

## REVIEWER'S REPORT

**Manuscript No.: IJAR-57458****Title: Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo and His Contribution to Balangir: A Regional Historical Analysis****Recommendation:****Accept after minor revision**

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓,		
Techn. Quality		✓,		
Clarity	✓,			
Significance	✓,			

**Reviewer Name: Abdul Haseeb Mir**

### Detailed Reviewer's Report

The manuscript titled "**Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo and His Contribution to Balangir: A Regional Historical Analysis**" offers a focused exploration of the transformative leadership of Rajendra Narayan Singh Deo, particularly his impact on the Balangir region of Odisha. The paper successfully bridges the gap between his role as a princely ruler of the Patna State and his subsequent influence as a democratic leader and Chief Minister of Odisha. This dual perspective provides a nuanced understanding of how traditional authority transitioned into modern administrative governance within a specific regional context.

The author effectively highlights the multi-dimensional nature of Singh Deo's contributions, spanning administrative reforms, agricultural modernization, and educational expansion. By grounding the analysis in the socio-economic challenges of Balangir—specifically its history of drought and underdevelopment—the manuscript provides necessary context that justifies the significance of Singh Deo's interventions. The inclusion of a section on cultural patronage is particularly commendable, as it acknowledges the importance of regional identity and social cohesion in the historical development of western Odisha.

The paper is well-structured, moving logically from the administrative foundations in the pre-independence era to the democratic representation and eventually the legacy of Singh Deo. The author maintains a balanced view by acknowledging the persistent structural challenges, such as seasonal migration and poverty, which remained despite Singh Deo's efforts. This prevents the manuscript from becoming a mere hagiography and instead presents a realistic historical assessment. To further elevate the

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paper for high-impact publication, the author should consider deepening the archival engagement and providing more specific data points regarding the irrigation and educational projects mentioned.

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#### Suggestions for Improvement

- The abstract should be expanded to include a brief mention of the specific methodology or primary sources utilized in the study to enhance its academic weight.
- In the "Introduction," provide a more specific geographic and demographic snapshot of Balangir during the 1930s to better illustrate the "underdevelopment" mentioned.
- When discussing the transition from Patna State to modern Odisha, include more specific details on the "measures to streamline tax collection" and how these differed from previous feudal practices.
- The section on the Swatantra Party would benefit from a brief explanation of how its ideology of "decentralized economic policies" specifically manifested in Singh Deo's local projects in Balangir.
- Regarding irrigation, the author mentions the extension of benefits from the Hirakud Dam. Providing specific names of canals or the approximate acreage brought under irrigation during his tenure would provide stronger empirical evidence.
- The discussion on education notes that several schools and colleges were established. Listing a few prominent institutions founded during this period would make the argument more tangible.
- The "Infrastructure" section mentions road connectivity. If possible, identify key routes or arterial roads that were developed under his leadership to connect Balangir with other commercial hubs.
- The "Cultural Patronage" section mentions Singh Deo's support for local language and literature. Citing specific poets, writers, or cultural festivals (beyond the general mention of Dhanu Yatra) would enrich the cultural history aspect of the paper.
- The manuscript identifies "seasonal migration" as a persisting challenge. A deeper analysis of why Singh Deo's policies were unable to curb this specific issue would add a critical layer to the historical analysis.
- The "References" list should be formatted more rigorously, ensuring that all archival records are cited with specific collection names or file numbers where possible.
- Expand the conclusion to reflect on how Singh Deo's regional focus in Balangir compares to other princely rulers of the era who also transitioned into democratic politics.
- Consider adding a map of the Patna State (pre-1948) versus modern Balangir to visually demonstrate the administrative evolution discussed in the text.

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- Ensure that all quantitative claims, such as "noticeable improvement" in agricultural output, are supported by the specific "Archival records" mentioned in the text.
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### Recommendation

**Recommendation: Recommend for publication with minor revision.**

This manuscript provides a valuable regional history that complicates and enriches the broader narrative of Odisha's political and developmental trajectory. The focus on a specific leader's impact on a perennially marginalized district like Balangir is both timely and academically relevant. By incorporating more granular data and expanding on the specificities of the institutions and projects initiated by Singh Deo, the author will significantly strengthen the paper's contribution to the field of modern Indian history.