GENDER BUDGETING AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

Abstract of the THESIS
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ABSTRACT

Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individuals and communities. It often involves the empowered developing confidence in their own capacities. Women empowerment is, in fact, a multidimensional phenomenon consisting of access to decision making in family, political and social sphere. Researchers in different times have identified different factors necessary for increasing the level of empowerment in an uni-directional way. But to have an effective strategy to raise the level of empowerment one should have a clear understanding of forces retarding or improving empowerment. Women's empowerment is a flow rather than a stock variable manifesting into various outcomes and well being is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the former, i.e. well-being going through various pathways like gaining resources, autonomy and agency. These pathways denote expansion in capabilities in a way which brings changes in individuals’ lives of individuals; people who are previously denied power are now being empowered.

Women will have to empower themselves from below in order to compel the government to empower them from above. Further, there is a need for a change of values and behaviour in the society, a need for positive socio-cultural, political and economic empowerment. Education can play a vital role in bringing about the desirable behavioural changes among the women and make them well equipped in terms of knowledge, competence and capacity to deal with different political problems. Education and Health fall in the category of mixed goods and therefore it is the responsibility of the nation to provide them. The policies of the government are reflected from its budget.

The inclusion of the Gender Budget Statement in the Union Budget Document demonstrates the growing concerns of the Government, its commitment and openness to make available the public expenditure figures for analysis. Gender budgeting initiative in India is still in its nascent stage and the process will get refined and strengthened over a period of time. Gender Budgeting is not merely an accounting exercise of disaggregating the data based on the expenditure incurred into 100 per cent women or pro women allocation. Though the availability of disaggregated data,
the first step is analyzing the flow of funds to various schemes. Based on this data the gender budgeting initiative needs to be taken further on. In Indian context, there is a growing relevance of gender budgeting initiatives keeping in view the position of women vis-à-vis various socio-economic indicators. Therefore, the ultimate outcome of the gender budgeting initiatives is the improvement in the socio-economic indicators where women/girls are concerned.

The first chapter is introductory in nature which includes a brief overview of status of women, Women Empowerment, Gender Budgeting, scope of Gender Budgeting, global scenario of Gender Budgeting, Gender Budgeting in India, objective of the study, hypotheses, data sources and research methodology and limitations of the study.

Objectives

The major objectives of the present research work are as under:

➢ To analyse the concept of women empowerment and its status in India.

➢ To study the concept and explore the nature of gender budgeting in India.

➢ To examine the allocation of resources for women during different plans in India.

➢ To analyse the budgetary allocation in Union Budgets for women from 2001-02 to 2013-14.

➢ To examine the global scenario of Gender Development Index and factors affecting it.

➢ To identify the factors which facilitate women empowerment.

Research Methodology

The study is based on primary and secondary data. Secondary data are collected from Census Reports, Five-year Plan Documents, Union Budget Documents from 2001-02 to 2013-14, Economic Surveys from 2001-02 to 2013-14, Annual Reports of Department of Women and Child Development from 2001-02 to 2012-13,
Sample Registration System of the Registrar-General of India, National Sample Surveys, National Family Health Survey rounds and the Central Statistical Organization. The secondary data collected from the above-mentioned sources is analysed using simple statistical tools such as percentage and ratio-proportion. Wherever required, suitable charts, graphs and diagrams are used to clarify further the issues involved in it. A sample of 300 women is taken from Aligarh City. With the help of questionnaire information regarding their age, education, occupation, monthly income, harassment etc. is being gathered. By employing Multinomial logit model we try to identify the factors which affect women empowerment.

Chapter second reviews the literature available to get both a summary and explanation and current state of knowledge on the topic as found in books and journals. It is divided into two sections. The first section reviews the studies on Gender Budgeting; the second section of this chapter covers the reviews on Women Empowerment. From the review of literature certain important observations may be summarised as: The concept of gender budgeting is of recent origin, it is a result of sustained efforts of different women-groups and organisations, it is a result of realisation of centuries old exploitation, marginalisation and discrimination against at least a half of population. It is realised that gender budgeting is necessary for social justice and economic equality. Governments have now introduced gender components in the budgets. It is admitted that gender development generates benefits which are helpful to both the sexes. There is serious need to carry out incidence analysis of different women-specific programmes. The gender budget policy should be regularly analysed, for which involvement of women organisations is necessary. Empowering of women pre-suppose a dynamic and democratic change in the perception and expectation for women in our society. Empowerment of women creates “social multiplier” where aggregate power will be greater than individual power and Empowering of women pre-supposes a drastic, dynamic and democratic change in the perception of and expectation for women in our society. Various indicators like education, health, political participation, longevity of women, fertility rate etc. are factors affecting women empowerment.

Chapter third analyses the various schemes, policies and programmes for Indian women and their welfare in the various five year plans since independence.
The First Five Year Plan (1951-56) was mainly welfare oriented as far as women's issues were concerned. In the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61) efforts were geared to organised "Mahila Mandals" (women's groups) at grass-roots levels to ensure better implementation of welfare schemes. The Third, Fourth, Fifth and other Interim Plans (1961-74) accorded high priority to women's education. Measures to improve maternal and child health services, and supplementary feeding for children, nursing and expectant mothers were also introduced. Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85) was regarded as a landmark in women's development. In the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) the development programmes for women were continued, with the objective of raising their economic and social status and bring them into the mainstream of national development. Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) attempted to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors did not bypass women. The approach of the Eighth Plan marks a definite shift from 'development' to empowerment of women. Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) envisaged: Empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes and Minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development, Promoting and developing people’s participatory institutions like Panchayati Raj institutions, cooperatives and self-help groups, Strengthening efforts to build self-reliance, The convergence of services from different sectors, a women’s component plan at the Central and State levels. The Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) formulated to ensure requisite access of women to information, resources and services, and advance gender equality goals. Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) proposed to undertake special measures for gender empowerment and equity. The Ministry of Women and Child Development would make synergistic use of gender budget and gender mainstreaming process. The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017) entails strict adherence to gender budgeting across the key elements for Gender Equity to be addressed in the Twelfth Plan can be clubbed under the following: Economic Empowerment, Social and Physical Infrastructure, Enabling Legislations, Women's Participation in Governance, Inclusiveness of all categories of vulnerable women, Engendering National Policies/Programmes and Mainstreaming gender through Gender Budgeting.

The fourth chapter analyses the various Union Budgets from gender lens. It included the introduction on gender budgeting, analysis of total allocation for women
in various Union Budgets, analysis of expenditure by different ministries/ departments for 100 per cent Women Specific Schemes, analysis of expenditure by different ministries/ departments for 30 per cent Women Specific Schemes.

The analysis of the total allocation for women from 2001-02 to 2013-14 reveals that the allocation for gender budgeting is increased around 70 percent increase. With some ups and downs there is an increase in the allocation for gender budgeting and as a percentage of Union Government Expenditure. There is an increase in allocation of budgetary fund for 100 per cent Women Specific Programme is almost 8 folds, which is higher than the allocation of 30 per cent Women Specific Programme, which is almost 6 folds during the study period.

From the analysis of the allocation for 100 per cent Women Specific Programmes to total union government expenditure as well as the percentage to total allocation for women shows increases with fluctuations from 2001 to 2014. The trend of 30 per cent Women Specific Programmes to total allocation for women in percentage reveals a sharp decline in allocation in 2005-06 and remain same in 2008-09. Again, there is decline in 2008-09 and then it increases in 2009-10 and remain almost the same in the subsequent years. The analysis of the allocation for 30 per cent Women Specific Programmes to total union government expenditure observed slight fluctuations it increases, but in 2008-09 there is sudden fall down. In 2009-10 there is steep up in the percentage and it continues till 2011-12.

Following NIFPF, the present study also categorised the women specific budgetary allocation into four clusters, viz. Protective and Welfare Services, Social Services, Economic Services and Regulatory Services. The analysis reveals that 45 per cent of the expenditure is on social services, followed by 2 per cent on economic services, 1 per cent on protective and welfare services, 0 per cent on regulatory awareness generation while the remaining 52 per cent on other services in 2006-07 while it is round 88 per cent of the expenditure is on social services, 2 per cent on economic services, 1 per cent on protective and welfare services, 0 per cent on regulatory awareness generation while the remaining 9 per cent on other services in 2012-13. The figures are startlingly different for 2013-14. The social services accounts 91 per cent of the expenditure, 0 per cent for economic services, the
protective and welfare services accounts for 2 per cent and regulatory and awareness
generation account 0 per cent and the remaining 7 per cent accounts for the others.

The chapter five is devoted to examine the global scenario of women. For this
we have taken the Gender Development Index (GDI) as compiled by World
Economic Forum. India’s performance in bridging the gap between male and female
is very poor among the countries of the world. India has 101th rank in gender gap
index out of 136 countries in the world in 2013 while ranked 114 out of 142 countries.

A multiple regression is employed to identify the factors responsible for the
gender gap among the nations of the world. To estimates the parameters we have
taken a sample of 103 countries and applied the Ordinary Least Squares Method of
estimation. The result shows that the magnitude of the coefficients of GDP per capita
of the nation is very low which can be neglected. Therefore, it can be interpreted that
the GDI rank score is not much affected by the GDP per capita of the nation. Though,
the coefficient of female life expectancy is not statistically significant but the
magnitude is quite high i.e. 72.7 per cent. The other two factors which are
statistically significant are female literacy rate and female workforce participation
rate. To conclude one may say that female literacy rate and female workforce
participation rate are the important determinants of GDI rank scores.

While close examination of the GDI ranks it is observed that the rank of
muslim countries are very low as compared to many other countries of the world.
Some of the Muslim countries are very rich but globally they are much below in the
ranking of GDI. Therefore, the women empowerment/ the gender disparity do not
depend on the prosperity of the nation but it basically depends on the female literacy
female employment and female life expectancy apart from social attitude of the
society.

In chapter sixth an attempt is made to identify the factors affecting women
empowerment in India. For the empirical analysis a sample of 300 muslim women is
taken from Aligarh City. The multinomial logit model, an econometric tool is applied
to identify the factors responsible for women empowerment. This analysis is applied
when there is a single dichotomous outcome and more than one independent variable.
The multinomial logit model (Greene, 2003) is specified as below:
\[ P[Y_i = j] = \frac{\exp(\beta_j x_i)}{\sum_{k=1}^4 \exp(\beta_k x_i)}, j = 0, 1, 2 \] 

(1)

Where, \( j = 0, 1, 2 \) refers to women empowerment based on either consultation of women in money matters or permission to move. The estimated equations provide a set of probabilities for \( j + 1 \) choices for a decision maker with characteristics \( x_i \).

Following Greene (2003), out of the three choices, only two parameters vectors are needed to determine all the three probabilities. The probabilities are given by:

\[ P[Y_i = j|x_i] = \frac{\exp(\beta_j x_i)}{1 + \sum_{k=1}^4 \exp(\beta_k x_i)}, \text{ for } j = 0, 1, 2, \beta_0 = 0 \] 

(2)

For our purpose, we use \( j = 0 \) as the reference group (or omitted). Since \( \beta \) coefficients in this model are difficult to interpret (Greene, 2003), we compute the marginal effects corresponding to \( j = 0, 1, 2 \) as:

\[ \delta_j = \frac{\partial P[Y_i = j]}{\partial x_i} = P[Y_i = j][\beta_j - \bar{\beta}]; j = 0, 1, 2 \] 

(3)

Thus every sub-vector of \( \beta \) enters every marginal effect, both through the probabilities and through the weighted average that appears in \( \delta_j \). These values can be computed from the parameter estimates. Standard errors are computed using the delta method. Although the usual focus is on the coefficient estimates, equation (3) suggests that these could be misleading.

The dependent variable for the model is obtained from the respondents’ perception about that they have freedom to go out or take any sort of permission to move, their concerns in the money matters. The study then captures the impact of several factors on the empowerment of women. In order to obtain information, a representative sample of 300 women is taken from the total population in the city of Aligarh were chosen for detailed analysis to find out their empowerment status. Since the focus of the study is to find the empowerment of women at home and at the workplace, the survey included only married and unmarried women. In order to obtain
a proper representation of the unit under study, the city of Aligarh has been divided into two regions – the New Locality of Aligarh and Old locality of Aligarh. The various explanatory variables that affect the level of empowerment of women are: marital status, father's/ husband's occupation, father's / husband's income, respondent's income, respondent's literacy, respondent's educational qualification, bank account, use of ATM, knowledge about women protection act by the respondent.

The study reveals that women in Aligarh City are relatively less empowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status in spite of many efforts undertaken by government. Gender gap exists regarding access to education and employment. Household decision making power and freedom of movement of women vary considerably with their age, education and employment status. Control over cash earnings increases with age, education and occupation. The study concludes by an observation that access to education and employment are only the enabling factors to empowerment, achievement towards the goal, however, depends largely on the attitude of the people towards gender equality.

The seventh chapter concludes the study with few suggestions as follows:

➢ Gender disaggregated benefit incidence analysis can be a useful tool for analysing the distributional impacts of public expenditure across gender.

➢ Sectoral initiatives on gender budgeting need to be given emphasis.

➢ The attempts to frame policies to integrate the unpaid care sector in GRB need to be given priority.

➢ The institutional mechanisms for GRB need to be strengthened,

➢ Open a new head in the budget classification on 'gender development'.

➢ Integrate gender budgets into outcome budgets.

➢ Build gender disaggregated data.

➢ The scope of the “Gender Budgeting Statement” should be expanded to cover all ministries and departments
➢ Strengthen the sex disaggregated database within relevant Ministries/Departments, which will enable better analysis and more effective monitoring of targets and achievements for men and women.

The Future agenda is to study the budget in a more disaggregated manner. There is need to study the success of different women specific schemes. Still there is scope to study the women empowerment with large sample taken all section of the society. There is a need to examine the women empowerment in different communities, religion, cast and region to have a holistic view of this concept and policy formation.