

# **Socio-Political Impact of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna On The Beneficiaries**

## **(A Case Study of Raipur Block , Dehradun, Uttrakhand)**

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### **Abstract**

*Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna (PMUY) launched on May 1, 2016 is a welfare program of the Government of India. It aims at empowering women and reducing the serious health issues associated with cooking in smoky kitchens or wander in unsafe areas collecting firewood. The scheme is mainly targeting the areas where LPG penetration is still minimal. The traditional cooking techniques such as burning of firewood, coal, kerosene, cow dung etc cause indoor air pollution which is hazardous to health. It leads to respiratory diseases, heart problem, lung cancer etc. Hence, seeing to the severity of problems associated with unclean cooking fuel, Government of India has pledged for providing LPG connection to all households. Apart from protecting the health of women, PMUY will also promote women empowerment. The connections are provided in the name of women and the subsidy is also transferred to their respective bank accounts. Moreover it will save their valuable time and energy which they can invest in other constructive works and activities. PMUY is one of the most successful social sector schemes of the Narendra Modi government. This study is an attempt to bridge the informational gap on the socio-economic and political impact of PMUY on the beneficiaries. It aims to understand the behavior of the consumers towards the government and scheme.*

### **Keywords**

*Socio-Political, PMUY, LPG, Women, Women Empowerment*

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

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*Socio-Political Impact of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna*

*RJPP 2018, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 52-61, Article No. 7  
Received on 06/01/2018  
Approved on 31/01/2018*

**Online available at :**  
[http://anubooks.com/  
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## **Research Methodology**

This research study is descriptive and explanatory in nature which attempts to compile data collected through direct personal investigation during the field survey and telephonic interview of the samples. Data was collected from 68 women beneficiaries of Raipur block, Dehradun through direct personal investigation (79%) and telephonic interview (21%).

## **About the Scheme**

**Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna (PMUY)** launched by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 1, 2016 in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh is a welfare program of the Government of India. It aims at empowering women and reducing the serious health issues associated with cooking in smoky kitchens or wander in unsafe areas collecting firewood. Under this scheme 5 crore Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) connections will be distributed to the families living Below Poverty Line (BPL) by the year 2018-19. Government will provide the connections at the cost of Rs1600 per connection (it includes the cost of LPG stove and first gas refill) in the next 3 years. EMI facility for meeting the cost of stove and refill will also be provided. These connections would be given in the names of women heads of the families that do not possess LPG. The scheme is mainly targeting the areas where LPG penetration is still minimal. The states with lower gas penetration are chosen by the Government for this purpose. Total number of connections released under PMUY in India was 31,542,582 (till November 2017). Largest number of connections was allotted in the state of Uttar Pradesh (34 lakhs till November 2017). 2.17 lakh families out of 4.38 lakh BPL families identified in the SECC-2011 have been benefitted under the scheme in the state of Uttarakhand (till December 2017). Total number of beneficiaries in Raipur block, Dehradun is 68 (till October 2017). Union minister of State Petroleum & Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan launched PMUY in Uttarakhand on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016. Retd. IG BSF Shri. S.S. Kothiyal launched PMUY at Dehradun. The increase of LPG distributorship from 239 to 400 in Uttarakhand, especially in hilly and rural areas is also in the plan. It will increase employment in hilly and rural areas.

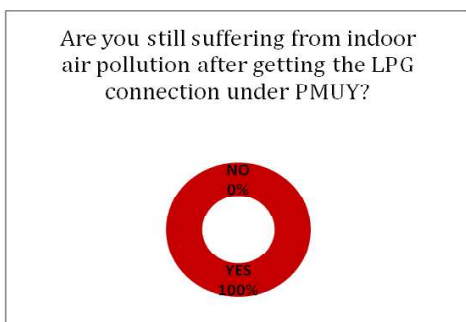
## **Social Indicators**

### **Health**

Importance of health in our life cannot be overlooked. A healthy population can contribute to the development of society with greater efficiency. Nowadays pollution is becoming a major cause for many health issues. Air pollution especially indoor pollution is becoming an important health concern worldwide. The indoor air

pollution is same or sometimes more as compared to that of outdoors. People, predominately women who spend more time in house cooking or doing other household activities are obliged to breath the polluted air that leads to chronic or acute respiratory diseases. According to a WHO report, cooking in unclean fuel in India leads to 5 lakh premature deaths per year. Hence, seeing to the severity of problems associated with unclean cooking fuel, Government of India has launched PMUY for providing LPG connection to BPL households.

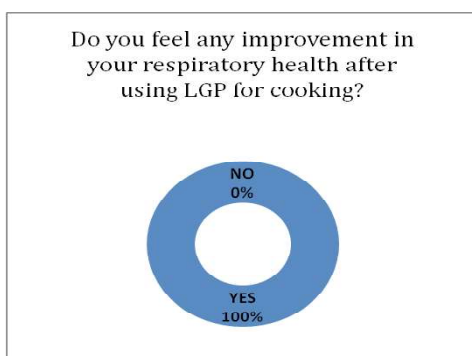
***Indoor air pollution after PMUY***



All the samples felt that they are no more exposed to the air pollution after using LPG for cooking. The traditional cooking techniques such as burning of firewood, coal, kerosene, cow dung etc cause indoor air pollution which is hazardous to health. LPG is free from such pollutants.

YES	0%
NO	100%

***Effect on respiratory health***

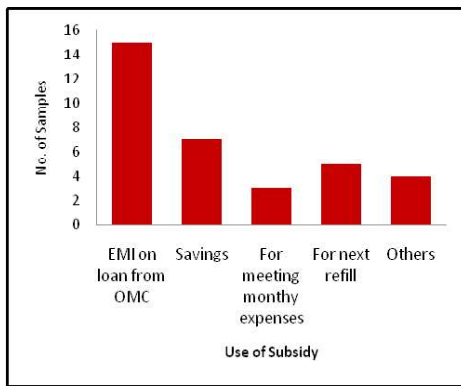


All the samples felt improvement in their respiratory health after using LPG for cooking. Being a clean cooking fuel, LPG is safe to use and doesn't produce smoke as firewood. The main aim of PMUY was to provide clean cooking fuel so that the women don't have to compromise with their health. It can be interpreted that there is an improvement in respiratory health condition of women associated with unclean cooking fuel as they are no more exposed.

YES	100%
NO	0%

### Income

Beneficiaries of PMUY belong to BPL category and are irregular income earners. The scheme intends to make the LPG connection available to BPL families, with a financial assistance of ₹ 1,600 to each household. EMI facility (optional) is also provided by OMCs for meeting the cost of LPG stove and first refill. Connection is provided in the name of women head of the family and subsidy is transferred directly to their bank accounts. They use the subsidy amount for various purposes.



44% of the respondents use the subsidy amount for paying off the loan taken from OMCs, 20% use it as savings, 9% use it for meeting monthly expenses and 15% spends them on next LPG refill whereas 12% utilizes the amount for other purposes.

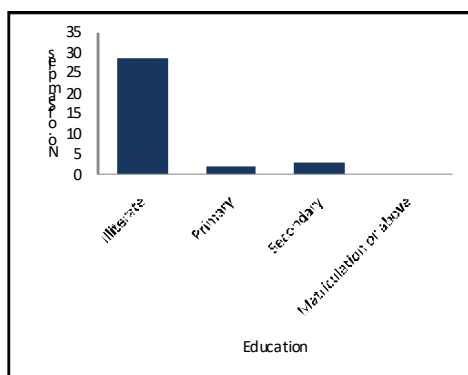
*Beneficiaries are getting confident than before, they are the sole owner of the subsidy income and can utilize it the way they want. The scheme is also promoting banking habit in women. They now prefer to save their money in bank rather than keeping it in cash form at homes.*

EMI on loan from OMC	44%
Savings	20%
For meeting monthly expenses	9%
For next refill	15%

### Education

Education is a fundamental right and is provided to all without any disparity and discrimination but BPL families especially women get deprived of it due to various reasons. One of the reasons is the need of cooking energy. People send their children to collect free firewood and cow dung for cooking or other purposes. It may be rare but true in some regions where LPG penetration is minimal.

During the survey it was found that majorities of the beneficiaries were illiterate and have never been to school. They were confined to household works such as cooking, collecting firewood etc which involved much time and effort. Therefore they were deprived of education.



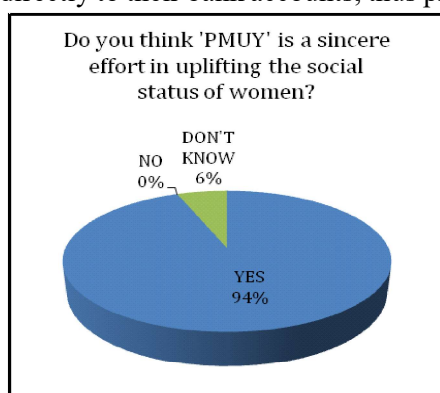
Illiterate	85%
Primary	6%
Secondary	9%
Matriculation or above	0%

Majority of the respondents are illiterate. 6% of them took primary education while 9% has taken education till secondary level. Highest education level found among the samples was till std 8th. 85% of them have never been to school.

PMUY is a path breaking step which saves much time and effort. Women showed interest towards education and wanted to learn to read and write. *Thus, education is promoted in an indirect way.*

### Women Empowerment

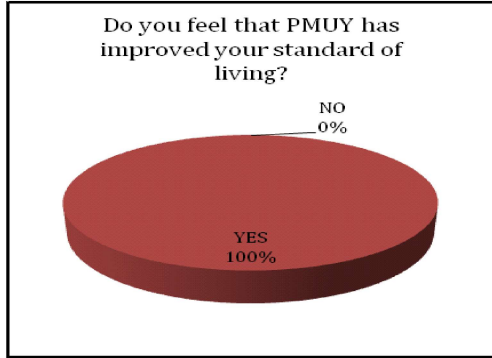
PMUY should be considered a path breaking initiative of Government of India. It addresses number of concerns and issues simultaneously. Connections are provided in the name of women head of the BPL family and subsidy is transferred directly to their bank accounts, thus promoting women empowerment.



YES	94%
No	0%
DON'T KNOW	6%

### Standard of Living

PMUY has improved the standard of living of the beneficiaries. They now enjoy a much healthy, happy and safe lifestyle.



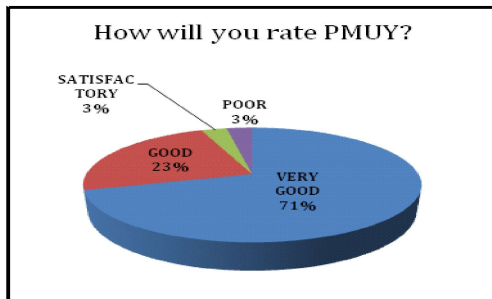
All the samples interviewed are of the view that PMUY has improved their standard of living. It has changed their lifestyle by providing clean cooking fuel- thus improving their health. It also saves much time and effort of the beneficiaries.

YES	100%
NO	0%

### PMUY : Political Masterstroke of the BJP Government

Kitchen has always played an important role in Indian politics. Leaders across political parties have cooked their electoral fortunes with the kitchen as the integral ingredient. While some distributed highly subsidised foodgrains, others doled out free appliances such as grinders and food processors. Most of them tasted success. That is why when Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) in Uttar Pradesh, which is a welfare scheme cum political strategy.

### Ratings

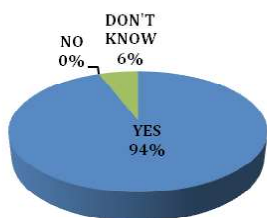


The survey result shows that majority of the samples are satisfied with PMUY. 71% rated it as 'Very good', 23% rated it as 'Good', 3% rated it as 'Satisfactory' whereas 3% rated it 'Poor'.

Very Good	71%
Good	23%
Satisfactory	3%
Poor	3%

### PMUY - Effort of Govt. Towards Social Upliftment of Women

Do you think 'PMUY' is a sincere effort in uplifting the social status of women?

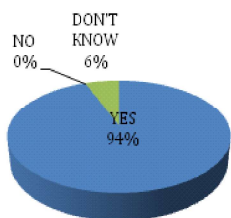


Of the total respondents, 94% are of a view that PMUY is a sincere effort in uplifting the social status of women in the society whereas, 6% aren't sure about it. Majority of the respondents think that providing the LPG connection in name of women and transferring the subsidy amount to their bank account will improve the social status of women.

YES	94%
NO	0%
DON'T KNOW	6%

### Women Empowerment

Do you think that the current government is working towards 'women empowerment' and PMUY is an example?



The survey results show that 94% of the samples think that the current government is working towards 'Women Empowerment' and PMUY is an example of it. Rest 6% isn't sure about this. Majority of the samples are of a view that PMUY is promoting women empowerment.

YES	94%
NO	0%
DON'T KNOW	6%

**Following findings are based on the survey conducted**

- 1) All the respondents felt improvement in their health after replacing firewood with LPG for cooking.
- 2) 6% of the respondents have taken education till primary level and 9% of them till secondary level. Highest education level found among the samples was till std 8<sup>th</sup>.  
*85% of them have never been to school and are illiterate.*
- 3) 23% of the respondents are from General category, 9% from OBC (Other Backward Classes) category, 3% from St (Scheduled Tribes) category and 65% are from Sc category.  
*Majority of the respondents are from Sc (Scheduled Caste) social category.*
- 4) 97% of the respondent receives subsidy on LPG refill in their respective bank accounts whereas 3% of them were facing difficulty in getting the subsidy amount.
- 5) 44% of the respondents use the subsidy amount for paying off the loan taken from OMCs, 20% use it as savings, 9% use it for meeting monthly expenses and 15% spends them on next LPG refill whereas 12% utilizes the amount for other purposes.
- 6) 44% of the respondents have taken loan from OMCs for LPG stove and first LPG refill whereas 56% of the respondents paid in full without availing EMI facility.
- 7) 20% of the respondents refill their cylinder every month, 59% refill their cylinder within 2 months, 15% refill their cylinder within 3 months and 6% of them refill their cylinder for more than 3 months.
- 8) 15% of the respondents save 1-2 hours in a day after using LPG cylinder for cooking, 47% save 2-3 hours a day, 35% save 3-4 hours a day and 3% save 4-5 hours a day.
- 9) 23% of the respondents solely use LPG cylinder for cooking, 18% of the respondents are still dependent on other sources of cooking fuel whereas 59% of the respondents sometimes use other sources of fuels.
- 10) All the respondents are of the view that PMUY has improved their standard of living by providing LPG connection.



- 11) 97% of the respondents are satisfied with PMUY whereas 3% are not satisfied with the scheme.
- 12) 71% of the respondents rated PMUY as 'Very good', 23% rated it as 'Good', 3% rated it as 'Satisfactory' whereas 3% rated it 'Poor'
- 13) 94% of the respondents are of a view that PMUY is a sincere effort towards uplifting the social status of women in the society whereas 6% aren't sure about it.
- 14) 94% of the respondents think that the current government is working towards 'Women Empowerment' and PMUY is an example of it whereas 6% of them aren't sure about it.

### **Conclusion**

A healthy lifestyle is a compulsion for any household. The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna helps the BPL households to achieve this through government's support. PMUY should be considered a path breaking initiative of Government of India. It addresses number of concerns and issues simultaneously. Major issues like women empowerment and environmental degradation are being addressed under this scheme. Therefore efficient and proper implementation becomes very important. Firstly LPG is safe and comfortable for cooking. Apart from easy control and reliability, it is less polluting and less hazardous to health. Secondly, PMUY shall assure energy security to large number of households especially BPL and in rural areas. Lastly, connections are provided in the name of women and subsidy is transferred directly to their bank accounts, thus promoting women empowerment. Political flavors of the scheme can also be acknowledged. PMUY would become a potent political weapon for the BJP in the Elections. It helped Prime Minister Modi re-establish his image as the leader of poor masses and especially women. By launching this scheme Prime Minister was able to develop connection with women at large and express concern about their health and women empowerment. Expectations are high and there is a strong backbone working behind the scheme. All that is required is concerted follow-up, a comprehensive and integrated strategy, and careful planning and implementation. Attempts should be made to overcome the loop holes. So now, all it needs is the support of the citizens, LPG distributor agencies and the consumers.

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