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## REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.:IJAR-50275

Date: 13/02/25

**Title:** "Unveiling the Implementation Woes of SPMRM: A Case Study of Rural Development Policy in India"

### 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		Yes		
Techn. Quality	Yes			
Clarity	Yes			
Significance	Yes			

Reviewer Name:Dr. Feroze Ahmad

Date:13/02/2025

### Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

*(To be published with the manuscript in the journal)*

*The reviewer is requested to provide a brief comment (3-4 lines) highlighting the significance, strengths, or key insights of the manuscript. This comment will be Displayed in the journal publication alongside with the reviewers name.*

This manuscript provides a valuable in-depth analysis of the implementation challenges faced by the Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM) in Tamil Nadu, offering critical insights into infrastructure, training, and stakeholder engagement. The study highlights the key barriers hindering rural development initiatives and proposes practical recommendations for enhancing policy effectiveness. The empirical approach and field-based evidence add substantial value to the literature on rural policy implementation in India.

### *Detailed Reviewer's Report*

This research paper presents a detailed investigation into the implementation challenges of the **Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM)**, a government initiative launched in 2016 to transform rural communities into sustainable, economically viable, and self-reliant regions. The mission aimed to integrate rural and urban areas by developing infrastructure, enhancing skill development, and providing economic support to rural residents. The study focuses on four districts in Tamil Nadu: **Thiruvallur, Madurai, Coimbatore, and Krishnagiri.**

The paper highlights several critical issues in the mission's implementation, including **inadequate infrastructure, insufficient skill training outcomes, limited support mechanisms, and the lack of**

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**effective coordination.** These shortcomings have contributed to the failure of the mission in achieving its goals, such as preventing rural-to-urban migration, improving livelihood opportunities, and fostering sustainable development in rural areas.

### Key Objectives and Methodology:

The paper's primary objectives are to examine the specific challenges faced by SPMRM in Tamil Nadu and propose recommendations to improve its functionality. It emphasizes the need for **improved infrastructure, better stakeholder engagement, effective monitoring mechanisms, and consistent support for local units.**

The research was conducted through a **field study** across the four districts, where empirical data was collected from 177 respondents through **questionnaires**. The study combines both primary data (from interviews and surveys) and secondary data (policy analysis and reports).

### Strengths of the Research Paper:

- Comprehensive Case Study:** The paper provides an in-depth case study, focusing on the implementation of SPMRM across four varied districts in Tamil Nadu. By analyzing diverse rural settings, the study brings out region-specific challenges as well as broader systemic issues faced by the policy, offering a nuanced understanding of the program's implementation woes.
- Empirical Approach:** The research relies on primary data collected from field surveys, ensuring that the findings are grounded in the real-world experiences of local beneficiaries. The use of empirical evidence adds credibility and relevance to the findings.
- Clear Identification of Challenges:** The paper effectively identifies the core challenges in the implementation of SPMRM. Issues such as the lack of business orders for rural units, insufficient certification for training programs, inadequate infrastructure, and poor regulatory mechanisms are all well-documented. This clarity helps policymakers understand where improvements are needed.
- Practical Recommendations:** The paper offers several actionable recommendations for enhancing the SPMRM, such as **improving infrastructure, ensuring adequate training with certifications, enhancing financial support for small businesses, and strengthening stakeholder engagement.** These recommendations are well thought out and align with the problems highlighted in the study.
- Political and Socio-Economic Context:** The paper offers valuable insights into the **political landscape** of policymaking in India. It examines how political considerations often influence the effectiveness of public policies, particularly in a complex and diverse country like India. The discussion on **political and socio-economic factors** adds an important layer of depth to the analysis.

### Weaknesses of the Research Paper:

- Limited Geographic Scope:** Although the paper examines SPMRM's implementation in four districts of Tamil Nadu, the findings may not be fully representative of the policy's challenges across the entire country. India's vast regional and cultural diversity means that the issues identified in Tamil Nadu might not be applicable to other states or rural areas. Expanding the study to include more regions could have offered a more comprehensive perspective.
- Insufficient Long-Term Analysis:** The study mainly focuses on the short-term challenges in SPMRM's implementation. There is limited discussion on the **long-term sustainability** of the policy, including whether the proposed solutions can create lasting change in the rural

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development landscape. A deeper longitudinal analysis would help gauge the longer-term impacts and challenges of the policy.

3. **Inadequate Data on Financial Aspects:** While the paper mentions financial challenges, such as the **lack of working capital** for businesses, it does not delve deeply into the **financial management** aspects of the policy. More data or case examples on **budget allocation, fund distribution, and financial mismanagement** could have provided a clearer picture of the financial bottlenecks hindering policy success.
4. **Limited Stakeholder Perspective:** While the study does include data from beneficiaries of SPMRM, the research could benefit from a more **holistic view** by incorporating perspectives from key stakeholders, such as **local policymakers, NGOs, and government agencies**. A broader range of viewpoints could provide a more nuanced understanding of the reasons behind implementation failures.
5. **Theoretical Underpinnings:** Although the paper references some theoretical frameworks, it could benefit from a **deeper engagement with existing literature on policy implementation, public governance, and rural development models**. A stronger theoretical foundation would add academic rigor to the analysis.

This paper offers a thorough and insightful analysis of the **Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission's (SPMRM)** implementation in Tamil Nadu, identifying critical shortcomings that have impeded its success. The paper's empirical findings and well-thought-out recommendations are valuable for both policymakers and practitioners involved in rural development. While the study has some limitations in terms of geographic scope and financial analysis, it provides a solid foundation for improving SPMRM and similar rural development policies. Overall, this research contributes meaningfully to the discourse on **rural development policy** in India and offers a critical examination of the challenges faced in the **implementation of large-scale government initiatives**. With some improvements in scope and theoretical depth, the paper could serve as a benchmark for future studies on policy implementation in developing nations.

I recommend that the paper be **accepted for publication** in a journal dedicated to **public policy, rural development, or socio-economic studies**. The paper has substantial merit and, with these enhancements, has the potential to make a significant contribution to both the academic literature and practical policy discussions concerning rural development in India and similar regions.