CHAPTER IV

THE CONCEPT OF GENDER BUDGET: NATURE, ORIGIN, SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE

This chapter is structured into three sections. Section I sheds light on the concept of gender budget, its nature and origin. Section II studies gender budgeting as a means of empowering women. In Section III the need to have gender budgeting is discussed with the help of three indicators: Life Expectancy, Adult Literacy Rate and Labour Force Participation.

Section I

4.1: Introduction

The concept of gender budgeting was introduced two decades ago. It got integrated into the main theme very recently. Gender budgeting is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. “Gender mainstreaming involves integrating a gender perspective and gender analysis into all stages of designing, implementing and evaluating projects, policies and programmes”89.

Government budgets have an essential role in the planning and control of the economic activities of a nation. They are not merely economic tools, but express political priorities. A budget, on the face of it, appears to be a gender-neutral policy instrument and is often assumed to affect everyone more or less equally. Economists tend to view government 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 to play, different responsibilities and

capabilities. These overlook the economic and social differences that exist between women and men.

Rhonda Sharp, with extensive experience on gender budgets, notes: “A significant gap can exist between the gender equality commitment of a government and the policies and programs funded by its budget” 90. A gender budget is a budget that accounts 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 91.

Gender budgeting refers to a method of looking at the budget formulation process, budgetary policies and budget outlays through the gender lens. To address specific needs of women, it seeks to have affirmative action. It is, therefore, not a separate budget for women. It is concerned not only with public expenditure, but also with the gender differentiated impact of revenue mobilisation by the government.

A gender analysis of government budgets offers an innovative tool for ensuring a better match between government’s policy commitments and development outcomes for recognising underlying gender inequalities and redressing them through allocation of public resources. Gender budgets aim to ensure a fair, just and efficient distribution of public resources for the overall development of the society.

Gender budgeting looks at the government budget from a gender perspective to assess how it addresses the needs of women in areas like health, education, employment, etc. “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”92.

4.2: Concept and Definitions of Gender Budgeting

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 specific areas like, health, education, employment, etc. It is important to note that gender budgets are not separate budgets for men and women and boys and girls. They attempt to disaggregate the government’s budget according to its impact on men and women respectively. It puts emphasis on reprioritizing the public expenditure rather than increasing the expenditure.

Gender budgets are referred by several names, like, “Gender Budgets”, “Women’s Budgets”, “Gender Sensitive Budgets”, “Gender Responsive Budgets”, “Applied Gender Budget Analysis”93, “Mainstreaming Gender Perspectives into Budgets”94, etc. All these terms refer to gender budget initiatives.

Gender mainstreaming was established as a global strategy for the promotion of gender equality in the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1994). Gender lens is used to analyse budgets at national, regional and civic levels. Gender budget initiatives are the exercises that help the country to move toward in the direction of achieving gender equality. Gender budgeting seeks to break down or analyse government budget, according to its impact on men and women. The challenge of gender budgeting lies in translating policy commitments to gender equality and elimination of discrimination against women into budgetary allocations and outcomes.

92 Centre for Social Research(CSR), New Delhi, accessed on 24th September 2009 (http://www.csrindia.org).
Government budgets reflect how the government mobilises and allocates public resources, and how they aim to meet the social and economic needs of their people. As against this, gender budgeting refers to the process of conceiving, planning, approving, executing, monitoring, analysing and auditing budgets in a gender sensitive way. It involves analysis of actual expenditure and revenue on women and girls as compared to men and boys. It also assists the government to decide how policies need to be made, adjusted and reprioritised. Gender budgeting is not only concerned with budgets alone but also throws light on various socio-economic policies from the gender perspective.

Women constitute the most disadvantaged section of our society and several macro indicators related to education, health, employment, economic participation, etc., indicate adverse status of women compared to men. Women and girls are deprived of equal access to resources, access to education, opportunities, political power in every region of the globe. “Women also comprise a sizeable segment of the poverty struck population”. There is lot of indirect evidence of differential treatment of women and men, particularly of girls vis-a-vis boys, in many parts of the world, e.g., among rural families in Asia and Africa: morbidity and mortality rates reflect the differential female deprivation of extraordinary proportions. “Women form the most oppressed and vulnerable section of the society, gender responsive budgets can contribute to achieve the objectives of gender equality, human development and economic efficiency”.

Development and empowerment of women has been a priority for governments in many countries. The outcomes of administrative intent, however, are not often realised. Women and men play socially determined roles in society, the gendered division of labour, different responsibilities, different opportunities for developing capabilities, and the different constraints that

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98 Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Background Note on Gender Budgeting, accessed on 1st November 2009(www.wcd.nic.in).
99 Index, Yojana, Vol.50, October 2006, p.5.
women and men face which normally leave women in an unequal position in relation to men in their community with less economic, social and political power. Women play different roles like, caretakers of family members, income earners, etc. In all societies, they are over burdened and over utilised in both paid and unpaid works. Diane Elson, an expert in the area of gender responsive budgeting, argues that, ‘if women themselves have more control over resources there will be gains for society as a whole; but if gender inequality persists, there will be continuing losses for society as a whole’.

Women represent half the resources and half the potentialities in all the societies. The overall objective of gender equality is a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. “Gender equality produces a double dividend as it helps both women and children”. The innovative methodology to achieve gender equality is through ‘Gender Budgeting’.

Gender inequality pervades developed and developing societies in varying forms and degrees. Gender neutral government budgets cannot reduce the gender-based disadvantages faced by women in socio-economic-political arena. Gender neutral budgets are gender blind budgets. Government budgets should be framed and implemented with gender perspective. “The significance of gender budgeting can be summarised in the adage- if it is unfair to have differential treatment for same people, it is also unfair to have same treatment for different people”.

All budgets prima facie look gender neutral. But women as a group are usually not considered seriously while a budget is being prepared. On closer examination it is observed that budgets are ‘gender-blind’. The impact of public

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100 Diane Elson is a Gender and Development Social Scientist. Currently professor of Sociology at the University of Essex, UK., and has acted as an advisor to UNIFEM, UNDP, Oxfam and other development agencies.


103 Das Subrat, Debdulal Thakur and Satadru Sikdar., Report of the Gender Budgeting Study for West Bengal, Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, New Delhi, November 2006, p.1.
policies differs for both the genders. This gendered approach can be described as wearing gender lenses, through which processes can be viewed, and can be effective at any stage of the budgetary process, including, planning, objective setting, auditing or evaluation. Gender biases creep in during the processes of budget preparation\(^104\). Budgets should consider women’s problems at all spheres and at different stages of her life cycle. The International Development Research Centre, Canada, states that gender responsive budgeting “requires government officials to think about finances in a new way”, to look “beyond the household to examine how budgets address the needs of male and female members”\(^105\).

**Definitions of Gender Budgeting**

The term ‘Gender Budgeting’ has been defined differently by different authors. Some of them are:

1. “Gender budgeting is a dissection of the government budget to establish its gender-differential impacts and to translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments. 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, education, employment, etc.”\(^106\)

2. “Gender budgeting is an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It implies a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality”\(^107\).

3. According to Report of the Expert Group on Classification System for Government Transactions, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, “Gender budgeting refers to presentation of budgetary data in a manner so that the gender sensitivities of the budgetary allocations are clearly highlighted. It envisages


\(^{107}\) Quinn Sheila., *Gender budgeting: practical implementation*, Directorate of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, April 2009, p.5.
highlighting the budgetary allocations not only to women-specific programmes, but also to quantify pro-women allocations in the composite or gender-neutral programmes of various programmes under various departments. Gender budgeting also involves carrying out an impact analysis of government programmes and its budgetary allocations on the overall socio-economic status of women in the country. The ultimate aim of gender analysis of national budgets is to incorporate gender variables into the models on which planning and budgeting is based".¹⁰⁸

4. The IDRC is of the view that: “Gender budget initiatives analyse how governments raise and spend public money, with the aim of securing gender equality in decision-making about public resource allocation; and gender equality in the distribution of the impact of government budgets, both in their benefits and in their burdens. The impact of government budgets on the most disadvantaged groups of women is a focus of special attention”¹⁰⁹.

5. According to United Nations Platform for Action (UNPAC), “Gender budgets do not look at whether or not the same is spent on men and women but rather at what the impact of the spending is on men and women and whether or not the budgets respond to the needs of men and women adequately”¹¹⁰.

6. Gender budgeting includes the following¹¹¹:

1. It is a way of linking gender equality policy with macroeconomic policy.

2. It is based on the premise that budgets are not gender neutral.

3. It applies to the revenue raising side as well as the expenditure side of budgets.

¹⁰⁹ Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Gender Budgeting, Background Note on Gender Budgeting, accessed on 3rd June 2009 (www.wcd.in).
¹¹¹ Quinn Sheila., op.cit., p.4.
4. It begins with analysis of the impact of the budget on women and men, and progresses to integrate gender into budget-planning.

5. It does not mean separate budget for women.

6. It means closer scrutiny of outcome of budgets.

7. It can be applied to specific budget lines or budgetary programmes.

8. Its ultimate goal is that gender-sensitive approach is applied to all aspects of all budgetary processes, that gender is mainstreamed.

From the above definitions, it is clear that:

1. Gender budgeting is not a separate budget for women.

2. It is not about dividing the government budget on 50-50 basis between male and female.

3. Gender budgets aim to allocate the government resources in a more equitable way to address the needs of both men and women.

4. These do not look at whether or not the same amount of money is spent on men and women, but they consider the differing impact on both the genders.

5. It implies that, the gender budget is the analysis of public expenditure or the method of raising public money through gender lens.

In order to address socio-economic discrimination against women, the gender budgeting should be implemented as a policy commitment. Women’s and men’s needs, concerns and priorities differ as they play different roles in society. These priorities are to be recognised, the way public money is raised and spent should help to redress the underlying inequalities.

4.3: Purpose of Gender Budgeting

Gender budgets can have several purposes, some of important ones are:

1. Improving the allocation of resources to women-specific programmes.
2. Supporting gender mainstreaming in macroeconomic policies.

3. Enhancing the linkages between economic and social policy with gender perspective.

4. Tracking public expenditure on gender and development policy commitments.

5. Contributing to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals with special emphasis on gender.

4.4: Gender Budgeting Initiatives

The initiative of gender budgeting can take many forms, which depend on its political location, the extent of coverage and the stage of budget cycle at which it is undertaken. Initiatives may differ from country to country, which depend on the government policies in the concerned country.

1. Political Location

There are several dimensions of political location. A few important areas where gender budgeting may be initiated are identified as under:

1. At national, regional or local levels of government;

2. Inside government departments, organised by officials and ministers;

3. In elected assemblies, organised by elected representatives;

4. Outside government, organised by researchers and civil society organisations.

2. Coverage

The important aspects of coverage are as under:

1. Expenditure of selected departments or programmes.

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2. Expenditure on new projects.

3. Selected forms of revenue (taxes, user fees, etc.).

4. Changes in the tax system.


3. Stages of Budget Cycle

   The gender budget initiative may be included at any stage of the budget cycle for example:

   1. Planning to identify objectives.
   2. Appraisal to identify financial allocations to meet objectives.
   3. Audit to identify any misappropriation of money.
   4. Evaluation of the extent to which objectives have been met.

4. Presentation of Analysis

   The gender analysis of government revenues and expenditures can be presented in different ways:

   1. At a number of points in the main budget and/or evaluation report;
   2. In a special annexure to the main budget and/or evaluation report;
   3. In briefing-papers for parliamentarians;
   4. In press releases;
   5. In research publications; and
   6. In popular education publications.
4.5: Preparation of Gender-Sensitive Budget Statement: Framework for Public Expenditure and Public Revenue

Gender budgeting can be applied either to expenditure or revenue side of public budget. Most gender-sensitive budgets have focused on expenditure side.

1. Gender Budgets: A Framework for Public Expenditure

In order to analyse the effects of budget on both genders, the sum of expenditure can be divided into three categories:

\[ \text{Total Expenditure} = \text{Gender-targeted expenditure} + \text{Equal opportunities expenditure} + \text{Mainstream expenditure} \]

Here, gender-targeted expenditure (or gender-specific expenditure) is concerned with the particular needs of women (or men), that is, women’s health programmes, domestic violence, special programmes for women with young children, etc. The equal opportunities expenditure is spending by government agencies on its employees, such as paid parental leave, providing creche facilities for children of employees. The mainstream expenditure aims at making goods and services available to the whole community, for instance, primary health care facilities, literacy facilities, etc., provided by the government.

2. Gender Budgets: A Framework for Public Revenue

The gender analysis of public revenue has not yet received adequate attention. A great difficulty is the non-availability of gender-disaggregated data. Taxpayers are usually not classified into male and female taxpayers. Similarly, in the case of consumption-based taxes, the consumers are not classified into male and female consumers. However, some extent of gender contribution to the revenue can be worked out by looking at the participation of women in organised sector, etc.

4.6: Tools of Gender Budgeting

Diane Elson has suggested that different ‘tools’ can be utilised for a gender-sensitive analysis of budgets\textsuperscript{114}. Her suggestions are\textsuperscript{115}:

1. **Gender-aware Policy Appraisal**

   This is an analytical approach which involves scrutinising the policies of different portfolios and programmes by paying attention to the implicit and explicit gender issues involved. This method assesses whether the outlined policy and its budgetary implications will reinforce or change existing inequalities between men and women, and to ascertain whether the money is allocated to reduce gender gaps.

   Example: The South African Land Reform Programme includes gender training and gender concerns in its monitoring and evaluation system.

2. **Gender-disaggregated Beneficiary Assessments**

   Gender-disaggregated beneficiary assessments analyse how women and men evaluate, to what extent public services and expenditures meet their needs. This research technique is used to ask actual or potential beneficiaries the extent to which government policies and programmes match these peoples’ priorities. In this method the public are not directly included in the planning process, but only their opinion is collected through surveys, opinion polls, group discussions, etc.

   Example: In Australia, an assessment was carried out and both male and female were asked if they would like public expenditure in certain sectors such as, public transport, national defence, education, housing, etc., to be increased?


3. Gender-disaggregated Public Expenditure Incidence Analysis

This research technique compares public expenditure for a given programme, usually with data from household surveys, to reveal the distribution of expenditure between women and men, girls and boys.

Example: In Sri Lanka, a gender-disaggregated public expenditure analysis showed that when public expenditure allocated to a Food Ration and Food Stamp Beneficiary Programme in the 1980s, was reduced, women and girls’ were worst hit.

4. Gender-disaggregated Revenue/Tax Incidence Analysis

This research technique examines both direct and indirect taxes in order to calculate how much taxation is paid individually by men and women. In this method, instead of looking at the household, amount of tax paid by men and women individually is considered.

Example: Indirect tax like, VAT is falling heavier on women and low-income earners, as they have to spend more money on these indirect taxes.

5. Gender-disaggregated Analysis of the Impact of the Budget on Time-use

Gender-disaggregated analysis of the impact of the budget on time use emphasises on the link between budgetary allocations and the way time is used in households. This ensures that the time spent by women in unpaid work is accounted for in policy analysis. Policies that reduce the time burden, for instance, by improving the water supply, can help to reduce time burden on women.

6. Gender-aware Medium Term Macroeconomic Policy Framework

Gender-aware medium term macroeconomic policy framework tries to go beyond the annual perspective of most budgets, and to introduce a medium-term framework in assessing the impact of policies on women and men. This attempts to incorporate gender into the economic models on which medium term economic frameworks are based. This aims to develop a model for multi-year budgets.
Example: In Ireland, a multi-year National Development Plan was started in the year 2000. Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) is incorporated in the implementation of National Development Plan.

7. **Gender-aware Budget Statement**

   This involves an accountability process which may utilise any of the above tools. It requires a high degree of commitment and coordination throughout the public sector as ministries or departments undertake an assessment of the gender impact of their line of budgets.

4.7: **Methods to Initiate Gender Budgeting**

   There are two methods for initiating gender budgeting. These are:

   1. **The Australian approach or the “Three-way Categorisation”**,\(^\text{116}\)

      The Australian approach comprises of:

      1. Gender-specific expenditure;
      2. Equal opportunities in the public services; and
      3. General or mainstream expenditures considered in terms of its gender impact. This covers all the rest of the allocations that are not covered in the two categories above.

   2. **The South African “Five Step Approach”**\(^\text{117}\):

      The five steps of South African approach are:

      1. An analysis of the situation of women, men, girls and boys;
      2. An assessment of the gender-responsiveness of policies;
      3. An assessment as to whether budget allocations are adequate to implement the gender-responsive policy;


4. Monitoring of whether the money was spent as planned, what was delivered and to whom;

5. An assessment of whether the policy as implemented changed the situation described in the first step in the direction of greater gender equality.

There is no ‘single recipe’ to initiate the gender budgeting procedure, the country concerned should adopt that methodology and tools that fit best for it. “A common starting point of different gender budgeting initiatives is challenging the notion of gender neutrality of budgets, public revenue and income“\textsuperscript{118}. Gender budgeting initiatives aim to reduce the gender inequalities by bringing changes in the government policies and programmes.

**4.8: Steps Taken By International Institutions for the Initiation of Gender Budgeting**

The earliest and systematic endeavour toward making women a focus of development took place in 1946. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to ensure the empowerment of women and gender equality. CSW organised four world conferences on women which sought to bring together the international community with an effective plan of action for the development of women, in all spheres of public and private life. The First World Plan of Action was organised in Mexico in 1975, The Second World Conference on Women was held in Copenhagen in 1980, The Third World Conference on Women was organised in Nairobi in the year 1985 and The Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing (Beijing Platform for Action) 1995\textsuperscript{119}. These conferences provided impetus for the progress of women.

The Convention on Elimination and Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by UN General Assembly in 1979 which is often described as an ‘International Bill of Rights for Women’. During 1970’s and


\textsuperscript{119} Department of Economic and Social Affairs, World Conferences on Women (www.un.org).
1980’s, the advocates of women development spoke of integrating women into developmental process and during 1990’s the emphasis was on bringing gender issues into the planning process. Gender sensitive planning or gender mainstreaming, that is, to incorporate relevant gender perspectives into overall budgetary process, was introduced as a new method for removing gender gaps.

In 1993, 45 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted and eight years after the Convention on Elimination and Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) came into force, the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna confirmed that women’s rights were human rights. Yet, this (CEDAW) was a step forward in recognising the rightful claims of one-half of humanity, in identifying neglect of women’s rights as a human rights violation and in drawing attention to the relationship between gender and human rights violations.

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in the year 1994, laid emphasis on women’s rights and health. Women’s rights and health were placed at the centre of population and development strategies. The Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995, in its Platform for Action, emphasised the need for a gender perspective in all macroeconomic policies of government. The Beijing Platform for Action contains twelve critical areas of concern including women’s poverty and women’s economic and political empowerment, and particularly emphasises the needs of poor women. The Platform calls for the financing of policies specifically addressing gender equality concerns.

The Platform for Action refers to the need for gender-sensitive budgets under the heading, Financial Arrangements 345: This requires the integration of a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes, as well as the adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between men and women.

National Level: Financial Arrangements heading 346: This requires that governments should make efforts to systematically review how women benefit
from public expenditures; adjust budgets to ensure equality of access to public sector expenditures\textsuperscript{120}.

**International Level:** Financial Arrangements heading 358: To facilitate implementation of the Platform for Action, interested developed and developing country partners, agreeing on a mutual commitment to allocate, on average, 20 percent of official development assistance\textsuperscript{121}.

The World Social Summit on Development held in Copenhagen, in the year 1995 included, ‘achievement of equity between men and women’, as one of the important goals, along with other goals. In June 2000, the 23\textsuperscript{rd} Special Session of U.N. General Assembly explicitly called for attention to the goal of gender equality in budgetary processes at national, regional and international level.

The Millennium Declaration signed in 2000, at the United Nations’ Millennium Summit, commits the member countries “to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable”\textsuperscript{122}. Gender equality is one among the eight Millennium Development Goals.

In 2001, UNIFEM launched a 20-country programme (2001-2004), creating a momentum among Governments, Civil Societies and Parliamentarians to make budgets from gender perspective\textsuperscript{123}. In 2005, the second phase of the programme was launched. It aimed at the application of gender analysis to government budgets, focusing on the use of ‘Gender-Responsive Budgeting’ as a tool to increase accountability, participation and gender responsiveness in national budgets.

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\textsuperscript{121} Latigo Alfred., op.cit., p.18.


\textsuperscript{123} Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Brazil, Belize, Mexico, Nigeria, Senegal, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Morocco, Chile, Egypt, Kenya, Afghanistan and Nepal, assessed on 1\textsuperscript{st} February 2009 (www.gender-budgets.org).
Gender budgeting initiatives have been supported by a number of multinational institutions. Some of which are Commonweal th Secretariat, the European Community, the World Bank, and institutions of civil society, including many women’s organisations 124.

4.9: Gender Budget Analysis

Diane Elson provides two important guiding principles for gender budget analysis 125:

1. Assessment on an Individual as well as on a Household Basis: It is important to assess the budget from the point of view of individual women and individual men, as although the households do share some resources, inequality persists.

2. Systematic Recognition of the Contribution of Unpaid Care Work: Socio-economic development of any country depends not only on the paid work of its people, but also on the unpaid work its people do, like, household work, caring family members and community members, etc. Unpaid work is not equally shared by men and women and it is also not recognised in budget planning.

4.10: Integrating Gender into Budgetary Cycle

Fiscal policy is considered as the most promising “entry point” to integrate gender analysis 126. Budgetary policy helps to achieve the goals set in the fiscal policy. The following Table No.4.1 shows how to make gender budget as a part of budget cycle.

Table No. 4.1: Integrating Gender Responsive Budgeting Into the Planning Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Budget Process</th>
<th>Initiatives</th>
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| **Budget Preparation**  | 1. Gender-specific budget initiatives set forth in the chief executive's budget policy.  
                            2. Gender policies incorporated into overall budget guidelines and instructions from the central budget office.  
                            3. Gender-specific priorities set for budget allocations within departments for specific agencies. |
| **Budget Approval**     | 1. Creation of specific gender guidelines for expenditure and revenue legislation in the overall framework for legislative decision-making.  
                            2. Integration of gender-specific language in legislation establishing new programs and agencies.  
                            3. Use of gender responsive budgeting guidelines in allocating discretionary resources. |
| **Budget Execution**    | 1. Creation of guidelines for spending where there is discretion given to departments by legislative bodies.  
                            2. Development of gender guidelines for outsourcing, procurement and grant disbursement.  
                            3. Implementation of gender goals in staffing. |
| **Audit and Evaluation**| 1. Incorporation of a gender dimension into financial audits that focus on expenditure and compliance.  
                              2. Incorporation of a gender dimension into performance audits that focus on outputs and outcomes.  
                              3. Audit for compliance with gender goals and guidelines. |


4.11: Process of Gender Budgeting

Supposing that gender budgeting is prepared for a particular department/ministry/organisation, it is necessary to identify the needs, problems and experiences of men and women followed by programme planning, programme implementation and monitoring and evaluation programme. Next step is to formulate the goal from gender dimension and participation of women and men taking into consideration their different needs and 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 No.4.1.

**Chart No. 4.1: Process of Gender Budgeting**


**4.12: Gender Budgeting Initiatives in Different Countries**

Several countries, both developed and developing, have initiated gender budgeting. Gender budgets have now been introduced in varying forms in more than sixty countries throughout the world. These exercises emerged out of feminist practical politics initially in Australia and later in a number of other
countries. “The idea of gender budgets gathered further momentum when the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action called for the integration of a gender perspective into budgetary decision-making”\textsuperscript{127}. An analysis of a few countries is as under:

1. **Australia**: Australia is the pioneering country to introduce gender budgeting. The first “Women’s Budget” was conducted by the Federal Government in Australia between 1984 and 1996 as a pilot project. It gave positive results. The Australian Women’s Budget (1984-1996), which was a government-led initiative, brought about a significant increase in spending in areas of importance to women. For example, between 1985 and 1996 federal assistance to families with children increased to 27 percent while assistance to the aged increased to 24 percent. There was also a five-fold increase in child care places for working women\textsuperscript{128}.

2. **South Africa**: In South Africa, gender sensitive budgeting had two dimensions. First phase was initiated in 1995, which was a joint effort of parliamentarians and non-governmental organisations. This parliamentary-NGO initiative had undertaken a detailed gender-sensitive analysis of expenditure portfolios like education, health, welfare, housing, labour, trade and industry, land affairs, agriculture, safety and security, transport, energy, foreign affairs as well as the cross-sectoral areas of public sector employment and taxation. It is to be noted that a parallel initiative had begun in 1997 within the Department of Finance, as a pilot for the Commonwealth initiative to integrate gender perspective into expenditure policy. The Commonwealth Secretariat coordinated the implementation of gender responsive budgets in Barbados, Fiji Islands, St.Kitts and Nevis, South Africa and Sri Lanka. Though the nature of gender responsive budget initiatives varies from country to country, one of the prominent features of the Commonwealth Secretariat initiative has been the direct engagement and coordination of the programme by Ministry of Finance.

3. **Other African Countries**: In Mozambique (1998), the Ministry of Planning and Finance initiated a gender-sensitive budget exercise, with financial assistance


\textsuperscript{128} UN Platform for Action Committee (UNPAC), “Gender Budget Project”, Manitoba, Canada, accessed on 4\textsuperscript{th} January 2009 (www.unpac.ca).
from the Swiss Development Corporation\textsuperscript{129}. The Namibia’s Gender Policy of November 1997 states that gender should be integrated into all government programmes and policies. In Namibia, the staff of Ministry of Finance worked with consultants from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and produced an analysis of selected portfolios for the 1998 national budget\textsuperscript{130}. In Tanzania, Gender Budgeting Initiative (GBI) began as a civil society initiative involving more than 20 non-governmental organisations; which grew out of a shared vision by ‘Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)’ and ‘Feminist Activism Coalition (FemAct)’ to transform the conceptual paradigms of development and economic governance. In Uganda, the strong parliamentary ‘Women’s Caucus’ and the affiliated NGO ‘Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE)’ have taken the lead in initiating a gender budget exercise, initially focusing on selected portfolios.

4. United Kingdom: In UK, ‘Women’s Budget Group’ started the process of gender-sensitive budget analysis. Their core recommendation to the UK government is the inclusion of a comparative gender impact statement published with every budget and public expenditure. The Women’s Budget Group argued successfully that Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) in UK should be reformed to make it more effective by splitting it into two separate tax credits, Employment Tax Credit (ETC) and Integrated Child Credit (ICC). This is to reorient the employment incentive effects in such a manner so as to target both men and women equally, so that work pays equally well for both sexes and that a sharing of caring and earning roles between parents are encouraged. During the 1998 budget, the British Treasury produced an “issues paper” which looked at the effect on women of the new deal for working families.

5. Canada: During the year 1993, the Canadian branch of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom developed a women’s budget in celebration of the League’s 75\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary\textsuperscript{131}. In Canada, although there are no formal guidelines regarding gender budgeting, the Human Resource

\textsuperscript{130} Budlender Debbie., “Review of Gender Budget Initiatives”, \textit{op.cit.}, p.13.
\textsuperscript{131} Budlender Debbie., “Review of Gender Budget Initiatives”, \textit{op.cit.}, p.10.
Development Canada (HRDC) is committed to implementing a gender-based analysis (GBA) as a part of their policy and programme development process. In the backdrop of its international commitment to the Platform for Action initiative, the Government of Canada adopted the ‘Federal Plan for Gender Equality (1995-2000)’. This ‘Federal Plan’ was prepared through the collaboration of 24 Departments and agencies, led by ‘Status of Women Canada’ (SWC)\(^{132}\). The Members of Centre for Policy Alternatives, a social justice research group in Canada, has developed a gender-sensitive budget as part of the Centre’s annual Alternative Federal Budget.

6. **India:** It was 1974 Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, *Towards Equality* that gave initial impetus toward the search for gender perspectives on public expenditure. Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) for the first time highlighted the need to ensure a definite flow of funds from the general developmental sectors to women. The gender budgeting initiative in India was started in July 2000 when a Workshop on ‘Engendering National Budgets in the South Asia Region’ was held in Delhi, in collaboration with UNIFEM\(^{133}\). NIPFP suggested inclusion of a section on gender budgeting. The Ministry of Finance has accepted the methodology developed by NIPFP\(^{134}\).

7. **Sri Lanka:** Gender budgeting initiative in Sri Lanka passed through two phases. Pilot project in 1997, was the first phase. The initial gender-sensitive budget analysis in Sri Lanka was coordinated by the Department of National Planning. It focused on the portfolios of health, education, public sector employment, agriculture, industry and social services. The second phase of study, initiated in December 2002, categorized the financial inputs from gender perspective with special reference to Ministries of Women’s Affairs, Samrudhi, Social Welfare, Tertiary Education and Training, Employment and Labour under


\(^{134}\) The methodology developed by NIPFP is discussed in detail in Chapter VI of this study on ‘Gender Budgeting Initiatives in India’.
the initiative of Ministry of Women’s Affairs in coordination with UNIFEM, South Asia135.

Other countries that have incorporated gender budgeting are Austria, Germany, Ireland, Chile, El Salvador, Mexico, Philippines, Bangladesh, Nepal, etc. By the year 2006, as many as 60 countries have adopted gender budgeting as a means to remove gender inequalities136.

4.13: Applications of Gender Budgeting

The uses of gender budgeting can be understood with the help of below Chart No.4.2:

The above Chart No.4.2 helps us to understand different applications and uses of gender budgeting. For example, the gender budget may be used for prioritising expenditure programmes at a time when resources at the disposable of national exchequer are limited. Further, it also helps to target the expenditure programmes and thereby help in promoting gender equity. The gender orientation

helps in designing and developing gender specific programmes and then subjects them to yearly monitoring and evaluation. Since gender component is inserted into the mainstream budget, it enhances auditing possibilities for the further justification of continuation of gender specific programmes.

Section II

4.14: Gender Budgeting as a Means of Empowering Women

“Let us tell the world- and let us tell with pride: The empowerment of women is the empowerment of all humanity”\(^\text{137}\).

Empowerment as a concept is the result of the process which enables an individual to know about herself/himself, what she/he wants, express it, try to get it and get what she/he wants, have confidence, awareness, mobility choices, control over resources and decision making power. “The process which enables an individual to gain the above qualities is called empowerment”\(^\text{138}\). Empowerment is a process and is not, therefore, something that can be given to people. The process of empowerment is both individual and collective, since it is through involvement in groups that people most often begin to develop their awareness and the ability to organise to take action and bring about change\(^\text{139}\). An individual or group moves from a condition of relative powerlessness to relative power through the empowerment process\(^\text{140}\). Women form an integral ingredient in the process of development of any community. The status of women in a society is the true index of its socio-economic, cultural, religious and spiritual level\(^\text{141}\).

Women’s empowerment is a multifaceted concept that extends to the psychological, social, economic, cultural, political and institutional spheres of

\(^{137}\) Boutros Boutros-Ghali, UN Secretary-General, Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia(ESCWA), accessed on 1\(^{st}\) December 2009(www.escwa.un.org).


\(^{140}\) Sahay Sushama., \textit{op.cit.}, p.24.

women’s lives. It is the conjunction of change in several of these facets that empowers women at the household level, not the change focused on a single facet. Women’s empowerment affects their well-being in terms of gender justice and social justice and the determination to use their physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual resources to protect, nurture and sustain values that guarantee gender equality at personal, familial, social, political and other sectors. Women empowerment is a process by which women get control over material and intellectual resources and challenge the ideas of gender based discrimination against women in all institutions and structures of power.

The need for women empowerment is ably summarised by Mahbub ul Haq: “No society can ever prosper, half-liberated and half-chained. Women’s empowerment is a pre-condition for human security”. There is continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors-economic, political, education, health care, nutrition, etc. It is important, however, to acknowledge that where gender inequality exists, it is generally women who are excluded or disadvantaged in relation to decision-making and access to economic and social resources. Therefore, a critical aspect of promoting gender equality is the empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives. “As women are oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walks of life”.

The below facts indicate the status of women in the world as reported by UNDP:

1. Of the world’s one billion poorest people, three-fifth’s are women and girls;

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145 Sahay Sushama., op.cit., p. 9.

2. Of the 960 million adults in the world who are illiterate, two third’s are women;

3. Seventy percent of the 130 million children who are out of schools are girls;

4. Everywhere, women earn less than men, both because they are concentrated in low-paying jobs and because they are paid less for the same work;

5. Women are conspicuously absent from parliaments, making up, on average, only 16 percent of parliamentarians worldwide;

6. Every year, half a million women die and 18 million more suffer chronic disability from preventable complications during childbirth.

*Human Development Report 1993* states, “Women are the world’s largest excluded group. Even though they make up half the adult population, and often contribute more than their share to society, inside and outside the home, they are frequently excluded from positions of power”\(^{147}\). The *Human Development Report* for 1995, published for UNDP presents a gloomy picture on the status of women in the world. The most striking point the report has made is that there is not a single country where women enjoy equality with men. As per the findings of a 31 country study, women work longer hours than men; of the total burden of work, women carry on average 53 percent in developing countries and 51 percent in developed countries\(^ {148}\). Women contribute more than half of the wealth of nations and yet they are denied economic, social and even legal rights and privileges.

The case for gender equality, though often viewed as a human rights’ or social justice argument, is also good economics. Gender equality helps to promote prosperity and well-being of societies\(^ {149}\). Gender mainstreaming is

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comprehensive and innovative in digging deep to uproot gender discrimination by ‘embedding gender sensitive practices and norms in the structures, processes and environment of public policy’\textsuperscript{150}.

Empowerment of women is essential for the advancement of women in all spheres of life and for the overall development of the economy. When a woman is empowered it does not mean that another individual will become powerless or less powerful. But, if a woman is empowered her competencies toward decision making will surely influence her family’s or neighbour’s behaviour. “The presence of this spill over effects will thus create a “social multiplier” where aggregate power will be greater than individual”\textsuperscript{151}.

\subsection*{4.14.1: Benefits Flowing from Empowerment of Women}

The following examples show that if gender inequality is reduced, it benefits the society\textsuperscript{152}.

1. Research on agricultural productivity in Africa shows that reducing gender inequality through gender budgeting could significantly increase agricultural yields. For instance, giving women farmers in Kenya the same level of agricultural inputs and education as men farmers could increase yields obtained by women farmers more than 20 percent.

2. Research on gender inequality in the labour market shows that eliminating gender discrimination in occupation and pay could increase not only women’s income, but also national income. For instance, if gender inequality in the labour market in Latin America were to be eliminated, not only could women’s wages rose by about 50 percent, but national output increased by 5 percent.

3. The probability of children being enrolled in school increases with their mother’s educational level and extra income going to mothers has more positive

\textsuperscript{150} Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2010, op.cit., p.31.
impact on household investments in nutrition, health and education of children than extra income going to fathers.\footnote{153}

4. Women’s time burdens are an important constraint on growth and development, women are an over-utilised, not an under-utilised resource. The benefits of reducing this gender-based constraint can be considerable. For instance, a study in Tanzania shows that reducing such constraints in a community of smallholders, coffee and banana growers increased household cash incomes by 10 percent, labour productivity by 15 percent, and capital productivity by 44 percent.

4.14.2: Methods/Approaches to Empowerment

Empowerment of women is a multifaceted approach. It involves economic, social, political and legal planes. Amartya Sen wrote, “Nothing arguably, is as important today in the political economy of development as an adequate recognition of political, economic, and social participation and leadership of women”\footnote{154}. The holistic approach to the empowerment of women is shown in the below Chart No.4.3.

For ensuring the empowerment of women, seven important approaches are identified. These are education, economic, political, integrated development, consciousness raising, organisation and gender budgeting approaches which are discussed below.\textsuperscript{155}

1. **Education Approach:** Education plays a positive role in empowering women. It helps women to be aware of their rights and responsibilities. Enabling girls to access the intellectual and social benefits of basic education ensures that their rights are protected and fulfilled and greatly enhance the range of life choices available to them as women. “Education helps to gain knowledge and information, equips women with ability to analyse and assess their situation and gain courage to change it”\textsuperscript{156}.

For sustained development of the community girl’s education is a must. Women’s education is the first step to attain gender equality. Girl’s education correlates positively with several important national and international goals.

\begin{itemize}
  \item[H.M. Hemalatha.,] \textit{op.cit.}, p.72.
  \item[H.M. Hemalatha.,] \textit{op.cit.}, p.73.
\end{itemize}
including universal primary education, economic productivity, social development, social equity and sustainability of development efforts. Girl’s education has long lasting benefits for her families and for the entire communities.

Education is an entry point to other opportunities. Education equips women with knowledge and skills to adopt healthy life styles. “As a result, their children have higher survival rates and tend to be healthier and better nourished.” Education provides girls with a basic knowledge of their rights as individuals and as citizens of their nation and the world. Empowerment through education leads women to greater participation in social, economic and political arenas and in community decision making. Educated women are assets to the family, society and nation. “Educational empowerment helps to have ripple effects within the family and across generations.” For the holistic empowerment of women, educational empowerment is vital, which is shown in below Chart No.4.4.

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Chart No. 4.4: Education Has Far-Reaching Effects: Educated Girls Lead Different Lives


2. Economic Approach: Participation in economic life affords women a basis for self respect and social dignity, attributes that are integral to participating in all dimensions of life. Economic empowerment means access and control over resources and the ability to earn an income. Women’s subordinate position is because women’s work is unpaid and underpaid. Women work longer hours than men but their work is unpaid (domestic work) and less paid and women are found in less prestigious jobs. “The differences in the work patterns of men and women, and the ‘invisibility’ of work that is not included in the national accounts, leads to

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160 Karl Marlee., *op.cit.*, p.4.
lower entitlements to women than to men”\(^{161}\). Lack of access and control over resources, lack of education, skill and training, etc., are responsible for lower status of women, therefore, education, access to resources, skill and training are essential for the economic empowerment of women. Economic empowerment of women focuses on improving women’s control over material resources and strengthening women’s economic security.

3. **Political Approach**: Empowering women in political arena can help to bring positive impact on the society. This can be done by (1) ensuring women’s right to vote and elect their representatives, (2) ensuring that women reach to the decision making bodies through democratic means and (3) reserving women’s representation in the governing bodies, at the local and national levels.

4. **Integrated Development Approach**: Integrated development approach views women’s development as key to the advancement of family and community. It provides a package of interventions to alleviate poverty, meet basic survival needs and reduce gender discrimination. This approach is met by forming women’s collectives that engage in development activities and tackle social problems\(^ {162}\).

5. **Organisational Approach**: This is one of the novel approaches for achieving empowerment of women. The 1985 Conference at Nairobi saw the emergence of a third world women’s perspective on development articulated by a third world women’s network called Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). It identified the causes of women’s oppression. It argues that patriarchy is not the only reason but also there are historical and structural factors. DAWN advocated a strategy of ‘empowerment through organisation’, both to push for major structural changes at the policy and political level, and also to raise basic survival needs as the priority development issue\(^ {163}\). Srilatha Batliwala says “it is difficult for one woman to bring lasting change, but if whole

\(^{162}\)Sahay Sushma., *op.cit.*, p.51.
group of women begin to demand change, it is much more difficult for society to reject them altogether.\textsuperscript{164} This speaks about the importance of organisation.

6. Consciousness Raising Approach: Another important method of achieving empowerment of women is creating awareness about empowerment of women. Women should be made aware about the gender inequality, causes for gender gaps. Women are then organised into collective groups to tackle the sources of women subordination. Socialisation, gender sensitisation, gender planning, altering the self image, understanding the responsibilities are some of the methods that help to create awareness and raise the consciousness level.\textsuperscript{165}

7. Gender Budgeting Approach: Gender budgeting or gender sensitive budgeting, is recognised as one of the important means of achieving empowerment of women. Gender equity should be integrated into all programmes and policies of the development process. Human Development Report 2003 reports that in “high achieving countries” the political commitment is reflected not just in allocation of public spending to health and education, but also in their equity.\textsuperscript{166} The ‘Gender Budgeting’ concept has already been discussed in detail in Section I of this chapter.

Section III

4.15: Significance of Gender Budgeting

According to the World Economic Forum, gender inequality is inefficient and costly to women, men, girls and boys.\textsuperscript{167} These costs are manifested by lower levels of productivity, competitiveness and reduced levels of well-being. Diane Elson is of the view that “if women themselves have more control over resources there will be gains for society as a whole.”\textsuperscript{168} A national budget that is gender responsive recognises the underlying inequalities between women and men and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\textsuperscript{164} Quoted by H.M. Hemalatha., \textit{op.cit.}, p.74. \\
\textsuperscript{165} ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{167} Quoted by Yasmin Ratansi., \textit{op.cit.}, p.20. \\
\end{tabular}
\end{footnotesize}
redresses them through the allocation of public resources"\textsuperscript{169}. It also views women not as “a vulnerable group who are beneficiaries of government assistance but rather as right holders, whose governments are under obligation to empower and protect them”\textsuperscript{170}.

In order to understand the significance of gender budgeting and why gender budgeting is needed it is necessary to learn how women are faring in different areas such as, life expectancy, adult literacy rate and labour force participation. The following tables help us to understand life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate and labour force participation of women in different regions namely, Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005.

4.15.1: Life Expectancy at Birth

Life expectancy at birth is one of the most favoured indicators in demographic and health analysis. Life expectancy at birth is the number of years a newborn infant would live if prevailing patterns of age-specific mortality rates at the time of birth were to stay the same throughout the child’s life\textsuperscript{171}. Life expectancy at birth is the average number of years a newborn infant would be expected to live if health and living conditions at the time of its birth remained the same throughout its life. It summarises the mortality pattern that prevails across all age groups, children and adolescents, adults and the elderly\textsuperscript{172}.

It is a proxy measure for several dimensions like adequate nutrition, good health, education and other achievements. Life expectancy is a statistical measure utilised to determine the average lifespan of the population of a country. Life expectancy is one of the dimensions of Human Development Index (HDI), along with adult literacy, education and decent standard of living. It is also used in the construction of Gender Development Index (GDI). Life expectancy reflects the

\textsuperscript{169} Balmori Hofbaur Helena., \textit{GENDER and BUDGETS}, Overview Report, BRIDGE, University of Sussex, February 2003, p.5.
\textsuperscript{172} World Health Organization(WHO), Indicators, accessed on 4\textsuperscript{th} January 2010 (www.who.int/whiis/indicators/2007).
health of people of that country and it helps to measure the quality and access to health services they receive. It is an indicator of the overall health of the country. It measures the relative achievement of a country in life expectancy at birth. It is measured by the formula:\(^\text{173}\):

\[
\text{Life expectancy index} = \frac{\text{actual value} - \text{minimum value}}{\text{maximum value} - \text{minimum value}}
\]

The Table No.4.2 shows trends in life expectancy at birth by gender and by region for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005.

Table No. 4.2: Life Expectancy at Birth
(in years)

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In the year 1995, lowest life expectancy at birth for both genders was seen in Burkina Faso of African region. Male life expectancy at birth was 45.3 years.
and female life expectancy at birth was 47.4 years. During the same year highest life expectancy at birth for male was 77.4 years in Iceland of European region and female life expectancy at birth was highest, that is, 82.8 years in Japan of Asian region.

The above Table No.4.2 reveals the fact that in the year 2000, the lowest life expectancy at birth for both male and female was in Central African Republic of African region. Male life expectancy at birth and female life expectancy at birth was 42.7 years and 46.0 years respectively. Highest life expectancy was found in Japan for both genders, that is, 77.4 years for male and 84.4 years for female. It can be observed that lowest life expectancy at birth for both genders was again in Central African Republic of African region in the year 2005. It was 42.3 years for male and 45.0 years for female. Highest life expectancy at birth was found in Iceland for male, that is, 79.9 years and 85.7 years for female in Japan.

Life expectancy at birth for men and women in Asian sub-continent shows that female life expectancy was higher compared to male life expectancy at birth. In Bangladesh, life expectancy for male was 56.9 years in the year 1995 which increased to 59.4 years in the year 2000 and further increased to 62.3 years during 2005. Similarly, female life expectancy which was 57 years during the year 1995 increased to 59.5 years and to 64.0 years during the years 2000 and 2005 respectively.

During the year 1995, in China male life expectancy was 67.3 years and female life expectancy was 71.3 years. It can be revealed that life expectancy for male and female has improved between 1995 and 2005. In the year 2000, male life expectancy was 68.5 years and female life expectancy was 72.8 years. For the period between 2000 and 2005 life expectancy has further gone up to 71.0 years for male and 74.3 years for female.

In India male life expectancy was 61.4 years and female life expectancy was 61.8 years in the year 1995. It can be observed that life expectancy for both genders has improved for the years 2000 and 2005 with slight decline for male. During the year 2000 life expectancy for male was 62.8 years which slightly
decreased to 62.3 years in 2005. Female life expectancy was 63.8 years for the year 2000 and it increased to 65.3 years for the year 2005.

Table No.4.2 shows that Japan has highest life expectancy at birth for men and women in the Asian region. Life expectancy at birth for male has increased from 76.7 years to 77.4 years and further to 78.7 years during 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively. Female life expectancy has improved from 82.8 years to 84.4 years and to 85.7 years in 1995, 2000 and 2005. There is an improvement in the life expectancy in the country for both the sexes. There is gain of 2.9 years for female, 2.0 years for male between 1995 and 2005.

In Nepal, male life expectancy was 56.3 years; 58.8 years and 62.1 years and female life expectancy was 55.6 years; 58.3 years and 62.9 years during 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively. In case of Pakistan, male life expectancy was 61.8 years and female life expectancy was 63.9 years during the year 1995. In the year 2000 male life expectancy was 60.2 years and female life expectancy was 59.8 years. The Table No.4.2 shows that both genders show decline in the life expectancy at birth between the period 1995 and 2000. It implies that male life expectancy has declined by 1.6 years and female life expectancy has reduced by 4.1 years. During the year 2005 male life expectancy was 64.3 years and female life expectancy was 64.8 years respectively, which implies that life expectancy of both genders has improved.

In Sri Lanka, male life expectancy which was 70.3 years in 1995, decreased to 69.5 years in 2000 and further it decreased to 67.9 years in the year 2005. Female life expectancy, which was 74.8 years in 1995, increased to 75.3 years in 2000 and further it improved to 75.6 years in the year 2005.

After analysing the life expectancy at birth for different countries of five regions, it can be concluded that the life expectancy at birth for female is higher compared to that of male life expectancy at birth for almost all countries. For this particular phenomenon two major reasons are:
1. Men are more addicted to tobacco, drugs and alcohol than women in almost all countries and, therefore, men die from associated diseases such as lung cancer, heart attacks, etc.

2. Women tend to have more resistance to infections and degenerative diseases\textsuperscript{174}.

Amartya Sen has also observed that “Women tend to have a lower mortality rate than men in nearly all age groups; this seems to have a biological basis. There is higher tendency of men to smoke compared with women”\textsuperscript{175}.

The statistical data contained in the above Table No.4.2 reveals that, of all the five regions, European region shows high life expectancy for both male and female followed by American region. Life expectancy varies from one region to another region of the world. These variations are mostly caused by differences in public health, medical care, better nutrition and hygiene practices. For instance, during the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, the average lifespan in the United States increased by more than 25 years which can be attributed to advances in public health (Vaccination, Control of infectious diseases, Safer and healthier foods, Healthier mother and babies, etc)\textsuperscript{176}. High death rate (excess mortality) in poorer nations is due to war, starvation and diseases\textsuperscript{177}. Table No.4.2 also indicates that women have higher life expectancies than men worldwide.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
4.15.2: Adult Literacy Rate

Adult literacy rate is defined as the percentage of population aged 15 years and above who can both, with understanding, read and write a short, simple statement about everyday life\textsuperscript{178}. Adult literacy reflects the accumulated achievement of primary education and literacy programmes in imparting basic literacy skills to the population, thereby enabling them to apply such skills in daily life and to continue learning and communicating using the written words\textsuperscript{179}. Literacy has a number of social benefits like improved health status, longer life expectancy, lowered fertility rate, increased income, etc. Table No.4.3 presents the adult literacy statistics for the world adult population categorized by region and country.

Table No. 4.3: Adult Literacy Rate
(% aged 15 and above)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>49.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>80.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>96.8</td>
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<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>98.5</td>
<td>98.0</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Canada</td>
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<td>99.0</td>
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<td>Sri Lanka</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>New Zealand</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Lowest adult literacy is observed in Burkina Faso of African region for both men and women, for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005. In the year 1995, male and female adult literacy was 29.5 percent and 9.2 percent respectively. During the year 2000 it has gone up to 33.9 percent for male and 14.1 percent for female.
Adult literacy declined to 31.4 percent for male and it has increased to 16.6 percent for female in 2005.

The highest adult literacy rate is noticed in European region. Almost all European countries namely, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom have achieved 99 percent adult literacy rate. This is not limited to males only, what is significant is to note that even females are 99 percent literate. Highest adult literacy is also found in Japan of Asian continent and Australia and New Zealand of Oceania. Possibly the one percent may include such persons who are mentally retarded.

Adult literacy rate for men and women in the Asian countries is as under:
In Bangladesh adult literacy was 49.4 percent for male and 26.1 percent for female in 1995 which increased to 52.3 percent for male and 29.9 percent for female during the year 2000. In the year 2005 adult literacy rate improved for female to 40.8 percent from 29.9 percent in 2000. Male adult literacy rate increased to 53.9 percent in 2005.

The figures in the Table No.4.3 indicate that in China, male adult literacy was 89.9 percent in 1995 which increased to 91.7 percent in 2000 and further it has gone up to 95.1 percent in the year 2005. Similarly, female adult literacy rate has increased from 72.7 percent in 1995 to 76.3 percent in 2000 and further to 86.5 percent in 2005.

Table No.4.3 displays that in India male adult literacy was 65.5 percent and female adult literacy was 37.7 percent in 1995, which improved to 68.4 percent for male, and 45.4 percent for female during the year 2000. Literacy rate has further increased to 73.4 percent for male and 47.8 percent for female in the year 2005.

Of all the Asian countries, Japan has highest adult literacy rate, that is, 99 percent, for both genders in 1995, 2000 and 2005. In case of Nepal, 40.9 percent male adult literacy and 14.0 percent female adult literacy was observed in the year 1995, which has gone up to 59.6 percent for male and 24.0 percent for female during the year 2000. It can be revealed that there was further
improvement in the male and female adult literacy rate which increased to 62.7 percent and 34.9 percent respectively during the year 2005. In Pakistan, male adult literacy was 50.0 percent; 57.5 percent and 64.1 percent and female adult literacy was 24.4 percent; 27.9 percent and 35.4 percent in 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively.

Table No.4.3 shows that Sri Lanka has 93.4 percent male adult literacy rate and 87.2 female adult literacy rate in the year 1995. It has slightly improved to 94.4 percent for male and 89.0 percent for female during the year 2000. It can be observed that in the year 2005 male adult literacy rate has declined to 92.3 percent and female adult literacy rate has increased to 89.1 percent.

Gender disparities in adult literacy are more in African and Asian regions (South East Asia). Adult literacy rate was equally distributed between genders for all countries of European region, Japan of East Asia, Canada and United States of America of American region and Australia and New Zealand of Oceania. Table No.4.3 indicates that illiterate adults in developed regions make up for small fraction, that is, one percent of the adult population. In the developed countries nearly 99 percent of the adult population is literate.

4.15.3: Gender Gap in Adult Literacy Rate

In almost all countries, the female adult literacy rate was below the male adult literacy rate. Gender gap in adult literacy for male and female was greater among South Asian Countries and some countries of African region. This can be explained with the help of following Table No.4.4
Table No. 4.4: Gender Gap in Adult Literacy Rate

*(in percent)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Africa</td>
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<td>42.9</td>
<td>39.9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>90.8</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>83.4</td>
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<td>47.6</td>
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<td>86.0</td>
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<td>Oceania</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiji</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Prepared on the basis of Table No.4.3

Based on the Table No.4.3 an attempt is made to identify the gender gap in adult literacy rate in 1995, 2000 and 2005. In African region the highest gender gap was observed in Burkino Faso for the three years 1995, 2000 and 2005. That is, it was 90.8 percent in 1995 which decreased to 85.9 percent in 2000 and further to 83.4 percent in the year 2005. Lowest gender gap was found in Kenya.
It was 30.0 percent in 1995, that decreased to 24.0 percent in 2000 and it increased to 29.8 percent in 2005.

In American region for the three years 1995, 2000 and 2005, highest gender gap was in Brazil and lowest was for Canada and United States of America. In Brazil, the highest gender gap was 16.8 percent in 1995, that declined to 14.6 percent in 2000 and further it declined to 11.2 percent in 2005. In Canada and United States of America the gender gap was 1.0 percent during 1995, 2000 and 2005.

In case of Asian region, the statistical data in Table No.4.4 shows that highest gender gap was found in Nepal for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005. That is, it was 86.0 percent, 76.0 percent and 65.1 percent respectively. In Bangladesh the gender hiatus was 73.9 percent in 1995, 70.1 percent in 2000 and 59.2 percent during 2005. In case of China, it was 27.3 percent in 1995, which declined to 23.7 percent in 2000 and further to 13.5 percent during 2005. In India, in the year 1995, the gender gap was 62.3 percent, which decreased to 54.6 percent in 2000 and further declined to 52.2 percent in 2005. In Pakistan in the year 1995, the gender hiatus was 75.6 percent in 2000, it decreased to 72.1 percent and again declined to 64.6 percent in the year 2005. Lowest gender gap in Asian region was observed in Japan, which was 1.0 percent during 1995, 2000 and 2005. In Sri Lanka, the gender gap was 12.8 percent in 1995, which reduced to 11.0 percent in 2000 and again declined to 10.9 percent in 2005.

In European region, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Sweden and United Kingdom the gender gap was constant at 1.0 percent during 1995, 2000 and 2005. In Oceania for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005 high gender hiatus was observed in Papua New Guinea. That is, it was 37.3 percent in 1995, which increased to 43.2 percent in 2000 and further it increased to 49.1 percent in 2005. Australia and New Zealand showed lowest gender gap, 1.0 percent for all the three years 1995, 2000 and 2005. From Table No.4.4 it is clear that the gender gap was high in Burkino Faso of African region. A low gender gap was found in all the countries of European region. This could be combination of several socioeconomic and historical factors.
4.15.4: Labour Force Participation

Labour force participation rate is the proportion of the population aged 15-64 that is economically active: all people who supply labour for the production of goods and services during a specified period. The labour force is the supply of labour available for the production of goods and services in an economy. It includes people who are currently employed and people who are unemployed but seeking work as well as first-time job-seekers. The labour force participation rate of the population aged 15-64 provides an indication of the relative size of the labour supply. It measures the proportion of a country’s working-age population that is engaged in the labour market, by either working or looking for work. Female as a percentage of the labour force show the extent to which women are active in the labour force. Table No.4.5 contains information on labour force participation rate by region and by sex (15-64 years) for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005.

\[^{180}\text{World Bank, World Development Indicators 2007, Washington D.C., 2007, p.47.}\]
Table No. 4.5: Labour Force Participation

(in percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>29.6</td>
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<td>80.6</td>
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<td>80.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<tr>
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<td>57.4</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>61.3</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td>67.4</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Iceland</td>
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<td>89.9</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>82.9</td>
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<td>76.4</td>
<td>80.3</td>
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<td>79.0</td>
<td>74.8</td>
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<td>66.9</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>69.4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Australia</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>80.8</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>54.7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>72.2</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Labour force participation among male was highest in Burkina Faso of African region, it was 91.6 percent, and lowest in Belgium of European region, it was 72.3 percent in 1995. The data presented in Table No.4.5 shows that Iceland has highest female labour force participation, it was 80.7 percent and Algeria has lowest, 27.6 percent female labour force participation for the year 1995. It can be observed that during the year 2000, Burkina Faso has 91.2 percent which was highest among male labour force participation and lowest male labour force participation was 73.8 percent, which was found in Belgium. In the same year 2000, lowest labour participation among women was 30.3 percent in Pakistan and highest was in Burkina Faso which was 80.1 percent. In the year 2005 highest labour force participation for both men and women was in Iceland, 90.6 percent and 82.9 percent respectively. Lowest labour participation among male was 72.4 percent in Belgium and 33.6 percent for female in Pakistan.

Among the Asian countries, Bangladesh shows 58.1 percent female labour force participation rate and 89.5 percent male labour force participation rate in the year 1995. The figures in the Table No.4.5 show that there was decline in both male and female labour force participation rate for the years 2000 and 2005. It declined to 57.0 percent for female, 88.4 percent for male in 2000 and 55.1 percent for female and 88.0 percent for male for the year 2005 respectively. Table No.4.5 reveals the fact that in China, in 1995 male labour force participation rate was 89.7 percent which decreased to 89.2 percent and 87.8 percent, for the years 2000 and 2005 respectively. Female labour force participation rate was 79.1 percent in the year 1995 which decreased to 78.1 percent in 2000 and further declined to 75.8 percent in the year 2005. In case of India male labour force participation rate was 85.9 percent in 1995 which declined to 85.0 percent in the year 2000 and further came down to 84.1 percent in the year 2005. Female labour force participation was 37.2 percent in the year 1995 which decreased to 35.9 percent in 2000 and rose thereafter to 36.0 percent. In case of Japan, male labour force participation was 84.6 percent; 85.3 percent and 84.8 percent and female labour force participation rate was 58.5 percent; 59.5 percent and 60.5 percent for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively.
The data for Nepal reveals that the rate of labour force participation was 50.7 percent, 52.0 percent and 52.6 percent in case of female labour force and 81.7 percent, 80.9 percent and 80.6 percent in case of male labour force in 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively. Similarly, in case of Pakistan, male labour force participation rate was 85.8 percent in 1995 which increased to 86.2 percent in the year 2000 and declined to 85.4 percent in 2005. Female labour force participation has continuously increased from 29.6 percent to 30.3 percent and 33.6 percent for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively. For Sri Lanka, Table No.4.5 shows that male labour force participation was 78.3 percent; 80.6 percent and 80.9 percent and female labour force participation was 39.2 percent; 40.3 percent and 38.2 percent for the years 1995, 2000 and 2005 respectively.

In general, estimates of women labour force participation are lower than those of men and are not comparable internationally, reflecting the fact that for women the demographic, social, legal and cultural trends and norms determine whether their activities are regarded as economic. Another important aspect is countries differ in the criteria used to determine the extent to which workers are to be counted as part of the labour force 181.

4.15.5: Gender Gap in Labour Force Participation

The gender gap in labour force participation is explained with the help of Table No.4.6.

Table No. 4.6: Gender Gap in Labour Force Participation  

(in percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United States Of America</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>China</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>India</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>France</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Prepared on the basis of Table No.4.5

Based on information provided in the Table No.4.5, an attempt is made to identify the gender gap in labour force participation in 1995, 2000 and 2005. In African region highest gender gap in labour force participation was found in
Algeria during the years 1995, 2000 and 2005. It was 72.4 percent in 1995, which decreased to 67.2 percent in the year 2000 and to 62.0 percent in 2005. Lowest gender hiatus was observed in Burkino Faso for all the three years, that is, it was 20.0 percent in 1995, which declined to 19.9 percent in 2000 and increased to 20.3 percent in the year 2005.

In American region highest gender disparity in labour force participation was found in Argentina during 1995 and 2000. It was 51.1 percent in 1995 and 45.7 percent in the year 2000. In the year 2005 the highest gender gap was 39.0 percent in Brazil. It can be observed from Table No.4.6 that lowest gender hiatus was found in United States of America during 1995, that is, it was 30.6 percent. Lowest gender gap was observed in Canada for the years 2000 and 2005, that is, it was 29.5 percent in 2000 which declined to 27.2 percent in 2005.

In Asia highest gender gap was found in Pakistan. The gender gap was 70.4 percent in 1995, which declined to 69.7 percent in 2000 and again it declined to 66.4 percent in 2005. It can be noted from Table No.4.6 that lowest gender hiatus was found in China. It was 20.9 percent in 1995, which increased to 21.9 percent in 2000 and it again increased to 24.2 percent in the year 2005. In Bangladesh, the gender gap was 41.9 percent in 1995, which increased to 43.0 percent in 2000 and again it increased to 44.9 percent in 2005. In Japan, the gender gap was 41.5 percent in 1995, which declined to 40.5 percent in 2000 and it again declined to 39.5 percent in the year 2005. In India, the gender gap was 62.8 percent in 1995, which increased to 64.1 percent in 2000 and it declined to 64.0 percent in the year 2005. Nepal showed 49.3 percent gender hiatus in 1995, which declined to 48.0 percent and again to 47.4 percent during the years 2000 and 2005 respectively.

In European region, highest gender gap was observed in Belgium. In 1995, the gender hiatus was 48.3 percent, which declined to 43.5 percent in 2000 and again it declined to 42.6 percent in the year 2005. Lowest gender gap was found in Iceland during 1995, 2000 and 2005. It was 19.3 percent in 1995, which declined to 16.7 percent in the year 2000, and it slightly increased to 17.1 percent in the year 2005.
In Oceania, highest gender hiatus was found in Fiji for the three years 1995, 2000 and 2005. It was 48.7 percent in 1995, which declined to 47.3 percent in the year 2000 and it again declined to 45.3 percent in 2005. Lowest gender gap was observed in Papua New Guinea. It was 28.6 percent in 1995, which decreased to 27.8 percent in 2000 and it again declined to 27.3 percent in the year 2005.

The gender hiatus in labour force participation was highest in Algeria of African region. It was found to be lowest in Iceland of European region. In Asia it was highest in Pakistan and lowest in China.

4.16: Global Gender Gap Index

The present status of women in the world is also analysed with the help of Global Gender Gap Index. The Global Gender Gap Index was introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006. It is a framework for capturing the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress. The Index benchmarks the national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health based criteria and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups. The rankings are designed to create awareness among a global audience of the challenges posed by gender gaps and the opportunities created by reducing them. The Global Gender Gap Index examines the gap between male and female in four categories:

1) Economic Participation and Opportunity;

2) Educational Attainment;

3) Political Empowerment; and

4) Health Survival.

The gender gap index in some of the important economies of the world is shown in Table No.4.7.
Table No.4.7: Gender Gap Index in Some Important Economies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0.601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0.594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>0.606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>0.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>0.655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0.658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0.651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0.644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0.656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0.688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.691</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0.616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>0.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>0.615</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table No.4.7 displays 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 rankings and scores of a few economies on the basis of economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment and health and survival. For example, India held 98th place in 2006, 114th place in 2007, 113th place in 2008 and 114th place in 2009. In four years India has slipped from 98th position to 114th position indicating the widening gender gap.
No country in the world has achieved gender equality. The three highest ranking countries—Iceland, Finland and Norway have closed a little over 80 percent of their gender gaps, while the lowest ranking country—Yemen has closed only around 46 percent of its gender gap\textsuperscript{182}.

The existence of gender gap, as above, calls for collective and corrective efforts. Gender budgeting is one such effort. Gender budgeting helps to bridge the gender gap and helps the countries to become more competitive. Gender responsive budgets can contribute to achieving the objectives of gender equality, human development and economic efficiency.