

Catalyzing the Flames of Transformation in India: Unleashing Feminine Potential

through the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana in the Rural Regions of Jaipur.

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Abstract

This article unravels the socio-economic reverberations of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) scheme in the bucolic confines of Jaipur, with a particular focus on women's empowerment. This article showcases how the scheme has transformed Indian society and culture with special reference to the rural belt of Jaipur. The scheme attempts to mitigate the health perils of traditional cooking methods and augments female empowerment by facilitating access to contemporary energy sources. This study is a detailed look at how this fairly simple action has caused a lot of different effects. Our research approach is manifold, synthesizing qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. We get direct feedback from PMUY beneficiaries through surveys, personal interviews, and focus group talks. Along with these, statistical tools are used to quantify the positive changes in the lives of women beneficiaries after the plan was put into place. The fruit of this research articulates a conspicuous transformation in Jaipur's rural women's lives.

The results highlight the need of understanding and support the unique needs and aspirations of rural women and highlight the possibility of such programs in the third millennium.

Keywords: Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), Rural Cooking Methods, Rajasthan, Transformation, Rural landscapes

Introduction

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) manifests as a groundbreaking canvas, sketching vivid strokes of transformation in the lives of women. This academic work aims to uncover the substantial effects that PMUY has had on women's empowerment by contrasting "before and after" scenarios to show the radical transformations that this effort has sparked. Before the initiation of the PMUY, women in Jaipur's rustic expanses were caught in an unending vortex of cooking meals via primitive, smoke-spewing techniques using the traditional *Chullah* traditional system (which uses raw wood for burning purposes). The kitchen for women, was a because of billowing smoke, soot, and relentless heat, became the pyre where dreams were incinerated alongside the firewood. Then, just as all hope seemed lost, PMUY's glorious knight, armed with clean cooking fuel, freed women out of the vice-like grasp of smoke-filled kitchens.

Pre-Ujjwala, women's existence was scarred by health deathtraps endemic to traditional cooking methodologies. Constant smoke exposure laid respiratory disorders and eye irritations, converting the kitchen into a temporary infirmary where women donned the dual mantles of healer and patient.

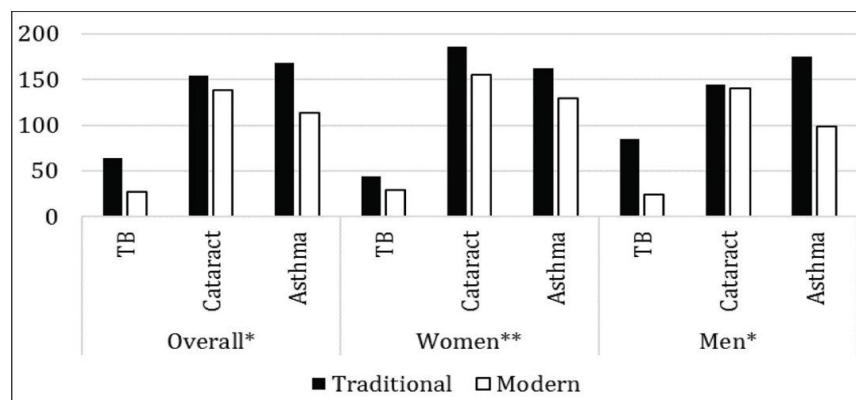


Figure No. 01: Source: Ranjan, R., & Bhadra, K. K. (2019).

With its distribution of LPG connections, PMUY catalyzed a tectonic shift in women's lives. The bygone era of hacking firewood and tussling with flames was replaced by the magical simplicity of turning a knob. The gas cooker changed into a cooking wand, creating meals free of the sweat- and smoke-filled spectacle. Rural women in Jaipur had the time and energy to release their inner culinary capabilities and experiment with meals that went beyond traditional, passed-down recipes.

However, PMUY's effects go far beyond the boundaries of the kitchen. Previously bound by domesticity, women now felt a sense of independence and confidence. This initiative demonstrated that the key to igniting feminine potential extends beyond mere access to clean cooking fuel—it lies in granting them the wings of freedom to transcend their traditional roles. As women embraced their newfound liberation, we observed a societal upsurge in educational endeavors, and entrepreneurial initiatives, and unleashed creative expressions. It seems that clean cooking fuel ignited stoves and lit these women's ambitions.

In this scholarly study, we provide a strategy for examining the PMUY's "before and after," using not only empirical facts and meticulous analysis but also a lighthearted perspective. We shall see how women progressed from being smoke-choked kitchen slaves to fearless cooks who could use clean cooking fuel. Through their narratives, we will discover the latent potential simmering within these women, awaiting its grand reveal.

So, settle comfortably, relish a cup of tea brewed on a smoke-free gas stove, and accompany us on this voyage of empowerment. Let's jointly celebrate the victories, struggles, and amusing stories of Jaipur's rural women before and after the implementation of PMUY.

Review of Literature

The concept of women's empowerment has taken the lead as the global development efforts' main focus today. At the forefront of this discourse is the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY), a laudable endeavor that aims to bequeath economically marginalized women with free LPG connections. PMUY's revolutionary potential to ignite women's emancipation, particularly in rural areas, has drawn a lot of interest and praise. In this literature review, we delve into extant studies exploring the rippling impacts of the PMUY scheme on the canvas of female empowerment in Jaipur's rural landscape. The review includes important local, national, and worldwide studies as well, giving readers a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

The detail analysis of Population Census 2011 published by Govt. of India for Rajasthan state reveal that population of Rajasthan has increased by 21.31% in this decade compared (2001-2011) to past decade (1991-2001). The density of Rajasthan state in the current decade is 519 per sq mile.

- Rajasthan is an State of India with population of Approximate 6.86 Crores.
- The population of Rajasthan state is 68,548,437.
- The density of Rajasthan state is 200 per sq km.
- Rajasthan State is spread over 342,239 Sq Km.

Sl. No.	District	Population	Women Sex Ratio	Literacy Rate	Density
1	Jaipur	6,626,178	910	75.51 %	595

Sl. No.	District	Population	Women Sex Ratio	Literacy Rate	Density
2	Jodhpur	3,687,165	916	65.94 %	161
3	Alwar	3,674,179	895	70.72 %	438
4	Nagaur	3,307,743	950	62.80 %	187
5	Udaipur	3,068,420	958	61.82 %	262
6	Sikar	2,677,333	947	71.91 %	346
7	Barmer	2,603,751	902	56.53 %	92
8	Ajmer	2,583,052	951	69.33 %	305
9	Bharatpur	2,548,462	880	70.11 %	503
10	Bhilwara	2,408,523	973	61.37 %	230
11	Bikaner	2,363,937	905	65.13 %	78
12	Jhunjhunun	2,137,045	950	74.13 %	361
13	Churu	2,039,547	940	66.75 %	147
14	Pali	2,037,573	987	62.39 %	164
15	Ganganagar	1,969,168	887	69.64 %	179
16	Kota	1,951,014	911	76.56 %	374
17	Jalor	1,828,730	952	54.86 %	172
18	Banswara	1,797,485	980	56.33 %	397
19	Hanumangarh	1,774,692	906	67.13 %	184
20	Dausa	1,634,409	905	68.16 %	476

Sl. No.	District	Population	Women Sex Ratio	Literacy Rate	Density
21	Chittaurgarh	1,544,338	972	61.71 %	197
22	Karauli	1,458,248	861	66.22 %	264
23	Tonk	1,421,326	952	61.58 %	198
24	Jhalawar	1,411,129	946	61.50 %	227
25	Dungarpur	1,388,552	994	59.46 %	368
26	Sawai Madhopur	1,335,551	897	65.39 %	297
27	Baran	1,222,755	929	66.66 %	175
28	Dhaulpur	1,206,516	846	69.08 %	398
29	Rajsamand	1,156,597	990	63.14 %	248
30	Bundi	1,110,906	925	61.52 %	192
31	Sirohi	1,036,346	940	55.25 %	202
32	Pratapgarh	867,848	983	55.97 %	195
33	Jaisalmer	669,919	852	57.22 %	17

Table No. 01: census2011.co.in/census

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Numerous studies have clarified the socio-economic situation of the PMUY project on women's empowerment in the rural areas of Jaipur. In a perceptive study, Singh and Choudhary (2022) leveraged a broad survey incorporating the scheme's beneficiaries, unearthing that access to

clean cooking fuel begets substantial time and energy conservation. The scheme's liberation from the toils of firewood collection allowed women to participate in economically productive ventures and skill tilling, bolstering their financial sovereignty. An intriguing shift was observed in the domestic power dynamics, with women exhibiting increased decision-making prowess, marking a promising stride towards gender equity.

Analyzing the topic from a wider lens, Suzuki et al. (2023) ventured into an international comparative exploration of corresponding schemes across disparate countries. The researchers discovered that the availability of LPG connections not only improved the health of women and reduced indoor air pollution, but also sparked wider cultural changes. Examples were reported where women, having acquired access to clean cooking fuel, actively participated in community affairs, shattered the glass ceiling of gender norms, and surfaced as society's leading lights. Such findings underscore the global significance of the PMUY initiative and its potential to be a channel for female empowerment on an international scale.

Moreover, a cross-sectional inquiry across India's multiple states by Rajput and Mishra (2021) of the PMUY plan in various regional contexts. The study avowed the scheme's significant positive influence on women's health metrics, as the transition from traditional cooking methods to LPG diminished the risks associated with indoor air pollution. An outstanding enhancement in women's social upends, coupled with a growth in their community decision-making involvement, underscored the miscellaneous benefits of the PMUY scheme in empowering women across different states.

While scholarly literature predominantly navigates the earnest consequences of the PMUY scheme, Verma and Gupta (2022) pervaded their study with a splash of humor. Through qualitative interviews with women beneficiaries, they unraveled that the provision of LPG

connections kindled a passionate passion for cooking. Women were proud to show off their culinary skills, and some even jokingly dubbed themselves the "culinary queens" of their homes. Women expressed their culinary prowess with pride, with some humorously crowning themselves as the "culinary queens" of their households. This cheerful anecdote reveals an uplifting perspective on the scheme's psychological windfall and heightened enthusiasm among women, underscoring the PMUY's transformative influence beyond its immediate responsibility.

In essence, the literature on female empowerment vis-à-vis the PMUY scheme in Jaipur's rural areas paints a painting of substantial positive impacts across diverse magnitudes. The scheme has not only economically strengthened women but also enhanced their health, social standing, and decision-making authority. International studies further praise the scheme's global significance in volunteering clean cooking fuel to women, thereby breaching regional limits. As we navigate the ins and outs of women's empowerment, The PMUY scheme emerges as an inspiration for transformative change as we navigate the complexities of women's empowerment, producing a landscape of improved gender equity in rural geographies.

Objectives of the Research

1. To comprehend how the PM Ujjwala Yojana is being implemented and outreach in the rural districts of Rajasthan with special reference to Jaipur.
2. To scrutinize the influence of PM Ujjwala Yojana on the empowerment of women in Jaipur's rural populations. To identify the various reasons for implementing PMUY 2.0 and its current status.

3. To assess the effects and identify the benefits and limitations experienced women encounter when utilizing the PM Ujjwala Yojana.
4. To assess the changes in socio-economic conditions and quality of life of women as a result of the PM Ujjwala Yojana.
5. To provide policy suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the PM Ujjwala Yojana, paying special focus to its function in empowering women in rural regions.

Research Methodology

By balancing description and exploration, this study highlights the lived experiences of groups who are economically marginalized. The research endeavors to dissect the implementation and efficacy of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) and assess its societal impact on these underserved populations. Moreover, it seeks to illuminate the undulation effects of cleaner fuel utilization enabled by PMUY, particularly amongst Below Poverty Line (BPL) families, highlighting how social inclusion can be facilitated through such government schemes. We use a variety of data sources, such as government reports, news stories, and surveys, to create a thorough picture.

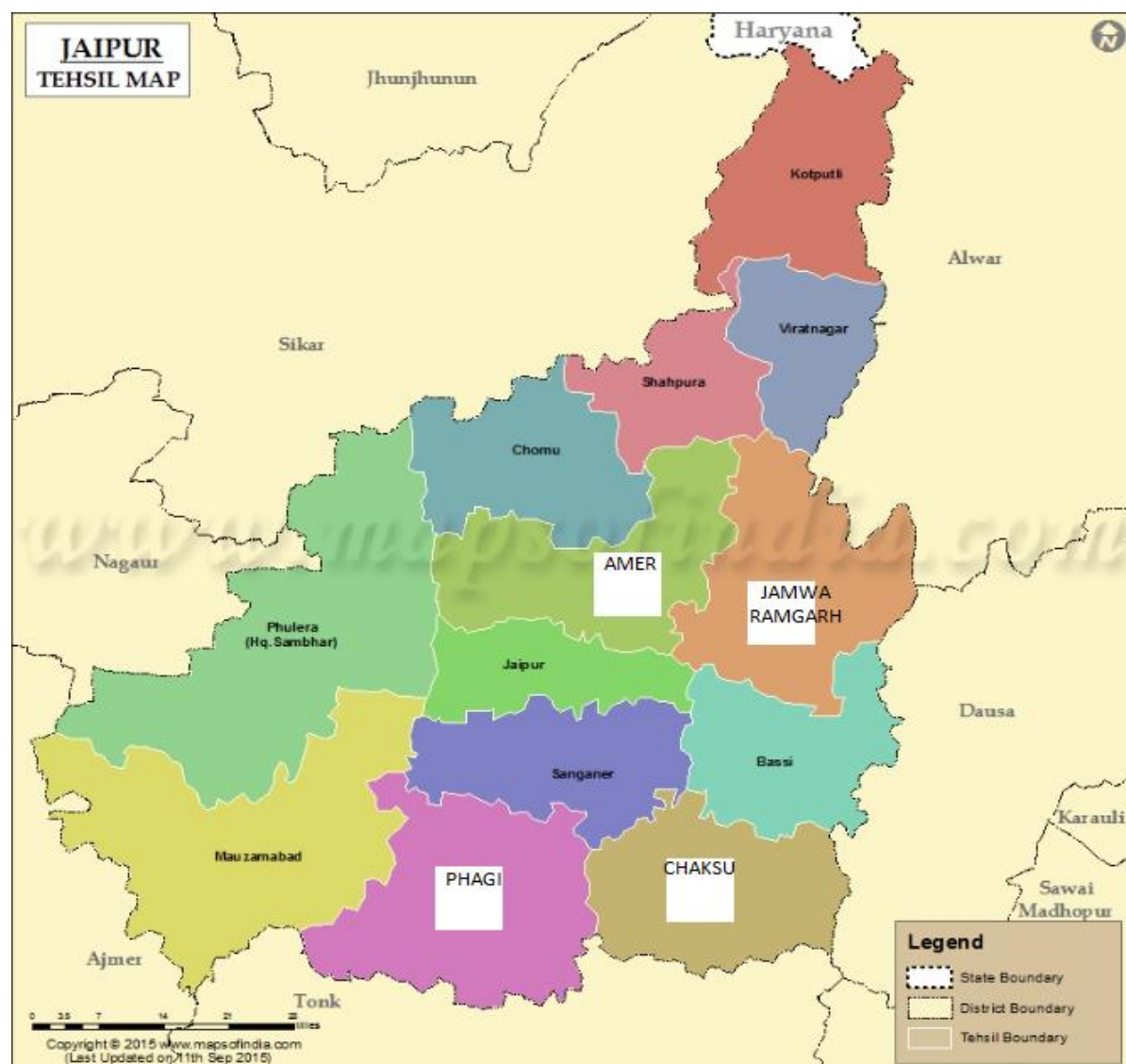
Research Context:

The geographical focal point of this research encompasses the rustic vicinities around the vibrant city of Jaipur, located in the heartland of Rajasthan, India. The demarcation of these regions aligns with the classifications provided by the Census of India. We handpicked a range of

villages and towns, ensuring they reflect the larger demographic and socio-economic composition of the rural milieu in the region.

Among these regions, some key areas under the research lens comprise:

1. Amer: Amer, a formerly busy settlement, is respected for its rich cultural history and is located about 11 km from Jaipur.
2. Jamwa Ramgarh: Located around 28 kilometers from Jaipur, Jamwa Ramgarh encapsulates rural simplicity, housing a blend of agricultural and artisan communities.
3. Chaksu: A mere 34 kilometers from Jaipur lies Chaksu, a rural town predominantly sustained by agricultural activities.
4. Phagi: Phagi, located about 40 kilometers from Jaipur, is a hidden rural area where a sizeable population still uses traditional cooking methods.



Map No. 01. Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com>

Data Collection:

To achieve comprehensive and nuanced knowledge, we use a mixed-method approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The quantitative facet of our research utilized structured surveys to gauge the outreach, advantages, and limitations of PMUY. Simultaneously, qualitative data was gathered via in-depth interviews and focus group

discussions, shedding light on the socio-economic transformations and policy implications seeded by the scheme.

Survey participants were selected through a stratified random sampling technique, certifying the sample was representative of the population's variety. The intimate stories of women beneficiaries of PMUY, local government representatives, and various stakeholders were collected through precisely conducted in-depth interviews, enhancing our understanding of PMUY's on-ground implementation and impact.

Discussion and Analysis

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) application in the rural areas of Jaipur and its contribution to women's empowerment are the subjects of the current study's in-depth debate and analysis. We use a combination of primary data obtained through surveys, interviews, and case studies, as well as secondary data gleaned from official documents, scholarly writing, and other relevant sources.

Objective 1: Dissemination and Execution of PMUY

PMUY, introduced by the Indian Government in 2016, was mainly intended to make clean cooking fuel, LPG, available to below-poverty-line households. By 2021, the initiative boasted a nationwide of 8 crore LPG connections, radically perfecting countless women's lives. Mainly in Rajasthan, around 63.17 lakh beneficiaries were reported by July 2021, many of whom hail from countryside parts of Jaipur. A careful analysis of PMUY's implementation and dissemination in these areas indicates a considerable positive influence. The well-orchestrated association between the central and state governments, in conjunction with the active participation of oil marketing companies (OMCs), surefire equitable LPG distribution.

However, room for enhancement remains. Some rural communities still exhibit an absence of awareness about PMUY, its benefits, or the application process, indicating an informational gap that needs to be linked.

State-wise PMUY connections	
<i>(Nos.)</i>	
STATE/UT	1-Apr-23
CHANDIGARH	659
DELHI	142164
HARYANA	767322
HIMACHAL PRADESH	140822
JAMMU & KASHMIR	1245438
LADAKH	11090
PUNJAB	1283976
RAJASTHAN	6927163
UTTAR PRADESH	17503067
UTTARAKHAND	496450
SUB TOTAL NORTH	28518151
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	49247
ASSAM	4414806
MANIPUR	202029
MEGHALAYA	214928
MIZORAM	33595
NAGALAND	91807
SIKKIM	13795
TRIPURA	283503
SUB TOTAL NORTH-EAST	5303710
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	13447
BIHAR	10733364
JHARKHAND	3646220
ODISHA	5319685
WEST BENGAL	12372225
SUB TOTAL EAST	32084941
CHHATTISGARH	3492221
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN & DIU	15033
GOA	1265

GUJARAT	3843237
MADHYA PRADESH	8227427
MAHARASHTRA	4890055
SUB TOTAL WEST	20469238
ANDHRA PRADESH	512437
KARNATAKA	3757704
KERALA	341187
LAKSHADWEEP	309
PUDUCHERRY	14833
TAMILNADU	3704058
TELANGANA	1152850
SUB TOTAL SOUTH	9483378
ALL INDIA	95859418

Table No. 02, Sources <https://www.pmuy.gov.in/index.aspx>

State	District	Connections released under earlier Scheme	Connections released under Ujjwala 2.0	Total connections released under PMUY
Rajasthan	Jaipur	3,12,044	30,165	3,42,209

Table No. 03, Sources <https://www.pmuy.gov.in/index.aspx>

Objective 2: Implication on Women's Empowerment

By substituting traditional cooking fuels with LPG, PMUY significantly trims down the time women dedicate to fuel collection. As a result, these newly freed-up hours can be used to generate revenue, promoting the financial independence and empowerment of women. PMUY has also significantly reduced the health risks linked to conventional fuels, improving women's health and well-being and elevating their social status.

Total Connections Released under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana *as of 31 May 2023 (95,859,418)				
Connections released under Ujjwala 2.0 *as on 31 May 2023 (15,994,338)				
		Financial Year	Financial Year	Growth
1	Total LPG Sales	17696 TMT	29339 TMT	66%
2	Domestic LPG Sales	16041 TMT (2014 -15)	25381 TMT (2022 -23)	58%
3	Improving Trend In Customer Base	14.52 Cr	31.40 Cr	
	A) Domestic Customer	01.04.2014	01.04.2023	
	B) PMUY Customer	0 Cr 01.04.2014	9.59 Cr 01.04.2023	
4	Bottling Infrastructure	186 Nos	208 Nos	
	A)Number Of Bottling Plants	01.04.2014	01.04.2023	
	B)Bottling Capacity	13535 TMT 01.04.2014	22225 TMT 01.04.2023	
5	Distributor Network Augmented			
	A)Total Distributor	13896 Nos 01.04.2014	25386 Nos 01.04.2023	82%
	B)Distributor Related To Rural Areas	6724 Nos 01.04.2014	17461 Nos 01.04.2023	160%

Table No. 04, Source: pmuy.gov.in

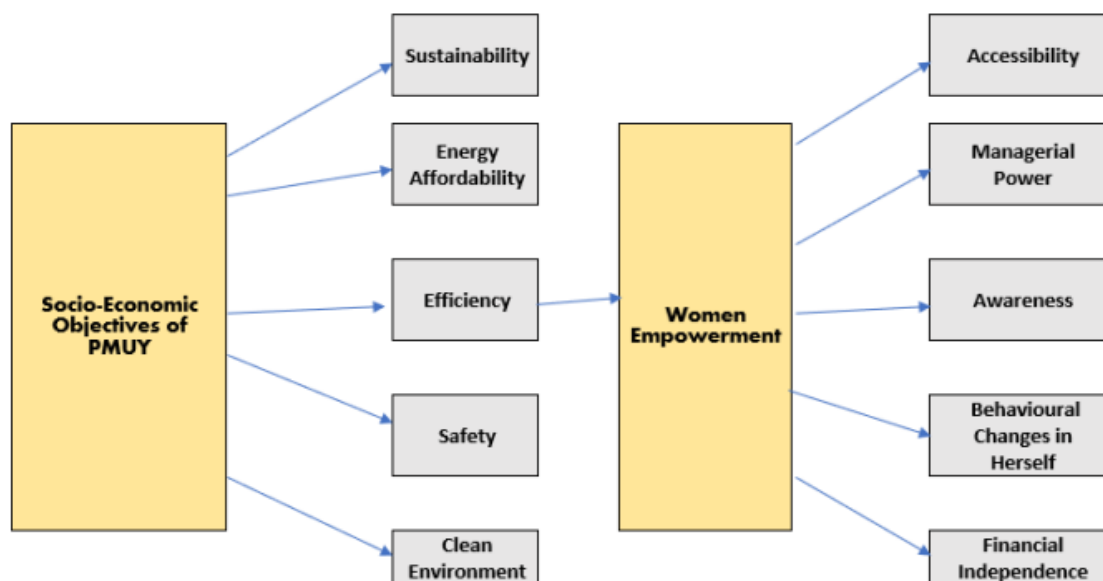


Figure No. 02, Source: Yadav, Yaduveer et al., (2020), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3618802>

Objective 3: Benefits, Accessibility, and Use Limitations

While PMUY has unquestionably improved the quality of life for many women, some barriers still exist. Despite the provision of free LPG connections, the steep cylinder refill cost poses a substantial challenge for below-poverty-line households. Therefore, while LPG access has been made possible, its consistent usage is curbed by financial limitations. A 2020 survey found that even while LPG use has increased, only over 58% of rural families in Rajasthan still primarily utilized clean fuel, underlining the need for additional initiatives.

Objective 4: Alterations in Socio-Economic Conditions

PMUY's significant impact on women's health, financial standing, and societal status contributes to enhancing their overall socio-economic conditions. Stronger systems for consistent supply, accessibility, and extensive awareness efforts are necessary to magnify these good changes.

Objective 5: Policy Recommendations

Policy ideas include creating a subsidy program for LPG refills that is specifically targeted at homes below the poverty line to increase PMUY's effectiveness. An extensive awareness drive is also vital to familiarize rural women with the scheme and the safe usage of LPG. Furthermore, a streamlined feedback system can help identify and rectify implementation bottlenecks. Working together with local self-help groups can abridge the distribution process, encourage community involvement, and strengthen women's empowerment.

To achieve this, while PMUY has indeed propelled women's empowerment and instigated social change in rural Jaipur, eliminating the existing policy and implementation gaps is crucial for fully unlocking women's latent.

Research Outcome

Critiques and Underprivileged Execution:

1. **Approachability:** Despite the remarkable number of LPG connections distributed, the availability and accessibility of LPG refills in remote rural areas have been a challenge.
2. **Affordability:** Though the scheme offers the initial LPG connection, the cost of LPG cylinder refills is not covered. The quite high cost of refills has been a fence for many families, causing them to relapse to traditional cooking fuels.
3. **Awareness:** There is a lack of awareness and understanding of the benefits of using LPG over outdated cooking methods, particularly among elder generations. This can lead to the under-utilization of the provided LPG connections.

Possible Grassroot Initiatives:

1. **Subsidies or Voucher Systems:** The Rajasthan government could implement supplementary subsidies or voucher systems to make LPG refills more inexpensive for needy households.
2. **Strengthen Distribution Networks:** Work with public and commercial players to expand the LPG distribution system in rural and remote locations.
3. **Knowledge efforts:** Run intensive efforts to raise knowledge of the advantages of using LPG over conventional cooking fuels. Collaboration with local community leaders, NGOs, and women's organizations may be necessary for this.

4. **Outreach Programmes:** Regular outreach programs should be conducted so that more and more awareness generations among the rural people.

Conclusion

The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has been a game changer, lighting up lives in the rural corners of Jaipur. The establishment of cleaner, readily available fuel is merely the tip of the iceberg. A transformation is being spurred by the plan, putting women on the road to empowerment and promoting a more just society.

Consider Local Self-help Groups as the PMUY's beating heart, providing vitality for its implementation. They frequently consist of women who work to spread information about the program, assist with paperwork, and impart expertise about safe LPG consumption. Their essential role ensures the PMUY doesn't fall into the trap of being a mere top-down initiative. Instead, it is grounded in the community, gaining acceptance and forming a lasting impact.

Imagine the homes before PMUY. Women were the hidden heroes who worked endlessly to gather firewood and cook over smoky fires, frequently going unnoticed and unappreciated for their efforts. Now, PMUY is subtly changing that narrative. By providing LPG cylinders, it identifies the importance of women's work, and in doing so, it gently pushes the scales of gender equality toward balance.

But the changes don't stop there. Picture a day in a woman's life, post-PMUY. The time formerly used for tedious cooking is now free. Women now have more free time, which they can use to pursue paid employment, further education, or leisure activities as they see fit. Their self-worth is increased by this freedom and agency, and their economic independence adds more vibrant hues to the larger picture of societal gender equality.

In conclusion, PM Ujjwala Yojana has done more than replace smoky chulhas with clean-burning LPG stoves. It has sparked a subtle revolution that is altering rural India's sociocultural environment. Yes, the scheme is about health and energy, but it's also about recognizing women, about empowering them. With continued support from community structures like SHGs and careful fine-tuning of policy implementation, PMUY can lighten a path to a transformed future for women in rural India.

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