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A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS THE DIRECT BENEFIT TRANSFER SCHEME OF LPG SUBSIDY IN PERIYARULAM TALUK

Sheeladevi, S and Aaksha Barveen, M*

PG and Research Centre of Commerce,

Jayam Annapackam College for Women (Autonomous), Periyarulam-623660,

Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu, India.

*Corresponding author: yaksha12010@yahoo.com

Abstract

The entitled Consumer Perception Towards Direct Benefit Transfer for LPG scheme with special reference to Periyarulam Taluk, is carried out with an objective to determine the Consumer perception towards direct benefit transfer for LPG scheme in Periyarulam taluk and to find out the LPG is being part of human life since 1970's. The government of India with its launch of direct benefit transfer for LPG (DBTL) pakal scheme on June 1, 2013 to curb leakages and prevent black marketing by providing subsidy to consumers bank accounts. This study is conducted with the aim to know the problems and prospects of LPG subsidy delivery to consumers who opted for the subsidy. Data were collected through structured questionnaire. For distribution of questionnaire to the customers non random sampling method was used to select the customers and the survey was taken among those selected users. After collecting the data from the respondents it was analyzed using simple percentage, chi-square, t-test. In the era of information explosion, people are to be provided with quick and timely access to information. Indian telecom industry is one of the fastest growing telecom markets in the whereas equipment manufacturers are witnessing growth. The present study carried out with 100 users of LPG.

Keywords: Cooking Fuel, Consumer Satisfaction, DBTL (Pakal) Scheme, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG).

1. INTRODUCTION

Government of India launched the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) program on 1st Jan 2013 to directly transfer the benefits to the under privileged population covered

under several central schemes. The idea behind DBT is to cut down wastage, duplication and leakages and also enhance efficiency. The benefit and other entitlements are transferred directly to the beneficiaries. This would be done through bio metric based Aadhaar linked bank accounts. This will reduce several layers of intermediaries and delays in the system. The primary aims of this Direct Benefit Transfer program is to bring transparency and terminate pilferage from distribution of funds sponsored by Central Government of India. Central Plan Scheme Monitoring System (CPSMS), being implemented by the Office of Controller General of Accounts will act as the common platform for routing DBT.

A decision was taken in the meeting of the National Committee on Direct Cash Transfers held by the Prime Minister that Direct Benefit Transfers will be rolled out from 1/1/2013 in 43 districts. The purpose of DBT is to ensure that benefits go to individual's bank account electronically, cutting down delays and diversions. The two pillars for the success of the system of Direct Cash Transfer that we have envisioned are Aadhaar platform and financial inclusion. If either of these pillars is weak, it would endanger the success of the initiative. So the Finance Ministry and Unique Identification Authority had to work in close coordination to achieve a collective goal. The DBT is of a recent origin. Many of the marginalized and weaker sections are potential beneficiaries included under DBTS but some of them are yet to be covered under the scheme. The study attempts to examine the mode of inclusion of beneficiaries in the scheme. Awareness on the schemes, willingness to operate through banks and compliance to procedures are issues to be dealt with while looking at benefits accruing from DBT schemes. Accessibility to bank service in rural area and the digital divide in the country are crucial problem that stand in the way of development of direct benefit transfer scheme. The scheme has already been facing severe constraints, problems and delays and therefore has paved way for a detailed study on the prospects, issues involved, feasibility, perception of the beneficiaries and the solutions therefore.

1.1. Bharat gas

Bharatgas has introduced innovative offers on LPG gas to their customers. Today, they serve more than 30 million households in India. To cater to the needs of the public, they have more than 49 modern filling plants which are used to bottle Bharatgas.

cylinders. You can now pick up your cooking fuel in a mini 5 kg cylinder. Simply provide a proof of identity (preferably Adhere card) along with the application and relevant fees, and you can have a convenient 5 kg cylinder of Bharatgas.

1.2. Indane Gas

Indane gas is a Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) brand developed and owned by Indian Oil Corporation in India. It is the world's second largest LPG marketer. The brand was conceived in 1964 to bring modern cooking to Indian kitchens. The first Indane LPG connection was released on 22 October 1965 at Kolkata. Indane serves more than 90 million families through a network of 9100 distributors. 27% of its customers reside in semi-urban or rural markets and every second LPG cooking gas connection in India is that of Indane. The sales network is backed by 45 Indane Area Offices. The brand has been awarded the title of "Super brand" by Super brand India.

1.3. HP Gas

Modern LPG was first launched by Union Carbide as "PYROFAX" brand in the year 1920. LPG marketing started in India in fifties by Burmah Shell & Stanvac in towns around the Refineries. The marketing of LPG was entrusted to private concessionaires & Caltex such as erstwhile Kosan Gas, DGPL & JK Gas. HPCL commenced marketing of LPG under the brand name "HP GAS" in 1979 with takeover of these concessionaires and merger with HPCL with a customer holding of 7.8 lakhs. The demand was sluggish till 1970 - sales 174 TMT.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To have a through insight into the various prospects and problems involved therein.
- To study about the awareness level of consumers regarding Direct Benefit Transfer for LPG Scheme.
- To analyze the satisfaction level of LPG consumers towards Direct Benefit Transfer for LPG Scheme.

The objective of this research paper concentrates on identifying the problems after the implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer LPG Scheme from the consumer's point of view.

3. SAMPLING DESIGN

As per the data collection regarding the consumer perception in the Periyakulam taluk, the financial year of 2017-2018, 100 respondents have been selected as sample for this study. Because of convenient, accessibility and proximity to the researcher, convenience sampling method has been adopted for primary data collection.

Table 1. Demographics profile

Demographics	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	30	30
	Female	70	70
Age	Below 20	6	6
	20-35	56	56
	35-45	28	28
	46-above	10	10
		26	26
Education	SSLC	30	30
	UG	24	24
	PG	20	20
	Others	30	30
Occupation	Private employee	20	20
	Government employee	32	32
	Business men	18	18
	Others	38	38
Monthly income	Below 10,000	24	24
	10,001-20,000	22	22
	20,001-30,000	16	16
	Above 30,001		

Source: Primary data

4. CHI- SQUARE TEST

There is no significance relationship between gender awareness level.

Table 2. Gender and Level of Satisfaction of Respondents

S. No.	Gender	Level of Satisfaction			Total
		Low level	Medium level	High level	
1	Male	8	14	8	30
2	Female	18	36	16	70
		26	50	24	100

Source: Primary data

It is inferred from the above table reveals that medium level of satisfaction of respondents are more.

In order to find out whether there is a significant relationship between gender and the level of attitude, chi-square test has been applied.

4.1 Calculation of chi-square test

H₀: There is no significant relationship between gender and the level of satisfaction.

H_a: There is a significant relationship between gender and the level of satisfaction.

O	E	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² /E
8	8	0	0	0
18	18	0	0	0
14	15	1	1	0.066
36	35	1	1	0.0285
8	7	1	1	0.1428
16	17	1	1	0.0588
			χ^2	0.5526

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O - E)^2/E = 0.5526$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Degree of freedom } v &= (r - 1)(c - 1) \\ &= (2 - 1)(3 - 1) = 2 \end{aligned}$$

$$\chi^2_{0.05} = 5.99$$

Since the calculated value of χ^2 is less than the table value, we accept the hypotheses. Therefore, may conclude that there is no significant relationship between the gender of the respondents and their level of satisfaction.

5. FINDINGS

- Most of the respondents are female.
- Majority of the respondents age group are 20-35years to 56%.
- 30% of the respondents are under graduate.
- 32% of the respondents are business man.
- Majority of the respondents are 38% of monthly income of below Rs.10,000.

6. SUGGESTIONS

- Aadhar is a unique identification document. Some consumers think it is very difficult to link Aadhar with LPG because they are not aware about it. So make them aware about the usefulness of linking Aadhar with LPG and continuous reminders should be sending to them.
- Improve financial literacy and financial inclusion so that people in urban area can also get benefit of these schemes.

- Many people compliant about non receipt of confirmation on linking Aadhar with LPG distributors so that they should give proper care for sending confirmation at the right time.
- Oil marketing companies should try to credit the amount of subsidy within a week from the delivery of cylinder and also inform them at the right time
- Banks should timely messages to LPG consumers when the amount is credited to consumer's account.
- Proper grievance redressal mechanism shall be implemented by Oil Marketing Companies. Complaints should be cleared with one week; call center operators should give proper reply to consumers etc.

7. CONCLUSION

In order to make the implementation of economic and social welfare schemes effective adoption of Direct Benefit Transfer scheme is the right pathway and it helps to minimize leakages, delivery delays, corruption and reduction in costs. From the study it is clear that DBTL has invited a mixed response among the general public, though it is welcome widely. The Government should play a major role in addressing the issues and shortcomings of the schemes so as to make it more effective in order to achieve the purpose of it, achieving total financial inclusion in the country and taking the social security benefits and the benefits of the subsidies directly to the common people, eliminating the existence of middlemen.

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