

Gender Budgeting in India: An Impact Analysis

Sanjaya Ku. Ghadai, Satya Narayan Misra

Abstract: *The Declaration at Beijing (1995) tried to usher in gender equality for women by encouraging main streaming of gender, who otherwise suffers from high Gender Inequality Index (GII). Gender Resource Budgeting (GRB) is a very powerful tool for fostering gender equality and empowerment. This paper looks at (a) the trends in gender budgeting, which is the nodal responsibility of Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) department in India, (b) the plight of Anganwadi female workers, who are the fulcrum for providing nutrition to 7 crore children and nursing mothers under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Ujjawala flagship programs. It explores the deplorable nutritional status of a significant large chunk of adolescent girls, dwindling trend of labour force participation and vulnerability of rural women wage earners and agricultural workers. It also traces of the global trends in gender gaps, where political empowerment remains a weak area for women. The paper brings out, how lack of political will and leadership, inadequate financial resources, lack of proper accountability mechanism and women participation in planning and budget preparation for women specific schemes are affecting realization of GRB goals. The paper suggests that there is a need to bring more women into the vortex of formal financial system, impart financial literacy programs and vocational training on a large scale. The Gender Budgeting Cells (GBCs) seem to be largely dysfunction. Taking note of the Gender Gap Report (2018), the paper makes a strong recommendation to improve the health status of girl child and women, improve their economic participation and bolster their political participation at the state assembly and national Parliament levels through reservation.*

Keywords: *GII, GRB, MWCD, ICDS, GBC.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The UNDP came up with the Human Development Report (1990) (Sen, Haq & Desai) to sensitize global attention to a composite evaluation of life expectancy, education and percapita income and move beyond obsession with GDP growth. It further refined its evaluation matrix by bringing in Gender Development Index (1995) to highlight for disparity in HDI between women and men. This was also the time when the Beijing Declaration (1995) underscored the importance of education and training of women, need to contain endemic violence against women and gender mainstreaming with gender budgeting as an important policy instrument.

The World Economic Forum brought up the Gender Gap Report (2006) to account for women's achievement in the labour market, progress in health education and political empowerment. Campus-7, Patia, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India The discourse on gender disparity got a further fillip when UNDP comes up with GII (2011) (Permnyer & Baneria) which measures the composite loss of achievement within a country, due to factors like poor reproductive health (MMR), low labour market participation and weak political empowerment. A review of Beijing declaration in 2015 (New Work) clearly highlights lack of success in equality of empowerment of men and women. It calls up on the nations to increase investment to further gender equity. The SDG (2015) further highlights the need to contain female feticide, recognize unpaid care and services by women, universal access to sexual health and report and end feminization of poverty. The Global Development Report (2018) brings out India's deplorable record in terms of health and survival of girl child and women, poor economic participation and most importantly, weak political empowerment at the state assembly and national Parliament levels. Gender budgeting was introduced in India in 2005-06 and the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare is at the vortex of realizing the goals of improving gender justice for women through a slew of flagship programs. This paper seeks to bring out (a) Constitutional provisions for women empowerment (b) Tools, processes and trends in gender budgeting (c) Flagship programs for women and their impact (d) Trends in global gender gap and inequality (e) Constraints and the way forward.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The Constitution frowns upon discrimination on the ground of gender and calls upon the state to create special opportunities for women (Article 15(3)). In pursuance of this, the 73rd Amendment (1992) has brought in Panchayat Raj as the third tier of democracy and 33% of seats are reserved for women in Panchayats for women (Article 243-D(3)). Similar provision has also been incorporated for Municipalities (Article 243-I (3)). It also enjoins upon the state in its directive principles to (a) give equal pay for work to women (b) maternity relief and (c) desist from practices which go against dignity of woman as part of fundamental duties. Nutritional benefit to pregnant women in Anganwadi centres, crèche for children of working women are part of the constitutional mandate. However, equal pay for equal work is often denied and endemic derogatory practices against women are widely prevalent.

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The women reservation bill for women in State Assemblies and Parliament has also been having fire for quite some time because of political lobbies to curv reservation for OBC women within overall reservations for women. Besides, equal opportunity in the workplace is conspicuous by its absence. This has been affecting the gender inequality significantly, with India having a score of 0.524 (HDR, 2018).

III. TOOLS, PROCESSES AND TRENDS IN GENDER BUDGETING

1.1. Tools Adapted Internationally for Gender Budgeting

Prof. Diane Elson (UK) has identified several tools for effective gender budgeting.

Gender Aware Policy Approach

In such an approach, it is presumed that public policies are not gender neutral in characters. It looks for policies and resource allocation which will reduce gender inequality. For instance, in Education for All Policy of the government, a study can be made whether the gender gap has reduced. ASER (2018) brings out how this happened in India.

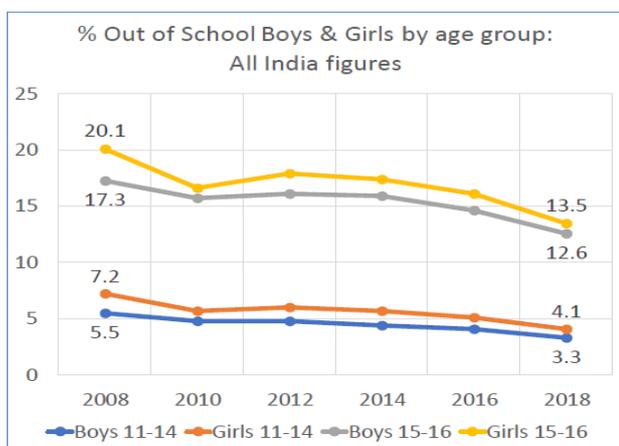


Figure 1: Declining Gender Gap

Source: ASER Report, 2018

Prof. Diane Elson advocates sex disaggregation assessment of public service delivery and budget priorities, public expenditure incidence analyze public revenue incidence analysis. For instance perception of men and women regarding quality of services provided, say by primary health centres, can be the focus of gender study. Similarly unit cost of running a primary school can be disaggregated by identifying number of boys and girls benefitting from its usage. The public revenue incidence analysis tries to study the kind of tax and user fee reform that would be more beneficial for poor women and men. It can also study if the system provides for labour market incentives for women. She also tries to delve into the question how female and make numbers spend their time for a service. As is well known, poor women spend a lot of time in collecting water for households. A gender budget study should compare the imputed value of unpaid

work with budgeted amount for similar paid work. The time which is spent on such useful but unpaid services must be part of the policy analysis.

Tools adapted Internationally for Gender Budget

- Gender aware policy approach
- Sex disaggregated assessment of public services and budget priority
- Public revenue incidence analysis
- Gender aware budget
- Labour market incentives for worker

Source: Prof. Diane Elson

A gender aware budget should highlight expected gender impact of total budget. Significant reduction of MMR in the index can be a major thrust area; as also reduction in anemia of adolescent girls.

Steps and Tools for Gender Responsive Budget

Prof. Debbie Budlender (2002), who has done pioneering work on GRB, has flagged the following steps and tools.

- Status of women, boys, girls and men in a given sector
- Whether that initiative has helped to bridge the gender divide
- If allocation is realistic
- Money allocated and spent, who the beneficiaries are
- Whether any positive change has been achieved for the original position

Gender Resource Budgeting (GRB): Global Experience

Australia was the first to adapt GRB. A study of (1984-1996) reveal that women policy offices work in tandem with budget office; which led to very good impact. In Australia as per Article 13 of the Constitution calls for “effective equality of women and men in budget allocation and management”. Budget statements have outcome objectives: one objective addresses gender equality; higher female participation in the labour market. In Mexico cervical cancer, ovarian and breast cancer have been given priority. In Japan the thrust has been to reduce maternity harassment at workplace. In Brazil comprehensive care program related to women’s health has been introduced. Spain & Korea spend 6- 6.75% of their budget for reducing gender disparity. India can draw very useful experience from such global practices.

1.2. Trends in Gender Budgeting

The allocation to gender budget is of the order of 5% to the total budget. It is divided into two parts; Part ‘A’ which is fully funded women specific schemes and Part ‘B’, where the women component of the scheme is around 30%. The provision during 2017-18 and last financial year is tabulated below.

Table 1: Allocation to Gender Budgeting

Sl. No.	Parameter	Allocation	
		2017-18 (BE/RE)	2018-19 (BE)
<i>Part A: 100% Women Specific Programme</i>			
1.	LPG connection	3200 /2251	3200
2.	Rural Housing	2308 /2300	21000
3.	Maternity Benefit Programme	2700 /2594	2400
<i>Part B: 30% Women Related Programme</i>			
1.	National Food Security Mission	480 /420	507
2.	Rastriya Kishi Vikas Yojana	1350 /915	1080
3.	Krishi Sichai Yojana	915 /900	1200
Total		113311 /11721	121961

Source: Ministry of Finance, GOI

It would be seen that in quite a few programmes, like Ujjawala, rural housing, maternity benefit, and Rastriya Kishi Vikas Yojana, there has been under spending at the RE state. The MWCD department, Government of India is the nodal Ministry for woman related schemes. The allocation trends are as under.

Table 2: Ministry of Women & Child Development (in Rs. Crore)

Sl. No.	Allocation	2016-17 (Actual)	2017-18 (RE)	2018-19 (BE)
(A)	Total	16873	21236	24700
(B)	ICDS	14433	15245	16334
(i)	Pradhan Mantri Matritva Vandana Yojana	75	2594	2400
(ii)	Scheme for Adolescent Girls	482	480	500
(iii)	National Creche Scheme	124.6	200/65	128
(iv)	Child Protection Scheme	576	648	725
(C)	Protection & Empowerment of Women			
(i)	Swadhar Greh Scheme	83	75	95
(ii)	Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme	28	200	280
(iii)	Nirbhaya Scheme	500	500	500
(iv)	Ujjawala Scheme	20	50/30	60

Source: Budget 2018-19, GOI

**8.	Sex ratio birth (females per 100 births)*	39.4	39.0	-1.0
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The above table highlights how allocation to important schemes is very paltry. Most dishearteningly the utilization of these poor allocations is also very low as in case of National Creche scheme; meant for working women with children.

Main findings on gender discrimination

It has been found in research that a nation can grow economically more, provided women are equal beneficiary of such a growth process. The process is further helped if they assume higher political power, public status and participate at par with men in the labour market.

Table 3: Main findings on Gender Discrimination

Sl. No.	Gender Discrimination	2005-06	2015-16	Change
1.	Decision about their own health	62.3	74.5	+12.2
2.	Unacceptability of wife beats	50.4	54.0	+3.5
*3.	Employed	36.3	24.0	-12.3
4.	Non manual employment	18.9	28.2	+9.3
5.	Education	59.4	72.5	+13.1
6.	Age at first child birth (Median)	19.3	20.6	+1.3
**7.	Using reversible Contraception *	33.8	32.8	-1.0

Source: India: Three Years Action Agenda Report

*(3) Farm mechanization has resulted in lower demand for female agricultural labourers (Chatterjee 2015), leading to a sharp reduction in employment of female workers.

** (7) The % in India is less than what 51.6% than it should be. There is little control over when they start having children

*** (8) This shows bias against females. It is 9.5% less than other countries.

Participation of Women across Sectors

The unequal participation of women in different sectors, compared to men, which impact on gender empowerment is enumerated below.

Table 4: Unequal Participation of Women across the Sectors

Indicator	Female	Male
Participation in labour force	27	80
% in Lok Sabha	12.1	87.9
% in Rajya Sabha %	12.6	87.4
% in Supreme Court	3.4	96.6
% in High Court	9.8	90.2

Source: India: Three Years Action Agenda Report

2. FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN AND THEIR IMPACT

Table 5: Trends in Allocation of Wage, Budget etc. of Anganwadi Program

Parameter	2011-2012	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-18
Anganwadi Centres (in Lakhs)	14	14	14	14	14
Female Workers (in Lakhs)	22	22	22	22	22
Budget (in Rs. Cr.)	10000	16253	15433	14560	15245
Monthly Wages of Workers (in Rs.)	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000
Children (in Millions)	70	70	70	70	70
Pregnant Mothers (in Millions)	15	15	15	15	15

Source: Budget, 2017-18, Government of India

It would be seen from the above that after a substantially augmented budget of Rs.16,235/- crore (2014-15), the allocation has dipped in the subsequent years, though the number of centres and coverage has remained the same. There has been a slight increase thereafter during 2017-18. The wage level, which was doubled in 2011-12 to Rs.3000/-, remained the same for the last seven years; to be hiked Rs.4500/- in September, 2018. This shows a marked low priority, to a critical nutritional programme, which has a long term bearing on the human development capability of children, due to inadequate protein intake and scant attention to the female workers who look after them.

Position in Odisha

Orissa is one of the less developed states of India in terms of state GDP, but displays higher sensitivity to social sector programs like the ICDS and Anganwadi workers. It provides coverage to around 60 lakh children and 12 lakh nursing mothers. When the central share was reduced from 80% to 50%, it has put an additional burden on Odisha's paltry budget by Rs.135/- crore during 2017-18 when the 14th Finance Commission increased the share of the states of the central government tax kitty for 32% to 42%. Prof. Abhijit Sen gave a dissenting note as he felt that the government of the day does not pay adequate attention to social sector allocation and reforms. Prof. Abhijit Sen believed that a mere increase of allocation for 32% to 42% might disrupt social sector allocation by the states, as they might pay low priority attention to social sector programmes and be more inclined to pay contractors for works projects. He has been proved to be very prescient, as many Anganwadi female workers did not get even their paltry wage; warranting a nationwide strike. There is another serious problem that deserves attention; viz. denial of minimum wage and permanent status to Anganwadi workers after they have put in number of years of work.

In the case of Akhil Bhartiya Anganwadi Kamgar vs UOI & Ors (2011) case, the prayer was to give them parity with nurses. The Supreme Court did not agree as these workers were not recruited through normal recruitment rules. Even regularization of their jobs which is given to casual workers was not agreed to by the Supreme Court. This is indeed

2.1. Programs for Anganwadi Female Workers

The Integrated Child Development Services is a flagship programme from 1975; with a view to providing additional nutritional support to children in their infancy and pregnant and lactating mothers. The fulcrum of this programme devolves on female Anganwadi workers and their helpers. The rural India, in particular, benefits significantly for this. The following table gives a trend of the centres, number of workers, budget allocation, wages being paid and coverage of this programme.

ironical as in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi vs Female Workers (2000), the Supreme Court has given maternity leave benefit to casual female workers at par with regular workers and have been pro worker in terms of regularization of casual workers after they have put in two years.

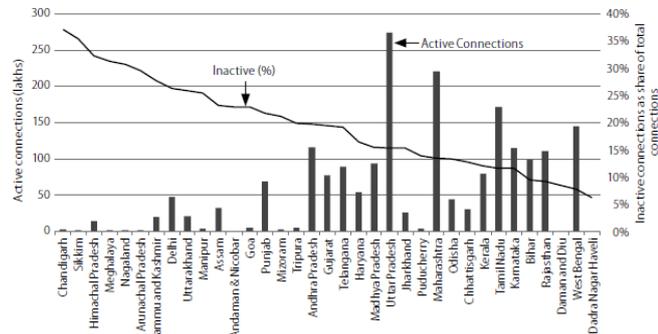
2.2. Ujjawala Scheme

The Ujjawala scheme was launched to provide relief to nearly 170 million households, who use solid fuels like firewood, crop residual, coal, cow dung as primary fuel for cooking, of which 88% are rural households (Census 2011). This is considered as the second biggest contributor to diseases (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare: 2015), 13% of all mortality in India (World Health Organisation). Besides 40% of all pulmonary disorders, 30% of the contract and 20% of heart diseases, respiratory problems and concern in the lungs (IHME 2015) are contributed by use of such solid fuels.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) includes lack of clean cooking fuel as one of the major parameters for Multi Dimension Poverty Index. Nearly 65% of the Indians suffer on this account. Redressing such major development deficit that predominantly affects nearly 170 million women. The Government of India launched the PMUY in 2015-16, with a view to covering 50 million households by 2019. The government gives Rs.1600/- for a gas connection, as subsidy, while the need for refill and stove amounting to Rs.1550/- is given on an interest free loan by OMCs to be paid as monthly EMIs. As a mark of our commitment to gender sensitivity, the gas connection is given to the lady of the house, who is the fulcrum for cooking in a household and looking after the household.

In a study conducted by Ashwini Dabadge, Ashok Sreenivas, Ann Josey (EPW, May, 19, 2018), they observe that the main concerns of this scheme centre around affordability, reliability, accountability and viability. The main concern is its use on a sustained basis. Studies on the impact of Ujjawala scheme are stymied by the fact that data is not available in a disaggregated manner for rural and urban households.

There are concerns regarding diversion of LPG by the BPL families. There is also no information available whether the loan is getting repaid in installments. The very fact that they have been waived by many state governments goes to show, that they are not being paid. The continued usage remains a serious concern. The inactive connections are reported to be 38 million (January, 2018), with wide variation across state governments. The following figure will explain state wise variation for incentive connections.



Source: PPAC (2017a).

Figure 2: State wise Variations for Inactive Connections
Source: PPAC (2017a)

However, it would be useful to note the dwindling trends in labour force participation, improvement in institutional delivery and nutritional status of adolescent girls.

Women’s Labour Force Participation

As per NFHS Survey, the percentage of women who had work was 36% (2005-06); has come down to 24% (2015-16). Further as per the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) paid female labour force participation declining. Indian states with higher level of GDP do not necessarily have higher FLFP as per Rahul Lahoti & Hema Swaminathan. It is not growth but composition of growth is relevant for worker. Bangladesh has improved women labour force participation 14% (90) – 36% (2016). Of the 11 million jobs loss in 2018: 8-8 are women; employed as farm labour, small scale trader as per Mahesh Vyas, Managing Director, CMIE. In the strategy for India @75, the government has set itself a missed to increase labour force participation significantly.

Institutional Delivery among Different Social Groups

The trends show that there has been a significant improvement, cutting across ST/ST/OBCs and others in terms of % of women who can avail of skilled medical personnel for safe delivery.

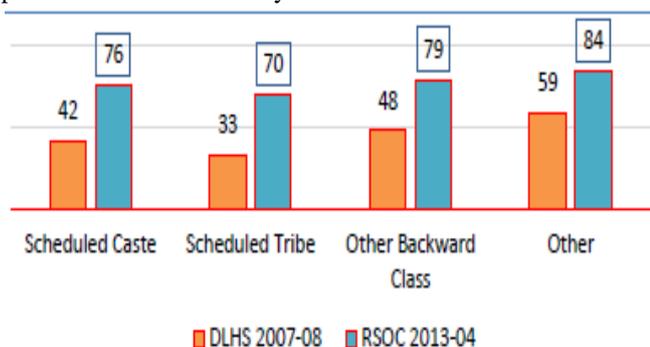


Figure 3: Institutional delivery among different social groups

Source: RSOC 2013-14 and DLHS 2007-08
Nutritional Status of Adolescent Girls

The nutritional status of the adolescent girls, who will later become mothers, show that nearly one third of them are severely thin as the following Figure will show. Quite clearly, the girls are at a disadvantage in the matter of nutritional intake. It shows a gender bias in a patriarchal society like India, where a male child is preferred over a girl child. An anemic girl has serious implication subsequently on her health when she becomes a mother.

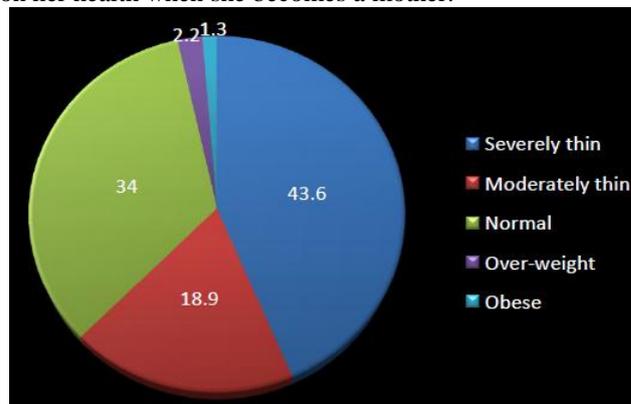


Figure 4: The Nutritional Status of Adolescent Girls
Source: RSOC Report, 2013-14

3. TRENDS IN GLOBAL GENDER GAP AND INEQUALITY

3.1. Global Gender Gap

The UNDP has come out with a Report (2018) on global gender gaps between different countries and has placed India at a rank of 108. The index takes into account four parameters viz. economic participation, education & health progress and political power. The position against these parameters has been reflected for a few developed countries & developing economies like China, Bangladesh and India in the under mentioned table.

Table 6: Global Gender Gap Indicators

Country	Global Index	Economic Participation & Opportunity	Education Attainment	Health & Survival	Political Empowerment
	Score (0-1)	Score (0-1)	Score (0-1)	Score (0-1)	Score (0-1)
Norway	0.835	0.806	0.999	0.972	0.563
France	0.779	0.685	1	0.974	0.458
Germany	0.776	0.734	0.976	0.973	0.418
Bangladesh	0.721	0.441	0.95	0.969	0.52
China	0.673	0.653	0.958	0.915	0.164
India	0.665	0.385	0.958	0.940	0.382

Source: The Global Gender Gap Report, 2018

It would be seen from the above that there are substantial variations in terms of economic participation and opportunity between India (38%) compared to (65%) China and (73%) Germany. However, in terms of political empowerment China fares quite poorly (16%), while Bangladesh scores (52%) over India’s (38%) in India. Quite clearly political empowerment for women remains a weak script, cutting across all countries.



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The graph below shows the contrasting picture for each of these countries against various parameters.

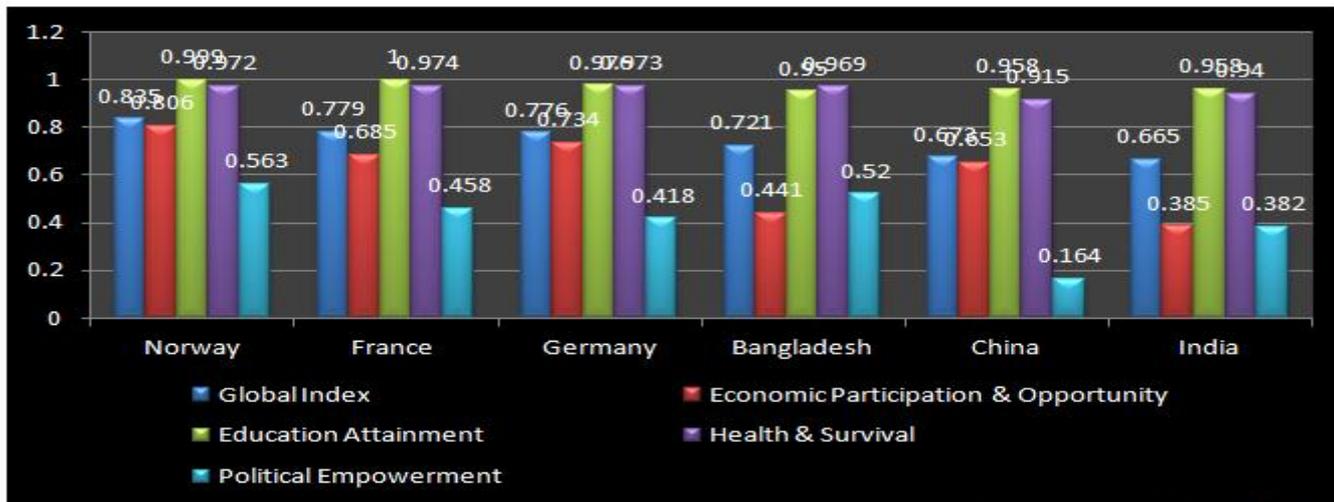


Figure 5: Global Gender Gap Indicators

Source: The Global Gender Gap Report, 2018

This index looks at reproductive health of women, their representation in the Parliament and percentage female workers in the workforce.

3.2. Gender Inequality Index

Table 7: Global Picture of GII and Underlying Factors

Country	GI	MMR	% Seats in Parliament	Female Workforce	Allocation to Education	Allocation to Health	Total
Norway	0.048	5	41.4	60.8	7.7	10.0	17.7
USA	0.189	14	19.7	55.7	5.0	16.8	21.8
Germany	0.072	6	31.5	55.0	4.9	11.2	16.1
South Korea	0.063	11	17.0	52.2	5.1	7.4	12.5
India	0.524	174	11.6	27.2	3.8	3.9	7.7

Source: Human Development Report, 2018

It would be seen that India ranks very poorly (127), while China fares very well (36) as per Human Development Report, 2018.

3.3. GII: Comparison of India and China

Both India and China became independent countries in (1947, 1949), with roughly similar per capita income and large agricultural base. Post economic liberalization, they have become Break Out Asian Tiger, clocking around 7-9% growth, thereafter. However, in terms of bridging the gender inequality gap, China has a much better record with (55.4%) female workforce as against 27.8% in India. As the following graph will show, China had a substantially lower Gender Inequality Index compared to India. But it has been achieving 2% reduction in gender gap per year as against 1% by India.

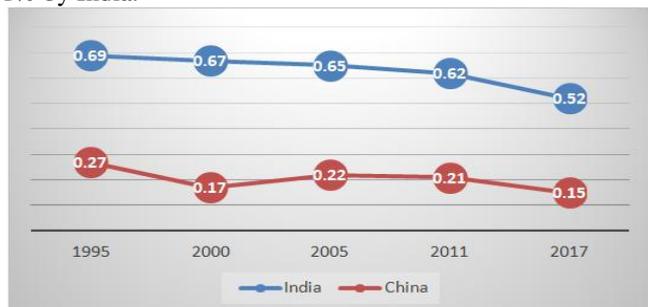


Figure 6: Trends in GII: India and China

Source: Human Development Report 2018

Quite clearly such low gender gap in China has contributed to its overall human development capability and indices and their footprint as a well as global power is unmistakable.

IV. CONSTRAINTS AND THE WAY FORWARD

Constraints and Challenges

Prof. Yamini Mishra (2015) who has worked extensively on gender budgeting issue has flagged the following constraints for ineffective implementation of GRB.

- Lack of political will and leadership
- Inadequate financial resources
- Lack of accountability mechanism
- Lack of strong coordination mechanism between Ministry of Finance and MWCD
- Lack of participation of women in planning and budget preparation

She also underlines how women in Anganwadi's are paid poorly as compared equal wage being enjoyed by women workers in the flagship MGNREGA programme.

The significant factors that contribute to acute gender inequality in India are high levels of school drops among girl children beyond primary level, lower ownership of assets amongst women due to our patriarchal system and high levels of malnutrition and anemia that afflict girl children compared to boys.

While GRB was set up in 2005-06 the gender budget cells (57) in different ministries were setup later. As per an analysis conducted by National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), that GRB has not translated in an effective manner into policies that can impact women decisively. The Gender Budget Cells (GBS), have been largely dysfunctional. The number of women employed informing is considerably higher (65%) compared to men as per the 68th round survey of the NSSO. There is also an urgent need to give equal access to woman in terms of employment and financial services which will help them to have self help and start up programs. The success of women workers in Bangladesh through the micro audit program is a wonderful template for emulation.

In order to link women to the formal financial structure, we must make financial literacy programmes customized for women. As per 68th NSSO raw, only 3.4% of women get the benefit of vocational training compared to 30% men. The CMIE study (2018) has shown that women in rural India are most vulnerable to job losses, due to their lack of education and vocational training. The gender budget cells are also not functioning optimally. Global experience of countries like Australia shows that women policy offices who work closely with budget office, bring out impressive outcomes. Initiatives like Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao have proved to very suboptimal. Quite clearly, lack of political priority and will is affecting effectiveness of GRB. It's seen that in quite a few major schemes apart from the paltry allocation, there is a surrender of funds; thereby clearly reflecting a lack of coordination and involvement on the part of the executing agencies. The entire budgetary processes have to be more responsive to the challenge of reducing gender inequality. The Global Gender Gap Report (2018), clearly shows that in terms of political empowerment, the women are seriously lagging behind. Their health status and economic participation needs to be significantly improved. Reservation for women in state assemblies and the parliament, as has been done at the Panchayat level can be a powerful catalyst to close the clasp that divides women from men in terms of real empowerment.

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