

Transgender Identity and Family Life in Africa

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Abstract

The idea of transgender identity is less perceived as a mental illness but as a sexual health condition in many parts of the Western world, while it is seen as an anomaly in most parts of Africa. Transgender identity is a gender expression that differs from the naturally assigned sex. The widely accepted reason behind transgender is unsatisfactory feelings toward assigned sex by the individual. This work sets out to explore transgender identity and family life in Africa. Several works have explored the concept but with less emphasis on family life as it relates to the African setting. Furthermore, this work sets out to demonstrate some implications of transgender identity in an ideal African family. In this work, we shall argue that once transgender identity is normalized in Africa, it will be a threat to family life. The arguments to be used are historical, analytical, descriptive as well as evaluative.

Keywords: Transgender, Family, Identity, Gender, Africa.

Introduction

We have binary genders apart from hermaphrodites, which are usually the result of genetic abnormality. Socio-culturally, the male and female genders have their assigned roles stemming from the family. With the growth of civilization and liberalism, there came a new turn in genders, which is not about an introduction of a new gender but the transition to genders of choice and feelings like the transgender identity. Transgender identity, as the name suggests, is a 'transited

gender'. It is a gender expression that differs from the naturally assigned sex of an individual (HINES, 2007, 1). The widely accepted reason behind transgender is the unsatisfactory feeling toward a naturally assigned sex by an individual. Transgender identity could be trans male or female whether involving a Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) or not.

Transgender identity cannot be dissociated from family. Family, the foundational unit of a society, is the first port of call when the issues of gender, sex, and transgender are discussed. Though transgender experience is more predominant in the Western world, it is also global. This understanding underscores the need to investigate and evaluate how it affects family life, especially in Africa. Africa practices both nuclear and extended family systems and this paper argues that transgender identity is a threat to family life when it becomes normalized in Africa.

Although other scholars have probed the issues of gender and even transgender, the relevance of the present research consists not only in investigating the implications of normalizing transgender, but specifically, on African family life. Doing this will contribute original ideas to the existing literature on gender studies from an African cultural perspective.

The research methods to be used include historical, analytical, descriptive as well as evaluative. Historically, we shall trace how transgender developed over time. This paper shall further analyze the concept and describe the nature of family life in Africa as well as its connection with the concept of transgender. More so, it shall ascertain the weaknesses and strengths if any, as regards transgender identity, and take a position. With these in mind, we shall argue that transgender identity is circumspect and does not appear to uphold African values which manifest themselves in family life. On the basis of the preceding, we shall conclude that if the transgender wave is not curtailed, its presence might harm the local African lifeworld due to its incompatibility with family life in Africa. Finally, this paper will anticipate and respond to some objections to our proposal.

In the first section, the paper will dissect the concept of Transgender Identity from various scholars. It will also explain the developmental stages concerning the meaning of the concept. In the second section, the paper will give a brief history of Transgender Identity. It will go further to summarize Transgender Identity in phases. In the third section, the paper will elucidate the modes and processes of transgenering. In the fourth section, the paper will demonstrate the nature of family life in Africa as well as interrogate Transgender Identity in relation to family life in Africa. Finally, in the last section, the paper will make contributions on coping with Transgender Identity and family in Africa and then the conclusion.

Conceptualizing Transgender Identity

'Transgender' can easily be mistaken on a periphery as a 'transited gender' or changed gender. This conception was the earliest perception it had at a time until the revolutionizing of the concept to accommodate more, making it an umbrella word. As an umbrella word, it includes transsexuals and transvestites. In line with

the idea of Virginia Prince, a transgenderist, transgender is the condition or identity established when one feels an overwhelming need to dress in the clothes of the opposite gender or change sex completely. When one talks about transgender, bi-concepts come to mind such as 'trans' and 'gender'. While trans as it relates to the topic at hand means 'transformation', 'crossing', and 'eventually going beyond or through', gender can be seen as a system of social differentiation and placement. It is also an important part of an individual's identity (EKINS AND KING, 2006, 16 and 33). Bringing the two together, transgender is a transformation, crossing or going beyond or through that system of social differentiation and placements. This definition does not capture in its entirety the intricacies of transgender as that which accommodates part or full-time cross-dressers. This is because, in cross-dressing, there is no fundamental change but an expressive and dispositional change. Secondly, the word as a composite of two strands of meaning becomes explicit if it accommodates cross-dressers of no Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) as well as all identities or practices that crossover, cut across, move between, or otherwise queer socially constructed sex/gender boundaries (ROEN, 2006, 658). In modern times, transgender includes the Transvestite (TV), i.e. the cross-dressers, and the Transsexual (TS), which involves those who undergo surgery, hormonal injections as well as pills to suppress the naturally assigned sex, and improve on the newly acquired sex. Transgender involving transsexuals makes it a medical, and psychiatric concept.

Social identity becomes transgenderal if it is concerned with the entire community or collective of those who change their gender either temporarily or permanently (HILL, 1997, 2). Vanessa Sheridan extends the boundaries of transgender identity as not just about the transvestites and transsexuals but the androgyny individuals, intersex persons as well as drag kings and queens. It covers that not covered by the culturally-rooted binary gender of man and woman. It is about all manifestations of blurring or crossing gender barriers. As a struggle, it is an expression whereby one establishes a platform of being seen and understood in a way that is different from sex at birth (2009, 1 and 2). Though an umbrella term, it is not the same as cisgender or having a traditional gender presentation (LEVITT & IPPOLITO, 2014, 1728). According to Andrew N. Sharpe, transgender is not just a viable option between transvestite and transsexual, but a term that covers a range of trans-subjectivities, including transsexuals in need or has undergone sex reassignment surgery, those seeking other surgical procedures and/or hormonal treatments, and those whose permanent or temporary gender crossings are unaccompanied by medical intervention (2002, 1).

The last explanation of transgender identity saw it as a middle course between Transvestites (TV) and Transsexual (TS) which differs from its understanding as an umbrella term for the two and similar others. It then poses the word as a problematic term to explain. However, it is more of a broader term than a narrower term. Transgender identity is more of a status than a role. It is neither cultural nor sociological in itself, instead, it is more psychological because it stems from an individual's acclaimed feelings, choices, and decisions. There are varieties

of explanations for transgender, but one crucial thing is that whether it involves surgery or not, there is always an inner feeling of dissatisfaction with the status quo as well as a feeling that is suppressed, which the encased victim insists on overcoming by such manifestations. The transgender identity goes beyond the culturally and socially approved binary gender (male and female), its terminology and meaning are evolutionary, hence the necessity of the historical knowledge of the development of the term as both a concept, an identity, and a lifestyle.

Brief History of Transgender Identity

Transgender as a terminology got its coinage from Virginia Prince in the 20th century in her article called 'The Transvestia' around 1969 (EKINS & KING, 2006, 13) and 1976 (HILL, 1997,1). As a terminology, it is less than 50 years old. In 'The Transvestia', the author calls herself a transgenderal. She meant it not as an umbrella term at that time but as a source of identification for people like her who are either transsexual, transvestites, or transgenderist. Around the same time, transgenderal as properly coined by Virginia Prince got an alternative meaning as an umbrella term recognizing the existence of transsexuals and transvestites. In 1979, Clare Raynor in an interview of Male Trans Female (MTF), Female Trans Male (FTM), and one part-time male Transvestite (TV) included all as transgenderists (EKINS & KING, 2006, 13 and 14). Between the 80s and 90s of the same 20th century, Stuart according to Richard Ekins and Dave King, preferred transgender to transgenderal and transgenderist since gender conditions are entirely different from both sexual conditions and sexual preferences though interconnected (2006, 14). At this time, it is not widely known and accepted. Furthermore, in the 90s, there was a nomenclature replacement where transgender substituted transsexual and so the concept kept developing in thought and meaning till what we have today.

In summary, transgender identity, according to Ekins and King, has four phases. Phase one (1) is using the word, 'Transgenderist' by Virginia Prince to identify herself and her likes (though males are elected to live full-time as women while retaining their male genitalia). Then in phase two (2), transgenderist became an umbrella term for Transsexual and Transvestites and a full range of transgender persons making up a community. Phase three (3) is the transgressive stage of going beyond the binary divide (restriction to male and female as the only gender), and many transgender activists adopted this into the 21st century. The last phase is the sociological understanding of transgender (EKINS AND KING, 2006, 16), which following a series of research and observation of transgender persons and their medical team, inspired sociologists to construct the meaning of transgender as a generic social process within which the various and changing categorization of transgender phenomena arise and within which contestation takes place. It is in transgendering that transgender identities emerge, are contested, ebbed, and flow. One can infer that transgender is of diversity, an outlaw, transgression, and stems from natural attitude as well as the alteration of gender signifier in some way (EKINS AND KING, 2006, 33 and 37). The development of transgender identity over time has made it both a personal and social identity (HILL, 1997, 2) and as a psychological status, it has clear involvements, which we shall discuss as its modes and processes.

Modes of Transgendering

Ekins and King (2006, 34), argue that transgendering individuals transgender between and within these modes following the classification of binary gender, and it includes:

- **Crossing the divide permanently:** This is a situation where the person transits to a different gender completely. Oftentimes, it is usually possible through Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS).
- **Crossing the divide temporarily:** This mode involves the individual using reversible means of transgendering. For instance, use of pills and hormones to boost the features of desired gender. The individual can as well discontinue usage when needed and return to the original gender gradually.
- **Seeking to eliminate the divide:** In principle, the individual decides not to identify with either of the binary genders (male and female). It is more of a psychological disposition which might or not lead to eventual radical transgendering.
- **Seeking to go beyond the divide (radical transgendering):** This is also a psychological disposition that forms a point of initiation into the journey of radical transgendering from a pre-existing gender to a new one of desire. At this stage, the individual makes necessary inquiries and practical efforts towards changing to a desired gender.

Processes of Transgendering

In 'Transgender Phenomenon'(EKINS AND KING, 2006, 37-38), there are 5 (five) sub-processes of transgender which include:

- ❖ **Erasing:** Here, the unwanted body parts are eliminated. For instance, castration for males and hysterectomy for females while the concerned individuals put on unisex clothes and ungendered mannerisms.
- ❖ **Substituting:** At this stage, the person with or without aid, replaces body parts and former gender attitudes with those of the intended gender. For instance, the male genital replaces the female genital and vice versa, flat chest with breasts/boobs. The degree of efficacy and success of these depends on the finance and project of the individual, healthcare, and technology availability.
- ❖ **Concealing:** At this stage, the characteristics and body parts that conflict with the intended gender are concealed. For instance, wrapping a scarf around Adam's apple, tucking the male genital (penis), and binding the breast. The level of this is dependent on visible biological characteristics. It can also involve concealing biography like birth and marriage certificates that are gender-based.
- ❖ **Implying:** They can or do wear clothes that indicate the intended gender like wearing foams inside a bra, hip pads inside a panty girdle, placement of an object by females to imply male genitals, and so on.
- ❖ **Redefining:** This stage is more psychological. At this level, the nature of the body and its parts, as well as accompaniments, are redefined. Male Trans Female (MTF) sees beards as facial hair. The Male Transvestite (MTV) sees the T-shirt and Jeans as female clothes because he buys them

from a feminine boutique and vice versa. It is about the self, body parts, and characteristics as well as gender associates taking on new meanings within the redefined system of classification.

Examining the rigorous nature of transgenering, one may ask, is it worth it? The amount of suppression and conflict from within and outside is worth it for the concerned persons. Furthermore, the level of liberalism, especially in the West, renders it no more a strange thing. At the level of the individual, decision making and choice, transgenering is a source of happiness, but at a broader level of both morality and interpersonal relationship sustenance, of which family is no exception, it is a matter of discourse and much more in Africa where the family is of utmost importance.

Fundamentally, the family is of two types: the nuclear and the extended. The Western world places priority on nuclear over the extended family system but this is not the case in Africa. The family is a state and society's smallest and most fundamental unit. Once the family is under threat, society, by extension, is also under threat. It is in line with this thought that this paper intends to see how transgender is connected to family and its implications. Before going into this section, a good understanding of family in Africa will usher in a better platform for such argumentation.

The Nature of Family Life in Africa

Family life is universal and is arguably the cornerstone of every human society across all times. A family is a social group characterized by economic cooperation, common residence, and production whereby, at least two adults of both sexes maintain a socially approved sexual relationship with one or more children, owned or adopted by the sexually cohabiting adults (IGANUS and HARUNA, 2017,1). An examination of this definition reveals an important aspect: a family cannot be said to be complete if there is no offspring. Spouses without offspring yet can better be referred to as 'couple' or 'husband and wife' but family entails offspring from and for both sexes. Both sexes are pivotal for sexual cohabitation and procreation. Though gay couples can decide to adopt children, yet family in Africa upholds both sexes and not same-sex, promoted and sustained by values.

One of the family values is political values, and one significant thing is that the political hierarchy in the traditional society of Africa begins with the family, then to the village and town with their respective heads and it continues (IDANG, 2015, 104). Family life in Africa is a respected institution in society since it is a basic unit of kinship and protected by custom. It is a marriage-based unit borne out of consent and welcomes children for fulfilment and honour of the parents. It is extended and involves the man and woman who play needful roles as the case may be at each point in time (SSEMOGERERE, 2011, 5 and 6). In addition to the notion of family as a union is the understanding that it accommodates both consanguinity (shared blood relationships) and conjugality (non-blood relationships) stemming from blood ties, legal ties, and sexual mating. The family does the function of conferment of identity and regulation of sexual activities among others, which become values that are taught to children and expected to be generationally transferable. These values regulate the behaviours of African people (OLUTAYO AND AKANLE, 2015, 48 and 49).

One of the challenges of African families is the economic challenge which in turn affects fertility rates and population size (BIGOMBE and KHADIAGALA, 2018, 3), and so no need of adding more challenges through transgenerating. There may not be many discrepancies between family life in Africa and the West regarding their make-up, but there are regarding values which is where the discourse on transgender identity will be evaluated. For now, in Africa, we recognize binary gender, that is, only two sexes—male and female. Furthermore, the idea of two cohabiting sexual adults in family formation invokes the necessity of authentic fatherhood and motherhood whereby fatherhood and motherhood are the major pillars of a flourishing family. Authentic fatherhood and motherhood do not end in being biologically responsible for a child but also involve the co-operative effort in raising children in all ramifications (BALOGUNb, 2012, 2). Authentic fatherhood, as opposed to inauthentic fatherhood, entails the fulfilment of responsibility to the family by the provision, care, nurture, and instruction of the children according to the dictates and norms of the culture and this also applies to motherhood (BALOGUNa, 2010, 3). This assertion questions the status of a transgender person in relation to the family.

With the inclusion of non-blood relations, fictive kin tie, and same-gender couples, (DIERCKX, 2017, 181), the family makeup as a union of parents, children, extended parents, and relations in the case of Africa faces a challenge. However, the research considers the understanding of family as that of a union of two sexes and child/children preferable because it is the most common in African settings.

Interrogating Transgender identity and Family Life in Africa

Family life in Africa is predominantly cultural. The Pro-trans argue that it is okay for one to know one's self-worth, appreciate one's identity and live freely through 'resilience or ordinary magic' which helps the trans to bounce back from stress, stereotypes, crimes, violence, and hard times (SINGH, 2018, 2 & 4). Also, they argue for flexibility in matters of gender to accommodate gender expansiveness (CHANG, n.d.n, 2018, 16-17), yet transgender identity, its nature, and involvement have few implications on family in Africa, which include: epistemic, social, cultural, ethical, health and economic implications among others.

Epistemically, transgender attacks the rationale behind instituting a family which includes companionship, continuity, and identity. Though transgender families may enjoy companionship, they demote at least a biological continuity and cause identity confusion since the past, present, and future makeup one's identity. It underscores the need for maintaining a nature given to an individual through which meaning is attached to life as it concerns the individual. It is also within this context of meaning that even the extremes of gender difficulties can best be handled. This aspect intersects with ethics and morality such that a positive meaning and understanding of life will go a long way in affecting the attitude with which transgender needs are handled.

In the 1980s, healthcare professionals had conflicting suggestions on how to handle transsexual matters both in social benefits and the likes, which later

improved over time but not everyone accepted that (FRANZINI AND CASINELLI, 1986, 537-538). It is as though there is a positive public acceptance with an inward reservation towards transgender. As such, both the professionals and lay people who are also members of the families will extend these conflicting feelings to members indulging in transgender. One may argue that this paper discriminates against transgender people. On the contrary, it only discourages it since it can threaten the continuity of society. One can also argue that trans couples can adopt and not all cisgenders want and can conceive, but then, it becomes a matter of circumstance as in the case of inability to conceive and deliberate decision not a matter of biological indisposition to the reproductive processes on the one hand. On the other hand, the challenge that LGBTQI+ people face in society spurs them into pretense and secrecy in lifestyle, fear of law enforcement agents, disownment, and deprivations of varied kinds (MARKS, 2006, 3). This does not affect the Trans persons alone but their families through stigmatization, rejection in several places, and even maltreatment and these impede the unity and flourishing of the family (DIERCKX, 2017, 183). The United Nations promotes humanity, marriage, and family but does not consider the modes of achieving them. For Trans persons who end up a man after marriage with a man and vice versa, should divorce or adoption happen, and whose baby is to be adopted? Until technology is invented that allows a biological man the ability of conception, transgender remains a dilemma.

Transgender is a birth defect resulting from dosages of androgens at critical times in the brain development of a foetus in the uterus. It simply means that one can have the genital of a particular sex and different in brain pattern (BLUMER, n.d.n, 2012). However, sex reassignment is more cumbersome and stressful than suppression of hormones to suit the genitalia from birth. This is because many hormones are being boosted by drugs like progesterone, and insulin among others, and such an approach can also be used instead of radical transgendering.

Another fundamental challenge that trans identity poses to family life is the institutional familial anxiety because an ideal family is either or both blood ties and natural interpersonal union. These two are mostly lacking, especially when the spouse transitions later in life (LI, 2019, 8). A lot of publicity through the media aims at promoting the acceptance of gender transitioning, however, in reality, such publicity has not yielded the desired degree of fruitfulness. There is still this restriction and reservation that always accompanies the unusual and unnatural. In terms of later parental and offspring transitioning, the affiliates tend to mask feelings, giving the agent a wrong impression of acceptance. This is if the familial members internalize at all. In some cases, there is an obvious expression of dissatisfaction by one, a few, or some members of the family in the form of Presence vs Absence, Sameness vs Difference, and Self vs Other. The first is the feeling of loss by family members of a dear one who is actually with them but transited. The second is the uncertainty of constancy of trans personality before and after while the third is the dilemma of family members between focusing on religion, morality, and emotions that define their own identities and expressing

unconditional love to the trans family member (LI, 2019, 9). In essence, transitioning is not as simple as one's desire and freedom demand but as complicated as the impact it will have on most especially the family members, how much more in Africa with identified dominant social and gender roles.

In some Western countries, there is a greater degree of acceptance of transgender but they cannot boast of equal social benefits like the cisgenders (MARKS, 2006, 2). However, with the selective access to social benefits, there will be an added burden on the family to augment the insufficiency and as such an unplanned tension in the family. Trans persons can bring about a permanent and temporal division in the family due to possible disunity among family members in coping with the current state of things. Various versions of liberalism have allowed for the promotion of several kinds of pervasions. Many countries see bestiality and pedophilia as punishable offenses yet accept same-sex marriage and transgender. If transgender is accepted because we feel that it is an act of freedom from an encased gender, we can then attempt to extend such understanding to pedophiles and bestiality since it is their body, freedom, and choice.

As we emphasize the impact of transgender on family, the family also has a way it impacts trans persons be it youths, adults, teenagers, or children. The structure of individual families determines the degree of impact on trans persons. For instance, if family dynamics (communication, conflict, organization, etc.) are considerably effective, trans persons may have an easier life than not (MURROE, N.D.N, 2020, 3) and the situation is not different in Africa.

Socially, a girl grows to be a woman, which exposes gender as a social construction and a natural thing. But then a girl growing into a woman and a boy growing into a man do not and cannot be limited to the social construction of gender. It merely entails the 'full realization' of what has been and not an introduction of a novel thing. It is more comprehensible to argue for the possibility of a girl growing into a woman and the same for a boy than a girl growing into a man and the same for a boy. Limiting gender to be just a socio-cultural reality is reductionistic. It transcends culture and society. If not, why should a trans person transcend to an intending gender and not 'ungender'? By "ungender" it means neutral gender or no gender at all. Gender, which is about the classification of a role according to sexuality might be socio-cultural regarding the role, but regarding its foundation, it is biological. This biological undertone interconnects with genetic formation. If not, why would a trans person feel she/he is of the other sex? What is the '*manness*' or '*womanness*' to which a trans person aspires, which is non-socially constructed that appetizes the person? It simply means that '*womanness/manness*' goes beyond gender. Of course, what makes a trans person insist that he/she was once a man/woman but now is the other way and why going to the extent of Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) to acquire some body parts that make up the intended sex with which we classify sex and gender?

In a family setting in Africa, there is a father and mother who are romantic mates. So, when a woman becomes a man (DIERCKX, 2017, 182), he does not become an automatic father alongside the dilemma of the correct way to address the family and ascription of social roles and vice versa. Transgender is mostly about emotion and desire superseding rationality. For this reason, those

excessive hormones of the other sex which stir these feelings can be suppressed rather than changing to an entirely different identity. Where such technology does not exist, what happens?

Research has shown that there is a high prevalence rate of HIV risk as well as its transmission among transgender people worldwide due to the struggle for survival (JOBSON, THERON, KAGGWA AND KIM, 2012, 161). It is not unnoticed that HIV is a threat to not just health but family life. Even though some measures are available that can enable those living with HIV/AIDS to have HIV-free offspring, yet many are unwilling to take such a risk. It is rigorous and dangerous. Having demonstrated that transgenering is usually a challenging experience, how do we cope with the already existing ones?

Coping with Transgender Identity and Family in Africa: Our Contributions

First, the stage of every society is, to no small extent, the function of the family structure, and as such, parents need to imbibe the dictates of culture and norms on the offspring and not discard them as anachronistic. By so doing, certain standards of behaviour are established for authentic children to take a cue from (BALOGUNA, 2010, 4 and 8), which includes self-restraint among others, though no criteria for authentic children have yet been established. It is undeniable that conflict is inevitable in the family and is often rooted in gender roles and as such one may suggest that swapping gender will curtail such conflicts. But a closer look will expose that nothing has changed except the roles repositioned in this regard.

Secondly, many interrogations need to be made to evaluate whether transgenering is worth the rigorous processes. If a trans man/woman is a person assigned female or male respectively at birth but identifies oneself the other way, what is the source of this identification? Is it just the brain, consciousness, or differences in feeling and attraction? Why change genitals and other variant body parts to suit a particular intending gender if gender is a mere social construction? Why not vocally proclaim such and stop at that level without surgery? One may argue that some outward appearances make observers attribute a particular gender to a person even when the person is not the attributed gender and, as such supports the inclination for transgenering, yet it has not been established whether 'beingness' lies in appearance, people's feelings or nature.

Thirdly, is the reduction of gender as mere social construction an empirical one, conceptual, or both? If gender is restricted to social construction, why is that stage of 'implying' and 'concealing' in transgenering processes? If such sensitive existence like gender and sex identification is reduced to social construction, why won't feelings and desires associated with binary gender be reduced to the same condition? Is it not also the same social construction that somehow directs or helps them identify that feelings/desires in some way are associated with particular sex? A lot of disorder has been corrected medically and psychologically but becoming a trans cannot be termed a disorder corrected. It is a feeling achieved and as such is more selfish than vital, if not, why would some remain at the level of transvestites and some further it to the extreme which is the surgical aspect (the rigorous process of transgenering)?

Furthermore, on concealing, if a transgender conceals details and credentials like birth and marriage certificates, what then will be the suitable details? Will the new date of transgendering be the birthdate or will there be no birthdate at all? How does a transgender cope with a change in marriage details? It is quite an awkward experience and as such should not be promoted, especially in Africa. If a male trans female or vice versa goes for adoption, what is the moral justification for such an act? Even if it is a matter of choice, human beings considerably have control over their choices and as such should act accordingly. Lastly, motherhood and fatherhood, sonship, or daughterhood transcends gender and are understandable outside the gender category (BALOGUNb, 2012, 6). A lot of natural things have been questioned and challenged today in the quest to promote science, technology, and globalization, and they have done more harm than good to the family setting. Thus, there is a need for reconstruction of orientation, which will, in turn, reconstruct other necessary aspects. The existing ones should not be ostracized but further engagements should be highly discouraged.

To balance the arguments of this paper, we will anticipate some objections to our proposals here. First, critics may argue that how it feels to transit to different gender is only understood by the individual. Yet, there are a lot of feelings that we have and jettisoned at the same time because we consider their consequence/s. For instance, not everyone harms the other in the name of anger or rage.

Secondly, critics may also argue that a lifetime is too long to jeopardize personal happiness and freedom. However, in Africa's web of relationship, collective interest is superior to individual interest. This is because, collective interest is an aggregated individual interests and transgender does not qualify as a collective interest in Africa.

Thirdly, one may argue that unlike Bestiality and Pedophilia which involves harm against the other, Transgender is an action on oneself. But it can better be seen as harm against oneself and even others by extension. More criticisms may arise against the thesis of this paper. However, we keep an open mind towards that and address them where and when necessary.

Conclusion

The wave of transgender is also here with us in Africa. Gradually, like the wave of globalization, if not handled well, might reach an outcry, and the family setting, which is characterized by the presence of authentic fatherhood and motherhood will be threatened and dissociated from flourishing. If there is an increase in transgender, its legality and legalization will become imminent, debatable, and inevitable, while the continuity of generations/society through the family will be seriously challenged. Even if people's feelings and desires should be considered, more consideration should be given to the long-term effect it might have on society, especially in Africa.

Today, a lot of pervasions have been mistaken to be a way of life, but this is a misconception and needs to be corrected. Androgyny and the likes can be

managed better when parents/guardians direct their affiliates aright to positively influence their choices over which they have a freewill. Such orientation should be inculcated at an early age. Parents/guardians should seek medical consultation in line with moral standards for better options like hormonal suppressions and counselling instead of transgenering. Gender responsibility is mostly cultural and gender swap brings about a significant change of roles, but in a situation where either family members are involved, it becomes an additional role and responsibility more than a change while transgender is for satisfaction.

Some argue that some transwomen give birth but it all depends on the nature of fertilization and nature of birth. Does it involve a biological process or is the process technologically induced? Is it a partial or complete transgender? Is the childbirth normal or through a cesarean section whereby the birth canal is irrelevant? A transman can only give birth if the reproductive organs are still intact and functional while a transwoman can give birth either through in-vitro fertilization or the individual has one-time experienced 5-ARD (*5a-Reductase* deficiency). This gene mutation allows for the formation of both functional male and female reproductive organs with one more functional than the other. In line with this, a complete transgender cannot perform the functions with which its former gender is associated.

Finally, having elucidated on transgender and family life in Africa, it has to be restated again that in the light of African values at present, transgender identity is pervasive and, as such should involve counselling and medical attention other than surgery and associated manifestations of attitudes. It is also within the ambience of the duty of therapists to issue conservative advice to control the rate of acceptance of involvement in transgenering processes. When these factors are taken into consideration, it will go a long way to stabilize the nature of things. More ideas are welcomed on this topic for further discourse.

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