

# Does Gender-Responsive Budgeting Act Upon Woman Employment?

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**Abstract**— The prominence of feminist economics afterwards the 1980s in the literature of economics led to the recognition of the role and significance of women's labor in economies. The secondary position of women which continues to exist almost all over the world, especially in business life, has oriented countries to policies based on gender equality. The main objective of these policies is to make women equal to men in economic, social and political terms. Gender-responsive budgeting is the budgetary policies being implemented by governments in order to eliminate gender inequality. Through these policies, measures are taken to eliminate inequality, by keeping in view the unequal socioeconomic status of women and men. These policies were first put into practice in Australia and since then became effective in many countries of the world, address the revenue and expenditure of the public with regard to gender. We are of the opinion that gender-responsive budgeting influences positively women's employment almost all around the world. Within this framework, we aim to clearly reveal the existing relationship between gender-responsive budget and women's employment.

**Keywords**—Gender-responsive Budgeting, Women Employment, Women Empowerment, Gender Inequality

## I. INTRODUCTION

The gender-responsive budgeting method aims to create and develop fiscal policy using the information obtained from gender analysis. Therefore, it brings together gender differences to examine the possible gender impact on issues such as employment, earnings, income and unpaid work, with information on policies set out in budgets, thus seeking to increase policy effectiveness. Gender budgeting helps make government expenditures more efficient and effective, and prompts policy makers to apply new rather than traditional methods.

The economic and social position of women differs in low-income, middle-income and high-income countries. Gender inequalities such as health, education, access to resources nutrition and women's employment are much more common in low-income and middle-income countries. Women living in developing countries make up about half of the country's population, generally working in jobs such as cooking, cleaning, maintenance or water harvesting, that is, in semi-skilled or unskilled labor or in the unpaid care economy. In high-income economies, both women employment and women

employment participation rates are higher than in low-income and middle-income countries. Thus, gender budgeting facilitates the use of more effective tools and uses more elaborate public financial management systems in high-income countries [1].

Gender budgeting; not separate budgets for women and men, the government allocates mainstream budgets based on their impact on men and women. The aim of these initiatives is to reveal the gendered aspects of macro and micro economic perspectives. This budgeting method can be done at the national or local levels, as well as covering certain sectors [2]. Hence, we are of the opinion that gender-responsive budgeting will contribute to women's employment, especially in supported sectors.

## II. AN OVERVIEW OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR IN ECONOMIES BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

Interest in enucleating the negligence of women and women's labor in development and gender inequalities has not been awakened in economic theory for a long time. Gender-responsive budgeting is the government's elimination of gender inequality through its budgetary policies. With the implemented budget policies, measures are taken to eliminate inequality by taking into account the different social and economic conditions of women and men.

Australia was the first country to introduce gender-responsive budgeting in the 1984. Later, many countries followed Australia to putting into practice the gender-responsive budgeting. Gender-responsive budgeting has many objectives, such as improving women's working conditions, promoting women's employment, ensuring women's greater participation in the public sphere and benefiting more from public services, and increasing women's employment and women's entrepreneurship. As touched upon, gender-responsive budgeting was implemented for the first time in 1984. However, in order to make the subject more scrutible, women's employment about ten years before the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting, the position of women in social life, and the inevitable role of women in the economic and social reproduction process will be addressed.

Patriarchal norms and institutional and cultural structures circled around these norms push women to a secondary position before men, and the roles of housework and motherhood draped around women's shoulders, which are the consequence of a gender-based division of labor. It is possible

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to trace the foundations of this situation back to the birth of economic thought. However, in terms of the scope of the study, it is more appropriate to evaluate the subject from the mid-1970s-when neoliberal economic policies began to be implemented around the world-till 1984, when gender-responsive budgeting came to the stage.

In the years following the 1970s, when there was great instability in the economy throughout the world, great political, economic and social transformations were experienced. Meanwhile, with the increasing momentum of globalization, the changes in the foreign trade policies of the countries have significantly affected the labor markets, especially women's employment. Neoliberalism has become the dominant economic thought in the world since the late 1970s. Neoliberal policies have made themselves felt through the practices such as export-oriented industrialization, flexibility of production processes, limitation of social government expenditures, and privatization.

The neoliberal economy is simultaneously being dependent on both increased domestic labor and also on its invisibility and devaluation. The withdrawal of the state from care services and social services has created conditions for increasing dependency on private care and this accordingly expanded women's domestic responsibilities. On the other hand, the neoliberal economy has favored women, who are regarded as a cheap labor source in terms of working hours and paid work obligations.

On the other hand structural adjustment policies created the triple burden for women [3], and globalization has consolidated its results. As state welfare systems have been suspended, much provision has passed over unpaid female labour. In the new global labour market relied on low-paid, flexible work, poor households cannot pivot on a sole breadwinner to keep alive [4]. Women have become an essential component of this liberalized labour market. Within the context of structural adjustment policies, certain areas have emerged where women are stacked in unregistered, uninsured, insecure, low-paid, together with an often uncertain and long working hours, and poor working conditions.

Work in the informal sector is also affected by the emergence of globalization in both industry and the service sector, which take into employment women in exceptionally marginal and exploitative conditions [5]. The augmented role and the expanded numbers of women, as production and service workers, in their own countries is a characterizing qualification of the contemporary era. The new role of women has conflicting outcomes. On the one hand, the employment chances for Asian women have inclined to provide them both more self-reliance and a more individualistic role within their conventional families [6]-[7]-[8]. On the other hand, their position has handed over them more defenceless to exploitation in the world economy, and to exposed to all the consternations of sexual exploitation and trafficking [9].

Neoliberal economic policies and structural adjustment policies have not achieved the desired success in world economies. The exacerbation of socioeconomic adversities in the process of globalization, especially in the underdeveloped regions of the world, has led to some changes in the

international development agenda. Some of these changes include the introduction of egalitarian and non-discriminatory approaches to women in development debates.

### III. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING AND THE IMPACT ON WOMAN EMPLOYMENT

Gender-responsive budgeting is characterized in the literature as "a gender-based evaluation of budgets that restructures revenues and expenditures, including a gender perspective at all levels of the budget process, to promote gender equality" [10].

Gender-responsive budgeting stands out as a strategy which aims to incorporate policies that consolidate women's place in society and also in the planning and budgeting process. In addition, although the main focus of gender-sensitive budgeting is gender equality, the main objective of the policies is to improve the living standards of women and to ensure their active participation in business life [11].

The understanding of gender-responsive is very crucial in terms of raising awareness on women's employment, comprehending the issues related to gender inequality in the eyes of the society, and preparing the ground for political decisions in order to realize the goals set in point of gender equality. On the other hand, gender-sensitive budgeting aims to evaluate the shortcomings between the goals and policy commitments set by the implemented policy by analyzing the resources devoted to women's rights and human rights and the outcomes of the policies put into practice [12].

Gender-responsive budgeting has a very noteworthy place in boosting women's employment. The gender-responsive budgeting is also of great stature in preventing gender differences in the participation of employed women, particularly in paid working hours, and participation in part-time work. In many developing countries, the proportion of women employed full-time is low compared to men. According to the ILO report, the current global labor force participation rate of women is around 47%, while the labor force participation rate for men is around 72%. This difference of 25 percent can be as high as 50 percent in some regions [13]. This is where the understanding of gender-sensitive budgeting comes into play. As the importance given to gender-sensitive budgeting enhances, there will also be an increase in female employment, especially full-time. On the other hand, in many developed economies, due to tax systems and high tax wedges on secondary income earners, the rate of women's participation in the labor force reduces. It will be possible to avert this problem and increase the share of women in total employment by means of the gender-sensitive budgeting [10].

The role of gender-responsive budgeting to increase women's employment has come in sight in many countries. In Australia, which is the pioneer of gender-based budgeting, many studies have been carried out in order to ensure women's active participation in working life and to increase the existing participation rate. One of them is the paid parental leave application. More than 280,000 women benefited from the parental leave application implemented in 2011, and the rate of women enjoying from this application increased from 50% to 95% [11].

Another country where this budgeting approach has amplified women's employment is France. In France, women are still less involved in the workplace than men. In France, women are still less involved in the workplace than men. In order to increase this rate, resources were transferred to the Experts of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination in France (as a reflection of the gender-sensitive budgeting approach), with the purpose of establishing 1,000 new workplaces from the IMF. On the other hand, more than three years grants have been given to state-supported institutions for female employees. By this way, the number of working women was increased by 25% [14].

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is possible to assert that gender-responsive budgeting includes a compromise on the exigency to strengthen women's economic position and makes legal arrangements to protect women. The secondary and passive position of women's labor in economies and the reason why women's employment remained in the background can be traced back to the birth of economic thought. This process continued sharply by the increase in the effectiveness of neoliberalism in world economies and the rise of structural adjustment programs. Although women's employment and the requirement for women's labor seem to have expanded in the aforementioned period, women are in a bad situation in terms of both working conditions and received wages. Gender-responsive budgeting has been carried into effect to eliminate these problems. Thus, the gender-responsive budgeting approach will eliminate the mentioned inequality and will significantly increase the labor force participation rate of women. In this context, policy recommendations for removing barriers to women's employment can be listed as follows [15]:

- Policies that will enable women to play an active role in economic decision-making mechanisms should be created, and the use of resources to increase women's employment should be encouraged by strengthening the position of women in the society in central and local government budgets.
- Priority should be given to women's entrepreneurship by expanding employment-guaranteed courses.
- Research centers for women's problems (especially in the field of employment) should be established in universities and funds should be created from university budgets for the solution of women's problems.
- Steps should be taken to improve the working conditions of women living in rural areas, and an independent control mechanism should be designed to prevent negative situations that women face in business life (promotion, wage, pressure, abuse, etc.).

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