CHAPTER I

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1: INTRODUCTION

Gender budgeting is a dissection of the government budget to establish its gender-differential impacts and to translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments. Thus, gender budgeting looks at the government budget from a gender perspective to assess how it addresses the needs of women in the areas like 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 prioritises? 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. 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. 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. 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. Thus, a gender budget can also act as an instrument for holding the government accountable to its gender equality commitments. Gender budgets are referred by several names, like, “Gender Budgets”, “Women’s Budgets”, “Gender Sensitive Budgets”, “Gender Responsive Budgets”, “Applied Gender Budget Analysis”, etc. All these terms refer to gender budget initiatives.

1.2: NEED FOR THE STUDY OF GENDER BUDGETING

Currently, the gender disparities have come to the forefront. The important dimension of these disparities is the falling sex ratio. Amartya Sen has described this phenomenon as “missing women” and several countries are now described as “daughter deficient countries”. Systematic steps are now being taken to address to this particular issue and gender budgeting is one such. A gender analysis of government budgets offers a new tool for ensuring a better match between government’s policy commitments and development outcomes for women recognising the underlying gender inequalities and redressing them through allocation of public resources.

The main aim of gender budgets is to highlight the gap between policy statements and the resources committed to their implementation, ensuring that public money is spent in more gender equitable ways. Originally, the initiatives were termed ‘women’s budgets’ because the focus was on the impact on women
and girls. More recently, the emphasis has shifted to 'gender' as a category for analysis and to avoid any misunderstanding that the activists are working to produce a separate budget for women. Gender responsive budgeting initiatives provide a way of assessing the impact of government revenue and expenditure on women.

Governments are influential in shaping gender outcomes both directly and indirectly. Governments make decisions about what constitutes a “fair” distribution between different sections of society. The government’s concern could be about inequalities between men and women, as well as between different sections. Gender budgets are premised on the assumption that a “fair” distribution of resources between women and men is an important goal.

Gender is mainstreamed in national budget to reorient public expenditure and revenue toward reducing poverty and inequality. In order to move toward sustainable development, it is critical that both men and women are empowered to contribute. For the empowerment of women and to enhance women contribution, the starting point is to engender national budget.

The Indian Government introduced gender budgeting in selected Departments and adopted a ‘Women’s Component Plan’ earmarking 30 percent funds for women. ‘Gender Cells’ have been established in different Ministries to monitor the flow of funds to schemes identified for women and collect sex-disaggregated data. By 2006 there were around 60 countries in the world which have initiated gender budgeting. It is in this backdrop that the need to study nature, scope, significance and different dimensions of gender budgeting arises.

1.3: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since long there was no specific allocation for women in the government policies and programmes, therefore, it has not led to a noticeable empowerment of women. Recently countries have realised that to remove gender gaps, persisting in all societies, and to achieve empowerment of women, there is a need to look at government budgets through gender lens. Gender budgeting is now recognised worldwide as a powerful tool to achieve socio-economic
empowerment of women. Gender responsive budgeting actively addresses gender gaps in budget allocations, particularly in key areas such as education, health, employment, access to resources, etc., and ensures that government resources are allocated where they are most essential for the benefit of all. The situation of Indian women is also pathetic, they need to be empowered through government policies and programmes. In this context, the problem to study here is ‘the gender responsive budget’ with special reference to India.

1.4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

i) Area of Study:

In this work an attempt is made to study the budget from gender view point. Therefore, the present work is on the borderlines of public economics on one hand and gender studies on the other.

ii) Period of Study:

The present study analyses the Union Budgets from 1996-97 to 2006-07. In addition to this the gender budget statements in Union Budgets between 2005-06 and 2009-10 are also analysed.

iii) Sources of Data:

The study is based entirely on secondary data collected from Census Reports, Five-year Plan Documents, Union Budget Documents from 1996-97 to 2009-10, Economic Surveys from 1996-97 to 2009-10, Annual Reports of Department of Women and Child Development from 1996-97 to 2009-10. Earlier to 2006-07, it was a Department under the Ministry of Human Resource Development. In the year 2005-06, this Department was elevated to a full fledged Ministry. In addition to this, data is collected from several other reports, country studies and online sources.

iv) Analysis of Data:

The 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.

v) Review of Literature:

There are several aspects of gender budgeting, the literature, therefore, is very vast. Several studies have covered one or other aspect of gender budgeting. For instance, there are studies related to experiences of different countries which have adopted gender budgeting; impact of gender budgeting in agricultural sector; education sector; need to adopt gender budgeting in public finance; experiences of several states in India which have initiated gender budgeting, etc. In the present study an attempt is made to review a few major works on the concept gender budgeting such as those of Caroline O.N. Moser (1989) “Gender Planning in the Third World: Meeting Practical and Strategic Needs”. The author discusses about the development of gender planning in the Third World. This paper portrays the capacity of different planning interventions (Welfare approach, Anti-poverty approach, Equity approach, Empowerment approach) to meet gender needs with examples from such sectors as employment, housing and other basic services. In the third world, women play the “triple role” of reproductive, productive and community managing (they struggle to manage their neighbourhoods), yet, their work is not recognised by the planners, whose task is to assess different needs of people within low income communities. This work provides the critique of different policy approaches to “women in development” from the gender planning perspective.

Naila Kabeer (1992) in her article “Evaluating Cost-Benefit Analysis as a Tool for Gender Planning” has evaluated the usefulness of Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) in gender planning and development. The author has identified several limitations of Cost-Benefit Analysis due to methodological biases of the framework itself as well as out of the political economy of gender in which it has to operate. The author concludes with critical comment that, the first step is to conduct cost benefit analysis on CBA itself. If a project or programme related to empowering women is evaluated only for the benefit of policy making agency
without commitments on gender equity, then the CBA analysis will be a waste of resources.

Ingrid Palmer (1995) in her paper “Public Finance from a Gender Perspective” draws attention to include gender issues in macroeconomic policies. The author speaks that a space is opening up for a new approach which could combine gender equity and growth, through an emphasis on public finance which supports and is complementary to women’s economic activities. There is a need of an “integrated approach” that is combining social and economic policies with gender perspective. Put through a gender lens, all public revenues and expenditures can become better focused, with subsequent benefit both in the form of gender equity and allocative efficiency.

Sujatha Vishwanathan (1997) addresses about the gender planning in her paper on “Focus on ‘ARE’: Need of the Hour in Gender Planning”. She opines that development planning aims at increasing opportunities as well as the ability to get these opportunities. Equality of opportunity for women can be given only if their needs are clearly identified and adequate resources are allotted.

Debbie Budlender and Rhonda Sharp with Kerri Allen (1998) in their document, *How to do a Gender-Sensitive Budget Analysis: Contemporary Research and Practice*, express that this document was prepared out of the experiences of developing gender-sensitive budgets in several countries. This document thoroughly explains the meanings and terms of gender sensitive budgets and instances of countries which have initiated gender budgets. It also discusses how gender issues arise in a budgetary context. Further, it discusses seven tools or methods which may be used in the gender-sensitive analysis of budgets. The seven tools are, gender-aware policy appraisal, gender-disaggregated beneficiary assessments, gender-disaggregated public expenditure incidence analysis, gender-disaggregated tax incidence analysis, gender-disaggregated analysis of the impact of the budget on time use, gender-aware medium term economic policy framework and gender-aware budget statement. It provides a brief introduction to new theoretical developments in macroeconomics, which take into account unpaid care responsibilities, and
discusses their budgetary implications. This document explains how to prepare gender-sensitive budget statement and provides an initial approach for those governments wishing to undertake a gender-sensitive analysis of their budgets.

Gita Sen (2000) in her paper “Gender Mainstreaming in Finance Ministries” focuses on three points of entry to engendering the work of Ministries of Finance. In order to engender macroeconomic management, the Ministry of Finance should conduct budget trade off exercise that will examine alternative scenarios for reducing budget deficits while strengthening the ability of government to support human reproduction needs. The paper highlights on institutional and attitudinal barriers that stand in the way of mainstreaming gender in ministries of finance.

The book Gender Budgets Make Cents: Understanding Gender Responsive Budgets authored by Debbie Budlender, Diane Elson and Guy Hewitt(2002) draws attention to the significance of gender budgeting. It takes into effect the differing impact of government expenditure and revenue on men and women. It throws light on how gender responsive budgets have been used as pivotal tool to assess budgetary performance and impact.

Nirmala Banerjee and Poulami Roy (2003) in their paper “Gender in Fiscal Policies: The Case of West Bengal” have examined several fiscal policies adopted by the Government of West Bengal for the development of women in the State. The paper studies the West Bengal’s budgetary situation with respect to other major Indian states during nineteen nineties. The paper examines the nature of women-oriented programmes adopted by state government and analyses the impact on women. It is analysed that it is difficult to understand the nature of the expected benefits and also to distribute those benefits by gender. Budgetary policies change the parameters under which workers and consumers operate. The relative impact on men and women is a function not just of the economic variables but also of their intra-household positions.

The report Implementation of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy: First Annual Monitoring Report, FY02 (2003) presents the findings of the first annual
monitoring of the implementation of the World Bank’s gender mainstreaming strategy. This report is based on the information submitted by the regions and additional cross-regional information collected by Quality Assurance Group and the Gender and Development Group. It focuses on the integration of the gender issues into country diagnosis, policy dialogue, analytical work and lending.

Goyal Anjali (2005) in her paper “Women’s Empowerment through Gender Budgeting-A Review in the Indian Context”, emphasises the effectiveness of gender budgeting as a means for achieving women’s empowerment. This study also shows the initiatives that have been taken by Government of India in the context of gender budgeting. Swapna Gopalan (2008) in her book, Gender Budgeting in India: Towards Achieving Gender Equity, throws light on how India is moving toward empowerment of women through the new concept ‘gender budgeting’. Public goods and services are not equally distributed among men and women. Gender budgeting is one of the major steps the Indian Government has introduced, recently, as a means to counter gender-related issues in the country. Gender budgeting seeks to analyse how men and women fare under the existing revenue and expenditure system.

Yamini Mishra and Bhumika Jhamb (2009) in their article “An Assessment of UPA-I through a Gender Budgeting Lens” evaluate the United Progressive Alliance government’s budgets over the past five years through the gender lens. The paper highlights the six Union Budgets presented by the UPA government and the recent Union Budget 2009-10. Although one of the six core principles of governance laid down in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) was dedicated to women, that is, “to fully empower women politically, educationally and legally”, how far the UPA government has reflected this principle is analysed in this article. Road map for the gender budgeting is provided.

The authors maintain that gender budgeting for the empowerment of women is a remarkable and bold step, but there are certain lacunas which need to be addressed seriously. The creation of an independent Ministry of Women and Child Development has not resulted in any significant change in priorities for
women. There is 42 percent decline in allocations for schemes meant for women’s welfare under Ministry of Women and Child Development in the Union Budget 2009-10 which puts a big question mark on UPA’s commitment on women’s empowerment.

The research studies as reviewed above are either of general nature or they study one particular gender related issue. No work is available which analyses gender budgeting exercise as carried out by Government of India, in a chronological order. The present study, to some extent, fills this gap.

1.5: OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH WORK

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

1. To study the concept and explore the nature of gender budgeting.

2. To study the origin of gender budgeting in India and elsewhere.

3. To study Indian budgetary policy with special reference to its gender angle.

4. To evaluate the budgetary allocation of Union Budget for women with special reference to the Department of Women and Child Development.

5. To review the gender budgeting statements in Union Budgets from 2005-06 to 2009-10.

1.6: HYPOTHESES

For the purpose of present study following hypotheses are developed:

H.1. Overall awareness amongst the women across the globe leads to gender budgeting and not the other way round.

H.2. Feminist practical politics contributes to gender budgeting.

H.3. Gender budgeting leads to a shift in the budgetary policy.

The present research work has found out that all these hypotheses hold good.
1.7: ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

The present work of gender budgeting is spread over ten chapters:

CHAPTER-I: The introductory chapter covers the need of the study, statement of the problem, objectives, hypotheses, research methodology, sources of data, limitations, etc.

CHAPTER-II: A detailed review of literature is carried out in this chapter.

CHAPTER-III: This chapter is devoted to the review of Indian budgetary policy.

CHAPTER-IV: The concept of gender budgeting, origin, nature, scope and significance are discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER-V: This chapter reflects upon the present status of women in India and commitments of Government of India to reduce gender hiatus.

CHAPTER-VI: The gender budgeting initiatives in India are studied in this chapter.

CHAPTER-VII: The state level initiatives in India are focused in the seventh chapter.

CHAPTER-VIII: This chapter sheds light on the budgetary allocation to the Department of Women and Child Development in Union Budget from 1996-97 to 2006-07.

CHAPTER-IX: Gender budgeting statements in Union Budgets (2005-2010) are analysed in this chapter.

CHAPTER-X: The concluding chapter contains summary, findings and suggestions.
1.8: MAJOR FINDINGS

The present work has led to several findings; a few are summarised as under:

1. Gender budgeting in India is an afterthought.

2. The expenditure of a major department of Union Government that is, the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) is not even one percent of the total expenditure.

3. Expenditure on ‘women exclusive’ schemes is found to be less than expenditure on ‘women-child’ schemes.

4. There is no consistency in the introduction and implementation of women oriented programmes/schemes. Sometimes the schemes are dropped and at some other times, one scheme is merged with the other schemes.

5. The expenditure on several ‘women exclusive’ schemes has not shown any appreciable increase.

6. There are exclusively no programmes/schemes for the support of elderly women such as old age homes for elder women, counselling centres, etc., for the welfare of aged women.

7. The total allocation for gender budgeting from 2005-06 to 2009-10 varies between 2.79 percent and 5.56 percent of the total union government expenditure. There are noticeable fluctuations in between.

8. The gender budget provisions for Part A (100 percent allocation for women), between 2006-07 and 2009-10, varies between 1.29 percent and 1.69 percent of the total union government expenditure (fluctuates on an average around 1.5 percent).

9. The gender budget allocations for Part B (30 percent allocation for women), between 2006-07 and 2009-10, varies between 2.15 percent and 4.03 percent of the total union government expenditure (fluctuates on an average around 3.2 percent).
10. The total budgetary outlay (Part A+B), from 2006-07 to 2009-10 varies between 3.68 percent and 5.56 percent. It implies that the total gender budget allocation (Part A+B) as a proportion of the total union government expenditure is around 4.72 percent.

1.9: LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present research work has following limitations:

1. The present work is limited to the Department of Women and Child Development.

2. This research work is entirely based on the secondary data.

3. The present study restricts only to the expenditure part of the Union Budget and does not cover the receipts part. Only Budget Estimates (BE) are considered here.

4. The present study is limited to a period of ten years (1996-2007). However, additional data from 2005-06 to 2009-10 is also used where necessary.