Gender Budgeting and Women Empowerment: The Indian Experience

MUKTAZUR RAHMAN KAZI
Department of Economics, Mankachar College,
Mankachar, Assam, Pin – 783131
INDIA
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2768-7194

Abstract: - The realization of human development necessitates the progress and empowerment of women and girls, who constitute 48.9% of India's overall population according to the 2011 census. Women are not only a significant proportion of the nation's valued human capital, but they are also individuals whose socioeconomic development is crucial for sustaining the progress of the country. Disparities are evident in India concerning the control and access to resources by women. These disparities are evident in various domains, including but not limited to occupational status, skill levels, health, and literacy. In recent decades, women's empowerment has garnered global focus, including in India, and several initiatives have been taken both at national and international levels for promoting women's empowerment. Gender Budgeting is a recent addition to these initiatives and is recognized as a crucial tool for attaining gender equality and women's empowerment. The present study seeks to analyze the effects of gender budgeting on women's empowerment in India by examining some key socioeconomic indicators such as education, health, and employment status. The findings reveal a mixed picture of the effectiveness of gender budgeting in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in India. Despite a number of positive developments, the gender budgeting effort has certain flaws that minimize its impact on holistic empowerment of women.

Key-Words: - Gender budgeting, women empowerment, health, female literacy, female employment status, IMR, MMR.

Received: June 6, 2025. Revised: September 9, 2025. Accepted: December 13, 2025. Published: June 17, 2026.

1 Introduction

Over the past two decades, empowerment of women has been widely recognized as a crucial factor for holistic and sustainable development of any nation. In this regard, a lot of initiatives have been made both at the national and international levels. In order to foster social, economic, and political equity, as well as expand access to basic needs for livelihood, a number of programmes and initiatives have been initiated and are still being carried out in different parts of the world. Among these initiatives, 'Gender Budgeting' is a new addition and a novel idea in the realm of government budgeting. In recent years, it has developed into a powerful instrument for promoting gender equality. Budgets are widely acknowledged as an important tool for achieving development objectives and acting as an indicator of the government's commitment to its stated policies. National budgets provide a comprehensive overview of how governments gather and allocate public resources, while also outlining their strategies for meeting the economic and social needs of their people. The government's budgetary policy, through the content and direction of fiscal and monetary policies, plays an important role in achieving gender equality and growth objectives. Gender budgeting is an approach of looking at the economy from a gender perspective, specifically through the lens of women. The purpose of this categorization is to determine the gender-specific impacts of the government budget and to ensure that gender-related commitments are reflected in budgetary allocations. Gender budgets are known by several terms, such as 'Women's Budgets', 'Gender Sensitive Budgets', 'Gender Responsive Budgets', etc. All of these terms refer to gender budget efforts that strive to incorporate gender-related goals into fiscal policies and administrative practises in order to achieve gender equality and encourage women's progress.

During the last two decades, gender budgeting initiatives have been incorporated into the national budgets of several countries, the majority of which are situated in Asia. Among the most notable initiatives in the region include those undertaken by developed countries like Australia and the Republic of Korea, as well as developing ones such as India and the Philippines.

Gender budgeting in India has become increasingly significant in the last two decades as a tool to address gender-related issues and tackle gender inequality, ever since the "Women's Component Plan" (WCP) was introduced during the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002). As a progressive measure, the finance minister, in the budget for the financial year 2004-2005, made it compulsory for all Ministries of the Government to establish Gender Budgeting Cells (GBCs). Additionally, the minister emphasised the need of presenting budget data in a way that clearly reflects the consideration of gender in the allocation of funds. Accordingly, for the first time, the Union Budget 2005-06 incorporated a distinct statement on gender budgeting. This statement detailed the budget allocations for grants under 10 demands. Since then, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) has started releasing "Gender Budget Statements" annually with the Union Budget. The gender budget statement illustrates the extent to which various ministries and departments have allocated funds for the benefit of women. In order to ensure gender mainstreaming at all levels and stages of the budgetary process, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), which serves as India's nodal agency for gender budgeting, has been actively promoting gender budgeting throughout the country. The MoF, in consultation with MWCD, issued a Gender Budget Charter detailing the composition and functions of the GBCs in March 2007 to facilitate the incorporation of gender analysis into policies, programmes, and schemes.

It has been over twenty years since gender budgeting was introduced in India. This duration is sufficient to examine the efficacy of gender budgeting in enhancing the well-being of women in the country. Hence, this study aims to examine the impact of gender budgeting on the empowerment of women in India. The present research paper is divided into three sections: the first section reviews the relevant literature, identifies the research gap and significance of the study, presents the objectives of the study, and the research method used. The second section presents the process and progress of gender budgeting in India, while the third section discusses the findings and draws conclusions.

2 Review of Literature, Research Gap, Objectives, And Methodology

2.1 Review of Literature

The present study makes a review of the most relevant literature on the concepts of women empowerment, gender budgeting as well as the impacts of gender budgeting on women empowerment in India.

2.1.1 Women Empowerment

The concept of women's empowerment has emerged as a contemporary phenomenon that has garnered global attention in recent times. The move towards empowering women was initiated with the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 advanced the campaign for women's rights in key areas including education, health, and poverty. As the successor of MDGs, the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. The SDGs are to be achieved by the global community over the next 15 years. Gender equality and the empowerment of girls' and women are explicitly stated in Goal 5 of its 17 broad goals.

It is difficult to provide a specific definition of the concept of "women's empowerment" because of the fact that 'empowerment' has multiple dimensions that are inter connected and interdependent. These dimensions include economic, social, cultural, and political aspects. The majority of contemporary definitions of empowerment found in the literature on development are based on Amartya Sen's "Development as Freedom" (1999), which emphasizes that development is about giving people more options or choices. According to Kabeer (2001), empowerment is "the expansion of people's ability to make strategic life choices in situations where this ability was previously denied to them". The changes in the ability to exercise choice can be conceptualized in terms of three interconnected dimensions that constitute choice: resources, which establish the circumstances in which choices are made; agency, which lies at the core of the decision-making process; and achievements, which are the results of choices (Kabeer, 2001). A more comprehensive notion of agency has been presented in the World Development Report 2012 that encompasses the ability to control resources, make decisions, have freedom of movement, be free from the threat of violence, and have a voice and influence in the process of collective decision-making.

According to Grown (2008), there are three different domains of empowerment: the capabilities domain, which looks at things like education, health, and nutrition as indicators of knowledge and health; the access to resources and opportunities domain, which mostly takes into account things like economic assets and political decision-making; and the security domain, which takes into account issues related to violence and conflict. The most common indicators of women's empowerment according to Desai (2010), assess capabilities, particularly health and education, as well as control over political and economic resources and decision- making processes. Thus, to be precise, women empowerment refers to a process of providing women with all the denied aspects of life (Kazi, 2015).

2.1.2 Gender Budgeting

As far as gender budgeting is concerned, it has been defined in various ways, although the essence of all the definitions is almost the same. Gender budgeting has been defined by the International Development Research Centre, Canada (IDRC) as "Gender budget initiatives look at how governments generate and utilize public funds, with the objective of achieving gender equality in the process of decision making on the allocation of public funds as well as in the distribution of the benefits and burdens of government budgets. Special attention is placed on the effect that government budgets have on the most disadvantaged sections of women" (IDRC, 2001). Gender budgeting, according to Budlender and Hewitt (2003), is a method of budgeting that involves a gender-based evaluation of the budget formulation process, budgetary policies, and budget allocations. Similarly, Goyal (2005) posits that gender budgeting is a method that involves segmentation of the government budget to see how it affects different genders differently and to turn gender commitments into budgetary obligations.

Chakraborty (2007) is of the view that the concept of a gender budget in relation to the government at any level does not mean the formation of a distinct budget exclusively for women. Instead, it serves as an analytical tool to identify the gender-differentiated impacts of the government budget and advocates for increased emphasis on programmes and initiatives aimed at addressing the gender-based disadvantages experienced by women. According to Goel & Rani (2009), gender budgeting strives to achieve gender equality in the allocation of public expenditures by recognizing and identifying the consequences for women's empowerment. The goal here is to provide a fair, reasonable, and efficient distribution of public resources for women's overall development.

Gender budgeting, according to Ahmad (2014), has replaced the concept of Women's Component Plan (WCP) in India and evolved into an umbrella term for a variety of government programmes and policies that seek to address gender concerns in the context of public spending and policy. Compared to its predecessor (i.e., WCP), which focused only on budget allocations, gender budgeting takes a more holistic and in-depth approach by incorporating a gender-inclusive viewpoint into all stages of the budgetary process, from planning to execution.

In its Information Bulletin (2016), the Lok Sabha Secretariat of the Government of India noted that gender budgeting is more than just an accounting exercise; it is a constant endeavour to ensure that women and men alike enjoy the benefits of development. Gender budgeting involves the adoption of a gender perspective throughout different stages of the budgeting process, including programme and policy formulations, assessing the needs of specific target groups, reviewing existing policies and guidelines, allocating resources, implementing programmes, assessing their impact, and reprioritizing resources, etc.

Thus, gender budgeting is a budgetary approach that seeks to promote gender parity and women's empowerment through the strategic application of fiscal policy and administrative actions. This approach takes a gendered view of the government budget to evaluate its effectiveness in addressing the specific needs of women in key areas such as healthcare, nutrition, education, employment, etc. Rather than making a separate budget for women, gender budgeting seeks to meet their needs through positive action.

2.1.3 Women Empowerment through Gender Budgeting

In their paper, Goel & Rani (2009) highlighted the objectives of gender budgeting and its approaches for empowering women. In addition, an attempt was made to analyze the Union Budgets from a gender perspective. The paper concluded that gender budgeting reduces economic disparities between men and women and promotes women's empowerment through the optimal distribution of resources.

Ahmad (2014) states that in addition to presenting the financial commitments of the Government of India towards gender equality, the gender budget approach provides each department and ministry with the necessary mechanism to integrate women-focused schemes and programmes into their respective budgets. However, the author points out that there is a declining trend in the proportion of funds going toward this goal, and unless this problem is effectively addressed, the gender budgeting process as a whole will amount to a mere statistical exercise. The author proposes that there should be sufficient quantity and quality of budgetary spending on programmes that help women, and those funds should be used fully and efficiently by the executing agencies to get the desired outcomes.

Alam, Ahmad & Abusad (2017) noted several positive outcomes associated with the implementation of gender budgeting in India. These include an improvement in female life expectancy at birth, a decrease in maternal mortality rate, reduction in infant mortality rate for females, a decline in the total fertility rate, and an increase in female literacy. The study revealed that gender budgeting in India had a significant beneficial effect on the socioeconomic and health outcomes of women, hence playing a crucial role in promoting women's empowerment.

In her article, Malik (2018) contends that the gender budgeting initiative in India suffers drawbacks in its execution and implementation, limiting its benefits across all regions of the country equally. Consequently, there are still some areas within India where women lack access to basic amenities, let alone their empowerment.

Gogoi (2020) states that the condition of women will undoubtedly improve if the gender budgeting initiatives of the Government of India are implemented effectively. Success towards improving the status of women is possible if the government periodically evaluates its strategies and attends to critical areas of need. He further asserts that mere allocation of funds through budgetary means is insufficient. More effort should be made to educate the general public, and women in particular, about their rights in order to close the gender gap and promote women's empowerment.

Moreover, it is well-established that greater economic efficiency and productivity is closely associated with gender equality. Achieving the gender and poverty-related goals included in the MDGs and its successor, the SDGs, would require improving women's educational opportunities, access to quality healthcare, and the ability to participate in paid employment. Gender budgeting can therefore contribute to more equitable or inclusive economic growth through its influence on fiscal policy (Stotsky & Zaman, 2016).

2.2 Research Gap and Significance of the Study

The above review of literature reveals that a number of studies have been undertaken on gender budgeting and women empowerment (e.g., Ahmad, 2014; Alam, Ahmad & Abusad, 2017; Gogoi, 2020; Goel & Rani, 2009; Goswami, 2006; Malik, 2018; Mitra, 2019; Sharma & Garg, 2014). However, most of those studies focus on the genesis, importance, steps, mechanisms, objectives, and so on of gender budgeting in India. A few of these studies emphasizes on the budget allocations to different women centric schemes under successive Five-Year Plans and their impacts. Thus, comprehensive studies on the impact of gender budgeting on women empowerment is very rare. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to fill this gap to some extent. This study will not only add to the existing body of knowledge, but will also hold practical implications for the formulation of policies pertaining to women's empowerment.

2.3 Objectives of the Study

The present study is taken up with the following basic objectives:

i. To assess the process and progress of gender budgeting in India.

ii. To examine how effective is gender budgeting as a tool for women empowerment in terms of socio-economic and health indicators.

iii. To suggest policy options on the basis of the findings.

2.4 Data and Methodology

The present analysis relies exclusively on secondary data. The necessary data has been gathered from multiple sources, including the Gender Budget Statements of Union Budgets of the Government of India, Census of India, National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), National Family Health Survey (NFHS), journal articles, books, magazines, newspapers, and websites. This study has used both quantitative and descriptive analysis. The data have been analysed and conclusions have been drawn using basic statistical techniques such as frequency counts, percentage method, and bar diagrams.

3 Results and Discussion

The process and progress of gender budgeting as well as the impacts of gender budgets on women empowerment in India have been discussed in this section as follows.

3.1 The Process of Gender Budgeting

Gender budgeting has gained considerable importance in India over the last two decades as an effective approach to tackle gender inequality and resolve gender-related issues. The concept of monitoring beneficiary-oriented schemes for women was introduced during the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90), which marked the emergence of gender sensitivity in resource allocation. However, the formal allocation of funds specifically for women started with the introduction of WCP in 1997- 98 during the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002). The Government of India 's commitment to gender budgeting was reaffirmed in the Tenth Plan (2002-2007), which continued the process of dissecting the government budget to determine its gender differential effect and translating gender pledges into budgetary commitments. In a progressive move, the finance minister, in the budget for 2004-05, mandated the creation GBCs in all government ministries. The Minister emphasised the need of presenting budget data in a way that reflects the consideration of gender in the allocation of funds. Accordingly, for the first time, a separate statement on gender budget was included in the Union Budget 2005–06 and, ever since then, the MoF has been issuing Gender Budget Statements (GBS) with the Union Budget every year. The Government has incorporated Statement 13 (gender budget expenditure statement) in Volume 1 of the Expenditure Budget Document. The GBS has two parts: Part A of the GBS covers schemes and programmes with a 100% allocation for women, whereas Part B encompasses those with 30% to 99% allocation.

As the nodal agency for gender budgeting, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has been leading a number of initiatives to advance gender budgeting at both the national and state levels. In order to advance gender budgeting in the country, the Ministry has been employing a three-pronged strategy. These include emphasising and advocating for the establishment of gender budgeting structures/mechanisms in all government Ministries/Departments; enhancing internal and external capabilities and expertise development to facilitate gender mainstreaming of policies/schemes/programmes; and commencing gender auditing of existing programmes to identify areas for improvement and strengthen service delivery mechanisms.

The gender budgeting process involves five important steps as follows:

Step 1: An analysis of the situation for women and men and girls and boys (and the different sub-groups) in a given sector.

Step 2: An assessment of the extent to which the sector's policy addresses the gender issues and gaps described in the first step.

Step 3: An assessment of the adequacy of budget allocations to implement the gender-sensitive policies and programmes identified in step 2.

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

Step 5: An assessment of the impact of the policy/programme/scheme and the extent to which the situation described in step 1 has changed.

3.2 The Progress of Gender Budgeting in India:

Gender budgeting in its present shape in India began with the Union Budget, 2005-06. The allocation of funds for gender budgeting is determined based on the demands put forth by different Ministries and Departments with regard to a variety of indicators, attributes and issues that are associated with the empowerment of women. In the Union Budget for the 2005-2006 financial year, only nine Ministries/Departments introduced gender budgeting, with a total of 10 demands. The following tables (Table 1 & Table2) provide an overview of the progress of gender budgeting in India with regard to the allocation of funds.

Table 1. Progress of Gender Budgeting in India

Year	No. of Ministries/ Departments	No of Demands	Total Magnitude of Gender Budget (BE) (Rs. Crore)	% of Gender Budget to Total Budget
2005-06	9	10	14378.68	2.79
2006-07	18	24	28736.53	5.09
2007-08	27	33	31177.96	4.50
2008-09	27	33	27661.67	3.68
2009-10	28	33	56857.61	5.57
2010-11	28	33	67749.80	6.11
2011-12	29	34	78251.02	6.22
2012-13	29	34	88142.80	5.91
2013-14	30	35	97133.70	5.83
2014-15	36	39	98029.84	5.46
2015-16	35	35	79257.87	4.46
2016-17	35	47	90624.76	4.58
2017-18	32	48	117221.47	5.28
2018-19	38	49	121961.32	4.99

2019-20	38	49	142813.30	4.72
2020-21	39	58	143461.72	4.71
2021-22	43	60	153326.28	4.40
2022-23	41	57	171006.47	4.33

Source: Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India: Expenditure Budget Vol. I.

Available at https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget_archive

Since its inception in 2005-06, the absolute amount of funds allocated under the gender budget statement has increased, with the exception of the fiscal years 2008-09, 2015-16, and 2016-17, as shown in Table 1. The gender budget commenced at its minimum of 2.97 percent of the overall union budget in 2005-06 and reached its maximum of 6.22 percent in 2011-12. However, it can be seen in Table 1 that the gender budget as a share of the total union budget has been on the decline since 2012–13 with noticeable fluctuations.

Table 2. Fund Allocation in Part A and Part B of the Gender Budget

Year	Part A		Part B	
	Allocation in Rs. Crore	% share to Gender Budget	Allocation in Rs. Crore	% share to Gender Budget
2005-06	7905.08	32.90	16126.92	67.10
2006-07	9575.82	33.32	19160.71	66.68
2007-08	8795.47	28.21	22382.49	71.79
2008-09	11459.61	41.43	16202.06	58.57
2009-10	15715.68	27.64	41141.93	72.56
2010-11	19266.05	28.43	48485.75	71.56
2011-12	20548.35	26.26	57702.67	75.74
2012-13	22968.93	26.06	65173.87	75.94
2013-14	27248.29	28.05	69889.41	71.95
2014-15	21887.61	22.33	76142.23	77.67
2015-16	16657.84	21.02	62600.00	78.98
2016-17	17412.01	19.21	75212.00	80.79
2017-18	30184.52	25.75	87036.97	74.25
2018-19	24440.07	20.05	97521.25	79.96
2019-20	29473.52	20.64	11339.78	79.36
2020-21	28568.32	19.91	114893.40	80.08
2021-22	25260.95	16.48	128065.33	83.52
2022-23	26772.89	15.66	144233.58	84.34

Source: Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India: Expenditure Budget Vol. I.

Available at https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget_archive

The Gender Budget Statement consists of two distinct parts. Part A covers those schemes where the whole allocation is dedicated to women, whereas Part B includes schemes where at least 30 percent of the allocation is specifically for women. The data presented in Table 2 reveals that since the beginning of gender budgeting, the share of Part A has consistently been lower than that of Part B.

Thus, it is clear from the above that the number of departments and ministries in India implementing gender budgeting initiatives has been increasing over the years, from 9 in 2005-06 to 43 in 2021-22. The union budget has also witnessed a rise in the coverage of demand for gender budgeting, which increased from 10 in 2005-06 to 60 in 2021-22. Although the overall allocation of funds under the gender budgeting statement has been steadily growing in absolute terms, however, the percentage share of gender budget in the total budget has shown a mixed trend with noticeable fluctuations. Further, the share of Part A (which includes100 percent women specific schemes) in gender budgeting has consistently been lower than that of Part B (minimum 30 percent for women specific schemes) from the inception. Part B consists of the maximum allocation that is not exclusively designated for women.

3.3 Impacts of Gender Budgeting on Women Empowerment

Here, the impacts of gender budgeting have been discussed on some important indicators of women empowerment such as education, health, economic participation (employment status), and political participation as follows.

3.3.1 Education

In India, male literacy is consistently greater than female literacy. It can be seen from Table 3 that although there has been a decline in the gender gap in literacy over time, it remains prevalent in both urban and rural areas. A significant portion of rural women remains illiterate, and female literacy is still significantly lower than that of men.

Table 3. Literacy Rates

Literacy Rate	2001			2011		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Rural	71.4	46.7	59.4	78.6	58.7	67.8
Urban	86.7	73.2	80.3	89.7	79.9	84.1
Total	75.3	53.7	64.8	82.1	65.5	74.0

Source: Census of India

In recent years, female gross enrolment ratio (GER) is increasing at all levels of education in India due to the Right to Education Act (RTE, 2009) and implementation of various measures/schemes/programmes through gender budgeting initiatives. However, at all educational levels, the percentage of female dropout is still quite high. In rural areas, the number of girls attending school is dismally low and most of the girls who enrol in school drop-out at their early puberty to get married.

3.3.2 Health

India has improved its performance in reducing Infant Mortality Rate – number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births (IMR) as well as Maternal Mortality Rate – number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (MMR) over the years as shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Infant Mortality Rate (No. of infant death per 1,000 live births)

NFHS Round (Year)	*IMR*
NFHS – 3 (2005-06)	57
NFHS – 4 (2015-16)	40.7
NFHS – 5 (2019-21)	35.2

Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS), Govt. of India

Table 5. Maternal Mortality Rate (No. of deaths per 100,000 live births)

Year	MMR
2004-2006	254
2007-2009	212
2010-2012	178
2011-2013	167
2014-2016	130
2015-2017	122
2016-2018	113
2017-2019	103
2018-2020	97

Source: Sample Registration System (SRS) Bulletins, Registrar General of India (RGI)

3.3.3 Employment Status

Women's economic empowerment is a crucial factor for fostering robust economic growth in any country. The economic empowerment of women necessitates, among other things, the availability of secure and gainful employment opportunities for them. Table 6 displays the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and Worker Population Ratio (WPR) in India during the period of gender budgeting. According to the data presented in Table 6, both the LFPR and the WPR for females are significantly lower compared to males, with the former being less than half of the latter. Moreover, the female LFPR had a decline from 29.4% in 2004-05 to 17.5% in 2017-18. However, it subsequently shown a rising trend in the subsequent years, culminating in a rate of 27.8% by 2022-23. Similar pattern can be observed for WPR also, as it experienced a decline from 28.7% in 2004-5 to 16.5% in 2017-18, followed by an increasing trend in the subsequent years, ultimately reaching 27.0% in 2022-23.

Table 6. Labour Force Participation Rate and Worker Population Ratio for all ages

Year	**LFPR**			**WPR**		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
2004-05	55.9	29.4	43.0	54.7	28.7	42.0
2009-10	55.7	23.3	40.0	54.6	22.8	39.2
2011-12	55.6	22.5	39.5	54.4	21.9	38.6
2017-18 (PLFS)	55.5	17.5	36.9	52.1	16.5	34.7
2018-19 (PLFS)	55.6	18.6	37.5	52.3	17.6	35.3
2019-20 (PLFS)	56.8	22.8	40.1	53.9	21.8	38.2
2020-21 (PLFS)	57.5	25.1	41.6	54.9	24.2	39.8
2021-22 (PLFS)	57.3	24.8	41.3	54.8	24.0	39.6
2022-23	56.2	27.8	42.4	54.4	27.0	41.1

(PLFS)						

Source: Employment and Unemployment in India, NSS 61st Round (2004-05), 66th Round (2009-10) and 68th Round (2011-12); Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022-23, National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), Govt. of India.

Table distribution of workers in India by broad employment status during the period of gender budgeting is presented in Table 7. It can be seen in the table that the proportion of women in regular wage/salaried employment has been considerably lower than that of men. However, the situation is reversed when it comes to casual labour. Moreover, a substantial wage disparity between men and women can be observed in both urban and rural areas. Besides, workplace harassment of women is rapidly increasing as more women join the workforce.

Table 7. Distribution of Workers in Percentage according to Usual Status (ps+ss) Approach by Broad Employment Status

Year	Self-employed		Regular wage/ Salaried employee		Casual labour	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2004-05	51.4	55.7	24.8	19.6	23.8	24.7
2009-10	50.0	53.3	17.7	10.1	32.2	36.6
2011-12	50.7	56.1	19.8	12.7	29.4	31.2
2017-18 (PLFS)	52.3	51.9	23.4	21.0	24.3	27.0
2022-23 (PLFS)	53.6	65.3	23.2	15.9	23.2	18.8

Source: Employment and Unemployment in India, NSS 61st Round (2004-05), 66th Round (2009-10) & 68th Round (2011-12); Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 &2022-23, National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), Govt. of India.

3.3.4 Political Participation

As far as political participation is concerned, women have a poor representation in India's Lok Sabha (Lower House), Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and also in State Assemblies. The share of women representatives (MPs) in the Lok Sabha has increased from 8.7% in 2004 to 10.7% in 2009 and to 11.4% in 2014. The present Lok Sabha (2019 General Election) has 14.4% women members. While this is the highest percentage of women MPs since Independence, India is still far behind the global average of 24 per cent or even South Asian average of 18 per cent when it comes to sending elected women political representatives to the Parliament. In the Rajya Sabha, about 11% representatives are women at present. Similarly, women representation in the state assemblies is also very poor. On an average, across the states of India, the number of women MLAs in assemblies accounts for only 8%. However, due to the reservation of one-third seats for women in all tiers of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), representation of women in the PRIs has increased to about 45% at present.

4 Conclusion

Gender budgeting is considered a strategic approach to achieve gender equality and promote the empowerment of women. It has been adopted by many nations throughout the globe beginning in the 1980s and 1990s. The Government of India has also made several efforts to include it into the budget, and it was first introduced in the 2005-06 budget. The assessment of the impacts of gender budgeting on women's empowerment in India presents a varied outcome. While there have been some encouraging developments, there are certain shortcomings in the gender budgeting initiative which limit its effect on holistic empowerment of women. Firstly, the percentage of the overall budget spending allocated to gender budget initiatives has been decreasing since 2011-12, resulting in limited funding for programmes that aim to empower women and promote gender equality. Second, insufficient enforcement and accountability, as well as a lack of committed human resources to implement the solutions suggested bythe GBCs are important challenges Third, with no specified monitoring mechanism at the national level, the gender budgeting initiative is significantly affected by the lack of effective monitoring. Fourth, there is ambiguity about the underlying assumptions of reporting allocations made under Part B of the GBS. Furthermore, the efficacy of gender budgeting initiatives for empowering women is reduced by socio-economic obstacles, inadequate capacity building, and limited involvement of women in the planning and implementation of projects at the field level.

A more focused approach to the gender budgeting process is needed if there is to be anyreal turnaround. This would call for the allocation of adequate funding in addition to the institutionalization of a comprehensive system that ensures the successful mainstreaming of gender budgeting into all ministries and departments. Concurrent with the implementation of gender budgeting, it is important to improve budgets in general and make them more gender sensitive in particular. Gender allocations must be purposefully planned with a greater involvement of women, rather than just reported. There is also a need to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to facilitate the appropriate and widespread implementation of the necessary capacity building programs. Furthermore, India should assess its gender budgeting process not just to fulfil its gender obligations, but also to make sure that fiscal decisions reflect the concerns and interests of women.

References:

[1] Ahmad, M. (2014). Empowerment of Women Through Budgets: Indian Experience. Humanities and Social Sciences Letters, 2(1), 1-11.
[2] Alam, M., Ahmad, S. N. & and Abusad, M. (2017). Women Empowerment through Gender Budgeting in India: An Overview. International Journal for Innovative Research in Multidisciplinary Field, 3(8), 50-57.
[3] Budlender, D. & Hewitt, G. (2003). Engendering Budgets: A Practitioners' Guide to Understanding and Implementing Gender-responsive Budgets. London: Common Wealth Secretariat
[4] Census of India, 2001 & 2011. https://censusindia.gov.in/
[5] Chakraborty, L. S. (2007). Gender responsive budgeting and fiscal decentralisation in India: A preliminary appraisal. Working Papers 07/46. New Delhi: National Institute of Public Finance and Policy.
[6] Desai, M. (2010). Hope in Hard Times: Women's Empowerment and Human Development. Human Development Research Paper 2010/14. New York: United Nations Development Programme.
[7] Goel, M. M. & Rani, S. (2009). Gender Budgeting and Women Empowerment in India. VARTA, XXX (1&2), 1-11.
[8] Gogoi, B. N. (2020). Empowerment of Women through Gender Budgeting in India with Special Reference to Assam. Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology, 17(7), 10697-10708.
[9] Goswami, S. (2006), Impact of Gender Budgeting on Women Empowerment. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=902530 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.902530
[10] Government of India. Gender Budgeting Handbook (2015). Ministry of Women and Child Development. www.wcd.nic.in
[11] Government of India. Union Budget (various years). https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/
[12] Goyal, A. (2005). Women Empowerment through Gender Budgeting – A Review in the Indian Context. New Delhi: Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.
[13] Grown, C. (2008). Indicators and Indexes of Gender Equality: What Do They Measure and What Do They Miss? In Mayra Buvinic, Andrew R. Morrison, A. Waafas Ofosu-Amaah and Mirja Sjöblom (Eds.). Equality for Women: Where Do We Stand on Millennium Development Goals? (pp. 93-146). Washington, DC: World Bank.
[14] International Development Research Centre (IDRC). https://idrc-crdi.ca/en
[15] Kabeer, N. (2001). Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. In Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (sida) Studies No. 3, Discussing Women's Empowerment - Theory and Practice, 17-57.
[16] Kazi, M. R. (2015). Status of Women in India in the Context of Inclusive Growth. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 20(4), 125-130.
[17] Lok Sabha Secretariat (2016). Gender Budgeting in India: A Tool of Women's Empowerment. Information Bulletin, No. LARRDIS (EF) 2016/IB-1, March 2016. New Delhi: Lok Sabha Secretariat, Government of India.
[18] Malik, P. (2018). Gender Budgeting: An Initiative Towards Empowering Women and Its Emergence in India. International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews, 5(4), 221-231.
[19] Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India: Expenditure Budget Vol. I, various years, available at https://www.indiabudget.gov.in/budget_archive
[20] Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India: National Family Health Survey (NFHS), various rounds. https://main.mohfw.gov.in/, https://dhsprogram.com/
[21] Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation: NSS 61st Round –

Employment and Unemployment Situation in India; Key Indicators of Employment and Unemployment in India – NSS 66th Round & 68th Round; Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 & 2022-23. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), Government of India. www.mospi.gov.in

[22] Mitra, S. (2019). Planning and Budgeting for Women's Empowerment in India: A Historical Process. Antyajaa: Indian Journal of Women and Social Change, 4(1), 51-69.

[23] Registrar General of India (RGI): Sample Registration System (SRS) Bulletins. https://censusindia.gov.in/

[24] Sen, Amartya (1999). Development as Freedom. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[25] Sharma, P. & Garg, P. (2014). Women Empowerment Through Gender Budgeting in India. International Research Journal of Human Resources and Social Sciences, 1(6), 25-34.

[26] Stotsky, J. G. & Zaman, A. (2016). The Influence of Gender Budgeting in Indian States on Gender Inequality and Fiscal Spending. IMF Working Paper, WP/16/227. Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund.

[27] World Bank (2012). World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development. Washington DC: World Bank.

Contribution of Individual Authors to the Creation of a Scientific Article (Ghostwriting Policy)

The author contributed in the present research, at all stages from the formulation of the problem to the final findings and solution.

Sources of Funding for Research Presented in a Scientific Article or Scientific Article Itself

No funding was received for conducting this study.

Conflict of Interest

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.