



GENDER BUDGETING: A PATH OF WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract:

The present study delves into the evolution of gender-focused policies in India with a specific focus on gender budgeting and its impact on women's development and empowerment. The Indian Constitution, through its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, and Directive Principles, firmly upholds the principle of gender equality. Moreover, it empowers the State to adopt affirmative measures for the advancement of women. From the initial five-year plans, where the discourse centered on women's welfare alongside other disadvantaged groups, there has been a transformative shift. The transition from a welfare-oriented approach to a developmental one occurred notably in the sixth five-year plan (1980-85). This period marked a pivotal moment as the approach became multidisciplinary, with a specific emphasis on health, education, and employment for women. Subsequent plans, further reinforced steps towards national development, addressing women's socio-economic status through beneficiary-oriented schemes, human development initiatives, and educational and vocational training.

Keywords: Gender Budgeting, Women's Development, Empowerment, Gender Equality, Indian Constitution

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Introduction:

In the complex tapestry of India's policy landscape, the commitment to gender equality is deeply woven into the fabric of the Constitution. Enshrined in the Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, and Directive Principles, the principle not only ensures equality for women but also authorizes the State to take affirmative action in their favor. From the inception of the first five-year plan in 1951, women's development has been a focal point for the government. However, during this period, the discourse primarily revolved around women's welfare, often conjoined with the broader welfare concerns of marginalized groups such as the destitute, disabled, and aged.

A significant paradigm shift occurred during the sixth five-year plan (1980-85), marking a transition from a welfare-centric to a development-centric approach. This transformative period embraced a multi-disciplinary strategy with a particular emphasis on three core sectors crucial for women: health, education, and employment. The subsequent plans built upon this foundation, directing efforts towards national development by improving women's socio-economic status through beneficiary-oriented schemes, human development initiatives, and educational and vocational training programs.

The Present paper aims to trace the trajectory of gender-focused policies in India, emphasizing the pivotal shift in approach and examining the subsequent steps taken to empower women and enhance their socio-economic standing. The exploration will extend to understanding the implications of gender budgeting and its role in shaping policies that foster women's development and contribute to the broader canvas of gender equality in the country.

India: policies for women

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Not only that development of women has been receiving attention of the government right from the very first five year plan (1951-56) but the same has been treated as a subject of 'welfare' and clubbed together with the welfare of the disadvantaged groups like destitute, disabled, aged etc. there was only discussion about women's welfare during first five year plan to fifth five year plan. The shift in the approach from welfare to development of women could take

place only in the sixth five year plan (1980-85). 6th plan adopted a multi-disciplinary approach with a special thrust on the three core sectors of health, Education and employment for women. After the sixth plan there were steps for national development by improving in women's socio-economic status, 'Beneficiary-Oriented Schemes', human development, Education and vocational training.

Even though these steps are not fruitful to reduce the difference between male and female in the Indian society. Because steps taken for women's development and empowerment were not successful. The use of provided money were not sufficient. Because of that central government had started the system "gender budget" for women's development and empowerment. Central Government also instructed all the states for implementation of this system.

WHAT IS GENDER BUDGET:

Women's development and empowerment preferred in country's development planning, in gender budgeting to check how much use of provided money for this work? How much distribution of resources for women? How many women get benefit from these? How it affects women's life? All these are the main objectives of budgeting. In short gender budgeting is not only different budget for male or female but also examine by the perspectives of women's development and empowerment the effects on male and female. The gender budgeting is a tool of the achievement of male-female equality in the development process.

Gender Budget: Analysis Of Selected Indian States:

Gendering the budget is to analyze the budgetary expenditures from a gender perspective. The objective was to enhance fiscal policy-making and measures, by providing a mechanism for ascertaining their impacts on women, men, girls and boys. The study analysed data of ten selected states, namely Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and Manipur.

It involved an analysis of public expenditure and methods of raising revenues; an analysis of gender-targeted allocations especially programmes targeting women; and a review of equal opportunities, policies and allocations within government services. It was found that Assam, Meghalaya, and Manipur allocated a substantial percentage of the state budget to the social sector. In other states, the social sector budget received around 22-36% of state budget

allocations in 2000-01. In 10 states selected, the range of allocations to women's programmes varied between 3 - 13% of the state budget. Targeted schemes, as compared to pro-women schemes, received lower percent allocations, and in 4 states they allocated less than 1%. Allocation to pro-women schemes showed wide variations across states and ranged between less than 1-11%. It was observed that fiscal flow to women's programmes in all states was far below the desired level and lower than the norms recommended by the Planning Commission (30%). The percentage allocations to women-targeted programmes of the social sector budgets were less than 5% in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and Assam, and less than 1% in Manipur.

Department of Women and Child Development/Social Welfare, Education, Health and Family Welfare made higher percentage allocations of their departmental budgets to both women-targeted and pro-women programmes. For pro-women schemes, other departments like the Rural Department, Agriculture, Cooperatives and Tribal, and Labour played an important role in women's development by having pro- and targeted schemes and reasonable allocations. The status of women was reviewed through indicators like sex ratio, female literacy rate, female school enrolment ratio 6-11 years and 11-14 years, and female drop-out rate (6-11 years). It was suggested that a serious methodical debate should be carried out for gender-based analysis, and tools for monitoring the progress of women's component plan should be sharpened.

There is a need for more in-depth analysis of sectoral issues and formulating uniform guidelines and procedures so that comparisons and inferences can be made at regional and national levels. For a comprehensive assessment of the gender impact of government budgets, DWCD should formulate and disseminate uniform guidelines on gender budgets and analysis to States, and develop software for such analysis. Restrictions should be imposed on the re-appropriation of budgetary allocations meant for women and girls. Closer monitoring, accountability, and community involvement should be encouraged to improve the implementation of programmes. Gender budget initiatives can improve efficiency of resource allocations, and strengthen economic governance through a framework that can enhance accountability and transparency.

Gujarat and Gender Budget:

We know gender development as a difference between males and females by Sex although to

drop out the women related social limitations. It is also to provide equal opportunity.

In this context, we also have to check the conditions in Gujarat. Gujarat is the best economic and industrial state for investors, in the comparison of the state the percentage of industrial peace is very good in Gujarat. But if we examine it by gender development the condition of women of economically developed Gujarat is very poor.

Gujarat is a very progressive state in economic development but A report by UNDP, Gujarat is in 6th place in Human Development and Gender Development. In the year 1990 before economic liberalization, Gujarat was ahead in Human development and gender development. But in the year 2001, it slid back in place. In comparison to other states, the opportunity for employment in Gujarat is good but as the main profession of the unorganized sector, there was less development in agriculture. If we discuss about Gender Development in other sectors: in Education Gujarat on 6th place, in Health in 9th and in environment in 13th place.

Gender Equality: Some Suggestions:

- (1). We made policy for women's development out of the women's welfare concept 30 years after India became A republic. Although we made an empowerment policy we did not get fruitful results, there was the thought of gender budgeting. All governments have been very careful about gender budgeting but only as ideal written document as in other policies and planning.
- (2). Equal participation and decision-making of women in the social, political and economic life of the nation is necessary.
- (3). Promoting societal awareness of gender issues and women's human rights.
- (4). Review of curriculum and educational materials to include gender education and human rights issues.
- (5).Removal of all references derogatory to the dignity of women from all public documents and legal instruments.
- (6)Economic development has been always with human development. We have to go out of thinking of development is a social development and development of country to be a guide of the world in 21st century India must has been take steps on the way of development. Many wonderful things will not be done. If You don't do them.

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