

Women Empowerment through Gender Budgeting in India: An Overview

Md Meraj Alam¹, S. Noman Ahmad², Md Abusad³

¹Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

²Professor, Department of Economics, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

³Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

Email: - merajraj2005@gmail.com

Abstract: India is second largest country after China with 1.21 billion population consisting 51.5 percent male and 48.5 percent females. Females are almost half of the population with decadal growth rate 18.3 percent as compare to male with 17.1 percent. But women face the disparities among all section of the society and lagging behind men in every field of life. This is a setback for the development process in India. India cannot be developed without the development of women. To provide the equal opportunity and to empower the women, India embraces the concept of Gender Budgeting in the Union Budget, 2005-06. The innovative concept of Gender Budgeting has received substantial attention worldwide. It is particularly important in the Indian context because a strong gender discrimination and cultural dominancy of male has been imposed on the female from a long time. The study found that overall there is positive impact of Gender Budgeting on the socio-economic and health status of women in India.

Key Words: Gender Budgeting statement, Women empowerment, Economic Development, Education, Health

1. INTRODUCTION:

Gender Budgeting refers to a method of looking at the budget formulation process, budgetary policies and budget outlay from the gender lens (Budlender & Hewitt 2003). Gender Budget with regard to the Government at any level does not refer to a separate budget for women, rather it is an analytical tool which scrutinises the government budget to reveal its gender-differentiated impact and advocates for greater priorities for programmes and schemes to address the gender-based disadvantages faced by women (Chant & S. H. 2007). Gender Budgeting is a dissection of the government budget to establish its gender-differential impacts and to translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments (Goyal, A. 2005). Thus, Gender Budgeting looks at the government budget from a gender perspective to assess how it addresses the needs of women in the areas of health, nutrition, education, employment, etc. Gender Budgeting does not seek to create a separate budget but seeks affirmative action to address specific needs of women. Budgets are reflective of what the government of a country priorities? It is a way of enacting government policies that have been identified as addressing the most important issues within the country. Besides looking at revenue and expenditure, budgets need to be understood in terms of a broader context, the process of decision making and with regard to who the participants are in the decision-making process (Singh, A.K). The budget is a mirror, expressed in financial terms, of the social and economic policies and the development goals pursued by a country. Gender is an issue that brings to the forefront the reality of inequalities that exist between women and men in the society (Hall & et al, 2004). A common reaction regarding gender and women's issues is that they are seen as less important than other problems prevalent in our society, e.g., poverty, unemployment, violence. This dismissive attitude toward gender inequalities is problematic because it denies the reality that those who are most affected are women and in order to address these problems adequately we need to understand why these problems are gendered. A budget, on the face of it, appears to be a gender neutral policy instrument. Economists tend to view budgets as gender neutral instruments since budgets do not mention women or men but consist of financial aggregates. Budgets, however, are not gender neutral, they are gender blind. Gender-blind budgets ignore the differing effects on women and men and on different groups of women and men. Gender-blind budgets do not consider that women and men have different roles, responsibilities, and

capabilities (Budlender, D. 2002). They ignore the economic and social differences that exist between women and men. This inevitably means that those who are most marginalised within the society are silent, thus their voices are not easily or readily included within the budgeting agenda. A gender budget is a budget that has accounted for the direct and indirect effects of a government's expenditure allocations and revenues on both women and men (Budlender, D. 2002). A gender budget can also act as an instrument for holding the government accountable to its gender equality commitments. Since the adoption of Gender Budgeting, more than one decade is completed. This is enough time for investigating the performance of Gender Budgeting in improving the lives of women in India. The present paper therefore tries to examine the performance of Gender Budgeting in India.

2. GENDER BUDGETING IN INDIA:

To know the status of women in a country, the government of India constituted the committee entitled "Towards Equality" in 1974. This report of the committee pointed out that the development trajectory of the country had adversely affected a large section of women and created new imbalances and disparities. The consciousness generated by this report led to changes in policies towards the development of women in the Fifth Five Year Plan. However, it was only in the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) that specific attention was paid to outlays for programmes/schemes which directly benefited women. The Seventh Five Year Plan witnessed the initiation of a mechanism for identifying and monitoring public expenditure schemes that extended benefits directly to women. In 1986, the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) of Government of India was assigned the responsibility of monitoring 27 beneficiary oriented schemes under various sectors which directly benefited women. However, the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) marked a significant progress in this regard and adopted the strategy of Women's Component Plan (WCP) which was a pioneer to the adoption of Gender Budgeting. The notion of WCP as it was adopted in the Ninth Plan, earmarked a clear, unconditional minimum quantum of funds/benefits for women in the schemes run by all Ministries/Departments that were perceived to be women-related. Under WCP, both Central, as well as State Governments, was required to ensure that at least 30 percent of the funds/benefits are earmarked for women. Although the domain of WCP is restricted only to Plan outlays by the Departments, WCP provides a benchmark to assess the performance of Departments in prioritizing Plan resources for schemes which directly benefit women. The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) continues with the strategy of Empowering Women with the Gender Budgeting. The need for taking up Gender Budgeting was also recognized in the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001, which observed that availability of adequate financial, human and market resources to implement the policy will be managed by concerned departments. In this scenario, the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) of Government of India with the collaboration of United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) led the initiative for Gender Budgeting at the central level, in which an important element was the commissioning of a Gender Budgeting study by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), New Delhi. In the Economic Survey of 2000-01, first time a separate section on Gender Inequality was included. Later on in the Union Budget, 2005-06 a separate statement on Gender Budgeting was included for the first time, which covered the budget allocations under 10 demands for grants.

Ministry of Women and Child Development has been consistently promoting Gender Budgeting across the country as a pathway to ensure gender mainstreaming at all levels and stages of the budgetary process. To facilitate the integration of gender analysis in policies, programmes and schemes, the Ministry of Finance in consultation with the Ministry of Women and Child Development had issued a Gender Budget Charter on 8th March 2007 outlining the composition and functions of the Gender Budgeting Cells (GBCs). The most important step taken in this regard has been the institutionalization of the progress through the formation of GBCs in various Ministries and Departments. As of now, 57 Central Ministries /Departments have set up GBCs. The magnitude of Gender Budget as reflected in the Gender Budget Statement shows allocations made for women by different Ministries/Departments.

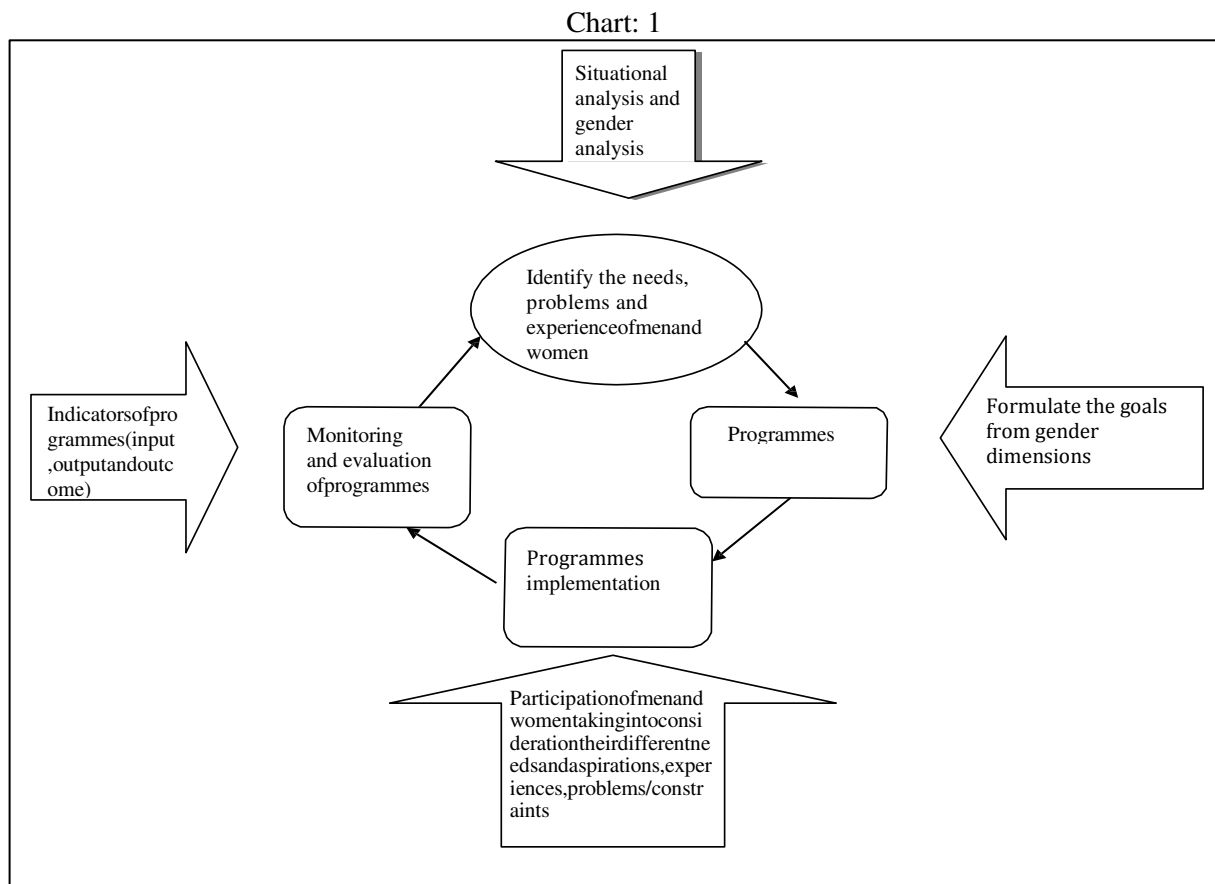
3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on purely secondary data. The required data has been taken from Gender Budget statement of Union Budget 2005-06 to 2017-18, population census 2011, various issue of the

Economic survey and National Health Profile 2015. The analysis carried out in this paper is quantitative and descriptive. In order to analyze the data and to draw conclusions, the simple statistical techniques have been used such as percentage method and Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) is calculated.

4. THE PROCESS OF GENDER BUDGETING:

If a gender budget is preparing for a particular department/ministry, it is compulsory to recognise the needs, problems, and experiences of men and women followed by programme planning, programme execution, monitoring and evaluation programmes. Further, the next step is to formulate the goal from gender aspect and involvement of women and men taking into consideration their different needs, aspirations, experiences, problems, and constraints, followed by Indicator Programmes (Input, Output and Outcome). The process of Gender Budgeting can be explained with the help of following chart 1.



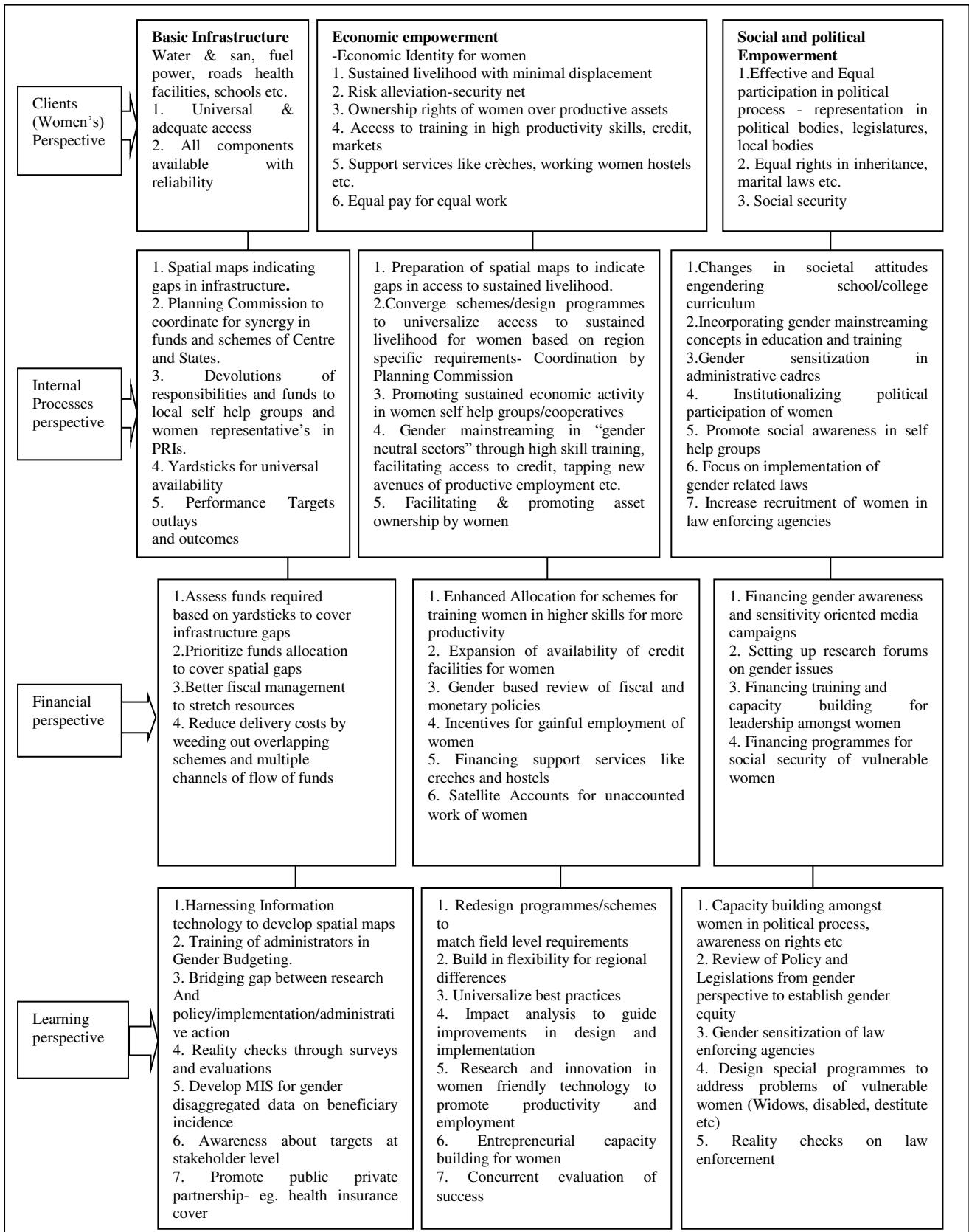
Source: UNIFEM, Gender-Responsive Budgeting (www.gender-budgets.org)

5. GENDER BUDGETING AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT:

A strategic map is presented to express all the interrelated activities which are required to the women empowerment and to facilitate the better focus on resource allocation under Gender Budgeting. The map is presented under four components i.e. client perspective, internal process perspective, financial perspective and learning perspective as following.

Strategic Map: Gender Budgeting as a Tool of Women Empowerment

Source: Goyal Anjali (2005): Women’s Empowerment through Gender Budgeting: A Review in the Indian context



6. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS UNDER GENDER BUDGETING IN INDIA:

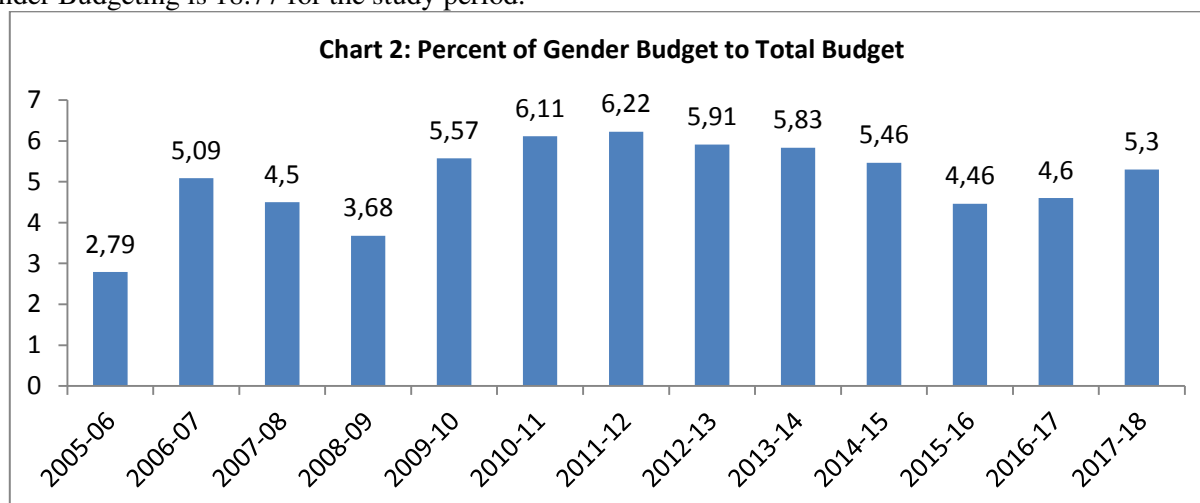
Gender Budgeting in its present form in India was stated in Union Budget, 2005-06. The provision for Gender Budgeting is made on the basis of demands made by various Ministries/Departments with respect to different indicators/aspects/issues related to women empowerment. The following table gives a detail of No of Ministries/Departments involved in Gender Budgeting and the No of demands made by them. For all the demands made by Ministries/Departments, the fund allocated under different budget is also provided along with their share in total budget allocation. Table-1 shows the allocation of funds under Gender Budgeting statement since 2005-06 to 2017-18. In 2005-06 total 9 ministries/department started Gender Budgeting with 10 demands. Since 2005-06 there is an increasing trend in allocations of funds under Gender Budgeting statement in absolute terms with noticeable fluctuation except the year 2008-09.

Table 1: Gender Budgeting Statement in India

Year	No of Ministries/Departments	No of Demands	Total Magnitude of Gender Budget (BE) (in Crores)	Percentage of Gender to Total Budget
2005-06	9	10	14378.68	2.79
2006-07	18	24	28736.53	5.09
2007-08	27	33	31177.96	4.50
2008-09	27	33	27661.67	3.68
2009-10	28	33	56857.61	5.57
2010-11	28	33	67749.80	6.11
2011-12	29	34	78251.02	6.22
2012-13	29	34	88142.80	5.91
2013-14	30	35	97133.70	5.83
2014-15	36	39	98029.84	5.46
2015-16	35	35	79257.87	4.46
2016-17	31	36	90769.80	4.60
2017-18	36	31	113326.65	5.30
CAGR	12 Percent	10 Percent	18.77 Percent	

Source: Expenditure Budget Vol. I, All Years.

Gender budget started with the lowest, i.e. 2.97 percent to the total union budget in 2005-06 and it improved to the highest level at 6.22 in 2011-12. But from the 2012-13, the percentage of gender budget in the total union budget shows the decreasing trend till 2016-17 which is 4.6 percent but in the present budget, it shows an improvement both in absolute and percentage term (5.30 percent) which is greater than the previous year but less than peak value. In the current year a total of 36 ministries /department pursuing the Gender Budgeting with 31 demands. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of the allocation of fund for Gender Budgeting is 18.77 for the study period.



Source Based on Table 1

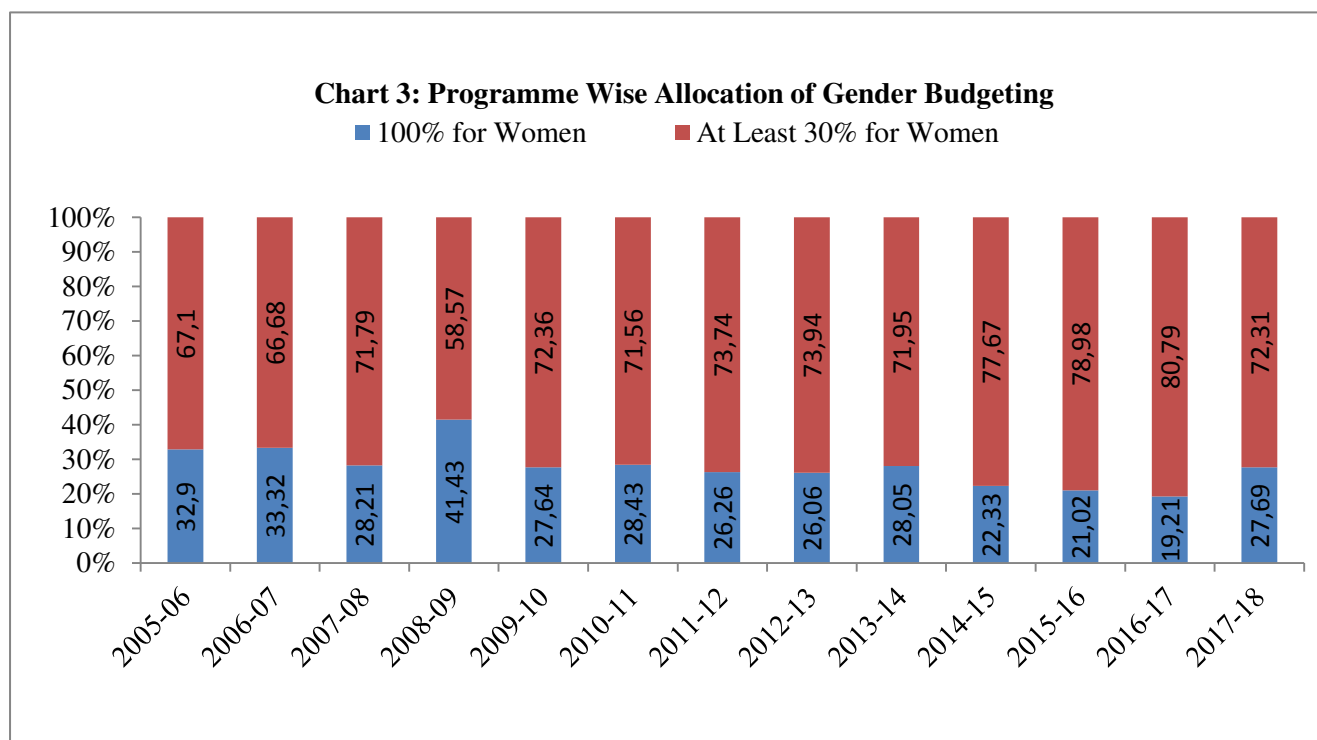
The Gender Budget Statement is divided into two parts. Part A indicates Schemes in which 100 percent provision is for women, and Part B reflects schemes where the allocations for women constitute at least 30 percent of the provisions. Table 2 shows that share of part A in Gender Budgeting is always less in comparison to part B from the beginning. In the 2005-06, the share of part A in Gender Budgeting was 32.90 and share of part B 67.10 percent. But the share of part A was increased up to 41.43 percent till 2008. After that, it starts declining and reaches to the lowest by 19.21 Percent in 2016-17.

Table 2: Schemes Wise Allocation of Fund in Percent and in Aggregate

Year	Part A (100% Women Specific Allocation)	Part A % share to Gender Budget	Part B (at least 30% for Women Related Allocation)	Part B % share to Gender Budget
2005-06	7905.08	32.90	16126.92	67.10
2006-07	9575.82	33.32	19160.71	66.68
2007-08	8795.47	28.21	22382.49	71.79
2008-09	11459.61	41.43	16202.06	58.57
2009-10	15715.68	27.64	41141.93	72.36
2010-11	19266.05	28.43	48483.75	71.56
2011-12	20548.35	26.26	57702.67	73.74
2012-13	22968.93	26.06	65173.87	73.94
2013-14	27248.29	28.05	69889.41	71.95
2014-15	21887.61	22.33	76142.23	77.67
2015-16	16657.84	21.02	62600.03	78.98
2016-17	17412.01	19.21	73212.75	80.79
2017-18	31391.20	27.69	81935.45	72.31
CAGR	12.18		14.51	

Source: Expenditure Budget, Volume 1, All Years.

In the current year, Part A has a share of 27.69 percent in total Gender Budgeting. Part B always has a greater share in Gender Budgeting, It stands almost one-third of total Gender Budgeting which is shown in table 2. The CAGR of Part A and Part B is 12.18 and 14.51 respectively that may be the case of concern.



Source: Based on table 2

7. BRIEF PROFILE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HEALTH INDICATOR OF WOMEN IN INDIA:

Table 3 shows the socio economic and health indicators of women in India. India having the lowest overall sex ratio and child sex ratio among the list of developing countries but overall sex ratio shows the increasing trend from 933 in 2001 to 943 in 2011. But child sex ratio is decreased from 927 in 2001 to 919 in 2011 which will definitely affect the gender equality in future. Other health related indicators such as IMR for girls, MMR, TFR and life expectancy at birth shows the improvement over the period of time. The literacy rate of women increases from 53.71 Percent in 2001 to 64.63 percent in 2011 which is almost 20 percent less than men. Work participation rate of women shows a reduction from 28.7 percent in 2004 (according to NSS 61st round) to 21.9 percent in 2012 (NSS 68th Round).

Table 3: Socio-Economic and Health Profile of Women

Indicator	Year	India
Overall Sex Ratio (Per 1000)	2001	933
	2011	943
Child Sex Ratio (Per 1000 Live Birth)	2001	927
	2011	919
Life Expectancy at Birth (Female)	2015	69.9
IMR for Girls (Per 1000 Live Birth)	2004	58
	2008	53
	2013	40
MMR (Per 100000 Live Birth)	2001-03	301
	2007-09	212
	2011-13	167
Total Fertility Rate	NFHS-2 (1998-99)	2.9
	NFHS-3 (2005-06)	2.7
	2013	2.3
Female Literacy rate	2001	53.71
	2011	64.63
Work Participation Rate (Percent)	NSS 61 st Round (2004-05)	28.7
	NSS 68 th Round (2011-12)	21.9

Source: Census of India, NSS Reports, NFHS and NITI Aayog.

8. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

There is an increase in the number of department and ministries undertaking the Gender Budgeting initiatives. The coverage of demand for Gender Budgeting in the Union budget has increased from 10 in 2005-16 to 31 in 2017-18. As of now, 57 Central Ministries /Departments have set up Gender Budgeting cells (GBCs). This is a positive step and will be helpful in bringing the positive changes in the life of women in India. The total allocation of the fund under Gender Budgeting statement increased continuously both in magnitude and percentage term. It increases from 2.79 percent in 2005-06 to 5.30 percent of total central government expenditure in 2017-18 with minor fluctuations. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of the total allocation of fund for Gender Budgeting is found to be 18.77 percent. The share of Part A (100 percent allocation of women) in Gender Budgeting is always less in comparison to Part B (at least 30 percent for women specific) from the beginning. Part B comprises the maximum fund which is not specifically meant

for women. The average share of allocation under Gender Budgeting statement is 27.89 percent and 72.09 percent for Part A and Part B respectively from 2005-06 to 2017-18. The overall sex ratio has improved by 10 points from 2001 to 2011 which is a good sign for women empowerment but at the same period, child sex ratio decreased by 8 points, which will certainly affect the sex ratio in future. The life expectancy at birth for women is 69.9 year which is greater than men. It shows the positive impact of Gender Budgeting on women's lives. Infant mortality rate for female decreases from 58 in 2004 to 40 in 2013. Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) has come down to 167 in 2011-13 from 301 in 2001-03. This implies significant impact of Gender Budgeting on MMR. Total fertility rate also declined from 2.7 percent in 2005 to 2.3 percent in 2013. It shows the positive impact of expenditure under Gender Budgeting statement. As far as the level of education is concerned, the female literacy has increased from 53.71 percent in 2001 to 64.63 percent in 2011. According to NSSO 61st and 68th round survey, female work participation rate has come down from 28.7 percent in 2004-05 to 21.9 percent in 2011-12 at all India level. The study found the overall positive impact of Gender Budgeting on the socioeconomic and health status of women in India and which is essential for women empowerment.

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