

Conceptual Framework Paper

Modeling How the Gender Budgeting Achieves Gender Equality Goals

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Introduction

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)¹ countries are at various stages of implementing gender budgeting. For most countries, gender budgeting is still in its early stages of development. The OECD's first pass at a gender budgeting composite index is designed to facilitate policymakers and the public in tracking the progress of gender budgeting over time (OECD, 2019a). However, this index does not investigate whether and how the introduction of gender perspectives in the budget process has impacted the gender equality goals. This paper models a conceptual framework to explain how the gender budgeting implementation supports the OECD countries' gender equality goals and tests the relationships between the comprehensive extent to legal foundations of gender budgeting and the same gender equality goals within the OECD countries and then examines whether the stronger legal basis mitigates the gender gap in wages and the proportion of seats in Parliaments. The research questions are:

1. How the gender budgeting application support gender equality goals ideally?
2. Does gender budgeting application improve gender equality?

Literature Review

Gender budgeting means the systematic application of analytical tools and processes in order to highlight gender equality issues and to inform, prioritize and resource gender-responsive policies (OECD, 2019d).

¹ List of OECD Member countries - Ratification of the Convention on the OECD.
<https://www.oecd.org/about/document/list-oecd-member-countries.htm>

According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2020, there is still a 31.4% average gender gap that remains to be closed globally. Among the 153 countries they analyzed, 36% of senior private sector's managers and public sector's officials are women. Also, only 55% of adult women are in the labor market, while 78% of men. In the past five years, countries have made very little progress in reaching gender equality goals (Downes & Nicol, 2020). Actions are needed in the OECD governments to close the remaining gender equality gaps. The OECD report, Government at a Glance 2019, stated that there are 17 OECD countries introduced gender budgeting (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Portugal, Spain and Sweden). In addition, two countries have plans to introduce it (France and Turkey).

Gender inequality is an important and visible issue for OECD countries. Gender equality is essential for ensuring that men and women can contribute fully at home, at work and in public life, for the betterment of societies and economies at large (Downes & Nicol, 2020). The gender equality goals could be allocated into four key areas: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and poverty, and leadership participation. Lots of objectives and their indicators are linked to each key area. For example, reduced gender gaps in reading and numeracy skills among youth is one of the objectives based on educational gender equality in Canada. And the federal government uses the estimated average scores of 15-year-old students for the Programme for International Student Assessment by gender as the related indicator.

The laws and policies create the legislative and regulatory framework for promoting gender equality (Downes & Nicol, 2020). These laws and policies help shape societal attitudes toward women's roles, capacities and responsibilities. Australia was a pioneer for gender budgeting in the 1980s when it included a Women's Budget Statement as part of the budget. Of

the 17 OECD countries that have implemented gender budgeting, ten countries have legal provisions (either in the budget law, or another legal provision) underpinning the practice (Austria, Belgium, Canada, Iceland, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, and Spain). In other OECD countries, the basis for gender budgeting is most often high-level political commitment or administrative practices (Downes & Nicol, 2020). Furthermore, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) required the national governments to examine their budgets with respect to gender equality issues (Moster & Korac, 2020). One function of the legal foundations is to identify the responsibilities between a number of government departments.

The OECD has identified multiple tools of gender budgeting (OECD, 2019c). These tools include needs assessment, gender dimension in performance, gender dimension in resource allocation, gender dimension to performance audit, gender dimension to spending view. baseline analysis, Ex ante gender impact assessment of policies, Ex post gender impact assessment of policies, and gender audit of budget. Over half of the OECD countries which have introduced gender budgeting use four or more tools (Austria, Canada, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Spain and Sweden).

The budget office needs to provide administration guidelines for the implementation of gender budgeting so there are some administrative approaches summarized in 12 OECD countries (Downes & Nicol, 2017), e.g., standard guidelines from the central budget authority on how to apply gender budgeting, training and capacity-development in the use of gender budgeting, expert/consultative group advises, inter-agency working groups to exchange good practices on gender budgeting, and annual budget process includes details and instructions on the application of gender budgeting.

Model, Data and Methodology

Model

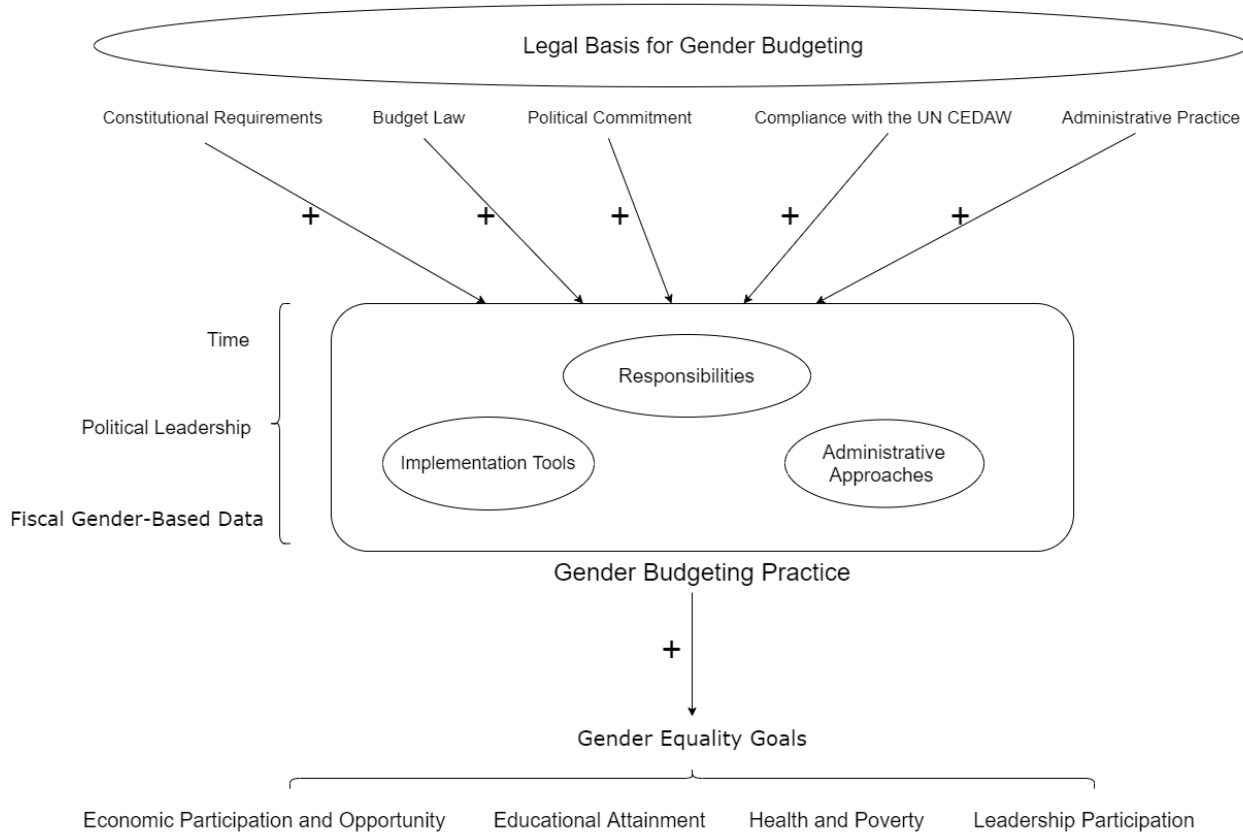


Figure 1 The Implementation Model of Gender Budgeting to Achieve Gender Equality

Figure 1 presents a schematic model of how the factors which support gender budgeting practice advance the gender equality goals. Drawing from the literature review above, this study models the supportive factors for the implementation of gender budgeting by classifying the factors identified in the literature. There are three broad supportive categories that have effects on implementing gender budgeting: the legal basis for gender budgeting, context, and the three aspects related to the gender budgeting practice. The legal basis for gender budgeting could be divided into five levels: constitutional requirements, budget law, political commitment, compliance with the UN Convention CEDAW, and administrative practice. These different

levels of laws prescribe the regulation details of the three aspects related to the gender budgeting practice (responsibilities, implementation tools, administrative approaches). Also, the context could influence the effectiveness of the implementation, such as the duration time since a country introduced gender budgeting, whether the political leaders support gender equality, and the comprehensive original gender-based data based on budgets. The diagram shows that these above factors have direct implications for gender equality goals.

This paper does not extend to analyzing the effects from the context, the implementation tools, the administrative approaches and the responsibilities on the gender equality goals. Therefore, it chooses to examine the relationship between the legal basis and the gender goals (economic and leadership participation). Parliament is a key player to promote gender equality and diversity in public life. However, gender equality in politics is not merely achieving an equal share of seats and positions. On average across OECD countries, women held one-third of federal/central governments' ministerial positions in 2019 (OECD, 2019e). The gender composition of the parliament can be a strong signal of a government's commitment to gender equality.

The independent variable is the comprehensiveness of the legal basis for gender budgeting in 2018 and the two dependent variables are: the gender gap in employment rate in 2018 and the proportion of seats held by women in Parliament.

Testable Hypotheses:

1. The comprehensiveness of the legal basis for gender budgeting has impacts on closing gender gap in the employment rate.

2. The comprehensiveness of the legal basis for gender budgeting has impacts on increasing the proportion of seats held by women in Parliaments.

Data and Methodology

In terms of the independent variable, the paper creates components of each level: constitutional requirements, budget law, political commitment, compliance with the international laws UN CEDAW and administrative practice (see Table 1).

Table 1 Comparison of the Components of Gender Budgeting Legal Basis Between OECD Countries in 2018

Components of the Legal Bases	OECD Countries			
Constitutional requirements:	Austria	Spain	Canada
National gender equality strategies				
Assign responsibilities at all levels of government				
Assign responsibilities within department at the central/federal level				
Collect and produce statistics data based on gender				
Cross-state collaboration on gender equality				
Set an office for women				
Gender Results Framework				
Structured women engagement on gender equality issues				

Budget Law:				
The Number of gender analysis tools it used				
Gender budget statements				
Gender Audit of the budget				
Gender impact analysis of specific policies				
Gender impact analysis of budget as a whole				
Political Commitments:				
Commitments documents				
Adopting government-wide plans				
Documents related to building Accountability				
Documents related to building Transparency				
Compliance with the UN CEDAW				
Administrative practice:				
The Number of administrative approaches it used				
An annual budget circular with instructions related to gender budgeting				
Sum				

Source: OECD. (2018). OECD Budget Practices and Procedures Survey. OECD, Paris.

Note: Sum= # of relevant components of gender budgeting laws

All items under the “Components of the Legal Bases” are required to answer yes or no (yes=1, no=0), except for the components marked with “the number”. The study will score the comprehensiveness of legal basis by dividing the “Sum” into three levels (strong, midlevel, weak). However, the scope of each level will be decided by the maximum value and minimum value of the “Sum” after finishing counting work so that the study could classify adequate line between these three levels.

In terms of the two dependent variables, the data source comes from OECD Employment Database (<http://www.oecd.org/employment/emp/onlineoecdemploymentdatabase.htm>) for OECD countries, and current members of Parliament website of each OECD country². The study will count the number of women and calculate the percentage of women among all members. Finally, the study will use R to conduct regression analyses between the independent variable and the two dependent variables.

Conclusion

Overall, this study proposes a conceptual framework for modeling how the Gender Budgeting Achieves Gender Equality Goals. Also, the research looks at whether the comprehensiveness of legal basis have effects on achieving gender equality goals or not. However, my study does not research these OECD countries during a decade to see the gender gap trends and it neglects other countries’ performance on gender budgeting in the world.

² For example, Canada Current Members of Parliament: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Members/en/search>

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