

## Chapter-5

### Conclusion & Suggestions

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Poverty and unemployment in rural areas have been two major challenges India has been facing since independence. Several wage employment programmes were launched by the government from time to time with the specific object of eradicating poverty by providing employment to the people. Though each of these could boast of several successes to its credit and the administration might be worthy of some accolade, the fact is that the two problems have been persisting and even growing. The need of some more specific and concerted efforts was long felt and this culminated into the enactment of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, which was later rechristened as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

The programme is different from the earlier ones as it is a right-based wage employment programme and makes the government lawfully responsible to provide at least 100 days employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. It was the starting instance when a nation has enacted any law of this type which ensures livelihood security to rural households. The object and rationale of the law was the requirement to available a social safety net to the people who are residing in rural areas and facilitate them by creating assets that renew the resources which are the main desire of their livelihood.

The Scheme was launched in a phased manner. In the first instance, it was implemented in 200 most backward districts in India on February 6, 2006. In the second phase, it was launched in another 130 districts on April 1, 2007 and was extended to the remaining rural districts on April 1, 2008 in the third phase.

In Haryana, the scheme was implemented initially in two most backward districts of Haryana which were Mahendergarh and Sirsa, after that it was implemented in Ambala and Mewat districts and it was tossed in rest 17 districts<sup>1</sup> at the third stage. At least six years have passed since the scheme was implemented. The investigator, therefore, considered it appropriate to conduct a study of the performance of the Scheme. Mahendergarh, Ambala and Bhiwani districts of Haryana

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<sup>1</sup> Seventeen districts of the state of Haryana where the Scheme was implemented in the third phase are: Bhiwani, Faridabad, Fatehabad, Gurgaon, Hisar, Jhajjar, Jind, Kaithal, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Palwal, Panchkula, Panipat, Rewari, Rohtak, Sonipat and Yamuna Nagar

state were chosen as a case where the Scheme was implemented in the first, second and third phase respectively.

Aggregate data obtained from the secondary sources was analysed in Chapter-3 and the sample statistics generated through primary sources was analysed in Chapter-4. On the basis of this analysis, following conclusions may be drawn:

### **5.1 Regional Variations in Implementations of the Scheme**

On the basis of analysis of secondary data regarding implementation of the Scheme in Chapter-3, the following observations may be drawn:

1. Some of the states like Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh etc. performed better while most of the north-eastern states lagged behind in the field of employment demanded and employment provided of the Scheme.
2. Uttar Pradesh was the state which performs better in Social Audit and Andhra Pradesh and Nagaland's performance was negligible in conducting social audit.
3. As per work status report of MGNREGS, Andhra Pradesh had performed better in works taken up but the performance of work completion was very low(0.63 per cent). Arunachal Pradesh had taken up lowest number of works and West Bengal had performed best in work completion.
4. Some of the districts in Haryana such as Hisar, Sirsa, Fatehabad performed better while some others like Gurgaon, Rewari, Faridabad etc. lagged behind in the employment demanded and provided. Sirsa and Panipat districts performed better in social audit and Kaithal, Karnal and Palwal district lagged behind in conducting social audit. Hisar and Sirsa districts performed better in completion of work and Faridabad and Gurgaon districts performance was not good in completion of work..
5. Some of the blocks in Mahendergarh district in Haryana such as Kanina and Nangal Chaudhary performed better in employment demanded and provided under the Scheme while some others like Sihma and Satnali etc. lagged behind in the implementation of the Scheme and in Ambala district Barara and Nariangarh blocks presented better performance and in Bhiwani district, Bhiwani and Tosham blocks were on top position in employment demanded and provided. .

6. Some of the blocks in Mahendergarh district in Haryana such as Narnaul, Mahendergarh and Nizampur performed better in conducting social audit and performance of Sihma block was on lowest position among all blocks of Mahendergarh district. Performance of Sahazadpur block of Ambala district was Satisfactory then rest of the five blocks. Only Bawani Khera and Siwani blocks of Bhiwani districts started conducting social audit under the scheme.
7. Kanina block of Mahendergarh district, Ambala-I block of Ambala district and Siwani block of bhiwani district performed better in work completion under the Scheme.

From the above it may be concluded that there exist regional variations in the implementation of the Scheme at all the three levels viz. at India level, in Haryana and in Mahendergarh, Ambala and Bhiwani districts of Haryana.

## **5.2 Level of Awareness**

On the basis of analysis of data pertaining to the level of awareness of beneficiaries and panchayat functionaries about provisions of the Scheme in Chapter-4, following observations may be drawn:

1. About 85 per cent of the beneficiaries have low level of awareness and 11.11 per cent possesses moderate level of awareness. Only 3.34 per cent respondents have high level of awareness about the provisions of the Scheme (Section-4.1.1).
2. Two-third of the panchayat functionaries (75 per cent) had moderate level of awareness. Only 25 per cent of them possessed high level of awareness about the scheme (Section-4.2.1).

From the above it may be concluded that about more than three-fourth of the beneficiaries and two-third of the panchayat functionaries possess moderate level of information about the provisions of the Scheme.

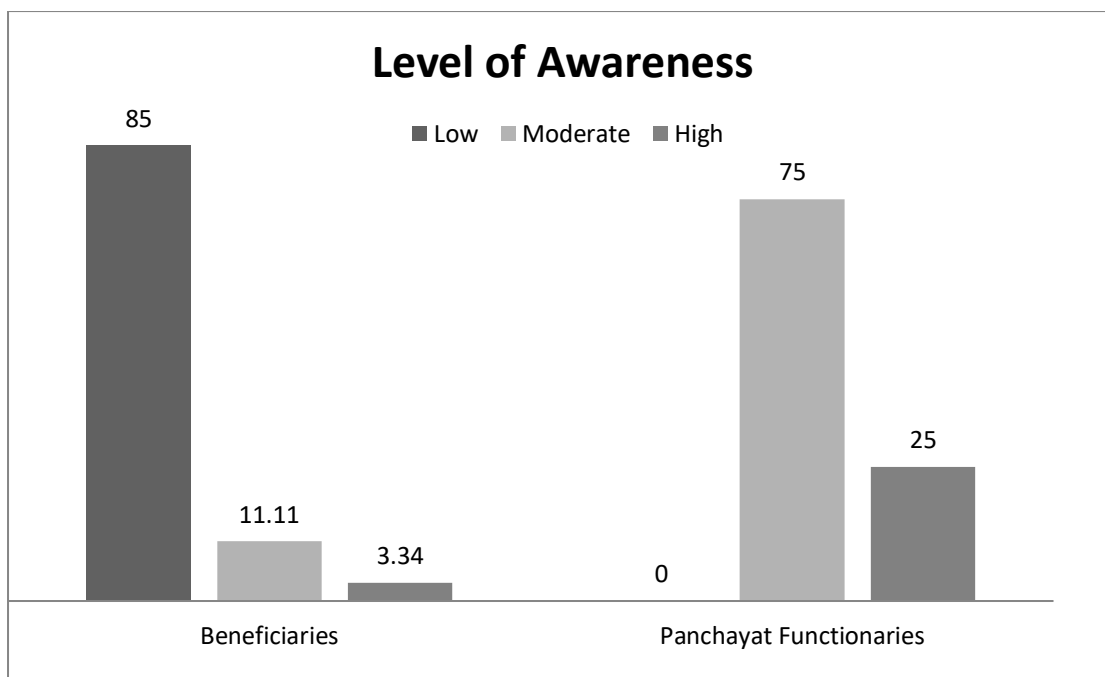


Figure: 5.1 Comparative Level of Awareness

### 5.3 Provisions of the Act and Implementation of the Scheme

On the basis of analysis of responses of the beneficiaries under the Scheme, panchayat functionaries and the district/ block officials in various sub-sections in Chapter-4 regarding implementation of the Scheme as per provisions of the MNREG Act, following observations may be drawn:

1. One-fourths of the beneficiary respondents reported that they were not issued job card. Ambala-II block was on the top position in issuing job cards to the households (section-4.1.2) whereas the panchayat functionaries of Dadri-II were on lowest position in issuing job cards to the households. . (Section-4.2.2).
2. The panchayat functionaries claimed that job cards could not be issued to those beneficiaries who do not cooperate. Thus, some of the beneficiaries do not furnish required documents such as copy of their ration card; the beneficiaries also do not turn up for photographs on the appointed day and time nor do they provide photographs of the adult members of the households. It was claimed that job cards could not be issued only in the case of such beneficiaries (Section-4.2.2).
3. About one-third of the respondents (32.22 per cent) were not provided work within the stipulated period of 15 days. Maximum number of such

respondents belonged to Mahindergarh block. All these respondents claimed that they were not paid any unemployment allowance. Also, all the beneficiaries admitted that they were provided work within 5 km radius of their village. Maximum number of beneficiaries of Ambala-I were provided work within fifteen days. Thus, the panchayat functionaries of Ambala-I block were more accountable in providing work to the beneficiaries. (Section-4.1.3). All the panchayat functionaries claimed that all the beneficiaries were provided work within the stipulated period of 15 days. So, there was no question of payment of unemployment allowance (Section-4.2.3).

4. About half of the beneficiaries and one-third (33.33 per cent) of the Sarpanches of the particular villages accepted the fact that they could not provide 100 days employment to the desired people and half of the functionaries (50 per cent) stated that they find it difficult to create work (Section-4.2.4).
5. Majority of the beneficiaries (77.22 per cent) did not receive payment of their wages within the stipulated period of a fortnight. None of the beneficiaries received payment of their wages on weekly basis while only 22.78 per cent of them were paid wages on fortnightly basis which belong to Ambala-I block. (Section-4.1.5).

66.67 per cent sarpanches self-confessed that payment of the work to the labourers was not done in the stipulated period of a fortnight. One - third of such functionaries attributed the delay to lengthy procedure and shortage of staff while the remaining two-thirds attributed it to technical problems (Section-4.2.5).

6. About one-third of the beneficiaries (37.78 per cent) responded that worksite facilities were not provided to them and majority of the remaining beneficiaries (73.21 per cent) told that at the name of worksite facilities only water was made available. Maximum worksite facilities were provided in Ambala-I block and Narnaul block was on lowest position in providing worksite facilities (Section-4.1.6). Panchayat functionaries gave lame excuses for not being able to provide worksite facilities, which were not convincing (Section-4.2.6).

From the above observations it may be concluded that while implementing the Scheme, there is violation of *at least* some of the provisions which is representing lack of transparency at implementation level. Therefore, the first hypothesis concerned with the awareness of the beneficiaries and the panchayat functionaries about the provisions of the Scheme has not been rejected.

#### 5.4 Citizen Information Board

About one-third (32.22 per cent) of the beneficiaries responded that the citizen information board displayed on the work sites but three-fourth (74.13 per cent) of them were not accepted the display of complete information about work on it (Section-4.1.7). About 41 per cent of the panchayat functionaries responded affirmative in the presence of citizen information board at the work sites with complete information regarding the concerned work and all the panchayat functionaries of Ambala-II block claimed for presence of citizen information board. Rest of the panchayat functionaries gave lame excuses of financial assistance in that concern which representing their lack of accountability in implementation of the scheme. All the DDPO's and BDPO's of Mahindergarh and Bhiwani districts gave positive response that they made available all the necessities for citizen information board on the spot where work is going on having the details of the approved amount, work dimensions and related details of work but there was negligible appearance as per their observation about citizen information board at the worksites. On the other side, the district/ block officials of Ambala district replied affirmatively about existence of citizen information board at the work places.

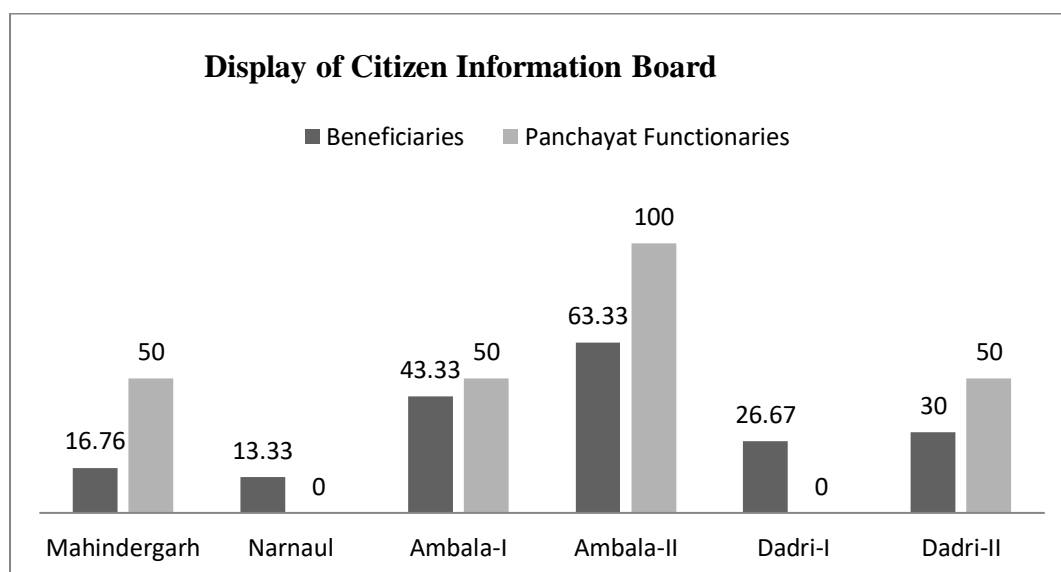


Figure: 5.2 Display of Citizen Information Board

## 5.5 Availability of muster roll

About two-third (62.22 per cent) of the beneficiaries claimed that the muster rolls were not available at the work sites (Section-4.1.9). Ambala-II block was on topmost and Mahindergerh block was on lowest position in availability of muster rolls on websites. On the other hand, 66.67 per cent of the panchayat functionaries accepted it that completion of muster roll on worksites is not possible and responded that due to online process we get only two copies of muster roll. We noted the attendances on zerox copies of muster roll because there was no scope for mistake in maintaining the muster roll. Narnaul and Dadri-II block legged behind in this process. About half of the panchayat functionaries accepted that availability of muster roll was not possible for public scrutiny because of safety point of view. So, one of the transparency measure was not being followed by the panchayat functionaries.

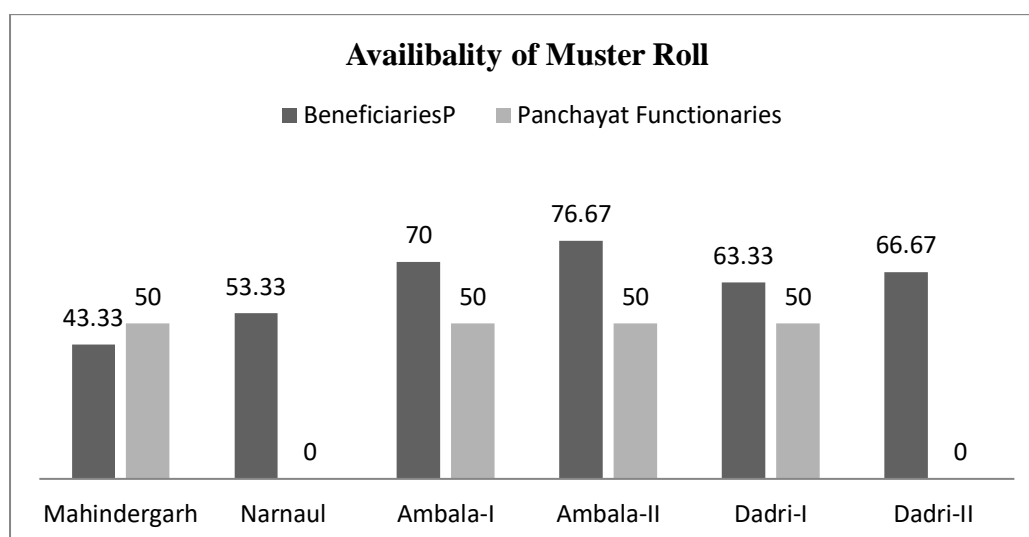


Figure: 5.3 Availibility of Muster Roll

## 5.6 Final measurement of the work

About three-fourth (74.44 per cent) of the beneficiaries denied their presence at the time of final measurement of work. Maximum number of such beneficiaries belonged to Narnaul block. About one-third of the panchayat functionaries also accepted it (Section-4.1.10). Maximum number of such beneficiaries belonged to Narnaul and Dadri-II block. The panchayat functionaries further explained that after prior information the beneficiaries did not show their interest in measurement of

completed work due to their personal reasons. Thus, we can say that the final measurement of the work was also not done on the basis of transparency measures.

### **5.7 Development Plans and Shelf of Projects**

The panchayat functionaries claimed that development plans are prepared before the beginning of the financial year and prior approval of the gram sabha and the programme officer obtained in case of any deviations therein (Section-4.2.11). However, as explained in Section-4.2.3, 66.67 per cent panchayat functionaries responded in negative about providing 100 days employment to those who demanded it and half of such functionaries expressed their inability to create work for the employment seekers. In case development plans were prepared in advance, the gram panchayats would not have faced any difficulty in assigning work to the employment seekers.

Thus from the two contradictory responses, it seems that development plans were not prepared in advance in the villages under study. Therefore, the forth hypothesis of the study that the villages did not prepare the Shelf of projects for implementation of the Scheme could not be disproved.

### **5.8 Motivation by Panchayat Functionaries**

About two-third (77.78 per cent) of the beneficiaries responded in affirmative that they were motivated by the panchayat functionaries to work under the scheme. Maximum number of such beneficiaries belonged to Ambala-I block. So, the panchayat functionaries of Ambala-I block were more accountable in motivating their beneficiaries.

### **5.9 Records on websites of MGNREGS**

All the panchayat functionaries of sample blocks responded that they provide all the MGNREGS records of their gram panchayat to the block officials (Section-4.2.12). The block office updates the data regularly. So, the transparency measure in concern of online data availability was completely followed by all the panchayat functionaries. All the block and district officials also gave favorable response in updating records on websites. Thus the second hypothesis which is related



about to follow the provisions of the pro-active disclosure in implementation of the MGNREGS has been rejected.

## Section B Social Audit

### 5.10 Social Audit

Even though the district/ block officials claimed otherwise, it seemed that social audit of the works undertaken under the Scheme was not ever regularly conducted in the villages under study. 45 per cent of the beneficiaries admitted that social audit did not conduct regularly in their gram panchayat (Section-4.1.8). Ambala-I block was on top position in conducting social audit. Two-third (66.67 per cent) of the panchayat functionaries even admitted that they did not conducted social audit regularly after at least six months (Section-4.2.8). Dadri-II block was on the lowest position in conducting social audit. Rest of the panchayat functionaries who regularly conducted social audit in their gram panchayat were further inquired about the agenda publicized, all the required records properly maintained than half of them were unable to show the properly maintained records (Section-4.2.8).

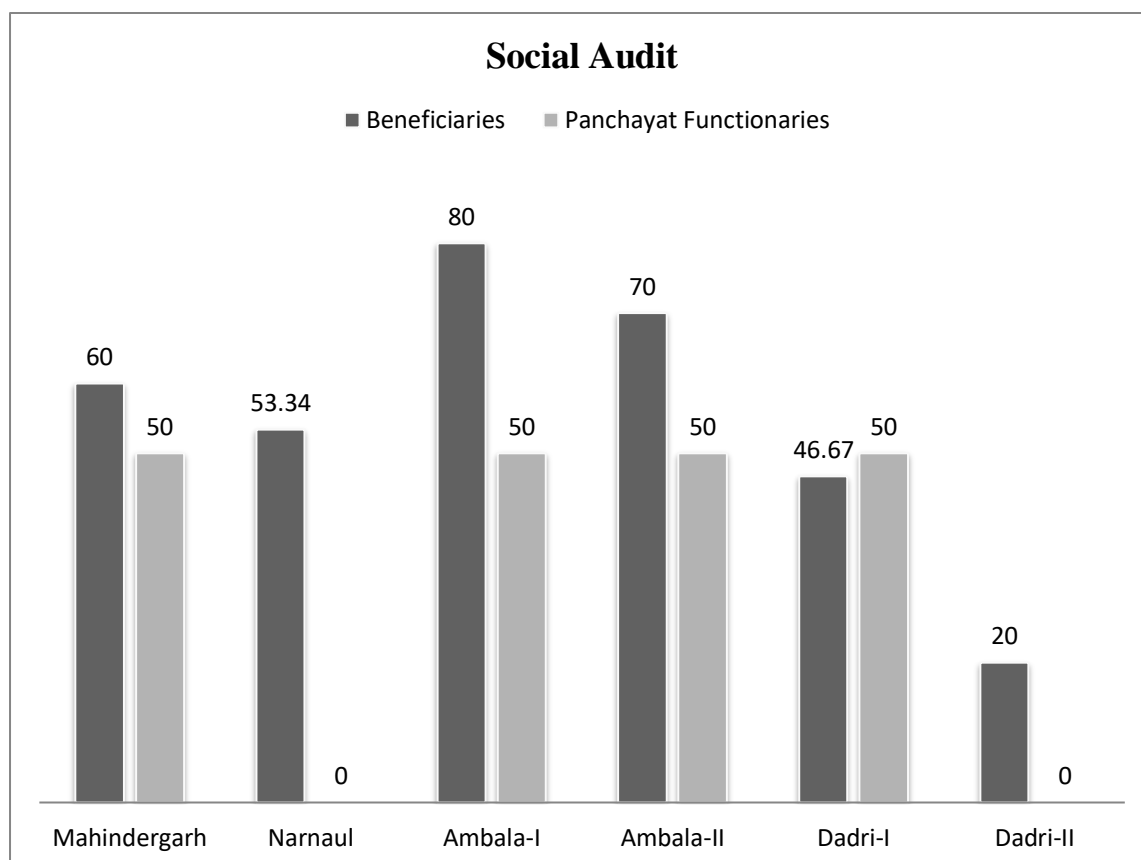


Figure: 5.4 Responses regarding Social Audit

Thus, the null hypothesis of the study “There is sufficient social accountability in MNREGS” could not be approved.

## **Section C Grievance Redressal**

### **5.11 Grievance redressal**

About 60 per cent panchayat functionaries gave answer in favorable manner when they asked about any complaint filed against them. They responded the trend of these complaints mainly about measurement of work and delay in payment of wages. The block and district officers responded in affirmative about maintaining the record of complaints, RTI and sought out according to prescribed time of the act. Maximum number of complaints filed in Narnaul and Dadri-II block which represented lack of transparency in implementation of the scheme. Thus, the sixth hypothesis which was related with proper monitoring of the complaint and redress machinery has been rejected.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF MGNREGA:**

Suggestions play an important role for guidance of future researchers. After going through the publicized findings of the study, following suggestions are made and some of the specific steps are required to address the vulnerabilities discussed earlier. Some of these vulnerabilities are relatively easy to remove. Following are some preliminary recommendations to start this process:-

- All the Panches. Sarpanches, Gram Sachivs, other officials, employees and beneficiaries should be given complete information about this act. So, the scheme could be implemented properly. Quality awareness campaigns with a focus on details of the provisions and entitlement of the scheme should be launched.
- Appointing full-time professionals for implementing MGNREGA at all levels which is extremely necessary to implement the scheme without any overburden of the other functions.
- Proper monitoring of the number of employment days generated should be made essential to ensure that the scheme does not fall behind the national average and the number of days should be increased so that economic standard of the beneficiaries could be raised.
- In order to ensure transparency in the implementation of MGNREGA works the Right to Information (RTI) can be used as effective weapon/check to curb malpractices/ corrupt tendencies. Almost inaccessible information regarding the cash memos, muster rolls of wage earners, vouchers is easily approachable. With the use of RTI people can have the power to seek explanation from officials if they detect any irregularity.
- All the records of the scheme should be computerized and all the information should be available on it's website with recent updates.
- It is strongly recommended to ensure the timely completion of the scheme, the mode of payment is universalized to wage payment through the bank and post office accounts.
- Specific efforts should be done to lessen the time gap between work done and payment received by rural laborers in MGNREGA.

- Apart from strengthening the existing provision of transparency, accountability and vigilance, an accountability provision for the PRI representatives also needs to be included in the guidelines. Moreover, the punitive provision needs to be made more comprehensive to ensure its effective functioning.
- Joint Workshops of Bureaucracy and PRIs should be organized to sensitize the bureaucrats and PRI functionaries towards their joint responsibilities and to inculcate mutual understanding, trust and a co-operative attitude wherever it is lacking.
- Management Information System (MIS) should be employed for effective monitoring of the scheme to check leakages and misappropriation of funds.
- To revise the schedule of wage rates periodically so that changes in statutory minimum rate of wages are made consistent with their revision.