

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: **IJAR-58960**

Title: State Capacity and Healthcare Performance in India: Do Better Health Outcomes Reflect Higher Public Spending or Greater Efficiency

Recommendation:

✓ Accept as it is **YES**.....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

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

Reviewer's ID: JPR- 159

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

The document 'State Capacity and Healthcare Performance in India: Do Better Health Outcomes Reflect Higher Public Spending or Greater Efficiency' is unique topic.

Recommendation : Accept as it is.

Detailed Reviewer's Report

1. Originality – This study investigates whether Indian states with superior health outcomes achieve them simply by spending more public funds or by utilizing their resources more efficiently. Using a panel dataset covering Indian states from 2012–2019, the research combines fixed-effects panel regression with Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) to analyze the impact of public health expenditure and resource allocation efficiency.

2. Structure and Clarity – The manuscript is generally well-structured with sections such as Introduction, Results, and Conclusion. However, transitions between sections can be improved, and paragraph alignment should be checked for consistency.

3. Strengths –

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Impact of Public Health Expenditure:

- Higher public health spending is statistically associated with improved life expectancy, along with significant reductions in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), and Total Fertility Rate (TFR).
- State economic growth (measured by per-capita NSDP) alone does not automatically drive better life expectancy or MMR unless translated into accessible health services.

Healthcare Resource Efficiency (DEA Analysis):

- The average Variable Returns to Scale (VRS) technical efficiency score across 17 states is 0.962, indicating high pure technical efficiency but notable scale inefficiency.
- Frontier States: Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Punjab, Telangana, and Uttarakhand form the efficiency frontier, with Kerala serving as the primary benchmark.

4. Significance –

Strengthening India's public health system requires a dual approach: increasing public health expenditure while simultaneously improving the operational and scale efficiency of existing healthcare infrastructure and resources.