

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana: Issues and challenges

Mr. Suresh kumar¹, Dr.Ravindranath N.Kadam²,

¹*Asst. Professor, Department of Economics, Government First Grade College, Mariyammanahalli,
Dist: Vijayanagara Karnataka, India.*

Cell No. 9482610651/e-mail:sonnad331@gmail.com

²*Professor, Department of Economics, Karnatak University, Dharwad, Karnataka, India.
9480024629/e-mail:kadamkud@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

India is almost crossing china's population and becoming most populated country in the world. In India Cooking related activities are mainly depend on unsafe fuel like fire wood, dung cake, agricultural residues and coal. In India, approximately 86.7 percent of rural households and 26.3 percent of urban households rely on solid biomass fuels for their cooking needs. Over the years, Indian woman has been using these unsafe fuel articles, as a result she has been suffering from several health issues. This practice adversely affects respiratory health of individuals, local forests and other environmental resources and contributes to climate change. These unsafe fuels emit substantial amount of toxic pollutants that include respirable particles, carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur, benzene, formaldehyde, butadiene and poly aromatic compounds, On 1st may 2016 at Ballia in Utter Pardesh Central Government launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) to provide clean and eco friendly fuel to households. This paper attempts to examine the issues and challenges related to PMUY. The paper contains i. Introduction, ii. Objectives, iii. Methodology, iv. Necessity behind the PMUY, Government efforts, v. Facts, Issues and Challenges of PMUY, vi. How to make success the PMUY and vii. Conclusion, etc.

Keywords: *Aromatic compounds, challenges, households, issues, respiratory, solid fuels,*

INTRODUCTION

India is almost crossing china's population and becoming most populated country in the world. In India Cooking related activities are mainly depend on unsafe fuel like fire wood, dung cake, agricultural residues and coal. In India, approximately 86.7 percent of rural households and 26.3 percent of urban households rely on solid biomass fuels for their cooking needs. Indian women need to spend major time of a day to collect the fuel articles and need to face several challenges in the forest and surrounding in search of the fuel articles.

Over the years, Indian woman has been using these unsafe fuel articles, as a result she has been suffering from several health issues. This practice adversely affects respiratory health of individuals, local forests and other environmental resources and contributes to climate change. These unsafe fuels emit substantial amount of toxic pollutants that include respirable particles, carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur, benzene, formaldehyde, butadiene and poly aromatic compounds, such as benzo (α) pyrene.

According to WHO indoor smoke from solid fuels ranked as one of the top ten risk factors for the global burden of disease, accounting for 4.3 million premature deaths each year. Household air pollution (HAP) arising from combustion of solid fuels for cooking is a major contributor to four of the top five causes of mortality and morbidity in India, and HAP is also a significant contributor to outdoor air pollution.

Use of such solid fuels degrades environment system. Consumes more time creates health issues to come out from above problem use of LPG for cooking is good solution . On 1st may 2016 at Ballia in Utter Pardesh Central Government launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) to provide clean and eco friendly fuel to households.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to examine the issues and challenges of Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojana in general.

METHODOLOGY

The present paper is aimed at disclosing the facts related to PMUY for which secondary data is collected from books, journals, reports, government websites, etc.

PRADHAN MANTRI UJJAWALA YOJANA

The scheme aims to benefit the poor families by providing monetary support about sixteen thousand rupees to get a connection of cooking gas to each beneficiary thereby helping women to adopt modern cooking technology, controlling pollution created by use of solid fuels, save the time need to spend for cooking and optimum use of this saved time to other economic activities, etc. Thus Union government has given approval to PMUY scheme under which fifty million LPG connections have been provided to the poor families.

NECESSITY BEHIND THE LAUNCHING PRADHAN MANTRI UJJAWALA YOJANA

In India majority of poor people use fire wood, dung cake, agricultural waste and coal for cooking purpose. This has become cause for release of hung dark smoke and emits carbon in atmosphere which affects the global green house gases and affected global climate at one hand and at another it caused for deforestation. In World Health Organization (WHO) report it is estimated that, five lakh deaths in a year in India are caused by unclean cooking fuels, while a much larger number suffer from a range of respiratory illnesses. Studies reveal that, having an open fire wood in the kitchen is almost as poisonous as 400 cigarettes in an hour. According to WHO indoor smoke from solid fuels ranked as one of the top ten risk factors for the global burden of disease, accounting for 4.3 million premature deaths each year. Household air pollution arising from combustion of solid fuels for cooking is a major contributor to mortality and morbidity in India and Household air pollution is also a significant contributor to outdoor air pollution.

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS

In order to come out from the problem of unsafe fuel causing ill health and environment pollution the Union Government has been implementing various programmes viz. the first program is Pahal, which aims to pay subsidy fuel payments into people's bank accounts. Thus LPG is now sold at international rates in the market, greatly reducing diversion of LPG to the non-household sector. The second program is "Give it Up," which persuades middle-class households to give up their subsidies to connect the poor. The third programme is Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna (PMUY).

FACTS, ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The Salient Features of the PMUY

Following are the salient features of PMUY

- The Scheme aims to provide Rs. 1600 per household to cover security deposit for a 14.2 kg cylinder as well as regulator .
- Under the Scheme, deposit free LPG connection is provided to the woman member of a Below Poverty Line (BPL) family.
- The cost of the Hot Plate and purchase of first refill is borne by the beneficiary.
- The beneficiaries have option to take Hot Plate or the first refill or both on loan basis from Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) at zero interest rate.
- The loan is recovered through the subsidy received upon purchase of refill(s) by the beneficiary

Objective of the Scheme

Provision of clean cooking fuel for rural poor household is main challenge in the country. Government is committed to providing clean fuel to all poor households. Providing free LPG connection to fifty million beneficiaries living below poverty line (BPL). The beneficiaries are provided monetary support of Rs.1600 to get a cooking gas connection. The beneficiaries selected on the basis of socio –economic and caste census data as per 2011 census. This Programme is launched to reduce health hazard/ diseases and air pollution caused by the use of unclean fossil fuels

Selection of Beneficiaries

In the initial period the beneficiaries of this Programme are only BPL families in the country. Preferences had given to SC/ST and weaker section of society. While providing the new connection to BPL households, priority was given to the state which has lower LPG coverage as on 1st January 2016.

- All SC/STs households
- Beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) (Gramin)
- Antyoday Anna Yojana (AAY)
- Forest dwellers
- Most Backward Classes (MBC)
- Tea and Ex-Tea Garden Tribes
- People residing in Islands and rivers etc.

Benefits of PMUY

Provision of LPG connection to BPL households has ensured universal protection of health of BPL families. This Programme has saved the time to be spent to collect firewood, dung and other cooking fuel and saved time could be used for other economic activities or for leisure thereby improve standard of living of beneficiary women in the country. Under this scheme, the gas connection has been given to woman who is adult in family and money will be transferred to her bank account. This increased the status of women and her decision making power within the family and pays way to women empowerment. The scheme also helps to adopt modern cooking technology among women of the country. This scheme generates employment opportunities in Gas distribution sector. It will reduce deforestation and cutting down trees for fire woods and help to protect environment.

Issues of PMUY

The government of India has announced PMUY as a programme for improving women's health, improving their standard of living on one hand and avoiding deforestation on the other. But scheme suffers from many issues. Lack of accurate identification of Poor households for PMUY though, socio-economic caste census Data 2011 is used about there are many example of wrong selection of beneficiaries. Data used for PMUY purpose might be used for other purpose particularly Aadhar details of beneficiaries.

There is lack of Awareness about the PMUY programme ,still all BPL families have not opted this programme. Many of actual beneficiaries are lacking documents needed PMUY. Less number of gas distributors in remote area of country is main issue of PMUY. Local leaders are influencing Gas agencies in the provision of LPG under this scheme. Though it is a government sponsored scheme but it works through Private Gas distributors is other issue of the scheme. Delays in receiving Gas connection by beneficiaries cannot be rolled out. Continue use of biomass along with LPG gas never fulfill the aim of this scheme.

Challenges of PMUY

Frequent increase in the price of gas cylinder affects adversely on BPL families to continue their use of LPG under PMUY. No subsidy for second and subsequent refills. This caused to decrease in the number of beneficiaries for second refill. There is no guarantee of use of LPG only for cooking purpose. Extension of beneficiaries again and again and in the identification of poor households for allotment of free LPG connection is biggest challenge.

The data collected on BPL population may be get misused by others. As Aadhar based direct benefits transfer system is facing legal battle in courts, hence transferring subsidies directly to oil companies may encourage, leakages in the system by vested interest groups. It will cause the demand for LPG increased and it leads shortage of LPG which in turn cause for increase in the LPG price. LPG distribution network in India is not fully developed which affects full realization of benefits of scheme to the concerned. Subsidized LPG might be used for commercial purpose in black market.

How to Make PMUY Successful?

Following are the ways to make PMUY successful

- ❖ **Proper definition of family should given:** Definition of family and adult should be given Properly to avoid confusions in the selection of beneficiaries..
- ❖ **Educating the people regarding PMUY:** People should be educated properly regarding LPG, its use, its safety and about the PMUY scheme.
- ❖ **Prompt identification of beneficiaries:** There should be prompt identification of beneficiaries who are really eligible for PMUY scheme.
- ❖ **Hassel free LPG connection under PMUY:** Eligible beneficiaries should get LPG connection without any difficult otherwise no one will come forward to opt the scheme.
- ❖ **The co-operation from the side of people should be appreciated:** Government should provided proper support from general public to implement the scheme accurately.

I. CONCLUSION

In India, approximately 86.7 percent of rural households and 26.3 percent of urban households rely on solid biomass fuels for their cooking needs. Indian women need to spend major time of a day to collect the fuel articles and need to face several challenges in the forest and surrounding in search of the fuel articles.

PMUY provides an opportunity to provide LPG connection to truly deserving ones. It will help in reducing the environmental pollution. It will increase the opportunity of employment. It also improves the quality of life of poor households. It also empowered the status of women.

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