

# SELF-IDENTITY CRISIS: THIRD GENDERS

**Dr. Minakshi Kar**

Assistant Professor

Social Work

.ISSW, DAVV, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India.

**Abstract-** As known the 'Third genders' are the individuals who do not directly fall into the formal gender definitions of male or female of any society. Most of these individual ('Third genders') have their own level of identity crises i.e. not been getting the appropriate sexual orientation towards male or female, so they identify themselves as the 'Third gender'. Biologically these peoples are born with unclear genitals of male genitals or female genitals. Science has proved that abnormal levels of sex hormones during the fetal development is said to be the main factor giving birth to so called 'Third gender' individuals. Thus Third genders' are living with their exclusive self-identity crises problems in the society. Human history is the witness of the helplessness of these people.

**Index Terms**—Third gender, Social Identity, Self-identity crises, Status, Roles, Society, Attitude, Development, Problems.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Humanism is at its stake when some of the individual is in crises of self identification of male or female being. The history is found as the pendulum for this community for giving at one end a prestigious position and at the other end a vulnerable situation in the society. In the present condition their identification with their traditional occupations is not respected like they were in the age old Hindu religion, instead, they are identified for doing cheap entertainment. Their identification crisis in the society is the big challenge to them for their survival, as they need to keep on changing their cultural role in the community. Example, with singing and dancing they also collect money in markets from shopkeepers. Poverty, unemployment and scarcity of alternative occupation lead many of them to work as prostitutes and many other worked as beggars too. Third gender is considered as earning money through blessing new born babies by singing and dancing called 'Baccha Nachano'. In sex work, third genders usually dress up as women to attract men.

From ancient period to till contemporary period, different traditions across the world have established few gender identities, some of which are accepted as an essential part of the societies. These are the gender names and their respective functions that all anthropologists have called '**Third Gender**'. Actually the name 'Third Gender' is so because they are different than the regular gender's dual idea of 'masculine men' and 'feminine women'. These identities of "Third Gender" are often called transgender too. Out-group of third gender's should get sensitized and learn about cultures that accept specifically transgender and non-binary people, so that we all can support & secure those people on their own terms, and so that we all can informed about varied challenges that those people face today. Outsiders should learn about them also in order to see that there have been hundreds of accepting cultures throughout human history, that it has worked, and that this gender has always been real for society. This gives tremendous hope for Third Gender culture to develop and becoming accepting as well.

A self-identity crisis of Third Gender is a "crisis of self." It's when third gender can't seem to figure out exactly who are they, or who they're supposed to be in the contemporary society. Generally, these individuals' with a self-identity crisis feels drawn to different possible selves to construct a life around them. They move from one potential identity to the next, never quite realizing the long-term pattern they're trapped in. Self-identity is always tricky for all genders' in general and specifically vulnerable for third gender, since the conscious mind works to create the viable and acceptable life around; but that blueprint is based (at best) on only a limited interpretation of a partial perspective of what they really are. Self-identity crises are the state of third gender individuals not believing in them self. In these phenomena a person experiencing self-identity crisis has a feeling of not knowing his real self in varied identity indicators. Thus self-identity crisis is one of the most important conflicts that third genders' experiences during their life span. It occurs during cohesion or role confusion stages of development, sexual maturation and internalization of ideas about how others view and think of them.

**Table 1: Age Group and Process to become Member of Third Gender Community**

Age Group	Process of become Member of Third Gender Community				Total
	After Birth Villagers Transfer	Family Member Shifted	Third Gender Community Forced to Come	Self Decision	
0-10 Yrs.	10	12	15	2	39
	25.6%	30.8%	38.5%	5.1%	100.0%
10-18 Yrs.	2	0	0	0	2
	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
18 Yrs. and above	0	7	9	3	19
	0.0%	36.8%	47.4%	15.8%	100.0%
Total	12	19	24	5	60
	20.0%	31.7%	40.0%	8.3%	100.0%

**Table 1** clarifies the relation between age group and process of becoming the member of Third Gender community. It is showing that 65 per cent respondents came to know their sexual identity in their age group in between 0- 10 yrs i.e in their childhood among about 38.5 per cent respondents revealed that the third gender community people forced them to become the member of Third Gender community. Around 31.6 per cent respondents came to know their sexual identity after the age of 18 yrs. among them 36.8 percent told that their family members shifted them to become the member of Third gender community. Only 8.3 per cent of the total respondent took self decision to join the third gender community. The study finds that there is an association between age group when came to know about sexual identity and process of become the member of third gender community.

**Table 2: Religion Distribution of Third Gender**

Religion	Frequency	Percent
Hindu	19	31.7
Muslim	8	13.3
Don't know	33	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2** reveals the religion of Third Genders. The study tried to find out whether the individuals' know their religion? So Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and the respondent who don't know about their religion categories are considered. Thus it finds that about 31.7 percent of respondent said that they are Hindu, 13.3 per cent know they are from Muslim community but the majority of respondent don't know about their religion which is 55 per cent and no one said they are Sikh. It shows that majority of respondent don't have awareness about their religion or don't want to disclose it and at the same time they are not worried about their religion.

**Table 3: Caste Basis Distribution of Third Gender**

Caste	Frequency	Percent
General but not sure	54	90.0
S.C	1	1.7
OBC	5	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3** is witnessing the caste consciousness among the Third Genders. Study finds that a big majority i.e. 90 per cent says that they might be from General category but not very sure about it. Rest just 8.3 per cent know they are from Other backward class and only 1.7 per cent are sure they are from S.C category where as no one claim the Schedule Tribes category.

**Table 4: Types of Family of Third Gender**

Type of family	Frequency	Percent
Joint family	8	13.3
Nuclear family	8	13.3
Don't have family	44	73.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 4** describes the distribution of Third Genders on the basis of their Types of Family. Table itself specifies that the majority of respondent are those who do not remember the type of family they are belonging from. The percentage of these respondent's are 73.3. Rest of them is equally belonging from both Nuclear as well as Joint family and the percentage of these respondents are 13.3 per cent. This study shows that the majority of the respondents have no memory of their biological family. They are living with this community either from their infancy or from their early childhood days.

**Table 5: Level of Educational Qualification of Third Gender**

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Elementary education	22	36.7
Secondary education	10	16.7
Senior education	7	11.7
Graduate & above	2	3.3
Illiterate	19	31.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 5** reveals the level of educational qualification of Third Genders. In the study the levels of educational qualification is measured by elementary education, secondary education, senior secondary education, graduate & above and the respondent who are Illiterate. From the table it is visible that the least respondents were graduate & above, which is only 3.3 per cent and in contradiction the majority of respondents' qualified up to elementary education only, the percentage of these respondents are 36.7 per cent. Respondent who have completed their secondary education are 16.7 per cent and the respondent who had their education till senior secondary are only 11.7 per cent. Rest, about one-third i.e.31.7 per cent transgender are illiterate. One of the prime requirement of life shows that the education is not well in reach of third gender community as they are not healthily accepted by educational institutions till date. Very few of them with lots of struggles manage to complete their present status of education.

**Table 6: Source to Know about Sexual Identity of Third Genders**

Source to Know Sexual Identity	Frequency	Percent
Figured out myself	11	18.3
Through parents	28	46.7
Through community	21	35.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 6** is showing the Third Gender respondents' on the basis of source through which they came to know about their sexual identity. The study finds that majority (46.7 per cent) of respondents are those who came to know their sexual identity through parents. The least numbers of respondents' (18.3 per cent) are those who figure out their sexual identity by them self whereas about one third (35 per cent) of respondents are identifying their sexual identity through community people.

**Table 7: Suggestions of Respondent regarding Healthy Relation with Family**

Suggestion	Frequency	Percent
Parents should accept us	11	18.3
Family should educate and aware about third gender	29	48.3
Community should respect & accept our gender	13	21.7
No suggestion	7	11.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 7** is presenting the suggestions of Third Gender respondent's for the development of respectful identity in the society. This table shows that 21.7 per cent respondents' believe that community by and large should respect & accept our gender as it is. If they do so we will be treated as normal persons in the society. About 48.3 percent respondent said that education plays an important role in human's life so they believe that family should provide education equally without any hesitation and also aware about their sexual identity, healthy and normal behaviour. Rest of respondents' viewed that parents are important in every once life and they play an important role, so if they will understand them the whole family as well as one and all in society is bound to accept & respect them.

## CONCLUSION

As a known fact 'Self Identity crisis' among Third genders develops when all their thought structure which they have mentally constituted with time or based on their own ideas of self upon starts to crumble. It is found that their feeling of existence, lifestyle, relationships, beliefs, attitude about the society, about their world, their life is a big question. Now, if because of the differential attitude towards them the life giving aspects are disillusioned and begin to shake as the reality asserts itself, then these individuals experience crisis that result into deep anxiety and fear of approaching emptiness, ignorance and development of what reality is about. So, to prevent such happenings, the third gender people should try to know what reality actually is, what is the trend and how it could moves and works. They should also learn to comprehend and operate inside the reality of the society. As their present identity is incomplete and fictional to civilization is concerned. If possible, they need to remember that anything can happen in life, so they don't build a severe negative or positive picture of them self and live upon it healthily and normally as other gender do so.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Chettair Anitha, (2009), The Status of Hijra in Civil Society: A Study of the Hijras in Grater Mumbai, College of Social Work, NirmalaNiketan, Mumbai.
- [2] Husain S.A.M, (2005) Hidden Gender: A Book on Socio-Economic status of Hijra community of Bangladesh, Deep and Deep Publisher, Dhaka.
- [3] Khan. et al., (2009), Living on the Extreme Margin: Social Exclusion of the Transgender Population (hijra) in Bangladesh, Sterling Publisher, Dhaka.