more than just two possibilities. Gender also is influenced by culture, class, and race because behavior, activities, and attributes seen as appropriate in one society or group may be viewed otherwise in another³⁶.

Susan Scutti, disputes Facebook's attempt to complicate the issues of sex and gender when it specified fifty different categories for sex and gender identification. She identifies transsexuals as "people who transit from one sex to another. A person born as a male can become recognizably female through the use of hormones and/or surgical procedures; and a person born as a female can become recognizably male."³⁷ She insists that transsexuals can neither change their genetics nor acquire the reproductive abilities of the sex to which they transit.

In another vein, *Renee Reyes* said "*transgenderism* is the manifestation of a person's need to identify with the opposite gender from which they were physically born. Transgenderism is an all-encompassing term describing all forms of alternative gender expression. It is used to broadly describe all forms of transgender expression or thoughts."³⁸ She believes that transgenderism could be manifested in different ways to include: "transsexuals cross dressers, transvestites and fetish genderists. This wide variety is one reason society at large struggles with understanding trans-issues: there are many variations."³⁹

In addition, the *Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology* insists that transgenderism is a rare situation, that an estimate of about "1(one) person in 350,000 (three hundred and fifty thousand) believes he or she was born with the wrong gender."⁴⁰ The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender organisation has used the term to describe "anyone who feels that the sex that was assigned to them at birth incompletely describes or fails to describe them."⁴¹ These

³⁶ Susan Scutti (2014), <http://www.medicaldaily.com/reporters> Accessed on 9/14/2016

³⁷ Scutti, (2014).

³⁸ *Renee Reyes* (2016), @reneereyes.com/styled-234/styled-113/. Accessed on 9/14/2016

³⁹ *Reyes* (2016).

⁴⁰ Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology.com. Accessed on 6/10/2015

⁴¹ <http://www.lgbt.cusu.cam.ac.uk/think/totb-glossary.pdf>

descriptions include the transsexual and intersex. This is so, particularly for those who identify outside the binary code and whose gender expression differs from social norms. According to the Ontario gender identity and gender expression brochure:

Trans or transgender is an umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, transwoman (male-to-female), transman (female-to-male), transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant or gender queer.⁴²

This means that there are many gender variations in transgenderism, since not all the persons who identify with the concept really want to embark on transsexual surgeries. Still differentiating, Susan Stryker, explains differences between a transvestite, who wear clothes of the opposite sex and a transsexual, who has permanently changed genitals. In examining the background to transgenderism, Stryker, indicates that the term 'transgender' was attributed to Virginia Prince, who encouraged freedom of speech in gender expression. Virginia Prince was said to be a pioneer of the cross-dresser movement in the United States of America. But, Christine Jorgensen was the first acclaimed transgendered person in the United States. He was said to have conducted his surgery in 1953. Jorgensen's surgery and its resulting media furor raised questions about whether transgenderism was a physical or psychological malady. The term targeted individuals whose personal identities range from the 'transvestite' to the 'transsexual'. According to Stryker, transvestite could be identified as:

Somebody who episodically changed into the clothes of the so-called "other sex," and a *transsexual* was somebody who permanently changed genitals in order to claim membership in a gender other than the one assigned at birth, then a *transgender* was somebody who permanently changed social gender through the public presentation of self, without recourse to genital transformation.⁴³

Stryker was quoting Leslie Feinberg when she said that transgender refers to a political movement calling on

all individuals who were marginalized or oppressed due to their difference from social norms of gendered embodiment, and who

⁴² <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/gender-identity-and-gender-expression-brochure>

⁴³ Susan Stryker (2006), (De)Subjugated Knowledge. An Introduction to Transgender Studies. *The Transgender Studies Reader.PDF*. Bookfi.org Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. Eds. 4

should therefore band together in a struggle for social, political, and economic justice. Transgender, in this sense, was a ‘pangender’ umbrella term for an imagined community encompassing transsexuals, drag queens, butches, hermaphrodites, cross-dressers, masculine women, effeminate men, sissies, tomboys, and anybody else willing to be interpolated by the term, who felt compelled to answer the call to mobilization.”⁴⁴ By this definition, transgender a new meaning, identified as “pangender’ movement of oppressed minorities—transsexuals, butch lesbians, drag queens, cross-dressers, and others.⁴⁵

Leslie Feinberg further describes transgender “as people who defy the man-made boundaries of gender. Gender: self-expression, not anatomy. The problem is that the many people who don’t fit these narrow social constraints run a gamut of harassment and violence.”⁴⁶ The work of Feinberg raises several the questions. Some of the questions are: who decides the ‘norm’? And, why do people get punished for rejecting their gender? He objected to the view “that all ‘masculine’ women are lesbians and all ‘feminine’ men are gay.”⁴⁷ In tracing the history of transgenderism, he brought to fore cross-dressing of Joan of Arc, and Native American Indians (Berdeche’s). He opines that the development of anesthetic drugs and the commercial synthesis of hormones encouraged many people to seek sex change, without explaining more about their biological sex or how this condition affected them.

Still on transgenderism, the *Stanford Encyclopedia* defines transgender as referring to “people who do not conform to prevailing expectations about gender by presenting and living genders that were not assigned to them at birth or by presenting and living genders in ways that may not be readily intelligible in terms of more traditional conceptions of gender”⁴⁸. And the American Psychology Association maintains that “a psychological condition is considered a mental disorder, only if it causes distress or disability”⁴⁹. In the same vein, Joanne Meyerowitz opines that:

⁴⁴ Stryker (2006), (De)Subjugated Knowledge. 4

⁴⁵ Stryker (2006), (De)Subjugated Knowledge. 4

⁴⁶ Leslie Feinberg (2006), Transgender Liberation : A Movement Whose Time Has Come . *The Transgender Studies Reader* pdf. Bookfi.org Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. (Eds). 205

⁴⁷ Feinberg (2006),

⁴⁸ See. The Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy(2014), ‘metaphysical research’ library of congress catalog. Issn1095-5054.

⁴⁹ Apa.trangender-individual-and-gender-identity.pdf Accessed on 9/14/2016

trans-phenomena were purely psychological in nature and ought to be treated psychotherapeutically to ‘cure the mental illness’ the latter ‘bisexuality theory’ which maintained that there was a physical blend of male and female in all human beings, and that special cases yielded a ‘mixed-sex’ condition which in some cases justified surgical intervention.”⁵⁰

Exploring transgenderism further makes it apparent that there is no definite line of distinction between the terms transgender and transsexual as both terms (transgender and transsexual) are constantly lumped together. However, there are more transgender terminologies like Gender Dysphoria Syndrome. The term gender dysphoria syndrome is also known as gender identity disorder. According to the United Kingdom National Health Service, “*Gender dysphoria* is a condition where a person experiences discomfort or distress because there's a mismatch between their biological sex and (their) *gender* identity. It's sometimes known as *gender identity disorder* (GID), *gender* incongruence or transgenderism.”⁵¹ It further explains that an individual may possess the male anatomy, but feel more connected to female traits and choose to identify as a woman, once they find similarities with the characteristic traits. Also, this condition in an individual could make such person feel uncomfortable with being neither male nor female. L. Fleming Fallon, Jr. confirms this claim when he says:

Gender identity disorder is a condition characterised by a persistent feeling of discomfort or inappropriateness concerning one's anatomic sex. The disorder typically begins in childhood with gender identity problems and is manifested in adolescence or adulthood by a person dressing in clothing appropriate for the desired gender, as opposed to one's birth gender. In extreme cases, persons with gender identity disorder may seek gender reassignment surgery, also known as a sex-change operation.⁵²

Therefore, gender dysphoria refers to a mismatch between one's biological sex and social gender identity. It leads to a feeling of discomfort called gender identity disorder. Therefore, Gender dysphoria is recognised as a medical condition. According to the UK National Health Service, people with gender dysphoria have a strong and persistent desire to live according to their social gender identity, rather than their biological sex, they are sometimes called transsexual or transgender. Accordingly, people with gender dysphoria or gender identity

⁵⁰ Joanne Meyerowitz (2002), *How sex changed* (Cambridge:Harvard University Press). 98–129

⁵¹ WWW.nationalhealthservice.uk/.../Gender-dysphoria/.../Introduction.../01/30/2016.

⁵² Fox L. Fallon Jr (2012), www.nocphmph.org/pdf/fallon.pdf

disorder could decide on treatment to make their physical appearance more consistent with their gender identity.

2.2.1 Clarification of Transgender Terms

In addition, the UK's National Health Service explains that early signs of gender dysphoria could be observed when a child refuses to wear clothes associated with, or typical for their gender. The child could also portray a dislike for toys and games associated with their gender. It observes that many children may grow out of this dislike, and that it only becomes gender dysphoria when this behaviour persists into adulthood. At this stage, the person feels as if he or she is caged in a body that did not match their desired gender identity. The UK National Health Service claims that the condition leads to unhappiness and depression, especially when the affected people feel that they do not meet the social expectations of their gender. This unhappiness manifests as discontentment, depression and could lead to suicidal tendencies. The National Health Service, therefore, recommends that any individual believing themselves as having gender dysphoria, should consult a specialist at Gender Identity Clinic (GIC), where a personalised assessment is carried out to determine their condition and the necessary treatment would be recommended.

Therefore, to assess an individual indicating gender dysphoria, the following inquiries are made:

- Whether there's a clear mismatch between your biological sex with social gender, and gender identity ;
- Whether you have a strong desire to change your physical characteristics as a result of any mismatch (for instance a desire to get rid of breast or facial hair.);
- How you're coping with any difficulties of a possible mismatch;
- How your feelings and behaviours have developed over time;
- What support you have, such as friends and family;
- A more general assessment of your physical and psychological health.⁵³

⁵³ WWW.nhs.uk/.../Gender-dysphoria/.../Introduction...

According to the organisation, treatment of gender dysphoria aims at reducing or removing the feelings mismatch between mental sex and body sex or identities, and mismatch between biological sex and social gender identity. The treatment may involve the individual's choice to cross-dress. It could also mean that they would have to take hormones or sex change surgery. Furthermore, the National Health Service claim that "a survey of 10,000 (ten thousand) people undertaken in 2012 by the Equality and Human Rights Commission found that 1 % (one percent) of the population surveyed was gender variant, to some extent. While gender dysphoria appears to be rare, the number of people being diagnosed with the condition is increasing, due to growing public awareness."⁵⁴ Finally, the report insists that gender dysphoria is not the same as transvestism or cross-dressing, for its dissimilarity to their sexual orientation. Since people with gender dysphoria also as known gender identity disorder may identify with any of these sexual orientations: straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual or asexual.

2.2.1.1 Transsexuals

According to the United Kingdom National Health Service, "transsexualism – the desire to live and be accepted as a member of the opposite sex, usually accompanied by the wish to have treatment to make their physical appearance more consistent with their gender identity."⁵⁵ According to Talia Bettcher's "*Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues*,"⁵⁶ transsexual as a term, describes people who are seeking surgery to transit from one gender to the other. It includes those using or have used hormonal and surgical technology to alter their body. The purpose of the hormonal treatment is to make their bodies conform to their sense of the gendered self. The condition of being a transsexual is identified as transsexualism and transsexuality. Transsexualism is sometimes used to interchange transgenderism because both concepts refer to individuals who insist that they feel like being 'trapped in the wrong body'. David Caldwell, who was said to be the first to use the term 'transexual', spelt it with one 's' transexual, while Harry Benjamin spelt his with two 's', 'transsexual'. While many people still use both words interchangeably depending on one's political orientation, it is clear that many transgenderism has a tendency to include transexaulism.

⁵⁴ See www.nhs.uk/.../Gender-dysphoria/.../Introduction...

⁵⁵ See www.nhs.uk/.../Gender-dysphoria/.../Introduction...

⁵⁶Talia Bettcher (2014), *Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues*. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/feminism-trans/>>.

2.2.1.2 Gender Queer

Gender Queer is another term in transgenderism, the queer is an appropriated form of self-identification. It “is a political and theoretical term and a reclamation of the word used as an insult.”⁵⁷ It refers to those in the queer nation, expressing sexual preferences outside the norm, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered. Hence, the term ‘gender queer’ is used for individuals who refuse the traditional binary division between male and female. A gender queer then, is an individual who has rejected the traditional gender norms, or one who has transgressed it. According to William Walter, the gender identity labels vary in different communities. Other terms in queer are ‘tranny boys’ or ‘two spirit’ and ‘femme queen’. According to Williams, people can choose whichever term that they feel comfortable in. That the term ‘queer’ could be employed by ‘butch,’ ‘femme,’ and ‘androgynous’ to describe their place and their comfort with masculinity and femininity. Gender queer, then “draws on the political force of *queer*. It is used as a term of self-identification by individuals who do not subscribe to the traditional binary division between male/female, man/woman, and masculine/feminine. An individual who self-identifies may claim either sexes or genders, neither, or a complex blend of them.”⁵⁸

According to the Talia Bettcher, ‘trans’ as a word have been employed since 2010 in place of ‘transgender’. This is so, as the word ‘trans’ is seen to provide more possibilities in self-identity. Hence, both men and women used it as a way to place themselves in binary categories. ‘Trans’ is also used as a prefix in creating expectation that trans people are transgendered individual, men or women. Hence, ‘trans’ would be used as an expression referring to male to female transgender (MTFs) and female to male transgender (FTMs) who self-identify as women and men respectively, that is, trans-man and trans-woman.

2.2.1.3 Cross-dresser and Trans-dressing

Cross-dresser and Trans-dressing refers to people who wear clothes of the opposite gender, it describes the physical appearance. It is generally assumed that a cross-dresser automatically transcends to a transgender. But this observation has been proven to be wrong, since not many

⁵⁷ Bettcher (2014)

⁵⁸ Bettcher (2014) .

crosser dressers are interested in sex change. They embark on cross-dressing just for fun and entertainment, but, cross-dressing is a necessary step for those who insist on sex change surgery, as cross-dressing is part of the real life training which they are expected to participate in, a transition mode.

In transgender debates, drag queens are usually men who work as female impersonators, they cross-dress to make a living. Some are said to “cross-dress for sex and those who cross-dress for sexual pleasure.”⁵⁹ According to Esther Newton, drag queens are usually homosexual males, who place themselves as females in relation to other men. Newton attempted to explain the relationship between gender and performance by explaining that the ‘drag’ is an essential feature of cross-dressing, that, it is applied as double illusion, a shifting between femininity and masculinity, that individuals who adapt the term, use it to express their feminine and masculine self. Newton explains that ‘drag and camp’ were the central focus of homosexuality before gay liberation of 1960. She illustrated that drag queens employed the term as a cover professionally to impersonate the female sex and gender, placing themselves as a group in world of the show business. Newton further claimed that many individuals, who were ‘drag queens,’ have two personalities, the social self and the inner self that is why some of them would wear feminine clothes inside and masculine outside. Others would do it vice versa. These individuals consider the outside dress as a mask or costume. In other scenarios, drag queens indicated mix sex-role by adding female items like jewelries, makeup, and high-heeled shoes with their masculine clothing.

According to Newton, these impersonators employ this façade as a desire to break the illusion of femininity, by portraying that the sex role may not come naturally, and to also prove that sex roles could be achieved by anyone, if they practice very hard. Accordingly, the purpose of the drag system is to remove the sex roles from its determining factors, like genital sex, and to show that appearance is not very certain, it could be an illusion, as many individuals have a female exterior, the inside could be something else (male).

⁵⁹ Esther Newton (2006), *Mother Camp. The Transgender studies reader*. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. (Eds). 121-128. Pdf.

2.2.1.4 Cisgender

Also the Cisgender, CIS (pronounced sis) gender, is a term used to refer to “people who are not transgender that is (persons) who experience congruence between their sex assigned at birth and their gender and sex.”⁶⁰ According to “statistics,”⁶¹ it is difficult to determine the number of people who are transgendered; this is because many of them force themselves to identify with the gender codes. A cisgender, therefore, refers to the other people who are not transgender. Hence, if a child was identified as a particular gender and grows up to be comfortable with that designation, then such a person is ‘cisgender’. This is said to be the case for ninety-nine percent of the American population. According to Julia Serano, the best description for cisgender is “parallel to homosexual and heterosexual. There was a time when there were homosexual people and everyone else was considered to be the ‘normal’ people ... Now people think of themselves as straight or heterosexual.”⁶² Genderphobic is “to be ashamed or afraid of a gender...hatred of having a gender;”⁶³ genderphobia could then be described as a state of being afraid of ones gender. However this work refers to all who believe and practice any form of gender or sex switching as transgenderist. And all who dislike or refuse to practice what their gender category expects of them as having genderphobia.

2.2.1.5 Transvestitism

A similar term in transgenderism is transvestitism, reveals a person, who is usually a male. This individual adopts the dress code of opposite sex, in this case female. They also tend to behave like the opposite sex; they usually do this for purposes of emotional and sexual gratification, same as pleasure. Therefore, transvestitism is described in a person (usually male), who finds sensual pleasure in wearing clothes associated with the opposite sex. According to Fleming Fallon Jr, “transvestitism or transvestic fetishism ... cross-dressing occurs for sexual pleasure. Furthermore, the transvestite does not identify with the other sex.”⁶⁴ The United Kingdom National Health Service confirms this by defining “transvestism

⁶⁰Talia Bettcher (2014)

⁶¹See <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-we-dont-know-the-size-of-the-transgender-population> or <http://time.com/3636430/cisgender-definition/>

⁶² <http://www.amazon.com/whipping-girl-transsexual-scapegoat-femininity/dpl/1580051545>

⁶³ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=genderphobic>

⁶⁴ L. Fleming Fallon, Jr. 2012. www.nocphmph.org/pdf/fallon.pdf

– where a person occasionally wears clothes typically associated with the opposite gender (cross-dressing) for a variety of reasons.”⁶⁵ This is a very common feature, as it is apparent that more boy/men enjoy blurring the gender lines with their soft dressing.

2.2.1.6 Intersex

According to the American Psychological Association, one in every one thousand five hundred babies is born with unclassified genitals. This means that their genitals could be classified as either male or female. Intersexism involves both biological sex and social gender, intersex conditions could be a result of different abnormalities in the chromosomal makeup of the individual, which affect both the internal and external reproductive organs. Some of the features include:

External genitals that cannot be easily classified as male or female, incomplete or unusual development of the internal reproductive organs, inconsistency between the external genitals and the internal reproductive organs, abnormalities of the sex chromosomes, abnormal development of the testes or ovaries. Over- or underproduction of sex-related hormones, inability of the body to respond normally to sex related hormones.⁶⁶

When external genital are not clear, the onus lies with either the parent, in a culture where birthing takes place at home, or health practisioners in more developed world, hence, intersexism and its associated condition should explain why a person is assigned a sex at birth, that is, when their biological sex was not clear. Such a child must be placed in one of the binary, especially, in a situation where there are only two recommended genders. Many of the babies born with the intersex condition were, therefore assigned a gender with the most consistent genitals, traditionally, usually, at the discretion of whoever helped the birthing process, or hormonally, through medical diagnoses, for the others, whose gender could not be detected, the intersex condition only becomes apparent later in life as they develop into puberty, necessitating medical intervention, especially, when any of these conditions are identified at birth, surgery (in more developed countries) could be applied where there is need to correct the condition. This could be done with or without the parents’ permission. This

⁶⁵ See www.nhs.uk/.../Gender-dysphoria/.../Introduction...

⁶⁶ See www.apa.org/pi/lgbtc/transgender. Accessed on 9/14/2016

must have been the case of Katie Flesch's Elizabeth, since the mother claimed that her child was assigned the wrong sex, hence, uninformed consent, an unethical medical practice that must be thoroughly examined.

Yet, the indication is that intersex may not always result in surgery. In fact, Cheryl Chase, founder and director of the 'Intersex Society of North America' advocates against sex re-assignment surgeries, insisting that society should make room for the intersexed. Chase opined that medical institutions stop conducting transgender surgeries, especially on infants; the reason for this advice, stems from the observation that their parents may not be aware that such a surgery had been conducted on their babies. The bioethical implication is that the physicians didn't get the consent, and the power to choose was denied them, hence unethical. The immorality of this act is brought to fore as Chase observed that the children grow up, ignorant that such a surgery had been carried out on them, that many only discover when they begin to have crises as the surgery had been known to take away the sexual functions, and sexual pleasures of the victim. More consequences is its effect on sexual orientations, it ranges from gay to lesbian, or heterosexual to bisexual, hence, making it uncertain whether these conditions were natural or induced, if induced, who then takes the blame for it the effect of this action? Many like conditions are the Androgen-Insensitivity Syndrome, Turner syndrome, Klinefelters Syndrome and the Vagina Agenesis.

2.2.1.7 Butch

Again, Butch, is a term associated with the male on whom the sex change surgery had been conducted, he had been butchered. This person would later self identify as a female, and as lesbians, when their sexual orientation tends towards other female, but with the addition of the term butch, that is butch Lesbian. Butch-Lesbian then is a male to female transsexual whose sexual orientation and attraction involve other females. C. Jacob Hale, argues that there is not one distinguishing feature between butch and female to male transgendered individuals. Hence the term attracts a lot of confusion because not all female to male transgendered have the same sexual orientation. Hale says that many butches:

Self-identify as men and not all butches self-identify as women, some butches identify more strongly with masculinity than do some

(ftms) female to male transsexuals, and some butches avail themselves of body-altering medical technologies, while some female to male transsexual do not ... desire for a penis, as the dividing line between butches and female to male transsexuals.⁶⁷

The term butch further points to failure of the standard scheme and straight lines of identity in transgendered male to female lesbian and female to male transsexuals. According to Talia Bettcher, “for some FTMs, butch masculinity was a lesser and perhaps ‘artificial’ manifestation of masculinity in contrast to the masculinity exemplified by FTMs. Such competing ways of understanding masculinity led to what have sometimes been called butch/FTM border wars.”⁶⁸

Still on gender identity, androgynous is a term derived from Androgyny. This term is applicable when an individual is said to have androgynous tendency, the person can be described as having the characteristic trait and nature that reflect masculinity and femininity. The individual is neither feminine nor masculine, hence, there is obscurity which may result in reversal of the traditional male and female roles. This gender ambiguity could be found in different aspects of life.

2.2.2 Gender Categories

Therefore, androgyny reveals that there are feminine men and masculine women. As Julia Ferman claims that there are more masculine women and feminine men in today’s world, she opines that it is the result of the Women’s Liberation Movement as the gender categories to place these people. She says

You’re feminine if you are graceful, refined, compassionate, kind, sensitive, tender, soft and patient. stylish and fashionable, vulnerable, submissive, flexible, adaptable, supportive, receptive, attentive, respectful, tactful, emotional, dependent, passive, quiet, accepting, sensual, vibrant, gentle, helpful, and caring. If your focus is on love and sharing, if you’re a good listener, and you have soft, flowing energy – you’re feminine. You’re masculine if you’re strong,

⁶⁷ See dukeupress.edu/author/Hale,C.%20Jacob. Accessed 9/14/2016

⁶⁸ Talia Bettcher (2014), *Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues*.

aggressive, active, tough-skinned, independent, logical, competitive, tough, rebellious, controlling and protective.⁶⁹

In this categorization, a person who is tenacious, attentive, and has a take-charge attitude is masculine, that they are also disciplined, independent, stable and practical, passionate but non-emotional. Her position stems from her desire to help people find suitable romantic partners. These are very relevant to this discourse as these are the traits that cut across gender. This kind of demarcation may lead to discontentment, as people discover that they possess or lack certain traits associated to their gender; they could interpret this as incongruence between mind and body. This could lead to dissatisfaction that could evolve into transgender thoughts.

Also, the study reveals differences in geographical variations in gender perception and approach, especially among Africans. According to a survey carried out in Lagos, Nigeria on genderphobia and gender presentation, cross dressing in boys and girls result in a desire to be in vogue, many cross-dress for performance. Particularly, many women cross dress because it gives them a sense of professionalism in their chosen carriers, making them peers with the men in the same profession. It is also common to come across muscular girls or masculine girls, who identify as Miss macho. The study shows that there are four possible reasons given for this gender presentation.

- A defense against any perceived feminine weakness;
- A display of their ability to engage in combat if necessary, as two out of every five such girls have either been raped, sexually assaulted or know of someone who has been.
- Cross dressing among girls is convenient considering that they have to be aggressive like a man to make a living, in which case the feminine dress stands as an obstacle;
- Finally, cross dressing amongst the female gender reveals that not every girls like to be feminine, nor has the time and effort it takes to be female, they do not have time to preen or dress up as it is usually required of their gender.

However, blurring of gender line for men could be identified in their soft dressing, and many who wear feminine items like jewelry were usually done for performance. One wonders how

⁶⁹ Julie Ferman (2012), www.CupidsCoach.com Accessed on 5/12/2018.

easy it is for one to recognise a transgendered person. As had been previously indicated, transgenderism is a broad term used for referring to people whose gender identity or presentation, or gender identity and presentation does not fit traditional norms. Many individuals often abbreviate the term transgenderism to 'trans' because it seems convenient to pronounce, instead of going all the way saying transgendered man or transgendered woman. The term FTM (female to male) and MTF (male to female), may also come in handy. A major challenge in the transgender practice is the use of pronouns. Many transgendered individuals would change this pronoun when referring to themselves. They would also change their names and their dressing style to reflect their new status so that one would be forced to readapt mentally when relating with them. To effect this change, some individual would take hormones, and others could move a step further by doing sex change surgeries. On the other hand the gender queer would use subtlety in their identity. The reason for this is that their physical presentation would be a mix of male and female. Hence, it is always difficult to categorise the gender queer because they blur the gender lines by their acts and dressing.

However, regardless of a person's gender identity or sexual orientation, Leslie Feinberg, insist that these individuals have a right to use the term or label with which they feel most comfortable, and that they should be accommodated regardless of their label of choice because gender-related labels are not proper description for trans people. He insists that in "many queer communities, 'butch', 'femme,' and 'androgynous' were terms employed to describe their place on a spectrum of masculinity and femininity."⁷⁰ On the other hand, "In straight communities, we may use terms like 'girly-girl' and 'tomboy' to label gender characteristics or expressions."⁷¹ The many definitions of the term transgenderism make the term so elaborate, that it could become confusing. However, for the purpose of this work, the term transgender is used to refer to only those individuals who have actually had sex change surgeries. They would then act and dress differently as a way to express their preferred gender. Transitioning means that the individual has decided to go through surgery. However, before this decision is made, the individual should have gone for medical diagnosis. Then

⁷⁰ Leslie Feinberg (2006), *Transgender Liberation : A Movement Whose Time Has Come . The Transgender Studies Reader*, Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. (Eds). 205

⁷¹ <http://www.isna.org . taxonomy/term/30>. Accessed 9/10/2016

hormonal therapy is administered, after which the individual is asked to live the lifestyle of the opposite gender for a period of at least one year, before the surgery would then take place.

Following from the above, a person who displays any of these traits is either having gender identity crises, or they were not comfortable with their bodies, and they were tending towards transgenderism, but not necessarily conclusive.

- People who cross-dress: This is very true for men when they add items attributed to the female to their appearance. Such items vary from, ear rings, hairdos and cosmetics.
- The desire to use different pronoun also identifies individuals with transgender tendencies or genderphobia, when individual address themselves with pronouns that are not consistent with their apparent gender categories.
- Name Change: Transgendered persons are most likely to have a name change. They would either switch to male or female version of their birth name, or they also choose a name that reflects their adopted gender, or they could choose unisex names.
- For women, their gender issues could involve all of the above, yet strict masculine appearance could reveal that they are having issues with gender performance. It could also mean that they are trying to assert themselves as discussed in feminine men and masculine women.
- Choice of Object: When children choose toys that are not consistent with their gender or toys designed for the opposite gender, this could be an indication of gender identity disorder, or it could just mean that they are adventurous and creative.
- Actions Engaged: The games that children choose could also indicate their gender identity or gender preference.
- Gender Traits: The gender codes attributes identify certain traits and character to the sexes, nonconforming traits could also be classified as gender disorder.

However, just as it had been noted above, the type of transgender issues vary from society to society, many of the above criteria change in accordance with the society where it is expressed.

2.3 BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR TRANSGENDERISM

Scientifically, it has been estimated that in “approximately one in every ten thousand infant girls, an abnormal sex chromosome pattern is found in which the second female sex chromosome is either defective or missing ... One out of every one thousand infant boys has one or more extra Y chromosome.”⁷² This condition and statistics reveal hermaphroditism, as a factor that necessitates attention. Yet in gender studies, only two categories of the sexes are recognised: the male gender and the female gender, male organ and the female organ. No provision have been made for persons with multiple organs or people with unidentified organs (hermaphrodite). Studies in human reproduction have shown that the determining factors in biological sex of the male and the female does not lie in the visible anatomy, but rather in the presence of hormones. This point is emphasised when James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi stated that “an extreme example of biological bisexuality can be found in the rare cases of true hermaphroditism, when a person is born with both female and male reproductive and genital structures.”⁷³ According to them, scientific researchers reveal that hormonal makeup of a person could be found in both genders, and that chromosomes were the determining factor of sexual features and characterisation. Hence, in the development of the foetus, it is the amount of hormones and not the kind of hormones that determine the biological sex of the foetus. At formation, it is believed that the foetus has the tendency to form any of the genders. For them “most people talk as if women and men are dicotonomous hormonally as noted by the frequent reference to estrogen and progesterone as being female hormones. While referring to the androgens as the ‘male hormones’. In fact, all three hormones are found in the blood stream of all men and women.”⁷⁴ This means that there are many abnormal hormonal conditions, owing from chromosomal abnormalities.

2.3.1 Chromosomal Abnormalities

According James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi, the XX chromosomes make up a girl and the XY chromosomes make up a boy. But where too many or too few of the chromosomes connect, they create anomalies, which could result in the presence of what is referred to as

⁷² James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi (1995), *Sex And Gender: The Human Experience*, (New York: Brown and Benchmark), p. 47-48.

⁷³ Doyle and Paludi (1995), 4.

⁷⁴ Doyle and Paludi (1995),. 4

‘Androgenital Syndrome’. They explain that Androgenital Syndrome is a hormonal abnormality. That

Some female foetuses have suffered the masculinising consequences of either of being exposed either naturally or medically to an overdose of androgen or androgenlike chemicals. During fetal development...leading to various degrees of masculinization of the external sex structures.⁷⁵

This case is common and peculiar to the female gender because it results in contradictions as girls could be raised as boys or boys as girls. This error becomes apparent to the parents, when the child does not develop their necessary organs as they grow. As the child develops, surgical procedures may become necessary at puberty to help facilitate the growth of their appropriate anatomy. The result could either be positive or negative as the case may be.

The implications of this condition manifest as the children continue to develop into adolescence, and later adulthood, where they would be required to adjust their sex/gender designation, which follows that, if this condition was not identified at birth, it is left to the parents to place the child in a category and raise the child using their discretion. There are other complications which could occur from the above biological state like the Androgen-In Sensitivity Syndrome. The person who suffers from this condition could be a male who usually grows up as a female because “the androgens produced by the testes do little if anything to foster the development of a male’s internal or external structure...not responding to the masculinizing effect of the androgens.”⁷⁶ Accordingly, despite the fact that they grow up as female, they will neither menstruate nor grow breast because they would lack the internal sex structure of the female. Furthermore, James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi insisted that the outcome and the result of such androgenital condition depended on the amount of the androgen substance in the foetus’s blood stream and the time at which it occurs during conception.

⁷⁵ Doyle and Paludi (1995), 45

⁷⁶ Doyle and Paludi (1995), 46

2.3.1. 1 Turner Syndrome

The following have been identified as the different abnormal chromosomes patterns; they are: the Turner Syndrome, the Kline Felters Syndrome, the Double Y syndrome, Vaginal Agenesis and Androgen-In-Sensitivity. Consequently, the Turner Syndrome is a condition found in one of every one thousand girls. The discovery is that, the second female sex chromosomes which direct development in the gonadal tissue is either missing or defective. This influence the absence of ovaries as the girls continues to develop, resulting into the lack of or late development of their breast, and later their inability to menstruate. Accordingly, the short stature of such girls is a major identifying feature through which the syndrome could be detected. These features become observable from the age of five (5). Their ovaries are said to malfunction, leading to premature death of the egg cells, this is called oocytes. It is a state in which their ovarian tissue degenerates before birth. These girls are said to miss the development that comes with puberty-early discovery of the condition could be assisted with hormonal therapy. Yet, the therapy could not guarantee complete restoration, as a major defect caused by the syndrome continues to remain. These girls may not be able to conceive, as they are mostly infertile. According to Das Turner and others:

About 30 percent of females with Turner Syndrome have extra folds of skin on the neck (webbed neck), a low hairline at the back of the neck, puffiness or swelling (lymphedema) of the hands and feet, skeletal abnormalities, or kidney problems. One third to one half of individuals with Turner syndrome are born with a heart defect, such as a narrowing of the large artery leaving the heart (coarctation of the aorta) or abnormalities of the valve that connects the aorta with the heart (the aortic valve). Complications associated with these heart defects can be life-threatening.⁷⁷

Furthermore, these individuals would display different disabilities varying from their intelligence, delays in body developments, learning disabilities, and the possibility of behavioral problems.

⁷⁷ See <https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/turner-syndrome>. 6/01/2016.

2.3.1.2 Klinefelters Syndrome

The Klinefelters Syndrome is a case of surplus X or Y chromosomes in the child. When this is found in a boy as it is usually the case, he is found to be gangly in height and have the possibility of impairment in his intellectual functions. This condition was discovered and recorded in 1942 by Kline Felters and others. It was a published report on the survey carried out on nine different men. These men were found to have “enlarged breasts, sparse facial and body hair, small testes, and an inability to produce sperm.”⁷⁸ Eighteen years after the report, it was discovered that these men had an extra X chromosome. The Klinefelter Syndrome, therefore, is a disorder associated with men the indication is that such men would be infertile. The disorder is identified with the following medical variants, 47,XXY or XXXY,⁴⁸. Apart from having small testes these males also experience late puberty, and they could display psychosocial problems. Klinefelters is said to “affect metaphysical and cognitive development.”⁷⁹ The symptom is said to affect one or two out of every one thousand infant boys. According to Witkins and others, individuals with Klinefelters Syndrome are mostly considered as retarded people with a tendency for criminal activities, hence the associations with crime since many are found in the prison.

The medical term XYY Syndrome refers to the double Y as a chromosomal disorder that affects mostly males. The double Y chromosome is said to be found in one of every one thousand men and the cause of the syndrome had been determined to be the presence of an extra Y chromosome. In the chromosomal distribution, a man should have one X and one Y chromosome. In these abnormal situation, these individuals have one X and two Y chromosomes. The main feature of the double Y Syndrome is the inability of men to handle frustrating situations; hence persons with this syndrome have quick temper. Accordingly, ‘the rear disease organisation’, double Y was initially miss-identified as the super-male disease because of quick temper and aggressive nature of the men associated with the syndrome as they are said to be lacking in empathy. The organization held that though these individuals may display learning disabilities with behavioral issues, they were not overly aggressive, and it does not result in mental illness. Accordingly, speech therapy and tutoring could help them

⁷⁸ See <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/945649-overview>. Accessed on 6/01/2016.

⁷⁹ See [Ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/klinefelters](http://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/klinefelters). Accessed on 6/01/2016.

overcome difficulties in life; they could also lead full, healthy, and normal lives. Also, the result of this abnormality is observed in “learning disabilities and behavioral problems such as impulsivity. Intelligence is usually in the normal range, although IQ is on average 10-15 points lower than siblings.”⁸⁰

2.3.1.3 Androgen-Insensitivity Syndrome

Another abnormal hormonal condition is Androgen-Insensitivity Syndrome, it is a condition that affects sexual development before the birth of babies, and it is evident during puberty in young people. It is a condition affecting the male gender. It is held that “their bodies are unable to respond to certain male sex hormones (called androgens), they may have mostly female sex characteristics or signs of both male and female sexual development”⁸¹. When there is complete androgen insensitivity, the body would not use androgens at all. The persons with androgen-insensitivity syndrome usually possess external sex characteristics of the female, alongside a male internal sex structure. This means that they have testes (which would require surgery to be removed so that they do not develop cancer). These individuals are said to also have little or no pubic hair as a result of androgen insensitivity. They would not have a uterus. The absence of uterus affects their fertility, since they could not menstruate. Yet, they have been raised as females, with the female gender identity. According to this “study”⁸², those individuals with mild androgen insensitivity are born with male sex characteristics. They are also infertile, despite the fact that they experience breast enlargement at puberty.

2.3.1.4 Vaginal Agenesis

Vaginal Agenesis refers to a hormonal condition, it develops before the birth of the child. The major feature of this condition is that the vagina fails to develop fully. This results in other problems, evident in the presence of small uteruses or no uterus at all. The treatment for this condition involves administration of hormones and surgery. After treatment, the individual may have a normal sex life, but most women with the disorder are said to be unable to

⁸⁰ See <http://rarediseases.org/rare-diseases/xyy-syndrome> Accessed on /6/01/2016.

⁸¹ See <http://ighr.nim.nih.gov/.../> Accessed on 6/01/2016.

⁸² See <http://www.mayoclinic.com/.../> Accessed on 6/01/2016.

conceive. Having a baby would then be through in vitro fertilization, that is surrogate motherhood. In conclusion, James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi insist “that biological factors are necessary but not sufficient in producing the characteristic that we attribute to sex”⁸³. The resulting question is, how did these hormonal issues affect a person’s identity or what is the connection between gender identity and sexual orientation? Could these chromosomal disorders have any connection with gender dysphoria? As transgenderism trends, the confusion is not only between the terms sex and gender, but between sexual identity and gender identity. The reason is that as individuals identify with unusual gender identities, people may confuse their choice as having a relation to their sexual identity and orientation.

Hence, any of these hormonal disorders could be termed as intersex condition. Since these conflicting hormones are connected to the internal and external development of people, it could later end up as a mental condition, gender identity disorder. According to the American Psychological Association, there are likely connections between gender identity and sexual orientation. The two reasons provided for this assertion include a sexual feeling where men are attracted to both men and women or neither, and a sexual feeling where women are attracted to other women. They insisted that these attractions always remain even after the individuals have had surgeries, necessitating further exploration of sex and sexuality.

2.3.2 Human Sexuality

Following from the above, Robert C. Solomon and Linda Nicholson, describes sexuality “as normal genital – genital intercourse between one male and one female.”⁸⁴ According to them sexual practices that fall outside the above are usually described as abnormal or pervasive, like Oscar Wilder, who was jailed for practising pervasive or abnormal sex. Theorists are now attempting to place such sexual attitude in a category, emphasizing the link between a person’s sexual orientation and sexual identity, and wonder about the influence of genetic inheritance or biological make-up in this connection. Again, they explored the idea that sexuality

⁸³ Doyle and Paludi (1995), 46.

⁸⁴ Robert C. Solomon, and Linda J. Nicholson (1995), Sexual identity, *Encyclopedia of bioethics, sex, genetics and human reproduction* Reich, T.W. (Ed), (New York :Macmillan) 1026.

described “a particular kind of person or more appropriately a specific type of activity.”⁸⁵ The reason for their concern stems from the fact that those involved in other kinds of sexual activities categorized abnormal, insist that their sexual expression is neither abnormal nor need to be cured. Rather it is “a difference in preference that should be tolerated within a free and open society.”⁸⁶ Hence the need to further examine their sexual identity, as seen in the work of Anne Melanie.

According to Anne Melanie, many persons allude to sex change surgery as a therapy for gender identity disorder, while others engage in transgenderism for pleasure because they can do it. She identifies (4) four features of human sexuality, the anatomical (physical) sex, sexual preference, gender identity and mental sex. Anatomical sex refers to the apparent gender of an individual which would either be male or female. Its identification is based on physical sex characteristics; physical sex refers to the body. Sexual preference deals with the choice of the individual in relation to their intimate relationships. According to Anne Melanie, sexual preferences could shift at different stages of life. The individual sexual preference could change from either heterosexual to bisexuals or homosexual. At one point such a person may give up on the idea of sex all together. Anyhow, sexual preference becomes apparent by having a sexual interest in members of the same, opposite or either sex.

On the other hand gender identity has been defined by the “*Ontario Brochure of Gender Identity and Expression*,”⁸⁷ as a person’s internal and their individual experience of gender. It relates with their sense of being any of the category a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. The article indicates that the individual’s gender identity could be the same as the gender assigned to them at birth, or it could defer from the birth-assigned sex. The brochure also determines that gender identity could defer fundamentally from a person’s sexual orientation. In this wise, gender expression reveals how a person wants to be viewed publicly. This includes behaviours and appearances in areas such as dressing, hair, make-up, body language and voice. Hence, gender identity involves the categories into which the gender is divided.

⁸⁵ Solomon, and Nicholson (1995) 1027.

⁸⁶ Solomom and Nicholson (1995), 1027

⁸⁷See [http://www. Ontario Brochure of Gender Identity and Expression.com](http://www.OntarioBrochureofGenderIdentityandExpression.com) Accessed on 09/09/2016.

In like manner, mental sex refers to how the individual think about sex. The *Urban Dictionary* describes it as “the communion or penetration of one's mind into or with another's mind, can often be akin to thinking of one another in a ‘sexual’ way to some greater or lesser extent or just taking in the push and pull of one another in the form of thought tag.”⁸⁸ Mental sex, therefore, designates the roles of the hormones in identifying gender. Melanie claims that “crises occur when mental sex conflicts with the anatomical sex.”⁸⁹ The predicaments become intensive when people seek to change their gender identity and expect understanding from family, friends and associates. The expected reactions could switch from rejection to acceptance and revulsion, stigmatisation, ostracism or violence, and many other responses.

2.4 TRANSGENDERISM AND GENDER FOUNDATIONALISM

Gender foundationalism is the idea that people can decide their gender from personality and behaviours that allows for ‘givens’ in biology. In *Interpreting Gender*, Linda J. Nicholson analyses the biological foundationalism and biological determinism of the genders. Nicholson insists that gender had been used to contrast sex in different settings, that it depicts a social construction, employed in relation to male and female distinctions of bodies, that is, the male and the female bodies. She claims that this social reference of gender becomes necessary as theorists come to grasp of societal influence in people’s behaviours and personalities. She holds that the influences boomerang into debates about how bodies appear. Previous discourse in gender studies revealed a distinction between sex and gender, that sex describes biological characteristics (gonadal, chromosomal, and hormonal), and that gender refers to social norms. The factors which influence these terminologies were mostly the physical appearances of the different people, especially their dress presentation.

In contrast, Linda Nicholson explains that sex had been used to portray that which is biologically given, that sex could not be detached from the body because body is included in sex. She explains that the word sex has strong biological undertones, found in the difference between men and women that it was not until the second wave of gender awareness, that character traits were added to the term as a means of demarcating between the genders. Still

⁸⁸ See <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=mental%20sex> Accessed on 3/6/2016)

⁸⁹ See Anne Melanie (1997), Introduction to sex change. Available at http://www.academia.edu/190562//sex_change Accessed on 28/3/2014.

explaining, she insists that 'gender' has its root in the definitions of self-identity, in that it explains the place of society in character formation. That gender was not only viewed as not replacing "sex, 'sex' seemed essential in elaborating the very meaning of gender."⁹⁰ As 'gender', was employed as a replacement for sex, "a means to undermine the encompassing pretensions of sex."⁹¹ Following from the fore, she contends that gender was introduced to supplement sex and not to replace it.

Accordingly, biological foundationism views the body as the determinate factor upon which characters are imposed, here the body is seen as a type of rack upon which different cultural artifacts, especially, those of personality and behaviour are thrown. This is that of "biological foundationalism"⁹² rather than biological determinism, hence portraying the body as a frame in the homes of different individuals. The purpose of the 'rack' is for people to place their outer coats, pending when they would be ready to use it, hence individuals could decide to add additional items on the rack, such as scarves and ties (even sock). She opines that whatever item is added to the 'rack' vary from home to home. Hence, the 'rack' is where identity is hung. It reveals that each time a person decides to present themselves to the world, they go to the rack to choose how they want to appear.

Linda J. Nicholson employs the term biological foundationalism to distinguish the differences and similarities in biological determinism. The theory suggest a relationship between personalities and behaviours that is far from accidental because it allows for 'givens' in biology to coexist with different aspects of human personality and behaviour. This theory enables feminist to accept the link between constancies of nature and social constancies. Also, it allows theorists to be more susceptible to the differences among women, enabling them to explain the differences in the social behaviour of women. According to her, the 'coat rack' analogy could be proffered as an explanation for the differences between men and women across cultures and societies. For her, biological foundationalism is different from biological determinism in the sense that biological foundationalism does not associate the differences in the genders with limitations and problems. That these problems when identified tend towards

⁹⁰ Linda Nicholson (1998), *Interpreting Gender. Race class gender and sexuality: The big questions.* Naomi Zack, Laura Shrage and Crispin Sartwell (Eds), (New Jersey: Wiley and sons) 188.

⁹¹ Nicholson (1998), 188

⁹² Nicholson (1998), 189.

coexistence than intersection. It means that biological foundationalism makes allowances for the fact that all women (and men) in the society do not have to behave in the same way. Nicholson points out that all societies have distinctions for being male and being female. Also that these distinctions relate to the body, despite the different interpretations of meaning.

As the theory portrays identity as a façade or a fake phenomenon, the reason for this stems from the idea that people are only acting when they reveal identity, this is, the performance theory. In transgenderism, this has two sides: on the one side, it means that if those claiming gender disorder were only acting, then they need not go through the surgery, that, the act of cross-dressing should be satisfactory. But on the other hand, they insist that their identity issue is mental and innate, having to do with how they feel. In which case, it is not an act, as there is no physical rack to pick their identity from. Yet, even the notion that people have alter ego (double mental identity) makes one hesitate in drawing a conclusion.

Still the difference between a person's biological sex and gender expression had been a constant feature in feminist debates. Mari Mikkola attempts to put it in another term, this time anabolic and katabolic energy. She says:

Sex' denotes human females and males depending on biological features (chromosomes, sex organs, hormones and other physical features); 'gender' denotes women and men depending on *social* factors (social role, position, behaviour or identity). The main feminist motivation for making this distinction was to counter biological determinism or the view that biology is destiny.⁹³

According to his article *sex/gender distinction*, Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thompson argue that social, psychological and behavioural traits were the result of metabolic state, that, as long as women conserve their 'anabolic' energy, they become 'passive, conservative, sluggish, stable and uninterested in politics'. While the men expend their surplus 'katabolic' energy, the result is that they are 'eager, energetic, passionate, variable and interested in both political and social matters'. In further examination, Robert Stoller claim that the word "sex is used to pick out biological traits and 'gender' to pick out the amount of femininity and masculinity a person exhibited. Although (by and large) a person's sex and gender

⁹³ See: The sex/gender distinction.<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-gender/#sexdis>

complemented each other, separating out these terms seemed to make theoretical sense”⁹⁴. Feminist countered this biological determinism by insisting that behavioural and psychological features have social and not biological causes. What this point to, is choice, and not innateness of gender like it had been claimed. Why then would anyone feel that they were ‘trapped in the wrong bodies? Yet, when surgery comes to intervene, it is reported that the problem remains, which is termed ‘transgender regret’. This then is the true stat of feeling trapped as many would then prefer their former state, instead of sex chang surgeries. What is it about gender traits that results in genderphobia? Can gender dysphoria really be resolved?

2.4.1 Making Sense of Genderphobia

Michael S. Kimmel’s article gives a peek at a possible reason for genderphobia and a possible reason for gender crises. According to Kimmel, “masculinity (is perceived) as a constantly changing collection of meanings that we construct through our relationships with ourselves, with each other and with our world.”⁹⁵ By this submission, the genders are a social construction whose meaning and definitions change constantly. Kimmel, explains that the shift in meaning, especially, for men, revolves around work and identities, that “manhood is neither static nor timeless”⁹⁶. As society and it people keep changing its standard for manhood, thus making it a herculean task to satisfy the demands of the expectation of what it means to be a man, he argued that ‘manhood is neither static nor timeless’ that it does not just bubble-up at birth, rather the definition of manhood encounters constant changes. Hence, many men view it as a herculean task striving to meet the expectation of what it means to be a man. Kimmel claims that the constant shift in the meaning and definitions of man, concerns their personal identities. For him, the American model of manhood is a tragic one, where the man strives to meet many unwritten conditions and expectations. He holds that masculinity could be defined more by what one is not, rather than by ‘whom’ one is. His work emphasizes that men have fears, and that they also suffer humiliation when they do not live up to the expectation of others. And when they do not meet up with the role streamlined for them to

⁹⁴ See <http://plato.stanford.edu/entiries/feminism-gender/#gender>, Accessed on 3/9/2016

⁹⁵ Michael Kimmel (1997), Masculinity as Homophobia: Fear, Shame, And Silence. *The Construction Of Gender Identity. Towards A New Psychology Of Gender*. Gergen, and Davis S. N. (Eds). (New York: Routledge). 224

⁹⁶ Kimmel (1997), 224.

perform, it could result in genderphobia. This position may have several authentic points since there seems to more men seeking sex change than women. In addition, the gap of knowledge about masculinity could be found in the void of grooming for the position or the associated social responsibility. The general opinion is that manhood comes naturally “once a boy child is born, he is thrown into the world to become a man.”⁹⁷ In another way, this is a misconception that can be handled by proper parenting. Parents should de-emphasize the gender codes in upbringing of their children, and emphasize more on the need for children to have authentic existence. Again, proper mentoring of young people can help them understand that they can achieve many things, without the concern for body types; this is to avoid eventual catastrophes of people engaging in hormonal applications and sex change surgeries that do more harm than good. In truth, unfair expectations could be tough on both genders, especially, when they were never prepared to expect otherwise. Hence not only men, but many women face tough demands on them, in being women, making womanhood ‘painful’.

However, Judith Lober, supports Michael Kimmel’s position on ‘non-static’ standard of gender codes by explaining that the genders are not static, as gender evolves out of human interactions. She said “gender, like culture is a human production that depends on everyone constantly doing gender.”⁹⁸ Susan Burdo confirms the oppressive expectation of others in the society, by explaining that her students both males and females have “experienced their lives as a perpetual battle with their bodies.”⁹⁹ Burdo was referring to eating disorders and feminine worries about the shape of their bodies. What this means is that, members of both genders, apparently, feel a compulsion to meet the gender codes and categories that guide them. These codes then, are the coercing force, which is compelling the genders to perform. These traits are therefore expected from members of any of the genders. It compels individuals to act and react in a certain way, which they many find too demanding.

⁹⁷ Onoyona-Ekeocha Soky (2017). *Charisma: Grooming Youngmen for emerging manhood* (Lagos : Dunamis publication) Vii.

⁹⁸ Judith Lober (1994), *The Social Construction Of Gender. Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Reading*. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee. (Eds) (Connecticut: McGraw-Hill). 143.

⁹⁹ Susan Burdo (1997), *Anorexia nervosa: Psychopathology as the crystalizing of culture. Towards a new Psychology of gender*. Gergen, and Davis S. N. Eds. (New York: Routledge), 424.

In like manner, Valarie Walkerdine in her article *Femininity as Performance*, protests against this performance, as she observe that the upbringing of girls prepares them to be weak, in nature molding them to be docile. That “as girls at school, as women at work, we are used to performing (pretending). As these demographic metaphors shows that life is a performance, in which we do nothing but act out a series of roles.”¹⁰⁰ Walkerdine, objects to this performance, frowning at the conditioning of girls to be wimps, feminine and passive, following from a long time characterization. She queries this stereotype by stressing that, “if masculinity and femininity may both be seen as defenses against the qualities held by the ‘other’, then there can be no natural division of the sexes.”¹⁰¹ This reveals how difficult it is to define certain traits as belonging to any particular gender. That is, how did people make sense of their gender, is it possible to know the expectations without the gender standard, codes, and categories? Saying it differently, can people survive their existence without a code or a guide to expected behavior.

According to James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi, acquiring gender role identity is fundamental to the development of the genders. They assert that:

The term gender role identity is often used parsimoniously to describe a complex developmental process that include the following, gender role preference, gender role identification, gender role orientation, knowledge of sex determined role standard and gender role-adoption.¹⁰²

Accordingly, gender role preference refers to how people adopt the behavior associated with their gender, while gender role identification is the creation of roles for the genders to fit into. Furthermore, gender role orientation refers to each person’s choice in gender. Knowledge of sex-determined roles’ standard refers to individual’s concepts and espousal of gender role stereotypes of both femininity and masculinity. They further explain that the gender role adoption indicate “individuals overt behaviour that is characteristic of a given sex, not to

¹⁰⁰ Valeria Walkerdine (1997), *Femininity as performance. Towards a new Psychology of gender*. Gergen, and Davis S. N. (Eds), (New York: Routledge), 171.

¹⁰¹ Walkerdine (1997) 181.

¹⁰² James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi (1995), *Sex And Gender: The Human Experience*, (New York: Brown and Benchmark), p. 66.

stated preference per se, it is the activity in which individuals participate, in rehearsing and practising the characteristic mode of behavior of the preferred role.”¹⁰³

Still trying to make sense of genderphobia, and exploring different reactions to alterantive gender expressions, Patrick Hopkins point to homophobia, stressing on the repression theory, irrationality, ignorance and political response hypothesis. The repression hypothesis, reveals that people who attack gays and lesbians are individuals who are repressing their attraction to the same sex. The irrationality/ignorance hypothesis holds that rejection of homosexuals is the result of fear and ignorance on the side of those denouncing it. And political response hypothesis claims that homosexualism is a threat to heterosexuals. In Hopkins’ opinion, these explanations have the hidden background of heterosexualism as gender identity. Hopkins holds that those who were arguing for heterosexism claim that it is the essence of manhood, a suspicious position which insists that manhood should be unchanged and constant. Hence, it claims that anatomy is prior to manhood. He says that not just anyone can make the performance; the reason is that anatomy is prior to being a man. That performance is only a validation of the anatomy. He holds that people frown at men who dare to act out other erotic orientation, as this is viewed as un-masculine, and a betrayal of the standard notion of manhood.

For Patrick Hopkins, the gender categories portray factors that affect labour, reproduction and it associated responsibilities; these include: parenting, political, and economic powers. It also involves sexual practices and the use of language. Other areas consist of “cognitive skills, possession of personality traits, spirituality, and religious beliefs and more.”¹⁰⁴ According to him, various members of the society have their material and psychological status defined for them, also their biological sex determines them and identifies them as members of a particular gender, which later influences their personal identities. Hence, people and society are the compelling forces in gender identification. To further buttress this position, Hopkins, draws our attention to the binary system of gender which recognises only male and female. He holds that in many societies these are the parameter with which the society tends to define what it

¹⁰³ Doyle and Paludi (1995), 66.

¹⁰⁴ Patrick D. Hopkins (1997), *Gender Treachery: Homophobia, Masculinity And Threatened Identities. Race, Class, Gender And Sexuality: The Big Questions*. Naomi Zack, Laura Shrage, and Crispin Sartwell (Eds), (New Jersey: Wiley and Sons) 170.

means to be member of a particular gender. He explains that once a child is born, the process of training begins. Hopkins insists that people submit to this grouping, as they have no choice. These codes are the way they could make sense of their gender, as society dictates only two categories, that there must either be male or female, masculine or feminine; there is no halfway. He insists that people use the code as a parameter to make sense of their gender, and also make sense of the self; many automatically fit in. He claims that the binary system created certain conditions and divide to which individuals adopt. Hence, any threat to the gender categories automatically becomes a threat to personal identity; as personal identity is linked to gender identity. He reasons that this accounts for why gender non-conformist met with resistance as their stance is viewed as a plan to destabilise the foundation of belief systems, soon to reflect in other aspects of people's lives, social, political, and personal existence. This explains why many societies are prejudiced against any risk to the gender divide, they would rather maintain the status quo.

For Patrick Hopkins, any effort to change the current status is viewed as a threat and the threat to gender identity is perceived as gender treachery. In this definition, he claims that "a gender traitor can be thought of as anyone who violate the 'rules' of gender identity / gender performance, that is, someone who rejects or appears to reject the criteria by which the genders are differentiated."¹⁰⁵ A gender traitor then, is anyone who refuses to act the traditional roles assigned to the genders, according to Hopkins gender traitors were responsible for the production of the concept of homophobia. That homophobia describes the assault, threat, violence, and victimization encountered by those who have been targeted as gender traitors. He associates homophobic tendencies with verbal assault, physical abuse, economic deprivation and injustice against individuals with different gender expression. He insists that homophobia evolves as a political term rather than a psychiatric one, since it has received acceptance from political and cultural arenas. However, he identifies the hypotheses of repression as the reason for homophobia. This repression is expressed among those (Gay) who are fighting their attraction to the same tendency. Homophobia, according to him, results from social training which portrays certain sexual orientation as acceptable and others as not. In this view, gender traitors are seen to reject the binary divide when they change their

¹⁰⁵ Hopkins (1997), 171.

personal identities. Yet, on the other hand, genderphobia could be traced to the attempt at creating “proper gender identity and proper sexual orientation.”¹⁰⁶ Hence, Hopkins suggested the elimination of the binary system to challenge the assumption that one must be sexed or gendered to be a person, hence necessitating a study of personhood, what it takes to be a person and different theories in personal identity.

However, in reviewing Patrick Hopkins article on *Gender treachery*, Gabriela McCall Delgado evaluation reveals an omission. Delgado explains that the omission involves lack of explanation for “why a behavior that does not fit into the binary categories becomes a threat?” Why and how having a third category threatens the concept of masculinity.”¹⁰⁷ Delgado also observed that Hopkins argument about the gender categories were not convincing enough. As he could not determine if the two categories would be the solution for societal order, in contrast to a society that has three or more gender categories. Delgado insists that Hopkins did not make a proper distinction of how homosexuality “infringes’ on the definition of masculinity in such a way that it becomes a threat to it.”¹⁰⁸ In addition, Hopkins work did not explain how gender identity and sexual orientation could lead to transgenderism since he claims that factors in gender categories affect labour, reproduction and it associated responsibilities. Following from Hopkins’ view changing ones sex could be viewed as gender treachery since people abandon one gender for the other.

2.5 TRANSGENDERISM AND DIFFERENT ARGUMENTS IN TRANSGENDER DISCOURSE

Transgenderism and its associated practices like bodily mutilation, hormonal therapy and sex change surgeries have generated a lot of arguments, some commending the practice and others rejecting it. For instance, Germaine Greer views male to female (MTF) transsexuals as ‘rapist’ because they appropriate to themselves female body without the female experiences, that is, the experience of oppression and suppression. In her opinion, sex roles are given not chosen. Hence, she opines that male to female transsexuals are men. And those female to male (FTM) transsexuals are women. She is of this opinion because male to female

¹⁰⁶ Hopkins (1997), 179.

¹⁰⁷ See Gabriela McCall Delgado www.authorsprofile. Accessed on 2018.

¹⁰⁸ McCall Delgado

transsexuals have avoided the history of oppression experienced by many women. She holds that since they were not part of this history of oppression, therefore, “MTF are really men who are victorious of the violence done through the rigidly enforced sex role”¹⁰⁹. She clearly believes in ‘oppression’ as a prerequisite to femininity and opines that tendencies to escape sex/gender divide reveals people’s discontent with the existing sex role system. She further explains that transsexuality remains largely unacceptable and that the transsexual empire was a medical phenomenon which perpetuates transgenderism for financial benefit.

2.5.1 Accusing the Transgender Empire

Therefore, transgenderism and those involved in the practice have not only been castigated as rapists, but have been accused of having a false consciousness. Janice Raymond's *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* was foremost in accusing transgendered men of false consciousness, insisting that they were ‘poorly’ oppressed woman, that is, they were not real women, since they lack the history of oppression faced by women. Furthermore, Raymond holds that transsexualism is a construct of an evil empire that should be mandated out of existence like the Frankenstein monster. Raymond asserts that these transsexuals are manipulative as they easily trade one stereotype for the other. Raymond expressed hostility towards transgenderism when she portrayed transgendered people as demons, identifying transgendered male to female as rapist who abrogated to themselves a feminist body without experiencing the oppression attached to it. Raymond wrote that all transsexuals rape women's bodies by reducing the real female form to an artifact, and appropriating this body for themselves.

She insists that the transsexually constructed lesbian-feminist (also called butch-lesbians) violates women's sexuality and spirit, as well as rape women’s consciousness. That, men and women are seeking escape from their genders because they can not cope with the resulting demands. In a like manner, Robin Morgan describes male to female transgender people “as an opportunist, an infiltrator, and a destroyer—with the mentality of a rapist”¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁹ Greer Germaine (1979), *Feminist Perspectives on Trans Issues*. Bettcher, T. Ed. P 16.

¹¹⁰ Robin Morgan (1977), *Going Too Far: The Personal Chronicle Of A Feminist* (New York: Open road media), p.181.

Consequent to the above, Janice Raymond criticizes the medical system which perpetuates the transgender culture by accusing male medical doctors of a scheme to produce a race of fake women. She holds that these ‘dreaded’ creatures are the makeup of the transsexual empire. The ‘transsexual empire’ then applies to the patriarchal medical establishment which perpetrates sex-role oppression through surgical intervention. She uses the word ‘empire’ to refer to “a political unit having a territory of great extent, or a number of territories under a single sovereign authority”¹¹¹. For Raymond the ‘medical empire’ includes urology, gynecology and endocrinology, psychology and psychiatry. It also includes lawyers and legislators; all collaborating in hiding what she calls the sovereignty of the ‘medical empire’ by making it appear that there is some need for transsexual medical intervention. Hence, Raymond is holding the medical institution responsible for perpetuating and benefiting from the situation. She posits that the ‘transcendence of sex role’ should take precedence over sex roles. Nevertheless, it is difficult not to excuse Greer, Morgan and Raymond wrath against transsexuals because as women, one would dread sharing a bath room with a butch lesbian or transgendered Caitlyn Jenner.

In another argument, Donna Haraway employs the term ‘cyborg’, as a better reference for transgendered tendencies. The word ‘Cyborg’ was coined from science fiction literature to describe a human being who was between humans and machines. The term cyborg was then adopted by Haraway as a way of striving to understand the meaning of “a conscious, embodied, subject in an environment structured by techno-scientific practices that challenge basic and widely shared notions of what it means to be human”¹¹². Haraway opines that the cyborg is a creature in postmodernism found in the gender world, that the concept of cyborg interfere with the definition of human and the meaning of human being since the idea of being human has taken on a technical undertone. She holds that the cyborg is fictitious, because it has ‘lived’ experience which is evolving in the meaning, like ‘women’, and their experiences. Accordingly, this being had eliminated the boundary between fiction and reality; hence, it had become the new ontological reality. Therefore, the cyborg birthed a new historical transformation, one without genesis and salvation history. Haraway holds that the main

¹¹¹ See http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-gender/#_traemp

¹¹² Donna Haraway (2006), A cyborg manifesto: science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century : *The Transgender Studies Reader* pdf. Bookfi.org

trouble with cyborgs could be traced to their illegitimacy, that they are offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism.

In Donna Haraway's view the concept does not only eliminate the boundary between man and animals by encouraging bestiality, rather it makes the distinction between what is natural and unnatural ambiguous, the belief is that the machines are lively but humans are inert and inapt. In her view, this result is technical determinism, the determinist theory that evolves from technology, that the concept, "transgressed boundaries, potent fusions, and dangerous possibilities which progressive people might explore as one part of needed political work"¹¹³. For Haraway, the threat in cyborg is its tendency to dominate. She points to the domineering techniques of the cyborg, by calling us to an imagined organic body to integrate our resistance. She opines that people unite in trying to resist this new source of domination, that our lackadaisical behavior could allow the cyborg become a social reality of joint kinship with animals and machines, a world where people are not afraid of 'permanently partial identities' and contradictory standpoints. In this reality, being female, male, and even human becomes a highly complex category and very vague. This vagueness results in the search for a new meaning of the word, driven by political undertones. Cyborg writings, accordingly, would be emphasized by the power to survive. This is because the proponents of the cyborg have seized the tools that have been used to mark them as the 'other', to equally mark the world as the 'other'. Feminist cyborg would re-code "communication and intelligence to subvert command and control a literary deconstruction of post modernism, but a luminal transformation of the concept."¹¹⁴ This is because it aids a new definition of pleasures and political embodiment found in feminist writing.

In contrast Sandy Stone opposes the 'medicalized' view of transsexuality, in her work *The Empire Strikes Back: A "Posttranssexual manifesto."*¹¹⁵ Stone portrays a 'transvestite' as one who usually dresses as the 'other sex,' on the other hand a 'transsexual' reflect a person who changed their genitals to claim membership of another gender. Stone defines a transsexual as a person who categorises his or her gender identity with that of the opposite gender. She

¹¹³ Haraway (2006),

¹¹⁴ Haraway (2006),

¹¹⁵ Sandy Stone (2006), *The Empire strikes back: A posttranssexual manifesto*, *The Transgender Studies Reader* pdf. Bookfi.org. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, (Eds), p. 9

explains that transsexuals tend to perform the character of the opposite gender showing that they were in the 'wrong body'. Arguing that transsexuals are 'oppressed minority'. Stone writes against feminist ethicist Janice Raymond who accuses and portrays transsexuality as a form of false consciousness. She did this by re-examining Raymond criticism of transsexuals. She observes that Raymond fall short in identifying the sources of gender oppression. For Stone, Janice Raymond's castigation of the transsexual empire as an evil construct whose design is to invade women's power is inappropriate as it portrays transsexuals as visible symptoms of a disturbed gender system. This is because by altering the surface appearance of their bodies, transsexuals alienated themselves from their own lived history, and placed them in an inauthentic position that misrepresented their 'true selves' to others. Instead of this view, Stone calls upon transsexuals to critically reconfigure the notion of authenticity by abandoning the practice of passing as non-transsexual men and women. She aims at combating the anti-transsexual moralism embedded in certain strands of feminist thought by soliciting a new corpus of intellectual and creative works, capable of analysing and communicating to others the concrete realities of "changing sex"¹¹⁶ or gender. She also insists that the need has arisen for a redefinition of womanhood. The reason for this recommendation lies with the fact that, a redefinition will employ literary genres of writing and discourses about their embodiment and experience. Hence, the work encourages new forms of self-expression as a redefinition of woman necessarily requires the redefinition of man and what it means to be a person.

It all has to do with language usage, as Stephen Whittle said. According to him, "a trans identity is now accessible almost anywhere, to anyone who does not feel comfortable in the gender role they were attributed at birth, or who has a gender identity at odds with the labels 'man' or 'woman' credited to them by formal authorities."¹¹⁷ Whittle holds that transgender is a political term which describes a variety of experiences, including those who are not comfortable, and an uneasiness with gender role and identity. Also it relates with expectations, the queer, cross-dressers and those living in cross-gender through hormonal therapy and surgeries. Whittle observes that the accessibility of these options to different

¹¹⁶ Stone (2006),

¹¹⁷ Stephen Whittle (2006), Forward: *The Transgender studies reader*. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. (Eds). xi

transgender identity have not been resolved because of the challenges still encountered by transgendered persons, which include stigmatization, violence and death. Furthermore, he holds that transgenderism influences the usage of language, and this is apparent from attempts to identify or include proper pronouns for transgendered persons.

Whittle explains that previous studies on transgenderism points at medical or psychological reasons for the existence of transgendered people. Yet, current studies in transgenderism negate those statements which propose transgenderism as a mental or medical disorder. According to Whittle, the studies reveals that controversies in transgenderism emanate from the concepts of indistinct line between sex and gender; that sex and gender are unstable categories because they are embedded in individual experiences. He wonders whether gender could be deconstructed and reconstructed from the postmodernist perspective. In this light, homophobia and sexism should not be conditioned by one's genitals. He opines that these experiences should not be connected to intimate relationships, but should depend on self-performance. Still positing on whether gender is socially constructed or biologically given. Whittle insists that transgendered people often question their understanding of self from the perspective of nurture and environment. He wonders why they bother when the parameters are wrong. He strongly believes that many of the parameters used by 'trans theorists' to study transgenderism were based on 'poor experimental procedures'. According to him, the subject groups lacked relevant control groups as they emphasize irrelevant issues which do not concern a transgendered person. As a result, such 'psycho-medical theories' are falling by the wayside. Whittle insists that the works of transgendered people who are in the academics enables a better understanding of transgenderism as they avoid categorising it as a mental disorder, instead it exposes 'expert knowledge' on intersexed conditions. In his opinion, works on transgenderism portray a better understanding of the concept are 'gender defender', even when they are termed "gender outlaws."¹¹⁸ It is outlawed because understanding gender conditions are still controversial. Yet, he wonders if transgenderism is a natural or an unnatural phenomenon, he even wonders what their sex classification should be.

Stephen Whittle is also curious about how to the answer the question of whether having a 'sex' is prior to being human. His view includes the limitation in language, when articulating

¹¹⁸ Stephen Whittle (2006), Forward:

transgenderism as transgendered people seem to be excluded from language. The limitation results in their exclusion from basic human rights. Whittle admits that transgenderism and its resulting identity issues threaten and challenge our core beliefs about gender. He posits that the goal of transgender studies is to reverse the tool used by the regular humans in oppressing transgendered people. That transgender studies should make individual with normal sex situation uncomfortable and embarrassed. In conclusion, Whittle claims that transgender studies ought to reveal the limits of sex and gender categories, that people, agencies, and the society need to have an open approach to sex and gender performance, revealing a “world in which any identity can be imagined, performed, and named.”¹¹⁹

In like manner, Susan Stryker opines that the field of transgender studies should be concerned with:

Anything that disrupts, denaturalizes, rearticulates, and makes visible the normative linkages we generally assume to exist between the biological specificity of the sexually differentiated human body, the social roles and statuses that a particular form of body is expected to occupy, the subjectively experienced relationship between a gendered sense of self and social expectations of gender-role performance, and the cultural mechanisms that work to sustain or thwart specific configurations of gendered personhood.¹²⁰

According to Stryker, transgender studies should examine these connections, to review assumptions about sex and gender, and, biology and culture, by asking who ‘we’ are; a question which should be answered by those who create the norms, thereby creating a link between “they” and “us.” The study should query the relevance and the differences between a person’s experience and their expression of sex and gender in fundamentally different ways. Stryker proposes the need to investigate the embodied differences with a view to determining how such differences interfere with the social hierarchies because such hierarchies enable possibilities for personhood of some while eliminating it for others. For Stryker, “a ‘transgender’ was somebody who permanently changed social gender through the public presentation of self, without recourse to genital transformation”¹²¹. However, she holds that

¹¹⁹ Stephen Whittle (2006), Forward:

¹²⁰ Susan Stryker (2006), (De)Subjugated knowledge: An introduction to transgender studies. *The transgender studies reader* pdf. Bookfi.org. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. (Eds) 3.

¹²¹ Stryker (2006),

when employed for political action, it becomes an adjective for⁷ describing an “imagined community”¹²². Insisting that Transgender concern is deeply embedded in feminism, as it grapples with the meaning and identity “woman,” she suggests that transgender studies should aim at reviewing the concept of gender in the new world order, especially its epistemic framework by enumerating the practices of gendered personhood.

Furthermore, Stryker holds that the studies in post-modernism should be addressing issues like ‘what the bodies should mean’, ‘how they are represented’ and ‘what should count as a legitimate form of knowledge’. She holds that in this view, ‘matter’ would be what really ‘matters’. Hence, transgender studies have emerged at a historic moment, “collectively thinking our way into the brave new world of the twenty-first century, with all its threats and promises of unimaginable transformation through new forms of biomedical and communicational technologies”¹²³. The purpose of such studies is to pave a new wave in the understanding of the different variations in sex and gender relationships. In addressing the issue of gender as performance, Stryker holds that many transgendered individuals view their gender self ontologically as determined rather than a performance that could be ‘put on’ at will, that their bodies were not just already constituted object of knowledge, but rather a ground for knowledge. In this view, the challenge with transgenderism is that everybody is grouped under the same umbrella. hence, debates for and against follow the same style, yet it is apparent that there are people who must consider the need to regulate their biological sex, like intersex. Nevertheless, the argument still holds that many of them can survive without the surgeries, this is the dilemma.

2.5.2 Arguments for No-Surgery

Just like there are advocates for surgery, Paul McHugh argues strongly against the idea that individuals with either gender identity disorder, genderphobia or gender dysphoria need to do surgery. He advocates for no surgery in ‘*Transgender Surgery Isn't the Solution: A Drastic Physical Change Doesn't Address Underlying Psycho-Social Troubles*’. According to McHugh, legislators and the media should stop approaching transgender concerns as issues of

¹²² Stryker (2006),

¹²³ Stryker (2006), 25

fundamental human rights, rather it should be seen as mental disorder. He insists that those susceptible to this condition require people's understanding and help. He stresses that transgenderism constitutes a mental disorder, resulting from sex misalignment, which could in turn result in negative psychological outcomes. McHugh exposes the contradiction in transgenderism, particularly where the transgenders feeling of one person could not be questioned by others, and yet, the individual is expecting other people to tolerant his/her situation, as this other would go a step further to affirm them. This unquestionable nature of the condition is unacceptable to McHugh.

He holds that transgenderism is the domain of psychiatry, that instead of the supporting agencies declaring them off-limits, they should encourage further studies and more research of the condition, as there is much to be learnt in the field. McHugh buttresses his point by emphasizing that people still change their minds about their 'dysphoria' status after meeting a psychiatrist. According to his study:

When children who reported transgender feelings were tracked without medical or surgical treatment at both Vanderbilt University and London's Portman Clinic, 70%-80% of them spontaneously lost those feelings. Some 25% did have persisting feelings; what differentiates those individuals remains to be discerned.¹²⁴

McHugh further argues his position by referring to Johns Hopkins University's study between those transgendered people who had surgery, and those who did not. The period is from the 1960 to 1970. The study discovered that those who had the surgery described themselves as 'satisfied', even when they still required constant psycho-social adjustments, a condition which made them not so different from those who did not do the surgery. According to him, this result influenced the conclusion drawn by John Hopkins team that those who had the surgery were in no better condition than those who did not have the surgery. Consequently upon that study, John Hopkins hospital stopped conducting transgendered surgeries. In another case, McHugh points to the study conducted on individuals who had done the surgery at 'Karolinska Institute in Sweden'. He observed that it did not yield any better result. The study rather reveals that transgendered individuals were experiencing mental difficulties with

¹²⁴ Paul McHugh (2014), *Transgender-surgery-isnt-the-solution*.1402615120#livefyer.comments . Accessed on 5/25/2016.

adjusting to their situation, leading to suicidal tendencies. In McHugh opinion, the suicide rate alone was enough to challenge the advocacy for surgery.

In addition, Paul McHugh suspects that those who suddenly claim gender identity disorder have on ulterior motive for their claim. For instance, he queried the intention of Private Bradley Manning, who insisted that he wanted to have the sex change surgery. Manning's desire to change sex only became known after he was convicted and sentenced for treason. He was reported as saying he had always felt like a girl. The question is could he be trying to escape the rigours of his punishment? Should he be granted his desires? Who would then take responsibility for his crime? It is apparent that whether before, or after the surgery, he would be the same person. McHugh insists that the surge of young people seeking transition could be curtailed, by separating them from the suggestive environments, where all they hear about is the need to change their sex. He explains that they should be offered counseling along with family therapy. He opined that his recommendation was essential because sex change surgery only 'feminized men or masculinized women'. He concluded that continuing the sex change surgeries is only promoting mental disorders, that, "the medical treatment for transgender youth is like performing liposuction on an anorexic child"¹²⁵

Laura Amato agrees with Paul McHugh by suggesting that alternatives to sex change surgeries have been kept secret. This is because of the assumption that all transsexual individuals want surgery. Amato opines that many transsexuals would rather maintain their present situation as a result of many factors outside their control, factors like their need to maintain a job, their need for family relationship, and other social influences. They believe that changing their status would distort these aspects of their lives. However, Amato explains that these personalities could also be traumatised while trying to cope with the situation because they too could have thoughts of suicide. She recommends that people who think that they have gender identity issue should go for counseling, a therapy session, and that without necessarily resulting in surgery they could have hormonal treatment, meaning that they take hormonal drugs. Finally, she recommends that girls could have orchiectomy. Orchiectomy is the removal of the source of testosterone in the body, however, when this is done, the body would stop masculinizing, this also is another type of surgery. She also suggests cross living

¹²⁵ McHugh (2014)

which is living a life of the opposite gender on special occasions and at intervals. She says “cross-living of some kind or length of time is essential. I’m not just talking cross-dressing here. You need to live the role itself, whether it is for one day, a week, at home or seven”¹²⁶. In addition to the argument against transgender surgeries, Walt Heyers insists that “transgender regret is real even if the media tell you otherwise”¹²⁷.

2.6 TRANSGENDERISM AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO GENDERPHOBIA

Since there seem not to be a consensus on whether gender dysphoria and gender identity disorder is a mental condition or a disorder that compels many to consider sex change and transgenderism, Margaret Wetherall suggest another approach, that the gender categories and gender expectations are flexible. In her article *New Directions for a Social Psychology of Gender*, she maintains that the sexes are flexible ‘movable categories’. In that article, she sought to answer certain questions pertaining to the gender divide, by wondering whether masculinity and femininity were a set of traits or whether these characteristics were psychologically fixed by the different experiences, limitation, and each person’s potential. She holds that the ideological practices of femininity and masculinity are natural function, acting because of the inevitable result of biology or experiences, and that these experiences stem from actions which are genderized and later universalized. Accordingly, gender is then reduced to a set of codes and conventions into which the genders are expected to fit.

2.6.1 Gender Flexibility

As a result, Margaret Wetherall proposes the need for a new conceptualisation of gender in social psychology that achieving this conceptualisation requires re-analysing the existing frameworks, showing that enough justice was not done to gender studies since “people’s behavior can be predicted from their endorsement of stereotypes.”¹²⁸ In her opinion such inadequate studies of gender have only produced imaginary identities which then serve as the

¹²⁶ See Laura Amato (2016), Playground.com/gender_therapists.htm Accessed on 5/25/2016

¹²⁷ See Walt Heyers (2015), [.http://:www. The public discourse.com](http://www.Thepublicdiscourse.com) Accessed on 5/31/16

¹²⁸ Margaret Wetherall (1997), *Linguistic repertoires and literary criticism: A new direction for social psychology of gender: Towards a new psychology of gender*. Gergen, and Davis S. N. Eds. (London :Routledge), 153.

‘normative standard’ for the genders. She explains that the normative standard projects “sex role stereotypes as established serving as a gauge for reality, rather than reality serving as corrective for the stereotypes”¹²⁹. According to Wetherall, the dilemma is that in reality people could move between traits that are feminine, masculine, and androgynous. The study claims that men and women with androgynous tendencies are better adjusted psychologically, and are more capable humans.

However, Margaret Wetherall purpose is to find a meaning in the gender divide and determine the definite content of those categories, since it is apparent that members of both sexes have traits that cut across the genders. Wetherall explains that sex differences could no longer be assumed ‘a priori’, that it is now based on one’s ability to fit into a category. She opines that this kind of approach may be retrogressive because the differences in the gender have not been clearly stated, as they seem to project some sets of traits as positive and others as negative. She holds that social psychology should be directed at investigating “how particular versions of sexual identity are adopted for characterizing one’s own and others action in specific situation.”¹³⁰ She hopes that this investigation would help eliminate the rigidity of the genders since the content of a box could change at any time. Therefore, she believes that the focus should be on how the content had been changed and renegotiated over time. Owing from this view, Wetherall holds that ‘socio-psychology study of gender is at an impasse’, as it has failed to capture the wealth of both femininity and masculinity.

2.6.2 Gender Expansion

In like manner, Charlene Muehlenhard, explains Sandra Bem’s suggestion on the need to expand the gender categories, that “we could expand the numbers of gender. That the mode of demarcation should involve two biological sexes (female and male) crossed with three gender roles (masculine, feminine and androgynous) and crossed with three sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual).”¹³¹

¹²⁹ Margaret Wetherall (1997), 156.

¹³⁰ Margaret Wetherall (1997), 155.

¹³¹ Charlene L. Muehlenhard (1998), *The importance and danger of sexually aggressive women* (London : Routledge), 27.

Consequently, James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi point to the fact that the lack of consensus in gender studies has led to a lot of confusion about the genders. In their work they propose the Nature vs. Nurture and Active vs. Passive as theories of how gender role identity is acquired, and how people make sense of their gendered status. The ‘Nature vs. Nurture’ theory maintains that gender roles identity is acquired by nature, which indicates biology, genetic and inherited factors. On the other hand, the Nurture theory holds that the gender roles are acquired through experiences, learning and environmental factors. Both theories are resonated in the concept of passivity and activity, pointing to how people should respond to their gender. The ‘activity’ theory insists that children are biologically prepared to organize their world. In contrast, the passivity theory, refers to people who are complacent; as they accept whatever is dished out to them. Doyle and Paludi’s conclusion does not differ much from Margaret Wetherall’s when they state that “a person’s gender role identity has been especially difficult to study because of the continuing debate over what factor – biological, social or a combination of both contribute to its development.”¹³²

Still exploring different approaches, Janet Sayers studies the psychology of social domination, in her book *Sexual Contradiction: Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Feminism*, by exploring men and women’s responses to social domination. She stresses the subjective aspect of the dominance and its resistance in relation to its social and historical determination. Her work focuses on the psychoanalytic theories of sexual inequality by investigating the claims of biological determinism. Sayers asserted that the sex hormones could influence behavior insisting that “it is clear that these hormones affect dominance and aggression by way of their influence on neural transmission in the brain.”¹³³ Furthermore, she observes that children conform to the traits associated with their social gender and biological sex to bolster their identity, that children tend to see these roles as flexible and evolving as they grow. Accordingly, children learn that it is not wrong to act like the opposing sex or gender. She explains that they also learn “that psychological gender is not equivalent to biological sex.”¹³⁴ Fear, according to her, is a major factor that influences conformity, and that the focus is in the

¹³² James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi (1995), *Sex And Gender: The Human Experience*, (New York: Brown and Benchmark) 84.

¹³³ Janet Sayers (1986), *Sexual contradiction: psychology, psychoanalysis and feminism*, (London: Tavistock), 11.

¹³⁴ Janet Sayers (1986), *Sexual contradiction*: 16.

material benefit, that is, what they have to gain from conforming to what is expected of them. This benefit becomes relevant in referring to the position of the 'other'; which she holds as social conditioning. The work encourages women to be androgynous to express those traits. But, what happens if a person chooses not to identify with any of the genders? Especially, now that the gender has been described as flexible or negotiable, is there a middle way?

2.6.3 Gender Non-Identity

To explore the idea of a person existing outside the binary male and female, made Judith Butler to argue for non -identity. She examines the plurality of the self, its underpinning and the multiple facets of identity. She holds that gender is always ultimately about something else, which means that gender is not real. The question is, if gender is not real, how can it be oppressive? Or why do people feel the compulsion to perform?

Judith Butler focuses on how people relate with their society, that is, the place of anatomy in relationships by analysing the question whether gender is a social construct or biologically given. She also queries the possibility of people abstaining from any identity, considering genderphobia, and its suspicious connection to transgender surgeries. To do this, Butler brings to the fore the case of John/Joan situation. In this occasion, the individuals involved were twin boys who were taken to the hospital to be circumcised. There was an accident by the physician because the instrument used to carry out the operation melted the penis of one of the twin. The boy (John) whose penis was damaged in the process was made to go through surgery at the consent of his parents which transformed his anatomy to female. He was brought up as a girl, but complications arose as he grew to realize that something was not right about 'himself' being a girl. Therefore, he began to ask questions. Eventually, he found out the truth, he then sought to return to status quo. This incident compelled the surgeon to consider another sex reassignment surgery.

However, before the complications, the surgeon (John Money) had been citing this case as a success story of transgenderism. He had cited the surgery in several conferences, as an example of sex change, using the case to emphasize that gender was a social construct. Yet, the transgendered girl (Joan) was having crises of identity. Consequently, posing more

questions, like the ones asked by Judith Butler, of who can a person become in a world where the meaning of the subject has been set out in advance? And, what happens when ‘I’ become that for which there is no place? Hence, the surgeon had been criticized for using “Joan’s example to substantiate his own theoretical belief about gender neutrality of early childhood, about the malleability of gender, and about the primary role of socialization in gender identity.”¹³⁵ Even then, Butler observes that many transgendered individuals find it difficult to live ‘normal’ lives, because such ‘normality’ is never achieved. Butler observes that no amount of socialization could take away this innateness, by noting that there is a ‘gender core’ that is tied to the anatomy. This experience (of anatomy), therefore, questions what is considered as ‘normal’. This is because in different discussions about transgenderism, the indication is that individuals with gender dysphoria ought to do surgery, to correct the body to its supposed core, yet attempts to pin down ‘gender core’, gender essentialism or what is normal seems more complicated.

According to Judith Butler, the different surgeons who were analysing the John/Joan case conceded that; body appearance, its observance by others and the self, have an influence on social identity of men and women. Nonetheless, the issue of what is normal still remains unanswered and questionable. She opines that normality is the allure to sex surgeries. This is because whenever people examine themselves along the line of what is supposed to be normal, they find themselves lacking and desiring to do something about themselves to make the self appear normal. In further analysis, Butler examines the feeling of John/Joan in psychotherapy by raising questions like, what really identifies a person? And who bestows identity? Or what is the place of social construction or gender essentialism in personal identity?

In concluding the case of Joan/John, the medical team observed that their projection in determining that Joan (the transgendered girl) would adapt to social construction was wrong, as Joan subscribed to gender essentialism by claiming that ‘she’ had always felt like a male, despite the female constructed anatomy and the gendered training. In this light, Anne Fausto-Starling agrees with Butler by proposing the need to acknowledge other identities. In “Two

¹³⁵ Judith Butler (2006), Doing justice to someone: Sex reassignment and allegories of transsexuality. *The transgender studies reader* pdf. Bookfi.org. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle(Eds), 186.

sexes is not enough”¹³⁶, she opines that despite the fact that states and legal systems acknowledge only two sexes, our biological systems does not. That while male and female bodies stand on the extreme of biological continuum, there are other bodies that “evidently mix together anatomical components conventionally attributed to both male and female.”¹³⁷ Fausto-Starling opines that the continual use of surgery to correct intersex condition was coercive; she opines that “these medical accomplishments must be read not as progressive but as a mode of discipline. Hermaphrodites have unruly bodies; they do not fall naturally into a binary classification only a surgical shoehorn can put them there.”¹³⁸ Deducing from her research, she strongly suggests “five sexes.”¹³⁹

Consequently, Cheryl Chase insists that society creates atmosphere of acceptance and love for these individuals without them needing a transformation into the socially acceptable gender categories. And Butler resounded Chase’s query by wondering why society would hold on to gender codes and divide, as a prerequisite of human development, especially, when it had become very clear that there are individual differences. Butler questions the societal norms which seek to confer intelligence on a person, insisting that “norms circumscribe the human.”¹⁴⁰ In conclusion, Butler emphasizes that society does not yet have a place and the necessary syntax to explain the case of John/Joan, that is, the issue of none identity. This is because such an individual is “the human in its anonymity, as that which we do not yet know how to name or that which sets a limit on all naming... condition of the human as it speaks itself at the limit of what we think we know.”¹⁴¹

From the above, it seems a “third gender”¹⁴² should be considered, therefore, necessitating a review of cultural approaches to third gender. In this light, Takeshi Ishikawa explores the Hijras of India, pointing to them as example of the third gender. Thus, revealing that many ancient cultures recognised the biological condition that resulted in a separate gender, and that

¹³⁶ Fausto-Starling, A (2000), Two sexes is not enough. *Women voices feminist visions: classic and contemporary reading*. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee. (Eds).

¹³⁷ Anne Fausto-Starling (2000), *Two sexes is not enough*, www.pbs.org/nova, .140.

¹³⁸ Charlene L. Muehlenhard (1998), *The importance and danger of sexually aggressive women*, (London : Routledge), 27

¹³⁹ Anne Fausto-Starling (2004) *Identities: Journal for politics, gender and culture*, vol. 3, No. 1

¹⁴⁰ Judith Butler (2006) 193.

¹⁴¹ Judith Butler (2006).

¹⁴² Takeshi Ishikawa (1995), *‘Hijra’ The third gender of India*, (Tokyo : Seikyusha).

many of them have a special place for differentiated body types. Many times, it is the inclination of a person to identify with the other gender that set them apart, like the Amazons; women who deliberately cut off their breast. It shows that some individual have a penchant for an alternative sex and gender which they could also explain as innateness, but very subjective condition.

2.6.4 Third Genders

This section explores the Hijras of India, the Xanith of Arab, the Berdachess of native America, the transgendered Alafin, (Oronpontoyinyun), Sango of Yoruba and the Ozakaye of Isoko.

2.6.4.1 Hijras Caste System

The Hijras caste system refers to young transsexuals who desperately want to maintain their status, they could be found in India and Bangladesh. They usually run away from home to join a group like themselves. They would then be castrated. According to Lynn Conway,

Teenagers voluntarily undergo fully emasculating surgeries under primitive conditions, just as they would have in ancient times, with only opium as an anesthetic. Most undergo the surgery in their teens shortly after the onset of puberty... By being castrated just early enough before the development of male secondary sex characteristics (except for the breaking and lowering of the voice), and their bodies can remain permanently soft, childlike and girly.¹⁴³

Lynn Conway explains, however, that a total external emasculation would not ‘de-sex’ a person; rather these young Hijras have the ability to experience sexual arousal and orgasm. According to Conway, they enjoy sexual intercourse through anal penetration, their sexual activities usually involves other men with this sexual orientation. She opines that these individuals have accepted their situation, by making the best use of their situation. Takeshi Ishikawa endorsed the concept of Hijra when he describes them as individuals who live their lives as women in ‘family groups’, since they assume the position of submission commonly assigned to female. However, they are said to earn their living by begging, prostitution or becoming traditional men who perform special function at weddings and childbirths. With

¹⁴³ See Lee Conway (2006), *Vaginoplasty: Male to Female Sex Reassignment Surgery: Historical notes, descriptions, photos, references and links.* <http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people>.

improved technology, many can feminize their bodies with hormones. According to Ishikawa, the Hijra practice:

Enables transsexuals to escape the angst and fate of masculinization as teenagers, and provides a safe though lowly place in society for them. The agonizing extremes to which these transsexual youngsters will go in order to "approximately have a female gender", with full knowledge that they will never see their families again and will face social degradation for the rest of their lives, is a testament to the reality and extremity of the gender conflict that they face within themselves.¹⁴⁴

Young people running away from home just to join a caste system, where they endure castration, just because of a feeling, seem to be a very desperate act of someone who is very convinced of their feeling. It also reveals that the society was not open to accept them. It also shows that the age of puberty is critical to every person as this seem to be the defining moment of their identities.

2.6.4.2 *Berdaches*

Likewise Berdaches of the native America tribe comes to mind. The term Berdaches is a French word for "younger partners in male homosexual relationships."¹⁴⁵ According to Walter Williams, Berdaches were discovered in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by French explorers, they were individuals who were neither male nor female. They occupied the alternative gender or third gender as they combined two gender roles. While male Berdaches did women's work, the women Berdaches engaged in masculine activities; some became notable warriors, leaders and had wives. Williams opines that a Berdaches role was a niche for males who were unable to fulfill the standard of masculinity. They were also referred to as individuals with 'two spirits'. Being identified as 'two-spirit' was a recent introduction made popular in the 1990s.

2.6.4.3 *Mahu*

Mahu is the Hawaiian version of third gender, it is a Hawaiian word used in reference to the drag queen and gay men. These Mahus were the transgendered individuals in that society. They are androgynous individuals (neither effeminate males nor masculine females), while

¹⁴⁴ See Takeshi Ishikawa (1995). <http://www.sa.il24.net/takeshii>

¹⁴⁵ Walter L. William (1986), *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture*.

some may have done the sex change surgery, many others were just comfortable with either using hormones, cross-dressing or just being drag queens. According to the Hawaiian history, Mahus were in the [Hawaiian] monarchy. Though the word is now used as a stigma, originally it was not so. The stigma and discrimination came as a result of the western influence. The Hawaiian history shows that “Mahu”¹⁴⁶ held privileged positions in the community. According to this historical analysis, they prefer the term Mahu to transgender. This is because they do not understand ‘transgenderism’, especially when it had become a tool for politics. The same article claims “people of colour and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds have generally felt excluded from this nascent movement because it is largely composed of Caucasians from middle and upper class backgrounds.”¹⁴⁷

Nevertheless, the Hawaiian Mahu was respected as teachers of the Hawaiian traditional ‘hula’ dance and chant, they also performed the role of goddesses in these hula dances, the dance took place in temples since Hawaiian temple did not admit women. Hence, Mahus were valued as the keepers of cultural traditions making them special, for passing down genealogies during child naming ceremonies. In recent times, the study reveals that Mahus are no longer willing to be identified because of the confusion and stigma attached to the term. They would rather be drag queens or go into prostitution. In like manner, the lady boy of Thai has an almost similar situation and traditions as the *Mahu* they are called Kateoy. Again transvestite of Brazil display a third gender, though previously identified as cross-dressers, who cross-dress for entertainment and for sensual and erotic drive.

2.6.4.4 Xaniths

Again, the Xaniths of Arab portrayed a third gender in their outlook. They were effeminate individuals in the Omani culture who mostly identify as transsexuals and reclassified as such. They were allowed to live in peace despite the fact that they were mostly prostitutes. They were not allowed to cross-dress because it is believed that such an act would dishonor women. But they could wear pastel ‘disbashas’ and use makeup. Because they could affect feminine mannerisms, they were treated as women. The Arabs allowed Xaniths to live their lives because of the belief that the world is not perfect, therefore imperfect people. Hence, “it is up

¹⁴⁶ See <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue6/matzner.html#n1>. Accessed on 6/8/2016.

¹⁴⁷ See <http://intersections.anu.edu.au/issue6/matzner.html#n1>. Accessed on 6/8/2016.

to each individual to behave as correctly as possible in all different encounters in which he or she engages, that is with tact, politeness, hospitality, and morality.”¹⁴⁸ Africans seem to know some things about tact, even when they don’t document their approach to these body concerns, it is apparent that they were able to navigate through the situation, found among Yorubas and Isoko people.

2.6.5 Africa on Differentiated Bodies

In like manner the work explored African versions of third gender, like Alafin Orompotoniyun, said to be “the first person on earth to perform a successful transgender operation”¹⁴⁹ a desperate act she embarked on to enable her, as a male, to inherit her father’s throne. In English terms, her actions were desperate, with the aim of making her qualify to seat on the throne; however, this would make her a butched female. Again according to Chinyere Ukpokolo, the Igbo alternative gender expression called “umam”¹⁵⁰, this is a gender expression where women abandoning their families, husband and children to take over the reigns of leadership in their birth place. Others variations of other gender expression is ‘Diopka’. Diopka is a masculine term for leadership, but when referred to a female she therefore expresses double identity, and is qualified to join the men’s meeting, with a strong voice.

2.6.5.1 Sango

Again, “Sango”¹⁵¹, a traditional ruler in Yoruba kingdom (Alafin of Oyo), who later became a deity. In another example Sango’s living style could be evaluated based on the argument that as a human being, according to Sophie Oluwole and Akin Sofoluwe’ “legends are not always fairy tales that are expression of mere illusions, misconceived or presented as true life stories of historical men and women.”¹⁵² They emphasized that the Orisas of Yoruba were once

¹⁴⁸ See International Encyclopedia on transexualism. Accessed on 6/8/2016

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See http://Face2faceafrica.com/article/the_little_known_story_of_the_first_transgender_royal_of_this_nigerian_empire_who_ruled_in_1540/amp/. Accessed on 6/8/2019

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¹⁵¹ Adebajji S. Akinloye (2010), A history of the Yoruba people (Amalion : Senegal), p. 73.

¹⁵² Sophie B. Oluwole and Akin J.O Sofoluwe (2014), African myths and legends of gender, (Lagos : Ark publishing), 11.

human, hence insisting that Sango was a historical person identified as the ‘Orisa of thunder’. The concern here is that Sango’s identity blurred the gender lines, depicted with a masculine body, covered with a loin cloth, around the waist and with a hairstyle, common among Yoruba woman, seemed confusing. The presence of a loin cloth and a braided hair makes one wonder at his gender identity. Is this deity a man, woman or intersexed? Why the blurred gender lines? Are there things he wanted to achieve in one gender that could not be achieved in the other?

Arguably, cross-dressing to achieve a position may not be necessary as Oyeronke Oyewunmi held that “seniority”¹⁵³ and not gender was the means of social order among the Yoruba of Oyo. In this wise, “regent of Ikogosi”¹⁵⁴ comes to mind. She was the heir apparent, though she also dressed as a man, contrasting Oyewunmi’s view. If body presentation was not important, one wonders why the Alafin Oropotonuyun had to transgender. Pointed we have to ask whether Yoruba have a place for third gender? Though, it is popularly believed that Sango lived as a man. Perhaps a look at his “sexual orientation”¹⁵⁵ would help. The reason for this could be traced to those who worship this deity, as Olatunji Adejumo hints at Sango being transsexual, with bisexual tendencies. And Adebajo Akinloye made reference to this when he identified those loyal to this deity as “cult of Sango.”¹⁵⁶

2.6.5.2 Ozakaye

Finally *Ozakaye of Isoko* represents blurred gender lines and third gender as intersexed individuals. Accordingly, the “Ozakaye”¹⁵⁷ (intersex) of the Isoko were intersexed individuals, who were identified because of their indistinct anatomy. At birth, their parent named them and classified them with their most distinct feature. They could choose only one acceptable gender as there was only two acceptable genders in their society. However, these individuals remain the way they were and most of them went through life with their intersexed status. This is so because hormonal therapy and sex change surgeries are unheard

¹⁵³ Oyeronke Oyewunmi (1997), *The invention of woman: making an African sense of western gender discourses* (Minnesota : University of Minnesota press), xii-xv.

¹⁵⁴ See [https://www.latestnigeriannews.com/...](https://www.latestnigeriannews.com/)

¹⁵⁵ A conversation Olatunji O. Adejumo (2016), Akoka Lagos. olatunjiadejumo@gmail.com

¹⁵⁶ Adebajo S. Akinloye (2010), *A history of the Yoruba people* 233.

¹⁵⁷ Ovuowonre. (2016).

of among the Isokos. Cross-dressing and any form of transgendered activities have never been considered, despite the fact that they have individuals who are intersexed. Instead they face stigmatization, ridicule and get treated with repulsion when their indistinct gender identities become common knowledge.

These examples of third gender emphasized the idea of genderphobia and confirmed that there were indeed African people who dreaded the social expectations of their gender and sought to escape the demands by transiting to another gender. Many ancient cultures were accommodating of the biological situations that created individuals who were not normal, that is, those who have differentiated bodies. Some acknowledge that a person could have two spirits like the 'Berdaches', who claim to have dual spirit or dual identity. Others like the Xanith think of it as 'life is not perfect'. In contrast, such a person may attract dread and repulsion from others in another culture where such tendencies have not been addressed like 'Ozakaye'. Anyone claiming to have two spirits in Isoko would definitely be treated with suspicion. Such a person would be called a witch as witchcraft is employed to explain confusing natural phenomenon. Unlike, the Mahu and Kateoy' who were perceived as people who attract luck and were given special place.

African approach to third gender and indefinite body types could be deduced from articles like that of Barry Hallen. According to Hallen, in his article *Eniyan: A Critical Analysis of the Yoruba Concept of Person*¹⁵⁸, he puts forward the position of Wande Abimbola about unusual body types. Abimbola insists that among Yorubas, individual with unusual body types were deposited with the priest to be his assistant. This would mean that persons like the intersexed, when identified, would be subject to the same position. The question then is what is the motive behind this act? Were they being quarantined or were they privileged? It seemed to be a privilege serving the priest because not everyone can be accepted into such a position, since the gods always request the best. The different approaches for managing these individual in the ancient times did not allow for discontentment or crises, rather they seemed to have roles and purposes in the affairs of the societies in which they belonged. Since many of those

¹⁵⁸ Barry Hallen (2000), *Eniyan: A critical analysis of the Yoruba concept of person. The substance of African philosophy*. C.S. Momoh (Ed). (Auchi : African philosophy project), 289.

societies accept the idea of destiny. They may not have sought for the sex change surgeries as that option was not available, what they did was dress to reveal the difference.

2.7 Conclusion

The works of Michael Kimmel and Susan Bordo definitely reveals genderphobia. These articles show that there are members of both genders, who are not comfortable with their gender identity; it show that some men find their masculinity and its associated expectation too demanding, and some women find being beautiful a painful experience. Hence, those who struggle with these expectations could have low self-esteem which could then affect their human dignity, leading to transgenderism. Also the condition of intersex appears to be a necessary reason why people find themselves under the umbrella of transgendersim, as they want to regulate their biological sexes. In addition, some others have their bodies messed up with hormonal drugs and surgical mutilation, hence, it is not surprising to find out that there are individuals who want to be incognito by seeking non- identity, or a third gender. However, the discovery that many people would rather endure a new gender than having to struggle with the gender given to them at birth need to be critically analysed before drawing a conclusion on the idea of trangendersim, as there are many factor affecting the concept.

Biology, religion and society could be held responsible for the gender codes and divides. Since most people belong to at least one of the two acceptable genders, it would be natural for them to conform, as sex change could be interpreted as efforts to escape the pressures of the character traits that each gender is expected to perform. Yet, many who have performed the surgeries have come to realize that sex change may not be the solution to their challenge. Other transgendered persons have resigned to their fate, since a reversal is complicated. Paul McHugh's claim that many people have suicidal tendencies must have some substance, since John Hopkins hospital stopped transgendered surgeries (they encourage people to seek other means like therapy and hormonal treatment). Apparently, there are many people who do not heed to this advice as they still turn to surgeries, some for clear reasons but others for unclear reasons, like the case of Bruce Jenner now Catlyn Jenner of the United States of America, the question remains to be answered about his motive for sex change. One would have expected that he would be thinking of retiring because age sixty five does not seem to be an appropriate

time to scream about discontentment with one's sex or gender. Speculations about his intention become necessary because he is in the entertainment industry, reaping the benefit of being controversial. Chapter five of this work will address some of the ethical issues arising from transgenderism.

Still there are several unresolved concerns raised in this work, like the dilemma of genderphobia and how it could be resolved, and nature's purpose for the genders. Again, could non-identity help or would androgenity solve the problem of characteristic traits? Shouldn't those who create the traits reconsider it? Finally, transgenderism and its practices question the continual existence of humanity by compelling a necessary examination into the future of a being that has been technologically enhanced. Would these beings continue to be man, machines or cyborg? Then again, what is the implication of cyborg for humanity? Or what is the impact of human intervention in the nature of being? Chapter six of this work explores these questions and their possible answers. This chapter is an attempt to understand the idea of transgenderism. It examined the different concepts and terms evolving from transgendered practices. It also attempted an understanding of why transgendered people exist. This was done through an examination of the biological foundations of the foetus development, we discovered that the amount of hormones in the blood vessel at the time of development of the foetus determine the biological sex of the child, and that abnormal chromosomal make up could account for intersex condition. The medical studies indicated in this chapter revealed that there are one or two persons in every one thousand, five hundred people, who have abnormal condition. The chapter also examined the views of those advocating for surgery and counter debates for no surgery. Furthermore, in this chapter we discovered ancient renditions of transgenderism. Of outmost interest were the African revelations of transgenderism which have not been researched.

In conclusion, United Nations population figure reveals that "the world population has reached seven point seven billion in 2021."¹⁵⁹ And deducing from the biological figures, that one or two of every one thousand to one thousand five hundred person have a defective chromosomal makeup, then, removing one from every one thousand of this figure (world population figure), we would be estimating that there are about seven point seven million

¹⁵⁹ [www.worldometer.info.world-population](http://www.worldometer.info/world-population) Accessed on 3/8/2021

people in the world with a transsexual or transgender condition. This being the case, it is imperative that we study their situation and their biological conditions, to enable a better understanding of the questions posed in this work. As this staggering estimated population figure means that we may likely encounter at least one person with this condition in our life time. However, this work emphasizes that the psychological or medical solutions did not sufficiently resolve the problem of incongruence between mind and body, the medical intervention, in many cases, rather created complications. As medical intervention can help with hormonal imbalance, like hormonal therapy, that helps remedy body and not mind. Hence, the true solution to incongruence between mind and body lies with determining the ontological person, by querying personal identity and answering the metaphysical question 'who am I'? Attempting answers to the above question ought to lead a person to the notion of self mastery, especially in the light of transgender regret, which emphasizes that surgery, may not resolve the crises and the feeling of being trapped, which many claim as incongruence between their minds and their bodies. Self mastery is one way through which people manage stressful and difficult situations, it is also known as self propriety or self ownership theories, the approach to self mastery include steps to self mastery, self mastery skills and pillars of self mastery.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ONTOLOGY OF A PERSON

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A person's view and approach to life matters greatly, it impact how they deal with problems, hence medicines have their limitations, and hard drug can make people happy, but it can not help think right, hence the resolution to incongruence between mind and body may not solely lie with correcting the trapped body, rather the solution lay with people's ability to resolve ontological idea of personal identity. This can be done by answering the metaphysical question, who am I? A probable evaluation of this question could lead to self-discovery, contentment and solve the crises resulting from genderphobia that usually boomeranged to transgenderism as examined in chapter two. This chapter explores Transgenderism and the Ontological theories of being, Transgenderism and Personal Identity theories, Transgenderism and the Theories of Determinism, Transgenderism and the Social Notions of Self, and finally, Transgenderism and African Cultures. In the process, the chapter shall seek answers to questions like: whether you are your mind or your body, what is the source and location of identity; like what should identify a person through time? Also, seeking to know what happens with like bodies, and the condition that certifies these identities? This leads to the questions about what a thing is made up of, this is the distinction between physical or mental identity? Another way of making this query is debating the divisibility of the self, that is, what happens when a person losses a body part? Or, how present, past and future selves were connected. Curiously, this chapter explores other approaches to transgenderism, especially, in an African culture, where there is a strong belief in destiny. The purpose is to determine traditional African cultural approach to indeterminate bodies and gender line blurring by speculating on whether these cultures were revolutionary enough to make room for alternative genders. In all, they need to consider the question of essence, that is, their own unique essence of being.

An ontological (philosophical) examination of transgenderism becomes necessary as it engages "adequate analysis and accurate claims about the nature of human sensory experience (and how it) could be eventually formulated...the activity of philosophy (is) was from its inception geared towards discovering and formulating what could be variously and inter-

linguistically described as the truth.”¹⁶⁰ Therefore, metaphysics is that aspect of philosophy that studies the fundamental nature of being. Julian Baggini and Jeremy Stangroom show that metaphysics, as a major field in philosophy, examines the fundamental nature of being, by addressing “questions concerning the nature of time, matter, causation and identity...a way of understanding the whole of being.”¹⁶¹ According to Joseph Omoregbe, there are two categories of being: “spiritual being and the corporeal being.”¹⁶² He claims both being exist in two corresponding worlds, which, though different, could not be separated from each other. This is because the spiritual being intervenes in the existence of the corporeal being which is ontological in nature. Considering this from the transgender discourse reveals that drawing an accurate line between mental and physical existence could be difficult. However, the being of interest to this study is the corporeal being as the corporeal being, refers to those living in the corporeal world, that is, humans, referring to the ontology of being. Therefore, ontology is the study of being, as it studies what it means to be or how being ought to be.

Transgenderism and its practices require the interrogation of the ontological concept of being by constraining a review of language and compelling a possibly redefine fundamental concepts about the self. This happens because humans have found different reasons to interfere with the nature of being as a result of transgender practices. This interference introduces to being new concepts and terminologies, both of which require proper examination to determine if previous propositions and conceptions of being require endorsement or re-adjustment to reflect the current realities.

Curiosity about the ‘self’ had thrived from ancient time as many philosophers like Socrates and Descartes who tried to define self when they embarked on reflection to locate it and to identify its position in nature. While some philosophers called for self-examinations, others were more explicit by using analogies to indicate what they considered as the self. Many of such hypotheses have given rise to further arguments and counter arguments about the identity of the self, its place in nature, and what it should be. The self, accordingly, has been

¹⁶⁰ L Keita (2014), Waiting for truth: Metaphysics analytic philosophy and theoretical science; *The Nigerian Journal of philosophy*. 25. No 1. p 1-36.

¹⁶¹ Julian Baggini. and Jeremy Stangroom (2005), *Great thinkers a-z:2500 years of thought that shaped the western world* (New York: MJF Bks) 9

¹⁶² Joseph Omoregbe (1990), *Knowing Philosophy*, (Lagos. Joja Press) 22.

identified as “a god within”¹⁶³. According to Daniel Kolak, this “notion of self-knowledge portrays whoever is making the assertions as guru who is claiming to have a direct knowledge of God”¹⁶⁴. Hence, when you hear a person say “I mourn the loss of self”¹⁶⁵ such significant declaration requires further investigation.

3.2 TRANSGENDERISM AND THE ONTOLOGICAL BEING

The search for the ultimate substance motivated the ancient study of being to which the ancient philosophers grappled with a universal answer, like the Greek mythology portraying the ship of Theseus, which changed its beam as it journeyed, showing a philosophical paradox. This ship gradually metamorphous into something new as it changes damaged parts, yet remaining the same. A true example about the debate on identity through time, leading to querying the authenticity of the ship, as philosophers wonder which would be the real ship, the one with the old beam or the one with the new beam? Then again, what was the link between both ships or what holds both them together, was it the old beam or the new beam, what then is the place of the engine? This is just like asking whether you are your mind or your body, and asking about the true source of identity.

3.2. 1 Transgendersim and the Search Substance

These philosophers were convinced that there was an item responsible for either man or the world. They were not alone in the search as their successors in the medieval and modern times still continued the philosophical search for the truth about man and his world. In any case, they were all divided on what this item should be. Some like Aristotle, Descartes and Leibnitz were consistent in identifying it as a ‘substance’. But others like Parmenides, Plato and Hegel claim it is being.

Nevertheless, Joseph Omoregbe explains that ancient and medieval philosophies portray substance as that which constitutes the nature of a thing. According to him, substance is synonymous with the word essence. He opines that it is essence that makes one thing distinct from other things. In addition to this, Harold Titus defines substance as “that which exists in

¹⁶³ Daniel Kolak and Raymond Martin (1993), *Self, Cosmos, God*, (Holts, Rinehart and Winstonic), p. 22.

¹⁶⁴ Kolak and Martin (1993),

¹⁶⁵ Jo Goodman (2007), *If his kiss was wicked* (New York:Zebra books), 25.

and of itself; that in which attributes, properties, and qualities reside.”¹⁶⁶ He explains that philosophers made distinction between substances and their qualities, claiming that the external world consists of substances like rock and water. And these substances possess qualities ranging from hard to soft and rough to smooth. Titus notes that there is a disagreement among philosophers “as to the number, nature, and status of substances,”¹⁶⁷ explaining that, while some philosophers are monist, believing in the existence of one substance, others are dualist, believing in the existence of two substances. And there are philosophers who are pluralist; they believe in the existence of many substances. In the same manner, being has been described as “that which exists; sometimes used for the infinite, God or ultimate reality.”¹⁶⁸ Joseph Omoregbe quotes Parmenides when he defines being as “whatever is, is being... whatever exists is.”¹⁶⁹ Being has also been described as a state of existence, that is what it means to exist as a person. This is relevant to the discourse on transgenderism because a thorough study of the term cannot be complete without the mention of being, substance, essence, and hormones. In this wise, hormones are strongly linked to the substance and being. The reason for this position is the belief that there is an essence in humans that must be responsible for their existence.

Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes were philosophers of the ancient period whose central focus was identifying the ultimate substance. Thales insists that the answer is water, for Anaximenes, it is air, Anaximander on his own insists that all things evolve from a primordial substance, but what primordial substance? For Heraclitus fire was the primordial element, which transforms into sea. Yet, it seems air, water, and substance has something to do with our senses. Hence, Parmenides queries the senses, because it is deceptive and illusory. He insists that the “only true being is the one, an indivisible and infinite being which cannot be divided”¹⁷⁰. This assertion raises questions and implications for transgenderism. For example, were these philosophers really trying to determine the content of the universe or the makeup of man? Were they able to draw a line between man and nature? It would seem from their

¹⁶⁶ Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in philosophy: an introductory textbook*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold co), 545.

¹⁶⁷ Titus (1970), 325

¹⁶⁸ Titus (1970), 536

¹⁶⁹ Omoregbe (1990), 160.

¹⁷⁰ Bertrand Russell (1963), *History of Western Philosophy*, (Great Britain: George Allen & Unwin Ltd), 702.

propositions that both man and nature were merged together, meaning that the demarcation is not clear as had been previously deduced from Omorgbe's corporal and spiritual being, the fact that both man and nature have water in common buttresses the point.

Scientifically, it has been proven that water is very important to all living creatures, that ninety percent of our body weight comes from water. Hence, Thales' 'water' may not have been too far from the truth, since he insisted that water was the ultimate substance. In like manner, humans do not need to look too far to relate with the 'Heraclitan' change, all they need to do is examine themselves on constant basis to realize that change is inevitable. They were born, they grow from infant to puberty, then they become youths, and adults before they age and die. Yet, permanence is an apparent part of human existence too, deducing from self-examination, easily acknowledged from bodily changes, showing that there is something permanent about our being that guarantees continuous existence. This means that any answer to the question of ultimate substance requires further reasoning, which Socratic did through self-reflection, where the primary act is self-examination. He invites people to self-examination by saying 'man knows thyself'. In this view, it seems self-examination should be an act that every living being should endeavour to embark on, at least once in their life time.

However, Socrates' position is controversial to the study because he claims to be guided by an inner self, a force so potent that he would be transfixed in a spot just to listen to its musing. Bertrand Russell, in his commentary on Socrates, insists that such a claim to an inner voice could be a symptom of insanity. Thus, revealing that self-analysis is not always safe without a guide. Though, it is not in doubt that humans have the tendency for introspection when they embark on self-examination, but the challenge is whether they understand the result of these contemplations or whether they can handle the revelations of this self-analysis. Self-analysis is an important process for those considering the transition from one gender to the other. They need to determine what makes them who they are, but, whether self-discovery could help them focus on their individual essence rather than body presentation is debatable. Nevertheless, they should delay the surgery as it is irreversible.

Still reflection enabled Plato to realize two different worlds. He found the world of forms and the world of ideas, claiming that both could be assessed through dialectical reasoning and not through sense perception. The reason is that the world of senses represents only the shadows

of real thing, that is, not the true essence of things. The true nature of things, which he insists are eternal, immutable, immaterial and invisible forms. According to him, our illusions could be compared to been captured in a cave. In the allegory of the cave “human beings are like prisoners, when they look at the material world, all they see is a misleading display of shadows and copies.”¹⁷¹ He claimed that the essences of things could only be found in the ideal world where humans live. For Plato the ephemeral world changes constantly, yet the case could be made that he was encountering a crises or a form of mental struggle by this duality, otherwise why is he making a distinction between the ideal world and a concrete world? Could it be that every individual may have to encounter such a struggle in their daily lives? Plato’s theory could just be an indication that true identity lies more with the immaterial rather than the material.

Aristotle makes a distinction between what a thing is made off and what it is, as a thing’s identity has less to do with what it is, but more to do with what it does. In this light, things could be separated into the material, what a thing is made up off, the formal, what it should be, its efficiency, that is what makes a thing what it is and its purposes, that is, what is it final cause. Aristotle claims that every imperfect being is in a state of potency and that the imperfection is a reflection of their lack that is a missing item. In his opinion, perfection comes after potency has been discovered. Following from this, Descartes found the missing item when he discovered ‘I’ which this work interprets as the self. This means that rather than looking for an abstract thing, man should examine ‘self’ the ‘I’. Descartes’s allude that the self is not a physical entity, but a thinking one, insisting on the self being the most certain thing in the universe. He said, “I am, I exist,”¹⁷² nonetheless, this self-existence seems in contradictory and uncertainty is revealed from a review of his analogy of the changing wax, where he describes the wax in different states of evolutionary change. One then wonders what happens after the change, if the wax retains its essence, or turns to a new being, as it changes from one state to another, thus resurrecting a significant argument in transgender discourse. That is, why should transgendered individual claim to have changed their essence of man and woman after surgery? Is surgery or hormonal drugs capable of changing the essence of a person? While the likely answer is negative, there is grave concern about how hard drugs

¹⁷¹ Dave Robinson and Judy Grooves (2000), *Introducing Plato*. (Australia: Macpherson’s printing), 98.

¹⁷² Daniel Kolak and Raymond Martin (1993), 7

influence a person, and the consequences of that situation. However, it appears that the transiting individuals would welcome the concept and idea of change, as it concerns that hormonal drugs that have the ability to change their body, but they are yet to consider the impact that the changes would have on their essential nature. They need to determine how much effect surgery and hormonal drugs would have on their real essence. Since it is clear from Descartes' analysis that what is called the self, encounters changes, either physiological or psychological. This being the case, transgenderists would find relevance to this position because they insist that their mental life is the cue to the real self. The reason is that what they understand about the genders and biological sexes seem to conflict with how they feel, it therefore reveals a conflict between their biological sex and their social gender.

In another perspective, Descartes theory of change indicates that change does not impact the essence of the thing, this is contradictory. However, transgenderist should find it easy relating with his internal crises. That is, the division of the self, the issues about substances and the discovery of a new self. Since transiting from one gender to the other does not involve death, they could not have lost their existence. What appears to take place is that they transit from one gender identity to the other, even when the point of 'self' transformation is debatable, just like it becomes imperative to examine the link between the two selves.

Pointedly, Descartes' claim of the mind and body being substances renews curiosity about what kind of substances they could be. Could the Cartesian substance be the same as hormones? This observation becomes relevant as medical science maintains the significance of hormones in determining biological sex, discussed in chapter two. Logically an association or interaction of two substances, like mind and body, usually produces another substance, but whether the substance is physical or mental is another issue. If this is the case, it implies that transgenderist were right in insisting that transiting produces a new person, the birth of a 'new body'. Yet, the contention is how this new body is connected to the former, or whether it could still be held responsible for its former actions. For example, could it continue to hold onto the property and possessions of the former body? Does that former self retain its family and friend relationships? If yes, then, how new is this self? It seems rather that the question is not about the new or old self, but the essence or nature of the being.

For Hegel the answer to the question of universal substance lies with the absolute being which is summed up as thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Hegel believes that this option will resolve the crises between the new and old, to create an understanding of the absolute, which is the totality of being. He posits that the object of philosophy is the study of the absolute. Since the absolute is the totality of being and reality, he holds that the whole of the universe is the self-projection of the absolute, that cosmic history involves the process of self-projection and self-development. According to him, the presence of the individual man on earth is an indication of the advance stage in the self-development of the absolute. This is because at this point the absolute became self-conscious, progressing into self-knowledge. Hegel maintains that the process of self-development of the absolute involves a dialectical process, revolving in conflicts and contradictions which then boomerang into synthesis, a new development. He proposes that philosophers study this process as “there is an underlying assumption that nothing can really be true unless it is about reality as a whole,”¹⁷³ that any statement made about separate things cannot be true because only the whole can be real. For him, the absolute ‘pure Being’ (the thesis) is ‘nothing’ (the antithesis). Then both produce a union of being and not being, by merging into becoming (syntheses). In his view ‘Becoming’ is a process of evolution, it is essential to the understanding of reality since ‘becoming’ enables that reality to keep changing until all the errors have been removed. By this process, whatever has limited the ‘becoming’ (which could be found in its nature) passes through a correction process. To attain the truth necessitates the processes of the dialectics. Owing to this, one cannot help but wonder how Hegel would view the transition in transgenderism, could this mean that those in transition were projecting themselves into another process? Do they even understand what they were doing?

In Hegel opinion, dialectics is the point where thoughts become fluent and interfused, as nothing is wholly true, and nothing is wholly false, rather both are part of the absolute. Therefore, adhering to this process would reveal the absolute idea, which thinks only about itself as there is nothing else to think about. The dialectical process is an important aspect of Hegelean philosophy, and it becomes relevant to the discourse of transgenderism because the individual’s self is part of the process of reality, especially as the self in this situation is in a

¹⁷³ Russell (1963) 703.

state of becoming. Hence, each individual could fill their own quota of 'becoming' to enable the reflection of the whole of reality. For them, the process started when they came into the world. They encountered other processes of dialectic at different stages of life development. These include the language games about sex and gender. They encountered different processes of gender norms, code and divide, later mandated for them. The process continues until the person attains self-consciousness. At this point some realize that they could not fit-in, rather they encountered barriers and limitations. They were being compelled to self-analysis to determine what the codes involve, and how it applies to them. This results in the emergence of another stage, the antithesis, at which point they confront the reality that something limited about them had been taken as the whole, and something infinite has been taken as finite. It becomes inevitable that in the stage of becoming, the individual end up with a synthesis, one that is a reflection of their self-consciousness and self-knowledge. This self-awareness then results in transition from what is, to what ought to be, waiting for it to become. Yet, in reality it seemed that the synthesis was taking time, marking time in the dialectical process of becoming.

Consequently upon the above theory, many transgendered persons would disagree with the absolute state of rest, a place where being is thinking about itself. As many people in this state seem not to find the rest, their transformation is always in process, implying the lifelong medical attention. This uncertainty seems so depressing, especially, when Hegel insists that reality is about the whole, not part. In transgenderism, their reality seems to revolve around continual therapy, a herculean mission of arriving at the stage of absolute. It would have been more hopeful if they could be certain of when they could attain their own absolute state. Though, Hegel's position may not be completely satisfactory, there is something about transcendence that attracts attention.

3.2.1 Transgenderism and Transcendence

Transgenderism and Ontological Theory of Transcendence reveals a person's inability to reach the state of absolute. The notion of transcendence bring to fore the idea of transiting. Transiting refers to the point at which persons desiring gender switch, metamorphose from one biological sex and gender to another.

Transcendence is a concept that describes experience, made popular by Edmund Husserl. In this theory, essence is perceived as the authentic meaning of the data of immediate experience, aiming to describe experience as it occurs without assumptions and prejudices; the purpose of phenomenology is to reveal the essence of things, not necessarily their concrete existence as individual things, but to reveal their essential being. To attain this objective in phenomenology, the individual is expected to perform an “eidetic reduction”¹⁷⁴ of things, that is, to put aside all they have known and experienced about the object of observation. By this act, they would discover its essence. The individual is to start at presuppositionless position, to arrive at the ‘epoche’. At the epoche, the individual is expected to have dealt with previous beliefs, assumptions and presupposition of the said object, in this case, gender. To attain pure consciousness in this “pre-given”¹⁷⁵ realm would mean that something exist apart from, and prior to experience. The method actually begins with experience because experience is the central focus of the self, in phenomenology.

To interrogate transcendence in the light of transgenderism, phenomenology appears to be less appealing to a person grappling with mind and body crises, or one suffering from genderphobia. This is so because such an individual may encounter difficulties with amnesia, being asked to set aside all their mental crises, linguistic repertoire, and analytical presuppositions, including their life experiences, to then, reconsider their essence. In this light, essence seems like an immaterial idea as against the material body. As they were invited to investigate their being by asking and answering the identity and life purposes question. In reality, the answers to these questions may never require one to have a certain sex or be of a certain gender, such answers transcend the sexual boundaries, and the answers have nothing to do with whether one is feminine or masculine. Hence, the transgendered person may consider it unrealistic. Yet, one wonders whether the search for essence was enough, that is could mental satisfaction replace inappropriate body?

Judith Butler exploration of bodies becomes relevant as she wonders if individual should be satisfied with subscribing to their mental state over their body state. She holds that “not only did bodies tend to indicate a world beyond themselves, but this movement beyond their own

174 Joseph Omoregbe (1991) *A simplified history of western philosophy*. (Lagos. Joja Press), 29.

175 Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in philosophy: an introductory textbook*. 314.

boundaries, a movement of boundaries itself, appeared to be quite central to what bodies are.”¹⁷⁶ She claims that ‘body’ should be examined in relation to life affairs. The truth is that despite that mental life, people need their ‘body life’ to achieve certain things. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the position of ‘bodies’ as people could easily condemn the person claiming gender dysphoria as seeking unnecessary attention. This could be an unfair approach to their challenge because it seems to be abstracted when compared to the reality of their everyday life.

Edmund Husserl’ position helps to provide a way for understanding the concerns and experiences of those with gender dysphoria or gender identity disorder, since phenomenology begins with experience and gender discontent is a feeling not easily overlooked, those involved appears to take it seriously. The reason is that phenomenology does not discountenance a person’s concerns rather it invites them to transcend their feelings and experiences, the central focus is the self and the mind. It is consistent in its concern for each individual to discover his/her essence. Therefore, when a person with gender dysphoria embarks on self-analysis, they could discover that they may be able to live with their condition without necessarily going for sex re-assignment surgery, thereby, focusing on their essence, how important then is this essence?

Martin Heidegger attempts to explore the notion, essence, by studying the predicament of human existence, following which he determines that the term 'Being' could only mean the being of Beings, a being from which all beings derived their being. This being could only be approached and studied from the point of man. This is because man is the only being who bother to question being. Therefore, attempts to discover the true being led to the study of man.

For Heidegger, Dasein is the technical word for man. This is because existentialism deals with man in his daily existence, and phenomenology is the recommended method of study. Heidegger believes that even when man was not consulted before he appeared in the world, it is to his benefit, when he confronts nothingness, since he came out of nothing and would return into nothing. Hence, acknowledging his finiteness enables him to become, as he

¹⁷⁶ Judith Butler (1993), *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limit of sex*, (New York: Routledge), ix.

projects himself into possibilities. This way, he could transcend himself since he is not a finished product. Accordingly, self-projection enables him to attain his possibilities by living an authentic life. Heidegger acknowledges that man could be limited by facticity, anxiety, temporality, dread, fear, consciousness, guilt, nothingness, and death. But in existentiality, he discovers his possibilities for change and self-projection. For Heidegger, self projection works better when people transcend limiting traits, as holding on to them portrays them as superficial being. Therefore, man is expected to abhor the emphasis on things and personal power because a life focused on things is rootless and empty. The recommendation for man, is to focus on the totality of being as this saves them from chaos and confusion, leading to authentic existence.

Heidegger's philosophy of essence is applicable to discussions in transgenderism because of its concern with living on authentic life, that is, instead of lamenting about body limitations, those having incongruence would be refocused. Owing from this view, those considering transiting or those claiming incongruence between their minds and bodies could ' stress the stressor '(like it is said in stress management sessions) by taking charge of themselves in the idea of 'becoming' as it propels them to their dreams, they could concentrate on their essence, instead of being discouraged by their bodies. After all, there is more to life than body types. The reason for this statement stems from examples of people with challenged bodies. Many of them are attempting to accomplish their life dream by finding a life fulfilling purpose, like those athletes in Para-Olympic. These people show that they are able to live beyond their bodies like Heidegger recommended.

Exploring Heidegger further, Tony Okeregbe insists that he "conveniently pursues his postulation on alterity by addressing the question: how do I relate with the other? He posits that the other or others are encountered in the pre-occupation of daily human existence"¹⁷⁷. Hence, trans-persons could never be left out in the process of becoming, not when Heidegger point out that their being is not fixed, and has never been determined. But, the concern in transgenderism is the ability of an individual to choose their own genders. Deducing from the foregoing, one wonders if the genders are so fragile. And if they are, how did this fragility

¹⁷⁷ Tony Okeregbe 2010/2011), Phenomenology and the ethics of tolerance. *The Nigerian journal of philosophy* . vol 1 vol 2. 94-95

impact on the nature of being? It appears that with such a delicate constitution, ‘being’ is very inconsistent; they could not be depended upon to remain in a particular state. If this is the condition of being, then being would have a problem with the idea of trust and dependability. But can being really escape to be? Could they escape their existence, or essentiality, the notion that there is something fundamental about the biological sexes. This does not make light of those suffering from issues about gender contradictions, rather these metaphysical theories lead people to be more concerned about their existence, it proposes that they need to consider how these concerns affect their personalities and identities.

3.3 Transgenderism and Personal Identity

Consequently from the above, if I am not some being who was dropped into the universe, expected to submit to cause and effect, then, who am I? These questions cannot be completely examined without an exploration of the personal identity theories, and examining the idea of cause and effect in view of its defining abilities, can it define ‘me’. Then again, what makes me, me. Answers to these queries include the psychological or memory theory, the somatic theory and the anitcriterialism theory.

3.3.1 Psychological Identity

John Locke was the proponent of the memory or psychological theory which holds that identity is constituted by the sameness of different parts and functions of the body empowered by a force that unites all of them. According to him, “man constitute viz: in nothing but a participation in the same continual life...in succession vitally unified in the same organized body.”¹⁷⁸ He emphasizes the unity of all that makes man, by insisting that human identity is unique and different from animal identity, as personal identity consists in the sameness of consciousness. A person, according to him, “is thinking, intelligent being that has reason and reflection; and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking and it seems to me essential to it.”¹⁷⁹ Locke opines that thinking is not sufficient for identity; rather thinking must be accompanied with ‘thinker’ as there is no perception without the perceiver.

¹⁷⁸ John Locke (1977), *An essay concerning human understanding*, Nidditch p,(ed), (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 159.

¹⁷⁹ Locke (1977), 162

For him, consciousness always goes with thinking, because it is consciousness that identifies the self, resulting in personal identity.

Therefore, consciousness is responsible for constancy of personal identity. However, he wonders whether consciousness could be transferred, and when such a transfer takes place, how to ascertain the owner of the 'consciousness'. He argues that though consciousness could not be transferred, when it is transferred from one person to another, the entity with the 'consciousness' ought to claim the identity. Therefore, he proposes an experiment to test his hypothesis: a memory switch between the prince and the cobbler. In this test, the prince would take on the memory of the cobbler and the cobbler would assume the prince's memory.

At the end of the exploration, Locke insists that whoever had the experience of the prince should claim the identity of the prince, that memory; consciousness and character traits were the main source of identity. From this position, he concludes that consciousness belongs to the one who can connect both present and past actions, since consciousness goes with substance. According to him:

Consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended, should it be to ages past, unites existence and actions very remote in time into the same person, as well as it does the existence and actions of the immediately preceding moment, so that whatever has the consciousness of present and past actions is the same person to whom they both belong.¹⁸⁰

What happens when a body is tampered with, like it is experienced in transgenderism? Does tampering with the body affect the consciousness of the person, or could a changed body affect personal identity? The resolution to this question is important because many people who partake in the sex change surgery claim to transform into a new person, like Caitlyn Jenner. But John Locke insists that it does not matter if the substance of the body changes, that the most important point is, which consciousness would possess the body. It is that consciousness that identifies the body. Locke insists that whichever body holds consciousness, should take responsibility for its conscious experiences, by this, he reveals that consciousness matters to existence. Consequently, he claims that personal identity does not lie

¹⁸⁰ Locke (1977), 167.

with substance but “in the identity of consciousness.”¹⁸¹ He says that without consciousness, a person could not possibly exist. And this means that personal identity is located in the immaterial, not in the anatomy. Hence, Locke’s position implies that each person only requires consciousness to guarantee their existence, as consciousness cannot be separated from thinking, hence consciousness is identity. But Locke needs to be more explicate about how to identity false consciousness emanating from dual identity and false identity, like in impersonation, where consciousness was either influenced (hard drugs), transferred, or stolen.

In analysing John Locke on personal identity, Carol Rovane interest lays with finding out whether a purely psychological analysis of personal identity was enough to secure identity. Nonetheless, she recommends Locke’s advice about analysing “what kind of thing a person is.”¹⁸² enabling a better conclusion on personal identity. This research led Rovane to conclude that persons have a nature that is ethical, hence, insisting that individuals are qualified to be identified as persons because of their “ability to engage in agency–regarding relation.”¹⁸³ By this position, she shows that humans have different relationships that could be influenced by others. These influences require them to make different choices, many of which have ethical significance. She does not explain why people are compelled to make ethical choices. She only insists that they have to make choices. For Rovane “the commitment to achieving overall rational unity.”¹⁸⁴ This work led her to concluding that individuals have normative commitment. A theory which she defines as being

3.3.2 Somantic Identity

John Perry contradicts the Lockean position on identity by claiming that identity should be located in the body, that the soul could not be responsible for personal identity through time. To buttress his point, he queries the possibility of a person survival after the death of the body. The reason is that he wanted to know how to identify souls after death, that is how one person’s identity can become distinguished from the other and to discover what happens at the termination of the subject of consciousness, including the answer to what could account for

¹⁸¹ Locke (1977), 168

¹⁸² Carolyn Rovane (1998), *The bounds of agency* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), 4.

¹⁸³ Rovane (1998), 5.

¹⁸⁴ Rovane (1998),

identity across time? Pursuing the likely answers to those questions led to his contention that memory may not be the true source of identity. He holds that:

Similarities of psychological characteristics- a person's attitude, beliefs, memories, prejudices, and the like – is observable. These are correlated with identity of the body on the one side, and of course with sameness of soul on the other side. So the correlation between body and soul can be established after all by this immediate like¹⁸⁵

Deductions from the above, questions the idea of one body and one soul. This is given the fact that people change overtime. For instance, the religious conversion, like the 'born again' experience, in which a person decides on new life and claim new values as against their former approach to life. When people make the claim of conversion, it is very apparent that the body remains the same, a significant change could be observed in the person's life, even when it is difficult to connect this individual to their past actions.

John Perry attempts at answering the above queries, he reveals that a person's body served as a prison for the soul, that the soul would escape this prison at death, but, whether the soul would live after death was in doubt as a result of the inability to distinguish one soul or memory from the other after death. Hence, Perry doubts that memory is sufficient as a form of identity, because neither the soul nor consciousness could provide the principle of personal identity; instead body serves as a better, and the most reliable source of personal identity.

Perry's work has a gap as he did not address the distinction issue concerning double body identity, experienced with identical twins or 'look alike' siblings. Again bio-technology raises the question of whether a person can remain the same after encountering the machine, like beauty enhancement, transgendersim or mutilations caused by accident,

3.3.3 Fictitious Identity

Transgenderists seem to hold sway to the body theory, since their bodies necessitate this debate. For them, body is the most reliable form of identity through time. Yet, many confident people could become disillusioned with Hume's position. David Hume proposes that neither mind nor body was responsible for identity, that "nothing is responsible for our identity

¹⁸⁵ John Perry (2004), *The First Night. Twenty questions: An introduction to philosophy*. Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C (Eds) (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth), 301- 315

through time because, strictly speaking, it is only a fiction.”¹⁸⁶ According to him, the self is a fiction created to explain perceptions, and the ‘self’ is a person’s ability to forge these perceptions into coherence. He further explains that “I never can catch myself at any time without a perception and never can observe anything but the perceptions.”¹⁸⁷ Personal identity, according to David Hume, is fictitious since nothing could be responsible for one’s personal identity through time. He arrived at this conclusion, believing the self to be an uncertain entity “self or person is not anyone impression but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference...personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded as grammatical as than philosophical difficulties.”¹⁸⁸ This is because, for Hume, the self is not constant; it is subject to changes none existent changes.

The question then is whether this change is enough to doubt people’s identity, or if identity was strong enough to bind perceptions together. For David Hume, identity is a quality attributed to things because of the union of ideas in the imagination, during reflection. He holds that memory is a faculty for raising images of past perception. Hence, memories discover identity by creating the belief of resemblance in the different perceptions, further linked together by cause and effect, hence contending that identity could not be decided because identity depended upon the relation of ideas.

Hume strongly believes that it is the relationship of ideas that produce identity. He opines that the disputes concerning identity have to do with languages, which are verbal issues. Nevertheless, he claims that memory may chiefly account for the source of identity because it is memory that gives the notion of cause and effect. By this position, Hume questioned identity in that “we cannot observe an ego through introspection. We alight only on our perceptions and emotions, never on the possessor of these qualities.”¹⁸⁹ Therefore, Hume was able to question the position that self-analysis and self-evaluation could help in discovering the self.

¹⁸⁶ David Hume (2004), Of personal identity. *Twenty questions: An introduction to philosophy*. Bowie , G. L. , Michaels, W. M. and Solomon, C. R. (Eds), (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth), 320- 323.

¹⁸⁷ Hume (2004), 320.

¹⁸⁸ Hume (2004),. 320

¹⁸⁹ Nicholas Fearn (2005), *Philosophy: the latest answers to the oldest questions*, (London: Atlantic Books), 5.

Yet, his position did not seem to accomplish much, rather his theory failed to answer many questions in personal identity, which includes; what makes one person different from the other? What distinguishes a man from an animal? What can account for identities through time? Though one may agree with Hume that different attempts to explain and define identity was compromised by the language of analysis since the idea of self could be interchanged for other notions like being, substance, and essence.

Again, contradicting John Locke's memory theory, William Bernard claims that "we identify more closely with our bodies than our minds."¹⁹⁰ He insists that the body could better identify a person across time. He buttresses this point by making an analogy, the 'mad scientist analogy'. In this analogy, the mad scientist aimed at torturing our body, but before the surgery, he was compassionate enough to reduce the pain from the torture by changing our mind to that of another person (Napoleon) who is supposed to be our enemy. Bernard insists that despite this possibility of mind swap, not many people would accept the offer of torture. He said "if memory is where selfhood lies, then we would have nothing to fear from the new day, as it would be 'Napoleon' who was going to suffer and not us"¹⁹¹ Hence, concluding that the body is more significant as a form of identity through time.

3.3.4 Personal Identity and Body Mutilation

Though William Bernard analogy seems very intimidating, the analogy was inconclusive as he did not address the influence of a mutilated body on our identity, mutilated in the sense that should the person dare to accept the torture, then what? How would this body process affect the person's mind? Or the continuous existence of the person? This is where Thomas Reid assists us, in considering body dismemberment; he strongly believes that the mutilation of the body does not change the person because the person remains the same. He insists that, it is the part that had been removed that ceased to exist, the person remains the same. He opines that a look at common sense will reveal answer to the identity question. He says "identity in general, I take to be a relation between a thing which is known to exist at one time, and a thing which is known to have existence in another time. If you ask whether they are one and the same, or two different things every man of common sense have a clear and

¹⁹⁰ Fearn (2005), 9.

¹⁹¹ Fern (2005) 10.

distinct notion of identity.”¹⁹² He explains that identity is “an uninterrupted continuance of existence,”¹⁹³ that when a being ceases to exist, the same being could not claim any part in the existence of another being. The reason is that such a claim would only involve contradictions because for any being to claim identity, it must have a continuous existence since identity could not be conferred on our feeling and experiences like David Hume claimed, as these experiences and feeling would never be the same no matter how similar they seem to different individuals, rather, these experiences should be put together as part of the ‘absolute space’ identity.

In addition, Thomas Reid claims that personality is in something that cannot be divided, that irrespective of any loss suffered by the individual, their being would remain the same. Hence, he suggests that whatever has been lost remains lost. The lost item cannot claim to be part of the same person; otherwise, it would need to have its own existence. In his opinion, “If he has a leg or an arm cut off, he is the same person as he was before. The amputated member is no longer part of his person, otherwise, it would have a right to a part of his estate”¹⁹⁴. The reason is that a person is indivisible, that even though the self is involved in thoughts, acts and experiences, the self is neither thoughts nor actions and /or experiences. It has a permanent and successive existence, and its credibility takes place when the individual remembers these events. He said, “whatever this self may be, it is something which thinks, and deliberates and resolves, and acts, and suffers. I am not thoughts, I am not actions, I am not feelings, I am something that thinks, and acts and suffers.”¹⁹⁵ He explains that this is the only evidence of identity because language lacks the ability to express all the different and various experiences confirmed in this discourse about a person, interchanged for self, being, substance and the like. These words may or may not be adequate to express meaning. Reid insists that the identity accrued to bodies (natural or artificial) is not perfect. The reason is that identity has no fixed nature as identity is about words.

Thomas Reid strongly believes that identity is not performance that thought, acts and experiences were not equal to the self. Yet, unlike Descartes who equated thought with

¹⁹² Kolak and Martin (1993), 82.

¹⁹³ Kolak and Martin (1993), 82

¹⁹⁴ Kolak and Martin (1993),

¹⁹⁵ Nicholas Fearn (2005), 5

existence, Reid's theory would really depress transgenderist because they have just been informed that all their labour is in vain. Apparently, many only make this discovery after they have made life impacting decisions, leading to transgender regret, and this is what advocates for 'no surgeries' plan to avoid when they insists that surgery is not necessarily the solution to gender dysphoria, that despite the mutilation or surgeries, their essence, core being and substances remain the same.

Still dealing with the concerns about what identifies a person through time; Fearn Nicholas looks beyond nature for the answers. The reason for this approach stems from the uncertainty about the existence of a soul which owns the 'transcendent ego', that despite the fact that all our experiences are accrued to the ego, it is usually left behind at the time of death, hence, the uncertainty about the state of the ego after death, as the 'left behind' ego could become attached to a different and unidentified body. Thus, concluding that since ego defies labeling at death, as it is outside human experiences.

It is however difficult to accept the argument that identity is a label because this position has some unanswered questions about the past and the future memories. Fearn Nicholas reviews this, pointing to the imperfection of memories, as two people usually experience and recollect events differently. He is concerned with the possibility of lapses in memory, memory loss or blanks in their mental record. They could also suffer the debilitating (wiping off the memory) Alzheimer's disease. Hence, one is supposed to seek something more than attributes when examining 'self', as it is apparent that characteristics trait is not enough to ascertain identity, because it is difficult to determine the most important, or authentic traits. This become necessary. "While personality, emotions and other psychological traits might be indicative of personal identity, they are not constitutive of it."¹⁹⁶ This means that attributes and traits will not serve as a sufficient form of identity, that both body and memory were necessary for identity through time, this is anticriterialism.

Susan Brison composes more on socially acceptable bodies by sharing experiences on how sexual violence (rape) affect identity, her position beams light on some unanswered questions in Williams Barnard's analogy on torture. She claims that the experience of trauma which

196 Fearn (2005), 13.

results from bodily mutilation reveals that "one can no longer be oneself even to oneself, since the self exists fundamentally in relation to others."¹⁹⁷ It is clear that not all torture involves the body nor does torture end only with body, experience shows that torture affects people's emotions and psyche, leading to trauma. This is revealed from the experiences of victims of war, rape, and people who experience violence against their person. She insists that violence could either be physical or emotional, that many people safeguard themselves from the truth and reality of their situation by experiencing the event as if it had happened to someone else. That when they were confronted with these abusive situations and physical escape was impossible, in desperation a person could split the self. This is achieved by distancing oneself mentally from the body being attacked or degraded. This explains why people always claim a new self after the event, as the body becomes an alien to them; it is rejected and stigmatized by the self.

Pointedly, Brison purpose is to analyse the difference between the two selves, the self before the traumatic experience, and the self after the experience. She claims that "the self is both autonomous and socially dependent, vulnerable enough to be undone by, and yet resilient enough to be reconstructed with the help of emphatic others."¹⁹⁸ She opines that in many cases, victims of violent abuse avoid using the physical body as a form of identity because they may be repulsed by their bodies, hence refusing to associate with it. this goes to show that identity is more than mind and body, as the self-described here had nothing to do with physical body. She wonders how a person would live with a 'shattered self', one which could 'stay tortured' and never feel comfortable again in that body. According to Brison, the individual would then "remake oneself by finding meaning in a life of caring for and being sustained by others."¹⁹⁹

Here, the query is about the possibility of a body existing independently of the mind, and, or the possibility of a person acquiring a new mind, is owing to Susan Brison hypothesis, as there seem to be some unexplainable connection between the concept of memory, and the body. The reason is that to escape the traumatic experience a person can chose to live in

¹⁹⁷ Susan J. Brison (2002), *Outliving oneself: trauma, memory and personal identity*. *Gender struggles: Practical approaches to contemporary feminism*. Mui C. L. and Murphy, J. S. Eds. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield pub. Inc.), 137- 165.

¹⁹⁸ Brison, (2002), 137-165.

¹⁹⁹ Brison, (2002), 158.

denial, even when consciousness is exchanged between two bodies as found in the Lockean prince and the cobbler. The body of the cobbler being inhabited by the prince's consciousness requires new training for there to be concert between them. Inevitably, reverting to grooming the body on etiquette, comportment and deportment for that personality, all embedded in gender codes, gender traits and gender categories, else, what would the training be about?

Also, John Locke did not bother to explain the attributes of the prince because he must have been referring to a particular prince. This could be the Prince Maurice with whom he had the dialogue on identity. Hence, to assume that the prince was an Aristocrat is appropriate. He would have been groomed to the etiquette of the ton, a training which involves a person's proper carriage and rules of public behaviour. This means that the traits he had acquired over the years could not easily be imbibed by the body of a cobbler, as the cobbler's body had not had same training. This means that the body of the cobbler may not easily do things in the aristocratic style; the cobbler's body may require a manual that explains the past of the prince, and how he should respond to certain genetic traits, like the sucking of his thumb, which outgrew through grooming, learning to put his hands behind him, as he puts takes on the façade (smiley face) during princely assignment. So, would the new body (cobbler) accommodate that trait (thumb sucking) or struggle with it? Debating the answer to this question shows that each body would only operate with a consciousness that it is familiar with. This means that identity would involve a particular body inhabited by its own special mind, that relates with its past, corroborated in the present, and making future decisions with both mind and body's experience in view. This is a strong point in differentiating identical twins or siblings who look alike? Hence, only an informed person can tell the difference, and this is accomplished through the memory of past experience shared or through observable traits, as no two persons can be exactly the same.

3.4 TRANSGENDERISM AND SOCIAL NOTIONS OF 'SELF'

Discussing the issues resulting from the prince and the cobbler raises several concerns, like the need to examine the self in relation to others. However, doubting the existence of others is not new, as Rene Descartes claims that he could not confirm the existence of 'others' because he could only talk about himself. Yet, existentialist philosophers like Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre acknowledge 'others' in their daily existence. They insists that man is a

being with others, that the self is a 'being' because of facticity and fallenness, and this being has no choice but to relate with others. The sociological concept of self defines it as "the totality of our beliefs and feelings about ourselves"²⁰⁰. While philosophers like Socrates and Descartes acknowledge two selves, the inner self and outer self. Philosophers have long used the two notions 'self' and 'person' interchangeably. Several other concepts like 'being' and 'individual' have also been used interchangeably.

Also the 'self' has been defined as "a person's essential being that distinguishes him from others."²⁰¹ It is considered as the object of introspection or reflective action. It is also associated with 'oneself', in this case it is considered as a pronoun. Again the self has been described as "a thing referred to with respect to complete individuality."²⁰² The notion 'person' had been defined as a human being, one who is regarded as an individual, hence, it would appear that the terms 'self' and 'person' could be used interchangeably, this is so because both definitions give indications of being and individuality in their descriptions and terminologies. Therefore, this work would continue to do the same, as could be found throughout the analysis, on social self.

Man, being, person or self as an entity among others in the society, requires examination as this would enable the entity to face facts about their existence. In exploring group identity especially amongst African organizations, Paul Reisman posits that social identity is viewed from both collective and individual perspective, that identity includes the process of naming oneself and naming others, that is, in sameness and otherness. He holds that "one's identity is initially entirely constructed by others. Identity, he argues, is the single most important component of the sense of self."²⁰³ Reisman opines that one's concept of the self can be very subjective because it is built out of shared meaning with others, insisting that what 'others' think of the 'self' is essential to a person's sense of 'self'.

²⁰⁰ Diana Kendall (2003), *Sociology in our time*. (Canada: Wadsworth/Thomas), 661.

²⁰¹ See [www. Google search.com](http://www.Google search.com). Definition of self: Accessed on 5/24/2016.

²⁰² See [http//www. Google search.com dictionary . com](http://www. Google search.com dictionary . com) Accessed on 5/24/2016.

²⁰³ Paul Reisman (1986), *The person and the life cycle in African: Religion and politics*. Women's group in Africa: *Organizing women: formal and informal women's group in the middle east*. Dawn Chatty and Annika Rabo. (Eds). (Oxford: Berg) 105- 107

Studies in “social psychology”²⁰⁴ portray the self being swayed by diverse deterministic factors, the reason for this position lies with the notion that many of our views and actions are influenced by others. As self-reflection necessitate individuals understanding of their motives, emotions and causes of their behavior. These social psychological studies examine what people understand about themselves, and how these perceptions came about. For instance, they embark on these studies to determine people’s perception of the concept “me,”²⁰⁵ the idea that explains “the ability to see you as a distinct entity is a necessary first step in the evolution and development of a self-concept.”²⁰⁶ The theory further claims that ‘others’ serve as a mirror to the self, that self-knowledge includes what ‘others’ perceive us to be and how we tend to fit into this view of their perception. However, what people think of themselves may not remain in consonance with what others think about them. This is so because before “others” could gain insight into the self, they would require information about the inner self. This knowledge of the ‘inner self’ is said to come through introspection. The yet to be answered question is the accuracy of introspection to self-knowledge, since there are different factors influencing introspection and its end result, this is referring to Socrates in self-examination.

3.4.1 Transgenderism And Self-knowledge

Self-knowledge as a philosophical activity is encouraged, as can be deduced from above from the teaching of Socrates, calling people to self-examination. But, what is the individual expected to do with this self-knowledge? Would the result of self-examination be accurate enough to determine action? The answer to the above questions seems to be negative. The reason is that, as the self engages in introspection, it may not produce accurate self-knowledge, especially, if the person doing this analysis is self absorbed. This is because individuals have a tendency to change with time. Hence, the study in self-knowledge concludes by claiming that introspection could only increase more insight through honest self-analysis.

²⁰⁴ Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin (1996), *Social psychology*. (3rd) (Eds), (Boston:Houghton Mifflin Co).

²⁰⁵ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 41

²⁰⁶ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), (1996).

In addition, social psychological studies of facial feedback analysis reveals that another way to achieve self-knowledge is by observation. That is examining their personal behavior reveals their thoughts and behaviours. This could be done taking into cognizance the different circumstances under which the events occur, inevitably leading to the study of emotions, that is, different emotional responses in different scenarios. In social psychology, the study of emotions enables further query and examination of self-perception, this theory, like the facial feedback hypothesis, holds that “facial expression can lead to corresponding changes in the subjective experience of emotion.”²⁰⁷ This study explains how a deliberate facial control could influence the individual’s internal emotion; it emphasizes how people could vary their emotions by contracting some of the eighty muscles in face. The focal point of “facial feedback hypothesis”²⁰⁸ states that one’s mind and emotions could be influenced just by changing their facial expression. Showing that what happens in a person’s brain, could affect the bodies. It follows that minds (sometimes replace with brain by scientist) could control the body or that peoples bodies influence their minds. William James supports this position by saying that “it is a well-known fact that mental acts affect the body.”²⁰⁹

This implies that in a transgender discourse, the individual could easily handle gender dysphoria, or gender identity disorder. It also suggests that people have control over their emotions, which would then influence their feelings. The hypothesis seeks to interpret how minds process information. It reveals that long time exposure to certain ideas could influence how individuals view themselves or perceive their self-image, like high or low self-esteem. In like manner, James D. Laird draws attention to the idea of intrinsic motivation, defined as an act people engage in just for the sake of the activity. Here, intrinsic motivation shows that individuals tend to act without a prior motive, without thinking of benefits, since it originates within the person. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation has to do with actions outside the person. An act is said to be extrinsically motivated when individuals get involved because of what they plan to gain from it that is, viewing it as a means to an end.

²⁰⁷ Brehm and . Kassin (1996),

²⁰⁸ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 44.

²⁰⁹ Available at [www.Openforum.com/articles/the power of the mind](http://www.Openforum.com/articles/the_power_of_the_mind). Accessed on 17th oct. 2014.

A review of the motivation for transgenderism becomes necessary as it is apparent that reasons for transgenderism vary that while some individuals are motivated extrinsically others were intrinsically motivated. Going by the notions of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the deduction shows those who get involved just because they can, like Bruce Jenner now Caitlyn Jenner, who seem to be profiting from it, and those involved as a result of their biological conditions. Hence, we could conclude that Jenner is extrinsically motivated. The reason for this statement stems from the resulting fame he is getting and its associate financial benefit, Jenner is the host of a reality television show titled 'Call me Cait'. If this evaluation is true, then by this act he has trivialised the situation of those who really need help. However, intrinsic motivation could explain the condition of Caster Semenya, as her actions could be explained as a professional athlete, only interested in achieving her purpose in life, which is winning an Olympic medal, despite the limiting condition of intersex. We could make this deduction as she refuses to draw any undue attention to herself or concern herself with any form of speculation.

The debate about self being a social construct shows that individuals usually respond to what people feel about them, by responding to how they felt perceived by others. Social construct influences our self-analysis indicating that when we define ourselves, we do so in comparison to others. Accordingly, in his social comparison theory, Leon Festinger insists that individuals tend to engage in comparison, when they are uncertain about themselves. He holds that this comparison occurs when they seek others with similar interest, that is, affiliate in life situation. To further examine this theory, Festinger asked two questions: when do we turn to others for comparison? And, to whom would we compare ourselves? He holds that people revert to comparison, when they are uncertain about themselves. At such a point, they would not have any objective means of comparison. On the other hand, people evaluate themselves with others, checking for similarities. The natural tendency is with less fortunate 'others', or less able 'others'. This point becomes critical to this work because, if the purpose of transiting from one gender to the other could only be traced to comparison, then it would make the process very shallow. It is pertinent to note that people not only change gender, they also aim to change their biological sexes.

In contrast to this theory, Stanley Schechter holds that there are loners, that is people who prefer their own company, they can seek self isolation for any reason, when they do feel threatened or when they are less threatened. This brings to mind the saying that misery “loves only miserable company.”²¹⁰ He speculates on how people’s emotions could be influenced by the reactions of those around them. To answer this question, he explains that there are certain physiological traits affecting the emotions of people and that when individuals recognize these reactions in others enables them to interpret their own reactions. It is called the ‘two factor theory’. The two factor theory explains why people sometimes are confused about their experience. They look to others for guidance; it holds that when people with like experience find themselves in the same company, the other person’s reaction help interpret our own response. The two factor theory explains why people find it necessary to have a counseling session and share experience, as it happens in support groups. It could also explain the significance of organisations like LGBTI. (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex’) and the ‘Outright’ movements.

To further decipher why people act in a particular way and why they experience same action in different ways, Robert Zajonc posits that air-cool blood flows better to the brain, when people smile, which then lowers the temperature in the brain. In contrast, frowning decreases the blood flow. Accordingly, these facial expressions results in psychological states that influences emotions. But the psychological question is, is it possible to alter how you feel just by putting on the right face? If putting on the right face could influence a person’s emotion, then, why the ‘façade?’ Façade is a face, a front ‘put on’ by people to disguise their emotions. This means that Zajonc thesis about this emotion may not be accurate, the reason for this doubt lies with the fact that a smiley face (façade) hides a lot of emotional feeling such as anger. The smiley face (façade) does not mean that, they are not mad at the situation, they are only able to hide their reaction. The facial expressions could be more beneficial if it helps to reduce the conflicts and stress that people encounter on daily basis, yet no amount of facial control would change a biological condition.

210 Brehm and . Kassin (1996), *Social psychology*. 49

3.4.2 Transgenderism And Body Posture

Aaron Siegman and Stephen Boyle's hypothesis show that body posture reveal how people experience emotions, through the sensory emotional feedback. He holds that when people are proud they stand erect resulting in chest expansion, while the chest would contract when people feel dejected. This is because they would slouch. Hence, it is proposed that one's emotional state could be revealed from one's posture. It could also be indicated by vocal cues, owing to the observation that, on the one hand, people tend to speak quickly, and raise their voices when they are fearful or anxious, but on the other hand, they lower the voice and walk slowly when they are depressed. Siegman and Boyle's research confirms this position by revealing that anxiety related events and discussions produce a corresponding emotional feedback. They conclude that "our emotions can be influenced by sensory feedback from the voice as well as from the face and body."²¹¹

Also, the self-concept leads to another notion. This time it is memory, that is, what social psychologists call autobiographical memories. The autobiographical memory comes handy in recollecting significant life impacting events. The theory holds that without these memories, people would have no concept of the self. It insists that, not all experiences of the past would leave the same memories, especially, when there were many people with the same experience. In which case autobiographical memories becomes vital to peoples identity. These memories were experienced like a flash bulb. It makes people feel special by serving as 'biographies' about the self. Such experiences enable them to link the past with the present, resulting in the sense of inner continuity. This may be the type of memory that John Locke was proposing.

Accordingly, there are three ways through which individual's experience self-recollection that is, remembering life event. They include self-reference effect, the egocentric bias and hindsight bias. The self-reference effect claims that people have the tendency to remember a word, concept or an event in relation to an occurrence. This happens as they connect such terms (words, notion or picture) to themselves anytime it is employed. In this view, humans are said to be susceptible to viewing different events in relation to the self, showing that self-reference leads to self-relevance or egocentric tendencies of biased interpretation of event. In

²¹¹ 46.

exploring the egocentric bias, Anthony Greenwald holds that the autobiographical memory could distort people's recollections of the past because such recollections could be coloured by their tendency to overemphasise what they did in the making of such events. In this light, the hindsight bias explains a person's tendency to assume that he/she/hir knew the outcome of an event before it took place. It holds that people recall such past events and their past behaviours in ways that are favourable to them. According to the theory, some people could go to the extent of claiming that they knew the outcome of a situation before it happened. Thus, raising the questions about how recollecting past events help in concern with transgenderism.

Apparently, mental acts and mental events were vital to this condition since these mental states influenced some people to make the choice to transit. However, it is clear that transgender care givers have put in checks and balances, to ensure that people have the right criteria in making sensible choices, such as the compulsory one year cross-dressing requirement for transiting (found in chapter two). Still on social psychological theories of self, the self schemas theories explore "beliefs about oneself that guide the processing of self relevant information."²¹² The self, according to Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin, is multifaceted. This is because in self-examination, many individuals do not only think of their current self, they also think of their possible self. Therefore, self-schema's concepts analyses how people make judgments about themselves. This shows that while they are quick to notice and recall or reconstruct event that fit their self-schemas, they are also quick to reject information that does not fit their self-schemas.

For example the cultural perspective notion holds that self-value vary between two major theories; they are the individualism theory and the collectivism theory. Accordingly, they both shape, our self-conception, self-perceptions and self identity views. For instance, Brehm and Kassin hold that individuals from North American and Europe have independent view of the self as an entity that is "distinct, autonomous, self-contained and endowed with unique dispositions."²¹³ And those from Asia, Africa and Latin America have an interdependent view about the self, seen as "part of a larger social network that includes one's family, co-workers,

²¹² Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 53

²¹³ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 55

and others whom we are socially-connected”²¹⁴ When viewed from the angle of transgenderism, the self schemas theories may explain why individual from the developed world like America and Europe are easily distorted with the idea of body types. On the other hand, people from conservative world like Africa have a lot more important concerns, and it is usually difficult to act without consideration for the agency of ‘others’. For them, social relations and social identity were essential to their personal identity. The debate on agency can be found in chapter five.

3.4.3 Transgenderism and Self-Esteem

Again, self-esteem is another theory that necessitates examination. Self-esteem as a social psychological theory seeks to explain self-evaluation, revealing that while some people have a high self-esteem, others have low self-esteem. This approach to self image influences how different people think or feel about themselves, the image also depends on how people approach their daily lives. According to the theory, people are motivated to keep a positive self-image of themselves, because self-esteem shields them from their own fears and anxieties. Hence self-worth is a “state of mind that varies in response to success, failure, and changes in fortune, social interactions and other experiences.”²¹⁵ While reactions to life events are mostly influenced by the mental state of self-worth, self-esteem mostly determines how people approach issues in their lives. In this examination, approaching life with high self-esteem, enables individuals to be more resilient, accommodating of others, they could be non-conformist, but, low self-esteem results in anxiety, pessimism, and tendency of depression. Melancholy could contribute to them having more disappointments in their life, resulting in failures. This is because those with low self-esteem have a self-defeating attitude to life issues, and their feeling of self-worth is usually unstable. It shows that self esteem and emotional wellbeing of an individual could be predicted from the distinction between the ideal self and the actual self. Consequent to this, those susceptible to gender dysphoria and gender identity disorder must of necessity consider psychotherapy. The reason is that they must submit to a process of self-examination, self-perception and self-image

²¹⁴ Brehm and . Kassin (1996),

²¹⁵ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 56

Inadvertently the idea of self-esteem can explain gender identity disorder. The reason for this statement is that when individuals complain of incongruence between mind and body, on the basis of self-evaluation, it could mean that they were not able to handle the result of this evaluation. Also, one is curious as to the criteria of the evaluation; the standard they used for the assessment. For instance, if they employed their society's expectation of gender, then those like the intersex would fall short of the evaluation because these social agencies would not be aware of the condition of these persons. In the same vein, it appears that people with high self-esteem or self-image were never bothered with meeting the expectation of others. It appears that those with high self-esteem have the tendency to scuff at convention; hence, rejecting the restricting values that would have depressed them, instead they convert the situation to a challenge to do the impossible.

When people engage in any form of self-evaluation, it could result in peace of mind or it could lead to emotional crises as it reveals a conflict between the individual's ability and social expectation. This may be the source of identity crises. According to Tory E. Higgins, your "self-esteem is defined by the match between how you see yourself and how you want to see yourself."²¹⁶ According to Higgins, when people perform a comparison between the 'actual self' and the 'ought self', such examinations could lead to discovering discrepancies, resulting in disappointment, frustration, and sadness. It could also result to the mental state of fulfillment or dissatisfaction in the life of an individual. Usually, the 'ought self' is deduced from social codes and guidelines, as against the actual self, which may not meet the social standard. Accordingly, the amount of discrepancy that individuals feel between the actual self and 'ought self' depends on the amount of discrepancies they find and their access to the knowledge. On the other hand, Robert Wicklund and Desmond Frey insist that there are many people who refuse to focus on themselves, but on the rare occasions when they look at themselves, it is always done through "self-awareness"²¹⁷.

During self-awareness, these individuals compare their behaviours to either an internal standard or the social one, and when they fall short of these standards, their self-esteem is reduced, leading to negative and depressive mood, many people want to escape the truth by

²¹⁶ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 57

²¹⁷ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 58

finding consolation in other vices; many of which could lead to clinical disorders. Accordingly, the self-awareness theory claims that there are two possible ways through which people could cope with the situation; they either “shape up” or they “ship out”²¹⁸, that is, they adjust their behaviours in ways that would either reduce the discrepancies, or they could escape the discrepancies by withdrawing from self-awareness. The individual’s choice could be determined by their perceived ability to reduce the discrepancy, and they would endeavour to fit into their personal or the social standard. This is done through ‘self-guide’, a theory that compels people to adjust their behaviour or escape from themselves. Those who seek escape are seeking a mental relief from the challenges of not being able to meet the expectations of the ideal self, which may also be the social ideal. They have decided to take responsibility for the situation, especially, when they expect too much from themselves after self-evaluation. But when this results in suicidal tendencies, the explanation is that, it is an attempt to shed the inhabitation that they imagined as preventing them from harming themselves. It is also their attempt to seek oblivion, that is, the loss of self-awareness, thereby undermining their humanity.

In this discourse, self-handicapping theory reveals that people have ability to undermine themselves as Snyder and Tory Higgins explain that many individuals employ this trait to excuse their inability to succeed, to explain a past failure or an impending (suspicion) failure. Accordingly, these individuals could actually go a step further by sabotaging their own performances, this way they could protect their self-esteem. The explanation is that those with low self-esteem want to avoid failure at all cost, while those with high self-esteem seek an enhancement of their image. They could also improve their image through association with other successful people, that is ‘Basking in the glory of others self-esteem’. This term is the theory that seeks to explain how an individual could be influenced by the success of others with whom they relate. The theory indicates that people are ‘basked’ in reflected glory, when they try to show their connection with other successful people, either by an association or by coincident. This means that people derive part of their self-esteem from those with whom they associate. In contrast, they stay away from those whom they believe reflected failure in the ‘downward social comparison’. Downward social comparison is a theory that explains how

²¹⁸ Brehm and . Kassin (1996), 59

individuals evaluate themselves through social comparison; hence, persons with low self-esteem tend to shy away from events where they would encounter people who seemed to have achieved more than themselves, while they would attend events that reflects positively on them.

According to Festinger, the theory of social comparison points to people's aversion to objective information. They use social comparison as self-defense, when their own self-esteem is at stake. Hence, they may benefit from the feeling they get from downward social comparison, especially, if the comparison is towards those who are inferior, less successful or less fortunate. Festinger holds that they engage in this practice to escape their own session of setback. However, downward social comparison could have another implication. It could lead to envy resentment and drop in self-esteem. These emotions could occur when the individual doing the comparison find themselves at the disadvantaged status. According to Sadley Taylor and Jonathan Brown, many individuals who are depressed, including those with low self-esteem are those who actually have a more realistic view about themselves:

Their self-appraisals are more likely to match appraisals of them made by neutral observers; they make fewer self-serving attributions to account for success and failure, they are less likely to exaggerate their control over uncontrollable events; and they make more balanced predictions about their future.²¹⁹

In this light, self-presentation reveals that individuals have concerns about the image they present to others about themselves. This is because each individual assumes a social face or identity which 'others' help maintain. Hence, the theory of self-presentation deals with how people think about themselves and how they attempts to influence others people's view about them, thus motivating them to reveal only their likeable self. This self-presentation is done through non-verbal behaviours. The goal is 'ingratiation' which means a presentation of a get along attitude, this goes with training on social grace.

Social psychological theories impact debates in transgenderism in many ways, the most apparent being the idea that a person has a part to play in how they turn out. These theories point to the influence of attitudes and character traits, some of them were worth emulating,

²¹⁹ Brehm and . Kassin (1996),70

others have to be discarded, particularly, as these self-analytic theories influence peoples approach to living, for instance, the facial feedback theory, which shows that what affects the mind could have a boomeranging effect on the body, this leads to the inevitable question about how a person's effort with self-image impact self-feelings. Could facial feedback notions explain the theory of affiliation, which claims that people seek for explanation about how they feel from 'others', knowing well in advance that the result could be positive or negative? What about Sadley Taylor and Jonathan Brown conclusion that depression and low self-esteem could be one result of a realistic self-evaluation, could gender dysphoria be the result of self-handicapping? Or why bother comparing yourself with others, when you know that many factors affect the final result? Does this mean that their life goals were too lofty? Advisably, breaking down their expectation to small achievable step would help better, considering the roles of culture and environment in creating a person's personal image? But these theories did not consider how biological make-up affects a person, as these social theories portray those with gender dysphoria, gender identity disorder, or genderphobia as having low self-esteem. Making these conditions temperamental issues, which could be resolved once they beef up their self-esteem.

However, there appears to be too much uncertainty, as self-awareness reveals a person's tendency to be self-absorbed, making them selfish. For instance, when self-reflection reveals the undesirable character traits about the individual person, what should they do? It appears that they hold something or someone else responsible for such shortcomings, as shown in determinism; in which case, the culprits are the gender codes or society. Yet, examining the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation theories show that the desires for transition motivate people, that many actions were motivated by the desire for gain, as proposed by the work of Raymond Janice, and the 'Transgender Empire'. She is convinced that the medical practitioners involved in this practice fall short of their Hippocratic Oath, hence required answering the ethical questions. This is not overlooking the place of culture and society, which reveals that there are other factors influencing our personality, like determinism.

3.5 TRANSGENDER DISCOURSE AND DETERMINISM

Determinism is a philosophical doctrine of cause and effect, it holds that “all our events, both mental and physical, have a cause.”²²⁰ The theory insists that once the cause has taken place, the effect follows automatically, hence the theory of cause and effect. It holds that all events have been ultimately determined. For instance, the Freudian argument that biology was destiny could be traced to this idea. It is relevant here as transgenderism and its practices did not only resurrect issues in the theory of the ontology of being; it also necessitates contemplating the issues of determinism. There are various forms of determinism they include: ethical determinism, environmental determinism, psychological determinism and biological determinism.

Anders Wedberg defines the concept like this “determinism is a vague and ambiguous term”²²¹. According to him, Leucippus and Democritus were the first to explore this idea, by associating determinism with the laws of mechanics, because it was employed in explaining the roles of atoms. But today, it has become a law of cause and effect. However, the theory contradicts the concepts of freewill and freedom of choice, as its proponents insist that man is not absolutely free, that even those actions seemingly free were actually determined. The doctrine became vital when applied to ethical issues. This is because of its attempts to explain why people act in a certain way. Ethical determinism holds that individuals have no freewill. This being the case, they should not be held responsible for their actions. However, when determinism is discussed, issues of fatalism, freewill and causality would also be mentioned. Fatalism being the idea that all our action and events are fixed. It holds that these acts and event were inevitable, because they were pre-destined to be. In this view, the individual will neither control nor affect it, while Freewill refers to the power and ability of the individual to make a decision and choose a course of action, but in causality, the idea is that every act has a cause and effect.

Nevertheless, issues in determinism query the idea of man’s freedom. The conjectures include the following: is man free? If man is free, he should be able to exact his freedom in different

²²⁰ www.philosophy.tamu.edu/~96class4.html Accessed on 5/6/2016.

²²¹ Anders Wedberg (1982), *A history of philosophy: antiquity and the middle ages*.(Oxford : clarendon press) Vol 1, 36.

choices of life. Since he is free, he should then take responsibility for his actions. But, the theory of determinism denies man his freedom by insisting that man's actions are determined by what the individual perceives to be good. As a result of this conviction, he would not deliberately make a choice for what he perceives to be evil. That he must have perceived the goodness in whatever act he is planning to take before making the choice. Taken further the theory, it queries the presence of God and His influence in the life and acts of men. This influence is examined in determinism by this question, if God holds such control over the actions of man, is man still free?

Determinism as a fatalistic theory, brings to the fore other concerns like the place of psychology and environment in man's choice, thus, questioning the place of mental processes in determining human's actions. Attempts to answer this query points to the psychological and environmental influences in the actions of men. As Psychological determinism claims that people's actions are influenced by forces outside their control. This seems to explain why a woman would make one choice during pregnancy, but make a different choice after delivery. This unstable behavior could happen under the same condition but without the pregnancy as a factor. In addition environmental determinism explains that human growth, activities and development were influenced by environmental factors such as culture and race. There is hard determinism, it maintains that environment, heredity, unconscious impulses and defense mechanisms affect how people behave and respond in different situations. From this view, it seems that people should not be held responsible for their actions. As soft determinism claims that "determinism is incompatible with freedom"²²².

According to Garland Edward Allen, "biological determinism is the idea that most human characteristics, physical and mental are determined at conception by hereditary factors passed from parents to offspring."²²³ Thus, implying a rigid causation largely unaffected by environmental factors. The factors responsible for influencing heredity include genes, cultures and environmental agents. The term biological determinism is synonymous with genetic determinism. Accordingly, the debates in biological determinism state that we were created to be the person we are today. It also holds that any alteration we make to ourselves would be in

²²² See www.Philosophy.tamu.edu/./96class4.html Accessed on 5/6/2016.

²²³ See www.britainica.com

conflict with nature. But this is a complex assertion, when we consider abnormal biological situation like intersex, as one wonders at their purpose. That is, whether they were predestined to be like that, and whether they were product of biological accident? And if it is an accident, then, what is the place of determinism in their situation? One cannot help but wonder the number of accidents yet to be discovered.

Sigmund Freud supports the idea of biological determinism when he insists that anatomy is destiny, his work in psychoanalytic theory illustrates gender-centricism. Accordingly, gender centricism states that personality development is different for the two genders, the male and the female gender, because of their biological differences. The theory identifies the differences in the life goals of the genders as a reason for the notion like ‘men are bosses; women are mothers’. In another way ethnocentricism in this theory refers to the different personality theories for the genders. It assumes that personal development of the genders is the same for every individual, despite their race, ethnic group, and social class. Other social psychological perspectives of personal identities include heterosexism, which emphasizes the normative nature in heterosexual orientation, here the argument is that other sexual orientation, like gay and lesbians are deviant and can be changed. While the androcentricist theories refer to personal identity theories which use “boys and men as prototype of humankind, and girls and women as variant on the dominant theme.”²²⁴ Freud’s psychoanalytic theory emphasizes the place of internal motive and fantasies in human behaviour, he opines that a person’s conduct attracts external rewards and punishments. J. Furlong explains that for Freud:

Every moment of our lives we are driven by unconscious desires which we cannot access owing to internal structures and mechanisms that protect us from facing raw ‘untamed passions’. Underneath our conscious lives, a struggle ensues between indiscriminate, mostly sexual, desires (the Freudian id) and the censor of those desires (the superego).²²⁵

²²⁴ James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi (1995), *Sex and Gender: The Human Experience*. (New York. Brown & Benchmark), 79.

²²⁵ J. Furlong (2005), Sigmund Freud 1856-1939: Great thinkers a-z:2500 years of thought that shaped the western world, (New York: MJF Bks), 98.

Accordingly, Sigmund Freud strongly insists that the inability of people to deal with their sexual fantasies lead to mental illness; in the same wise, he opines that personal development is different for men and women because of their biological differences. He holds that ‘penis envy’ was the major drive for girls, as they grow to recognize the differences between themselves and boys, and that penis envy determines their relationship with other individuals in their lives. He views that women are less ethical than men, hence possessing lesser morality which denies them the ability to be logical. Consequently, women have a less modified ego because they are “passive, emotional, masochistic, narcissitic and in competition with other women for man’s attention.”²²⁶ M. Lewin contradicts the Freudian claim by insisting that “behaviour is a function of the interaction between the person and the environment”²²⁷. This means people’s behavioural traits could be traced to their environment. The “interactionist perspective”²²⁸ merges the two previous theories by positing that both external and internal factors influence our behaviours.

When inevitable occurrences take place in life, many people point to determinism. This can be observed over and over again when people commit crime that calls for prosecution. Then, instead of allowing the judges to pass their sentence, the legal advocate seeks every way for their client to escape judgment by explaining and excusing the crime base on determinism. They usually argue that the accused was not free. Fearn Michaels stresses this point by claiming that the theory of determinism has become a reference point for many people to excuse their crimes. He holds that “when we apportion blame we assume that the accused committed his or her crime of their own free will, while those whose actions were not under their control at the time can expect to be exonerated.”²²⁹ He further explains that some people plead insanity as excuse for their acts. Here he refers to Clarence Darrow, whose clients had pleaded guilty to murder by insisting that “there is a sense in which ultimately nobody’s actions are under their control. Actions are like any other physical events in that they all have a cause”²³⁰. By this assertion, Darrow employed the theory of determinism as a plea for his client to escape the death sentence. This means that believers in the theory of determinism

²²⁶ James A. Doyle and Michelle A. Paludi (1995), *Sex And Gender: The Human Experience*, (New York: Brown and Benchmark), 82.

²²⁷ Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin (1996), *Social psychology* 9

²²⁸ Brehm and Kassin (1996), 10.

²²⁹ Fearn, (2005), 20.

²³⁰ Fearn (2005),

could expect to be exonerated, when they invoke the theory of cause and effect to excuse their actions. We see this happening in courts of law of many advanced countries where experts investigate family history, environment, and culture, including social interactions to seek explanation for people's actions. What this means is that anyone could excuse their behaviour on the ground of determinism. Nonetheless, the fact that the law still sentences people who are found guilty, shows that the plea about determinism is not enough justification for crime.

It is apparent that despite the theory of determinism, law enforcement agents and legal agencies still expect people to take responsibility for their actions otherwise they would never be subjected to punishment even when found guilty. In this light, Daniel Dennet contradicts the theory of determinism, when he insists that the deterministic forces were in the mind, that deterministic notions confuse the ideas of control and causation. According to him, causal links were not enough explanation for this kind of control. He asserts that "a jail without a jailer is not a jail"²³¹. By this assertion, Dennet is daring the determinist to point out the jailer. He insists that "there are no feedback signals from the present to the past for the past to exploit."²³² According to Nicolas Fearn, in determinism, authorities tend to search for :

A history, a set of causes that made it what it was. We can regress until we alight on causes outside the accused control...no event – not even human action – are outside the jurisdiction of the immutable laws of nature, just as the law of gravity causes an apple to fall to the earth, physiological laws operate upon your body and nervous system and govern your interactions with the environment and other individuals.²³³

Pointedly, even nature could be linked as cause of an action, just like in transgender debates, biological determinism had been held responsible for the condition of some transgendered individuals. They point to the jailer in their body, but would Dennet agree to this explanation? They claim that the forces pulling the strings of their lives could be found in the body. The question remains unanswered, whether this makes them a puppet, whose strings are being pulled in the grand game of life or individuals without freewill and choice? But if they keep using the excuse of a jailer, then, would it help them to first determine the purpose of the puppeteer before acting? Nonetheless, many of them were able to apply their freewill and

²³¹ Fearn (2005), 35

²³² Fearn (2005), 35

²³³ Fearn (2005), 20-21

choice to make their decision on sex change; this is because not many of them were bothered about honouring the demands of the jailer or a puppeteer. In their desperation to live a 'normal' life, many have broken the strings of the puppeteer by making a choice for surgery or remaining the way they are. How then would their choice be judged? This is considering that fate had handed them an unpalatable meal. However, the possibility of them changing the cause of their lives questions the theory of determinism.

3.5.1 Determinism, Fatalism and Destiny

Fatalism is a theory popularly associated with resignation, on the belief that no human actions were free, that everything had been predetermined, the theory holds "that we are powerless to do anything other than what we actually do"²³⁴. Many people like the indigenous African would not find it easy to just shrug off the theory of fate and determinism. This is because of the strong belief in destiny. "Their view also stresses the connection between the spiritual and corporeal forces which many people of African descent dare not interfere with. Many individuals would rather secretly endure their condition by conforming to codes of behaviour, even when they may be struggling with their situation. As Christopher Agunlana explains that Africans have respect for social norms and custom, the "belief is common in Africa, that no one can live successfully outside of the social setting or human community ... to be cut off from one's natural relation with the soil and with the society is regarded as a curse"²³⁵. Though many Africans are sensitive to issues of curses and taboos, one could still argue that this 'curse' refers to an unidentified jailer. The deduction here is that, since the jailer is too difficult to be identified, they should consider the idea of self-projection, as they must, and should live their lives as if they are in-charge. This means they must consciously make life choices and be ready to take responsibility for their actions.

In another view, Stephen Toulmin relates determinism with the theory of human nature, from passive and active perspectives. He holds that "self-understanding involves two distinct elements: ... in the sense of deciding what to make of ourselves, getting the hang of our own

²³⁴ Rice, H. (2018) <hugh .rice@philosophy.ox.ac.uk>

²³⁵ Christopher Agulanna (2009- 2010). Ezigbo Mmadu: An exploration of the Igbo concept of a good person. *Ibadan Journal of humanistic studies*. Nos 19 & 20

motives, knowing our own minds”²³⁶. He opines that a key component of our existence is decision making, rather than self-knowledge, that whenever people claim not to know their minds, it does not necessarily indicate ignorance, but rather, the assertion points to their inability to make a decision. According to Toulmin, human actions may not be entirely predetermined as the theories of determinism indicated. This is because, when these actions were viewed in line with the possibility of them having alternatives, it became apparent that people could have made different choices that not all human actions were fixed; they were ‘indeterminate’ and ‘malleable’.

Consequently, Stephen Toulmin, exposes the role of humanity in the outcome of things by insisting that psychological factors have made it possible for a situation to be resolved in many possible ways, the term ‘identity crises’ shows lack of self-confidence among people. He stated that people should be more decisive in their actions instead of submitting themselves to additional self-examination. For Toulmin, “we can choose just what kind of human being we turn ourselves into.”²³⁷ Hence, the solution rests with the idea self-creation. This means that we should make ourselves up as we go along life and as we encounter different challenges.

Yet self-creation and self-projection could have adverse effect on conservative as societies, where their belief system insists on acceptable and unacceptable personal conduct. For instance, unacceptable behavior like incest and adultery are viewed as abominable among Isokos. According to James Welch, life circumstances can make a person special in a negative way. He said when “a man is constantly the victim of calamity which is taken to be a sign that he must be a priest”²³⁸. In this view, the gods are held responsible for causing the misfortune, it is their way of revealing to the person that he/she ought to be serving them, the calamity or unforeseen circumstances in the lives of people portray them as not being in the right part of destiny. By implication, the unidentified body types like intersex may rank under calamity as the individual is a person in conflict.

236 Stephen Toulmin (1976), *Knowing and acting: An invitation to philosophy* (New York: Macmillan) 285.

237 Toulmin (1976) 287.

²³⁸ James Welch (1934), The Isoko tribe of Africa. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Apr., 1934), pp. 160-173

According to Eva E. Rosander, “the study of African organisations seen from the overall perspective of individuality and collectivity cannot avoid focusing on social identity, including ethnic, religious, gender and kinship identity”²³⁹. She holds that identity could simply be defined as the self and others. When studied from an African perspective, religion would definitely find a place in the definition because “religious beliefs provide the means whereby people negotiate the personal, social and political condition they experience and through which they may be empowered,²⁴⁰ as previously observed concerning Isokos.

Rosander opines that a further exploration of African organisational personality reveals identity creating, identity maintaining and identity reproduction. For instance, the Igbos connect the will of a person with their personal identity. K.C. Anyanwu holds that there is a connection between the will of a person and their personal identity. He claims that “the process of self realization requires that a person strives to develop certain skills and correct attitude to work.”²⁴¹ He insists that the success of a person depends on the success of his will. Hence, the individual is required to make effort at success, otherwise, he would have to make sacrifices to correct whatever is the cause for lack of success. The reason for this lies in the idea that he has a part to play in his life endeavors. To appreciate this African mix, this work dedicates an extensive comparative study in that area (Isoko world view). This could be found in chapters three and four.

It is imperative for this work to determine the place and importance of self-awareness, to decide whether the result can detract people from seeking transition from one gender to another. This quest is necessary, since self-awareness eventually reveals unpleasant things about us, especially when self-awareness reveals the short coming in a person’s life, leading to sadness and depression, when they discover that the ‘real self’ contradicts the ‘ideal self’. How then would people gain true knowledge about themselves, if the truth makes them sad? Again, the desire to transit from one gender to another could explain the theory of shaping-up or are they actually shaping-out? There are so many self theories, but the theory of self mastery should be able to sum all up nicely. According to Oyeshile:

²³⁹ Eva E. Rosander (1997), Women’s group in Africa: *Organizing women: formal and informal women’s group in the middle east*. Dawn Chatty and Annika Rabo. (Eds), (Oxford: Berg), 101- 123.

²⁴⁰ Rosander (1997), 105

²⁴¹ Anyanwu, K.C (1987), The notion of chi (self) in Igbo philosophy. The Nigeria journal of philosophy 1986 - 1987 issn 0189-885x

Self-mastery logically implies having self power , individual power and personal power over ones conduct. It would be almost impossible to change one's situation without some degree of self. But in achieving self mastery, a lot of other factors, such as knowledge, mindset, environmental disposition, and even religious and social values also come into play.²⁴²

Undoubtedly, self mastery and self power can be employed to do a lot of things. Just like personal power and mind power can be employed as a tool of motivation and drive, making a person so determined that no amount of stigmatization would affect them, rather the fact that people said that something is impossible, would be enough reason to prove them wrong. Hence, self mastery could be approached in two ways, like a person's decision to transgender, this act could be justified as a result of self examination or the lack of self examination. Afterall, a person could make the choice to alter their biological sex or decide to change their gender, and claim that he/she/hir didn't deliberate on it. It is expected that they must have gone through self examination before making the decision, but whether the result of their evaluation can be trusted is the question here. The reason for doubting the validity of their self evaluation is seen from many social schema theories about the self, as it is apparent that people can live in denial, people can split their identity or they can choose self defeating options. Then again, what justification would one have for judging their choice, as it is their right to make a choice. And every choice has a responsibility attached to it.

Apparently the jugdemental approach could be traced to prejudices and bias, metaphysical and religious influences hold significant place in how people approach the idea. Yet if we can only remember that many of our deities are genderless, it would go a long way to reducing the rigidity we place on gender lines, for instance, the Christian God doesn't have a gender, he is said to be all things. It is a whole lot of complicated process of debunking people's mindset and fundamental views. The difference is so clear that though many African believe in the existence of forces and spiritual capacity to change things, yet that capacity has not helped progressive development. This shows that making a choice and acting on those choices are two different things.

²⁴²Olatunji A. Oyeshile (2009), The mindset factor in self-mastery. *The developmental philosophy of Emmanuel onyechere osigwe Anyiam-Osigwe: personal values, personal awareness and self mastery.* Oladipo, O and Ekanola, A. B. (eds) Vol 1. 74.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Thus far, this chapter has been able to examine the ontological substances resulting in the idea of hormones; the most consistent item in identity seems to be the unique essence of being, gleaned from existentialism, where being endures changes, yet finds comfort in the state of becoming, which further indicates that individuals would benefit more if they could ask themselves, what I am created for? This analysis explored theories in personal identity to answer the question what could possibly identify a person through time? It determined that though people needed their bodies, without the corresponding consciousness and memory, existence would be unbearable. Also, it analysed some social psychological theories of the self, and their implications for our transgender discourse. This chapter critically explored the theory of determinism; it emphasized that though many people would claim the force of determinism, they cannot produce the jailer. It only means that each individual could choose their destiny as indicated by the theory of self-mastery. Relevant to this is Eduardo Morato Jr, seven steps to self mastery, he proposed that self mastery should begin with our ability to think critically, the purpose just like we discovered in the life of Socrates is to know yourself. The second step is what he called the ability to intuit; here the recommendation is the ability to listen to one's intuition. And then, it is learning to feel, that is focusing on our emotional side, this therefore, does not discontinue how a person feel, but its purpose is to help connect with other people. But we must also learn to do, that is use the knowledge you have or what you have learnt from the self mastery session.

Also, learning to communicate is included in the above steps, here the emphasis is on vocal, verbal and non verbal modes of communication. The next step is learning to lead, that is help to teach, by helping to guide others. Then finally, learning to be, this aspect is very important as there are so many factors aiming to influence people's behavior, consistency would help people to be more stable.

When the idea of transgenderism was pitched against the theory of being, several questions about the self were raised. Some of these questions were addressed, but many were left hanging because metaphysical and ontological theories could not properly resolve ethical issues, even when social psychological theories attempted to soften our attitude towards

others. Yet when we associate with people, it is difficult for us to determine those who are 'shaping up' from those 'shipping out' because when we encounter 'others', it is difficult to tell what aspect of self-cognition they were dealing with. And then, since we mostly serve as a mirror to paint a picture of the 'other', the criteria used for this position is mostly determined by their present state and actions. This means that before a person decide to embark on transger surgeries they ought to carefully evaluate their situation, before taking the irreversible step into surgery, to determine whether they need surgery or therapy. This is the reason why many still have issues after the surgery, inevitably man is more than body.

CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSGENDERISM AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The theories of personal identity explored in chapter three left many questions unanswered, like the psychology or memory theory, which did not answer questions on how to recognize an imposter, instead it revealed the ease with which such an act could be glossed over on the grounds of determinism, as many psychologists are prone to do. Previous experiences showed how a person's crime could be excused as dual personality or identity crises. Thus resulting in unanswerable questions like, how is it possible to separate the person body act from his/her/hir mind acts or which personality will take responsibility for the crime? In like manner, the somatic theory did not define how to address concerns about impersonation found in the same body type like identical twins and identical siblings. Also, the debates in chapter two reveals a significant aspect of the transgender debate, this refers to the question about why one gender seems more appealing than the other. As L. Fleming Fallon Jr. demographic shows that "Gender identity disorder is more prevalent in males than in females. Accurate estimates of prevalence for either males or females are not available."²⁴³ However, the works of Michael Kimmel and Valeria Walkerdine definitely portrays genderphobia, fear of one's gender traits, which necessitated exploration of the genders and their attraction or why one was more appealing.

Therefore, it is apparent that not every man wants to be macho, aggressive, and domineering. And not every woman can suffer to be beautiful, they don't have the time and inclination to preen, make-up and/or be docile. The research reveals that there are men who are comfortable with feminine traits, like being gentle, submissive and doing house work, they categorise as feminine men. And, there are women who love to be bossy, aggressive, and domineering, they categorise as masculine women. Thus, threatening the gender lines, and emphasizing the importance of including these factors to gender studies, as seeking answers to the above questions become imperative. Yet, not every man accept the threat to their gender identity; a condition of many indigenous African men, who celebrate their manhood and take pride in

²⁴³ See Fleming L. Fallon, Jr. www.nocphmph.org/pdf/fallon.pdf

being men, whether they meet the associated responsibility or not, many have never bothered themselves with thought of escape, rather, when the expectations becomes unbearable, they hide their heads in the sand, like the proverbial ostrich, ignoring the problem. This does not negate the fact that there are individuals involved in the practice of transgendersim. It only compels an exploration of the attraction in each gender, especially, in the more developed world. This crisis is complicated by proponents of the natural law theory, which asserts that nature has a purpose for the genders, that is, they are compelled to perform their expected roles. Inevitably, to resolve the dilemma, Sandra Bem suggests an expansion of the genders, Judith Butler posits a place for non-identity, Margaret Whetherell points to gender flexibility or androgyny and Fausto-Starlyn insists on multiple genders.

Further enhancing the crises is the contribution of technology, leading to bio-ethical concerns, and queries about how far technology should go in the issue of enhancement of which Leon Kass cautions on the ‘wisdom of repugnance’, known as the ‘yuck factor’. The query then is about the justification for sex change surgeries that are motivated by beauty, could we then conclude that this is going too far? For instance, is it ethically permissible for a person to engage these artifacts just to be beautiful? Like in Thailand, where male to female transgenders are so enhanced that their allure and beauty far exceed that of the natural female, by which act they attract jealousies and antagonism from the straight (natural) female. This situation makes it imperative for people in Thailand to learn how to identify the “Katoey or ladyboy”²⁴⁴ as they are called.

This chapter explores transgenderism and body types, to debate body as a performance. The purpose is to determine the metaphysical implication for a gender that could be ‘put on’ or ‘put off’ at will, also to differentiate transgenderism and gender identity issues. it interrogates Transgenderism and the bioethical concerns. And, Transgenderism and the cultural challenge, it explores African cultures like that of the Isokos to determine their approach to differentiated bodies and determine whether they are revolutionary enough to embrace transgendered practices, that is, would it be a cultural shock or a clash of civilizations? This is keeping in mind that the Isokos are communalistic and superstitious people, who hold a strong belief in male superiority, they practice division of labour along with gender divide. and they believe

²⁴⁴ See www.shemalemodelstube.com/videos/ladyboy-kate-movie-star-beauty-7008.html

that biology is destiny. A proper evaluation would require a comparative analysis of the cultural person, their social relationships and rules of behaviour as it relates to the theory of regard and consideration as proposed by Bolatito Lanre-Abass, who insists that “ To violate a person's autonomy is to treat that person merely as a means, that is, in accordance with others' goals without regard.”²⁴⁵

4.2 TRANSGENDERISM AND BODY CONTROVERSY

There have been several debates about how the genders are perceived and what is expected of them. A prominent one is the theory of gender as performance, which is the belief that when people act out gender roles they are performing lines, thus, when a person claims a gender, they are expected to perform the roles associated with the gender, this is the only way to show that you belong to that divide: that is a person's ability to perform the traits associated with their gender choice.

Looking back at ancient philosophy, it reveals the search for substance, which later progressed to the study of being. But Descartes was more direct in his approach to studying being when he attached performance to identity. This position could be ascertained from his insistence that “a thing that thinks is one that doubts, understand, conceives, affirms, denies, wills, imagines and feels.”²⁴⁶ This is a clear statement about how the ‘I’ is expected to perform. For Thomas Reid however, the credibility of the ‘I’ or self takes place when the individual remembers these events. According to him, “whatever this self may be, it is something which thinks, deliberate and resolves, acts and suffers. I am not thoughts, I am not actions, I am not feelings, I am something that thinks, and acts and suffers.”²⁴⁷ Here suffering is an existential notion which is associated with fear, dread, and fallenness.

In *Suffering to be Beautiful*, Sandra Lee Barky observes that women go through “pain”²⁴⁸ to have a socially acceptable body. She points out that “my topic is not the female but the feminine body and the feminist critique of the cultural norms that teach us what it is to

²⁴⁵ Bolatito Lanre-Abass (2010), *Suicide and human Dignity: An African perspective*.

[https://idosi.org/hssj/hssj5\(1\)10/7.pdf](https://idosi.org/hssj/hssj5(1)10/7.pdf)

²⁴⁶ Bertrand Russell (1963), *History of Western Philosophy*. (Great Britain: George Allen & Unwin Ltd) 548.

²⁴⁷ Nicholas Fearn (2005), *Philosophy: The latest answers to the oldest questions*, (London: Atlantic Books), 5.

²⁴⁸ Sandra Lee Barkey (2002), *Suffering to be Beautiful. Gender struggles : practical approaches to contemporary feminism*. Mui C. L. and Murphy, J. S. (Eds) (New York: Rowman & Littlefield pub. Inc).

achieve and to maintain such a body... I examine as well the profound ambiguity that femininity has for women: its seductiveness as well as the pain it causes and its hold on our very identity.”²⁴⁹ She argues that the burden of femininity on the female body requires discipline, as a strenuous cultural practice. Her targets are the norms of femininity which society teaches, that an individual has to look a certain way to be beautiful. She concludes that for the female to feel beautiful, she has to go through pain. This pain could be surgical, cosmetic or self imposed (exercising or dieting). Also this imposition is suspicious as Lee Barkey insist that the implication of this pain could be seen in billions spent on cosmetics worldwide.

She holds that the lure for cosmetic beauty reveals itself in the feminine psychology of inferiority complex, a simple way to confirm this accusation is to review why people make up and seek enhancement, could they exit or be seen without it? The dominant feature of her analysis is an inferiorised body. This inferiority complex compels the female to distance herself from a stigmatised body, eventually the resulting pain could lead to “bodily transformation.”²⁵⁰ This culture, according to her, has “elevated ...(permanently or temporarily) masculinity over femininity,”²⁵¹ thus having a body constructed through the appropriate practices is crucial to the sense of self. This is because self presentation will no longer be constrained by the necessity of announcing one’s gender but by body presentation.

Lee Barkey laments the difficulty that women undergo to attain an impossible body, which she describes as depicting a teenage body. She holds that the body is then perceived as one’s enemy when it keeps resisting her effort. Yet this teenage body is difficult to attain as most women who have gone through child bearing find it difficult to maintain. This is because the process of conceiving and birthing children involves a healthy body. This could be confirmed by most women as their bodies accumulate fatty tissues during conception, birthing and weaning children. Hence it is not unusual to find women (and men) going through pain and hunger strike just to maintain a socially acceptable body. This brings to light Susan Brison’s position as to why people split themselves by distancing themselves from an abused body. Though, in her case she was addressing concerns about assaults and abuse, yet transgenderism

²⁴⁹ Sandra Lee Barkey (2002), *Suffering to be Beautiful*, 242-245.

²⁵⁰ Lee Barkey (2002), *Suffering to be Beautiful* .3.

²⁵¹ Lee Barkey (2002), 5.

and it practices allude to such possibilities, as there are many solutions to a repulsed body like pretending to be somebody else, impersonation, and taking on a different personality. These women would probably envy the male who may not have their type of challenge. No wonder some could take the drastic step of refusing to have babies, just to keep being attractive. This is a drastic step because for many women, along with femaleness comes the desire for motherhood.

Nevertheless, speaking from a different perspective, Michael S. Kimmel portrays masculinity as a constantly changing collection of meanings. He holds that the genders were social construction whose meaning and definitions were constantly shifting. He insists that men also encounter their own emotional struggle by striving to meet societal expectation, that men had fears and feel humiliated when they do not live up to the expectation of others. According to him, “everyman is a tragic tale of striving to live up to impossible ideals of success, leading to chronic terrors of emasculation, emotional emptiness and a gendered rage that leaves a wide swath of destruction in its wake.”²⁵² Susan Burdo confirms both positions when she claimed that both males and females have experienced battles as a result of their bodies. The reason for this claim is that these bodies attract sexual harassment like “grab and grope mode”²⁵³. And that these bodies are perceived as a prison “confinement and limitations... the enemy”²⁵⁴. By implication, it appears that individuals find themselves in positions, where they are under constant pressure to conform to certain body characterization and categorisation. Hence, instead of dual identity people could seek the opposite gender, they could do surgery, thus, escaping their inability to meet certain gender expectations.

The question then is, since these social expectation seem to be obligatory, how would notions of self-esteem and self-cognition help a person? Could transiting from one gender to another facilitate a better condition for the individual? It appears that every individual requires the right perception of themselves to enable them survive social expectation. To further interrogate the self, Judith Butler examines the question of body in *Bodies that matter*. She

²⁵² Michael S. Kimmel (1997). Masculinity as homophobia. *Towards a new psychology of Gender*. Gengen, M. M. and Davis, S. N. (Ed) Newyork: Routledge 227

²⁵³ Susan Bordo (2002), The sexual harasser is a bully, not a sex fiend. *Gender struggles : practical approaches to contemporary feminism* (Eds) Mui and Murphy, (New York: Rowman & Littlefeild Pub) .

²⁵⁴ Bordo (1997),

hinges on the notion that “gender is a ‘mere’ performance on the model of drag.”²⁵⁵ The idea depicts that gender is not ‘real’. According to her, explanations about gender seem misguided because of the belief that gender could be changed or ‘re-scripted’ at will, that is, ‘put on’ or ‘taken off’ at one’s choice or whim. Butler wonders if the need for the deconstruction of genders will result in the idea of creating an original gender. According to Kathleen Lennon, Butler’s work “stressed the way in which gendered performances incorporate a presumptive heterosexuality; but they also are co-constituted with class, ‘race’, and cultural positioning as well as age and a variety of forms of abilities and disabilities.”²⁵⁶ Hence Lennon insists that connecting gender with bodily style and performance makes it apparent that “there is no necessary link between gender and any particular bodily shape.”²⁵⁷

4.2.1 Transgenderism and Body Re-definition.

However, in considering the materiality of the body, Butler contemplates the need for a re-evaluation and a re-definition of the body, she believes that the body should not just be fixed as a subject of thought: rather, the body should indicate a world beyond itself. She portrays this notion as central to what bodies are. She poses a fundamental question that “if gender is constructed through relations of power and especially normative constraints that not only produce but also regulate various bodily being, how might agency be derived from this notion of gender as the effect of productive constraint.”²⁵⁸ She further wonders how gender could be understood as constitutive and compelling if it was not a choice, and why what is constituted seems to have become artificial and could be easily abandoned. Her concern is controversial, as she wonders what gender could be. She speculates on how easy it is for people to wake up in the morning, check their closet for the available gender, to determine what they should put on for each day, and later change their mind, putting it off at a convenient time, like at night. What could be the significance of this kind of gender? She explains that instead of the available clothes being the indicator, it is gender that decides the issue. She said “on the contrary, (that) gender is what decides on the subject”²⁵⁹.

²⁵⁵ Judith Butler (1993), *Bodies that matter: on the discursive limit of sex*, (New York: Routledge),

²⁵⁶ See Kathleen [Lennon \(2014\)](#) K.Lennon@hull.ac.uk>

²⁵⁷ Kathleen [Lennon \(2014\)](#)

²⁵⁸ Butler (1993), x.

²⁵⁹ Butler (1993), 9

In the same vein, Butler wonders how gender could be analysed without it being susceptible to cultural determinism. She holds that cultural determinism reveals a situation where gender is portrayed as an artifice to be put on and put off at will. She insists that various facts about people's daily lives could not be dismissed as mere construction regardless of the contrary indications about gender. Butler debates the construction of gender as artificial and dispensable character, wondering what could be done about those constructions. The search becomes necessary as people are compelled to live with their bodies. How then would such terms be necessary for the body be altered, as the claim that sex is already gendered would not be enough to explain the materiality of sex. Butler's challenge is to determine bodies that have come to matter and to explain the reason people give for their bodily choices. Accordingly, she explains that:

What I would propose in place of these conceptions of construction is a return to the notion of matter, not as a site or surface, but as a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity and surface that we call matter. That matter is always materialized has, I think, to be thought in relation to the productive and indeed materializing effect in regulatory power of the Foucaultian sense.²⁶⁰

Butler marvels at how power relation work for the bodies and how the theories of materiality have shaped the body contours. To buttress this, she opines that Plato's discourse on materiality did not permit the female to have a form, hence, the theory did not give women a body. Rather it presents women in a metaphysical dream-like world. She therefore queries "how the criteria of intelligible sex operates to constitute a field of bodies, and how precisely we might understand specific criteria to produce the bodies that they regulate"²⁶¹.

Politicizing the body emphasizes the idea that the body is social, it has space and exist in time, it also indicate that the body types have benefits owing from agitations for equal benefits by gender advocates. In many western countries protection of the rights of women and children left a gap in the protection of men (seen in Michael Kimmel's work). The men are left to protect themselves or fight for themselves, since it is believed to be a man's world. But the truth is that many of them are scared and helpless, as they have no backing. They are seen as

²⁶⁰ Butler (1993), 9

²⁶¹ Butler (1993), 64

always the “oppressor”²⁶² which may not be true in all cases. Hence, they have become victims of gender oppression. Previously, Patrick Hopkins explores the idea of political bodies when he addressed the issue of homophobia. He claimed that the repression hypothesis, irrational hypothesis, and the political response hypothesis were explanations proffered for homophobia. In the political response hypothesis, body is perceived and employed as a tool of political debates and agitation. It is also seen as a tool of privilege, as different types of bodies have advantages and disadvantages. He opines that lesbians and gays view their bodies as “primarily a political identity... that their choice was an act of political advocacy.”²⁶³ In contrast, Judith Butler queries performance by criticising central assumptions in feminism, like the supposition that identity as a subject requires representation in politics and language. For Butler, ‘women’ and ‘men’ were controversial categories, complicated by factors such as class, ethnicity, and sexuality. She holds that the universality presumed by these terms parallels the assumption about the universality of patriarchy. She opines that this assumption blurs the oppression of the gender in distinct times and places, hence, challenging assumptions about the distinction often made between sex (biological) and gender (social), claiming that the distinction introduces a split into the supposedly unified subject of feminism, that, it expresses a distinction that is false because bodies that are sexed cannot signify without gender. She opines that the apparent existence of sex prior to discourse and cultural imposition is merely an effect of the functioning of gender, that both sex and gender are constructed. Perhaps, the query should be whether division of labour is wrong, that is, what is wrong with assigning roles to people? Shouldn’t everyone in a group know their places and what is expected of them? Could the problem lie with those who assign the roles? Do they need to rethink the roles, or should the roles be conditional and flexible for every situation instead of developing a box to fit everyone in.

Judith Butler further explores the relationship between power and categories of sex and gender, by examining the works of Simone de Beauvoir and Luce Irigaray. She stresses that Beauvoir’s work portrays women as lacking something, and it is this missing item that

²⁶² Struckman- Johnson, C. & Anderson, P. B. (1998), *Men Do, Women Don’t: Difficulties In Researching Sexually Aggressive Women*. *Sexually Aggressive Women*. 9

²⁶³ Patrick D. Hopkins (1997), Gender Treachery: Homophobia, Masculinity And Threatened Identities. *Race, Class, Gender And Sexuality: The Big Questions*. Naomi Zack, Laura Shrage, and Crispin Sartwell (Eds), (New Jersey: Wiley and Sons)

establishes the man's identity, while Irigaray views gender discourses as more of a language game, for Butler, gender is performative because there is no identity behind the acts. She claims that gender is neither solid nor universal, "*gender* is constructed through your own repetitive performance of gender."²⁶⁴ For her, incest, as portrayed by Sigmund Freud, only reveals the productive or performative aspects of gender. She holds that the Freudian position reveals that "gender identification is a kind of melancholia in which the sex of the prohibited object is internalised as a prohibition"²⁶⁵. Butler questions the notion that "the body" is a natural entity which does not require explanation, that the contours of the body portrays limits, possibilities and boundaries. Hence, the drag queen presentation (as performance) was meant to destabilise the binary both internally and externally, and to ridicule the notion that there is something like 'original' gender. In which case the drag notion, therefore, shows that all gender were scripted, rehearsed, and performed. Another name for performance is division of labour previously mentioned. Though, nature seem to endorse role playing by creating male and female, man's rigidity must be responsible for why there is no place in the middle, unlike nature's place for hermaphroditism or intersexism.

So far, the debates shows that distancing the self from the body is a possibility, both theoretically and physically, it is yet to determine how this settles the problem. It seems rather to complicate things. For instance, when a body approaches the rack, picks up an identity, puts it on, and then, goes ahead to act out the person, like women do in men dominated professions, where they usually want to dress in pants and trousers, just to look tough. Then gets home, to become docile, this seems complicated, as the person is revealing two faces, dual personalities.

One wonders what happens, when the act involves a crime, or how does psychology justify its evaluation and excuse of dual personality and identity crises. It is questionable, as they are yet to address the criminal act. This reason is that someone will need to own up to it, that is, taking responsible for the theft or the murder. This concern cannot just be swept under the carpet. Thus, excusing a person acts on the ground of identity crises has difficult foreseeable consequences. As people would then find excuses to explain away their actions, especially

²⁶⁴ See Judith Butler (2016), [www.http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/gustafson/Judith%20Butler%20handout.do](http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/gustafson/Judith%20Butler%20handout.do).

²⁶⁵ Judith Butler (1990), *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (New York: Routledge), 63.

criminal actions. But is it more controversial when the society is filled with people who do not have a true self or identity, many people parading their alter egos?

In addition, culture *is* a major determinant factor as it instructs a person on how to deal with their bodies. It also gives them ideas of what they can do or not do with it. Also, culture examines, accepts, rejects, and analyses bodies, “cultural bodies”²⁶⁶ revealing a connection between culture, body and the self.

In this light, cultural bodies could be identified as bodies that are acceptable in one society, but not acceptable in other societies. This means that there are bodies which are either culturally acceptable or culturally rejected. This conclusion could be drawn from abnormal situations, like when a child is born with more than two arms or limbs. In many societies, such a baby may be rejected by the parents and society. In more developed cultures, the medical team would immediately carry out a surgery. But in India, such a child may be accepted and celebrated, especially if it has three sets of arms like their deity.

But, ‘body’ is neutral in the sense that it could be employed for many purposes, for instance, the body serves as a venue for communication, it is studied to place or identify a person, and the body has its own language. It gives messages like ‘come on’ or ‘stay away’. According to Susanne Youngerman, “bodily movements usually perform to music, that serves as a form of communication or expression. Human beings express themselves naturally through movement.”²⁶⁷ Julia T. Wood observes that “both men and women are affected by the cultural standards of attractiveness. Yet, research indicates that members of both sexes tend to be dissatisfied with their bodies”²⁶⁸. She opines that the nature and the scope of dissatisfaction were different for men and women. While men’s discontentment would not necessarily affect their competent abilities and their feeling of self-worth, women, on the other hand, would allow such feeling to affect their self-worth. According to Wood, women with unsatisfied bodies would conclude that they were unworthy and unattractive as their concerns tend

²⁶⁶ Helen Thomas (2004), *Cultural Bodies: Ethnography and Theory*, (New York: Routledge)

²⁶⁷ Susanne Youngerman (2009), *Dance Microsoft Encarta 1993-2008* (Microsoft Corporation).

²⁶⁸ Julia T. Wood (1994), *Gendered lives: Communication, gender and culture*, (Boston :Wadsworth/Carnegie), 166.

towards physical attractiveness. Wood observed that women were judged harshly when they fell short of this cultural ideal.

She further observes that attractiveness varies across cultures in different societies. According to her, the ideal form of thinness among women is a concept that evolves with the western women's appearance in professional scenes. She holds that 'thinness' in connection to beauty produced another set of challenges. One of such challenges is that those whose body does not meet the ideal form of thinness and beauty could fall into depression. The implication here is that dissatisfaction or contentment with one's body is influenced by social perception. Therefore, a person with differentiated body may feel stigmatised and ostracised. Many may be compelled to do something about it, like consenting to 'body correction' surgeries. In this case, they have not bothered to ask whether sex change would help depression. It is apparent that people need to have relationship with their bodies as the individual specification on 'body type' and 'body like' is important here. Inevitably, one cannot be tall, short, fat or slim at the same time, this shows that all body types have their place and value. In which case, it would be better for a person to have 'body like', an intentional act of self love. Thus, allowing him/her/hir to take advantage of situation.

However, the irony is that consenting to external pressure leads to another type of ostracism and stigmatism, but, when the issue at stake is attempting congruence between mind and body, the contradiction stems from the fact that the mind is prone to change. Hence, one wonders whether it is always possible to have a body that reflects every mental situation.

Once more, Susan Brison seems to have a solution to thinness, the depression and dissatisfaction that goes with a negative 'body image' when she explains that people tend to create a separate identity and distance themselves from a failed body, a body that gives them the bad image. This portray them as having two identities, the real one, which acknowledges the bad image, and the imaginary one, which ignores that problem. For instance, I could relate with the idea of distancing one's self from one's body; this experience occurred during pregnancy. I usually grow so big, and I feel very fat and consequently become embarrassed by the shape of my body. This is especially so, when my body is attracting the gaze. As a professional I would mentally turn my mind off the situation by ignoring my condition by

pretending as if it is not there. This way, I do not remain embarrassed throughout the day's work. However, this is a temporary condition, unlike the situation in 'transgenderism' where surgery would separate a part of the body. This part is then lost forever, therefore is it significant, as it become a permanent condition? This is definitely different from pretending to be someone else or distancing minds from bodies.

Still on body identity, Susan Brison asserts that the experience of trauma, which results from bodily mutilation, rape, mugging and the like, changes a person, by this she claims that, the individual is no longer the same being. She claims that people distance themselves from the experience as if it happened to someone else. These two positions set the pace for confusion in the efforts made by researchers to understand trans person since one position appeals to emotions and mental life as reason for transiting, and the other points at the body condition. Though it is clear what makes an experience so traumatic that it could change a person's identity, it seems the experience violated their being, which would then lead to the curiosity about the makeup of being. Changing ones name or taking on a new mental identity are controversial situations. Also susceptible is the fact that people can do anything under the influence of dual identity and get away with it, like people with dissociative identity disorder, people who "have two or more separate identities, these personalities control their behaviours at different times, each identity has its own personal history, traits likes and dislike,"²⁶⁹ what then, is the difference between the two conditions since many psychologists easily explain away these crises. One wonders whether it is better to give them their own place, like it was done in the ancient times, but doing this would only lead to loneliness and result in depression as this would be a caste system. Alternatively declaring them sick would require a cure, even when, a typical transgendered person may not agree that they are sick; would they accept the idea of two spirits, or agree that they have a mental condition? Gender identity disorder or genderphobia as it relates with transgenderism appears to relate with the mind, hence a mental condition, an unfamiliar problematic mental condition, since the agent would have crises, and agency is not familiar with an alterantive approach, therefore, the general view is that gender dysphoria is a psychological problem, undauntedly, it appears to be a mental problem. It

²⁶⁹ See Clevelandclinic.org

reveals a crises between norm and acceptable social behavior. Just like the popular idea, ‘alter ego’

4.2.2 Gender Performance and Alter Egos

Referencing the notion of two spirits is similar to having alter egos, which creates a place for people to manifest alternative self, one believed to be distinct from the original self, yet it is a part of a persons personality that is hidden, either deliberately or through discipline. In this notion, individuals, especially, those who entertain others claim to have alter ego, that is, they insist that they have two identities: one on stage and a different one off stage. For examples Beyonce’ Knowles introduction of “Sasha Fierce”²⁷⁰ as her alter ego and now she wishes that she were a man. Shakira also introduces an alter ego this time an animal “she wolf.”²⁷¹ Minaj is not left out in the introduction of alter ego, but one wonders whether this new trend is just an act or a reflection of their hidden nature? However, what they mean is that, what we are seeing on stage is not the real self. The notion of “ego”²⁷² made popular in psychoanalysis is a “term denoting the central part of the personality structure that deals with reality and is influenced by social force.”²⁷³ In this notion, Freud explains that the “ego is the rational, reality-oriented component of personality that imposes restrictions on the innate, pleasure seeking drives of the id.”²⁷⁴ The ‘ego’ reveals one of the three basic functions of the mind. In5 this theory, the other aspects of the mind include the id and the superego. For Freud, the formation of the ego begins at birth, it later encounters other external ideas, and then the ego learns to modify its behaviour by controlling desires that are against the social norms. Having two personalities for real life and entertainment is an ancient profession, it makes people to act out roles that may not have anything to do with the true self. The challenge is that after coming off stage they could continue the act; hence the true self may never come forth. But, is this not the same thing as grooming? After all, grooming is the act of putting on a particular personality to impress one’s associates. It is also like norms and customs that tell people what to do and how to act at different occasions, even when they don’t feel like acting that way.

²⁷⁰ See www.mirror.co.uk › 3am › *Celebrity News*

²⁷¹ See <https://www.theguardian.com> › Arts › Music › *Pop and rock*.

²⁷² Michael J. Furlong (2005), Sigmund Freud 1856- 1939. *Great Thinkers A-Z: 2500 years of thoughts that shaped the Western world*. (New York: MJF Bks), 99.

²⁷³ Arlow, J. A. and Herma, J. L. 2009. *Psychoanalysis. Microsoft Encarta 1993-2008*. Microsoft Corporation.

²⁷⁴ Dianna Kendall (2003), *Sociology in our Times*. (Canada: Wadsworth/Thomas), 107.

This makes one wonder, if there is anything like the true self, and if there is, when would it reveal itself.

Performativity of gender is the term employed by Judith Butler to explain gender performance. It approaches the idea of gender from the view point of “always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed.”²⁷⁵ Butler has been criticised by Julia Serano, for portraying gender as performance, and therefore, making it to appear as something that is not real, meaning that gender could be changed or rescripted. Serano insists that “gender is not performance.”²⁷⁶ Her position is supported by Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. They posit that the idea of portraying gender as performance is “misguided” because many persons who are susceptible to transgenderism do not see themselves in that way. That is, they do not conceive of their gender as an item to ‘put on’ and ‘put off’ at will, rather, they insist that it is innate, evolving as a natural inclination. They claim that performance and the performative discourses are all language and speech acts.

Critical however, many transgendered people consider their gendered self ontologically, they believe that it is not subjected to their instrumental will, neither divestible nor a form of play. Instead, they consider their gendered sense of self as ontologically inescapable and inalienable. Hence, for anyone to suggest otherwise to them shows a profound misunderstanding of their personhood. For them, that kind of discourse reveals lack of understanding of their specific mode of being, this happens when people cannot interpret their scripts, or understand their roles. Transgenderism then, seems to be the answer to the lack of understanding or predisposition to gender roles.

This is the case as transgenderism could be viewed as the tool of deconstruction of genders. Yet, it is not a universal response as it is imperative to point out that the social expectation, that compel many western women to present a slim body, is not true for all cultures and societies. For instance, many African women do not feel the pressure to look slim. This is the case mostly for married women and those who have had the privilege of bearing children. For many of these women, their bodies are rather seen as evidence of proper care in their

²⁷⁵ See Judith Butler (2016), [www.http//artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/gustafson/Judith%20Butler%20handout.do](http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/gustafson/Judith%20Butler%20handout.do).

²⁷⁶ [Julia Serano](#) (2010), [Gender Outlaws](#). Kate Bornstein and S. Bear Bergman. (eds)

marriages. While the Isoko woman may not necessarily think of her body in that form, most of them have naturally slim bodies and this is owing to environmental factors and their lifestyle, they do not feel compelled to have a particular type of body.

Notwithstanding, Valeria Walkerdine argues that the genders are only performing the role expected of them. She proposes this thesis in her article *Femininity as performance*. Walkerdine reiterates the metaphor 'life is a performance,' a metaphor, which indicates that many of us are just acting out roles. And that once these roles are taken away, the true self would be revealed. Walkerdine purposely refutes the notion that girls are passive, whimpy and feminine. According to her, these attributes are just acts which they have been taught to put on as a sign of their femaleness, or in her words, they have been 'conditioned to play'. She challenges the view that femininity equals poor performance and "the position that female do not possess a capacity for reason or mathematical minds."²⁷⁷ Her idea on how gender is communicated includes influence from parents, teachers and peers. She explains that these influences help the child to imbibe these attributes as they grow, that the child becomes a subject of learning as they are subjected in the learning process. In her own words:

When we say then, that experience is created as a sign within the practice, or the child is produced as subject, what we are talking about is the production of signs. If language does not represent reality, but rather the regulation of a practice itself produces a particular constellation and organization of material and discursive practices, then it can be argued that something is produced²⁷⁸.

Furthermore, Valeria Walkerdine insists that in communication the child becomes a sign to be read, that the need to create the role of inferiority for the girl child is done at this stage. She insists that this act is motivated by the fear of losing her, thus, caging her true nature which may be as wild as that of the boy. Yet, these "fantasies, fear and desires"²⁷⁹ become effective, since the female eventually performs these roles. She interprets the roles as a force of control for the genders, concluding at the same time that femininity is a performance, a defense by girls. She opines that the performance protects girls from stepping out of the roles created for them. Therefore, she concludes that both genders are performances, that gender is the role

²⁷⁷ Valeria Walkerdine (1997), *Femininity as performance*. *Towards a new psychology of Gender*. Gengen, M. M. and Davis, S. N. (Ed) (New York: Routledge), 176.

²⁷⁸ Walkerdine (1997), 175.

²⁷⁹ Walkerdine (1997), 177.

created for them and the barrier of limitation compelling them from stepping out of the intended act portrayed in marital relationships, where both couples project these roles into each other, that is, women compel men to be strong and men compel women to be 'weak'. She insists that without such projection women could actually be powerful and men could be very emotional. This reminds us of the fact that there are individuals who blur the gender lines like the feminine men and the masculine women. Confirming that not all men care about being aggressive and forceful and not all women care about being docile and weak.

There are questions emanating from the above, such as which comes first or which takes precedence, a person's humanity or gender identity? And, how disability affects a person, that is does disability reduce or detract from a person's gender and humanity? Humanity had often been theorised to take precedence over gender, yet, in reality, it is not so, as the theory of self mastery showed that people are mostly what they make themselves to be. The social self schemers theories show that self-cognition and self-perception are crucial to self-determination. Like teachers of comportment insist that body carriage give others a lot of information about a person. Just like the social psychological theory of facial feedback, which holds that standing erect depicts courage and self-confidence while slouching portrays defeat, rejection and depression.

4.3 DISTINGUISHING GENDER IDENTITY FROM PERSONAL IDENTITY

Deducing from the foregoing, it is apparent that there are complications owing from distinguishing between gender identity from personal identity, the indication is that gender identity involves an individual's experience of their gender; it holds that gender identity involves sex at birth, gender categories and social identity. On the other hand exploration of personal identity theories does not pin point what should identify a person through time, which makes it necessary to distinguish gender identity from personal identity this is to help those seeking transition, since their claims of a crisis between mental identity and anatomic identity blurs the line between gender identity and personal identity. The reason is that as persons, they are humans first before their gender, therefore, when there is incongruence between the two, they should simply ask themselves, who am I? The hope is that this question will reveal to them that their essence far exceed their body issues.

Accordingly, Julia T. Wood claims that there are people who have preconceived notions about gender, as they were taught the idea socially, that people were already familiar with a theory of gender and that they constantly rely on whatever theory they have imbibed in them to make sense of their own behavior, as well as that of other men and women. She explains that those who hold biological views about gender tend to pay attention to the cognitive strength of children, while those who subscribe to the psychological approach encourage analytic problem solving of the boys and creative thinking of girls. She reveals a third attitude, where boys are expected to imitate masculine role and girls are expected to imitate feminine roles. Wood says that:

None of the three is clearly right or even more right than the others. Each view point makes sense, yet, each is limited, which suggest that an adequate explanation may involve several theories. It is important to realize that theories do more than provide explanation. They also have impact on our attitude and behaviour.²⁸⁰

Julia T. Wood holds that peoples' appreciation for gender identity and its attached interpretation becomes profound once they have had the opportunity to examine other societies. Her study shows that different cultures create "quite distinctive gender arrangements and identities."²⁸¹ It insists that gender is learned through interaction with others. It follows that each society has its own definition, place and importance for gender. Wood opines that gender is tied to the social order. Hence, children become familiar with gender constancy and perceive themselves as gendered beings even before they become aware of other things like social status, religion or nationality. Wood, therefore, concludes that gender identity is a complex notion, interwoven with individual interpersonal relationships and cultural influences. She claims that "gender (not sex) is culturally constructed and that the meaning a culture assigns to femininity and masculinity are expressed and sustained through communication."²⁸² She further holds that because different societies have their own perspective on gender, gender definitions would have to be dependent on the society in which individuals find themselves, and their positions in the society. Accordingly, the consequence of this is that of the process of being socialized, during which people internalise the gender identities of their societies. She opines that the process is communicated through people's

²⁸⁰ Julia T. Wood (1994), *Gendered lives: Communication, gender and culture*, 36

²⁸¹ Wood (1994), 47.

²⁸² Wood (1994), 54

language, interaction and mentoring. Wood's position clearly portrays different approaches to gender identity and sexual orientation, though differences in opinion and acceptance ranges from different individuals, to different societies. It also reveals the differences between how 'body' appears and how it is perceived, especially in disabled ones. In this light, such bodies could become privileged or could they feel less human?

4.3.1 Personal Identity and Differentiated Bodies.

Discussing the gender identity of disabled bodies, Thomas J. Gerschick and Adam Stephen Miller explore different ways by which they could understand and adopt unusual body (disabled) in the process of gender. They claim that "hegemonic masculinity privileges men who are strong, courageous, aggressive, independent, and self-reliant and carrier oriented. On the other hand, society perceives and expects people with disabilities to be weak, pitiful, passive and dependent."²⁸³ They claim that hegemonic masculinity operates through three different areas: the personal, the cultural and the institutional organisational use of the body. This involves individual views, usually based on cultural belief systems, later institutionalized as world views on what the body should be and how it should be employed at different times.

They insist that these three views have influenced the collective practice and the processes connected to gender. The dominant features for men in this realm are the commendation of "strength, courage, endurance, stoicism, tenacity and independence"²⁸⁴. And for women the commendation about them is weak, docile, and submissive. Hence, men and women who do not meet these characteristic standards are said to be marginalized and stigmatised because they undermine the gender roles set for them. Gerschick and Miller point out that the above description results from the view that body is a central foundation of self-definition. They opine that the bodies of people (men) with disabilities remind others that these disabled bodies have failed to meet social and cultural expectation.

Gerschick and Miller's work reveals that those with challenged bodies could adjust by creating a mind shift from normal identities. They suggest that disabled people could

²⁸³ Thomas J. Gerschick and, Adam S. Miller (1997), *Gender Identities At The Crossroads Of Masculinity And Physical Disability: Gengen, M. M and Davis, S. N. (Eds) Towards a new psychology of Gender* (New York: Routledge), 455.

²⁸⁴ Gerschick and, Miller (1997), 456.

accomplish this by redefining and reformulating the gender ideals along with “their own abilities, perceptions and strength.”²⁸⁵ They proposed that many of such people could approach their situation from the perspective of the three Rs. The three Rs refer to reformulation, reliance, and rejection. According to Gerschick and Miller, reformulation means that disabled persons should redefine the hegemonic masculine characterization on their own terms, that their ability to accomplish this will put them at the center as the ones in charge of their situations. They posit that sexuality can be reformulated, that this could be accomplished when disabled persons focus on their emotional relationship, and concentrate on building trust. According to them, the men in this study insist that they could gain pleasure in their relationship, once they can satisfy their partners in other ways.

However, reformulation would not completely eliminate the prospect of gender expectation; it would only show the needed addition of reliance. The notion of reliance is “reflected by sensitive or hypersensitive adoptions of particular predominate attitude. In this light, disabled persons would gain the sense of self from their accomplishment, even then their interaction with others seem incomplete.”²⁸⁶ In reliance, disabled individuals were expected to rely on themselves; they are encouraged to internalise those ideals connected with their gender. For instance, a wheel chair bound person (man) would have strength in other parts of their bodies. Also, advanced technology have provided special tools for them, like car seats to enable self-reliance. The last R stands for rejection. In this aspect, physically disabled individuals should refuse gender standards that they find unattainable and develop their own. For example, some disabled men may not have the ability to impregnate a woman, and disabled women could have the problem conception. The option of adoption or the idea of surrogacy should be considered on this ground. The perception is that:

Parenting doesn't necessarily involve being the male sire (or the female womb) it involves being a good parent... parenting doesn't mean that it is your physical child, it involves responsibility and an emotional role as well. I don't think the link between parenthood is the primary link with sexuality, maybe in terms of evolutionary purposes, but not in term of relationship.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁵ Gerschick and Miller (1997), 458.

²⁸⁶ Gerschick and Miller (1997), 457.

²⁸⁷ Gerschick and Miller (1997), 459

The three Rs of Gerschick and Miller are commendable theories for disabled persons who suffer from identity crises, especially those who feel they have fallen short of their gender identity; it clearly states that their humanity comes before any ability or inability to perform their gender roles. They too could redefine the three Rs to suit themselves. Also, redefinition of the gender codes is very important for those with gender dysphoria, since the surgeries would not solve the mental situation; this means that changing gender may not solve the crises. The redefinition theory brings to mind androgyny or the theory of flexible gender, as people are expected to discover their strengths, focus and develop it.

4.3.2 Gender Identity and Social Performance

Discussions on body presentation, cultural bodies and how the body is perceived leads to re-exploration social identity theories as the same body type tend to encounter diverse response depending on its social reality. This claim results from the social psychological idea that “individuals differ in the extent to which gender influence their social judgment.”²⁸⁸ The theory holds gender credibility, distinction and traits as common factors that influence perception, both self and others. According to Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin, the consequence of this is that the society is filled with individuals who are stereotyped. They explain that it does not matter how the stereotypes influence the behaviour of people, rather it determines their response to unfamiliar notions, like transgender. It is, therefore, not in doubt that once ‘others’ become aware of the transgendered status of a person, the inevitable reaction is expected; it may either be positive or negative, including rejection, discrimination, bullying, violence and harassment. Yet, many transgendered people seek acceptance from family and society since they cannot exist alone, but life is not fair, they may not be guaranteed the support once the switch takes place. How many people wants to be associated with a black sheep, talk less of a person who provokes the ‘yuck factor’.

The concept of the other and the issue of agency is a major concern in social psychology. Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin indicate that helping others involve three stages: the person who needs helps, the one who receives help and the situation that requires help. Furthermore, they wonder how people react to being helped and who determines that a person

²⁸⁸ Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin (1996), *Social psychology*. (3rd) (Eds), (Boston:Houghton Mifflin Co), 140.

needs to be help, thus, querying the motive behind the concept of help. Nonetheless, there are many factors influencing the concept of help, one of such is the sociobiological theories of helping. The theory holds that there are individuals who have “innate tendency to help”²⁸⁹. This tendency is identified as the kinship selection theory. The truth is that many people are suspicious of being helped even when they need help. The reason for their suspicion is that they do not know all the motives behind the act of philanthropy, whether it is psychological or religious satisfaction, or a means to amass funds from others. But, whatever the reason, if you need help, allow yourself to be helped.

Kinship selection reveals peoples’ tendency to help blood relation, like Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA). These persons could range from brothers, sisters, cousins, nephews and nieces. They could also include a distant relation like uncles and aunties, first and second cousins depending on the society. In addition to this, there is reciprocity the theory. It holds that individuals in non-kin relationship have a tendency to also help one another, which results in the survival of both entities. This is further emphasized by the selection theory which holds that individuals in the same group and society help one another based on social connection like religious and social organizations, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) organizations. The theory says that co-operation and being helpful within such groups is revealed when there is an external threat. Sharon S. Brehm and Saul M. Kassin insist that the motivational factor for helping could either be empathy or altruism. Empathy, describes the inability of one person to put him/her self in the position of the person suffering, while altruism means putting others before oneself. Whatever the case may be the concept of help, the attitude to helping and the approach to helping varies between different societies. Those who feel the negative impact are those who cannot be helped because they refused to share their problems, mostly perceived as secret.

Yet, the theory of help reveals that there are more questions that require answers, questions like, what if help is offered and the individual claims that they do not need it? Could there be a line drawn between help and interference? The point is that a transgendered person is an individual who leaves in the society, among others. There are many people who would react to their status, and there are many more who would feel compelled to help, even in a negative

²⁸⁹ Brehm and Kassin (1996), 245.

way, like eliminating them from society, and justifying their reactions as helping. Therefore, help could be good or it could be bad, it depends on the perspective, a good example is the “honour killings”²⁹⁰ practised in many societies, where a girl or woman is killed by male members of the family because of their belief that she had brought shame to the family name.

Still, on the theory of help and determining why people need to be helped, Robert Van Krieken, Philips Smith and others examine interpersonal relationship in nuclear families. According to them, the nuclear families in modern industrial societies display two basic functions, one is the socialization of the young and the other is the stabilization of the adult. They observe that to achieve the socialization of the young, members of the same families are compelled to display attributes of closeness, warmth and support among themselves, that the woman is mostly responsible for these qualities. They strongly believe that “the woman’s role in the family is expressive, meaning that she provides warmth, security and emotional.”²⁹¹ Hence, the concept of help could be targeted at any member of the family who displays vulnerability.

For Margaret Wetherall, the best help for the genders is to remove rigidity from the gender lines. To buttress this, she attempts to resolve gender crises by positing gender flexibility, to allow line crossing and blurring with other tendencies in gender categories. She explains that there are individuals with androgynous tendencies, and that they were better adapted to the gender situation. Androgyny means that the individuals have gender traits that cut across male and female. Wetherall expresses that femininity and masculinity are ideological practices which result from biology or experiences. That these experiences stem from actions which are genderised and later universalized. She further claims that gender is then reduced to a set of codes and conventions into which the genders are expected to fit. According to her, several studies on gender reveal that members of the sexes have traits that cut across the genders.

Yet, she observes that the differences in the gender have not been clearly stated, the reason being that some sets of traits are projected as positive above others. She opines that there is need to eliminate rigidity of the genders, since the content of a box could change at any time.

²⁹⁰See Raghu N. Singh and Daily J. Douglas, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/honourkilling>

²⁹¹ Micheal Haralambos, Martin Holborn, R. Van Krieken Smith, P., Habibis, D., Kevin McDonalds (2008) *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives* (UK : Harper Collins) 384.

This is because in reality people could display traits that move between genders, from feminine to masculine and androgynous, and that androgynous people adopt better, by this position, she claims that the genders have become negotiable. But the question is does this flexibility erase the need for the gender? Is this flexibility the excuse for sex change? One expects that this flexible approach should make people relax and reevaluate themselves. It seems that these persons should feel differently since they can now express whatever characteristic traits that make them comfortable, hence playing down on the need for transiting from one gender to the other, just like Laura Amato opines that cross dressing could satisfy the need to represent the other genders, without sex change surgeries.

There are many questions raised from this position, particularly with those who claim that gender is just performance. The insinuation is that many human are fake, living inauthentic lives. The theory of authentic existence evolves from existentialism which emphasizes individual existence “freedom and choice.”²⁹² The notion of performance depicts a robot doing that which it is programmed to do, thus, making our existence a faux. Yet, the theory of performance does not have an explanation for those attributes that are innate like a person’s sex drive or sexual orientation. It does not have an explanation for a woman’s desire to conceive and give birth to children or a man’s instinct to protect and provide for others. Performance may reveal girls playing with dolls, but how does this relate with their desire for care. Then, again is care a gender attribute? Put differently, is house work gender based? Shouldn’t these traits cut across humanity? These questions fault the gender codes that feminine men and masculine women find it uncomfortable when it comes to being themselves.

Flexibility of gender is not an idea that would appeal to many religious people; the reason is that religion argues that each gender has its place, as God created men and women to be whatever gender they find themselves. Therefore, blurring the gender lines may not seat well with them, so also is the idea of transiting from one gender to another which seems like a violation of the natural law. The problem with this view emanates when they are compelled to act on behalf of God by becoming violent against transgendered persons. This is the case in many societies, even those considered as developed. The result is those transgendered people

²⁹² John-Paul Sartre (1958), *Being and nothingness*, (London: Routledge), 25.

tend to keep their status a secret just like those with a different sexual orientation. The saying “Don’t ask, don’t tell”²⁹³, is a United States government policy which buttresses this point, it allows people with other sexual expressions to keep their status private. Anyway, flexibility of the gender implies that individuals can choose whatever gender that catches their fancy, and whenever they choose to express that gender, which would impact many fundamental assumptions about men and women. For instance, when one’s husband returns home from his daily activities just to declare that he is now a ‘she’. What would that mean? How would this new status declaration affect his obligation to the family and his intimate relationships? It would be more ridiculous if he is a polygamous man (as could be found in many home across Africa). But then, gender flexibility does not necessarily mean sex change, it also mean choosing gender traits while your biological sex is intact.

In another view, Judith Butler would rather consider the possibility of a new gender category called none identity. She posits that gender is always ultimately about something else, which means that gender is not real. If this is the case, then, one would have to ask how something that is not real became oppressive or even obligatory. Butler opines that claim about gender being oppressive confirms that gender is something that happens in the society. This must be why she focused on how a person with none identity would relate with the society, especially, the individual with a gender identity that cannot be easily discerned. The query continues to wonder about how my anatomy looks or rather how it should look. That is, how it comes to appear to others, based on the standard that has been set for it.

Social Psychological studies reveal that individuals become conscious of what is expected of them as they grow. This takes place socially, culturally and environmentally. The difficulty is usually revealed when these persons perceive that there is a ‘no place’ for some types of identity. Hence, Butler’s inquiry revolves on what femininity or masculinity could really mean, that is, whether it can be easily altered? She observes that transgender have difficulty in living a normal life. As the term ‘normal’ is questionable, for her the search for normality is the allure to sex change surgeries. In conclusion, Butler states that society does not yet have a place and the necessary syntax to explain the case of John/Joan, which she identifies as the limitations of identity.

²⁹³ See. psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/html/military_history.html

In review, John/Joan was a circumcision surgery that went wrong. To rescue the situation, the surgeon sought the consent of the parents to reconstruct sex organ of the child from male to female. After all has been said and done, at adolescence the child became aware of his changed gender status and condition. He insists on going back to his former gender because he had always ‘felt’ like a boy. Thus the complication, raising many question as many cultures and societies have no place for an individual with non-identity. Judith Butler describes him as the person with none identity “he is the human in its anonymity, as that which we do not yet know how to name or that which sets a limit on all naming. And in that sense, he is the anonymous—and critical—condition of the human as it speaks itself at the limits of what we think we know”²⁹⁴. The challenges with transgender practices are enormous, as we observed in chapter two that the umbrella refers to diverse situations. Perhaps, this is the kind of confusion that these societies wanted to avoid by acknowledging only two gender categories. Yet we must ask how the ‘feeling’ of this transgendered boy affects the idea of innateness of gender. That is gender essentialism. His condition appears to be an honest mistake but the concern rose from the surgeon’s insisting that gender is a social construction. Hence, the bioethical concerns.

4.4 THE BIOETHICAL CONCERNS

There are many victims of surgery gone wrong, the situation necessitate ethical concerns, like using humans as guinea pig. John/Joan issue is just one out of thousands of medical errors resulting from biotechnology. No doubt biotechnology provides much possibility in an otherwise hopeless situation. But the question is, with the equal possibility for errors, why are people taking such risk with their bodies? Who takes the blame, the surgeons who conduct the surgery or the individuals who are ready for the surgery at all cost. Nonetheless, bioethics is the aspect of ethics that examines how science intervenes in human issues. There are numerous concerns in bioethics: questions in this area query the ethics of experimenting with humans and animals, plus notion of human dignity. The challenges of bioethics involve who or what should serve as an experimental tool, including issues of informed consent, ensuring that the people who volunteer themselves for any experiment know all it involves, and so on. When the medical team eventually produces an informed consent to enable them proceed with

²⁹⁴ Judith Butler (2006), Doing Justice to Someone: Sex Reassignment and Allegories of Transsexuality. *The transgender studies reader*. Pdf. Stryker, S. and Whittle, S. (Eds). 197

surgery, the proponents of bioethics are doubtful about the possibility of true informed consent. This is owing to the condition, that those involved in such experiments may not be aware of all the implication of the research, conversely and overly as they too could be carried away with the benefits. Leon Kass explains that bioethics is that field which claims to have expertise in moral matters. For him:

Bioethics was founded by people who understood that the new biology touched and threatened the deepest matters of our humanity: bodily integrity, identity and individuality, lineage and kinship, freedom and self-command, Eros and aspiration, and the relations and strivings of body and soul. With its capture by analytic philosophy, however.” and its inevitable routinization and professionalization, the field has by and large come to content itself with analysing moral arguments, reacting to new technological developments and taking on emerging issues of public policy, all performed with a naive faith that the evils we fear can all be avoided by compassion, regulation and a respect for autonomy.²⁹⁵

The phrase that catches our attention is ‘the evils we fear’ and one wonders whether it is possible for the researcher to foresee all the possible complications in every exploration. Could they be certain that their hypothesis would not go awry? Again, since the possibility of things going wrong is there, why do they bother to go on? Yet, life is about taking risk, if these researchers do not take risk, science would loss its value, but why would a person consent to his/her body being used for research, could being guinea pig be that exciting ? Exactly how much is too much?

One of the major arguments against using humans for experiment is the issue of human dignity, but, the question of dignity does not seem to be enough justification for caution in the sciences. This is because John A. Robertson insists that the argument about human dignity is too weak to deter the progress of science, and the accrued benefits. He expresses this in his article “A ban on cloning and cloning research is unjustified.” In this article, he defended the cloning research and other medical manipulations of nature. He countered all the argument against cloning by taking a critical look at the whole argument and the concerns. For instance, when he examined the argument that the child would not have a unique identity, he insisted

²⁹⁵ Leon Kass (1997), *The Wisdom of Repugnance. Taking side: clashing views in science and technology & society*. Easton, T. E. (Ed). (Connecticut: McGraw-Hill), 18.

that the love of the parents of a cloned child would shield them from that concern. He also insists that the issue of harm is over flogged, since “life itself is so full of suffering or confused identity, that any existence ... is less preferable than nonexistence.”²⁹⁶ He, therefore, concluded that a “purely moral or symbolic concerns are not a sufficient basis for overcoming procreative choice or banning beneficial uses.”²⁹⁷

Leon R. Kass has however opined that people should trust the feeling of repugnance they get from inhuman scientific researches. He recommends this because of the possible misuse and abuse that could result from unmonitored scientific research. He insists that the feeling (repugnance) helps “revolts against the excesses of human willfulness, warning us not to transgress what is unspeakably profound.”²⁹⁸ He strongly recommends that each scientific endeavor should be investigated and evaluated as the morality of such an action would then be dependent on the motive and intentions of those involved.

In this same vein, David Cauldwell told the story of an “Earl determine to be a male.”²⁹⁹ This was a female who wanted desperately to be a man, for her own reason, but the surgeon found no medical condition to perform the operation, subsequently he rejected her request. The Lady went to another consultant who could help her achieve her desire, despite the outcome of this escapade, Leon Kass, concluded that people should trust their feeling of repulsion whenever they encounter these scientifically enhanced being. He said “people should trust their repugnance... because it threatens important human values such as the profundity of sex, the sacredness of human body, and the value of individuality.”³⁰⁰ But the question is what should people do after repulsion? Candidly, many people find themselves incapable of doing much as there are laws restraining their reactions. For instance, attempts to air one’s opinion could be termed as “hate speech”³⁰¹ or ‘hate acts’. However, Kass holds this position because of his concern that practices like body manipulation affect human dignity.

²⁹⁶ John A. Robertson (1997), A ban on cloning and cloning research is unjustified. *Taking side: clashing views in science and technology & society*. Easton, T. E. Ed. (Connecticut: McGraw-Hill), 340.

²⁹⁷ Robertson (1997), 341.

²⁹⁸ Kass (1997), 344.

²⁹⁹ David O. Cauldwell (2006), Psychopathia Transsexualis: *The transgender studies reader*. Stryker, S. and Whittle, Pdf, S. (Ed). 44

³⁰⁰ John A. Robertson (1997), A ban on cloning and cloning research is unjustified, 335

³⁰¹ See [Saharareporters.com/..](http://Saharareporters.com/) Accessed 10/05/2018.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that not every scientific research is negative, many are justifiable, as scientific interventions have come handy in many cases. This is why a blanket ban or blanket acceptance in any research is neither reasonable nor the best course of action. Leon Kass calls for caution by saying, “one must never forget that these are human beings upon whom our eugenic or merely playful tendencies are to be enacted.”³⁰² A visit to the web will justify his caution, on internet it is very easy to find evidence of surgical inaccuracies done on those seeking one enhancement or another. And in many cases, while humans remain the victims, surgeons either try to explain it off or they try to patch people up, which clearly show that this is going too far, but could there be consequences to this exploitation of nature? Why this desperation for beauty? .

There are many people who consent to facial surgeries just because they want to be desired, or they want to be seen as beautiful. In this case their idea of beauty is universal despite its subjectivity, as shown in debate about body and the ideas of ‘thinness’ among women. It is popularly held that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. The reason is that, what one person considers as beautiful may not catch the attention of the other man. For instance, I once asked a man why Princess Diana was considered beautiful that I could not see what others were seeing. This man, who is well travelled, patiently explained to me that her beauty was subject to the Caucasian standard. In another situation, I decided to examine the acclaimed Mona Lisa. I wanted to see what made it a master piece, but I could not. I needed someone to explain the depth of what I was looking at. Then, I was told that one of the things that made it a master piece was the smile. The woman looked as if in any moment she would change her countenance and probably walk away. After the explanation, I could relate with the painting a little. But my question is, why did I not see all these features? Why did I need someone to explain it to me? Does it mean that beauty could be taught? Again, if beauty could or would be taught before a lay man and woman like me would understand it, what does that say of beauty? If people would have to make-up their faces before they feel beautiful, does that make beauty intrinsic or extrinsic? Aesthetics as a philosophical concept studies beauty. According to Arthur C. Danto, aesthetics is:

³⁰² Leon Kass (1997), *The Wisdom of Repugnance*, 346.

Concerned with the essence and perception of beauty and ugliness. Aesthetics also deals with the question of whether such qualities are objectively present in the things they appear to qualify, or whether they exist only in the mind of the individual; hence, whether objects are perceived by a particular mode, the aesthetic mode, or whether instead the objects have, in themselves, special qualities—*aesthetic qualities... there is a difference between the beautiful and the sublime.*³⁰³

4.4.1 Plastic Beauty and Enhancements

Aesthetics and arts are so interwoven that both words are used interchangeably. Thus, examining the factors that underline aesthetic experience, Harold Titus insists that “emotional reactions need to be cultivated and refined along with his thought if he is to become mature.”³⁰⁴ He holds that one’s aesthetic experience is influenced by perception involving visions, hearing, the sense of touch and sense of taste or smell. In his opinion, aesthetic experience is mostly provoked from disinterested contemplation of natural and manmade facts. This includes pleasure in purpose of art. Art, accordingly, involves play, empathy and communication. He posits that the different theories of art varies, from art as imitation, art as pleasure, art as play, art as empathy, art as communication, art as an expression, and art as experience. Furthermore, Titus claims that art is part of human life because it forms part of people’s daily encounter as it seeks to influence thought and thought process, that art and culture were interwoven as works of arts affect “the personality of the artist and a reflection of the spirit or outlook of the age in which it is produced.”³⁰⁵ Art, according to him, could influence or help direct culture like beauty.

To explore the idea of beauty further, Kathleen Higgins examines the concept of beauty in relation to art, wondering how it could depict ideal beauty, since the idea is suspicious, which explains why beauty is substituted for kitsch. Kitsch, accordingly to her, is an aesthetic form of lying, involving cheap tricks and deception and “eliciting emotional responses merely by treating subject matter that is associated with fundamental human concerns”³⁰⁶. In her own words, “the current avoidance of beauty by artist is itself an indication of the presumption that

³⁰³ Arthur C. Danto (2008), *Aesthetics. Microsoft Encarta 1993-2008*. Microsoft Corporation.

³⁰⁴ Harold H. Titus (1970), *Living issues in Philosophy*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold co), 380.

³⁰⁵ Titus (1970), 392.

³⁰⁶ Kathleen Higgins (2004), *Beauty, kitsch and glamour. Twenty questions: An introduction to philosophy*. Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C, (Eds), (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth) 696.

beauty is coercive and manipulative.”³⁰⁷ This implies that beauty is a myth that has been replaced with kitsch and glamour. Glamour, in this sense, is described as a perverted beauty, whose purpose is “a sexual magnetism that pulls the enchanted viewer off course.”³⁰⁸ Higgins insists, therefore, that “human beauty is not only skin deep, instead, it emerges from a condition of integration that encompasses the body and soul”³⁰⁹

In reminiscence, the idea of gender beauty and desirability affect more women than men, the reason is that many women are concerned about how they are perceived, hence, women go through a lot in an effort to be beautiful and we experience this in the current trends of make-up and makeovers, but the truth is that after all said and done, we can hardly identify the new product (person) as the outcome seem outrageous, a far cry from the real thing. While some women would go on a diet just to be slim, others would submit themselves to hormonal drugs to enhance their beauty. For the men, some would do anything to get six packs. Yet, it is apparent that many of these enhancements have side effects. We only need to review the works of Sandra Lee Barkey and Susan Bordo to confirm this. For Lee Barkey, women “experienced their life as perpetual battle with their bodies”³¹⁰ because they desire a slender body, which result in eating disorders. The assumption is that “the body, far from being some fundamentally stable, a culturally constant to which we must contrast all culturally relative and institutional forms, is constantly in the grip of ... cultural practices.”³¹¹ Bordo posits that this reveals the influence of cultural practices on physical bodies.

Also, Soraj Hanglodoram resonates this query by asking if sex change is beauty or enhancement? Sex change surgeries had been shown as a medical attempt to help correct a body that misbehaved. The idea that it could be beauty is too fickle towards making too much trouble over. Though not everyone will think so, since how a body appears, has led many to do nose job, face job, or even leg job, therefore is it apparent that it is a restoration of a missing item. Just like Soraj imagined, it is the restoration of that which an individual believe to be missing from their bodies, or this showed that it is a sickness requiring a cure hence the

³⁰⁷ Higgins (2004), 696.

³⁰⁸ Higgins (2004),

³⁰⁹ Higgins (2004), 698.

³¹⁰ Susan Bordo (1997), Anorexia nervosa: psychopathology as the crystallization of culture. *Towards a new psychology of Gender*, Gengen, M. M and Davis, S. N. (Eds) (New York: Routledge), 424

³¹¹ Susan Bordo (1997), Anorexia nervosa: psychopathology as the crystallization of culture, 427.

treatment. In his opinion, transgenderism as a therapy places the gender variant person into a sick human being. Though, people would be more comfortable with sex change, when it is identified as a restoration of what seem to be missing. But the question is, if gender dysphoria is not a sickness what are its victims doing in the hospital? Some other person may ask, is it only sick people that attend hospital? The answer appears to be yes, since most individuals would hardly think about visiting the hospital once they are sure of their perfect health.

How then are the surgeons justifying their intervention, with surgeries that are so risky, Could Janice Raymond be right in her accusation of the transgender empire, that is the medical industry gaining wealth from people's pain? Again, could just making money matter that much? What about their hypocratic oath? Did it matter that some people's life had been messed up? For instance, how did John Money feel after it was discovered that his hypothesis was not accurate? What about the amount of people who have been affected unjustly out of the wrong hypothesis? The bioethical concern and consequences cannot not be overlooked, it is humans involved not furnitures.

4.5 TRANSGENDERISM AND THE CULTURAL CHALLENGE

Allowing people and the society to dictate how bodies ought or should be, reveals the place of cultural influence on bodies, which reveals the impossibility or difficulty people encounter in trying to live above culture, as every gathering of people has a type of culture. However, it is apparent that applying transgender practices to indigenous cultures result in different responses, usually, each approach depends on the body cultural view it takes for granted as previously said. For some, it could be a 'cultural shock', for others, it could be viewed as a 'clash of civilisations' and for the rest they may not be bothered. The term cultural shock was defined by Diana Kandell as the "disorientation that people feel when they encounter cultures radically different from their own and believe they cannot depend on their taken-for-granted assumptions about life."³¹² She explains that many people employ their cultural views as a yardstick for judging others, thereby creating the impression of superiority. This attitude is called ethnocentrism. She holds that ethnocentrism has a positive and a negative side. The positive side reveals patriotic tendencies, while the negative shows bias in individuals who insist on their superior culture over other groups or persons. On the other hand, she claims

³¹² Diana Kandell (2003), *Sociology in our times*, 89.

that alternative ethnocentrism allows for other cultures to be viewed and analysed from the standard of those who believe them, those who practice them, and those who live in them. Kandell points to this approach as “the self-interest of individuals must be balanced with the needs of the society as a whole. Cultural universals help fulfill these important functions of society”³¹³. The notion ‘clash of civilizations’ is the idea that people's cultural and religious identities will be the primary foundation that would result in conflict in the post-Cold War. Dan Andrews explains that:

Culture shock is a common phenomenon and, though it may take months to develop, it often affects travelers and people living far from home in unexpected ways. Culture shock is more than simply being unfamiliar with social norms or experiencing new foods and it tends to impact travelers even after they've become familiar with and comfortable in new cultures.³¹⁴

Accordingly, cultural shock involves four stages. It starts with the honeymoon stage where individuals who land in a new environment gets infatuated with the language, people and the food. Then, the frustration stage. This shows when the new arrival does not understand gestures, signs and the language resulting in miscommunications. They move to the adjustment stage where they become comfortable with the cultures, people, food and languages. And finally, the acceptance stage where they make do by forging ahead irrespective of their lack of total understanding of their new environment. While Samuel P. Huntington describes the clash of civilization in this light, as ;

The beginnings of the dramatic changes in peoples' identities and the symbols of those identities. Global politics began to be reconfigured along cultural lines. Upside-down flags were a sign of the transition, but more and more the flags are flying high and true...people are mobilizing and marching behind these and other symbols of their new cultural identities.³¹⁵

He further explains the relevance of culture to identity by stating that to adapt to new changes people were reinventing new identities and ethnicities. In addition, Julia T. Wood points out that in dealing with diverse cultures, people present ‘cultural bodies’ to refer to the ways bodies were furnished to represent different cultures. Like many young men, when visiting

³¹³ Kandell (2003), 75.

³¹⁴ [Home](https://medium.com/global-perspectives) [https://: medium.com/global perspectives](https://medium.com/global-perspectives)

³¹⁵ Samuel P. Huntington (1996), *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Other*, (New York: Simeon and Schuster).

their African communities after a long stay in the United States, they tend to show up with tattoos, wavy hairdo and a stud in their ears which may have nothing to do with cross dressing, but it is their way of showing where they have been. Nevertheless, a critical examination of the African person necessitates a comparative analysis; this is because there are certain themes which are common in the study of African societies. These themes are interconnected in meaning and interpretation and their meaning in these societies are interconnected. For instance, similar ideas on Isoko conception of person could be found in the Yoruba and Igbo notions of person. The reason for this is not farfetched. According to Obaro Ikime, part of Isokos traced their ancestral origin to the Benin dynasty, which further reaches to the Oduduwa dynasty, and the other part traced their origin to the Igbo kingdom. Ikime said that “the Isoko clans fall into two main migratory groups- those which trace their origin to Benin ... and those which trace their origin to Iboland.”³¹⁶ This situation led to the debate about Isoko being an independent language or a cluster of languages. Ikime insists that “Isoko is a language with several dialects in fairly well developed standard form base...undoubtedly a language and not a dialect cluster”³¹⁷ This debate however does not concern this work. The language resemblance was pointed out to buttress the point that their worldviews are interconnected. This is relevant because sometimes the social identity of the individual in these cultures could overlap.

A transgendered person in this society would be confronting more than just theories of personal identity and theories of determinism. Their issues may be beyond the power of technology and the issues of agencies. They would be confronting “forces”³¹⁸ that are far outside their control, in a realm where their opinions are not considered nor requested. To crown it all, their dilemma would be complicated because they could not hope to influence the outcome of the forces judgment like in many African societies; these forces are expected to intervene on behalf of the people or someone could decide to invoke it. The Isokos have a strong belief in the power of retributive justice. In this wise, the ‘eni’ or eri conceived to activate itself once an act of taboo or abomination had been committed. For them, it is only a

³¹⁶ Obaro Ikime (1972), *The Isoko people: a historical survey*. (Ibadan: university press), p. 1.

³¹⁷ Ikime (1972), 129.

³¹⁸ Hountondji, P. 1996. *African philosophy: myth and reality*. 16-17.

matter of time before such an act is avenged. When relating this to transgenderism, the people may be waiting for the force to strike. Some would even go ahead and invoke the force to act.

James Welch claims that when anyone is suspected of witchcraft, such a person is brought before the force of the *Eni* river, where the deity is said to reside. If the individual survives the test, he is proven of innocence and vindicated. Also, when a woman displays any strange life threatening ailment, many people begin to suspect her of committing adultery. They believe that such a person is being punished for the crime; hence, she is encouraged to confess to 'ese*mo*' an ancestral family deity, seeking absolution. It is important to note that despite the fact that the woman's conduct that is addressed here, the 'eri' phenomenon deals with every kind of injustices and humans violation of the natural law. Notwithstanding, the gender divide holds sway as Isokos endorses the idea of male superiority.

However, many cultures recognize the concept of male and female as a strict gender divide some even have spiritual backing for such beliefs. An example is the Chinese concept of "yin" and 'yang'³¹⁹. The 'yin' is believed to be the mother, negative, dark, damp deep and female force. The 'yang' is the father, positive, bright, hard, high, constructive and penetrating male force. It is believed that these two opposing forces were required for peaceful coexistence of nature. Both are opposite, yet complementary forces. The two are intertwined and could not exist independently of each other. In Chinese philosophy, *yin* and *yang* are believed to be necessary in various proportions of life. The thinking is that there is always an element of yang within yin, and an element of yin within yang. This notion of male and female force could also be deduced from the Yoruba myth of Sango and Oya. Both of whom were married. While Sango is the wind, force of thunder and the terror. The wife is the force of water which is more terrifying than thunder. Though, it is not clear how this association relate existence, they seem to complement each other. Oluwole and Sofoluwe explain that "a union of the two difficult characters may bring some positive result"³²⁰. Applying this to this discourse means those who tamper with their sex would be seen as working against nature, since the belief is that nature should be allowed to run its course. The 'force' thought system stresses the need

³¹⁹ Michael Bring and Josse Wayembergh (1981), *Japanese gardens: Design and meaning* (New York: McGraw-Hill) 152.

³²⁰ Sophie B. Oluwole and Akin J.O Sofoluwe (2014), *African myths and legends of gender* (Lagos : Ark publishing)

for a balance between these two to ensure social and political harmony. Hence the “harmony of forces within an individual and of those without ... *yin* and *yang*.”³²¹ This shows that a violation of this harmony would be reflected in disharmony, disasters. It explains why the indigenous people believe that natural forces be left alone or cooperated with.

Many of the ideas, notions and concept that we have been discussing have different meaning and interpretation when viewed from the African perspective. For instance, notions like kinship, help and family ties were introduced from the early grooming stage of many African communities. Yet, regardless of the general acceptance of African “communalism.”³²² this tendency varies for different societies as it applies in various degrees across African societies. For instance, while the degree of togetherness among the Yorubas appears to be very high, same may not be said for the other cultures. For instance for the Yorubas looking into the eyes of a much older person is considered disrespectful, but in contrast, Isokos, have no reservation about looking into anyone’s eyes.

4.5.1 Transgenderism and Cultural Particularism

Consequently, cognizance must be taken of Kwasi Wiredu’s suggestion of “strategic particularization”³²³ where he specified that African philosophy should be done in cultural specific approach. Teffo, J.L and Roux A.P. J. support this position when they explain that “Our perceptions are influenced by our expectations, beliefs and emotions, but also by our conceptual schemes, our histories and social circumstances, and the language we speak. That is to say, the conception of the nature of reality varies from culture to culture, almost suggesting that different cultural communities live in different worlds³²⁴. They analyse the position of Nordenbo as he applied the pluralistic approach to cultural studies and their frameworks, the ‘alternativism’. In alternativism, he posits that there are different cultures with different questions, answers and values. Again, that it is possible to understand and communicate with other cultures by exploring cultural alternatives.

³²¹ Michael Bring and Josse Wayembergh (1981), 155.

³²² Pauline Hountondji (1996), *African philosophy: myth and reality*, (Bloomington: Indiana University press), 16-17

³²³ Kwasi Wiredu (2002), *Toward Decolonizing African philosophy religion*, (hope publication), 200.

³²⁴ Teffo, J. L and Roux, A P J. (2002), *Metaphysical thinking in Africa: Introduction themes in African metaphysics. The African philosophy reader*. 2nd edition by P.h.Coetzee and A. P. J.. Roux. (London: Taylor and Francis)

Furthermore, Teffo J.L and Roux A.P. J.'s work emphasize some aspects of African thought about the person, one of such aspect is the relational basis of selfhood. They insist that the self is the starting-point in most African thought. This is usually preceded from social relations. That is, the self is seen and accounted for from its relationship with others. They follow up the claim by insisting that these African thought are subject to empirical considerations. By this, they mean that these interpersonal relationships are embedded in empirical reality. This statement confirms the notion that distinguishes between being alive and not being alive. It says:

People have different personalities and character traits. Even though they are members of the same family or community and are raised in more or less the same way, individuals differ and they may differ radically. Why is this so? According to African thinkers this is because of another 'spiritual' aspect of the person. Often this is linked to God; it is said that this part of the person is placed there by God and is the basis of a person's immortality.³²⁵

These African thoughts relate with theory of dualism as they agree that man is a combination of both spiritual and material substances. The theory of destiny explores man pre-determination before birth. It holds that destiny in life is what determines the success or failure of an individual. They also addressed the conceptual issue about the alterability of destiny. In this conception, the question is, can a person do anything about their destiny? Since we believe that what will be, would be. According to the authors, destiny does not equal fatalism, the theory that makes people resign to the believe that what will be will be, and what is has been planned long before existence. Hence people are not expected to resign themselves to destiny. They explain that Yoruba conceive "destiny as a mere potentiality whose actualization depends on a person's human qualities. Others claim that a person's destiny merely determines the broad outline of his/her life and not the minute details. To that extent, the concept of destiny may be understood as a version of soft determinism."³²⁶ Soft determinism holds that we are determined yet are still free to be moral agents.

³²⁵ Teffo, J. L and Roux, A P J. (2002). , 205.

³²⁶ Teffo, J. L and roux, A P J. (2002). 206.

Another idea that has distinct particularism among African cultures is the concept of male superiority. Though the emphasis differs from place to place, the need to examine this notion becomes necessary in the light of Freud's claim that 'penis envy' was the major drive for girls as they grow to recognize the differences between themselves and boys. He claims that penis envy determines their relationship with other individuals in their lives. This Freudian position has been authenticated several times in Western cultures with emphasis on the superiority of the male gender.

In many African societies, the male body is seen as a normative source of power and the female body is held in a subordinate position, here, penis possession is enough to secure a place in many African cultures, yet this is not the case for other cultures, like Yoruba culture. A prominent reference are Yoruba people of Oyo, as stated by Oyeronke Oyewunmi. Oyewunmi opines that though gender is perceived as a fundamental social category in many cultures in the West, same could not be said in Yoruba, that gender has not been a historical and organizational principle among Yoruba of Oyo. She claims that biology was not destiny, hence, it is not applied in social relations. Oyewunmi posits that the history of body as an identity could be traced to the ancient philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. According to her, "the notion that difference and hierarchy in society are biologically determined continues to enjoy credence even among social scientist who purport to explain human society in other than genetic terms"³²⁷.

According Oyeronke Oyewunmi these thought have influenced biological arguments because they are brought up in the discussions about gender, race and class. The result is that with such argument people assume that society is constructed on body. She insists that these analyses were not only deterministic in nature, they were hinged on the presence or absence of a body organ, 'the penis'. According to her, penis possession is the reason proffered for the differences in the genders. She holds that it is not only deterministic in thought but refers to a reasoning, the body reasoning. It is defined as "biological interpretation of the social world order"³²⁸. Here, she repeated the position of Dorothy Smith in *The Everyday World as*

³²⁷ Oyeronke Oyewunmi (1997), *The invention of woman: making an African sense of western gender discourses*. (Minnesota : University of Minnesota press), 1

³²⁸ Oyewunmi (1997), 5

Problematic: A Feminist Sociologist. Smith claims that western thoughts had significantly influenced idea about women and men bodies. She said that those views portray women as having bodies and men having minds. She repeats Michael Foucault's point that "the man of idea often had the woman and indeed other bodies on his mind"³²⁹. This statement and other like it reveals the Western male bias.

Oyeronke Oyewunmi differs from this position by insisting that "the fundamental category-woman, which is foundational in Western gender discourses simply did not exist in Yoruba land prior to its sustained contact with the West."³³⁰ She insists that such a group as woman did not preexist, that woman was a logic that had its base in Western social category in biological determinism. She identifies this as bio-logic, the body reasoning imposed on African societies from Western methodologies as it is usually applied by African scholars. Oyewunmi frowns at this approach because she insists that all concepts are cultural in the sense that they come with their own 'philosophical baggage', that when each notion is applied to other cultures, it becomes a distortion, incomplete notion from other cultural perspectives.

Furthermore, Oyewunmi insists that Yoruba people did not organise their societies based on body type. According to her, the social hierarchy reveals that "males and females are not ranked according to anatomic distinction. The social order required a different kind of map, not a gender map that assumed biology as the foundation for social ranking."³³¹ Rather the scale employed was seniority, this means that 'seniority' (age) secures one's position among these people. She explains that age could be used as determinant of position in two ways. The first is chronological age and the second ranking is by 'first come', that is, the child in a family is held in higher position, than the woman who marries into the family. She further explains that "Those who are different are seen as genetically inferior, and this, in turn is used to account for their disadvantaged social position"³³²

In discussing the place of body in Africa or how Africans view inferior bodies, Barry Hallen explores Yoruba approach. He opines that Yoruba recognize some bodies as inferior and they

³²⁹ Oyewunmi (1997),

³³⁰ Oyewunmi (1997),

³³¹ Oyewunmi (1997), xii

³³² Oyewunmi (1997), 1

make a place for them, in reference here are bodies like albino and disables. He explains that these types of bodies were seen as uncommon body conditions, hence conceived as a sign of one's destiny. According to him, having a differentiated body would have great consequences for the individual involved. This means that individuals who had a different type of body were consigned to the "Orisanla³³³" priest. Here the distinction is made between mental (spiritual) life and physical life or existence. To determine the answer, requires exploration of a Yoruba person. Segun Oladipo suggests a dualism in the Yoruba conception of personal identity. He explains that "the category of the visible and tangible entities that constitute the material aspect of a person (ii) the category of immaterial, in a sense invisible, elements that is postulated as the categorical basis of life"³³⁴. Oladipo insists that the body, *ara*, is both a physical and spiritual entity. According to him, Yorubas conceives a "person an integrated physio-chemical system whose conscious activities are products of the harmonious interaction between its various element or sub-system"³³⁵. He further explains that this conception of person is non-descriptive, like that of the Western conception. That in this notion anatomy was not the only determining factor, rather, Yoruba idea results from "collective view which developed as a reaction to certain experiences in the life of the people"³³⁶

For Segun Oladipo, mental activity is not attributed to a single organ, that such activity is the attribute of all the collective internal organs. That even the *emi*, soul of the Yoruba person is incapable of independent existence because it could not have any conscious life without the body activity. This is the same position held by James Welch when he insisted that the Isokos held that in creation of 'oma' body spirit comes first before 'ezi' human-spirit. He also posits that the Isoko conceive of the 'oma' body as having both a physical and spiritual essence, he identifies it as 'body spirit'. Welch insists that intellectual activities connected to the 'ezi' only manifest as the child begins to articulate speech. Oladipo opines that the material body in Yoruba conception is not self-sufficient or self-enclosed, that it always requires the presence of the spirit to function. That the *emi* is the categorical basis of life.

³³³ Barry Hallen (2000), Eniyan: A critical analysis of the Yoruba concept of person. *The substance of African philosophy*. C.S. Momoh (Ed). (Auchi : African philosophy project), p. 298.

³³⁴ Segun Oladipo(1992), The Yoruba conception of a person: An analytico-philosophical study. *International studies in philosophy* xxiv/ 3, 15

³³⁵ Oladipo (1992),

³³⁶ Oladipo(1992), 18.

The Yoruba and Isoko conception of a person does not give a distinct divide between the material and spiritual being. In both descriptions, there always seem to be an aspect of the spiritual in the physical. This being the case, the individual from these societies who hold the same values may not easily ‘put off’ and ‘put on’ a new gender or identity as indicated by the western theories. This indication of biological determinism in African societies is so potent that it also boomerangs into the concept of destiny. The question is how an individual with these views and values have identity crises? Wande Abimbola insists that unusual body types had special place. Among Yorubas, persons with ‘inferior’ bodies were assigned special function. Barry Hallen quotes Abimbola as saying “unusual bodily types alone are sufficient to secure a special status for the individual concerned... by virtue of their deformities, said to have been selected by the *Orisanla*, and for this reason are deposited with the priest to be raised and made use of”³³⁷. It means that these cultures believe that every body type has a purpose. The individual may not even feel left out or less human, if they focus on their purpose. Hence it seems that the only apparent condition for transgenderism would be the issue of intersex, in which case science could help in correcting the anomaly. From the following, it appears that many persons in these societies would take unusual body type in stride as they believe in destiny; they would consider it as one of those things, not the result of gender dysphoria. This is the case if they have already determined that each body has its place in the nature of things. Hence, these African people seem to have a more grounded physical and mental foundational body perception. Issues of self-esteem may not likely have a relevance to body state. The gaze and performance theories would therefore have a different interpretation among Africans.

Olatunji A. Oyeshile buttresses this belief when he claims that the physical and non physical aspect of the Yoruba person are interconnected and interrelated to his mores and social existence, he insists that the connection is related to “forces, inspiration, motives, desires and goals of human action in society”³³⁸. He supported the concept of harmony of the body and soul when he claims that all activities of a human person produce harmony. According to him,

³³⁷ Hallen, B. (2000). 298

³³⁸ Olatunji A. Oyeshile (2006), The physical and non physical in Yoruba conception of the person. *Russian Journal*. Vol 35 no 2 153.

the Yoruba's "have a tripartite conception of a person. The three elements are 'ara' (body) *emi* (vital force) and *ori* (destiny)"³³⁹. Oyeshile posits that these three areas reveal a person's destiny and a connection between man, mores and social status. The reason is that a person is seen as an integrated part of the physio-chemical system, that their activities were result of this harmonious interaction. On examination of this view, one would conceive that destiny seems to be irrevocable because whatever is conferred on the 'ori' could not be altered. Hence, the outcome of a Yoruba person's life is connected to his 'ori'.

Further studies reveal that the individual who is not satisfied with their lives could seek divine assistance by making oblation and necessary sacrifices, to appeal their situation as found in the work of James Welch on Isoko, and as confirmed Oyeshile. According to Oyeshile rituals and sacrifices could rectify an unhappy destiny. He stresses that patience is often emphasized among the Yorubas, and he insists that patience is not the same as resignation, that idleness is not encouraged because a good destiny could be destroyed when people are idle. According to Oyeshile, a deformed or less privileged body could not be seen as an excuse because even when they are not able to attain the position of prominence or leadership, they should not be denied of their moral status. He said "a defect in the physical components of a person is not enough ground to deprive the person of his moral and social status"³⁴⁰.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter reexamined concerns arising from the idea of 'body performance', it explored some of the consequences for a gender that can be 'put on' and 'put off' at will. Also debated were issues owing from dual personalities. It critically analysed the idea of beauty and enhancement by wondering how far is it going too far? And it was determined that cultural spectacle had influenced the concept of beauty. This means that the concept had other factors affecting its interpretations, hence, portraying beauty as subjective in interpretation. The chapter did a comparative analysis of what body means to some African cultures, like that of Yoruba and the Isoko. The focus was to determine the implication of these ideas for a transgendered person in these cultures, as transgenderism seems to be gaining recognition. The work endeavoured to determine the possibility of a third gender category in the light of

³³⁹ Oyeshile (2006).

³⁴⁰ Oyeshile (2006). 164.

how flexible the genders have been portrayed. No conclusion was drawn because the issues involved were diverse.

Furthermore, the work opined that a transgendered person from a conservative society may be biting more than they could chew. This is because despite the realities of technological developments, they would have to confront social agencies. Many of these conservative societies believe in the existence of spiritual forces and deities, who could be trusted to activate themselves in the face of aberrations like taboo and abominations. In these realms, the individual may not even be able to defend themselves as someone may decide to invoke the wrath of the deity. Otherwise, when the deity is allowed to do their own battle, it is certain that people would not take the laws into their own hands. The work asserted that an indigenous Isoko person was unlikely to have identity crises as each gender had its given place. This could be inferred from the Isoko conception of person and their values which insist on the individuality, gender divide, division of labour, penis superiority and the notion that biology is destiny. However, personal identity should not be confused with self-esteem, because all humans have their moment of ups and downs. This concern for self-esteem only becomes necessary when an individual seen to be hung up themselves, and they are in constant state of depression, as they did not meet the expectation. What that person needs is the ability to master his/her self.

Olatunji Oyeshile's claim that self-mastery is a notion that an individual would be required to develop. He opined that by practicing this theory, people would be able to produce self-power over their conduct and situation. According to Frank Outlaw " watch your thoughts, they become your words, watch your words, they become your actions, watch your actions, they become your habits, watch your habits they become your character, watch your character, they become your destiny"³⁴¹. In this light they explain that self mastery is a process that include self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-development and self-mastery. As "self mastery is the ability to recognize , understand , control and make most out of your phusical, mental, emotional and spiritual self."³⁴²

³⁴¹ Destinysodyssey.com

³⁴² Destinysodyssey.com

This recommendation brings to mind a statement accrued to “Meghan Markle”³⁴³ the Duchess of Sussex of Winsor. She told of her experience of feeling out of place as a cross racial person. She claimed that when she was required to fill any form asking for her racial identity, she wouldn’t find any appropriate box that completely identifies her, she always created her own box. Showing that, she was comfortable with her identity, and had mastered herself. Oyeshile further claimed that one’s mindset influences his/her performance because mindset is a given which could be nurtured, he opined that the mindset of an individual could either be manifested in positive or negative ways as mental health influences physical health. In his theory, self-mastery enables people to become productive by impacting their environment and society. He said:

From the metaphysical perspective, the mindset is a subset of the mind, which is an intricate part of the human person. Although the conception of a person differs from one African culture to the other, and sometimes some contradictions and overlapping result from such conception, it is still the case that certain attributes are common in African cultures which, more often than not, commit us to speak of an African conception of a person.³⁴⁴

Hence, the need to reiterate Mike Okonkwo’s position when he opines that ‘we must not throw away our uniqueness in the guise of technological knowhow’, insisting that each person have that thing that makes them special, they must tap into it for others to benefit, though body is important because we need our bodies to achieve these life goals, it is only part of the whole, not the total package.

³⁴³ See Meghan Markle (2016) www.elle.com> news> more. Accessed 2019)

³⁴⁴ Oyeshile (2006), 164.

CHAPTER FIVE

MORAL AGENCY AND TRANSGENDERISM

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Owing to the debate about transgenderism and the body concerns, the controversy arose from the last Olympic, around the gender status of Caster Semenya. The worry revolved on whether Semenya should be allowed to compete in the female athletic team. The debate became necessary as Semenya, who identifies with the female gender, is said to have androgens in her blood. Eventually, it was decided that she should take a drug that suppresses that hormone, before she would be allowed to compete in the female team. She complied with this regulation and still won the race. This issue raised a lot of ethical concerns; the reason is that Caster Semenya is intersexed, a biological condition which allows her to have large amount of male testosterone (androgens) and female hormones (estrogens and progesterone) in her body system. Though she had no control over the condition, she was made to suffer for it, she was embarrassed in the process and she was made to suppress her gift. The case raises concern as the speculations portrayed it as if she was to blame for her condition.

Still the presence of the male hormones gives her an edge over the other female athletes. Then, one would wonder why compete when you know of your condition. It seems dishonest, but, why not? After all, people compete because they believed that they had a winning edge and the purpose is to employ it to win in life competitions. In this case, her challenge became a blessing in disguise. On the other hand, one could argue that she had undue advantage over the other female athletes. Maybe she should have competed with others like herself, yet that may be difficult as there were no such competitions for transgender people. Should she then ignore her talent just because of this condition?

Candidly, the solution to this kind of crisis, is for there to be a separate competition for people in the 'others' categories, the reason for this position, stems from the undue advantage that comes with the condition of having (natural steroid), which is enough to reduce the self esteem and mentally defeat the other athletes who would be straight female, especially when more men are changing to women, just to compete with women. This feels unfair as they

would not have the women problem, but enjoy the woman privilege, its a paradox. This case resonates, on the one hand, questions about why there are more men changing gender, when compared to women who change gender, and on the other hand, how many women are there who would change gender and join the men in a competition? Again many athletics competitions have categories, like age range and weight range to enable people qualify to participate in these competitions, what this means is that men and women of the same categories were not allowed to compete together, which is what happens when a transgender male or intersex person compete with the straight female. Hence, people like Semenya who want to compete with other female should endeavour to go through (HRT) the hormone replacement therapy.

The above situation, like many others clearly reveals rules and regulations, either written or unwritten telling people how to behave, and they are expected to comply. These are conceptions of morality which people in the society are expected adhere to. Thus, necessitating an exploration of what makes people act morally, and what makes moral conducts appealing. Or what propels human to become moral agents. Exploring the discourse on agents and agency, Dwight Furrow describes it like this “an agent is someone who acts; a moral agent, then, is someone who has the ability to make moral decisions, and to act on them”³⁴⁵. This definition becomes important because moral agents are expected to be held responsible for their decisions about moral judgments. That is to say, they were to receive the praise or blame for their actions, which they are to make without other’s influences. This analysis evolve into issue of autonomy, which Furrow says, is an individual’s ability to make their own decision and to be self-directed persons; a trait lacking in children and animal as their agency is susceptible.

In transgenderism, the debate is between those who claim on the one hand that the idea is good, and on the other hand, those who insist that the idea is bad. Both sides have different arguments to back up their positions. On the one hand, advocates of transgenderism assert that transgenderism is the solution to gender dysphoria syndrome and gender identity disorder. While on the other hand, advocates of no surgery (transgenderism) frown at the idea (surgery) of employing a medical solution to solve a psychological problem. Their focus is on the sex change surgeries which they insist were neither necessary nor a resolution to gender dysphoria

³⁴⁵ Dwight Furrow (2005), *Ethics: Key Concepts in Philosophy*, (New York: Continuum) 8.

or gender identity disorder (as it seems more like a psychological situation, rather than a medical condition). Rather, they opined that the surgeries do more harm than good. Hence, the contention is about value judgement, and the review of the ethical justification for or against transgenderism.

Consequently this chapter shall examine the ethical and moral issues in transgenderism to address questions about whether there is an agreement on how a person should act. Then, who should be the beneficiary of such actions? And, how both concepts relates to the idea of obligation. In addition, the chapter shall further explore the natural law theories and notions about hedonism along with their consequences on transgenderism. To achieve this, it reviews the place of value consideration and regard in relationships, which invariably led to the examination of how discourses in agency influence culture and tradition, as they affect people's value judgments. The general opinion is that culture, traditions, and environment impact people's worldviews and life values. In this wise, the work explores indigenous Isoko society for its likely approach to transgenderism, and its customary relations to differentiated bodies. This examination is necessary as the Isokos have strong belief in gender divide. Their gender code reveals division of labour for genders; their social value gives superior place to 'penis' possession, as it cannot be disputed that among the Isokos a person's biological sex is their destiny, this worldview doesn't seem revolutionary enough to deal with transgenderism. Can a person then claim dual identity? Or how can transgenderism thrive here? This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section addresses ethical issues like transgenderism and value consideration, transgenderism and the idea of obligation, transgenderism and the theory of benevolence, and transgenderism and the natural law theory. The second section shall address the cultural implication of transgenderism for a traditional African (Isoko) person.

5.2 TRANSGENDERISM AND THE QUESTION VALUE JUDGMENT

Clearly the debates about who participates in competitions, and their qualifications for taking part has a lot to do with values judgement of everyone involved. The reason is that value has been described as "the regard that something is held to deserve; the importance, worth, or usefulness of something...principles or standards of behaviour; one's judgment of what is

important in life.”³⁴⁶ In ethics, “value denotes the degree of importance of some thing or action, with the aim of determining what actions are best to do or what way is best to live or to describe the significance of different actions.”³⁴⁷ Individuals make value judgments in their everyday lives. Some of these value judgments are trivial but others impact our lives forever. This is because individuals are compelled to make choices, which are rated by others as good or bad. Though, people have their own sense of value, reflecting from their environmental and social influences, molding them in line with acceptable cultural rules. This shows that each society has its own value system, which when not clearly stated, are embedded in people’s habits and traditions.

Carl Wellman debates this, between good and bad actions, which “presupposes some judgments of value...the soundness of each argument then, depends in part upon the correctness of the value judgment it takes for granted.”³⁴⁸ He further explains that the concern for value reflects two main ideas; intrinsic and extrinsic values. As Harold Titus suggest that anthropologists and social scientists study the customs and traditions of different people to discover their values. Axiology, therefore, is the study of value and value judgments: it tends to appraise the actions of people, revealing two types of value judgment, the negative value judgments and the positive value judgments. Our statement of value often reveals knowledge and they express our feelings about issues of value. According to Harold Titus, it is difficult to separate judgement of fact from judgement of value because of the interaction between facts and value. He opines that “the observable characteristic of things enter into our appraisal of value”³⁴⁹. This means that different facts and conditions influence how we evaluate things, that individual’s value judgments were just expressions of what they feel and their desires. This is also true for their emotional judgment as emotions are only sentiment of approval or disapproval. This means that value judgment could either be subjective or it could be objective. Titus insists that values could be justified by claiming that they are absolute and eternal, or by arguing that they could be found in the nature of man, in which case they would be the worth of humans that would be rated.

³⁴⁶ See <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/value>

³⁴⁷ See <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/value>

³⁴⁸ Carl Wellman (1988), *Morals and Ethics*, (London: Scott Foresman/ Addison Wesley), 77.

³⁴⁹ Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in Philosophy*. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold co), 34.

The theory of intrinsic value holds that things are just good in themselves, which is, for its own sake and not as a result of any benefit. And extrinsic value theory indicates that things are good only in the light of others, that is, as object of other things. Also, values could also be examined from the angle of their justification: this means the values could be appreciated from their production. This is done by looking at its end product, hence, productive and permanent values have intrinsic nature. In arguments about value, people are expected to choose between values that benefit the self, others, or values that benefit certain ideals.

One cannot help but wonder what happens, if I do not care about a certain value, for which I am expected to choose? In deliberating on value judgment, Furrow observes the place of emotions and desires in the ethics of care. He insists that these two traits are essential for us to achieve moral wisdom. According to him, moral reasoning could not be effective without emotions and desires which is sometimes connected with our relationship to those concerned. He opines that “just as a heightened state of fear helps one pick out dangers in the environment, a heightened state of empathy or compassion engages our capacity to notice moral relevant properties.”³⁵⁰ He insists that the concern should not be for justices or ethics, but that the concern should be for the recipient of our care. In this light, he posits the theory of moral particularism which states that when dealing with the issues of care, morality should not be generalise, rather consideration should be given to the individual’s history, identity and feeling. In doing this, the caregiver would understand the need of each person instead of working on abstract construction. According to Furrow caregivers need to understand the moral relevance of each situation, so that the individual is not sacrificed on the altar of common good. He is of this opinion because moral particularism enables caregivers to connect emotionally to each person’s situations, to be partial towards individuals and the issues that concern them. In this light, each complain of incongruence must be investigated thoroughly before considering transition.

But, how did people arrive at their values? The subjective view of value holds that opinions of values could be found in statements that express a person’s likes and dislikes, as such statements vary from person to person, or from group to group. The second opinion insists that value statements were just there in the world, people just discovered them. According to

³⁵⁰ Dwight Furrow (2005), *Ethics*, 78.

Titus, “we make clear distinction ... between the acts of judgment on the one hand, and the thing or situation about which judgment is made on the other hand.”³⁵¹ He made this statement because, it is possible for people’s judgment made about fact to vary; however, these differences could not wipe out the existence of the fact, from which the judgment is made. In the estimation of values, they are either correct or incorrect. In Titus opinion, “a value is always an experience, never a thing or an object. Things may be valuable but they are not value... we project value into the external world attributing to it the things that serve desire.”³⁵² Hence, there are various degrees of values. but ultimately God is the ground of value. According to him, the truth and falsity of different values would depend on the evidence for and against it. He claims that, the challenge about value is not its objectivity or subjectivity but the fact that each society has acceptable norms and values which they expect people to emulate. He claims that when an individual or group deviates from the acceptable norms and values, the result is that they either eliminate themselves from the society or they were alienated. Titus posits that “in fact, without knowing the value system or standard of a group, it is difficult to understand its culture”³⁵³. The reason is that some value standard though unconscious, could be inferred from the actual choices and behaviour of the members of each society, which stresses not only the place of agency but different cultural approaches to sex change surgeries.

For Wellman, both intrinsic and extrinsic values are connected, since judgments of extrinsic value are based upon and connected to judgments of intrinsic value. He explained that “in the end, however, all judgments of value must rest on judgments of intrinsic value evaluations of things that have value for their own sake. Because these judgments of intrinsic value are logically fundamental”³⁵⁴. He explains that people eventually show preference for things that have value for their own sake, that when such things are identified they tend to stand as the recommended value. The above position has implication for transgenderists as they are caught within multiple sources of value. It is not easy for the individuals to determine which is the correct value, so the moral confusion. This confusion becomes evident as we could not determine if the individuals have been able to properly interpret nature to determine their

³⁵¹ Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in Philosophy*, p. 343.

³⁵² Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in Philosophy*.

³⁵³ Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in Philosophy*.349

³⁵⁴ Carl Wellman (1988), *Morals and Ethics*. 78.

choice of value. Therefore, controversy remains as to one's choice of value, as the theory could not proffer a final word to the objectivity or subjectivity value or whether value is inherent in a thing.

In retrospect, reevaluating Caster Semaya's issues raises many questions about our moral conduct and value judgment. The prominent one being, on the one hand, why compete with others when you know that you have an edge? But, on the other hand, this seems ironical, in the sense that people compete because they believe they could win. People compete believing that they have a winning edge. In the same vein, we could ask 'others' the same question, which is why query Semenya, knowing that she did not have control over the condition? In her case, the condition became a blessing.

Deducing from the circumstances above, we could query the morality of insisting that Caster Semanya suppresses the androgens in her body by taking hormonal drugs, which was what the authorities asked her to do, as we wonder at their value judgment. To explore our discussion of value, we require a review of our morals conduct. This examination is also ethical in nature since ethics studies the values of human conduct. It raises questions about values; how values are justified, and how values are created. Ethics investigates how we come about selecting and rating values. It also analyses scientific development as it relates to human values in addition to the influence of culture and society on our value systems. Ethical theories, however, seek to describe what occurs by distinguishing what is, from what ought to be. Here, we consider the conduct of individuals or personal morality, the conduct of groups or social morality, and the cultural pattern of national and racial groups. These theories also endeavor to explain "why people act as they do, and what the principle are by which men live and ought to live."³⁵⁵

In ethics, goodness in conduct can be defined as those that are "either good in themselves or good because they conform to a particular moral standard"³⁵⁶. While the authority for such

³⁵⁵ Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in philosophy: an introductory textbook* 358

³⁵⁶ Simon Blackburn (2001), *Being Good: An Introduction to Ethics*, (Cambridge: Oxford University Press),

actions or reactions could range from “the will of a deity, the pattern of nature or the rule of reason”³⁵⁷. In Peter Singer's opinion:

Reason has a significant role to play in ethics, independently of whatever desire one may happen to have... they recognize the need to allow scope for disagreement and reasoned argument about ethics. Hence while they continue to take the view that ethical judgments are based on our desires, they will not allow just any desire to form this basis. Rather they acknowledge that to account as ethical desires must be passed through a screen that filters out those that do not meet certain conditions of impartiality and reasonableness³⁵⁸.

Following from different views above, it becomes imperative for us to examine people's justification for changing their nature or what some may term as interference with the law of nature, a theory which holds strongly that nature has a place for the genders and people ought to adhere to it.

However, when we interrogate transgenderism with issues of morality, each category of persons who are susceptible to the tendency, have their reasons for making their moral choices. Some appeal to nature, in other words, nature created them with such gender conflict (gender dysphoria syndrome or gender identity disorder), and others appeal to the search for happiness as their moral goal, same as hedonism, which is the idea that one's life goal should be the pursuit of pleasure, and indulgence in the self. Transgender people insist that they were born with the wrong biological sex. Hence, their gender expression and behaviour do not always conform with social expectation; they were insisting that their moral conduct is right because they were given the opportunity to make a choice. Nonetheless, many people have strong opinion about their choices.

Transgenderism attracts more debates, when we question the value of the practice. For example, the surgeons are getting richer, and due to media intervention, many more people are claiming gender identity disorder or gender dysphoria syndrome. This means an increase in the number of people who may be seeking sex change surgeries. One is compelled to wonder whether these surgeons know when to draw the line, between their duty and self-

352. Julian Baggini. and Jeremy Stangroom (2005), *Great thinkers a-z:2500 years of thought that shaped the western world*, (New York: MJF Bks) 10.

³⁵⁸ Peter Singer (1994), *Ethics* (Oxford : Oxford university press), 10.

gratification. The reason for this doubt stems from two angles, it is either that the surgeon are being motivated by financial gains, to carry out the surgery and they consider the people as tool of experiment, or they are actually helping to solve a problem. This doubt is further necessitated from the controversy surrounding the question of how to categorise the gender identity disorder and gender dysphoria syndrome, many wonder whether it is a mental condition or a medical situation.

Terming transgenderism as a mental condition stigmatises its sufferers, and it becomes a dilemma, as many people are refusing the stigma as mental disorder. Again, those who are against the practice are querying the value judgment of the physicians who employ medical solution to solve what they consider a psychological condition. How then do we judge this value and its consequences?

Drawing the line between duty and self-gratification reveals our previous observation about people having different perception about what could be virtuous and what would be vicious. For instance, when we ask people (in this case the surgeons) why they perform the surgeries many of them will claim to be helping the patient. But, what are the resulting concerns? Barbara McKinnon critically examines two different angles of consequences, consequential theory and non-consequential theory. The first one examines issues from the view point of their consequences. Walter Sinnott-Armstrong holds that “consequentialism (is) about the moral rightness of acts, it holds that whether an act is morally right, depends only on the consequences of that act or of something related to that act, such as the motive behind the act or a general rule requiring acts of the same kind”³⁵⁹. According to McKinnon, consequential theory could be deduced from utilitarianism. The reason is that when we employ utilitarianism against transgenderism, it would examine transgender practices for consequences of how the practice would affect the individual, its impact on others and the result for humanity. In utilitarianism, pleasure is perceived as good, here, “the only intrinsically good thing is pleasure, and the one thing that is intrinsically bad is pain”³⁶⁰.

³⁵⁹ See Sinnott-Armstrong, W.(2003), Consequentialism: <mailto:ws66duke.edu>

³⁶⁰ Carl Wellman (1988), *Morals and Ethics*, 79.

Following from this argument then, the individuals with gender dysphoria and its related conditions would claim to be seeking escape from the pain caused by their condition; by embarking on the surgeries they were pursuing their own good. But, can we truly claim that pain and pleasure is all that matters. The reason for asking this question becomes necessary because even the pleasure or escape from pain, ends up in life long pain as argued by advocates of ‘No surgeries’. Also, the surgeons can claim that he/she is escaping from the pain caused by lack of funds, thereby allowing the desire for gain to cloud their judgment, even when this goes against their professional oath. Therefore, Peter Geach challenges consequentialism by arguing that “good” is an attributive adjective and cannot legitimately be used without qualification.”³⁶¹ By this assertion, he opines that it is pointless to call something virtuous unless this means that it is good for someone, or good for something.

5.3 TRANSGENDERSIM AND THE NOTION OF CONSEQUENCES

It is not in doubt that having a clear understanding of Peter Geach position calls for more analysis of consequentialism. Consequentialism as we previously observed, discusses the impact or implications of our acts in transitioning from one gender to the other. It has been defined as “the view that normative properties depend only on consequences”³⁶² It is a theory that interrogates the morality of an act based on the future consequences, which means that those who believe in going for surgery as a way to resolve their difficulty will have to wait for the future, to determine the rightness or wrongness of transiting from one gender to the other, but only after they have done the sex change surgeries. Yet, these surgeries are too dangerous, the risk arise from the fact that during the surgery, vital human organs are tampered with, as we have record of several cases of people who regret making this choice. Nevertheless, the question is, is the surgery right or wrong for everyone? Must everyone have their separate encounter with the surgical blade before they realise the consequences of their choices? Can’t we learn from the lessons of others?

A review of Jeremy Bentham’s utilitarianism gives us an idea of how to choose. As a normative theory, utilitarianism tells us what to do base on the consequences. Utilitarianism is

³⁶¹ Geach, P., (1956). “Good and Evil”, *Analysis*, XVII (2): 33–42

³⁶² Julian Baggini. and Jeremy Stangroom (2005), *Great thinkers a-z*, p. 364.

generally held to be the view that “the morally right action produces most good”³⁶³. The theory insists that we should focus on that which gives the greatest pleasure and avoid whatever causes pain, just like Epicurean’s search of pleasure and avoidance of pain. Epicurus asserts that “for this cause we shall call pleasure the beginning and end of a blessed life, for we recognize pleasure as the first good innate in us, and from pleasure we begin every act of choice and avoidance; and to pleasure we return again.”³⁶⁴ Though, he maintains that we were not supposed to choose every pleasure, rather our guiding parameter should be that which leads to “freedom from pain in the body and from trouble in the mind”³⁶⁵. Yet, he opines that pleasure should be controlled by reasoning, that reasoning should be a guide in searching out our different motives. Thomas Hobbes buttresses this point when he insists that people are selfish, that “the desires, and other passions of man, are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions that proceed from those passions, till they know a law that forbids them”³⁶⁶.

Clearly, Jeremy Bentham holds that we were to focus on the greatest good, for the greatest number, that pain and pleasure are our masters, they guide man’s actions throughout their life time. He defines utility as “that principle which approved or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency with which it appears to have to augment or diminish happiness of the party whose interest is in question.”³⁶⁷ He explains that utility is the property which provides that benefit of pleasure, good, or happiness. The reason is that it enables the avoidance of pain, mischief, and unhappiness. However, he holds that the consideration could be for the community, or the individual. Though, he is careful to stress that the community is made up of individuals and the interest of the individual becomes the interest of the community, as the interest of thse community becomes that of its members.

Deducing from the above , utilitarianism seems to be confusing and self conflicting, since it addresses pain and pleasure in the same breath, it focuses on both happiness and unhappiness

³⁶³ See Stanfordencyclopediaofphilosophy.com Accessed on 2/03/2018

³⁶⁴ Epicurus (2004), The pursuit of pleasure. *Twenty questions. An introduction to philosophy*. Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth), p. 546- 548.

³⁶⁵ Epicurus (2004), 548.

³⁶⁶ Hobbes, T. (2004), People are selfish. *Twenty questions. An introduction to philosophy* . Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth), .548-549

³⁶⁷ Jeremy Bentham (1994), The Principle of Utility. Peter Singer *Ethics*. (Oxford : Oxford University Press), 306/7

at the same time, dealing with the individual and the community at the same time. We can agree that the community is made up of individuals, but we also know that many a time, there is a clash of interest between the two, hence, we have to wonder what choice to make when this happens. That is, when we are confronted with the self and community, which should we choose? It is debatable whether Jeremy Bentham view can settle the contention in transgendersim, the reason is that one person's happiness, could become another person's unhappiness. Here lies the contradiction.

This is where John Stuart Mill comes in to help resolve the conflict. Stuart Mill, a fellow utilitarian, aims to ground society on how to apply utilitarianism to individuals for their "self protection"³⁶⁸ that is preventing them from harming others with their actions. He explains that our interest should lie in the sum total of pain or the sum total of pleasure. He holds that restricting an individual's liberty becomes necessary when it causes harm to others; otherwise, the society should allow all "expressions of liberty that involves no harm to others, rather by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest"³⁶⁹. He maintains that when the harm concerns the person performing the act, we can only help them to change their minds by cajoling them through reasoning. We are to reason with them by trying to persuade them to change their minds. We should never result to force. He advises that we should be "pursuing our own good in our way, as long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs or impede their effort to obtain it."³⁷⁰

The no 'harm principle' is significant to our transgender debate as it is apparent that hurt and pain takes place, but how this hurt and pain is perceived is contentious. The harm in this case can be direct, when the surgeon gives the pain, and the pain happens to a person who chooses surgery, or it can be done indirectly, when it affects the patients relationships with others and ultimately nature. Hence, it seems that by harming oneself, other things get harmed too. This leads us to repeat the same questions about which should take priority between self and others?

³⁶⁸ John Stuart Mill (2011) The Harm Principle. *Social Ethics: morality and social policy*, Thomas A. Mappes and Jane S. Zambaty. (Eds) (New York : McGraw-Hill) 256.

³⁶⁹ Stuart Mill (2011)

³⁷⁰ Stuart Mill (2011). 257.

Therefore, examining the consequences of transgenderism from the view of the world at large is not out of place, how would transgenderism affect the continual development of human beings That is, in the area of procreation. In addressing this question, it is apparent that some people think that the idea will help limit those who are procreating, hence help in the control of world population, as the world was said to have exceeded its limit. The reason for this observation lies in the fact that the use of hormones alters a person body; it messes up the reproductive cycle, which could then have implication for the foetus, as we see in chapter two. But when viewed from the consequentialism angle, Barbara MacKinnon claims that “the sexual practice or relation that has better consequences than other possibilities is the preferred one.”³⁷¹ That is the better consequence should be chosen. How do we then determine the best practice? Here, we look up to Immanuel Kant as he proposes his two guiding imperatives.

For Immanuel Kant the worthiness of an action may not necessarily be the pain and pleasure. He says that “the consequences of our actions are not always in our control and things do not always turn out as we want.”³⁷² Therefore, he contradicts the utilitarian consequences by positing that the consequences should stem from either the categorical imperatives or the hypothetical imperatives. Kant claims that the justification for moral behaviour should be based on reasoning, that is, pure reason. He asserts that the moral worth of an action could only be acceptable, when it is performed by an agent, who possesses a good will, that a person has a good will when their acts reflect ‘universally valid rule’. Kant posits that the yardstick for analysing our acts should be its ‘universality’, that “I ought never to act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law”³⁷³. By implication, if the act could be universalized, then it would be right, but where it cannot be universalized, then such an act would be wrong, this is the ‘categorical imperative’.

Furthermore, he explains that every man has the sense of duty, the ‘I ought’ or the sense of the moral law which is prior to man’s experience and springs from man’s “inner most nature”³⁷⁴. Kant states that “an act is morally praise worthy only if done neither for self-

³⁷¹ Stuart Mill (2011) 212.

³⁷² Stuart Mill (2011) 76.

³⁷³ Tom L. Beauchamp and LeRoy Walters (1999), *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, (Boston: Wadsworth Pub. Co), 13.

³⁷⁴ Harold Titus (1970), *Living issues in philosophy*, 364.

interested reasons nor as the result of a natural disposition, but rather from duty”³⁷⁵. But what does Kant mean by duty? Could the surgeons who carried out the operations be said to be doing their duty? In analysing Kantian duty ethics, Joseph Omoregbe identified Kant’s distinction between, when one acts for the sake of duty and when one acts according to duty. Omoregbe explains that to act for the sake of duty is the same thing as acting from duty. It means that when the individuals act, they do not hope for any gain, these people perform the act because of their reverence for the moral law. He opines that moral law “brings man into contact with the very order of the universe itself. Since the laws of nature and the laws of reason are essentially one.”³⁷⁶ This means that, the explanation for such act would be that the moral law demands it. Omoregbe holds that acting for the sake of duty, is an act done after one has given “prudent consideration of one’s interest.”³⁷⁷ This is contrary to acts that are performed from natural inclination or natural tendency. In Kant’s opinion, such acts performed from natural inclination would not have any moral worth because it would not be praise worthy. Hence, it is only acts that are performed for the sake of duty that have moral value. But acting from duty becomes necessary, if the person performing the act care about duty or if others care about duty. What if self gratification is their only motivation?

Still on Immanuel Kant, he claims that the good motive or the good will follows the natural law. He explains it to be a ‘will’ which act out as our respect for the principle of duty; this is determined by morality, regardless of the consequences, like the categorical imperative. He explains that the formulation of the natural law involves the principle of universality, a theory which says that when we act, it should be interpreted to mean that we have recommended the acts for everyone, this is to recommend it as a universal principle. What this means is that once we admit that transgenderism is morally right, then we are either saying that everyone can transit, or those who are not satisfied with their biological sex and social gender should be free to change. But we see how risky this is for the self and others. we have also noticed that even nature would be affected, once people can no more populate the earth, as the surgeries takes away their abilities, or once they begin to have children with deformity as hormones

³⁷⁵ Beauchamp and Walters (1999), 13.

³⁷⁶ Harold Titus (1970),

³⁷⁷ Joseph Omoregbe (1991), *A simplified history of western philosophy*. Vol 2 Modern philosophy. (Lagos: Joja Press), 112

messes up their natural tendencies. This proves that waiting for the consequences is very dangerous.

Still on Immanuel Kant, he holds that when we act, we should use humanity as the end, that people should not be used as means, but as ends. He explains that only physical things should be used as means, his reasoning stems from his view that people have intrinsic worth and not instrumental value. He maintains that when humans are used as means, we end up violating their humanity or their personhood. What this means is that everyone involved in transgenderism has to declare their motives, or they have to explain why they persist in continuing a practice which many say is not the solution to gender dysphoria. In this wise, Kant explains the principle of autonomy by saying that “the moral law that a man obeys are not imposed on him from the outside. The sense of duty and the reason which man obeys comes from within as expression of the higher self”³⁷⁸. This position raises many more questions; for instance, are the surgeons helping or exploiting the situation? Or when I act, whose interest should take priority, mine or others? These questions necessitate us to explore the theory of self, egoism. It also compels us to reevaluate the idea of benefit, principle of obligation and the question of agency

But Maggi Colene Hume ignores the Kantian reasoning when she insists that transgenderness is morally permissible on the basis of Kantian autonomy. She said “the primary reason that GReS (gender reassignment surgeries) has become morally permissible could be traced to the Kantian reasoning and notion of patient autonomy”³⁷⁹. Since the theory insists that a rational person is free, therefore, he or she possesses autonomy, which enables them better to make a decision about their health. This means that the individual has the right to self-determination, that whatever they choose may not always be the ethical choice.

When viewed from Maggi Colene Hume’s position, our attempt at analyzing the surgeon would be inconsequential as the decision for surgery or no surgery seems to lie with the patient. But as professionals who have taken oaths to help the patient, they are expected to display an above-reproach lifestyle. Nevertheless, many of our life choices portray a conflict

³⁷⁸ Omoregbe (1991), 365.

³⁷⁹ See Maggie C. Hume (2011), Sex, lies, and surgery: the ethics of gender reassignment surgery > researchgate.net > publications

between our self-interest and the interest of others. So, it is imperative that we review egoism, to determine what is our right to choice on the one hand, and responsibility for this choice on the other hand? We need to address how our actions help or harm others? And to decide whether there are reasons for moderation in our actions? We also need to reflect on what this portends for the common good?

Consequentialism becomes difficult because one cannot foresee all the consequences of an act before performing the act. Hence, despite the fact that we could claim the right to self-determination, there is an urgent call for caution as we make our choices, since our choices usually have consequences. Making choices starts from child birth; a person is born into a stage, setup with rules and regulations, where those caring for the child make choices that affect them in line with these backgrounds, and as they advance into maturity these instructions become embedded in their sub-consciousness, directing their everyday life choices. When a person gets to self-awareness, the need to make the right choice becomes a dilemma, even as they wonder why they should act in a certain way, and who should have the right to direct their actions. Also, they are confronted with making a choice between goals that benefit either for themselves or their societies. In which case, hedonism could guide people's life choices, as Jeremy Bentham claims that good equals pleasure, and bad is equals pain. But can one in pain really focus on the broader social goals when they act? Why would a person be bothered about goals that influence the society, when such an act could conflict with their personal interest?

There seemed to be no straight answer to the above question as Ayn Rand queries moral theories for not giving us a definite guideline on what to do and how to do it. She asserts that moral theories do not clarify how one ought to act in a given situation. And those moral theories do not state if one should act to favour oneself or others. She criticizes ethical theories for not stating in clear terms whether the end should justify the means. However, Plato gives us a guideline on how to examine the question whether the end justifies the means in the *The Ring of Gyges*. In this analogy, the shepherd Gyges came across a ring, upon examination he discovered that the ring could make him appear and disappear at will. With this knowledge, Gyges plotted a coup in his country which enabled him to become the head of that kingdom.

Plato was not comfortable with the morality of Gyge's actions, especially, as he was able to escape detection. He wonders if a man could be just for the sake of justice. Or whether a man could be judged for using the resource at his disposal for the sake of rewards? In this story, Plato acknowledges the ability in everyman to act in both just and unjust manner. He opines that man's action is suspect by pronouncing "we shall not know whether he is just for the sake of justice or for the sake of honours and rewards."³⁸⁰ Accordingly, it is the end of the action that justifies the act. The moral of the situation points to how close the action relates to happiness, as the happy ending of the story seems to determine the rightness/wrongness of the action, yet, waiting till the end is a high risk.

Viewing transgenderism from the moral agency results in personal dilemma. This is so because the issues involved reveal a clash between personal right and social expectations. Social agency becomes a force to reckon with, since, social rules created gender categories, customs, and traditions. Even as social rules are responsible for molding the individual. Inevitably, when people examine themselves along social expectations, should they find a short fall, they would determine whether they are either compliant or noncompliant to the rules. In chapter three, we saw that some people would adjust themselves to these expectations, and that others would not bother. In this light, it seems that those who consider the surgeries were also trying to adjust to the gender categories, which tell them how they ought 'to be'. Since transgendered people cannot leave in isolation, then, people should be more considerat in relating with them. But, we wonder if by expecting people to be accommodating, they were expecting too much from the society. Or how easy is it for people to change their mindset concerning personal identity and gendered stereotypes? While one could easily argue that the greatest consequences of transgenderism are personal; that the individual is the one who would endure the surgeries, and hormonal treatment (the pleasure and the pain), the speculations does not always end there, as different societies react to transgenderism in different ways. The prominent reaction is molestations, abuse and stigmatization, thereby compelling the social agencies to examine the predicament of

³⁸⁰ Plato (2004), The ring of Gyges. *Twenty questions: An introduction to philosophy*. Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth) 543-546.

transgendered people. The question is, shouldn't we be bothered about the mental wellbeing of others?

Perhaps, a look at Laura Amato and Paul McHugh 'no surgery' stance would help as they argued that gender identity disorder or gender dysphoria syndrome may not necessarily lead to sex change surgery. They claim that people susceptible to the condition could be helped with only therapeutic counseling. They blame the media for hiding other options open to people with gender dysphoria. Their accusations may be authentic, once we review the media attention for trivial issues like which rest room a transgendered person should use, or speculations about their sexual orientation. These media focus seem inconsequential compared to the complicating issues resulting from the surgeries. Instead, the more important concern should be for their mental health, and did medical intervention solve the psychological problem? The act of embarking on a sex change surgery without absolute certainty is too precarious for trial and error.

Hence, we may not have to choose all pleasure like Epicurus advised, even when he has to show concern for self. As Richard Dawkins's emphasizes the extreme to which self-interest can lead us, by explaining that each person is "a selfish machine, programmed to do whatever is best for his genes as a whole."³⁸¹ He further posits that each machine (the individual) perceives the other machines as something to be exploited. He explains that this tendency for exploitation could be found in the genetic nature of each individual, which is applauded by nature. Exploitation here means that we could manipulate things or situation to our benefit. So, is there anything wrong with a person acting in a way that would benefit them? That is who should be benefiting from our actions?

5.4 TRANSGENDERISM AND THE THEORY OF BENEFIT

Consequentialism as an ethical theory poses conflict for those considering the option to transit either from male to female or from female to male gender. In utilitarianism an action or a practice is evaluated on the condition of "the *greatest possible* balance of beneficial

³⁸¹ Dawkins, R. 2004. The selfish gene. *Twenty questions: An introduction to philosophy*. Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth), 553-555

consequences or to the *least possible* balance of bad consequences”³⁸². Therefore, it appears that value judgment, moral conduct, and individual rights are not sufficient ground for interrogating transgenderism. As we need to resolve who would or should be benefiting from the idea. Accordingly, benefit has been defined as “something that produces good or helpful results or effects or that promotes well-being”³⁸³ and beneficence is described as “the quality or state of doing or producing good : the quality or state of being beneficent ”³⁸⁴.

According to Tom Beauchamp, the “principle or rule of beneficence refers to a normative statement of a moral obligation to act for the others' benefit”³⁸⁵. This idea could be found in David Hume virtue ethics, where he claims that human motives are benevolent, that benevolence is an important aspect of our moral life. To buttress his point, he argued “that natural benevolence accounts, in great part, for what he calls the origin of morality”³⁸⁶, a principle found in human nature. He maintains that benevolence is the ‘original’ feature of human nature, insisting that, it is the most important moral principle of human nature. He employs the term “benevolence to designate a class of virtues rooted in goodwill, generosity, and love directed at others”³⁸⁷. According to him, benevolence could be displayed in several ways: friendship, charity, and compassion, as it is a principle of human nature.

In this light, the surgeon and those in the medical practice who take out time to work with transgenderism may feel vilified as they would think of themselves as helping. But the contribution of some of these physicians become a thing of suspect when Soraj Hanglodarom tells of a surgeon who could be moved to operate for financial benefit. The “surgeon”³⁸⁸ asserts that he would do whatever his clients want, as long as they pay. This shows that the only challenge to applauding the assistance of such a surgeon would arise, when his motive for helping is examined, and found to be motivated by financial gain. Then, his acts of benevolence become suspicious. Since surgeons had promised in their Hippocratic oath to

³⁸² See Tom L. Beauchamp (2013), *The Principle of Beneficence in Applied Ethics*. <beauchamp@georgetown.edu>

³⁸³ See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/benefit>

³⁸⁴ See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/benefit>

³⁸⁵ Tom L. Beauchamp (2013), *The Principle of Beneficence in Applied Ethics*

³⁸⁶ Tom L. Beauchamp (2013),

³⁸⁷ Tom L. Beauchamp (2013),

³⁸⁸ See Soraj Hongladarom *Ethics of sex change operation therapy or enhancement*. Available at <http://www.academia.edu/190561/>. Accessed on 2/2/2014.

help save lives, many of them pledged that whatever choice they make “it shall be for the good of the sick to the utmost of your power, your holding yourselves far aloof from wrong, from corruption, from the tempting of others to vice.”³⁸⁹ Ethically “actions must be guided above all by adherence to clear principles, such as respect for free will.”³⁹⁰ Notwithstanding, the idea of autonomy or freewill, in this discussion on transgendersim complicates this theory. This is so because autonomy allows people the rights to determine their own fates, by making their own choice, as long as they do not interfere with the rights of others, this leads us to a vital concern, should the surgeon go ahead and do a sex change surgery, just because the individual can pay the fee?

For Immanuel Kant, the answer to the above question lies with either the hypothetical imperative or categorical imperative. While the hypothetical imperative gives us a condition of performing an action out of duty, the categorical imperative specifies how actions should be carried out, that is, without having the end in view, but recommending the act as a universal principle. It is therefore a controversial debate, whether everyone who feels the incongruence between their mental gender and anatomic gender should go for surgery. Could surgery be the answer, just because people can pay the bill? This seemed to be the case with the “earl”³⁹¹ who desperately wanted sex change surgery, she kept approaching different surgeons with her request and we were not told whether she found one but the implication is that, having the financial resources would help. Many transgenderists have family relations and acquaintances, many of them could either support their decisions or reject their choices because they too can. The preference seems to be that, one makes a choice that would benefit the self.

According to Ayn Rand, the idea of benevolence could be interrogated from a personal angle. She holds that selfishness is the concern with one’s own interest and that ethics is about the person, thereby insisting on individualism and claiming that selfishness is a virtue. In this

³⁸⁹ See Rachel p. Sikorski and McDonald R.Peters (2009), "Medicine." Microsoft Encarta. (Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation)

³⁹⁰ Rachel p. Sikorski and McDonald R.Peters (2009),

³⁹¹ Richard F. Krafft-Ebing (1965), *Psychopathiasexualis with especial reference to the antipathic sexual instinct: A medico-forensic study*, translated from the Twelfth German Edition with Introduction by Franklin S. Klaf, (New York: Stein and Day)

perspective, she questions the moral evaluation of selfishness by declaring that it is vague, as morality did not tell us what should be the content of our interest. According to Rand, morality neither states who should benefit from values, nor does it specify what values entails. She queries the lack of definite moral guidelines, when she insists that morality portrays man as an evil genius because in this description selfishness is synonymous with evil. It reveals that a man, who only acts out of self-interest, is a brute who tramples over others to achieve their gain. According to her, ‘beneficial-criterion of morality’ holds that “morality is his enemy: he has nothing to gain from it, he can only lose. (This is) self-inflicted loss, self-inflicted pain, and the gray, debilitating pall of an incomprehensible duty is all that he can expect.”³⁹²

In this wise, we wonder whether morality is man’s enemy. Shouldn’t a man hope that since he sacrifices himself for others, they should also do the same for him? Otherwise, that kind of relationship seems one sided, and it would only lead to resentment. Ayn Rand holds that, the short coming of morality is its lack of direction in life crucial situations, thereby concluding that this lacuna makes morality evil. She says:

It means that altruism permits no concept of self-respecting, self-supporting man- a man who supports himself by his own effort and neither sacrifices himself nor others. It means that altruism permits no view of man, except as sacrificial animal and profiteer of sacrifice³⁹³.

Therefore, re-examining the action of the surgeon would reduce the criticism for an individual who could make money from his skill. After all, to what purpose do people acquire skills, if not to make money? The reason for this query stems from the financial benefit, as it is a strong motivation for skill acquisition. This is very true for anyone who finds themselves in poverty stricken environment, like in many African countries, and other less developed nations. Also, acquiring skills for financial benefit would likely be true for anyone surrounded by family relations and friends, who are constantly demanding his/her assistance, such a person may become desperate enough about money. Nevertheless, Rand opines that ethical theory would be better, if it proposes that the actors should be beneficiary of their actions that

³⁹² Ayn Rand (2004), The virtue of selfishness. *Twenty questions. An introduction to philosophy*. Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C (Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth), 560.

³⁹³ Ayn Rand (2004),

people should be allowed to act for their rational self-interest. The reason is that everyone has the right to moral existence.

Still on benefits, Adam Smith explains that each man has a natural tendency to act in ways which reveal that he has a concern for others. He claims that concern for others could be experienced in the misery we suffer when bad things happen to people we know. Smith argues that “people are not essentially selfish they are naturally sympathetic to others and concerned for their wellbeing.”³⁹⁴ He made this conclusion from his observation that human beings often become sorrowful from the sorrow of others, especially when their mental fantasy enables them to put themselves in the sufferer’s position.

To further explore ethical theories that pertain to the self, it is necessary for us to look at psychological egoism and ethical egoism. The reason is that, egoism is the doctrine or attitude that claims that “one's own interests are of greater importance than any other consideration or thing”³⁹⁵. According to Frank J. Cavico, Stephen C. Mufflerand and Bahaudin G. Mujtaba, ethical egoism teaches relativism and the promotion of self-interest; it insists that individuals ought to promote his or her self-interest. Cavico and others interpret this to mean that acting selfishly is morally acceptable and acting against one’s self-interest is an immoral action. For them, this means that before a person acts, he/she will “discern the ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of an action, and then perform the action that produce the most personal good, which also is the moral course of action.”³⁹⁶ To this end, people should be ready to sacrifice some short-term pain and expense to attain a greater long-term good.

On the other hand, psychological egoism insists that self-interest explains the motivation for many of our actions, that our actions are directed by what we want, which is the same as our self-interest. The theory generalizes all human actions by claiming that our moral actions either makes us feel good or look good, either now or in the future. It points to the fact that many human actions have a deep embedded motive and meaning, insisting that the self is the object of all our desires. Curiously, then, what is wrong with me performing acts in my

³⁹⁴ Smith, A. (2005). Compassion. *Twenty questions. An introduction to philosophy*. Bowie L.G. , Michaels, M.W and Solomon, R.C. Eds. Canada: Thomas/Wadsworth 551

³⁹⁵ See Egoism. (2009), Microsoft Encarta. 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation.

³⁹⁶ Frank J. Cavico, Stephen C. Mufflerand and Bahaudin G. Mujtaba (2012), *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 2 No. 1; January 2012*

favour, since the self is supposed to be the object of all my desires? The reason for this question is that the theory further claims that, even when I act to benefit others, I am still gratifying myself. This theory is a two edge sword, in the sense that on the one hand, it belittles the work of altruist and on the other hand, it affirms the selfish acts of others. It could also mean that they can concentrate on acts that benefit others as they themselves would also benefit from it. In transgenderism, your act seems to benefit only me, but what about all the drugs and cosmetics expenses? The industries providing these drugs and related services are definitely beneficiaries, even when they tell us otherwise, by branding it to our needs. However, the theory questions our trust and makes us wonder about genuine relationships.

For Furrow, psychological egoism cannot explain all human actions. The reason is that, there are many people who are capable of performing actions that does not benefit them in any way, a tendency which he identifies as “super –size altruism”³⁹⁷ Furrow holds that psychological egoism is similar to ethical egoism. The reason for this position stems from ethical egoist claim that we ought to act to advance our self-interest. Accordingly, an ethical egoist would realise that it is in their moral interest to act in certain way. Furrow argues that “a rational ethical egoist would recognize that it is in her long term interest, most of the time, to be cooperative, helpful and to follow moral norms.”³⁹⁸ Viewed from this angle, it follows that a moral act could be withdrawn, if it does not favour the actor. This implies that, the act would be held back, when it is not in the best interest of the actor. Nonetheless, Furrow is convinced that when self becomes the motivation, the actor could not be trusted to act, except in self-interest, because his actions would generate a lot of suspicion. He observes that, in a place where everyone is acting in self-interest, conflict becomes inevitable, as people would find it difficult to trust one another.

Accordingly, Dwight Furrow holds that “the difficulty with ethical egoism is that it does not take seriously the many situation in which co-operation is necessary and the kinds of motivation that make people reliable in co-operation.”³⁹⁹ In this wise, the theory is incapable of explaining our everyday, ordinary social interactions, as not all of our actions could be

³⁹⁷ Dwight Furrow (2005), *Ethics: key concepts in philosophy*. 12

³⁹⁸ Dwight Furrow (2005), 13.

³⁹⁹ Dwight Furrow (2005), 15

calculated because many actions are intuitive and spontaneous; otherwise they would be laboured and clumsy. He said that once a man is known to act only in self-interest, others will not be comfortable in seeking the opinion of such a person, as suspicion becomes the order of the day. Here, people can deal with the problem of how the interest of others becomes my interest, when I don't share in their interest or why should I respect the interest of others? After all, humans owe it to themselves to be happy. Seeking one's happiness is a two-edged sword, as many people who set the standard were insatiable, they tend to keep raising the bar once you have met one condition, they introduce another. However, one must always be self-guided, be determined and intentional about what they are doing, why they are doing it, where they are going with it, and how they want or aim to get there. Then again, since everyone has the right to self-determination they could be whatever they wanted to be. Yet, they were not islands to themselves; hence agency must always have a place in their choices, therefore, the call for caution

5.5 TRANSGENDERISM AND THE IDEA OF OBLIGATION

Apparently, the theory of beneficence expects us to act in ways that benefit either the self or others, which transcend to the idea of obligation, a duty that one is expected to perform, telling us what we owe others and why one is obligated to keep the condition or the rule, since the person was not part of making the rule, the reason for these queries, arise because there are norms which expect a person to act in a certain way, that is, either to facilitate their acceptance in a certain group, to benefit self, or others. Robert Merrihew Adams examines moral obligation and explains that it is determined by the expectations and demands that "arise in a relationship or system of relationships that is good or valuable."⁴⁰⁰ This position shows that we are essentially in relationships that binds us to certain rules of behavior, or that we have relationships that limit our life choices. The implication is that, we have to decide whether we want to remain in the relationship and adhere to the abiding codes or scoff at the relationships and their restricting codes. In which case, we must find other associations or remain lonely. This means that despite the laws of fundamental human right, which tells us what we are free to do and to be, in reality, it is apparent that we are atomic individuals who

⁴⁰⁰ Robert M. Adams (1999), *Finite and Infinite Goods: A Framework for Ethics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 244.

need others. The reason for this assertion is that we live in the context of society, hence, the resulting obligation.

Once again, we explore Immanuel Kant's position that the source of human dignity could be found in our capacity for freedom, that the motivation to act could be traced to moral requirement as the individual impose on themselves the requirement, which is the freedom to choose. Accordingly, moral autonomy is the basis for moral agency, moral autonomy cannot be achieved once moral judgments is influenced or governed by our desires, emotions and inclinations. He strongly believes that these attributes are part of the deterministic universe as they result from our 'bodily' nature. He holds that, though this nature influences other beings, we cannot afford to act like them, otherwise, we would be responding like animals. Hence to escape deterministic universe, we have to act rationally, that is, accessing our actions without the influence of our desires.

In the same way, Dwight Furrow insists that we only have to examine the concept of obligation to realise that morality makes a demand on us to act in a certain way. According to him, "most philosophers think that 'ought' implies 'can'."⁴⁰¹ This may not necessarily be the case, obligation as a force has the power, ability and tendency to point people in a certain direction, and this compelling force could be deduced from statements of 'ought' and 'should' that always accompany such sentences. He concludes that to be obligated is a human experience. which we encounter in many circumstances of life, that the acts may be morally good but not morally obligatory. He explains that when people feel an obligation, it may not reveal their will to do it and doing something just because you should, can lower a person self-worth or their human dignity.

Human dignity is a concept expounded on in the article of the fundamental human rights, compiled by the United Nations, it spells out the extents to which the actions of others could infringe on the right of another person. A like situation in transgenderism, where the 'is' and 'ought' statements are attempts to manipulate people, which in itself could affect their human dignity, making them feel less than human once they realise that they have been manipulated. Yet, it is apparent that those who go ahead with the surgeries feel no better, as their bodies

⁴⁰¹ Dwight Furrow (2005), 85.

have been manipulated through the construction or reconstruction of vital organs. This can also affect their dignity, leading us to the bioethical debates. There are diverse research areas in the sciences that involve the use of human as experiments; a cause for debates about the morality of human experiments. Since we cannot categorical claim that the surgeries can resolve gender dysphoria and its associated conditions, why the gamble? One view is that such experiments degrade humans. But then, why should a means to cure, suddenly turn to a tool of degradation? Yet, the word disorder is degrading enough. But, expecting them to consider others before acting would be expecting too much, considering that, their self-esteem is already at stake, as depression and suicidal thought may not be too far.

Just like Immanuel Kant's view that human beings occupy a special place in creation, as 'intrinsic worth', this is the dignity which makes them more valuable than all animals. Patrick Lee and Robert P. George concede to Kant's view by maintaining that those who are prone to denying other humans their identity because certain conditions were wrong. They examined the notion of human dignity in their work, *The Nature and Basis of Human Dignity*. In their article, they posit that human beings have dignity on three bases. That human dignity obligates from killing them, their wellbeing must be considered when we act, and we must treat others the way we want to be treated. As all humans are equal in fundamental dignity. For them, "The dignity of a person is that whereby a person excels above other beings, especially other animals and merits respect or consideration from other persons."⁴⁰² For Patrick Lee and Robert P. George, rationality is a major aspect of dignity, this is, the rational nature of man. For them the rational nature of man is revealed in their ability for conceptual thoughts, their capacity to participate in deliberation and express free choice in their approach to life.

Patrick Lee and Robert P. George further explain that some life situations could detract from our identity, for example, when a human being is reduced to an object or when the person loses a body function. They hold that despite these conditions, dignity is never completely lost. These situations can affect our sense of dignity without compromising real dignity. In summary, they insist that "all humans have real dignity simply because they are persons...that all human beings, regardless of age, size, stage of development, or immediately exercisable

⁴⁰²See www.patrickleebioethics.com/dignity...rat Accessed on 10/10/2016

capacities, have equal fundamental dignity”⁴⁰³. Furthermore, on the issue of human dignity, Bolatito Lanre-Abass holds that “human beings have rights that must be respected because of the value they have by virtue of being the kinds of things they are.”⁴⁰⁴ Lanre-Abass observes that Kant was able to connect the issues of human dignity to human freedom in relation to moral agency by writing that moral agency is intrinsic to the nature of human being. Dwight Furrow insists that “a moral agent not only acts autonomously; she must be capable of moral actions as well.”⁴⁰⁵ This description is necessary because moral agents were expected to take responsibility for their moral judgments. As they receive the praise or blame for their actions. Hence their autonomy is vital.

For Carole Rovane, the idea of agency requires an examination of personhood. She explores this in ‘*The bounds of agency*’ where she writes about “an ethical criterion of personhood.”⁴⁰⁶ insisting that agents have the ability to influence each other, that the influence has ethical implications when individuals engage in this kind of relations, that is, agency relations. Rovane claims that agency related association results in the need to regard each other’s agency. She insists that each person needs to display due regard for the agency of the other, for the reason that it is “a relation that arises between agents when one agent attempts to influence another, and yet aims not hinder its agency”⁴⁰⁷ According to Rovane, people want to escape the ethical pressure of the choice they face concerning ‘agency – regard relationships’, but it becomes difficult for them to avoid it, since they cannot escape the choice that comes with it. She holds that attempts to escape the choice would deny humans of their personhood. She strongly believes that such denials were hypothetical because “it is in the nature of persons, qua agents who can engage in agency – regarding relations; to recognize other instances of their ethical kind.”⁴⁰⁸ By this statement, she means that one agent should recognize the capacity in other agents to engage in agency relationships. Therefore, ethical choices must be made since these choices were inevitable.

⁴⁰³ See www.patrickleebioethics.com/dignity...rat Accessed on 10/10/2016

⁴⁰⁴ Bolatito A. Lanre-Abbass (2014) Interrogating socio-moral challenges of violence and women: *The Nigerian Journal of philosophy*. Vol 25, no. 1, 2014. 130.

⁴⁰⁵ Dwight Furrow (2005), 9.

⁴⁰⁶ Carolyn Rovane (1998) *The bounds of agency*. (New jersey: Princeton University Press), p. 5.

⁴⁰⁷ Carolyn Rovane (1998), 75

⁴⁰⁸ Tom L. Beauchamp and LeRoy Walters (1999), *Contemporary Issues in Bioethics*, 7

Still focusing on society and agency in human morality, Tom L. Beauchamp and LeRoy Walters explain that morality “refers to traditions of beliefs about right and wrong human conduct, that morality is a social institution with a history and code of learnable rules”⁴⁰⁹. For them, morality had already existed before the existence of the individual. Hence, it is the individual who is expected to learn and adjust to the preexisting moral standard and values. They clearly state that we were not expected to create our own morality. Since morality is just a guideline for actions, the individual is expected to learn these rules as they grow older; also they should be conscious of ‘others’. As each person will have to learn to make the distinction between general morality and individual morality, before it becomes blurred. They are to distinguish between moral instructions and social expectations. But with these rules serve as guide to people’s life choices. Then, can a person really claim to have made a free choice when all along these rules were there to guide them? Hence “personal autonomy refers to personal self-governance: personal rule of the self by adequate understanding, while remaining free from controlling interference by others and from personal limitations that prevent choice.”⁴¹⁰

According to Tom L. Beauchamp and LeRoy Walters, respect for autonomy involves freedom from external factors, which is granting individuals the capacity and perspective to make their own moral decision. In moral autonomy, individuals are granted the right to determine their own destiny. This is conditioned on the ground that the individual’s action does not violate the moral standard. Here is the source of our challenge in the theory of agency, because in a roundabout way, others (agents) would still have to interfere in our choices, as certain limits are placed on our choices. This happens when they interpret our actions and judge them according to some moral standard. We must then have to wonder how they determined that they could be judges of other people’s action. We could also become curious about their justification for claiming that their standard was better than our own. In Furrow’s opinion, an agent should be able to make moral decisions because they are expected to act autonomously, that is, they must have the capacity for moral actions, as such moral action becomes a paradigm example for others to emulate. Dwight Furrow believes that self interest is a great

⁴⁰⁹ Beauchamp and Walters (1999) 1.

⁴¹⁰ Beauchamp and Walters (1999), 19.

influence on agency because of motives. Hence moral agency is better explained by our need to be reliable co-operators.”⁴¹¹

In another way, Furrow explores procedural autonomy, by saying that “a person achieves procedural autonomy if she critically evaluates her beliefs and desires, and she endorses them without excessive interference from external authority”⁴¹². In this theory, reasoning that comes from self-direction is upheld as the condition for autonomy. In the same manner, relational autonomy shows that our capacity to be self-directed is based on our ability to enter into different relationships and our ability to sustain them. This theory brings to mind, the principle of beneficence. Beauchamp, T L. and Walters, L. holds that the principle of beneficence is a bioethical theory which insisted on:

The doing of good and the active promotion of good, kindness and charity. But in the present context the principle of beneficence has a narrower meaning. It requires us to abstain from injuring others and to help others further their important legitimate interest, largely by preventing or removing possible harm.⁴¹³

The insistence on ‘important legitimate interest’ in this ethical arguments reveals that autonomous right cannot be right to unrestricted access because there are acceptable liberties, and there are unacceptable liberties. For Tom L. Beauchamp and LeRoy Walters, there are justifications for the restriction of individual liberty; people should not be allowed to do what they liked just because they could, they don’t have the right to cause harm. For instance, the internet is filled with parents who are making the sex change decision for their children. Some make this decision on trivial excuse that the children prefer the gender presentation (dresses) of the opposite gender. Others point to their types of games or toys of the child as their reason. Hence, Beauchamp and Walters claim about restricted liberties seem to have a base here. Accordingly, liberties could be restricted to four principles:

The harm principle: a person’s liberty is justifiably restricted to prevent harm to others caused by that person. The principle of paternalism: a person’s liberty is justifiably restricted to prevent harm to self caused by that person. The principle of legal moralism:

⁴¹¹ Dwight Furrow (2005), *Ethics: key concepts in philosophy* 19.

⁴¹² Dwight Furrow (2005), 25.

⁴¹³ Beauchamp and Walters (1999), 20.

a person's liberty is justifiably restricted to prevent that person's immoral behavior. The offense principle: a person's liberty is justifiably restricted to prevent offense to others caused by that person.⁴¹⁴

This means that society and its agent's tend to find excuses to interfere in the autonomy of the 'others'. They excuse their interference on the ground of obligation. Furrow believes that there are many people, including philosophers who think that 'ought' implies 'can', hence the confusion. He opines that when we discuss obligation, we have a guide on how to deal with conflict, that it would be difficult to escape an obligation, because it binds our will, this means that it restricts us in what we can do and what we cannot do. Here, Carole Ravene's agency regarding relations comes into the fore, as it is a relationship between agents attempting to influence one another, thereby hindering the agency of the other. She holds that things that hinder our agencies include hypnosis, manipulations, lies, threats and rational arguments , including agency regarding or agency disregarding influences .

5.6 TRANSGENDERISM AND THE NATURAL LAW THEORY

Being intuitive seem to be an instinctive position that speaks for itself, just like the natural law theory, which point to nature for direction, just like in transgender debates, where it is common to hear people appeal to nature as the excuse, reason and the foundation for their choice, as homosexuals, gays and lesbians insists that they were created by nature with a different sexual orientation. In the same vein, individuals with gender identity disorder and those with gender dysphoria syndrome also insist that nature is responsible for their condition. Again, the others argue that we only need to look at anatomy to understand what nature intends for the genders. And, it becomes more contentious when people can easily grow out of the psychological state. Hence gender identity disorder is a condition that is not stable. It is inconsistent because when found in growing children, it is almost certain that they would later change their minds, during adolescence, or drop the claim totally as they mature. Also we have learnt that gender identity disorder could be addressed by simply cross-dressing. Hence the surgeries could be avoided especially among young people who were still being influenced by external factors.

⁴¹⁴ Beauchamp and Walters (1999), 28.

However, despite the fact that people with this condition appeal to nature to explain their preference, those who frown at the tendency employ the same argument from nature to contradict the claim. According to St Augustine, nature manifest God's plan that we need only to examine nature, to discover the functions of the genders male and female, or look at nature (in/Out) for cue on the place for each sex organ. Therefore when considering how natural law impact on transgenderism, we have to wonder whether there is a clear statement on what is 'to be' sought after and what 'ought to be' sought for.

Barbara McKinnon critically explores the natural law theory, by examining natural law and natural rights. She holds that the basis for natural law theory could be traced to John Locke, who argues that all human were the same species, that all of them have the same basic nature, hence, the need for all to be treated equally. The statement holds sway despites the fact that there were many contentious reasons to deny people their rights. Also, it is debatable whether every man understands what nature expects of them.

To explain further, McKinnon insists that natural laws must not be confused with laws of nature. She holds that the laws of nature were descriptive and they refer to the belief of scientists about how nature behaves, natural law or "Moral laws on the other hand, are prescriptive laws. They tell us how we ought to behave. The natural law is the moral law written into nature itself...the basic moral law can be known by human reason and that we know what is requires by looking to human nature."⁴¹⁵ This means that people only need to look at nature to see those things that are essential for us to function as human. The theory asserts the universality of natural laws and their visibility to all men. But, is nature so easy to read? Would we understand what we see? The reason for these question lies with the fact that whoever does the explaining would do it from their perspective.

Again, can we trust nature to show us its intent? The reason for the doubt, stem from the concerns with mutations, and abnormalities which were far from normal. Hence we may not be able to rely on nature to reveal its purpose for every condition. For Thomas Aquinas, natural law is like the first principle, based on the concept of good. He says "good is to be done and evil avoided. All the other precepts of natural law are based on this. All concerns

⁴¹⁵ Barbara McKinnon (2009), *Ethics: Theory and contemporary issues*, (US: Wadsworth), 98.

what is to be done or avoided because practical reason naturally apprehends what is the human good”⁴¹⁶. He explains that the ordering of natural law stems from our natural inclination to order things. From this we assume that good is an end, but evil has contrary nature. For Aquinas, this claim could be observed in man’s inclination to perform naturally good acts. Aquinas insists that all virtuous acts were part of the natural law, that the end of human law is the well-being of humans.

To further examine Aquinas’s theory, Mark Murphy points to Aquinas’ focus on divine providence, “that the natural law is an aspect of divine providence. The fundamental thesis affirmed here by Aquinas is that the natural law is a participation in the eternal law.”⁴¹⁷ This means that the eternal law is a rational plan by which all creation is ordered. It holds that through the natural law, humans participate in eternal law. He insists that the theory portrays practical rationality. The reason is that natural law constitutes the basic principles of practical rationality for human beings because they possess this status by nature. This means that the natural law is universally binding by nature and that its precepts can be universally known. Finally, he opines that in Aquinas’s natural law, the good is prior to the right. He says

But on Aquinas's view we are, somehow, able to reason from these principles about goods to guidelines about how these goods are to be pursued. Aquinas's thoughts are along the following lines: first, there are certain ways of acting in response to the basic human goods that are intrinsically flawed; and second, for an act to be right, or reasonable, is for it to be an act that is in no way intrinsically flawed.⁴¹⁸

One becomes curious as to why people feel a compulsion to the natural law or why they feel obligated to it. Kai-man Kwam opines that the ‘is/ought’ notion in the natural law theory is a gap, that, it neither makes a clear statement on what is to be sought after and what ought to be sought after, nor does it explain why natural law should be obligatory? This makes it unsatisfactory. According to him, the law just states that “if human beings want fulfillment, they should obey the natural law or those positive laws which are derived from the natural laws. However, this can only give rise to hypothetical imperative rather than categorical

⁴¹⁶ Barbara McKinnon (2009), 104-105

⁴¹⁷ See Mark Murphy (2011) murphym@georgetown.edu.<https://plato.stanford.edu/info.html>

⁴¹⁸ See Mark Murphy (2011) murphym@georgetown.edu.<https://plato.stanford.edu/info.html>

imperative which imposes obligation on us”⁴¹⁹. When we explore this idea from transgender discourse, many believe that sex change was unnatural; they frowned at it because it is contrary to nature. That nature’s design for the genders was for procreation. Also, there is the other side that wonders why the sudden surge of awareness in transgenderism, could this not be natural too? Could it not be that nature wanting to help in controlling the world population, which is said to be over populated, the reason for this observation is that, transgenderism affects procreation. Again, natural law queries certain sexual orientation like homosexuals, insisting that it is an unnatural sexual behavior. Therefore, Kwam concludes that natural law is not only imperative, it is aspirational, despite the fact that its requirement could be confusing, it speaks to the person as a whole, seeking to locate the good in the person, and not what they were comfortable with. From this perspective, the person can only flourish when their individuality is realized in moral actions. He observes that this statement is against the spirit of modernity which seeks to remake the self, without reference to natural boundaries.

Also Joe Dallas insists that there is a connection between natural law theory and divine command theory. The divine command theory holds that there are things which are good for us to do, because God commanded it. Morality from this view seemed to be arbitrary; the reason is that the individuals would not be expected to use their reason as they are to adhere to the divine command. In this case, the rightness or wrongness of an action is judged, not by reasoning and reflection, but on religious basis. Religion, then, is the motivation for such an opinion, especially, if its adherents have a reward in mind. The reward could vary from relishing sexual bliss in heaven or just leaving in peace on earth. Still, for others it is living in eternal life, a place without the trouble and evils found in this world. Since religion makes claim about human conduct and beliefs, it tends to lay emphasis on personal adjustment and commitment by proposing a definition to the meaning of life, without reference to reason. In this light, “the good and conscientious person is the one who wants to do right just because it is right.”⁴²⁰

For Mark Murphy, the paradigm of natural law could be summarized into the following that:

⁴¹⁹ Kwam Kai-man 2012. Reflections On Contemporary Natural Law Theories And Their Relevance. OGST Journal no 53.. 220

⁴²⁰ Barbara McKinnon (2009), *Ethics: Theory and contemporary issues*, 5.

(1) The natural law is given by God; (2) it is naturally authoritative over all human beings; and (3) it is naturally knowable by all human beings. Further, it holds that (4) the good is prior to the right, that (5) right action is action that responds nondefectively to the good, that (6) there are a variety of ways in which action can be defective with respect to the good, and that (7) some of these ways can be captured and formulated as general rules.⁴²¹

To create a distinction between what is morally right and what is morally good, Mark Murphy examines the question about how we can determine goodness by claiming that “moral rightness belongs to the obligation family, and the concept of obligation is *irreducibly social*: one is under an obligation only if one is subject to some sort of demand in the context of a social relationship”⁴²². Murphy claims that goodness/rightness is part of the logic of obligation as it demands or imposes on human beings the obligation to obey. It also creates a feeling of guilt when we flaunt it. This, according to him, is the intrinsic moral authority of the natural law “the natural law account of reasonableness in action adequately satisfies that conception.”⁴²³ He further explains that the notion of ‘morally right’ is not only confusing, it is unclear about the choice we were to make.

But Barbara McKinnon holds that we could develop our own moral judgment because “we should be able to evaluate critically our own or others views of what is thought to be good and bad or just and unjust, including religious views in second cases.”⁴²⁴ She holds that both believers and non-believers should be able to discuss moral matters together. This is because we live with ‘others’. For Mackinnon, the goal of philosophical ethics is to develop non-religious based strategies and ways of dealing with moral issues; this way, ethical issues could be evaluated, and the discussions would portray an idea as good or bad, in this way it would explain the positive and negative reasons for the morality of the situation. Such arguments could either be experimental or empirical discussions. A curious person would need to know if religion really gives meaning to life. The indications to this query are positive, because many religious people tend to find satisfaction and contentment just by knowing that it is commanded.

⁴²¹ See Mark Murphy (2011) murphym@georgetown.edu.<https://plato.stanford.edu/info.html>

⁴²² See Mark Murphy (2011) murphym@georgetown.edu.<https://plato.stanford.edu/info.html>

⁴²³ See Mark C. Murphy (2001), *Natural Law and Practical Rationality*, @philpapers.org. murnla-9.

⁴²⁴ Barbara McKinnon (2009), 5.

Contentiously, when we review the scriptural phrase which claims that, in God we are all the same, that there were neither male nor female, Greek nor Jews but all were one, this could throw more light on the fact that God was not bothered with gender and race, rather he was bothered with being. It could also mean that people could be whatever they preferred, including transgender and God would not be bothered.

However, natural law's argument against transgenderism consistently anchors on its wrongness because it goes against nature. It insists that once one had been born with a certain body, it only follows that one is intended to live with that body, and it should not be changed. In accordance with this position, the '*Vatican declaration on some questions of sexual ethics*' insists that moral order originates from human nature, that:

The human person is so deeply influenced by his sexuality that this latter must be regarded as one of the basic factors shaping human life. The person's sex is the source of the biological, psychological and spiritual characteristics which make the person male or female, and thus extremely important in the maturation and socialization of the individual.⁴²⁵

This declaration was made in reference to other sexual behaviours, like homosexuality and lesbianism. Yet, it is apparent when we consider issues of transgenderism, the statement would still hold true. This is because in transgenderism, references were made not only to the human person, but also to the person's sexual orientation, as many people think gender identity automatically translate to a different sexual orientation. But this is not necessarily the case, influences on sexual choices were diverse and may not logical connect or be deduced from a person's gender identity.

5.7 Isoko Cultural Agency and Transgenderism

This work previously examined issues pointing to the influence of cultural values, customs and traditions in the attitude of a person, it also revealed the place of subjectivity to moral issues, as moral evaluation and moral justification defer from one culture to another. A study of the Isoko people will go a long way to buttress this point. This is because we have

⁴²⁵ Thomas A. Mappes and Jane S. Zembaty (1992). *Social ethics: Morality and social policy* (New York: McGraw-Hill), p. 195.

determined that individuals were shaped by their cultural values, customs and traditions, we see this among Isokos, who believe in male superiority and division of labour among the genders. Here, the human dignity of the woman seems to be secondary, as the male sex and gender is superior to female sex and gender. From this view a person's identity is connected to their social identity and perception, as the Isokos strongly believe that biology is destiny.

According to Harold Titus it is important for us to know the value system and standard of each group of people to enable us understand their culture. This step is vital to our understanding the different cultural approaches to transgender practices. This is because the individual must exist among others, even when they throw caution to the wind, and perform daring act, they still need others to survive, and they could either develop new ones or work on their old relationships. Here tradition is popularly defined as the "passing of beliefs from one generation to the other"⁴²⁶, it is said to be constant. On the other, culture is said to consist of the "features that describe a society at any given time,"⁴²⁷ it is subject to regular changes. Hence, our cultures and traditions have a lot of influence on our morality.

Cultural traditions are important because they are the means through which shared values and mores were transmitted to the individual. Hence, it is conflicting and self-contradictory, when any individual questions the society about its roles in their action. The reason for this position lies with the fact that these traditions could be held responsible for shaping him/her. Rather, the query should focus on how much influence agency should exact on the persons, whether people can exist without others, or if they can thrive without rules and regulations? Diana Kandell claims that cultural theories are easy to propound, that change takes time as the application of these practices mostly rests in the hands of agencies that could not be easily controlled. Yet, while the society and its relevant agencies attempt to be accommodating or spurning new changes, the individuals cannot live forever, they need urgent solution to their challenges. Mike Okonkwo insists that "our culture must be preserved. The things that make us unique should not be dumped for the sake of following the crowd"⁴²⁸. He said this to

⁴²⁶ [www.http//. Ask.com](http://www.Ask.com)

⁴²⁷ [www.http//. Ask.com](http://www.Ask.com)

⁴²⁸ Mike Okonkwo (2018), *Building According To Pattern*, (Lagos: Dunamis Press) www.trem.org

buttress the influence of technology on our cultures. Here, following the crowd has a lot of implication, especially in our transgender discourses.

Again, culture is defined as “the common denominator that makes the action of individual intelligible to the group.”⁴²⁹ According to Diana Kandell, “our society has become more diverse, and communication among members of international cultures more frequent, the need to appreciate diversity and to understand how people in other cultures view their world has also increased”⁴³⁰. Kandell buttresses the importance of cultural influence in relation to people’s thoughts and actions by calling our attention to how culture enables the individual to survive. The reason for this position is that an individual is not born with a manual of how to survive in their societies; it is a technique that has to be learned. Hence, culture is a tool for learning how to survive in different societies.

In addition, Kendell opines that culture is not only vital to the individual, it is also a necessity for the survival of societies; this is because to co-exist with one another, these societies need rules and laws to survive. That is why, what could be considered as moral in one culture would be considered immoral in another culture. For instance, while some cultures consider bigamy as immoral, other cultures do not only promote it, they encourage it. In another instance, we find divergent cultural views in the subject of adultery. While many cultures frown at a woman who would dare have sexual relationship outside marriage, it had been known that there are societies in “Australia,”⁴³¹ “China”⁴³² and “India”⁴³³ where a woman could actually have more than one husband; it is called polyandry. Same difference has been noticed in sex change or transgenderism as it is embraced in one society, and repelling in other societies. We therefore, must ask about cultures where the individuals have never heard anything about the concept, by wondering how one would be viewed when he/she suddenly announces that they have had their biological sex changed.

Exploring transgenderism from the Isoko culture could reveal issues which affect many other African cultures, but with slight differences, as many of them have similar world views. The

⁴²⁹ Diana Kendall (2003) *Sociology in our time*, 72.

⁴³⁰ Diana Kendall (2003), 71.

⁴³¹ See www.theaustralian.com.au/news/...in.../9fc967a2d54ae4e5b411858984976314

⁴³² See <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/02/when-taking.../272726/>

⁴³³ See www.dailymail.co.uk/.../The-wife-married-FIVE-brothers-Rajo-21-follows-tradition-I

implication is that, we cannot assume a blanket acceptance or rejection of transgenderism, as each person will have to deal with their own cultural situation that is from their cultural perspective. The worry is that during this research, it was discovered that many cultures have secretly dealt with issues of biological abnormalities and sex change, without the knowledge of the vast majority members of the society. Many people with indefinite body types like the intersex have been given special places with the priest. This could probably be the source of such terms like '*okurin bi obirin, or Obirin bi Okurin* (male like female and female like male) in Yoruba, and *Ozakaye* (male/female) in Isoko. Just like the term Ekelekbo is the Igbo term for hermaphroditism.

Also we know of the historic Yoruba transgendered Alafin, Oronpotoniyun, and Sango (crossdressing), hence the question is, is transgenderism possible within the traditional African cultures like Isoko culture? Is their ontological world view able to accommodate transgenderism? Or has it explanations for the possibility of sex change? Then again, what challenges would an Isoko person (who considers transgenderism) need to deal with? Should this be the case, then, what are the possible communal values, and ethical reasoning that would influence this approach? The answers to these questions become necessary, as we consider the Isoko condition of '*Ozakaye*' intersex, cross dressing is not an issue here as both men and women tie wrappers.

5.7.1 Isoko Notions of Identity

Metaphysical conception of the Isoko person could enlighten us about their world view and its influence on our transgender discourse. The Isoko people of Delta state were identified in the work of James Welch as the "Isoko tribe of Africa."⁴³⁴ According to James Welch, the Isokos conceive a person as a creation of *Oghene*. The supreme Deity, '*Oghene*' could be known only by his acts. These acts relate to the creation of the world and his fatherhood, which identifies him as a man. '*Oghene*' is said to reward and punish acts accordingly. The result is that the Isokos refer to *Oghene* in masculine terms and by implication, the Isoko man is seen

⁴³⁴ James Welch (1934), *The Isoko tribe of Africa* 160-173

to have these attributes. The myth is that *Oghene* deposited man on earth along with “two guardian spirit.”⁴³⁵ Their purpose is to guide and monitor the person, through his life time.

Therefore, the answer to the question of identity of isoko person could be found in their metaphysical belief that a person has two guardian spirits are ‘Ezi’-human spirit and ‘*Oma*’ body-spirit. The myth holds that a person’s life prospect depends on the ‘*Oma*’. The reason is that, each *oma* creates its own body and it is *Oma* that leads the individual on their life journey. The *Oma* (body-spirit) as the guardian only arrives with the birth of a new child. Welch observed that it was a common practice among the Isokos for the ‘*Oma*’ to attract oblations. By implication, every Isoko person possesses a special ‘*Oma*’-body which is unique and special to the individual.

The ‘*Ezi*’ (human spirit) on the other hand, is a life giver, which consists of the soul. According to Welch, without the ‘*Ezi*’- spirit life is said to be impossible, this is why the birth and death of a person attracts special oblation. Accordingly, the Isokos believe that life begins at birth. So when a child is born, his/her status or destiny has to be determined in order to decide what oblation and sacrifices would be carried out at birth. After which a like name is given to the child, the choice of names reveals either the circumstances of birth or the perceived destiny of the child. Such names include ‘*Emamoke*’-good gift, ‘*Oghenekeno*’ divinely settled, ‘*Emamuzo*’ good head, ‘*Akporobero*’ hope for future, and ‘*Orieda*’ meaning witch, (this name could actually be given to a child whose birth is accompanied by bad omen, like the death of its mother). Others are ‘*metujhe*, a capable leader/warrior and ‘*Otomanoviegba*’ a lion that breaks through obstacles.

When evil is perpetrated in the society, such act is blamed on the ‘*Orieda*’ Witch’. Welch observes that witchcraft is held responsible for many evils among the Isoko people. They believe that witchcraft is a spiritual force which usually poseses a person to make them act in a certain way, ususally evil. This person perpetrates evil acts with the second identity, to deal with such evil, either the witch is caught, which is very difficult, or the person confesses to their evil ways, to avoid the wrath the gods. This happens when the person senses that the force of retributive justice is at play. They could determine this when they begin to experience

⁴³⁵ James Welch (1934),

successive harmful incidences. The Isokos believe in the concept of universal justice, hence in a roundabout way, a force would compel the guilty person, to confess to their crime (witchcraft) by afflicting the person with death threatening diseases. They believe that the physical evidence of justice is located and conceived by the 'Eni' (a river). This universal force of justice monitors the acts and actions of each individual. The 'Eni' justice system is brought into the fore when a person is suspected of the act of witchcraft or other evil acts. Such a person when identified would be compelled to confess their act or subjected to the rituals of the 'Eni' when they deny. This would involve a test of the individual's ability to contend with the force of the river (a river inhabited with crocodiles). They were sent to compete with the force of nature which could either save, or execute them according to their status (guilty or not guilty). The general belief is that a guilty person could never escape this force.

In another case, the system is believed to activate itself, especially, when an individual is guilty of acts of abominations and taboos. According to Welch, acts of abomination include, not circumcising a girl at the right time, and the crime becomes even more obnoxious when such a girl gives birth to a child. Other such abominable acts identified by Obaro Ikime include adultery, witchcraft, incest, stealing and abduction of a married woman. The guilty party would normally die mysteriously, in which case neither the family, nor community would bury the person, they would be thrown into the forbidden forest 'Eri' (a spiritual force), hence, crimes and offences in the community are judged accordingly. Especially, when these crimes were reported, Ikime says "the council did everything to ensure that the people's sense of justice and fair play was not outraged."⁴³⁶

These views when placed alongside with our discussion on transgenderism have many implications; it portrays issues like destiny, fate and determinism in Isoko metaphysics. The implication for *Ozakaye* (intersex) and those planning to transit is that the society may assume that their body was destined by *Oghene* (Supreme Being) to be the way it is. Hence attempting to change their body may not be an acceptable condition. Since this is his/her own special body spirit, this determines his continuous existence on earth. Therefore, tampering with it may be considered abominable, this is not surprising because previously the birth of

⁴³⁶ Obaro Ikime (1972), *The Isoko people: a historical survey*. (Ibadan: university press), 37 - 40

twins was a dreaded experience, as one of the children has to be sent back to the other world, and the family stigmatized as a result of that situation. However, the purpose of this analyses is to determine the evolutionary nature of this society, like when we wonder how they would approach new, and previously unknown ideas. For instance, while Isoko would judge witchcraft, the psychologist would explain it away as dual identity or dissociative identity disorder, not bothering to consider the consequences of a person who have to put on a personality to achieve a purpose, and then put it off after achieving that purpose.

It is a known fact that many psychologists usually seek other explanations for people's crime by blaming it on the second identity or other environmental causes. But, how is it possible to separate the person from their crime? Which personality would take responsibility for the crime and which personality would be convicted? The reality is that, all the accusation would be directed at one body, the known culprit. How easy is it then to apply the theory of dissociative identity disorder to absolve people from their crime?

Of necessary exploration here, is the Isoko conception of personal identity, that is, who bestows identity? As the Isoko person is seen as a being with others, the question of others is so strong in Isoko that they have a saying that 'when two rats appear the first one loses its identity to the second rat'. This could be interpreted in two ways either the well-known attributes of a family sticks or a person lose their personal identity to family identity. Furthermore, when two Isoko people meet for the first time, the introduction usually takes the form of interrogation, the first question after your name is, "*whe omo 'ono*" whose child are you? Or what family do you come from? It could also mean who are your parents? From the answers offered, it follows that the individual's status would either rise or fall on this pedestal. This is because when the information is offered, the inquirer strives to recall the data and history of the said family. By implication, the action of one person rubs off on other members of the family. For instance, taboo and those abominations mentioned above could easily become a stigma and a reproach to the family name. This occurs on occasions when one family is seeking marital relationships with the other.

Notwithstanding, the individual is held responsible for his or her actions that aid the family name or soil it. Since the person is introduced as 'Omo *Onoyona*', that is the child of

Onoyona. It is this social standing that first identifies the person before his/her personality and character traits. What this means is that, if the said family has any stigma attached to its social behaviour, it automatically rubs off on their offspring. As Ikime insists that “the clan as made up persons of whom trace their ancestry to a common figure.”⁴³⁷ Hence, the onus lies with each individual member of the family to ensure that the family name is not soiled by their behavioural acts.

5.7.2 Isoko Social Identity

Still more on Isoko identity, masculinity and male gender is perceived to have a higher place in social order, and higher value in the scheme of things. The biological male and gender has more esteem, then the biological female and gender. In Isoko, biological sex is usually flaunted, especially among men as pals, and friends greet each other just by saying ‘Oza’ that is ‘man’. ‘Oza’ male, is given prominence in social identity. Even an infant enjoys this special place as he is already addressed as ‘Oza’. This can be observed as celebration of birthing is usually the loudest when the new babe is a boy. Also as the child develops from stage to stage, the acculturation process is already taking place, through parents, family members and society. The process involves gradual awareness of norms and customs of the society. As they are communicated to the person, he also adopts them and molds himself both mentally and socially to the norm, not long after he reflects his social relation with others by constantly claiming *me o Oza* ‘I am a man’.

In addition, the Isoko have age grade system where people relate with each other, especially among those born in the same period; they were parleys and have their own group. Each group has rules that guide their conducts as defaulting member could be called to order. They have a common saying that explains this, “*Orie ruo uvboma vio orie guo*”⁴³⁸, it is better to behave well than to explain well. This means that the Isoko people prefer the good behavior to oratory and explanation for a bad behavior is usually frowned at, though, a special place is given to oratory. The question then remains; must everyone behave in the same way?

⁴³⁷ James Welch (1934), The Isoko tribe of Africa.

⁴³⁸ Agbada, E. O. Umokoro, M. E. and Itiveh, J.O., (trans) 2008. *Ubuhre umubora Isoko: Teach yourself Isoko* 75.

Though, group identity seemed important to the indigenous Isoko person, but what about the individual personality?

There are many Isoko proverbs that explain and guide a person's behavior. For instance, one can usually hear them say "*ma ruo owrhe epha no a re ruo owhro, re ma re ho uzi obo ro kpa oka,*"⁴³⁹ 'let us do things in order to enable us use the thumb to pluck corn'. It portrays the importance of orderliness and co-operation among people in the society. Therefore, personal identity to Isokos is mostly social identity, as they believe in the idea that 'no man is an island'. Hence, when anyone commits an abominable act the family is concerned, as this may soil their family name. Also, when one person is ostracized it could affect others. According to James Welch, families appease their deities by "sacrifices offered when the family name has been sullied by incest, adultery, theft, or misuse of the family land and possessions. Should the *obueva* advise that a sickness is caused by an ancestor, members of the family are urged to confess any sins they have committed, and sacrifices are offered."⁴⁴⁰ In conclusion, an Isoko person is expected to act in a way that would bring honour to the members of their family as the 'brush that rubs one soils the others'. Hence, they desperately want to preserve the family good name, they believe that the '*esimo*' dead fathers in '*erivi*' the 'spirit world' "are jealous of the good name of their family and clan, and will, and can punish any one harming either of these by sending calamity."⁴⁴¹

Isoko have strict gender divide observable from the birth of a child. For a boy, he always admonished at interval to behave well because of his status as '*Oza*' (man). This is usually the beginning of his preparation towards masculinity, character training, and soon. He is qualified to join a social group of '*otu*'. According to Ikime, the boy child begins to experience this from the age of fifteen to sixteen years, while the girl could only join the women, when she is mature enough to marry. According to Obaro Ikime the gender divide among the Isoko is a strong phenomenon. We observe this from the social organization of the society, a gerontocracy, society ruled by elders. Administrative leadership in the ancient Isoko society is mostly the function of the "male population."⁴⁴² They were divided into age grade of '*Otu*'

⁴³⁹ A conversation with Judith U. Ekpo in Lagos, Sangotedo (2016), 08033808699.

⁴⁴⁰ James Welch (1934), *The Isoko tribe of Africa*

⁴⁴¹ James Welch (1934).

⁴⁴² Obaro Ikime (1972), 3.

groups and 'Odio' elders, and 'odion ologbo' (aged elders). The women are relegated to the group of 'Ewe eya' women's group or society, whose major concern is fertility, once a girl is circumcised and married, she belongs to this group all the days of her life. These women insist on the proper cleansing ceremonies and ensue that the necessary rights are performed. But the administration of the day to day gerontocracy is the responsibility of the men. What this means is that women were not really consulted when vital social issues are being discussed. Should a woman be present during their meetings, she is expected to remain silent, or directed to air her views/opinion through an appointed spokesman 'Otota' or through her husband. If she insists on doing this herself, she would be told to sit down, because of her biological sex and gender.

This gender divide could further be gleaned from the embedded culture of division of labour in the society. The culture has unwritten rules, which specifies the duty of a man and women in a standard family. He is expected to be either a hunter or a fisherman, while the duty of the woman is that of a farmer and provider of the ingredients. In many cases, marriage improves a woman's status; yet, she retains her individual identity as a distinct person. You could hear others referring to her by her birth name, despite the fact that she is a mother of several children. But, as far as she remains a woman, she would only attend the women's meeting and remain a second class citizen. One wonders how she handles this approach, that is, does gender divide affect her dignity in any way? It appears that many indigenous Isoko women hardly consider the divide, since they grew into that belief system. Hence, whether the divide affects her human dignity, is subjective to each woman, because she finds her place in the scheme of things and then she relates appropriately; many a time she excels beyond the division of labour.

Yet, women were not totally helpless as they have strategies by which they could make the men adhere to their demands. It includes public display of nudity and activism. The idea of nudity, which we saw a similar act in the "Aba women riot,"⁴⁴³ shows that she is very concerned about nation building and national consciousness. She seeks for a way to build and nurture. Again, nudity may portray an image of carefree woman, this is not necessarily the

⁴⁴³ Larenwaju Akinsola (2018) *Onigegewura: Echoes across the Niger . historical tales of cotemporary events in Nigeria* (Lagos : SCO Publishers) 387.

case, the act stems from desperation, since the same people have a saying against blatant display of nakedness. This position can be gleaned from this saying ‘*Edho oga ke he, are bafihogue e*’ this means that, no matter how hard a case or problem, people (judges) do not go naked in the prosecution. Yet, that these women resort to this desperate act buttresses their influence and ability to sway public opinion.

5.7.3 Isoko On Gender Identity

In another vein, the Isoko woman may retain her identity through her life time; this is regardless of her ability to be fertile and bear children. While other African women, find barrenness stigmatizing, the Isoko woman does not as her birth name remains part of her identity, hence without been told, one cannot distinguish the barren woman from others. She is hardly called mother ‘*oni*’ of anybody. She is just called her birth name like ‘*Erowo*’ throughout her lifetime, mostly among her relations, peers, older men and women. Younger ones could also refer to her by her given name, and she would not take offence, because she is used to being called by her birth name.

However, another aspect of motherhood is seen in the woman’s connection to the child. This is more so when the family is polygamous, as it is common and permissible among Isokos. This would be revealed when individuals introduce some siblings as (mother child) ‘*Omo oni*’ or (father’s child) ‘*omo ose*’. Those siblings who came from the same woman are more bonded, than those from the father, which are half siblings. It is common to hear them describe each other as *omo oni* (mother’s child) or *omo ose* (father’s child). This explains the potency of the cry ‘*Oni mo*’ my mother. It is a common way of calling your mother’s attention, it is without age and gender, at times it could be spontaneous call for attention, at other time it would be a cry for help. Whenever this call is made, the ‘*oni*’ disposition for provision and protection is awoken. It is common for the Isoko person to keep making this call even when the *oni* is dead, then it becomes a call to essence. The Isokos may worship their ancestors, but it is not a common practice to think of deifying one’s mother. Nevertheless, the ‘*omo*’ child prefix could become demeaning during discussions about right and privileges of inheritance. The reason is that a person could be made to feel less, despite their gender, when they are referred to as *Omo omote*, which means an offspring of a girl

child. As the offspring of male children have more prestigious and better standing in the family.

In discussing the issue of body, Dorothy Smith observes that a man's body has a strong force as it gives credibility to his utterance, but the woman's body is weak, as it takes away her power. Nowhere is this statement more accurate than among the Isokos, where body is seen as a social category; it determines the relevance of an Isoko person. They have a saying that '*Ovanu yoma edaha*' that an ugly face does not equal evil. Or '*Ovanu yoma te he urekpugbegbehe*', that an ugly face cannot break the mirror. Among these people, body serves as a basis for social roles; it is seen as the foundation for social thought and identity. This is so embedded in the social relations that it would be difficult to dismiss it as a Western influence.

Both the works of Obaro Ikimi and James Welch indicate this notion of male superiority; the reason is that, when they made reference to the women in their articles, it is so specific that it cannot be overlooked. What this implies is that many of the social functions of the typical Isoko society revolve around the men. Hence, women have to find their own engagement. The implication of this observation is that, the intersex person may not find a place in the society. They could escape ostracism by claiming the gender ascribed to them from birth. But what happens if they grow to feel differently?

Reviewing '*Oza*' (man) reveals that it is not just a form of identification; it is also a term that creates privileges, expectations and confers approval, as it acknowledges the person's dexterity. When a man tells you '*mo oza*' (am a man), it is a defense of masculinity, it shows his achievements and it portrays his superiority, as the male anatomy is held in superior position than the female. Consequently, the title changes in meaning, with reference between male and man. When a mature male is called '*oza*', it means that he is an achiever, who had accomplished some traits attributed to men; he could actually strut like a peacock. Without doubt, we can definitely say that the Isokos strongly believe that a person's biology is their destiny, but what would happen when a girl decides to change her gender, do you see these people according her the respect accrued to the Oza? It seems impossible and difficult.

According to Obaro Ikime, the age grade system is vital to many Isoko men, since they are expected to join the group, once they attain the age of responsibility, a boy attending his 'otu' (age grade meeting) is seen as a step to masculinity. Ikime explains the importance of these character traits, when he states that as the individual advanced, other attributes begin to be included in judging his performance "service, wealth and natural talents also play their part"⁴⁴⁴. To attain a leadership position, he opines that although the criteria of 'Oza' (male) remains, further indices are added to his evaluation, including character traits and social acceptance, "he was chosen on account of his personal qualities."⁴⁴⁵

Pointedly, social acceptance and social responsibility become an additional value that the 'oza' had to aspire to. The parents and elderly relations persistently repeat the laws and mores to enhance his education of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Eventually, an Isoko person is held responsible for his actions. The person's offences, acts of violation of rules and values were brought before the heads of family and heads of clans. When it becomes necessary, they were fined appropriately for unacceptable behaviour. According to Ikime, "refusal to accept the verdict of the clan's council results in the offender being ostracized"⁴⁴⁶. This ostracism is not just being socially ignored or avoided. The person is publicly humiliated, by being told to step out of meetings and never come back until the condition changes.

This concept of male superiority continues to drive the thinking of an indigenous Isoko person. This is very apparent in the issues of fidelity. For instance, while the male could become promiscuous in his intimate relationships, by acquiring more wives, absolute fidelity is expected from the female. This conclusion could be inferred from the dress code of the women, the married woman is expected to tie two wrappers at all times, this is not only for the sake of fashion, nor is it only to protect her dignity, tying of two wrappers is meant to make it impossible for 'quick sex', should she be caught, retying the wrappers was a special process and skill, that could not be accomplished speedily.

⁴⁴⁴ Ikime (1972), 37.

⁴⁴⁵ Ikime (1972),. 34.

⁴⁴⁶ Ikime, 1970), 39.

Also in circumcising the girl child, the belief is that this would help detract promiscuity. Their deities further these beliefs, as they target women who commit adultery and mete out justice. In this light, the act of adultery does not need witnesses, once a woman is afflicted with a strange sickness, the Isokos would suspect that she had been unfaithful to her husband. Many of the ‘*Edio*’ (elders) intervene with a preconceived mindset of her guilt. They may never bother to find out who her companion was; rather the situation is investigated, in anticipation of her confession and admission to the crime of adultery. Therefore, querying these cultural practices, as it is very apparent, that the gender divides among the Isokos result in subjective value judgments. Subjective, in the sense that goodness, and badness of an act, could depend on the gender of the perpetrators, there are lines and divides which an individual of the opposite gender could never hope to cross. The dress code among them is a mixture of both genders, since men could tie wrapper or wear a trouser, but body enhancement like wearing makeup and tattoos is not common, it is the forte of the juju man or woman.

Nevertheless, much as the Isoko person relates with others in groups, they have very definite personal opinions, that is revealed in their life approaches. They turn out to become people with strong personal opinion. The concern here is how this society would deal with sex change or handle a transgendered person. The Isoko society is yet to be confronted with its first open case of transgendered person; however, some individuals are familiar with hermaphrodites who are said to be addressed as an individual “*Ozakaye*”⁴⁴⁷ (meaning male/female). Historically, many of such cases were kept secret, as it is common with many African societies; knowledge about such personal issues is not open to others. Once the status changes, the standard approach is awe, repulsion and ostracism. The truth is that with this attitude many people would rather keep their status a secret, suffering in silence.

Curiosity, is the reason for asking how Isokos would react to a person who suddenly claims that he/she is no longer a female but a male, that he/she plans to join the ‘*Otu eza*’ (men group) or ‘*eweya*’ women’s group. For a man, would the other men accept him? Could he be considered as their equal? We may not need to speculate too much, we only need to review the concept relating to gender divide, the penis superiority and the belief that biology is destiny to guess at the answer.

⁴⁴⁷ Felix ovouwonre (2016),

Moreover, Isoko handle unnatural phenomenon by consulting a juju man “*oge’edo*’ or ‘*okporo*’ who would then decide on the course of action. The Isoko people believe in analysing the individual’s concern before a solution could be found, hence, the person is summoned to a townsquare meeting. What this means is that, despite the tendency for individuals to have strong personal opinions, they may be required to conform to certain codes, showing the need for cooperation. In this light, they say “*obo whozhe obo , ru ob o ru ro fua*”⁴⁴⁸ (One hand washing the other accomplishes a clean hand). The implication for our transgender discourse is that, the general course may not always go well for the individual as it may have a negative impact on him/her. Inadvertently, society comprises of people, that is the “other” selves. Many would have accepted that agency has the final say, these ‘selves’ may be carried away with ideas of values, obligations and notions about personal identity and agreed to the customs, not minding whether one person has a reason to believe, accept or act differently, and, whether the ‘belief’ affect another person’s individual’s human dignity, the paradox here is between change and status quo.

5.8 Conclusion

Values could not be easily discarded; this conclusion is deduced from Jim Unah’s statement on values, he said:

Values are pursuits or engagements that are perceived by persons or groups to be worthwhile. The perception of what is worthwhile may be right or wrong, positive or negative. The wrong or negative perception of what is worthwhile would result in a wrong value system. Values are themselves structurally interconnected with behavior because they influence and direct behaviour and vice versa. So a wrong value system would result in wrong pattern of behavior. The adoption of a wrong pattern of behavior by persons or groups will in turn result in the negative unfolding of events around them. In other words, the adoption of a wrong social conduct by persons or groups will result in negative development.⁴⁴⁹

Concerns about sex change and its related issues always hang on the uniqueness of human life, and the fear is that there would be an eventual loss of the human dignity. Hence, to curb

⁴⁴⁸ Judith U. Ekpo (2016.),

⁴⁴⁹ Jim Unah (2009), Value and value judgment. The developmental philosophy of Emmanuel onyechere osigwe anyiam-osigwe. Vol 1 personal values, personal awareness and self mastery. Oladipo, O. and Ekanola O. A. 52

such reckless actions among humans, the ethical, religious and social motives were regularly examined, to enable the concerned authorities to act quickly by coming up with legislative laws that serves as restrain to those involved. Yet these legislative laws have not been able to reduce our efforts to meddle with human nature, as any practitioner could decide the discard the restraining rules by acting on their convictions or mischievous curiosity, as was discovered in one case where, unknown to one client, the surgeon had ferterlised eggs with a dog sperm. The ethical consequences of this act were enormous yet, the victim bore the brunt. Therefore, as a result of happenings like the above and many more unrevealed cases, cautions must be the watch word as the frenzy about enhancement of human physical, intellectual, and emotional capacities seems to be on the increase in the developed world like United States, United Kingdom and Thailand as explored in chapter two, and the awareness is trending in many African countries. Yet, it is necessary that we apply moderation in all things. Especially, in Africa communities, as many Africans still need to work on our mindset to enable us accommodate new developmental theories. That despite the influx of knowledge and the exposure made possible by internet, the exposure does not equal acceptance. We need to heed Mike Okonkwo's advice that we should not dump things that make us unique. Also, we must think about our acts of freedom, and what it might portend for the future generation.

In this chapter, we have examined the ethical and cultural issues in transgenderism, the chapter explored concerns like Transgenderism and value consideration, transgenderism and the idea of obligation, transgenderism and the theory of benevolence, transgenderism and the natural law theory. This chapter attempted to address a vital question; about the possibility of transgenderism within the traditional Isoko culture. The reason for this endeavor is because Isoko ontological view of being is definite on issues about gender divide, division of labour among the genders and the superiority of 'penis' possession. It cannot be disputed that among the Isokos that a person's biological sex would be their destiny. Considering that the 'oza' (male) is eulogized and given credibility because of his anatomy. It seems to be difficult and a herculean task for an individual like intersex or *Ozakaye* (male/female) to switch gender, talk less of a person who have no apparent anatomic challenge. The reason is that personal identity among the Isokos revolves around family and friends. How then would a person suddenly announce that she/he is a member of the 'Otueza', men's club, without causing

chaos? Herein lays the dilemma between self-interest, and the interest of others. However, when a person claims gender dysphoria or gender identity disorder, it is not debatable that they must act in self-interest; their concern should not just be cast aside. Since they are the ones wearing the shoes, they know where it pinches. But, unfortunately for them, the irony is, they could not be an island to themselves. They are living with others, and this necessitate that they must decide how to deal with social agency and compelling force of obligation. Vitially, they must seek therapy; they must look within themselves to discover their own personal essence to affect their world.

CHAPTER SIX

TRANSGENDERISM AND THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we examine the implication of transgender practices, its significances or implications for the foreseeable human future. By querying the possible ways in which transgenderism and like practices could affect humanity. That is, the effect of hormonal drugs on generic makeup and its implication for human reproduction. One could not help but wonder how these drugs and their usage are linked to the raging cancer experienced by many individuals who have used them. As it is common knowledge today that many women with breast cancer were said to have taken “contraceptive pills.”⁴⁵⁰ These pills were hormonal drugs that enabled women to control their menstrual circle, but this disruption of nature rebounds with side effects.

Also, the practice of transgenderism and sex change compels us to examine the future of technological enhancement, a practice where people make use of technology to enhance their bodies. The unanswerable question is, whether the combination of technology and man changes the individual’s identity, that is, do these beings continue to be humans, machines or the cyborg? This inquiry becomes necessary, as the aim of such technological endeavours, to merge human and machines is to increase processing speed, among others. It is imperative for us to determine the place of humans in this evolutionary stage, as man’s attempt to elongate bodylife is still frustrated by death. This is why the alternative solution seems to lay with mental life, after death, that is ‘mind immortality’. This is another aim through artificial intelligence, as it also deals with how to engineer machines, to become as capable as humans, but with biotechnology, man has more options concerning eternity. Previously, questions asked about life after death includes, what will happen to the soul after death? The answer to this question however varies, depending on the perspectives, whether philosophical or religious.

⁴⁵⁰ www.cancercouncil.com.au

Unexpectedly, humanity must be shocked that when they address issues of life after death, the silicon would have anything to do with the answer, or would become a major contender. These concerns necessitate the work to explore the possibility of mind immortality, and to speculate on effects of hormonal drugs and surgeries on humans, to determine their possible influence on the 'default' programming of the body. The reason for this quest lies with established fact that human genomes duplicate themselves. Genomes are a set of instructions for building and running the body. These instructions are written in the genetic code called DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). According Michael Cook, DNAs are copied to the next human that passes through that being, through pregnancy and birthing. But, the probing question is whether hormonal appropriation (or mis-appropriation) changes the DNA and how it affects the next product? This question and its answers lies with the medical sciences, however, as philosophers, it is imperative that we examine them considering that

When DNA is inherited it is copied, copying text is something of which we all have experience: it leads to mistakes, and more successive copies are made, the more mistakes accumulate. Some of these mistakes may be disastrous, some may be no more than a nuisance, and some will not matter at all. In the case of DNA mistake copying are called mutations⁴⁵¹.

The examination of chromosomal make up in chapter two shows that a person's biological sex is susceptible to the amount of hormones (androgens, estrogens, and progesterone) in the blood, at the point of a foetus growth. Hence, additional hormones in the system of a person, who plans to procreate, may not augor well for the foetus, especially if the hormones are applied to compel the body to behave in a certain way, like it is done with sex hormones, or in egg fertilization, in which case we see the result in wombs carrying up to ten babies at once. Then, this would make us wonder whether the medical sciences really have a control over the results of these mutations. The answer to this question is relevant considering that post humanist future is not just about hormones and chromosome. This could mean that the post human person could be immortal. That is, if he is able to extend his/her life with biotechnology, a notion likened to immortality of the mind.

This theory seeks to manipulate minds transfer from one being to the other. In considering the immortality of the mind, individuals have been enticed with the choice of preparing for

⁴⁵¹ Michael Cook (2003), *A brief history of the human race*, (London: Granta books), 11.

eternity by downloading their consciousness into a chip, as we have observed in attempts to preserve the brain of a genius like Albert Einstein.

Conversely, Nick Bostrom speculates about the virtual world, inhabited by virtual minds, and Hans Moravec explored the notions of minds becoming immortal. in machine evolution theory. Also, we encounter these notions in body enhancing schemes, life prolonging drugs, plastic surgeries, and cloning. Especially, in the presence of machine's ability to keep the heart beating long after consciousness have been lost. These possibilities result from man's ability to overcome restraining values, languages, cultures and control found in the post prefix, like post modernism, post structuralism, posthumanism and tran's humanism, all trending in transgenderism.

According Thomas Baldwin, the 'post' prefix is employed in philosophy as "philosophical responses to difficulties inherent...and there is much interest which surrounds the use of the terms"⁴⁵². While both Nick Bostrom and Hans Moravec are salivating and anticipating a future of virtual existence, Leon Kass calls for caution, by insisting that we should trust our feeling of repugnance, otherwise known as the 'yuck factor'. Consequently, this chapter is divided into five sectional titles including; historical analysis of transgender thought, as it boomerang to technological evolution, examining how we got to where we are in transgenderism. It explores Transgenderism and Sexual Evolution, that is, what is the hope for a future, where people could just wake up, and change their personal identities or sexual identity? This led to the exploration of Transgenderism and the Idea of Mind Immortality, which concerns ideas about life elongation. Finally, Transgenderism and the Theory of Repugnance, wondering whether, the 'yuck' factor be any indication for caution?

6.2 Transgenderism and Technological Evolution

The ability of humans to throw caution to the wind started, when philosophical theories began to address issues that concerns human, and not abstract concerns. Those theories were termed humanist, as they focused on ontological existence, called humanism. Humanism has been defined as the "attitude that emphasizes the dignity and worth of the individual. A basic

⁴⁵² Thomas Baldwin (2001), *A history of Western philosophy: contemporary philosophy, philosophy in English since 1945*. (New York: Oxford University press), 269.

premise of humanism is that people are rational beings, who possess within themselves the capacity for truth and goodness”⁴⁵³ According to Cuff and others, “the concept of humanism refers to the extent to which social theories account for the organized character of social life, in terms of the individual”⁴⁵⁴ Hence, many philosophical theories, qualify as being humanistic; existentialism and phenomenology as discussed in chapter three are in this category. Also, Karl Marx and Georg Hegel’s fall into this group as their thought influence social thinking and man.

While Hegel explores humanity’s special place in history as process of history concerned about the human spirit, Karl Marx equates his to “matter, especially as it is revealed in the economic organization of society and the models of production, determines the social and political institutions of society.”⁴⁵⁵

Seen from this angle these theories reflect the concerns of man, and how he should handle the challenges in his daily existence. Thus, taking existentialism a little further, Jean-Paul Sartre in *Being and nothingness*, analysed one key concept in existentialism, human freedom. He explains that “one cannot understand the extent of human freedom, unless one can understand what it is like to be human.”⁴⁵⁶ Presenting the idea of what it is to be human, he explains and describes it as ‘being in the world’. According to Sartre “existentialism... is a doctrine that does render human life possible; a doctrine, also, which affirms that every truth and every action imply both an environmental and a human objectivity.”⁴⁵⁷ He explains that critics of the theory were doing so because they were against the optimism of the theory, Suspiciously, they see existentialism as quietism, since it invites people to embrace a state of passivity, and accept things as they come, and “for having underlined all that is ignominious in the human situation, for depicting what is mean, sordid or base to the neglect of certain things that possess charm and beauty and belong to the brighter side of human nature.”⁴⁵⁸ He insists that the doctrine was “less scandalous and the most austere: it is intended for philosophers”⁴⁵⁹.

⁴⁵³ See Arthur C. Danto (2009), Humanism. *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia*. 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation.

⁴⁵⁴ Cuff , W.W. Sharrock and D.W Francis (2015), *Perspectives in Sociology*. 4th ed. (London: Routledge), 11.

⁴⁵⁵ Harold H. Titus (1970), *Living issues in Philosophy*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold co), p. 210.

⁴⁵⁶ John-Paul Sartre (1958), *Being and nothingness* (London, Routledge), xvii.

⁴⁵⁷ John-Paul Sartre (1958), Existentialism is humanism, 2.

⁴⁵⁸ John-Paul Sartre (1989), Existentialism is humanism: *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*. Walter-Kaufman (Ed), New York: New American Lib.), 1.

⁴⁵⁹ John-Paul Sartre (1989), Existentialism is humanism, 3.

Hence, existentialism is one notion that could be called humanist, as it addresses how humans should relate with their circumstances, and to their world.

In this light, Julia T. Wood opines that humans should “become an active, critical member of your society which means to reflect on its value and to challenge those that limit human potential. We must not be lulled into believing that the views and values our culture seeks to normalize, are in fact inevitable.”⁴⁶⁰ According to Alex Voorhoeve, in humanism existentialist “found a culture which appears to have answers to the question they faced regarding the individual’s relations to the community.”⁴⁶¹ Therefore in humanism, man’s attention is to himself. Voorhoeve explains that many proponents of existentialism like Desiderius Erasmus, did not have control over the far reaching effect of the idea, like the idea of self the reason for this observation is that any notion trying to deviate from humanism, was then termed anti-humanist. Hence in progressing, humanism evolves to post humanism and trans humanism. And, in examining post humanism, Kevin LaGrandeur distinguishes between post humanism and Trans humanism by insisting that both should not be confused, explaining that ,

The post human can be defined as that condition in which humans and intelligent technology are becoming increasingly intertwined. More specifically, the post human is a projected state of humanity in which unlocking of the information patterns that those who believe in the post human, say make us what we are— will shift the focus of humanness from our outward appearance to those information patterns.⁴⁶²

LaGrandeur claims that post humanism focuses on the function of being rather than form, that humanness is defined in accordance with how these species operate and how they processes information. He puts forward notion of merging humans and machines as he opines that differences in appearance would be meaningless, as “apes have been granted the right of personhood.”⁴⁶³ A move that undermines human ‘exceptionalism’. Human exceptionalism been the view that suggests that man is unique from other beings. This distinction is revealed

⁴⁶⁰ Julia T. Wood (1994), *Gendered lives: Communication, gender and culture*, 290.

⁴⁶¹ Voorhoeve, A. 2005. Desiderius Erasmus. *Great thinkers a-z:2500 years of thought that shaped the western world*, (New York: MJF Bks) p 92

⁴⁶² See Kevin LaGrandeur (2014), What is the Difference between Posthumanism and Transhumanism: *Ethical Technology* . moracleveland.org>files>Accessed 25/08/2016

⁴⁶³ See <https://www.theguardian.com/.../chimpanzees-granted-legal-persons-status-unlawful-> Accessed 25/08/2016

when he is compared to other beings. LaGrandeur theorizes that post humanism leads to trans-humanism, a world which revolves around technology. He says that trans-humanism is :

The project of modifying the human species via *any* kind of emerging science, including genetic engineering, digital technology, and bioengineering. Trans humanists already use implants to modify their body and seek to also modify human longevity, brain power, and senses. The focus is on using prosthetics and other modifications to enhance, rather than compensate for, normal human functions.⁴⁶⁴

Owing to the above, he opines that ‘human exceptionalism is dead’, hence an attack on human uniqueness and human dignity, as Post human studies reveals themes of (dis)embodiment and (im)materiality. Both themes involve “debates in culture, philosophy, and the field of artificial intelligence concerning the material conditions of mind, the functional basis of intelligence and consciousness, and delves specifically into it with question of whether (and if so how) sentience requires embodiment.”⁴⁶⁵

In studying post humanism, authors like N. Katherine Hayles argue that embodiment and materiality are central to the question of the human future. The projections of embodiment is explored in many ways, one of them is in science fiction films like “Transcendence and Her”⁴⁶⁶ and “Ex Machina and Chappie”⁴⁶⁷. In the film, ‘Transcendence and Her’, the artificial mind once created evolves on its own, this is done in the absence of a specific body. Whereas in the film ‘Ex Machina and Chappie’, the material body (mostly robotic) is programmed to develop other artificial minds. These works according to LaGrandeur reveal the discrepancy in cultural perspectives of artificial intelligence. Therefore, it is apparent that there is no consensus of how the post human being would develop, as one is not certain whether it would take place in the mind or body. In another instance, trans-humanity had been defined as “a contemporary life philosophy, a global cultural and intellectual movement that actively promotes interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and evaluating means to selectively

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⁴⁶⁵ See <http://www.deviantart.com/art/Cyborg-348434931>)

⁴⁶⁶ See Johnny Depp. 2014. www.imdb.com/title/tt2209764/

⁴⁶⁷ See Alex Garland (2015), https://www.reddit.com/.../ex_machina_2015_is_everything_the_movie...

enhance the human condition.”⁴⁶⁸. This process involves a step by step transformation of man into a being that is genetically different from Homosapiens. We can interpret this to mean that the post human being would become something that can no longer be defined as human.

The reason for the above statement stems from individual’s ability to expound their values and cultures. As the focus could either be body enhancement or mind enhancement. Both are trending discourses in transgenderism, but transgenderism and its advocates have a lot of issues to consider, as it relates to existentialism. For instance, many of them are conversant with the subjective need to make a choice, yet this choice is accompanied with responsibility which they seem to shrug off, expecting understanding from others. Trying to convince everyone, the he/her/hir is a different person, like Bruce Jenner, now Caitlyn Jenner who has spent a lot of energy to convince his audience that he is a different person, while he was having internal struggle about his identity. Jenner had admitted to the slurs and mockery targeted at him, because while he was portraying himself as a female, he was yet to make the final step to penile (penis) surgery. At this stage, his penis would be converted to a vagina. Here we encounter only a tip of what it will cost humans to transcend their bodies, as Jenner could not declare that he is anything but hermaphroditic. Therefore, there is a need to query the tenability of the argument about human dignity and the thinking about the post-humanist subject.

Consistently, post human theories reflect the ability of individuals to withdraw from conventional practices by creating their own set of value system, like the three Rs, reformulation, reliance and rejection of Gerschick and Miller recommendation that physically challenged persons could redefine their identity using the three Rs. Following from this, it remains to be determined whether it is too much for those contemplating transition, to consider reformulation, reliance and redefinition. The reason for this opinion lies with the speed with which they choose surgery. But again who is to say that they have not explored all their options before making this decision. It is all part of the attempt of post humans to deconstruct the existing structure.

⁴⁶⁸ See Gregory J. Walters (2014), Transhumanism, Post-Humanism, and Human Technological Enhancement : Whither goes Humanitas? *Exitenz*. An international journal in philosophy, religion, politics and the arts. Volume 8, No 2, Fall 2013 ISSN 1932-1066 [.gwalters@ustpaul.ca](mailto:gwalters@ustpaul.ca)

In structuralism the focus is on the language of expression. It purposes to explore the relationship between “words or signs which pre-exist any particular act of speaking and not in terms of the ways individuals put words together to say things”⁴⁶⁹. The aim of this theory is to analyse the unconscious, as it governs human thought, and its influence on human thought process. Especially, how they think about it (thought) in their unconscious state. Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalysis is an example of a theory that examines the workings of the unconscious state. In this theory, Freud proposes that mental illness results from tension created by the individual’s unconscious mind. According to him, mental illness occurs as the mind tries to repress thought of sexuality, a sign that it would not acknowledge the thoughts, or act on them. His assertion is that this results in mind-brain identity thesis, which insists that “the nature of the mind is revealed by knowing the working of the brain”⁴⁷⁰. In this analysis, mind is the immaterial substance, while the brain is the material substance. This conclusion is relevant to our transgender debate as it seems to confirm Freud’s assertions, that sexual repressive thoughts affects people, then; this could also explain gender identity disorder. It also follows that such notions could indeed be hazardous to people. In transgenderism, the tension is found in the restricting line between the two genders male and female. And this could also mean that sexual repression is the problem, and not body presentation as transgender people are claiming. Those individuals who find themselves at the center of this crisis will definitely reject such structural ideas.

Nevertheless, Cuff, E.C., Sharrock, W.W. and Francis, D.W. explains, that “for many and certainly for the enlightenment, the development of science is taken to be the equivalent of development of reason, and the progress of science is seen to provide a truly rational basis for the conduct of social life; with humanity achieving control of its affairs, and enjoying authentic freedom”⁴⁷¹ They posit that the enlightenment reveals the notion that nature and humanity were opposite, since it depicts a struggle between humans and nature, showing that these theories demonstrate the need for man to dominate nature, in order to be well positioned. They opine that the tool man employed for the domination of nature were the natural sciences, for them science enables productivity, by making it possible for one man to

⁴⁶⁹ Cuff , W.W. Sharrock and D.W Francis (2015), .204.

⁴⁷⁰ Cuff , W.W. Sharrock and D.W Francis (2015), 210.

⁴⁷¹ Cuff , W.W. Sharrock and D.W Francis (2015), 194.

dominate another, along with technological know-how, by giving human control over nature. For them, another way to view this development is ‘the many dominate the few’.

Hence, “the development of reason provides people only with the illusion of greater freedom, whilst subjecting them to ever more rigorous and thoroughly disciplined administrative regulation.”⁴⁷² However, men having control over nature seems precarious since neither science nor nature could provide acceptable explanation for all conditions, as revealed in transgenderism like the condition of intersex, it is therefore not surprising that mutations were the result misappropriating science. This may be the reason why people have to decided use their discretion to determine whether they want surgery or not. The implication is that science has indeed become an instrument of reasoning. By instrumental reasoning, they mean that “reason is used simply as an instrument and considered to be a mere means to practical purposes.”⁴⁷³ Since reason was employed to question nature of things and the social order, it became inevitable, that both science and the social sciences needed to be challenged, as they allowed themselves to become tools in the hands of politicians, hence the challenge of the instrumentality of science also known as structuralism leading to the birth of post structuralism.

In this light, post structuralism is the outright rejection of structuralism, as it is skeptical of reason. Accordingly to Cuff and others, the most consistent feature of post structuralism is their approaches to issues, that is a withdrawal from conventional way of thought, gleaned from their inconsistencies and ambiguous themes. They posit that the post structuralists “engage in profound critique of reason with its demand for logic.”⁴⁷⁴ That post structuralists criticize the unruly nature of language, on the basis that language became a tool used for the conducting and organization of our daily affairs. Therefore, language had become an instrument of domination. Consequently, language has the ability to disrupt, subvert and escape any effort to contain it. As portrayed in the struggle between language and social organization, they said “the structuralist account of the system of signs is partial rather than wrong; it emphasizes the extent to which meaning can be imposed and controlled and how it

⁴⁷² Cuff, E.C., et al, 195.

⁴⁷³ *ibid*

⁴⁷⁴ Cuff , W.W. Sharrock and D.W Francis (2015), 239.

is produced through conformity”⁴⁷⁵. Inadvertently, structuralism is the reason why we have to deal with gender crises late in the twenty first century, when it had been confirmed, from our research that these conditions were as old as the human race, otherwise, had these biological conditions being explored, transgendersim may have never been a factor. As we would have settled it concerns and the condition would have been natural. Same reason could be held responsible for why it is difficult for society to accommodate other gender categories, as if it is apparent that they are individuals who were neither male nor female, thus confirming a restriction in our language since we are familiar with only two sides, male/female, boy/girl, and man/woman.

In rejecting strictures that come from imposed meaning, conformity and social manipulations, Michel Foucault’s post structural theory explores openness in sex and sexuality. Foucault’s ideas seemed to be progressive, as he was convinced that structuralism did not capture the reality of history and change. Foucault aimed at the fundamental changes in the nature of thoughts in Western world.

Joan A. Lang and Paul L. Adam claim that sex notions were taught to children as they develop. Hence, the concept is intertwined with theories of nature and nurture, insisting that our sexual attitude is influenced by “customs and practices (that) all historically and culturally variables interact in complex ways with chromosomal, hormonal and anatomic influences.”⁴⁷⁶ Roberts C. Solomon and Linda J. Nicholson explain further on sexuality, focusing on the difficulties of categorizing behaviours that were abnormal as genetic inheritance or biological condition. The curiosity is about how one’s sexual tendency defines the person or how sexual tendency describes behavior. Especially, when sexual orientation is interchanged with/for sexual identities. In sexual orientation the focus is on how an individual wants to express their sexual desire. According to Naomi Zack, sexual behavior includes “the preferred sex of sexual partners, practices of monogamy or polygamy, and styles of sexual behavior.”⁴⁷⁷ It ranges from male to female (heterosexual), male to male or female to female (homosexual)

⁴⁷⁵ Cuff , W.W. Sharrock and D.W Francis (2015), 247.

⁴⁷⁶ Lang, J. A. and Adam, P.L. (1995), Sexual development. *Macmillan Compendium: bioethics, sex, genetics and human reproduction*. Ed Reich , W.T. 1004

⁴⁷⁷ Naomi Zack (1999), Social Identity, *Philosophy: The Big Question: Race, Class, Gender And Sexuality*. Naomi Zack, Laura Shrage, and Crispin Sartwell (Eds), (UK: Blackwell) 4

and male to female or male (bisexual). But in sexual identity, the focus is on “psychological attitudes, and social roles, especially those of masculinity and femininity.”⁴⁷⁸

Consequently, sex and sexuality are notions that feature constantly in transgender debates. The reason is that both ideas are interwoven and interconnected with the explorations of what and who makes a person, therefore, it is not out of place for these issues to be mentioned in our discourse as people tend to change their sexual expression after transition. Thus, showing that sexual orientation can be one motive for transition, like gender identity code can motivate transit, just to align their bodies to their sexual orientation. Yet, a transition that is motivated by the need to aligning one’s body to their sexual orientation is not a good idea. According to Roberts and Nicholson, individuals who are susceptible to these conditions describe themselves as having “a difference preference that should be tolerated within a free and open society”⁴⁷⁹, as post structuralism proposes. The reason for this statement stems from the observation that many societies were not open and free, displaying a negative approach to unusual identities. This view was discussed in chapter five, the work shows that the Isokos were not liberal in their world view on sexuality, they even have deities who guard a person mode of sexual expression, and it frowns at bestiality, incest and adultery.

Still on sexuality, Sharon K. Turnbull observes that sex functions as “allowing procreation providing reassurance of desirability and worth, and forging bonds between individuals ... as special gifts conveying the message of love and affection.”⁴⁸⁰ She explains that sex research and curiosity was part of ancient writings, that these writings reveal the effort of their writers to classify sexual behavior and techniques that increase erotic pleasure, but because it was all approached as sacred its lessons were lost. Viewed like this, post structural approaches allows for more freedom of expression, as more people are able to determine their body, their sexual orientation and sexual identity. People can then identify themselves as straight (male and female) bisexual (male and male/female) and homosexual (same sex). Turnbull explains that ancient writings’ had recommendations on how one could overcome sexual dysfunctions as

⁴⁷⁸ Robert C. Solomon, and Linda J. Nicholson (1995), Sexual identity, Encyclopedia of bioethics, sex, genetics and human reproduction Reich, T.W, p. 1025.

⁴⁷⁹ Robert C. Solomon, and Linda J. Nicholson (1995), 1027.

⁴⁸⁰ Sharon K. Turnbull (1995), Sex therapy and sex Research. *Macmillan Compodium: Bioethics, Sex, Genetics And Human Reproduction*. Thomas Warren Reich (Ed), (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan), p. 996.

sexuality is a vital aspect of human personality, but the recommendations were shrouded in secrecy and myths. Therefore, leading to ignorance as the myths and discomfort about one's sex and sexuality could be gleaned from the "public outcry against the landmark research of Masters and Johnson."⁴⁸¹ William Masters and Virginia Johnson reviewed traditional approach to sex and proposed treatment for various sexual problems, but supposed secrecy did not allow for any form of review and discourse on the subject.

6.3 Transgenderism and Sexual Evolution

Just like Sharon K. Turnbull, Sigmund Freud believes that sexuality is a vital part of human existence, that mental illness results from tension created by the individual's unconscious mind. According to him, mental illness occurs as the mind tries to repress thought of sexuality, a sign that it would not acknowledge the thoughts or act on them, as the social norms may have indicated that it is unacceptable to even think about it. Hence, confirming the delicacy and mysterious nature with which sexual issues and attitude were perceived. This laid the background for his work, *the history of sexuality*, here Michel Foucault examines sexuality and how it had been portrayed in former times. Insisting that discourses about sexuality were repressed as there seemed to be an unwritten agreement for silence in issues of one's sexuality or certain sexual tendencies. He points to "the repressive hypothesis as an explanation of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century western experience of sexuality."⁴⁸² In that era, children were said to have no sex, since they were not allowed to talk about it. He claims that repression was the link between power, knowledge and sexuality. He explains further that:

If sex is repressed that is condemned to prohibition, nonexistence and silence, then the mere fact that one is speaking about it has the appearance of deliberate transgression. A person who holds forth to such in language, places himself to a certain extent outside the reach of power, he upset established law, he somehow anticipate the coming of freedom."⁴⁸³

⁴⁸¹ Sharon K. Turnbull (1995), 997.

⁴⁸² Margaret A. Farley (1995), Sexual Ethics. *Macmillan Compodium: Bioethics, Sex, Genetics And Human Reproduction*. Thomas Warren Reich (Ed), (New York: Simon & Schuster Macmillan), 1020

⁴⁸³ Michel Foucault (1978), *The history of sexuality*. Robert Hurley. Trans (New York: Pantheon books), 6.

Foucault, opines that there is a connection between sex, society and how this sexual repression had been communicated. He explains that the association of sex with sin, and the ensuing silence led to a paradox, as the repression of sexuality eventually led to sexual discourses, making it apparent that the repression was an illusion. He holds that attempts to manage the repression led to changes in the strategy and methodology of sexual discourses, as it became the domain of the medical sciences, that sexual expression took the form of therapeutic treatments and medical terms, instead of employing moral norms, as “the connection, this implied furthermore that sex would derive its meaning and its necessity from medical intervention; it (confession) would be required by the doctrine, necessary for diagnosis and effective by the nature of the cure.”⁴⁸⁴ He claims that these sexual discourses later produced economic benefits and gains, revealing “the regime of power-knowledge-pleasure that sustain the discourse on human sexuality on our part of the world.”⁴⁸⁵ Accordingly, the silence was a closure of language, therefore repressive, hence necessitating the liberation sex, and the consequent revolution, which involves happiness, or a revolution with “a different body, one that is newer and more beautiful; or indeed revolution and pleasure.”⁴⁸⁶ In this way, the eagerness to speak about sex in terms of repression, resulted from the desire to speak against established norms and structures. Therefore, Foucault proposes a new structure and method of presenting and writing the history of ideas. As his notions on differentiated bodies signifies a concern for the state of our current body, suggestive of the body change revolution.

Reviewing Foucault’s work, Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle commend it for creating the foundation for transgendered studies, that he was read by academia who were trying to theorize transgendered studies. For them, Foucault’s theory of subjugated knowledge did not only portray knowledge as repressed, it also reveals that not much study could be carried out in the ensuing silence. The reason is that not much experience had been gathered to enable us cope with the other sexual expressions outside our knowledge. Accordingly, they said “transgender studies exemplify what Michel Foucault once called ‘the insurrection of subjugated knowledge.’ They explain that ‘subjugated knowledge,’ points to the “historical

⁴⁸⁴ Michel Foucault (1978), 9.

⁴⁸⁵ Michel Foucault (1978), 11

⁴⁸⁶ Michel Foucault (1978), 7

contents that have been masked or buried in functional coherences or formal systemizations.”⁴⁸⁷ A proper analysis of this knowledge reveals that it had not only been despised but that it is now required as a scholarly tool in academic discourses in transgendered studies. This means that individuals experiencing incongruence between mind and body, would need to have this kind of knowledge, since it is articulated from different experiences. Here differentiated bodies could range from enhanced, manipulated or reconstructed.

Also commenting on Foucault, Donna Haraway describes his work in bio-politics as part of the cyborg manifesto. The cyborg being that trans-humanoid being, with technologically altered gender. She opines that Michel Foucault’s hypothesis about the closure of language, anticipated the theory of the cyborg. According to her:

The cyborg, is a way to grapple with what it means to be a conscious, embodied, subject in an environment structured by techno-scientific practices that challenge basic and widely shared notions of what it means to be human—practices such as animal-to-human organ transplants and gene splices, cochlear implants, or the seemingly inescapable structuring of the material world by machine-readable codes⁴⁸⁸

Haraway explains that the cyborg could be found in a post-gender world of sex, and sexual embodiment, as found in transgenderism, resurrecting debates about meaning of human being, and being human. She holds that discussions on cyborg explore notions of bodily boundaries and social order, that with the cyborg, survival tends towards the use of tools, to mark the world that marked them as ‘other’ to be the other. Thus, gender identities come into play as individuals exploit the cyborg image. She expresses that the:

Cyborg gender is a local possibility taking a global vengeance. Race, gender, and capital require a cyborg theory of wholes and parts. It means both building and destroying machines, identities, categories, relationships, space stories. Though both are bound in the spiral dance, I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁷ Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (2006), *The transgender studies reader*, Bookfi.org, Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle. (Eds), 12.

⁴⁸⁸ Donna Haraway (2006), *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century* in *The transgender studies reader* Stryker, S. and Whittle, S. (eds.)

⁴⁸⁹ Donna Haraway (2006), *A Cyborg Manifesto*:

In like manner, Jacques Derrida maintains the notion, when he insists that language may not be the solution to our challenges. The reason is that the meaning of things were imposed upon us, hence, this only portrays that meaning is 'closed'. By this position, he means that there is a standard set for meaning and the interpretation of what is to be or had been said and written. He posits that this 'closeness' of language is violent in nature, that "once set free from violence of closure, language will show itself to be wild and unpredictable magnificent in its disorder."⁴⁹⁰ According to Cuff and others, this position constitutes an attack on the Western thought system which employs language as a tool of repression, with its constant reference to myth and thought systems aiming to guide our reasoning. This is because language and meaning give a strait jacket conception of words.

However, this condition of language allows for a new system of thought, that would deviate from the old, which involves thought and language application. The proposal allows the individual to choose a different part, along with new ideas like mind and brain connection, as it happens in transgenderism, with its own special mind and body problem. As its practice and considerations, employ words like Gender Identity Disorder and Gender Dysphoria Syndrome. Again, new distinctions could be made between words like human being, and being human, employing new pronouns, different from his or hers, to 'trans', "hir"⁴⁹¹ and the like. Hir being the pronoun employed to a transgendered or intersex. When viewed from the transgendered debate, it appears that repression could be the likely explanation for the sudden rise of individuals, who claim gender dysphoria, rebelling against an undermined gender. It appears that they have been enduring the condition until others like Christine Jorgensen, Bruce/ Caitlyn Jenner and many others took the bold step to make their concerns public, upon reexamination, as many people have become suspicious of the gender assigned to them at birth. Hence, the new rage of gender neutrality could be blamed on the 'repressive theory'.

6.4 Transgenderism and Notion of Immortality

While Michel Foucault's thesis includes the idea of a different body, one that is newer and more beautiful to deal with the revolution against repression, Donna Haraway opines the cyborg as that body. A clear example of open language, in an open society where people can

⁴⁹⁰ Cuff, E.C., Sharrock, W.W. and Francis, D.W (2015) *Perspectives in Sociology*, 282.

⁴⁹¹ Fearn (2005), *Philosophy: The latest answers to the oldest questions*, (London: Atlantic Books),

do whatever they like, as far as it does not infringe on the right of anyone. This may sound bizarre but the addition of biotechnological enhancement makes it peculiar but inevitable in that more people are becoming a blend of man and machine. LaGrandeur opines that the focus is on how information is processed. It opens our mind to new possibilities as it destroys all conceptions. The idea gives new interpretations and consideration for new words like man and woman. Yet, not everyone is excited about the notion. There are pessimists, skeptics, and conservative people who would not be able to wish it away, just by turning the blind eye. This is because it is in our faces. It stems from Alan Turning, who believes that once a computer can be developed that could respond to our queries or communicate in such a way, that it would be difficult for us to differentiate it from a human, then; the machine would be declared intelligent. Turning envisaged that “at the end of the century the use of words and general educated opinion will have altered so much that one will be able to speak of machines thinking without expecting to be contradicted.”⁴⁹² Commenting on Turning’s view point, Peter Cave explains that

computers can be constructed to think as intelligently as humans, then it is possible that our thinking operates mechanically and that we are part of the physical, causal world. It remains a practical matter about what stuff can realize the algorithms. Silicon chips can do so ; biological brains too- but maybe they do much more in human thinking? After all machine intelligence seems contradictory, for we contrast mechanical behavior with intelligence.⁴⁹³

With all these, and the accompanying breakthroughs, resulting in machines with “human perceptual and motor abilities, and superior reasoning power could replace humans in every essential task.”⁴⁹⁴ This entity appears to be a mixture of human and machines like people going about with microchips inside their bodies, the purpose is wide ranged. Some use it to rectify hormonal imbalance while several others employ them for other health benefits. These chips have no doubt been of immense help to those using them. However, this trend blurs the line between human and machines, yet, this move is suspicious because it appears that even

⁴⁹² Fearn (2005), 38

⁴⁹³ Peter Cave (2005),. Alan Turning. Great thinkers a-z:2500 years of thought that shaped the western world, (New York: MJF Bks) 240-241

⁴⁹⁴ Hans Moravec (1998), The Universal Robot. *Taking Sides: clashing Views in Science and Technology & Society*. Easton, T. E (Ed), (Connecticut, McGraw-Hill), 274.

the language of meaning blurs the line between the two as one is identified as man and the other is identified as 'Man-chine'.

It only goes to show that speculating about the future of post prefixes becomes a daunting task, too many things are happening at the same time. Hence, humans, society and governments seem to have lost control of their creations; they now want to live forever since they have the power of technological enhancement, take for instance the condition of the former Israeli Prime Minister "Ariel Sharon"⁴⁹⁵ who was made to stay in coma for eight years. This happened just because the scientists had the technology know how to do it, so can anyone hazards a guess of what would have happened, had he suddenly snapped awake? Would the mind and body remain the same? Would he be the person of now, yesterday, or tomorrow? There are endless questions here, like Could a mind be in coma for eight years without adverse effect?,

In this same vein, Nick Bostrom re-examines Theseus in the Greek mythology by revisiting the Philosophical paradox about both the old and the new ship, and reviewing the questions of which is the real ship, the one with the old beam or the one with the new beam, and wondering what was the link or connection between the ships, like which is its essential part as changing the beam seems like a form of life elongation, thus the contention about which ship reflected the true essence and purpose of the ship. According to him, man had always being curious as to how they could transcend nature by extending human capabilities, hence the necessity for development. He buttresses this point of development by analysing Darwin's theory of evolution, to determine that Darwin's evolution theory portrays man still in the process of development. He traced the history of this progress to Frederick Nietzsche by explaining that "what Nietzsche had in mind, however, was not technological transformation but a kind of soaring personal growth and cultural refinement in exceptional individuals. People who he thought would have to overcome the life-sapping "slave-morality of Christianity."⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹⁵ [www.http// Theguardian.com](http://Theguardian.com) Accessed 25/08/20218

⁴⁹⁶ Nick Bostrom (2005), *A History Of Transhumanist Thought*, (Oxford. Oxford University), 4.

Nick Bostrom claims that many foundational post human theories, are only predicting a society that is wealthier and abundant with clean energy, societies where genetics is employed to enhance people. He observes that those frowning at the idea of enhancement, believe that such technological interventions were enabling “many unfit individuals to survive, individuals who would in earlier ages have perished—and they worried that this would lead to a deterioration of the human stock”⁴⁹⁷ He further explains the introduction of the eugenic laws shows attempts at preserving and protecting the best species. These ideas proved that there had been concern for the quality of human race, thus, the introduction of the ‘useless eaters’ concept, a theory which frowns at individuals who were not making positive contribution to their society or humanity. It recommends their elimination to debar them from wasting valuable resources. Bostrom holds that this notion led to the introduction of post human ideas, where it was agreed that man could transcend him. Hence, “*transhumanism* will serve: man remaining man, but transcending himself, by realising new possibilities of and for his human nature.”⁴⁹⁸ He agrees with others like Marvin Minsky, Hans Moravec and Ray Kurzweil that humanity would soon get to ‘human-level artificial intelligence’.

This prospect of artificial immortality boomerangs to an immortal mind, as shown in science fiction, exploring the prospects of co-existence between man and machine, shown by many examples in movies like Will Smith’s ‘I robot’, the Mexican soap opera ‘Aurora’, even children cartoon are no exception, cartoons like ‘Ben 10’, ‘Jimmy Neutron’ and ‘Avengers’ are more examples. Yet, whether these stories end ‘happily ever after’ is based on one’s perspective. Nevertheless, the hero or heroine would have to deal with complications, resulting from human intervention in creating his fellow man, with something more than the usual (chips). It is clear that these fictitious films aim to open our mind to the possibility/necessity of having, and operating dual identities, especially, when the hero or heroine lack the ability to perform some task that seem beyond human abilities, they switch personalities. Bostrom, therefore, defines transhumanism like this:

Transhuman is a transitional human, someone who by virtue of their technology usage, cultural values, and lifestyle constitutes an evolutionary link to the coming era of posthumanity... boundless

⁴⁹⁷ Bostrom (2005), 6.

⁴⁹⁸ Bostrom (2005), 7.

expansion, self-transformation, dynamic optimism, intelligent technology, and spontaneous order.⁴⁹⁹

He agrees with James Hughes view that the best posthuman future would be achieved when technology becomes safe, and made available to everyone. But can anyone really control how far technology could go? Our discussion in transgenderism reveals that human are not only interested in determining their body, they are also attempting to elongate life, like Ariel Sharon. It is clear that this is the result of open language, a child of the post prefix, discussing one automatically allows us to speculate about the other. Like the idea of Immortality of the mind, a thought that stems from the notion that the mind could live forever; it focuses not on the soul but on the technological transmission of data from one's mind to a computer. Mind immortality owes it origin to the eventual frustrations of humans with attempts at body-life elongation, it is clear that the body still collapses despite human and technological intervention. Since the body cannot be made to live forever, minds could be preserved or transferred to another body to continue the life of its previous owner, a type of post human.

Furthermore, W. Warren Wagar proposes three possibilities for transhumanity. His prediction involves technological, political and economic awareness and relations. He maintains that this would be the case despite of one's future expectations or the various ideas of 'good'. The reason is that many futurists are not in agreement on what the future would be or should be. Yet, they are insisting that our study of the future should not prevent us from functioning in the present. The claim is that "the study of the future can destroy our power to make choices and to plan and follow courses of plan."⁵⁰⁰ Wagar contradicts this theory by insisting that studies on the future help with information about upcoming event.

He further identified other notions of future influence: the techno liberals, radicals and counter culturist. In techno liberalism, the influence would be felt in technology and in artificial intelligence, while in radicalism, the world citizens would take drastic steps to be self-sufficient. Here, the proposal is focused on people's ability to meet their own needs, like growing their own food and meeting their own services. He predicted that self sufficiency

⁴⁹⁹ Bostrom (2005), 14.

⁵⁰⁰ Warren W. Wagar (1999), *The Three Next Future. Prospects For Tomorrow: Scanning The Future; 20 Eminent Thinkers On The World Of Tomorrow*. Blurmenfeld, Y. (Ed), New York: praeger), 121.

would be a great weapon of this era. He said, it is an age of “counter-culturalist value ... people have learnt to fend for themselves as grown up rather than wards of omnipotent states or cooperation.”⁵⁰¹ Wagar’s work reveals that technology facilitates fast development, that before the philosophers get the wind of an idea or before they would attempt to theorize about it, another event and new development would have overtaken it. It is not like the former era where they would have life span of decades, centuries or ages to turn the idea around; it’s an age of the now!

In this era, the philosopher is not only theorizing but they are also expected to anticipate change, and become agents of change, by speculating the future. For instance, while this work had been querying Jenner for not taking the full step towards organ reconstruction, as this is the final step to transition, he suddenly announces that he had done the penile surgery and this is “his final word.”⁵⁰² This means that he is no longer willing to discuss that aspect of his anatomy. This raises a query about trust, could we take his word as the final answer? The reason for questioning ‘his word’ is that Jenner has been known to be an extrinsically motivated person; he could be doing this just to avoid any more ridicule.

In this light it is believed that as Caitlyn she is “exploiting”⁵⁰³ the condition for gain. Here, it is important to note that many of those who make the same claim like “J. T. Hayers now Terri O’Connell and Mike Penner now Christine Daniels”⁵⁰⁴ proceeded to the final step without prompting from anyone. Despite the fact that they were public figures, they did what they wanted without anyone leading them on. This means that without concrete evidence of this step, our conclusion shall remain the same.

It is easy for us to assume that no matter what the post human person is or would be, it is inevitable that there must exist some part of humanity in this being. According to Nicholas Fearn, the post human person would be a simulated mind and he/she/ ‘hir’ could be compared

⁵⁰¹ Wagar (1999), 125-126

⁵⁰² See [Anka Radakovich \(2017\), www.yourtango.com/.../caitlyn-jenner-penis-gone-sexual-reassignment-surgery-detail](http://www.yourtango.com/.../caitlyn-jenner-penis-gone-sexual-reassignment-surgery-detail)

⁵⁰³ See Buddy Beaverhausen (2015), Djbuddybeaverhausen.blogspot.com/2015/.../my-final-word-on-bruce-caitlin-jenner.htm...

⁵⁰⁴ Debra Rosenberg (2007), *Rethinking Gender*. In *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings*. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (Eds)

to the Theseus ship which changes its damaged body as it sails, just like “Elizabeth Taylor”⁵⁰⁵ the celebrity and cosmetic guru, who improved her looks with cosmetic and technological enhancement, thereby looking thirty years younger than her age. Comparing this individual to the Theseus ship also raises the question of authentic identity, as the subject of identity is viewed from its former present, past, and future. But then, the criteria for authenticity may have changed, consequently, anyone asking the question may be committing the fallacy of begging the question. Accordingly, the post humanists have a guiding manifesto. It holds that

Humanity stands to be profoundly affected by science and technology in the future. We envision the possibility of broadening human potential by overcoming aging, cognitive shortcomings, involuntary suffering, and our confinement to planet Earth. ... (2) We believe that humanity’s potential is still mostly unrealized. There are possible scenarios that lead to wonderful and exceedingly worthwhile enhanced human conditions. (3) We recognize that humanity faces serious risks, especially from the misuse of new technologies.⁵⁰⁶

The manifesto also insists on the need to invest in more research effort. It stresses the need reduce risks and the preservation of life and health, respecting autonomy and individual rights. also, advocating for the well-being of all sentient being like humans, non-human animals, and any future artificial intellects. It emphasizes individual personal choice over how they enable their lives. Therefore, post humanist activities makes it difficult to draw a fine line between silicon and reality. This is expressed in the seventh section of the manifesto which claims to advocate for the well-being of all sentient, both human and non-human animal, though one wonders how none human animals feature in this discussion. Even when non-humans have suddenly become stakeholders in the affairs of man, as apes also have the right to personhood. However, there are several implications for such intent; one of them is the problem of knowledge. According to Fearn Nicholas, when people plug themselves to different silicon, they would be able to “leave behind the inevitable frustrations of life in the natural world and exist free from pain and death.”⁵⁰⁷ He insists that virtual experience would appear to be the real thing. Many would not know the difference, yet they must remain in the virtual world, as they would discover a new challenge of remaining in the human world, this

⁵⁰⁵See <https://elizabethtaylor.com>

⁵⁰⁶ See <http://www.nickbostrom.com> www.

⁵⁰⁷ Fearn (2005), *Philosophy: the latest answers to the oldest questions*, 77.

is just like those kids who are addicted to their game controllers, PS1 and PS11 they usually find the real world boring (as they expect machine performance from others) after hours of fighting some unknown beast in the virtual world. The effects of human's interaction with machines are enormous, it is even clear that human lives improved, yet lack of proper projections, on how to control 'man made' creation may not bode well for humans.

Still exploring the post human era, Nick Bostrom believes in three possibilities for the future of humanity: the possibility of human extinction that is humans declining to create simulated people, or it could be that we are already living in the matrix, this trans-human future that machine intelligence would outstrip its human creators. In this event humans have uploaded their consciousness into digital chips. Bostrom insists that "once we can simulate consciousness, we may then decide to simulate worlds for artificial minds to inhabit, and might even place them within re-creations of human history without them knowing. In such a future, most minds might belong not to flesh and blood creatures like ourselves but to digital individuals living inside artificial worlds."⁵⁰⁸ He holds that in this world, these individuals would be so cushioned that they will not know that anything is amiss since it would become a matter of probability, because these beings may have never set foot in the physical world since they are not aware of a programmer's purpose, they would not have to face the predicament of determinism or the problem of existence.

The world described by Bostrom brings to mind Plato world of forms, as one wonders whether these persons would ever consider the resulting issue of the problem of knowledge as they may never know the real world. Also, this world sounds very much like the kind allowed by social media where people can "switch identity"⁵⁰⁹ at intervals, but of outmost importance is the importance of separating dissociative disorder from the notion alter ego, as both appear to be two distinct type of personality. Even when people were allowed to choose any gender they wish to perform it online. Identity disorder seem to be the reality of the post humanist world. The implication is that, when it involves identity, it is dangerous to make uninformed assumptions.

⁵⁰⁸ Fearn (2005), *Philosophy*: 77

⁵⁰⁹ Judy Wajcman (2004), *Virtual Gender. Women voices feminist visions: classic and contemporary readings.* Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (Eds)

In another view, Susan Griffin portrays a pessimistic view of the rapid development of science when she proclaims that “we will all die.”⁵¹⁰ Death seems inevitable, in that it could either be ‘mind’ death, when mortal mind becomes immortal or body death, when enhancement transforms one body to another, or when technological enhancement led to demise. She said this in her poetic write up on the progress of science where she portrays the scientist as not having control over their creation. In her analogy, she showed a group of scientist performing an experiment, one snapped out of the excitement and wonders aloud at the purpose of their experiment, on hearing this question, the confused scientist was not sure about the purpose of their pursuit, then “it occurs to him that they do not know if they are at rest in an inertia system or if they are moving at a continuous rate of acceleration.”⁵¹¹ This confusion was compounded when these scientists sought for new laws of nature, to enable them interpret the new developments. Griffin explains that the dread of mere humans is the fear that the scientists may not have control over their creation, this distress have been portrayed over and over again in science fiction, emphasizing the idea of mutation, that is, errors resulting from science and biology.

Richard Feynman seems to have the answer to the question about where humanity is heading, by suggesting how generate new laws of nature. According to Feynman, the process of formulating new laws of nature should start with guessing, recording of the result of these guesses comes first, next is comparison of results through observation, to determine if it would work, next to this is drawing conclusions to determine whether it’s right or wrong. According to Feynman, it is easier to determine the wrongness of an experiment, than to claim that it is right. The reason is that most experiments are usually considered to be true, until someone is able to prove them wrong. A typical example is the thesis by John Money about gender being a social construction, based on his work with John/Joan case. Feynman says “it could never be proven right; because tomorrows experiment might succeed in proving wrong what you thought was right. We never are definitely right, we can only be sure we are wrong”⁵¹². Richard Feynman’s position about the uncertainty of science raises doubt in post

⁵¹⁰ Susan Griffin (2005), *Gravity. Twenty questions. An introduction to philosophy.* , Michaels, M.W and Solomon, R.C. Eds. 121

⁵¹¹ Ibid.

⁵¹² Richard Feynman (2005), *Twenty Questions. An Introduction to Philosophy*, Gary L Bowie, Meredith. W. Michaels. and Robert C. Solomon, Michaels, (Eds), (Ohio: Wadsworth Pub), 114.

humanism. This is because the enthusiasms of scientist require caution; they need to consider the implication of being wrong, since they are dealing with humans. The question is, should we take such risks with life? In this wise, we need to pay heed to Leon Kass's advice.

To further analyse the contradictory issues in personal identity, we reconsider the ancient Greek legend, where the ship sailed and the years went by, the beams of the ship would rot and it would be replaced along the way. This happens until all the beams were completely replaced. Consequently, the ship still looked the same, which is, like the original one, commanded by Theseus, yet, it was new in a different sort of way. The relevance of this recollection is its similarity to plastic surgeries and technological enhancement, to which people subject their bodies, aiming to elongate their life, to living forever. For instance, when an eighty year old woman decides to maintain a teenager body by using enhancements, yet lacks the energy and vitality that goes with the look, would this be authentic existence? How dignified is that body? Looking young, yet old at the same time, like "Joan Rivers"⁵¹³ and Elizabeth Taylor, but unlike the ship of theseus, the changed beam did not reduce performance, rather we could assume that the changed beam enhanced the performance of the ship, here lies the difference between man and machine, though, anyone could counter this argument claiming that the idea of dignity is over flogged, since nobody cares about that anymore, as far as they are happy. Even when the trending argument is that the notion of dignity is not strong enough to impede progress of science; nonetheless, science is on a collision course with nature, yes science must progress, but at what risk?.

Speculatively, the challenge and rising issues of a genetically cloned/manipulated generation point to one in constant state of depression and tending towards suicide. If the current statistics is anything to go by, this is a very dysfunctional generation, individuals who are in constant therapy, dissatisfied with status quo.

These approaches seem like the hypothetical end, portraying the far reaching effect, and power of an idea as confirmed from the history of philosophy where speculations and questions abound, to which philosophers delightedly, proffered varied answers producing more theories about the makeup of the substances. The postulations were as diverse as there

⁵¹³Joan Rivers (2014), *Diary of a mad Diva* (Berkeley Books : New York), 113.

were philosophers. But, constancy could be found in the agreement that substances contained either one or two elements. Hence the philosophical notions ranged from monism (one) to dualism (two). Dualism in this period placed mind in a higher pedestal than the body, but with transgenderism and the post human age, there is a contention for which should be higher, as it appears that body is gaining the top position, relegating minds to second place. The divide was between material and immaterial. Nevertheless, materialism is firmly established in that it has spread to all facets of our lives, especially in the theory of gender and sexual identity. Thus, with the exaltation of body over minds, it is therefore not surprising that people are focused on body appearance, rather than mind performance.

Consequently, when we propose certain views, we can never have control of the reach of the idea; we could never foresee all the implications of our theories. According to Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet, “the impact of an idea has a lot to do with where it lands.”⁵¹⁴ They insist that an idea requires a person, who believes in it enough to see it to fruition. This position was buttressed by Mike Okonkwo, when he said “without a vision the people will perish, and without a people the vision will die.”⁵¹⁵ McDowell and Stonestreet claim that every concept requires individuals who believe enough in the idea to pursue it through to the ultimate process of change. This means that ideas have champions, as we see in ideas like communism, connected to Lenin and Stalin, and capitalism, connected to Adam Smith and John Locke.

6.5 Transgenderism and the Theory of Repugnance

The wisdom of *repugnance* is a theory accrued to Leon Kass; it is also known as ‘appeal to disgust, or the ‘yuck factor’. The idea is embedded in the belief that, intuitive and deep-seated negative response to something, an idea, or a practice should be interpreted as evidence of its intrinsic harm or evil to others. Kass employs the term repugnance to explain cloning, and its like practices. He opines that it springs from the hand of the man playing God. He says that “the programmed reproduction of man will, in fact, dehumanize him... Though many view it as exercising control as never before... We cheerfully take our' own beginnings in our hands

⁵¹⁴ Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet (2014), *Same-sex marriage: A thoughtful approach to God’s design for marriage*. (USA: Bakerbooks).

⁵¹⁵ See Mike Okonkwo(2005), www.trem.org

and, like the last man. We blink.”⁵¹⁶ Kass blames the field of bioethics for this complacency. The reason is that it claims to have expertise in moral matters relating to technological intervention, since bioethics was founded by people who understood how the new technology and biology intertwined, touched and merge, and bioethical scientist claim to understand the threat their practice have on “matters of our humanity: bodily integrity, identity and individuality, lineage and kinship, freedom and self-command, eros and aspiration, and the relations and strivings of body and soul, with its capture by analytic philosophy.”⁵¹⁷ He opines that when humanity confronts their technological creation, they should trust the feeling of repulsion that comes to them naturally.

For Leon Kass, repugnance is our last hope, that people should trust their innate and intuitive reaction as wise. He explains that the feeling of disgust was not an argument, rather it reveals that "in crucial cases... repugnance is the emotional expression of deep wisdom, beyond reason's power to fully articulate."⁵¹⁸ associated with the feeling of disgust include are terms like ‘offensive’ ‘grotesqtte’ ‘revolting’ ‘reptignant’ and ‘reptilsive’. Kass insists that revulsion is not an arguement but an emotional expression of deep wisdom, beyond reason's powerfully to articulate it, like the “yuck factor”⁵¹⁹ . Leon Kass’s appeals to the power of the feeling of disgust that comes to mind, as we approach the idea ‘transgenderism’. The reason is that many people claim that they feel nauseated, when they encounter or think about transgenderism, and that the feeling remains when they imagined the changed anatomy, like the surgical closure of vagina or total castration of penis. Take for instance an individual of African (Isoko) origin, travels to the United States. She/he comes back in ten years to claim to be another person. Definitely his/her trouble had just begun, as this person is sure to provoke disgust, repulsion and ostracism. Repugnance, here as elsewhere, reveals the revolts against the excesses of human willfulness. Leon Kass claims that the feeling is warning us not to do unspeakably things. Indeed, in this age where everything is permissible, so long as it is freely done, it is apparent that human nature no longer brings awe, hence it is not surprising that the

⁵¹⁶ Leon Kass (1997), *The New Republic* . *Taking Sides: clashing Views in Science and Technology & Society*. Easton, T. E (Ed) (Connecticut, McGraw-Hill), 17.

⁵¹⁷ Kass (1997), *The New Republic*

⁵¹⁸ Kass (1997),

⁵¹⁹ See <https://www.newscientist.com/.../mg21528731-800-the-yuck-factor-the-surprising-po>. Accessed on 06/15/2018

body has become susceptible to people's will, and emotions. Hence for Kass the good is protected by 'repugnance', a prompt to caution.

Commenting on Leon Kass's idea of repugnance, Leigh Turner opined that it had two flaws. First, she identified the use of 'we' pronoun as misplaced, as there is no uniform 'we' experiencing the shared reaction. Secondly, Turner insists that the repulsion and disgust people feel, may just be wrapped up in ignorance, and biases which require examination. According to her, "reactions of disgust are often built upon prejudices that should be challenged and rebutted rather than regarded as sources of moral insight"⁵²⁰ Hence, she concludes that "we should thus be wary about equating visceral reaction of revulsion, with moral wisdom"⁵²¹. Also Jussi Niemela ridicules 'the yuck factor', when he wonders "what put the yuck in the yuck factor"⁵²² He opines that the 'yuck factor' is a backward and unintellectual attempt to slow technological progress, by appealing to irrational feelings of disgust, he opines that it is a "cognitive violations of folk biology"⁵²³. And that it is an instinctive response, but it does not make anything morally right or wrong, rather it is should be associated with "cognitive violation and rationalization of superstitions."⁵²⁴

Taken in this light, it is apparent that people are ignorant of the biological condition that could lead to discomfort in others, hence enlightenment could make them less judgmental. Nevertheless, we should not be surprised at the view that the feeling of repugnance is not rational, or that it is backward, the reason is that we seem to be people going backward, to living on instinct.

Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet reveal the dramatic shift in the Western value system, in sexual and emotional relationships by observing the shift in cultural understanding of the meaning of freedom, sex and human dignity. According to McDowell and Stonestreet,

⁵²⁰ See Leigh Turner (2014), <http://www.nature.com/nature/biotechnology> Nature publishing group. Accessed on 06/15/2018

⁵²¹ See Leigh Turner (2014), <http://www.nature.com/nature/biotechnology> Nature publishing group. Accessed on 06/15/2018

⁵²² See https://www.researchgate.net/.../41577266_What_Puts_the_'Yuck'_in_the_Yuck_Facto. Accessed on 06/15/2018

⁵²³ See Neumann. A (2010), Folk Biology: The Yuck Factor and the Wisdom of Repugnance. Accessed on 06/15/2018

⁵²⁴ See Neumann. A (2010). Folk Biology: The Yuck Factor and the Wisdom of Repugnance. Accessed on 06/15/2018

Western history depicts the human person, as fundamentally religious and metaphysical creatures, who are bothered about the question of meaning and purpose of life with beliefs about social order. The authors explain that this goal is considered as more fundamental to human identity, than one's physical survival, or one's sexual pleasure, believing that the sexual restraint was appreciated along with thought that people were "weary of sex without rules"⁵²⁵, in this wise they embraced rules that monitored their behaviours, acceptable to the notion freedom with limitations.

In like manner, rules only made sense in a particular worldview, where there is reward and punishment for ones actions, but with "the death of God"⁵²⁶ proclaimed by Fredrick Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, stressing the need for people to freely express their sexual desires, man chose the freedom, to express everything or anything they desire. In Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet opinion, these views had profound effects on humans as they changed human identity, the "ideas that unseated the traditional view of the human person and replaced them with the sexual view."⁵²⁷ In like manner, sexual orientation have become important. Sexual orientation "refers to an individual's preference for emotional-sexual relationships with members of the opposite sex"⁵²⁸. Therefore, people who are attracted to the opposite sex are identified as heterosexuals that is straight. Homosexuals are people with sexual and emotional attraction to other people of same sex and bisexuals are those who are attracted to both. Diana Kandell holds that researches on sexual identity employs "sexual attraction"⁵²⁹ as a criteria of categorisation.

Since the notion about sexual orientation claim that people were born in a certain way, it follows that such people are inclined to certain sexual and emotional relationships. The argument is that because people were born that way, their inclinations must be natural, right and should be acceptable. But experience also reveals that sexual behaviours may not really equal to sexual identity, as it shows that these behaviours could be learned. Diana Kandell

⁵²⁵ Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet (2014), *Same-sex marriage: a thoughtful approach to God's design for marriage*, 70.

⁵²⁶ Joseph Omoregbe (1991), *The history of western philosophy*,.75.

⁵²⁷ Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet (2014), 73.

⁵²⁸ Diana Kendell (2003) *Sociology Of Our Time*, 339.

⁵²⁹ Kandell (2003),339.

strongly believe that any girl who has ever been involved in lesbianism, knows that someone provoked their interest in to that sexual orientation.

The story is told by a woman who describes herself as “a gay woman”⁵³⁰. Wanda Taylor is a biological female, who became a cross-dresser. She presented herself in the role of man, and she (he) had other women as lovers. Intentionally, she married some of them, only to later divorce them. She said that she was a tomboy and had always liked girls. But surprisingly, she was able to change her gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, after experiencing the life changing, religious experience, that resulted in the Christian conversion, born again, the fact is that many people who have had this experience always have the ability to change their lifestyle. Hence, Wanda Taylor is now a straight person.

But, what happened to all the statement about been born that way? Could it be that all these claims were excuses that people proffer, to be allowed to live with what used to be described as baser instincts? Those susceptible to living on baser instinct are in dilemma because on the one hand, they appear to be humans, who crave intelligence and a better, enhanced life. Yet, on the other hand, they are demanding the need, or right to live on instincts, hence taking a step back on the evolution ladder, which could be the result of either, the “clash of civilizations”⁵³¹ or cultural shock.

Diana Kandell’s explains that “technology will continue to have a profound effect on culture”⁵³², that challenges arises when individuals in one culture express a disdain for the beliefs and action of other people in other cultures. Or when they express disdain for other people’s value, and views. Seen “hate speech.”⁵³³ When we consider the connection between technology and humans, we need to think through the advice of Leon Kass, who said that we should trust our felling of repugnance. It is not in doubt that those involved in transgenderism and sex change could glean some reason from this. Especially, as we view the trending issues with Caitlyn Jenner, who seemed to model the transgender person. It is not surprising that many individuals with the condition do not accept him as their role model. The truth is that the proposed post human, who would emerge from these creations, could be perceived by

⁵³⁰ Wanda Jo Taylor (2008), *A gay woman...Ex player...Ex pimp...My deliverance*, (US: Justus2u), p . 44

⁵³¹ Samuel P. Huntington (1996), *The Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Other*.

⁵³² Kandell (2003), 98.

⁵³³ Alexander Brown (2017), What is hate speech Link. Spring .com Accessed on 06/12/2018

many as a monster, that is, a being not easily discerned, one who is a combination of man and machine. Our brains would have a hard time placing them in any box as we definitely have to re-think our notions, deconstructionalism.

However, Jenner's situation takes another twist, because despite all the therapy his anatomy is still very masculine. It is also very shocking to know that all the while he was speaking as a transgendered person "Bruce still has a penis"⁵³⁴. Jenner recently insisted that it was "not that big a deal"⁵³⁵ he has had the penile surgery; the reason for this claim could be traced to the fact that he had become a laughing stock. Let us consider how he would have appeared or may appear (since his claim cannot be ascertained, as a controversial person) to you, if you get to stumble on him in the bathroom. You could imagine a being with big breasts, and a bulging penis. So his boyfriend could play with his breasts, while he could have anal sex with the person. This is disgusting or repugnant you would say, but this is what our society is accommodating in the name of post modernism.

How then do we describe such a being? What would be the features of their identity? Would it be sexual identity, mind identity or body identity? Would anyone care whether this being is a man, a woman or what? It appears that it is all about the celebration of one's erotic desire. As proponents of sexual identity aspire to elevate our baser instinct above our minds. This goal contradicts their acts as they portray our society as one going back to the basis, which is a primitive being, operating based on instinct, having lost the sense of mind power. The "ape"⁵³⁶ in this, case is not only in high heels, the ape could be white skinned, an educated professor, speaking what used to be considered obscenities but now considered as acceptable language. Then we would not be allowed to use the word 'ape' with disdain anymore, as they too will have right.

6.6 Recommendations and Conclusion

This chapter explored the impact of human intervention in the nature of being to determine if hormonal drugs and surgeries could distort the 'default' programming of the body. It explored trans-humanists ideas and the far reaching effect of sexual freedom. It examined the

⁵³⁴ See. Jennifer Finney Boylanm [www.http://rumorfix.com/2016/04/has-caitlyn-jenner-had-surgery-to-remove-penis/](http://rumorfix.com/2016/04/has-caitlyn-jenner-had-surgery-to-remove-penis/). Accessed 2/12/2016.

⁵³⁵ See O'Neil. T. 2018. *Cutting Off Penis*. Pjmedia.com Accessed on 01/05/2018.

⁵³⁶ See Pamela Taylor. (2016). [www.zerohegde](http://www.zerohegde.com/.../Ape%20in%20heels) .com /.../Ape in heels

implication for transgenderism and wondered if and how post humanist theorist and scientist could determine the far reaching effect of their models. The chapter also examined the idea of repugnance which calls for caution in our application of science and innovative technology.

Our study of Transgenderism explored concerns about personal identity, and it revealed critical distinctions between personal identity and sexual identity. The work showed that people now prefer to identify with sexual orientation. As language has expanded (or expanding) to accommodate gender identity, male, female, non-gender or gender neutral. Those acceptable pronouns include him, her or hir and these parameters of identity seem to change constantly, or progressively. It has become apparent that when humans desire more than nature offers, they turn to technology for solution, a progressive or retrogressive step depending on the circumstance, as men seem to have rejected the power of reason. The point here is that, it does not seem progressive to descend from an intelligent and rational being to one led by instinct.

There has never been a time in the history of man, that men knew rest, all generations have the new rages, tendencies not common in their time, hence this generation could not be different. Therefore, instead of been bothered everyman should make attempt to master their circumstances and situations. Again we revisit the idea of self mastery, as people need to apply the pillars of self mastery to their which include self-awareness, one's ability know themselves, who we are, our core values, our goals for life our life's dreams, challenges to those dreams, including our strengths and weaknesses. Also self-compassion, the emphasis here is being kind to you, respecting and accepting yourself. In this way one must recognize that they are humans and they make mistakes, we correct what we can and move on, making do or accepting what we can't change. Hence, self-mastery, that is learning to manage the self, our thoughts, our words and our actions is recommended. In the same way, people who claim genderphobia, gender identity disorder, or gender dysphoria just need to answer these questions to help them in self determination, like who am I? What am I doing? Where am I going? When am I going? And how do I plan to get there? Answers to these questions are essential to living a fulfilled life.

On the contrary, the society and people are willing to explain away these impulses on the guise of biology, but the same society would not accept that thieves, rapists or pedophiles

were born that way, rather suspects have been made to take responsibility for their actions by facing prosecution, of recent “castration”⁵³⁷ had been considered as a deterrent punishment to rapist. How easy then is it that some actions could be explained away, and others cannot? Could the claim that “sexual identity is (had become) human identity”⁵³⁸ be correct. Could same statement explain the reverse of our value systems? Is there an unresolved clash of civilizations?

For many indigenous African societies, the theory of determinism and destiny hold sway, this is why, when they encounter differentiated bodies, the standard approach is to help them find their place in the scheme of things, we see this everyday, as some people even accept disability as fate. The sages have an explanation for this body type and what the person ought to be doing, many of them find fulfillment once they make this discovery, hence, transiting or changing gender is an uncommon solution to life problems. Even an intersexed person could find their purpose. They could have relationships and they too could adopt other people’s children. In this wise, they have defeated the jailer who could not be found, so instead of being a liability, finding every excuse to become bitter and complain, the recommendation of the three Rs is significant here, people should redefine their life along with their abilities. Even when everyone is changing, this discovery helps a person to remain stable.

According to McDowell and Stonestreet, what we are experiencing results from the change in cultural perception and people’s attitude towards notions that used to be sacred, as yesterday’s impossibility now looks like tomorrow’s inevitability. This point was buttressed when American Psychology Association altered its former claim that homosexuality is a mental disorder and a sexual aberration.

The current release on these conditions reveals that these statements have been reversed as the association has expunged the term ‘mental disorder’ from its definition of homosexuality. For McDowell and Stonestreet, this shows that Western civilization had gone through a top to bottom regression. It portrays that people are “fundamentally sexual creatures, not

⁵³⁷ See Lucinda Dordley (2018), Women’s league calls for castration to deter child rape. <http://www.capetownetc.com>.

⁵³⁸ Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet (2014), Same-sex marriage: 68

metaphysical one's... sexuality is who we are"⁵³⁹, these individuals were expected to be loyal to sexual autonomy, while their religious belief is relegated to personal and private, and their sexual life has become a public affair.

Consequently, proponents of post modernism and other 'post' prefixes must take some pleasure in the state of things, as this is what they advocated in the 'release of language'. This statement explains why they were hung up on the re-examination of language terms, like the distinction between sex and gender, as personal identity discourses must include sexual identity. This explains why we find people insisting that they have crises between their mental sex and body sex, in which case, people can then exercise their right to freedom, including freedom from regulated sex, one would not be surprised if they begin to consider pedophilic inclination as natural tendency. This controversy is at its height, despite the release of language, people still believe that they are not mentally free, rather the passion for 'freedom' allowed humanity to perform repulsive acts, in the guise of being free. It shows that humanity had regressed or is regressing back to the Hobbesian state of nature.

However, this top-to-bottom regression has far a reaching implication for the developing worlds, like in many African societies, where silence is still celebrated, people are humiliated, treated with disdain and everyone expects them to take it. Especially women, in many cases of domestic violence, husbands beat their wives, some abuse them mentally, emotionally and physically, yet everyone expects the women to take silently and manage the situation, they celebrate her sacrifice until she breaks down mentally. Therefore, silence is very harmful for anyone, as it affects their mental health. Some people keep many harmful pressure inside them, that all they do is transfer aggression, to innocent bystanders. Hence, instead of celebrating silence, the government should setup agencies that can help people heal, a place where people can get professional counseling free of charge. As the negative silence does not bode well for social development, it is destroying people's mental health, it starts with the family and boomerangs into social interactions.

⁵³⁹ Sean McDowell and John Stonestreet (2014), 69.

In these indigenous societies sex is viewed and perceived through silence, especially abominable sexual crimes, such as rape, or when blood relations become intimate with each other, the victim is intimidated into silence while they suffer the emotional trauma.

However, with the emergence of technology and social media, it is apparent that those agents of silence cannot control language, as they are fast losing their grip. Thus, maintaining the silence is a difficult task, in which case, silence is controversial, because even when people are not allowed to discuss issues concerning sex, their silence is a very loud and bold statement of astonishments, like Ludwig Wittgenstein states that “of what we cannot speak we must be silent.”⁵⁴⁰ The onus then lies with philosophers to explain the silence. Though, it is generally said that silence speaks louder than words. Daniel Kolak, suggests “that the philosopher must necessarily confine philosophical discourses to the realm of sense,”⁵⁴¹ that the treatment of silence is meant to make sense of language and symbols. This explains Wittgenstein’s effort to demonstrate the necessary condition that makes language possible, and to which symbolism must conform, as one cannot say something while remaining silent. Kolak portrays Wittgenstein’s silence, as deceptive when we attempt to deliberate on difficult issues, and “to pretend that it does not exist, is un-philosophical.”⁵⁴² Thus we wonder if there is anything that cannot be discussed. Or put differently, is there anything that cannot be said? Could silence have a voice of its own? After all the popular belief is that ‘silence means consent’, could our deliberate attempt to ignore trending issues mean that we are consenting to them?

The implication of this new meaning of silence for developing countries cannot be overemphasized. Take for example, the Nigerian saying, “sidon look.”⁵⁴³ ‘Sidon look’ is the political term for silence; it means that we should be silent and watch how the events would play themselves out. Many Nigerians adopt this attitude in controversial debates, when they feel helpless. Their silence makes loud noises as they allow the event to completely unfold, revealing its advantages and disadvantage, they boldly depict notion of the social schema ‘hindsight bias’ which assumes that we knew the outcome of an event, before it took place.

⁵⁴⁰ Kolak (1998), Wittgenstein’s Tractatus. Statement 7. 49.

⁵⁴¹ Kolak (1998),

⁵⁴² Kolak (1998), p. xviii-xix.

⁵⁴³ See [therecorderng.com/days of sidon look](http://therecorderng.com/days-of-sidon-look). ... 2014

Only then, will they lend their voices to the unfolding event. However, history has shown that when we adopt this approach to life issues, we end up living in regret as things get out of hand since we do not have control over the result.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that this generation has no place for sacred cow; this means that there is no topic that cannot be brought to the table for discussion. Hence, parents, guardians and counselors would do themselves a world of good by attending to these matters. Again, one is compelled to make a distinction between the Western approach, and the African approach to addressing issues about sex. This distinction shows that we cannot always lump everyone together. As there are indigenous African societies where the notions of sex are revered. Therefore, ignorance or the silence still prevail in the subjects. Many people in these societies still believe that only women have control over fertility, believing that she determines the biological sex of the foetus. They also believe that she has more control over sexuality and fidelity.

This ignorance could be blamed on sex education; the reason is that teaching sex education in secondary schools is a new concept. Here sex education could be traced to the last ten years, when the government made it mandatory for schools to add it to their curriculum. Even at this, the policy may be difficult to implement in all areas of the country, like the North. What this means is that issues about sex cannot be openly discussed in these societies. If this has been the case, how then, would one dare to introduce an idea like transgenderism?

To resolve the crises of meaning, Julia Wood suggests that each generation create its own definition of words, like femininity and masculinity, that individuals have to “redraw”⁵⁴⁴ and redefine cultural images of man and woman. The result is that when one version of personhood is pitted against another, the defining factors would have to hinge on the attributes ascribed to the genders. She holds the same opinion with Margaret Whetherell who proposes a flexibility of the genders, and Sandra Bam, proposal about expanding the genders.

Julia Wood advises that “your generation has the opportunity to lead us away from

⁵⁴⁴ Julia T. Wood (1994), *Gendered lives: communication, gender and culture*. 306.

oppositional images and embrace a flexible perspective that recognizes as vital the substantial variability within each gender.”⁵⁴⁵ This statement clearly refers to a generation of people who will approach issues like transgenderism with open mind, especially, when they recognize that there are differences in biology that goes beyond sex and gender. In her opinion, the move inevitably involves a cultural change. The reason is that issues involving gender and communications do not only interact, they are also interwoven. A generational challenge liken to the concept of the “melting pot”⁵⁴⁶, the notion ‘melting pot’ portrays individuals with different ideas, meeting to create a new one, in this case they erase their differences for a new one.

The melting pot is a theory that defines the American society, where its leadership and people have been able to manage cultural diversity and ethnic multiplicity, to create the American ideal, unlike Nigeria still grappling with its diversity. The country is yet to properly address the multicultural nature of its citizens. Again, melting pot describes a “society composed of many different cultures: a place where people of different ethnic groups are brought together and can assimilate, especially a country that takes immigrants from many different ethnic backgrounds”⁵⁴⁷. But while we attempt to assimilate this, Wood posits that it is “time to abandon the melting pot metaphor and inaugurate a new one, that acclaims differences as valuable and desirable. One that remakes the cultural ideal to incorporate all citizens instead of trying to remake diverse citizens to fit a single, non-inclusive ideal”⁵⁴⁸. The pursuit is to recognize common ideals without erasing the real and valuable differences in people. Hence, philosophers and thinkers need to discuss these concerns about the need to expand the gender and how it impacts on our cultural approach to notions like transgendersim and sex change notions.

A gruesome situation occurred recently when a family displayed their child’s genitals to the public, soliciting for alms. The intersexed child was carried on the arm, as they moved from one place to another, to whip up emotions. Suspiciously, it was not clear what they planned to

⁵⁴⁵ Wood (1994), 306

⁵⁴⁶ Wood (1994), 308

⁵⁴⁷ Melting Pot. Microsoft® Encarta® 2009 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2008.

⁵⁴⁸ Wood (1994), p. 309.

do about the situation, however, being Africans it is almost certain that it would be explained off, as a supernatural occurrence, since they don't know better. Especially when some people would carry perfectly healthy children to beg for alms as commanded by their deities, why not this one?

Still on the implication of new ideas for developing world, the global financial crunch saw many Africans in diaspora, return home to seek new opportunities. They arrive with new ideals and values. Therefore, their new approach to issues would be revealed, as they clinch high paying jobs, making them significant actors in their sectors. The implication is that they could implement many of their foreign ideas with open mindedness and their opinion would matter, as they are armed with technology and backed by the social media. They were bound to make significant changes in social culture. Twenty four hours television, broadcasting foreign ideas has opened the door for uncensored and unrestricted flow of information, hence only constant philosophical debates would help people make informed decisions to ensure that change happens, even when it is a gradual process. Also philosophical debates like this would encourage individuals to critically examine issues and determine the values they aim to live by. Thus, fostering open mindedness where tolerance is proclaimed as the ideal. Otherwise, portraying men and women as people who are the result of a random process in a chaotic world definitely leads to meaninglessness and despair in a person, instead, setting value and boundaries creates a sense of purpose. This does not mean that we are ignorant of biological mutations, or that those mutations, can be uncomfortable, it just means that we develop an open approach in dealing with issues that concern other humans.

Deducing from the above, it is apparent that nature offers more than two sexes, this is clear from many biological conditions, it is also apparent that the gender categories did not sufficiently represent all the gender expression. As Anne Fausto Starlyn states categorically that “our current notions of masculinity and femininity are culturally conceit.”⁵⁴⁹ This claim necessitates re-conceptualised sex and gender categories, by allowing more gender categories.

⁵⁴⁹ Anne Fausto- Starlyn (2000), Two sexes are not enough. *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings* . Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (eds) 140

This recommendation allows for a new way of managing other condition as any other approach may cause “serious harm.”⁵⁵⁰ Many scholars are beginning to review their stance on gender as gender is constantly being created and recreated, in human interactions and social life, as everyone does gender naturally. For Judith Lober we ‘do gender’ without even thinking about it because it has being ingrained in us. Therefore she concludes that “not biology but culture becomes destiny”⁵⁵¹. Cultural and environmental influence can not be ignored, as they compel people to act in a certain way.

In the same vein, Judy Wajcman emphasized the need for a new construction of meaning by explaining how the internet has transformed the gender roles and altered the relationship between “body/self and machines”⁵⁵² The explanation results from the fact that body cues are removed from internet communications, thereby, making gender communication on the internet difficult or even irrelevant for judgments on sex, race, voice or appearance. She observes that in internet communications focus is on textual/tonal exchange making it possible for people to escape their biological bodies. Again, this means that ‘doing gender’ has become a very complicated process, while people enforce their right to choice, they are not ready to take the accompanied responsibilities for their action so, do we really need the gender? Could we do like the isokos and many African countries who have a code of how genders ought to perform? Should the humanity of a person not be more important than gender performance.

Furthermore, the western media make matters worse, as they are to be held responsible for everything that makes a person feel bad about his/her bodies. One reason for this accusation is their constant portrayal of the slim body type as the acceptable type, making people with differentiated bodies feel like the ‘other’. Courtney. E. Martins explain that big (fat) sided people feel traumatified and they experience internal struggle because of their body image. She holds that many obese people desperately want a slim body and that this type of

⁵⁵⁰ Fausto- Starlyn (2000), p.142.

⁵⁵¹ Judith Lober, (1994). The social construction of gender. *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings*. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (eds) 144.

⁵⁵² Judy Wajcman (2004), Virtual gender. *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings* . Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (eds)

desperation could be the explanation for unnecessary surgical enhancements which enable people to do things like “leg stretching”;⁵⁵³ a process which involves breaking the bones and resetting them. Others request for “designer vaginas”;⁵⁵⁴ a surgical procedure that allows surgery on vaginal lips. Lisa Miya-Jervis confirms this when she explains that she was perceived as having an inappropriate “nose”⁵⁵⁵. And she kept getting prompts from people to do nose surgery (job). Also social media does not make it any better, as it portray people in happy state, hence, a depressed person may not understand that it is just a façade, they could also see it as being left behind, even when many of these acts portray meaningless living, revealing people with no goal in life but living for the self and pleasure.

One likely result of meaningless living is depression; this feeling becomes inevitable when a person believes that their life is empty. Especially, when they perceive that other people are having fun, and they are not. This is the impression that social media creates for an unmatured mind, which result in despair.

Unprofessional application of hormonal drugs and hard substances has become common place in our societies; this attitude has a lot of consequences for our mental health and bodies. Especially when these substances begin to conflict with our body’s normal function. For instance, many women experience a history with hormones from puberty, to ovulation, to her menstrual circle, to pregnancy, then antenatal and post natal hormones, and, finally menopause. The point here is that, these natural circumstances have consequences for the bodies, as they affect a person’s mental wellbeing. More so, when tampered with through hormonal applications, purporting to do things like change the sex of the body must definitely have side effect. It is apparent that people need to understand how these stages influence their well being, instead of seeking drugs to make them happy.

Lack of understanding of the natural process of hormones could be blamed on depression and this may likely explain the increase in reports of shootout in many American schools and violent behavior of many young people, this shows that Africans should not be in a hurry to

⁵⁵³ Grace Jonothan Watts (2004), China cosmetic surgery. *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings* . Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (eds)

⁵⁵⁴ Simone wad-Davis (2002), Designer Vagina. . *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings*. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (eds)

⁵⁵⁵ Miya-jervis, L. (1998). Hold that nose. . *Women Voices Feminist Visions: Classic And Contemporary Readings*. Susan Shaw and Janet Lee (eds)

abandon their value system. The reason for this position is associated with the belief that the openness of language must be managed with information, caution and experience the additional attributes of openness in language have side effects, as there is an apparent gap between the observable development between Africa and the other continents. But for many Africans, rather than feeling backward and left out, they should study history as it would make them better off, they would also learn their lesson to enable them minimize errors of application.

Finally, the solution lies with self-ownership. This means that each person should look into themselves to discover the thing that makes them unique and different from others. I strongly believe that every human being is gifted with unique talent, which once discovered, would enable them add value to humanity and sustain their lives. When a person is able to discover their purpose, they would realise that it has little to do with how the body looks, a life dedicated to the pursuit of purpose will soon find fulfillment, aside the body.

Nonetheless, those who insist on going for surgeries have the right to decide what happens in their lives, as its right to do, the body belongs them. But they will soon realize that a life hung up on the self does not bring fulfillment. Hence to find fulfillment and joy, people should move beyond self, develop their minds and focus on humanity.

Therefore more attention ought to be paid to mind building, mindset, mind performance, and mind possibilities and mind abilities. As these skills, along with developing proper attitudes, becomes very important for relationships and associations. Since no man is an island, those who desire friends, ought to develop a friendly attitude. Similarly, when nature throws unexpected things at us, with the right attitude we would take it in strides. Like we commonly hear that, we should make lemonade out of life's lemons. With this mindset, we are taking ownership of situations and taking responsibility for our actions by driving ourselves to the best possible height, instead of expecting too much from others.

Therefore, this work recommends that each person to discover their personal essence and take ownership of the self. The reason for this conclusion is not farfetched. As more and more people attempt to make sense of their lives, it appears that extremism, mergers and individualism have failed to bring them fulfillment. They keep seeking for more and more

ways to find a balance, which they may not attain as they live behind that essential part of their being that connects them to their creator. This neglect creates a void which could remain as they disparage the benefits of religion. One of which is its ability to guide its adherent on how to find peace and balance. Many people have found that the control gives them purpose and many more people have found satisfaction in religion, despite being under enormous psychological pressure. Its meditations and prayers provide psychological therapy, as just the act of airing one's challenges to another entity seen or unseen, results in relief. Being a member of a particular religion could also give a person identity and resolve other personal crises.

Also, the work recommends that anyone who is interested in parenting children ought to know that there are attached responsibilities, otherwise it is not worth the effort. As all stages of child development is important, yet owing from this work, it is apparent that puberty requires hands-on parenting, by guiding the young, to help them discover themselves. These recommendations, along with those others highlighted in the work is vital to children's mental health. Especially, the need for parent to bring up children in line with their special traits, a less focus should be placed on gender lines.

Still recommending, the society, herein referred to as the social agents, have to be more accommodating to people who do not fit their boxes, as genderphobia stems from the gender codes and guidelines, the reason is that, we should approach people who threaten the gender lines, with more care and understanding, knowing that many have been under censor and mental pressure, therefore, It is clear that God, family and society are cardinal for individual confidence and identity as love conquers all. And, the onus lies with government to help people heal, such as those with abnormal chromosomal makeup, and those other conditions, there should be agencies and organisations that help people with free counseling, aiming to create acceptance by laying less emphasis on things that divide, but more emphasis on things that heal. There ought to be more Agencies investigating each person's condition and helping them resolve the crisis. Finally, philosophers need to study these concerns by helping to create awareness for why people act in certain ways, they should also help in studying ancient societies and learn how they approached people with differentiated bodies.

This work's contribution to knowledge seeks to pave the way for a new conceptualisation of gender categories. It offers new ways of understanding, analysing and reviewing transgenderism. The research seeks to fill the vacuum created by the lack of the study of the issues of Transgenderism from the ontological and agency perspective. It seeks to create an understanding of transgenderism philosophically, psychologically, socially and medically.

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