PREFACE

India is one of the world’s fastest growing economy in which women form valuable human resources of the nation and their socio-economic status play important role in the sustainable growth of an economy. There exists a great potential in women, their potential hidden power is to be utilized for which their status in the society must be improved and she must be strengthened in all the spheres of life. Women’s empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban/rural), educational status, social status (caste and class), and age. Policies on women’s empowerment exist at the national, state, and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender-based violence, and political participation. However, there are significant gaps between policy advancements and actual practice at the community level. In order to create more gender equality among women in both urban and rural settings, scholars and field practitioners have recognized the importance of empowering women. Mayoux (2000) defines empowerment as a process of change in power relations that is both multidimensional and interlinked.

As far as India is concerned, the principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution and finds a place in the Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women but also empowers the States to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Since independence, the Government of India has been making various efforts to empower women. In various plan periods, the issues regarding women empowerment has been given priority. From fifth five year plan onwards there has been a remarkable shift from welfare oriented approach of women empowerment to development approach. The National Commission for women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights’ of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution of India provided opportunity to women to take part in active politics. The year 2001 was declared as the year of women’s empowerment for enhancing their status. To achieve the goal, the government introduced different programmes, identified strategies, established
different institutions and made various legal provisions. In spite of all these efforts and actions, women in India still lag behind the men.

Gender budgeting, which is also known as gender responsive budgeting, tracks how budgets respond to gender equality and women's rights requirement. This entails investing in and making available mechanisms, guidelines and indicators that enable gender equality advocates to track progress, benefit incidence and show how supposedly gender neutral budgets impact on men and women. The aim of this discussion is to highlight the importance of gender budgeting in addressing gender disparities while taking note of the fact that gender is a key variable in development. The term gender budgeting will be defined in an effort to show how the practice can lead to gender equitable resource allocation and improve revenue generation for nations. This enables government's commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment move from paper to practical policies. In gender budgeting, there is the creation of awareness regarding gender specific issues in the policies of all government agencies. It also brings to light the effort of women in running the economy and attaining economic efficiency by including equity in budget performance indicators. Considering that most nations signed and ratified international commitments on gender equality and equity, it is expected of them to put in place realistic budgetary measures towards the achievement of gender equality. Despite the fact that gender budgeting is a relatively new concept, it is undoubtedly an important ingredient in quickening the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and the fulfilment of international commitments on gender equality.

The present study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is an introduction to the study. It discussed the importance of women's skill and talent in the process of development of the nation, concept and importance of women empowerment in India as well as in the world, concept of gender budgeting, scope of gender budgeting, global scenario of gender budgeting, gender budgeting in India, objective of the study, hypothesis, research methodology and limitation of the study.

The chapter 2 is divided into three sections. The first section reviews the studies on Gender Budgeting, the second section of this chapter covers the reviews on Women
Empowerment while the third section of the chapter covers the conclusion derived from the reviews.

The chapter 3 analyse the various schemes, policies and programmes for women and their welfare in the various plans since independence.

The chapter 4 analyse 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 chapter 5 is devoted to see the global scenario of women. For that we have taken the GDI as compiled by World Economic Forum. A multiple regression is employed to identify the factors responsible for the gender gap among the nations of the world.

The chapter 6 we have examine the responses of 300 Muslim women from the Aligarh City. The multinomial logit model, an econometric tool is applied to identify the factors responsible for women empowerment.

The chapter 7 deals with summary and findings of the study along with suggestions and future agenda.