



**TIME-BOUND LABOUR WELFARE SERVICES UNDER THE PUNJAB TRANSPARENCY
AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, 2018: AN EMPIRICAL
STUDY OF SEWA KENDRAS IN SANGRUR DISTRICT**

Jatinder Singh

Ph.D. Research Scholar,
Dept. of Public Administration,
Punjabi University, Patiala
E-mail: jatindercheema008@gmail.com

Abstract

The protection of workers' rights depends not only on legal provisions but also on timely service delivery, especially for informal and construction workers. This paper examines the role of the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Services Act, 2018 in ensuring time-bound labour welfare services. Focusing on Sewa Kendras in Sangrur, Lehragaga, and Moonak, the study uses primary data from service users. It evaluates services such as construction worker registration, labour card renewal, pensions, maternity benefits, and education schemes. The findings show that although the Act provides clear timelines and accountability mechanisms, limited awareness and administrative delays reduce its effectiveness. The study concludes that improving awareness, transparency, and coordination is essential for better service delivery and protection of workers' rights.

Keywords: Labour Welfare Services, the PTADPS Act, 2018, Sewa Kendra, Time-Bound Delivery, Worker Rights, Transparency and Accountability.

INTRODUCTION

Labour welfare and social security are essential for protecting workers, especially those in the informal and construction sectors. However, the real benefit of welfare schemes depends on their timely and efficient delivery. Administrative delays, procedural complexities, and lack of accountability have often created difficulties for citizens in accessing services that are legally their right. To address these challenges, right-based public service laws were introduced to ensure time-bound and transparent delivery of services. These laws provide legally enforceable timelines and include penalties for officials responsible for unjustified delays. By promoting transparency, digitalisation, and grievance redressal mechanisms, such reforms aim to improve administrative efficiency and strengthen citizen trust. In Punjab, Sewa Kendras act as the main service delivery centres for labour welfare schemes administered by the Punjab Labour Department and the Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. In this context, the present study evaluates how time-bound service delivery under the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Services Act, 2018 contributes to strengthening worker rights in Sangrur district.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- i. To examine the implementation of time-bound labour welfare services delivered through Sewa Kendras in Sangrur district under the PTADPS Act, 2018.
- ii. To assess the level of awareness among workers regarding labour welfare schemes, service timelines, and appeal rights.
- iii. To evaluate the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms in ensuring timely service delivery and strengthening worker rights.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study uses a descriptive empirical design to examine time-bound labour welfare services under the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Services Act, 2018 in Sangrur district. Primary data was collected from 100 service users visiting Sewa Kendras in three tehsils through a structured interview schedule using purposive sampling. Secondary data was gathered from official records and literature. The data was analysed using percentage and tabular methods.

3. CONCEPT OF LABOUR WELFARE

Labour welfare refers to the efforts made to improve the well-being and working conditions of employees. It includes services and facilities provided by employers, trade unions, and government agencies in addition to wages, to ensure workers' comfort, safety, and social security. Welfare measures help maintain high morale, motivation, and productivity among workers. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), labour welfare includes services and amenities provided in or near workplaces to ensure a healthy working environment and to promote the physical and mental well-being of workers. Effective welfare measures contribute to industrial harmony and strengthen the overall development of the workforce and society.

4. THE PUNJAB TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICE ACT, 2018

The PTADPS Act, 2018, enacted on **17 July 2018**, was introduced to improve how public services are delivered to citizens by creating a more structured, accountable, and transparent administrative system. The Act requires that services be provided within a fixed time frame by designated officers, making departments more responsive to the public. A major feature of the Act is its emphasis on digitalization maintaining electronic records, enabling online applications, generating digital acknowledgements, and allowing real-time tracking of service status thereby reducing corruption and human error. The Act clearly defines the duties of designated officers and provides a strong grievance redressal system through the First Appellate Authority and, if needed, the Punjab Transparency and Accountability Commission. It makes transparency and accountability a legal obligation by mandating the publication of service timelines and responsible officers.

5. MAIN PROVISIONS REGARDING TIME-BOUND SERVICES UNDER THE PTADPS ACT, 2018

The Act is introduced to reform public service delivery by making it more efficient, citizen-centric, and accountable. It establishes clear timelines, defined responsibilities, and enforcement mechanisms to ensure the timely delivery of notified services. **The main provisions regarding time-bound services are as follows:**

➤ Section 2(h) Electronic Modes

Electronic mode refers to the use of digital technologies such as the internet, mobile applications, and email to deliver government services and communication between departments, citizens, and businesses.

➤ **Section 2(i) Electronic Service Delivery:**

Electronic service delivery means providing government services to citizens through digital platforms like online portals or mobile services, making the process faster and more convenient.

➤ **Section 2(n) Public Service**

This section defines a public service as any service officially notified by the government and provided to citizens. These services may be delivered through traditional methods or through electronic means such as online platforms. Once a service is notified under the Act, the concerned government department must provide it to eligible citizens within the specified time limit.

➤ **Right to Time-Bound Service (Section 4)**

Every Designated Officer and his subordinates shall provide the public service, as notified by the Government from time to time, to the eligible person, within the stipulated time in a transparent manner.

➤ **Commencement of Time Limit (Section 6)**

The stipulated time limit shall start from the date when the required application, complete in all respects, for a public service is submitted to the Designated Officer or to a person authorized to receive the application in such manner as may be prescribed. The receipt of each application shall be duly acknowledged by the Designated Officer or the person authorized to receive the application

➤ **Right to Appeal (Section 8)**

Any eligible person whose application is rejected or whose service is delayed may file an appeal within 30 days. The Appellate Authority must decide the appeal within 30 days of filing.

➤ **Penalty for Delay or Default (Section 10)**

The Appellate Authority can impose a monetary penalty on the concerned officer for delay without reasonable cause. The penalty range shall from ₹500 to ₹5,000. The penalty amount is recovered from the salary of the officer.

➤ **Constitution of the Commission (Section 12)**

This section provides for the establishment of the Punjab Transparency and Accountability Commission to monitor the implementation of the Act. The Commission is headed by a Chief Commissioner and is supported by a Secretary and staff appointed by the government. It acts as a supervisory body to ensure accountability and proper delivery of public services.

6. Time-Bound Labour Welfare Services under the PTADPS Act, 2018

The PTADPS Act, 2018 mandates that notified labour welfare services must be delivered within stipulated time limits. These services are officially notified by the Government along with designated officers responsible for their delivery. The following table presents the list of labour welfare services covered under the Act along with their prescribed time frames.

Table No.1 list of the Labour welfare services cover under The PTADPS Act, 2018

Department / Authority	Service Name	Indicative Time Limit
Punjab Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (BOCWBB)	Registration of Construction Worker (Lal Copy)	7–15 days
	Renewal of Construction Worker Registration	7–10 days
	Update/Correction in Worker Record	7–15 days
	Pension Benefit Approval	30 days
	Maternity Benefit Scheme	15–20 days
	Ex-Gratia / Death Assistance	30 days
	Funeral Assistance	7–10 days

Department / Authority	Service Name	Indicative Time Limit
	Scholarship/Stipend for Children	30–45 days
	Medical / Surgery Aid	30 days
	Occupational Disease Benefit	30 days
	Marriage Assistance (Shagun)	30 days
	Tools Scheme	30 days
	Skill Training Assistance	15–30 days
	Housing Assistance	30–60 days

Source: <https://connect.punjab.gov.in/about-sewa-kendra>

The table no.1 shows that a wide range of labour welfare services under the PTADPS Act, 2018 are delivered within specified time limits by the Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board. Most registration-related services are completed within 7–15 days, while welfare benefits such as pensions, scholarships, and assistance schemes are generally delivered within 30 to 60 days.

7. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR TIME-BOUND SERVICE DELIVERY

The PTADPS Act, 2018 set up a clear system to ensure services were delivered on time in a transparent and accountable manner. It defined the responsibilities of officers and provided a mechanism to handle complaints and delays. At the grassroots level, Sewa Kendras played an important role as the main service delivery centres for citizens.

8. SEWA KENDRA

Sewa Kendra function as the primary service delivery centres where citizens submit applications for notified services, including labour welfare schemes. The implementation of Sewa Kendras was carried out by the Punjab State e-Governance Society (PSeGS), which acts as the executing agency for the Department of Good Governance & Information Technology under the Government of Punjab. These centres serve as an important interface between citizens and concerned departments, particularly the Punjab Labour Department and the Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, facilitating the delivery of labour welfare services in a transparent and time-bound manner.

Image No.1. Outside view of Sewa Kendra Image No.2. Inside View of Sewa kendra



Source: Primary data



Source: Primary data

Table No.2 List of Sewa Kendra under Sangrur District

Sr. No.	Place of Sewa Kendra	Types	Sr. No.	Place of Sewa Kendra	Types
1.	D.C COMPLEX SUWIDHA CENTRE, SANGRUR	Type-I	04.	BHAI KI PISORE	Type-III
2.	TEHSIL COMPLEX LEHRAGAGA	Type-II	05.	MANDVI	Type-III
3.	TEHSIL COMPLEX MOONAK	Type-II	06.	HARYAU	Type-III

Source: Primary data

The table no.2 presents the list of type I, type II and type III Sewa Kendras located in the urban and village areas of Sangrur district. It shows their locations and the services they provide to citizens in these town centres.

9. MAJOR FINDING OF THE STUDY

The present study is based on primary data collected from labour welfare service users in Sangrur district. To cover both rural and urban areas, one urban centre, Sangrur City and two educationally backward tehsils Lehragaga and Moonak were selected. This helped assess labour welfare service delivery across different areas of the district.

Table No. 3 Socio-economic Profile of Service Users

	TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)				Total No. of Service users
	21-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	Above 51 years	
AGE	13 (13%)	21 (21%)	56 (56%)	11 (11%)	100
GENDER	Male	Female			100
	63 (63%)	37 (37%)			100
AREA	Rural	Urban			100
	71 (72%)	29 (29%)			100
MARITAL STATUS	Married	Unmarried			100
	78 (78%)	22 (22%)			100
EDUCATION	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Graduations &Above	100
	58 (58%)	27 (27%)	15 (15%)	-	100

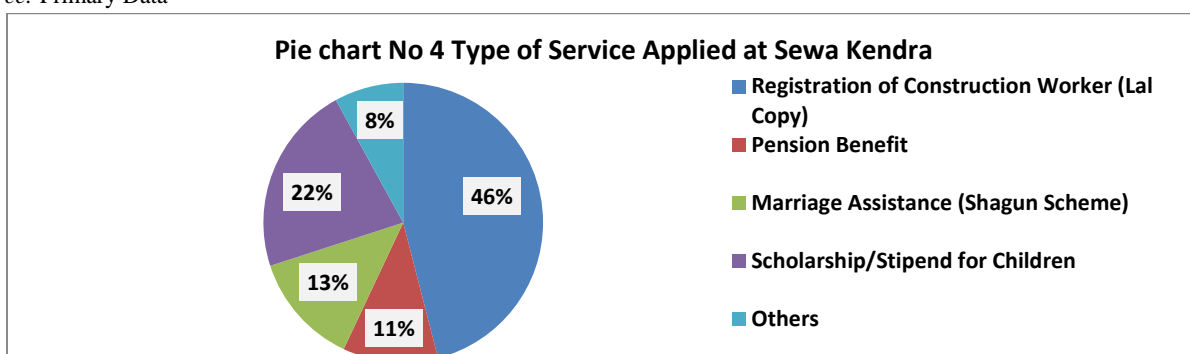
Source: Primary data

The table No. 1.3 shows that most service users were aged 41–50 years (56%), followed by 31–40 years (21%). A majority were male (63%), belonged to rural areas (72%), and were married (78%). In terms of education, most respondents were illiterate (58%), while 27% had primary and 15% had secondary education.

Table No 4. What kind of service have you applied at Sewa Kendra?
(Beneficiaries)

SEWA KENDRAS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	
Purpose of Service	Number of Service Users (Total 100)
Registration of Construction Worker (Lal Copy)	46 (46%)
Pension Benefit	11 (11%)
Marriage Assistance (Shagun Scheme)	13 (13%)
Scholarship/Stipend for Children	22 (22%)
Others	08 (8%)

Source: Primary Data

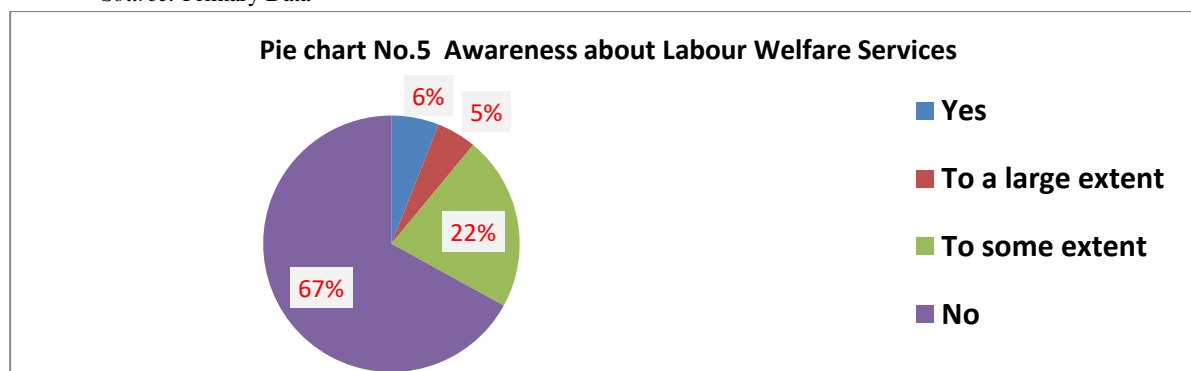


The table and pie chart no.4 highlights that at Sewa Kendras under Sangrur district, a majority (46%) of beneficiaries applied for Registration of Construction Worker (Lal Copy), followed by 22% who sought Scholarship or Stipend for Children. Further, 13% applied for Marriage Assistance (Shagun Scheme), while 11% applied for Pension Benefits. A smaller proportion (8%) availed other services.

Table No 5. Do you know about the services related labour welfare provided under Sewa Kendra?
(Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	06 (6%)	05 (5%)	22(22%)	67 (67%)	100

Source: Primary Data

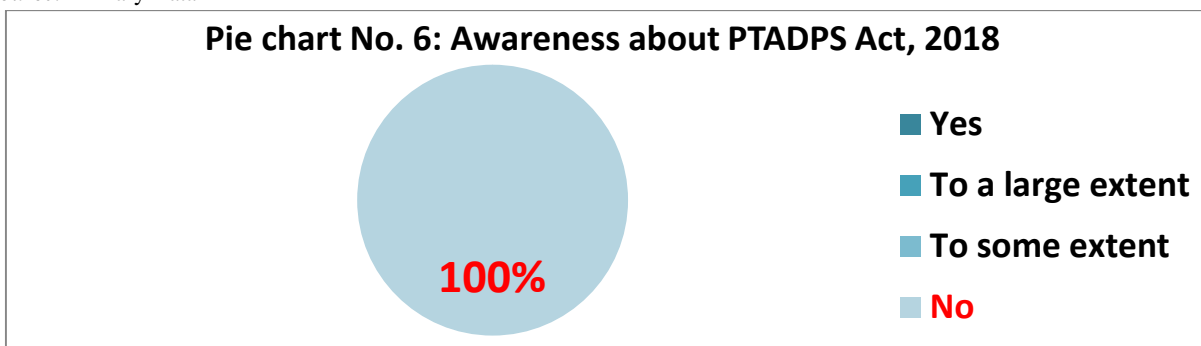


The table and pie chart no.5 indicates that at Sewa Kendras under Sangrur district, a majority (67%) of service users reported that they did not know about the labour welfare services provided under the Sewa Kendra. Further, 22% stated that they were aware to some extent, while 5% knew to a large extent. Only 6% of the beneficiaries reported that they were fully aware of such services.

Table No 6. Do you know about The Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018?
(Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	100 (100%)	100

Source: Primary Data

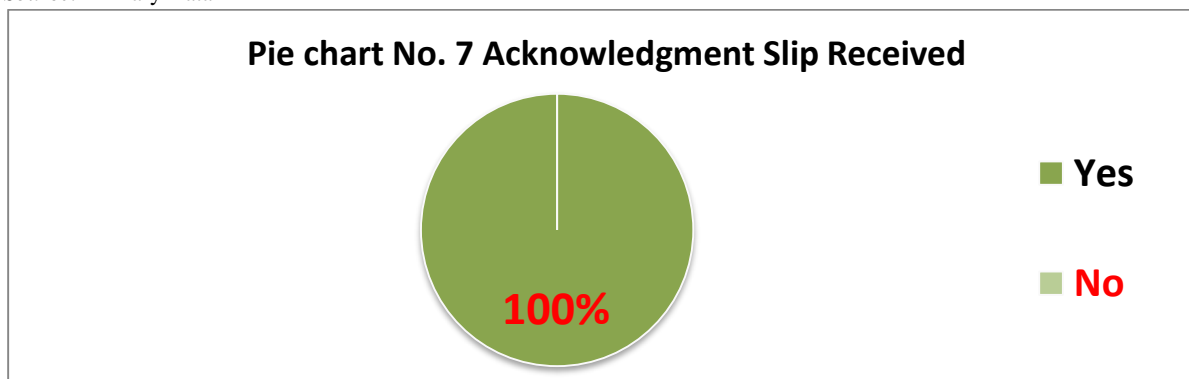


The table and pie chart no.6 shows that all (100%) of service users under **Sewa Kendra** were not aware of the PTADPS Act, 2018. This clearly shows that awareness of the PTADPS Act, 2018 was entirely absent among the beneficiaries.

Table No.7 Did you receive any acknowledgment slip of service which you applied?
(Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	100 (100%)	00 (0%)	100

Source: Primary Data



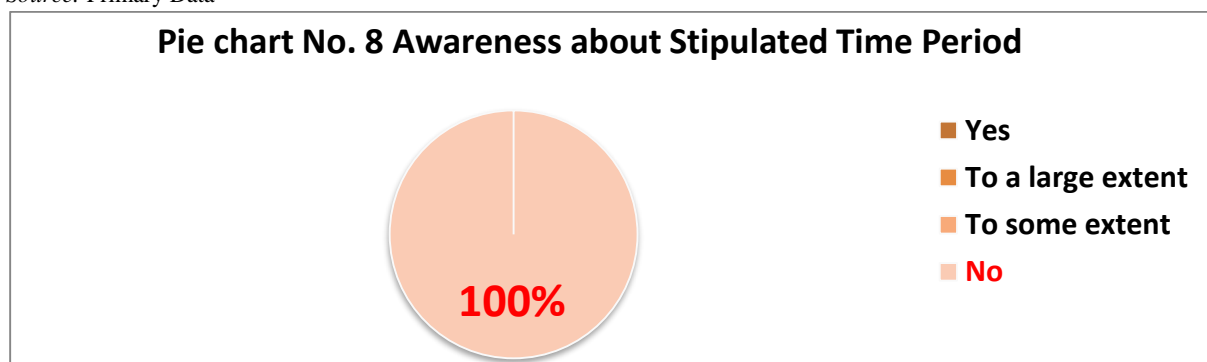
The table and pie chart no.7 shows that all (100%) of service users under Sewa Kendra confirmed that they received an acknowledgment slip.

This indicates a strong level of procedural compliance across all service centres with regard to issuing acknowledgment slips, which was a critical component of ensuring transparency and traceability in public service delivery.

Table No. 8. Did you know about the stipulated time period of delivery of service you have applied for?
(Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	100 (100%)	100

Source: Primary Data



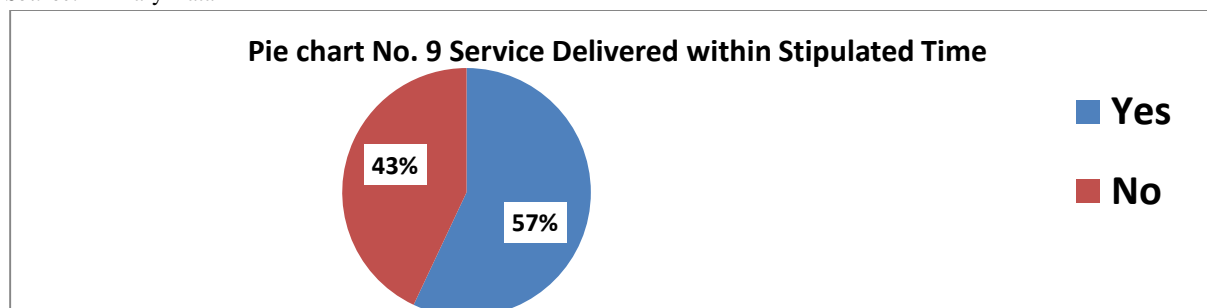
The table and pie chart no. 8 shows that all (100%) of service users under Sewa Kendra admitted they were not aware of the time frame.

As a result, it can be said that beneficiaries lacked awareness of the prescribed time limits, which may have reduced their ability to monitor delays or demand timely service delivery.

Table No. 9. Was the service applied by you delivered in stipulated time period as mentioned in the receipt?
(Beneficiaries)

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	57 (57%)	43 (43%)	100

Source: Primary Data



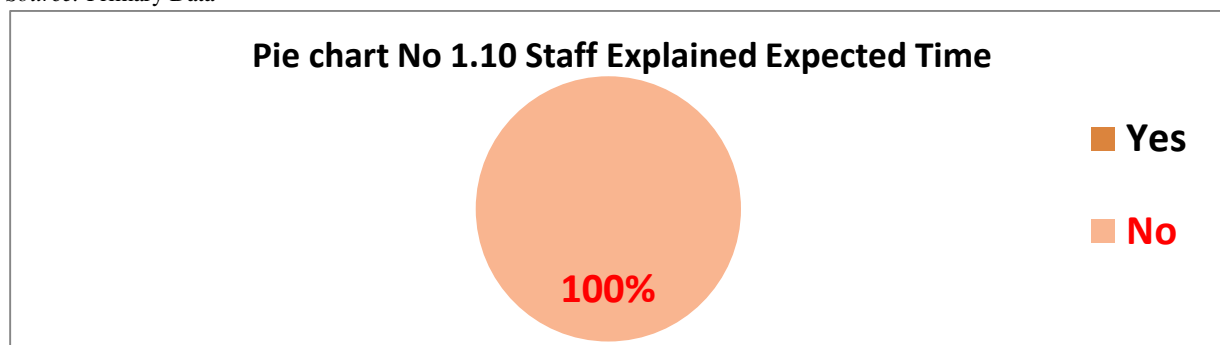
The table and pie chart no. 9 highlights that a majority (57%) of service users at Sewa Kendra confirmed that the service was delivered within the stipulated timeframe, while 43% said that it was not delivered on time.

As a result, it can be said that although more than half of the beneficiaries received services within the prescribed timeframe, a considerable proportion still faced delays, indicating the need for improved efficiency and consistency in service delivery

**Table No.10 Did the staff explain the expected time for service delivery?
(Beneficiaries)**

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	0 (0%)	100 (100%)	100

Source: Primary Data



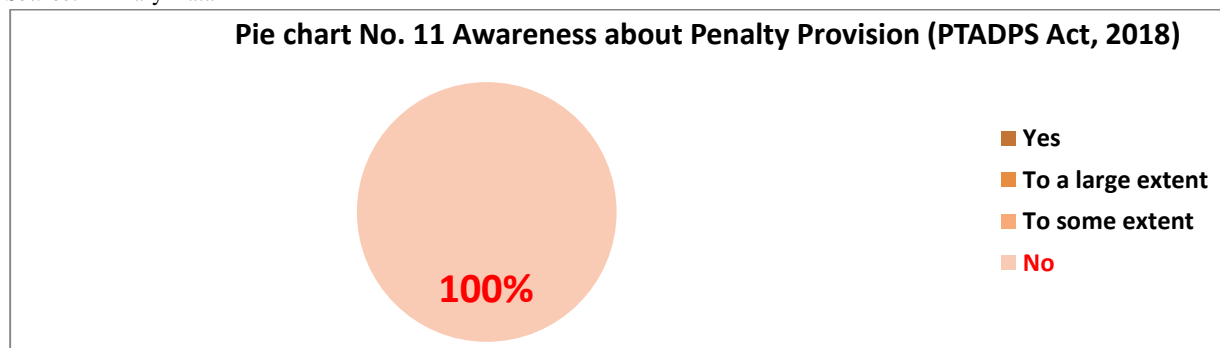
The table and pie chart no.10 shows that all (100%) of service users under Sewa Kendra confirmed that staff did not explain the expected time for service delivery.

This indicates that explaining service delivery timelines to beneficiaries was generally weak across Kendras and needs improvement.

Table No. 11. Do you know that penalties can be imposed on officials for delay under the PTADPS Act, 2018?

TEHSILS UNDER SANGRUR DISTRICT (Sangrur City, Lehragaga, Moonak)	Yes	To a large extent	To Some extent	No	Total No. of Service Users
SEWA KENDRA	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	100 (100%)	100

Source: Primary Data



The table and pie chart no. 11 highlights that all (100%) of service users under Sewa Kendra confirmed that were also not aware of penalty provisions under the PTADPS Act, 2018.As a result, beneficiaries lacked awareness of the penalty provisions, limiting their ability to ensure accountability.

10. SUGGESTIONS

The major suggestions are given below:

- A. **Awareness campaigns:** The government should actively promote awareness about the PTADPS Act, 2018 in local communities, schools, colleges, universities, and government departments. Clear information about service timelines, required documents, and appeal rights should be shared through talks, workshops, seminars, and conferences so that people receive proper guidance.
- B. **Digital Awareness:** Digital awareness about the PTADPS Act, 2018 should be promoted through social media platforms like **Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter**. Short informative videos, reels, and simple explanations can help people understand their rights and the importance of timely public services. Senior officers, advocates, and experts can also share information through **podcasts** and online sessions to reach a wider audience and enhance public awareness.
- C. **Improve Help Desk Performance:** Every Kendra should have a help desk managed by properly trained staff that can guide citizens, provide correct information, and assist them with service procedures in a clear and polite manner.
- D. **Display Time Limits and Appeal Process Clearly:** Service delivery timelines and the grievance redressal mechanism should be prominently displayed on notice boards and digital screens in simple language.
- E. **Training and Guidance for Employees:** Officials should be trained to explain expected service delivery time and legal provisions to applicants at the time of submission.
- F. **Strengthen Monitoring and Accountability:** Regular monitoring should be conducted to ensure services are delivered within stipulated time and penalties are imposed in case of delays.
- G. **Special Awareness for Rural and Illiterate Beneficiaries:** Since most users are rural and less educated, awareness materials should be provided in Punjabi and through simple pamphlets or verbal guidance.
- H. **Engagement of Labour Unions:** Labour unions should be actively involved in spreading awareness about labour welfare services and the provisions of the PTADPS Act, 2018 among workers. Their participation can also strengthen monitoring of service delivery and ensure accountability at the grassroots level.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that although the Punjab Transparency and Accountability in Delivery of Public Service Act, 2018 provides a framework for time-bound and accountable service delivery, its effective implementation at the grassroots level remains limited. While Sewa Kendras are delivering labour welfare services and issuing receipts, beneficiaries lack awareness about their rights, time limits, and penalty provisions under the Act. Therefore, improving awareness, transparency, and accountability is essential to ensure that the Act truly strengthens good governance and citizen empowerment.

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