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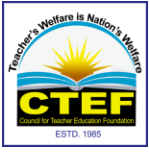


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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH GENDER BUDGETING IN GUJARAT

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Abstract

The Gujarat Government is committed to holistic development of its citizens that includes not only economic but also social development of all sections of the society. Efforts are being made to ensure that the fruits of the development reach to the poorest of the poor with special emphasis on development of women in society. There are several aspects of gender budgeting in Gujarat. First, the government makes gender sensitive policies for the betterment of women. Secondly, government allocates required funds to different departments for tackling the social and economic problems faced by women. Thirdly, many government departments make bulk of joint expenditure and do not allocate separate funds for men and women. The gender budgeting provision sensitizes these departments to allocate more funds for the welfare of women. The main objective of the present study is to analyze the quantum of budgetary allocations for schemes/programmes that substantially benefit women in gender budgeting statement in Gujarat for the year 2024-25. The present study is based on secondary data. The required data has been taken from Expenditure Budget, Various Issues. In order to analyze the data and to draw conclusion from them. Today significant progress can be seen in the areas of women's development, their reproductive rights, health and gender equality but much more needs to be done.

Introduction

The Gujarat Government is committed to holistic development of its citizens that includes not only economic but also social development of all sections of the society. Efforts are being made to ensure that the fruits of the development reach to the poorest of the poor with special emphasis on development of women in society.

The United Nation's Agenda 2030 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a universal call for to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Among the 17 SDGs, Goal 5 is aimed to achieve general equality and empower all women through ending all types of discrimination against women and girls. Gender equality is not only a basic human right but it is crucial for sustainable future. The State Government has already prepared "**Gujarat Sustainable Vision 2030**" spanning 17 Sustainable Development Goals; including Gender Equality. To bring out desired outcome for women's empowerment and gender equality, the State Government has been implementing many schemes for women and girls development. Since financial year

2014-15, the State Government has been publishing "**Gender Budget**" comprising of women specific financial allocations.

The innovative concept of gender budgeting has received substantial attention worldwide. There are about 85 countries around the world which have followed gender budgeting. Gender budgeting is looking at the economy through women's eyes. The issue of gender budgeting has become very much important in the present day Indian scenario for the social, economic and educational development of women as a whole. It is particularly important in the Indian context because a strong gender discrimination and cultural dominance of male folk has been imposed on the female folk from a long time. With this background, the paper intended to analyse the quantum of budgetary allocations for schemes/programmes that substantially benefit women in gender budgeting statement in India.

Gender budgeting is one of the important components of gender mainstreaming. Gender budgeting is looking at the economy through women's eyes. Gender budgeting is a dissection of the government budget to establish its gender

differential impacts and to translate gender commitments into budgetary commitments. Gender budgets are referred by several names like “Gender Budgets”, “Women’s Budgets”, “Gender Sensitive Budgets”, “Gender Responsive Budgets”, “Applied Gender Budget Analysis”, etc. All these terms refer to gender budget initiatives.

The concept of gender budgeting came into existence in 2005. For the first time, the Government of India included a statement on gender budgeting in the budget 2005-06. The basic aim of this was to make allocation of resources/funds for various programmes/policies/schemes which are designed for the benefit of women. With the production of the gender budgeting statement as part of the Union Budget documents, an institutionalized effort is being made to answer the basic question that how much of the government’s total expenditure is flowing to women. At present, twenty two states have taken initiatives to implement gender budgeting for the welfare of women in India.

For more than five decades of planning, the policies/ programmes for women do not seem to have made any significant impact on the development of women. The economic imbalances under

which they work still exist in the country. The Indian civilization has given women such a place in the society where she can make her best contribution in the social system as with her abilities and potentialities. Articles 14, 15, 16, 21, 39, 42 of the Indian Constitution became pertinent in the context of equal rights for men and women. But the gender based differences in the society still exist. Therefore gender budgeting exercise of Government of India and Gujarat are relevant for the development of women and society as a whole. Women can make use of gender budget analysis in almost all the sphere of life.

There are several aspects of gender budgeting in Gujarat. First, the government makes gender sensitive policies for the betterment of women. Secondly, government allocates required funds to different departments for tackling the social and economic problems faced by women. Thirdly, many government departments make bulk of joint expenditure and do not allocate separate funds for men and women. The gender budgeting provision sensitizes these departments to allocate more funds for the welfare of women.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the present study is to analyse the quantum of budgetary allocations for schemes/programmes that substantially benefit women in gender budgeting statement in Gujarat for the year 2024-25.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data. The required data has been taken from Expenditure Budget, Various Issues. In order to analyze the data and to draw conclusion from them, percentage method and Compound Annual Growth Rate is calculated.

Review of Literature

A number of research studies have been undertaken by different researchers in the field of gender budgeting at international, national and state level. In the present section, an attempt is made to review the existing literature on the concept of gender budgeting. Budlender D, Sharp R and Allen K (1998) focussed on the concept, issues, background, methods, strategies and tools of gender sensitive budgets. The study also presented the examples of countries viz. Australia, South Africa, Barbados,

Canada, Mozambique, Namibia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, UK which have undertaken or initiated the exercise of gender budgeting. The study also showed the interlink between gender and government budget. The exercise of gender budgeting varies from country to country due to the criteria of location, scope, reporting format and politics. The study also identified 7 tools for doing gender sensitive analysis of budgets. The study also incorporates the idea of care economy in budgetary implications. The study also discussed how to prepare gender budgeting statement by taking into account both sides of the budget (revenue and expenditure). Chakraborty L (2003) highlighted the experiences of various countries which have undertaken the exercise of gender budgeting. Then the study analyzed gender sensitive indicators of health, education and economic activity in Sri Lanka. The study also analyzed the budgetary trends for the period 1999 to 2003 of Sri Lanka government in general and gender sensitive analysis of budget in particular for the same period. The study found that the exercise of gender budgeting varies from country to country. Women in Sri Lanka are on better foot in terms of life expectancy, maternal mortality

rate, literacy rate, access to health care still there exist gender gap in labour force participation rate, unemployment rate, nutritional status and literacy rate. Government expenditure for the period 1999 to 2003 was more than government revenue which contributed to the problem of debt outstanding, fiscal deficits. The budgetary outlay as a percentage of total expenditure across seven Ministries has declined from 9.69 per cent in 1999 to 7.68 per cent in 2003. The study concluded that adequate budgetary allocation, gender disaggregated base, benefit incidence analysis, women's participation in decision making, gender sensitive policy is required to achieve better gender budgeting. Lahiri A et al. (2003) made an attempt to establish the link between Gender Development Index (GDI) and public spending on education and health across India and 14 other countries through an econometric model. The study showed a significant positive relationship between per capita public expenditure on health and education in India, while the impact of per capita expenditure on education on GDI was insignificant in India. The allocation on health in developing countries was much lower than that of developed countries. The study also identified three dimensions of

public expenditure on women from Union Budget. The study found that pro-women allocation constituted relatively a small proportion in the total union budget. Goyal A (2005) studied the aspect of women empowerment through gender budgeting in India. The study linked gender budgeting directly to the issue of women's empowerment. The study also explained the strategic framework and alternative strategy for empowerment of women. The study concluded that for the real empowerment of women, the government should formulate policies in such a way that reflects efficient allocation of resources, adequate planning, proper programme design and formulation etc. Acharya M (2006) made a comparative analysis of gender budgeting in India and Nepal. The study highlighted that the exercise of gender budgeting varied in these two countries. The exercise of gender budgeting in India with the assistance of UNIFEM started in the year 2000 while this exercise in Nepal started in 2001. The focus in India was on to make expenditure analysis at the centre and selected states i.e. West Bengal, Karnataka and also involved incidence analysis of educational expenditure at the state level as education is state responsibility in India. While the

Nepal gender budget exercise involved budgetary policies, budget allocation, formulation and implementation process along with taxation and other structural adjustment policies. The study pointed out that in spite of focusing on per cent allocation per se, it is important to rectify the inadequacy, ineffectiveness and inefficiency in the allocation of resources for programmes/schemes which involve women effectively and empower them. Patel V (2007) made an in-depth analysis of gender budgeting in India. The study throws light on the implementation of planning process on gender budgeting. The study also made an audit of gender budget from 2001-02 to 2007-08 in India. The study showed that total magnitude of gender budget has increased during the study period. Suguna R (2011) made an attempt to measure the effectiveness of gender budgeting for women's empowerment. The study mainly proceeds to show economic, social and political empowerment of women. The study also discussed the definition, concepts, tools, rational and actors of gender budgeting. The study concluded that women's involvement in decision-making at every tier of the government helps in economic gains of

gender equality and that in turn will pave the path of true development for women.

Background of Gender Budget initiative in Gujarat:

In Gujarat, the process GRB & gender auditing was initiated at suggestion of the central government and there after the Chief Secretary of Gujarat initiated the process in the state in year 2006. Thereafter the Department of Women and Child Development issued a General Resolution dated 13 October 2006, within 10 priority sector departments Women and Child Development, Health, Education, Rural Development, Tribal Development, Narmada Water Resource, Supply and Kalpasar, Social Justice and Empowerment, Revenue, General and Administration and Finance, the priority areas are as mentioned below.

- DWCD (Department of Women and Child Development), Finance Department and GAD (General Administration Department) are the nodal departments.
- DWCD to also form Gender Cell for Monitoring of GRB process.
- Formation of a High Powered Committee headed by Principal Secretary (Expenditure), to monitor

the progress. Secretaries of the various departments included in GRB are the members of this Committee.

- Two workshops organized for developing a common understanding on GRB among Secretaries and Senior Officials of respective departments and agreeing on the way forward.
- Appointment of nodal officers in each department
Formation of Task force (Gender Budget Cell) in each department
- First High powered Committee meeting held in May 2007.
- Preliminary Analysis of budgets of last three years to understand current

status. In depth analysis being taken up in 4 departments, RDD, health, education and DWCD by GRC.

- SIRD initiated process of capacity building for GRB by committing a Capacity Building Cell for GRB.

The state Government has not published the Gender Responsive Budget statement but it does publish the WCP (Women Component Plan) in Development programme of state. Simultaneously in 2006, the state government of Gujarat also formulated the policy for gender equity, called the ' for addressing gender based issues and also inclusion of gender based focus in the budgetary allocations, announcing various schemes and programmes for enhancing equality and equity of women in Gujarat.

Gender Budget- Gujarat for Year 2024-2025		
Summary of category- A+B		
(Rs.in crores)		
Category	Total No. of Programmes	2024-25 Budget Estimates
Category- A (100% Women specific programmes)	138	8191.07
Category- B (Atleast 30% Women specific programmes)	666	116119.16
Total Fund Category A+B	804	124310.23

Gender Budget 2024-25				
Department Wise Summary				
Rp. in crores				
Sr. No.	Name of Department	Cat A	Cat 2	Total(A+B)
1	Agriculture & Co-operation	20.79	616.79	637.58
2	Climate Change	0.00	17.96	17.96
3	Education	448.42	33337.99	33786.41
4	Health & Family Welfare	2498.28	7601.18	10099.46
5	Home	0.34	8727.51	8727.85
6	Labour & Employment	45.43	2416.51	2461.94
7	Narmada & Water Resources	1.50	13005.34	13006.84
8	Rural Development	378.84	5665.21	6044.04
9	Social Justice & Empowerment	303.02	4997.60	5300.62
10	Sports, Youth & Cultural Actv.	1.37	345.49	346.86
11	Tribal Development	328.63	4657.26	4985.89
12	Women & Child Development	4126.47	2244.79	6371.26

Conclusion

Gender budgets are critical in transforming rhetoric about women's development into concrete reality. For women, gender budget exercise are empowering because they strengthen their representative capacities. Women can make use of gender budget analysis as an indicator of fulfillment of their specific needs, and rights to health care, education and employment etc. In India, gender budgeting has drawn significant attention from policymakers. With the production of the gender budgeting statement as part of the State Budget

documents, an institutionalized effort is being made to answer the basic question that how much of the government's total expenditure is flowing to women.

Although the Indian government's experience of gender budgeting is widely used as a reference point for other gender budgeting initiatives, there seems to be a visible gap between what was envisioned and what has been achieved under the rubric of gender budgeting. However gender budgeting exercise is not merely academic. It has to be implemented vigorously at practical level. Today significant progress

can be seen in the areas of women's development, their reproductive rights, health and gender equality but much more needs to be done.

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