

# Evaluating the Impact of Reservation on Knowledge Productivity in Indian Higher Education.

## Abstract

Affirmative actions have been in debates on and off. Reservation in various governmental departments and agencies are the result of affirmative actions. It was also debated related to its impact on performance. The opinion related the impact of reservation on quality and performances have both dimensions. Few believe that quality was affected by reservation while other deny. The present study is an attempt to bring forth some imperial evidences for the arguments. This study is limited to the higher education only and covered a limited number of faculty members that may not be sufficient as proportion to the larger group. But it necessarily has a direction of the question. A methodology was used according to the need of the study. An interview schedule was prepared and executed among the sample chosen from among faculty members of universities. The data collected revealed that reservation did not hamper the quality of services rather faculty members are found active at all parameters of the study.

**Keywords:** Reservation Policy, Higher Education, Academic Performance, Faculty Achievements, Knowledge Productivity, Social Equity.

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## 1. Introduction

Reservation has been sometimes in debate regarding quality and performance. Higher education is important aspect of societal development because it is responsible for all other developmental parameters to lead further. If lack persists in higher education other developmental parameters may not be at the required pace of time. Compromising with quality higher education is not a good idea for nation. In the debate the argument which often was furthered that reservation in higher education may lead to compromise the quality. At the other hand, constitutional provisions demand to bring the oppressed of the society on equal footing with others. Of course, historical suffering created different conditions in society so it was not possible to let them compete with those who had good opportunities. Affirmative actions provided an opportunity for those who were considered eligible for special treatment to get into the systems. Higher education of the country is no exception to it.

To explore and find out the evidences and patterns among reserved categories in higher education it was thought to do a small research. This paper is the outcome of that effort. This study intends to evaluate the performance of faculty members of reserved categories in higher education.

Performance in higher education can be assessed on certain parameters. These parameters are related with the knowledge production, training, research output etc.

## 2. Research Methodology

Hundred, on random and purposive basis, faculty members were chosen as sample for the study. They are all from reserved categories. But among reserved categories it include only social category and did not include any physical one. It had scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward castes. The faculty members in higher education have three designations which are hierarchal in nature. From the bottom, it has Assistant Professor, then Associate Professor, and at the top it has Professor. In the sample 72 Assistant Professors, 20 Associate

43 Professors and 8 Professors were included. The samples chosen are all from various  
44 universities.

45 An interview schedule was framed and administered among them. Questions were based on the  
46 parameters discussed above. While administering the interview schedule the consent was  
47 obtained and tried to capture the information required for the intention of the study. Face to  
48 face interview brings accuracy in response which is found in the response. The data was  
49 scrutinized, after collection, standardized and tabulated for easy understanding. Each question  
50 was analyzed separately and frequency and respective percentage have been made available for  
51 clear understanding at a glance.

### 52 3. Data Analysis and Presentation

53 The present study is about the impact of reservation in higher education. The impacts have  
54 been captured based on certain indicators to assess the performance of faculty members who  
55 belong to various reserved categories. The indicators have been identified considering the core  
56 work of academicians activities related to their professional development. A schedule, based on  
57 such indicators have been developed and administered. While administering the schedule all  
58 possible measures have been taken into consideration to extract the real and original responses,  
59 though the questions were very objective in nature.

60 From the faculty members hundred have been identified as sample. These hundred have been  
61 taken from all three faculty categories that is; Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant  
62 Professor. The indicators which were identified, as mentioned above, are participation in  
63 academic activities, production of knowledge in the form of publication, undergoing training  
64 programs, helping the institutions by participating in administrative activities, etc. Total  
65 numbers of samples were hundred proportionally distributed from categories and from all  
66 designations. In the paper it is tried to present the data in tabular form based on each question  
67 administered. To make the findings at a glance for reader, designation wise responses are  
68 presented. The responses are converted into percentages and made it available in the table  
69 against each category.

#### 70 a. Association with academic bodies

71 Association with relevant academic bodies keeps the individual up to date about the new  
72 happenings of the field. It also provides input to take new areas to explore and ponder over.  
73 Association also provides opportunity to the faculty members to collaborate the  
74 interdisciplinary nature of research. Such bodies give platforms for people to represent  
75 various issues concerning the governmental policies related higher education in general and  
76 discipline in particular. Therefore, membership of professional bodies is considered as an  
77 indicator to putting efforts to the development of the discipline. The samples were posed a  
78 question on membership of professional bodies and the result was as below:

79 **Table 3.1: Membership of academic bodies-Designation wise**  
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Designation	Number of Respondents			% of Respondents		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Professor	4	4	8	50.0	50.0	100
Associate Professor	14	6	20	70.0	30.0	100
Assistant Professor	26	46	72	36.1	63.9	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

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83 The above table shows that 56% of the faculty members responded in negation while 44% in  
 84 affirmation. The question did not enquire about the name of those bodies which are of various  
 85 types. But it was made sure at the type of interview that each type of association will be  
 86 included.

87 Putting the response in subcategories the table clearly speaks that 50% from the professors  
 88 have membership while the same %age did not. Among associate professors the %age for  
 89 haves are more that is 70% and only 30% responded that they did not. The situation among  
 90 assistant professors is reverse of associate professors. 63.9% of assistant professors did not  
 91 have association with any such professional bodies and rest 36.1% replied that they have. It  
 92 seems easy to conclude that at entry level awareness about such associations and related  
 93 benefits in terms of career development may be less and consequently membership is also less.  
 94 Among professor the reason for less membership may be because of the feeling of fully  
 95 achieved in career.

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97 **b. Conferences and Knowledge production**

98 Lecturing, presenting papers, speaking key notes and publishing papers and books are the main  
 99 purpose of higher education. A faculty member is assessed mainly of his publications and  
 100 lecturers. As mentioned above the purpose of having association with professional bodies is  
 101 also to get collaboration in research and getting ideas for new areas to explore as researcher.  
 102 Therefore, in other words it may be said that having association with professional bodies is to  
 103 publish new ideas. In the schedule, a question was asked about publication too.

104 The faculty members were found very active in publishing their researches in various journals  
 105 and attending conferences. This question did not include the publication of books because  
 106 while framing the interview schedule it was felt that publishing books takes time and mixing  
 107 the book publishing with conference papers and research paper will not be justice. So a  
 108 separate question has been framed.

109 The response of the question is as under in the form of a table:

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111 **Table 3.2 : Research Publication & Conferences attended-designation wise**

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Designation	Number of Respondents			% of Respondents	
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No
Professor	8	0	8	100.0	0.0
Associate Professor	20	0	20	100.0	0.0
Assistant Professor	66	6	72	91.7	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>94.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>

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114 In response to the question related to research publication and conference 94% of the faculty  
 115 members responded in positive. Only 6% said that they did not attempt. The subdivision of  
 116 faculty members shows that only Assistant Professors did not attend conference and did not  
 117 publish research paper. Of course the interpretation requires interpretative understanding of the  
 118 responses as it is clubbed with the conference and seminars.

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120 **c. Production of Books**

121 Publication of books considered important in the field of academics. Books may be written,  
 122 translated or edited. Even the books may be of reference in nature or curricula related. All of  
 123 them are considered contribution and appreciated. While preparing the questionnaire, a  
 124 question of this nature was thought to be framed.

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126 The response of the faculty members was obtained and tabulated as below;

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128 **Table 3.3 (a): Cross-tabulation of Books produced, Designation wise**

Designation		Books produced		Total
		Yes	No	
Professor	Frequency	4	4	8
	% within Designation	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Associate Professor	Frequency	20	0	20
	% within Designation	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Assistant Professor	Frequency	32	40	72
	% within Designation	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>% within Designation</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>100%</b>

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The analysis of the data revealed that 56% of the faculty members have published books in any of the above mentioned category. Remaining 44% said that they did not publish any book till now. In the subcategories of the faculty members the mid category dominated in the publication of books that is associate professors. Professor category is divided into the two equal groups. Among assistant professors 44.4% said that they have produced books where as 55.6% replied that they did not have books to their credit. The data shows that midlevel faculty members are more aware and active about the publication of books.

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**d. Teaching Experience**

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Experience brings perfection. Experience in any field indicates that how effective is the person in his area. Teaching experience also shows the possible effectiveness of a teacher. Considering the importance of experience it was thought to ask a question related to it too. But the question was divided on the basis of level of teaching. There are faculty members who start career at school level and by their struggle reach at higher level whereas few start at higher level and few at middle that is college level. The responses were captured and tabulated as under:

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**Table 3.4: Teaching Experience (University, College, School level)**

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<i>Teaching Experience (Nos. of Years)</i>	<i>University Level</i>		<i>College Level</i>		<i>School Level</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent (%)</i>
0	12	12.0	46	46.0	84	84.0
1 to 5	46	46.0	34	34.0	12	12.0
6 to 10	22	22.0	16	16.0	4	4.0
11 to 20	12	12.0	4	4.0	0	0.0
> 20	8	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

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The data shows, when it is analyzed on the basis of the type of experiences, that 84% did not have experience of teaching at school level, whereas 46% did not teach even at college level. 12% of them have taught at schools but less than 5 years. Those who have less than 5 year experience at college level are 34%. There are 4% faculty members who have more than six and less than 10 years of teaching experience at schools whereas 16% have college level experience of the same length. Faculty members with 11 to 20 years of teaching experience said that their experience is only at university and college level, whereas the faculty members with more than 20 years of experience do not have college and school level reaching experience.

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### e.Awards and Distinction

Recognition works as a booster to the performer and encourage others to perform better too. Conferring awards is a way to recognise the services of performers. Those who receive the awards in recognition of their services try to perform better and become role model for others in the field. There are several awards exclusively for teacher in higher education. A question was also asked about the recognition of their services people offered in their respective area.

**Table 3.5 (b): Distinction/awards received by designation wise**

Distinction/awards received		Designation			Total
		Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	
Yes	Frequency	6	4	18	28
	% within Distinction/awards received	21.4%	14.3%	64.3%	100.0%
No	Frequency	2	16	54	72
	% within Distinction/awards received	2.8%	22.2%	75.0%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>% within Distinction/awards received</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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The data shows that out of hundred respondent twenty eight faculty members said that they have been awarded awards and remaining 72 were not awarded. The subdivision of the data on the basis of designation shows that 18 out of 72 among assistant professors were awarded and 4 out of 20 among associate professors got awards. Among professors, 6 out of 8 were awarded. The data is also presented in percentage of the respective category in the table.

### f.Fellowship

Award of fellowship is also one of the indicators for performance. Fellowships are given to the people with potential as a support to enhance the capability in order to perform better. People who have achieved the fellowship are considered laborious, dedicated and bright. The faculty members were found who were given fellowships at various levels. The responses are tabulated below:

**Table 3.6(b) :Cross-tabulation of Fellowship received, Designation wise**

Fellowship received		Designation			Total
		Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	
Yes	Frequency	2	6	16	24
	% within fellowship received	8.3%	25.0%	66.7%	100.0%
No	Frequency	6	14	56	76
	% within fellowship received	7.9%	18.4%	73.7%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>% within fellowship received</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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The data shows that out of hundred, 24 were given fellowships. The subdivision of responses revealed that 16 out of seventy two from among assistant professors got fellowships whereas 6 among 20

196 associate professors got and 2 from 8 professors. The analysis says that faculty members of the  
 197 reserved categories are not behind any other in bagging the opportunities for fellowship.

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199 **g. Deputation, Lien, Sabbatical and Related leaves**

200 A good performer is always in demand. He may get opportunity to serve various institutions  
 201 nationally and internationally. From going from one to another institution in higher education  
 202 government made a provision of extra ordinary leave and deputation. Even one may take  
 203 sabbatical to enhance the ability in the field. Those who get opportunity to move from one to  
 204 another institution avail such facilities. Therefore, it was also considered as an indicator for  
 205 active involvement in the process of academic and institutional development. The question was  
 206 framed and administered among the faculty members who were chosen as sample for the study.  
 207 Responses are being tabulated as under:

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**Table 3.7 :Leave for deputation/lien etc, Designation wise**

Designation		Leave for deputation/lien etc		Total
		Yes	No	
Professor	Frequency	4	4	8
	% within Designation	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Associate Professor	Frequency	12	8	20
	% within Designation	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Assistant Professor	Frequency	6	66	72
	% within Designation	8.3%	91.7%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>% within Designation</b>	<b>22.0%</b>	<b>78.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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213 The faculty member who availed the deputation, lien or other such leaves are only 22%. 78%  
 214 of them did not avail. This may be justified as the 50% among the professors have availed and  
 215 most of the non-avilers are from the sub category of assistant professors that is 91.7%. The  
 216 assistant professors are relatively at the beginning of their career so having longer time to avail  
 217 such provisions. Among associate professors, which is the midlevel are at good ratio of  
 218 availing that is 60% and only 40% of them did not avail.

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220 **h. Teacher Exchange Programs**

221 Teacher exchange programs enhance the opportunity for faculty members to explore new  
 222 avenues of knowledge, learn new techniques and new methods for imparting and research. This  
 223 also provides a collaborative opportunity with the faculty members of other countries.  
 224 Therefore, it was thought to explore that how many faculty members have got opportunity to  
 225 avail the benefit of exchange programme.

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**Table 3.8 :Teacher Exchange programme, Designation wise**

Designation		Teacher Exchange programme		Total
		Yes	No	
Professor	Frequency	4	4	8
	% within Designation	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Associate Professor	Frequency	0	20	20
	% within Designation	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Assistant Professor	Frequency	2	70	72
	% within Designation	2.8%	97.2%	100.0%

<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>% within Designation</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>94.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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232 The data shows that only 6% among the sample faculty members could get opportunity of  
 233 teacher exchange programme. The ratio among professors is more that is 50%. Associate  
 234 professors reported zero whereas among assistant professors two faculty members got the  
 235 opportunity for this programme. Since the scheme for exchange of teachers is very limited  
 236 therefore, the ratio of beneficiary is also less. This may be same for other categories in the  
 237 higher education.

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### 239 i. Research Projects

240 Carrying out research is considered the primary work of teachers in higher education. Various  
 241 ministries and organizations of national and international level offer funding for carrying out  
 242 research in various areas. Faculty members are considered well-paced with the academic  
 243 research who can bag the funding for research projects. Research output contributes enhancing  
 244 existing knowledge and adding new. The responses from the faculty members are tabulated  
 245 below:

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247 **Table 3.9(a):Research projects, Designation wise**

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Designation		Research Projects		Total
		Yes	No	
Professor	Frequency	8	0	8
	% within Designation	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Associate Professor	Frequency	0	20	20
	% within Designation	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Assistant Professor	Frequency	22	50	72
	% within Designation	30.6%	69.4%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>
	<b>% within Designation</b>	<b>30.0%</b>	<b>70.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

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250 The analysis revealed that 70% of the faculty members did not take research projects. The  
 251 subcategory of the faculty members shows an interesting result. Among associate professors no  
 252 one has taken any research projects whereas among assistant professors 22 have taken. All  
 253 professors reported that they have undertaken the research projects. The data did not cover  
 254 number of projects. There may be faculty member who have carried out more research  
 255 projects.

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### 257 **Conclusion**

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260 The study finds that the faculty members of reserved category are found on par with other  
 261 category in the field of higher education on all parameters. They are working satisfactorily in  
 262 the field of research, publication, presenting paper in seminars and conferences, getting  
 263 opportunity in exchange of teachers etc. They are found well even in undertaking research  
 264 projects from various agencies.

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