The Living Experience Of Sex Transformation: A Preliminary Study Under The Guidance of Parse's Humanbecoming Theory

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Background

• A study on gender identity suggested
  – 1.6 million of Taiwanese people were not satisfied with their gender
  – 0.4 million of them would like to have their sex changed.

• Prevalence rate of transexualism
  – $9 : 10^5$ for male-to-female (MTF)
  – $5 : 10^5$ for female-to-male (FTM)
Definition of Transsexualism

• ICD-10 defines as
  – a desire to live and be accepted as a member of the opposite sex,
  – usually accompanied by
    • a sense of discomfort with, or inappropriateness of, one's anatomic sex,
    • a wish to have surgery and hormonal treatment to make one's body as congruent as possible with one's preferred sex.
Sex Reassignment Surgery

• A way of empowerment of individuals with transexualism,
• The first SRS in Taiwan was performed in 1988
• 50 ~ 100 SRS performed each year.
• Individuals with transexualism are often rejected by the public
• Stigma is still attached to individuals who receive sex reassignment surgery (SRS).
Nursing Perspective

• The humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998, 2007, 2010, 2011b) is the theoretical perspective that guided this study
Assumption of Humanbecoming

- The human with universe is coexisting while coconstituting rhythmical patterns.
- The human is open, freely choosing meaning with situation, bearing responsibility for decisions.
- The human is continuously coconstituting patterns of relating
- The human is transcending illimitably with possibles.
Assumption of Humanbecoming

- Becoming is human-living-health.
- Becoming is rhythmically coconstituting humanuniverse.
- Becoming is the human’s patterns of relating value priorities.
- Becoming is transcending with possibles.
Purpose of the Study

• Explicate the experience of persons who had undergone FTM SRS,
• Contribute to the understanding of the lived experience of persons who had undergone FTM SRS,
• Contribute to nursing’s extant body of knowledge by enhancing human becoming.
Research Question

• The research question guiding this qualitative study was:

“What is the meaning of the living experience of female to male sex transformation?”
Participant Selection

- Purposive sampling method to recruit persons who had undergone FTM SRS.
- Participants were recruited from a regional teaching hospital in Central Taiwan.
Participant Selection and Protection of Participants

• Approval was obtained from a hospital IRB for the protection of human subjects.
• Five participants, who had completed all phases of SRS, agreed and signed a consent form that fully disclosed the purpose, procedure, and intent of the study, were included in this study.
Participant Selection and Protection of Participants

• All participants agreed to the audiotaping of the dialogue and volunteered to describe their living experience of sex transformation.

• All participants met the researcher at a time and a convenient setting of their choice that was conducive to a private discussion.
Methodology

• The Parse research method was used to discover the meaning of living experience of sex transformation.
  – It is a phenomenological-hermeneutic mode of inquiry used to explore the meaning of living experiences (Parse, 2005, 2011).
Methodology

Dialogical Engagement → Extraction Synthesis → Heuristic Interpretation
Methodology

- It is an unstructured dialogue between the researcher and the participant.
- It is not an interview.
- In this study, the researcher engaged in dialogue with 5 participants about their living experience of sex transformation.
- The researcher in true presence, an unfolding “free-flowing active stillness” (Parse, 1998, p. 71), moved the dialogue with focused comments such as, “Go on,” and “Can you please say more about your experience” (Parse, 1998).
- Participants’ descriptions of sex transformation constitute the primary information that were audiotaped and later transcribed to typed format for the extraction-synthesis process.
Methodology

- It is “all-at-once dwelling with and inventing” (Parse, 2006b, p. 52).
- The researcher synthesized a story by capturing core ideas (Parse, 2005, 2011b) that surfaced from each participant’s description of sex transformation.
- Core ideas were further extracted-synthesized as essences in the language of each participant.
- The researcher all-at-once invented expressions by synthesizing-extracting essences at a higher level of abstraction in the language of the researcher.
- These essences were further described in statements formulating the language-art that arose directly from each participant’s description of sex transformation.
- The core concepts in a structure of the living experience of sex transformation was synthesized to answer the research question.
Methodology

- The structure of the phenomenon is stated at a higher level of abstraction, whereas conceptual integration connects the structure to concepts of the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 2011b).
- As participants describe experiences, metaphors emerge that elucidate the meaning of living experiences related to the phenomenon under study.
# Participants Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Age at Dialogical Engagement</th>
<th>Age at SRS</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Time Since SRS</th>
<th>Current Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>6 yrs &amp; 9 mos.</td>
<td>general contractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Graduate School</td>
<td>3 yrs. &amp; 11 mos.</td>
<td>Senior Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>4 yrs. &amp; 3 mos.</td>
<td>Travel Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>1 yr. &amp; 5 mos.</td>
<td>Semi-Conductor Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Vocational School</td>
<td>7 yrs.</td>
<td>TV Assistant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Progressive Abstraction of the Core Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Concept</th>
<th>Structural Transposition</th>
<th>Conceptual Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the difficulty of gender identity, the meaning of sex transformation is validated</td>
<td>Comprehend the significance of sex transformation from gender confusion, and become persevered to stand facing the difficulty.</td>
<td>Imaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the dilemma of full commitment or giving up and that of change and preservation, the support strength and the balance are pursued</td>
<td>Achieve balance in the constant swing of “reform-rigidity”</td>
<td>Revealing-Concealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With the vision of life and realization of dream, the future is optimistic and hopeful.</td>
<td>Step into the sunlight and stride toward the bright future</td>
<td>Powering</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## Progressive Abstraction of the Core Concepts

### Structure:
The lived experience of going through FTM SRS is the validation of the meaning of sex transformation with the difficulty of gender identity, the pursuit of support strength and the balance with the dilemma of commitment or giving up and that of change or preservation, and the future is optimistic and hopeful with the vision of life and realization of dream.

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## Progressive Abstraction of the Core Concepts

**Structural Transposition**

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**Structure Transportation:**

The lived experience of going through FTM SRS is to comprehend the significance of sex transformation from gender confusion, and become perseveré to stand facing the difficulty, to achieve balance in the constant swing of “reform-rigidity”, and to step into the sunlight and stride toward the bright future.
Progressive Abstraction of the Core Concepts

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**Conceptual Integration:**

The lived experience of going through FTM SRS is imaging in the revealing-concealing of powering.
Recommendation for Practice

• Findings of this study can guide nurses who practice with persons with trassexualism.

• The nurse in true presence (Parse, 1998) with persons, focuses on meanings from the perspective of the person is present without judgments, and bears witness to the person’s own value priorities.
Recommendation for Future Research

• Continue to unleash the knowledge of the phenomenon of the common lived experience as experienced by persons undergo SRS, as well as to reach out to persons with unsatisfactory outcomes.
Conclusion

- The findings of this study contribute new knowledge and understanding about the living experiences of going through FTM SRS.
- The findings enhance the unique body of nursing knowledge by expanding the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998) and by providing insight for future research and practice.
Limitation

• The participants of this study included only persons who had completed their SRS and with satisfactory outcomes.

• Study of the same phenomenon with persons of unsatisfactory outcomes may lead to different themes.