

## PART-II

QUESTION NO: 04

### INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER

Social construction is an anti-realist, relativist stance which proposes that social process results in the formation of an idea of any aspect. Likewise, social construction of gender is a socially constructed phenomena due to assignment of specific roles to gender. Thus, the view of society plays an integral role in construction of gender phenomena.

### GENDER IS A SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED PHENOMENA

The phenomena of social construction is defined as

- Assignment of particular notions and connotations to

Specific objects and  
events in an environment  
and interaction with  
these objects."

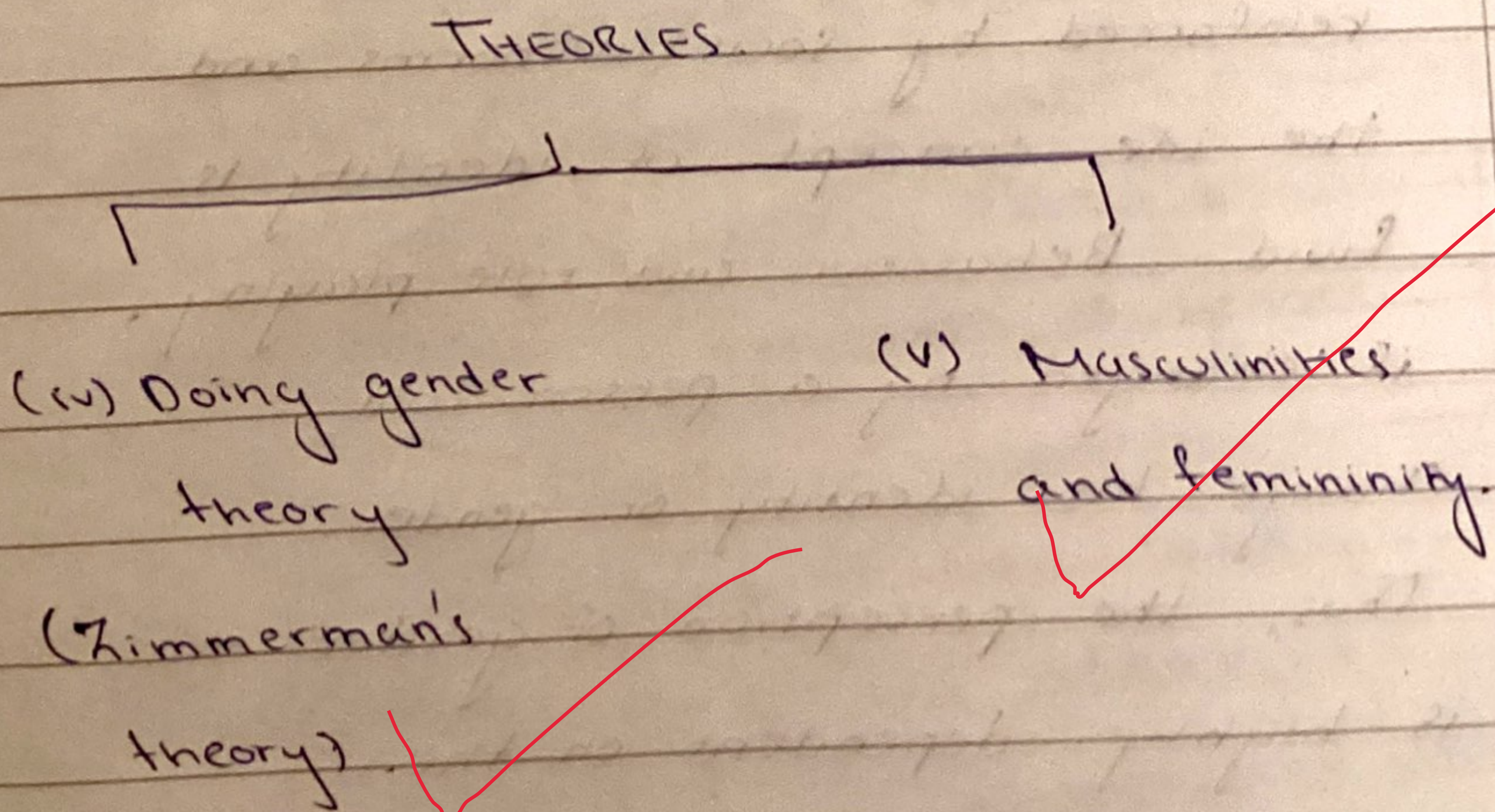
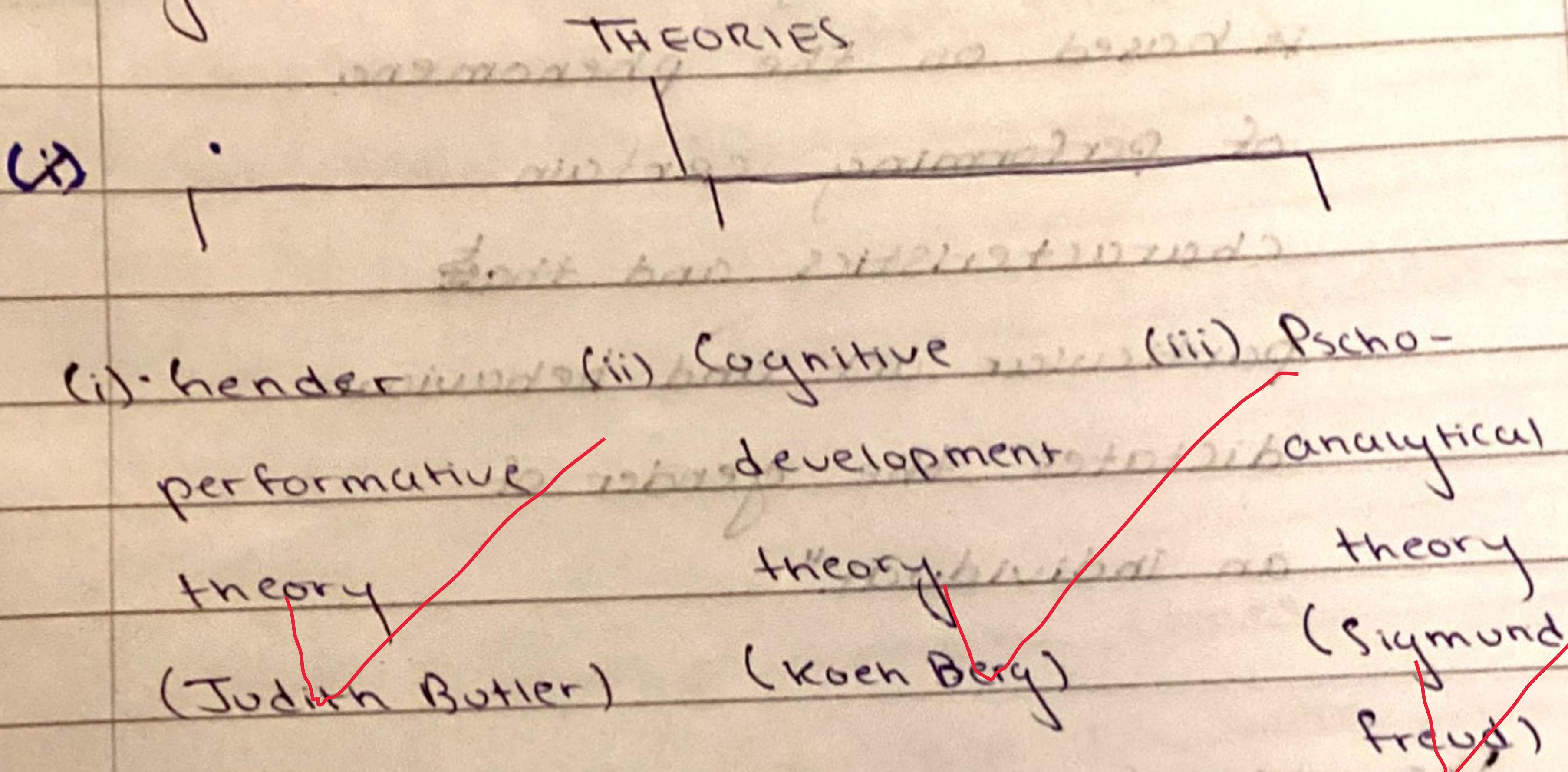
Moreover, the prospect of gender  
can be regarded as a constituent  
of social phenomena as.

"Gender represents way  
of thinking, talking,  
behaving, playing  
fulfilling responsibilities  
in accordance with the  
notions and connotations  
attached with the  
perceived idea of man  
and women."

Thus, the idea of gender phenomena,  
explicitly arises from the influence  
of societal norms.

# THEORIES OF SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER:

Following theories proposes the idea of social construction of gender:



(i) Judith Butler theory of "Gender Performativity"

According to Judith Butler

"The idea of gender is based on the phenomena of performing certain characteristics and those particular act and behaviour dictates the gender of an individual."

The idea of this theory proposes that behaviour of a gender or is reinforced by societal norms and the concept of identity is fluid. Behaviour and role playing, if changed by a person will change his identity or gender. Thus, the perception of gender is highly dependent on the performativity of an individual.

Example:

Performance of a woman as labelled by a society includes the concept of nurturing, showing affection and behaving in a certain manner or dress in a particular way.

(ii) Cognitive development theory by Kohlberg:

According to cognitive development theory

"Gender identity comes from identification with same sex parent and certain critical events that are cognitive in nature has a lasting effect on the development of gender."

The core concept of this theory proposes that gender identity is established in accordance with the

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precedent model set by gender of  
parents. Once an identity is established  
self is motivated to display gender  
congruent attitudes and behaviour.

Example:

A child at different stages of  
growing acquires and then establishes  
the identity prescribed to him or  
her. It involves two crucial stages

(i) Acquiring  
fixed gender  
identity

(ii)  
Establishing  
gender identity.

• Till age of 3

Child can apply  
appropriate gender  
label to oneself

• Till age of 4  
labels are applied  
to others.

• Till age 6-7

Child recognises  
that her  
gender will  
not change  
despite an  
outward  
appearance.

(iii) Psychoanalytical theory of Sigmund Freud :

According to psychoanalytical theory

" Gender identity develops through identification with same sex parent as boys are influenced from father and daughters from mother "

Psychoanalytical theory propagates the idea of affiliation of a child with same sex parent that dictates or influences the gender of child

Example :

An age A child of age 3 develops strong attachment with opposite gender parent. At the age of 6 the boundaries with same sex parent are resolved and child starts to get influenced from the same sex parent.

(iv) Doing gender theory by  
Zimmermans :

According to doing gender theory

" Gender is a complex of  
socially guided perceptual  
interactional and micro-  
political activities that  
cast the expression of  
masculine and feminine  
nature "

A This theory suggest the idea  
that indeed gender is a socially  
constructed phenomena as gender as a  
routine accomplishment is embedded  
in every day interaction.

Example:

Most of field work jobs are  
associated male and men are discouraged  
to take over upon the job of  
handling or nurturing of children.



(iv) Gender Schema Theory by Sandra Bem:

According to this theory,

"The ideas about gender are shaped through the culture in which we live."

This theory revolves around gender schemas that refers to

"Mental structure that organises incoming information according to gender categories".

A child will learn about gender specific attributes and form gender schemas and try to live up to the appropriate gender schema.

Example:

A 6 year old boy may have a

gender scheme about the dressing  
aspect of boys

## CONCLUSION:

Gender is a socially constructed phenomena build upon the hegemonic influence that is contributed by a community. Multiple theories establish this fact that precedent set by society's norms dictate the social construction of gender. Thus, gender originates from the aspect of constructionism.

Question no: 05

**INTRODUCTION: MODERNISATION  
AND DEPENDENCY THEORY  
ANALYSING WOMEN  
VULNERABILITIES**

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Multiple tiers of vulnerabilities are faced by women in contemporary society. The presence of vulnerabilities can be expounded by the stance of modernisation and dependency theory where the former describes the cultural lag and internal cultural factors responsible for women's subordination and later one expounds the idea of dependence of women on others in a society. Hence, the subjugation of women can be curbed only when proper remedial steps are taken to decrease the gender stratification gap.

## **WOMEN VULNERABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY IN LIGHT OF MODERN- ISATION AND DEPENDENCY THEORY:**

(i) In context of Modernisation theory.

According to modernisation theory

"Internal cultural factors are responsible for the women's subordination in developing world."

Presence of cultural lag and patriarchal dominance in each domain of society suppresses the presence of women. In this context many various vulnerabilities are faced by women in contemporary society.

(a) Low rate of enrolment of female students in universities:

Decrease rate of female literacy reflects the presence of internal cultural factors in resisting involvement of women in society. According to World Bank report enrolment of female students in Pakistan in 2021 stands at only 38%.

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## (b) Women's representation in political arena:

Due to male dominant society, the presence of women at political forum is weak and meagre. According to global organisation of International Parliaments, Pakistan ranks at 112<sup>th</sup> in the world for its percentage of women in national parliament.

## (c) Subjugation of women at family level:

Patriarchal dominance at family level subjugates a women and acts as a hurdle for women to acquire basic rights and services. As seen in Pakistan, 154 women die of every 100,000 live births - a high Maternal mortality rate & shaped by socio economic status. (UN Women report)

## (d) Economic disparity faced by women:

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The inequality regarding women's participation in economic domain is due to presence of domineering patriarchal forces in society. For example, labour participation rate of women in Pakistan at 21% is below global percentage of 39%. A significant gender gap challenge persists.

(ii) In context of dependency theory:

According to dependency theory:

"The developed countries exert their dominance over the peripheral countries in order to expand their own ambit of influence and this produces a vicious cycle of dependency."

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Dependency theory explicitly  
posits the ~~phen~~ widening of  
gender phenomena due to  
presence of dependence of  
women on others in society.

In this way vulnerabilities  
endured by women are  
following.

(a) Structural adjustment policies  
(SAP) of ~~IMF~~ program  
resisting the provision of  
social safety network.

Dependency of a developing  
countries on the monetary policies  
of developed countries highly  
affects the weak marginalised  
group of society that is women.  
For example SAP policies of IMF  
does not encourage providing subsidies  
and the increasing country's budget  
towards social safety network.

## (b) Exploiting the labour of women.

Women workforce in developing countries are exploited and paid low income or wages. For example, women comprise of 4% of global chain workforce in 2021 (women supply chain survey 2021). Large multinational companies manipulate the value of surplus while suppressing women.

## (c) Women faces the implication of weak social services in the country.

In developing country, mobilisation of funds is from the developed side.

However, the dominance of Global North over Global South shows highest level of repercussions affecting the women in developing countries.

Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) accounts for only that only 30% of girls in Nigeria attend school.



This shows feminisation of poverty

## REYAMPING WOMEN STATUS GLOBALLY:

Conservative response:

① What

② Why

③ How

- Policy research on liberalisation measures - Increase potential of equality Research by WHO

- Advococation of equality in International trade policy - Issues represented - Support for networking and research activities

- Capacity development in macroeconomic domain - Gender main-streaming - Institution strengthening

What                      why                      how

Systematic monitoring of equity impact	Support policy development <del>at international</del> level	Change in employment agricultural production, access to resource
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## CONCLUSION:

Subjugation of women is prominent contemporary society where they face patriarchal dominance, exploitation of labour, ~~the~~ feminisation of poverty and many other vulnerabilities.

Such subjugation can be negated with help of proper formation and implementation of policies.