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**GENDER AFFIRMATION SURGERY**

- Rishika Saluja & Priyanshu Nagar<sup>1</sup>

**ABSTRACT**

This research paper, a significant contribution to the field, provides a comprehensive review of the outcomes and considerations surrounding SRS, a critical component of medical interventions for individuals seeking to align their physical characteristics with their gender identity.

The paper undertakes a thorough examination of the historical background of SRS, providing a comprehensive context for its evolution over time and the development of surgical techniques. It also explores SRS's legal and ethical aspects, discussing the recognition of transgender rights and access to gender-affirming procedures in different jurisdictions.

The study delves into the medical and psychological evaluation processes that precede SRS, emphasising the importance of a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to ensure the well-being and satisfaction of individuals undergoing the procedure. It analyses the various surgical techniques employed in male-to-female and female-to-male transitions, highlighting the specific procedures involved and the potential outcomes and complications associated with each.

Furthermore, the paper discusses the impact of SRS on physical and mental well-being, examining the effects on body image, gender dysphoria, and quality of life. It addresses potential side effects and risks associated with the surgery and the need for post-operative care and support.

The research paper also explores the societal implications of SRS, emphasizing the broader impact of the procedure on the social acceptance of transgender individuals, legal recognition of gender identity, and the role of healthcare policies in ensuring access to safe and affordable

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<sup>1</sup> Student at DME Law School

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procedures. This comprehensive review provides a valuable resource for healthcare professionals, researchers, and individuals considering or undergoing SRS.

## INTRODUCTION

Transgender are people whose outer body doesn't match their gender expression. For example, a human being is born in a male body but identifies as a female, though these people are neither male nor female. Historically, it was believed that when lord shiva and Shakti came together to set an example that wife and husband are equal and are a companion to each other, no one is greater than the other; they are one soul with two bodies. To prove this fact, lord shiva and Shakti came together and took the 'ardhanarishvara' avatar, and it is well known in history that transgender is born out of this avatar; therefore, in our country, it was religiously believed that if you are upset the hijra's, lord shiva would never forgive you for this sin. However, as time changed, our society started neglecting this community, and not only this, but it also started disrespecting the same. The story doesn't end here, but they were also forced into prostitution. In the two holy Hindu mythological epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, we also mention the hijra community. Lord Rama should have asked all the "men and women" to return to the city when he turned around to leave the city in the epic Ramayana after being exiled from the kingdom for 14 years. Following his lead, the Hijra community elected to live with him because they did not feel obligated to go back.

In India, transgender individuals have legal recognition and protection under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. This legislation recognises the rights of transgender persons and prohibits discrimination against them in various aspects of life, including healthcare. The Act also provides for the recognition of self-perceived gender identity. It allows transgender individuals to have the option to self-identify their gender and provides a legal framework for obtaining identity certificates and other documents that reflect their gender identity. However, the specific requirements and procedures for legal recognition of gender vary. Some countries require individuals to undergo sex reassignment surgery as a condition for legal gender recognition. In contrast, others have moved towards more inclusive and self-determined models that do not mandate surgery.

While the Act does not explicitly mention sex reassignment surgery, it does

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Recognise the right of transgender individuals to access healthcare, including gender-affirming treatments and procedures. The Act also mandates the provision of medical facilities, including sex reassignment surgery, in government hospitals and specifies that insurance schemes and other healthcare programs should cover transgender-related healthcare needs.

It is important to note that the legal landscape can change, and specific cases or challenges related to transgender rights and healthcare may arise. It is advisable to consult with legal professionals or transgender rights organisations in India for the most accurate and up-to-date information on the legal status and protections for transgender individuals and sex reassignment surgery in the country.

Sex reassignment or gender affirmation surgery is a surgery which changes a man's body to a woman's body and vice versa. In other words, it is a procedure or series of procedures that transforms a person's appearance. A professional medical organisation established standards of care in the 1980s. It helped out the people both medically and psychologically by making them meet and talk to those who had undergone the same changes and helping them resolve all their queries related to the same.

Gender reassignment surgeries to male-to-female known as FEMINIZATION SURGERIES. It is the process in which a series of surgeries takes place, and the body of a man transforms into a woman- this transformed woman is known as a trans woman. Sex reassignment surgery, which is frequently used to refer to vaginoplasty, can also refer to other gender-affirming procedures an individual may undergo, such as permanent reduction or removal of body or facial hair through laser hair removal or electrolysis, facial feminisation surgery, tracheal shave, valvuloplasty, orchiectomy, voice surgery, or breast augmentation. This reassignment process usually begins with the feminisation surgery, and in addition to that, one needs to follow the lifelong medications of masculinising or feminising hormone replacement therapy.

It is important to note that gender identity is a deeply personal and individual experience, and not all transgender individuals choose to undergo sex reassignment surgery as part of their transition. Transitioning can involve various steps, including social, medical, and legal aspects, and the decision to

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Pursuing any specific procedures, including surgery, is a personal one made by the individual in consultation with healthcare professionals.

Sex reassignment surgery can involve different procedures depending on the desired outcome and the individual's specific needs. The methods typically include altering the genitals, chest, or other body parts to align with the gender identity of the individual. For male-to-female (MTF) individuals, the surgery may involve procedures such as vaginoplasty, breast augmentation, or facial feminisation surgeries. Female-to-male (FTM) individuals may undergo procedures such as phalloplasty, chest masculinisation (top surgery), or hysterectomy.

Gender reassignment surgery, female-to-male surgery, known as Phalloplasty, is where a human being assigned as a female by birth transforms its body into a male person. This is the process of construction or reconstruction of a penis by surgery or a series of surgeries. Nikolaj Bogoraz was the first Russian surgeon who performed this phalloplasty surgery, where he reconstructed the penis by using rib cartilage and abdominal flap. Later, in 1946, Sir Harold Gillies performed the first-ever sex reassignment surgery, where he transformed a female by birth into a male.

In 1972, Sweden became the first-ever country to allow people to change their gender legally, and it also provided them with free reassignment treatment. Later, in 1973, Singapore followed the same policy given by Sweden.

#### **GENDER REASSIGNMENT SURGERY IN OTHER COUNTRIES-**

Africa:

***DRC (the democratic republic of Congo, also known as Congo Kinshasa and formally known as Zaire) has not recognised any transgender laws or rights, does not even have any supportive legislation for changed genders, and also does*** not have any medical process for gender reassignment.

***Egypt-*** Egypt also doesn't have a law against being transgender or gender diverse, though the same has criminalised the activities associated with sex work. Furthermore, sex-affirmation

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surgical procedures are illegal. Moreover, the government prohibits medical professionals from performing any such surgeries.



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**Ethiopia-** here, trans medical surgery is banned and recognised as illegal, and not only this but due to the 'norm', the gender also faces a lot of violence.

**Nigeria** also considers trans surgery as illegal. Additionally, there is no specific protection provided to them - trans people are not even allowed for their gender expression.

#### **SOUTH AFRICA:**

The laws in South Africa recognise and protect the rights of transgender people. Although gender affirmation doesn't cover the same in medical aid, it is legal and accessible.

#### **ASIA:**

**CHINA-** The said surgery is legalised in the People's Republic of China, and a person can change their legal name and sex. To perform the same task, one has to undergo certain formalities such as providing the certificate, which will be proof of gender-affirming surgery, which a person cannot undergo without the approval from a psychiatrist diagnoses and verified with no earlier criminal record and written agreement from family and workplaces that they are unmarried.

**INDIA-** this transgender surgery was first opposed by an activist who themselves were transgender. For altering the gender stated on one's passport, India additionally demands documentation of having had gender-affirming surgery. This stipulation has been challenged in court. Gender-affirming operations for transgender people may soon be covered under the government's leading national health insurance system. A rising number of medical tourists and the general public in India are being offered cheap gender-affirming operations.

IRAN is the country that fully financially sponsors the process of this surgery; it has been declared permissible. According to Zara Saeidzadeh's research study, nine trans guys have completed their medical transition, and the remaining five intend to do so.

#### **JAPAN**

As of 2020, has performed forced sterilisation on the transgender people of its country

PAKISTAN on the other hand, has said that the particular surgery is against Islamic law. Afterwards, the same is not approved in the same region.

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## LEGAL OUTLOOK OF GENDER AFFIRMATION SURGERY IN INDIA

In India, the legality and recognition of sex reassignment surgery and transgender rights have evolved through various legal judgments and legislative developments. While there is no specific case or judgment that solely legalised sex reassignment surgery, several legal milestones have contributed to the recognition and protection of transgender rights, including access to gender-affirming procedures.

One significant legal development was the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) v. Union of India judgment 2014. In this landmark case, the Supreme Court of India recognised transgender individuals as a third gender and affirmed their fundamental rights under the Constitution. The court recognised the rights to self-identification, equal protection, non-discrimination, and access to healthcare for transgender individuals.

Following the NALSA judgment, the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2019 was enacted by the Indian Parliament. This legislation provides legal recognition and protection to transgender individuals, affirming their rights in various aspects of life. While the Act does not explicitly mention sex reassignment surgery, it acknowledges the right to access healthcare. It mandates the provision of medical facilities, including gender-affirming treatments, in government hospitals.

Additionally, several state High Courts in India have passed judgments recognising the rights of transgender individuals and affirming their access to gender-affirming procedures. For example, the Madras High Court, in the case of Arunkumar & Sreeja v. The Inspector General of Registration, recognised the right of a transgender woman to undergo sex reassignment surgery and directed the Registrar of Marriages to register her marriage as per her post-surgery gender.

These legal developments, including the NALSA judgment and subsequent legislation, have contributed to the recognition and protection of transgender rights in India, including access to gender-affirming procedures. It is essential to consult with legal professionals or transgender rights organisations for the most accurate and up-to-date information on the legal status and specific legal precedents related to sex reassignment surgery in India.

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## **EFFECTS OF THE SURGERY**

Sex reassignment surgery, like any significant surgical procedure, carries potential risks and side effects. It is essential for individuals considering sex reassignment surgery to be aware of these potential risks and discuss them thoroughly with qualified healthcare professionals. While the specific side effects may vary depending on the procedures involved, here are some common considerations:

**Surgical Risks:** As with any surgery, there are risks associated with anaesthesia, bleeding, infection, and complications related to the specific surgical procedures performed. These risks can vary depending on the individual's overall health, the surgeon's expertise, and the particular techniques used.

**Pain and Discomfort:** After surgery, individuals may experience pain, discomfort, swelling, bruising, and tenderness in the surgical areas. Appropriate pain management strategies are typically employed to help manage discomfort during recovery.

**Scarring:** Surgery will often result in visible scars, which may vary in size, location, and appearance depending on the procedures performed. Surgeons strive to minimise scarring and optimise wound healing, but individual factors can affect the extent and visibility of scars.

**Loss of Sensation:** Some individuals may experience temporary or permanent changes in sensation in the surgical areas. This can include areas of increased or decreased sensitivity or numbness. Nerve regeneration and healing over time can help improve sensation, but complete restoration may not always be possible.

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Emotional and Psychological Impact: Undergoing sex reassignment surgery is a major life-changing event, and individuals may experience emotional and



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Psychological effects as they adapt to their new physical appearance. Mental health support, counselling, and access to peer support groups can be helpful in maintaining and Discomfort:

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Loss of Sensation: Some individuals may experience temporary or permanent changes in sensation in the surgical areas. This can include areas of increased or decreased sensitivity or numbness. Nerve regeneration and healing over time can help improve sensation, but complete restoration may not always be possible.

Emotional and Psychological Impact: Undergoing sex reassignment surgery is a major life-changing event, and individuals may experience emotional and psychological effects as they adapt to their new physical appearance. Mental health support, counselling, and access to peer support groups can help manage these transitions.

Revision Surgeries: In some cases, individuals may require additional surgeries or procedures to address complications, refine results, or make further adjustments to achieve desired outcomes.

It's important to note that the risks and side effects associated with sex reassignment surgery can vary depending on the specific procedures performed and individual factors. The best way to understand the potential risks and side effects is to have a thorough discussion with a qualified healthcare professional who specialises in transgender healthcare and has

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experience in performing gender-affirming surgeries. They can provide personalised information and guidance based on your specific situation.



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## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, sex reassignment surgery, also known as gender confirmation surgery, is a medical procedure that can help individuals transition from one gender to another. It is a complex and transformative process that involves surgical interventions to alter a person's physical characteristics to align with their gender identity.

The legal outlook for sex reassignment surgery varies depending on the country and jurisdiction. Laws and regulations related to transgender rights and healthcare differ worldwide. However, many countries have made progress in recognising transgender rights and ensuring access to gender-affirming procedures, including sex reassignment surgery.

It is important to note that sex reassignment surgery, like any major surgery, carries potential risks and side effects. These can include surgical risks, pain and discomfort, scarring, changes in sensation, and emotional and psychological impacts. It is crucial for individuals considering this procedure to have thorough discussions with qualified healthcare professionals to understand the potential risks, benefits, and outcomes specific to their situation.

AND Suppose someone is considering undergoing this surgery (sex reassignment surgery) or has questions related to transgender healthcare. In that case, you can consult the healthcare professionals who are experienced in transgender healthcare, as well as legal professionals or transgender rights organisations in your jurisdiction, for the most accurate and up-to-date information and support.

The decision to pursue sex reassignment surgery is deeply personal and varies from person to person. For many individuals, it is an integral part of their gender transition and can significantly alleviate gender dysphoria. It can involve various procedures, such as genital reconstruction, breast augmentation or removal, facial feminisation or masculinisation surgery, and other body contouring procedures.

It's crucial to note that sex reassignment surgery is just one aspect of the overall transition process. Transgender individuals often undergo a multidisciplinary approach to transition,

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which may involve psychological counselling, hormone therapy, voice training, and social support.



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Sex reassignment surgery, also known as gender-confirmation surgery or gender-affirming surgery, is a medical procedure that some transgender individuals undergo as part of their transition. It is an essential option for individuals who experience gender dysphoria, which is a distressing disconnect between their gender identity and the sex assigned to them at birth.

The decision to pursue sex reassignment surgery is deeply personal and varies from person to person. For many individuals, it is an integral part of their gender transition and can significantly alleviate gender dysphoria. It can involve various procedures, such as genital reconstruction, breast augmentation or removal, facial feminisation or masculinisation surgery, and other body contouring procedures.

According to me the decision to pursue surgery is deeply personal and varies from person to person. For many individuals, it is an integral part of their transition. Though it is important to note that the surgery is just one aspect of the overall transition process, individuals often undergo a multidisciplinary approach to transition, which may involve psychological counselling, hormone therapy, voice training, and social support. Respecting and supporting individuals in their decisions regarding their bodies and identities is essential. Society's understanding and acceptance of transgender people and their experiences have been evolving, and it is necessary to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for transgender individuals to live authentically and with dignity.

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