

Issues of Reservation Policy Implementation in Manipur: An Analysis of Scheduled Tribes Issues in Secondary, Higher Education, and Medical Institutions


Haokip S^{1*}

DOI:10.5281/zenodo.15335383

^{1*} Sonkhothang Haokip, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Arunachal University of Studies, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

This study comprehensively analyses reservation issues pertinent to faculty appointments in higher secondary institutions, Manipur University, and the Regional Institute of Medical Science (RIMS). At Manipur University, the study focused on the admission issues of Scheduled Tribes in 2016. RIMS received a specific focus, where the research examines the composition of the teaching staff, the overall teaching staff strength, and the underrepresentation of Scheduled Tribe (ST) teaching staff, which is not by the reservation policy. In the context of higher secondary schools, the study investigates the appointment of lecturers on a contract basis from 2014 to 2018, encompassing all categories and the shortfall in ST appointments relative to the reservation policy. Furthermore, the research explores the social class dynamics prevalent in Manipur, analyzing the distribution of higher education teachers among the Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST). The study also delves into the appointment issues surrounding assistant professors, enrollment patterns, and admission trends related to the reservation policy. Notably, the research provides valuable insights into the trends and patterns of ST representation in higher educational institutions in Manipur, focusing on ST enrollment trends from 2011 to 2019 and the ST gross enrollment ratio during the same period. Lastly, the study critically examines the shortage of ST faculty members, attributing this shortfall to the Government of Manipur's failure to adhere to reservation rules and provisions, which mandate a 31% reservation for tribal people. This finding highlights the need to effectively implement reservation policies to promote inclusive education and representation in Manipur's higher education landscape.

Keywords: reservation, faculty appointments, higher education, manipur university, scheduled tribes, medical reservation issue, students enrollment

Corresponding Author	How to Cite this Article	To Browse
Sonkhothang Haokip, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Arunachal University of Studies, Arunachal Pradesh, India. Email: sonkhothangh@gmail.com	Haokip S, Issues of Reservation Policy Implementation in Manipur: An Analysis of Scheduled Tribes Issues in Secondary, Higher Education, and Medical Institutions. Soc Sci J Adv Res. 2025;5(2):154-166. Available From https://ssjar.singhpublication.com/index.php/ojs/article/view/247	

Manuscript Received
2025-02-11Review Round 1
2025-03-01

Review Round 2

Review Round 3

Accepted
2025-03-25Conflict of Interest
NoneFunding
NilEthical Approval
YesPlagiarism X-checker
3.38

Note



© 2025 by Haokip S and Published by Singh Publication. This is an Open Access article licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> unported [CC BY 4.0].



1. Objectives of the Study

- (i) To examine the composition of teaching staff and the representation of Scheduled Tribe (ST) teaching staff in RIMS and higher secondary institutions.
- (ii) To investigate the appointment of lecturers on a contract basis and the shortfall in ST appointments relative to the reservation policy.
- (iii) To analyze the distribution of higher education teachers among OBC (Other Backward Classes), SC (Scheduled Castes), and ST (Scheduled Tribes) categories.
- (iv) To examine the representation of OBC, SC, and ST teachers in Manipur's social class.
- (v) To critically examine the shortage of ST faculty members and its causes.
- (vi) To highlight the need to implement reservation policies to effectively promote inclusive education and representation.

2. Significance of the Study

- (i) Inclusive Education: The study highlights the importance of inclusive education and representation in higher educational institutions in Manipur, particularly for Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities.
- (ii) Reservation Policy Implementation: The research emphasizes the need for effective reservation policy implementation to promote inclusive education and representation.
- (iii) Addressing Underrepresentation: The study examines the underrepresentation of ST teaching staff and students, aiming to address the existing disparities and promote equal opportunities.
- (iv) Informing Policy Decisions: The study's findings can inform policy decisions and interventions to promote inclusive education and representation in Manipur's higher education landscape.
- (v) Contributing to Social Justice: The research contributes to the broader discourse on social justice and equality in education, highlighting the need for inclusive policies and practices.
- (vi) Empowering Marginalized Communities: The study examines the representation of ST communities in higher education to empower marginalized communities and promote their participation in educational institutions.

3. Statement of the Problem

The underrepresentation of Scheduled Tribe (ST)

teaching staff and students in higher educational institutions in Manipur, particularly in RIMS, Manipur University, and higher secondary institutions, despite the reservation policy, poses a significant challenge to inclusive education and representation. This issue becomes even more complex because of the failure of the Government of Manipur to adhere to reservation rules and provisions, which mandate a 31% reservation for tribal people. As a result, there is a noticeable shortage of ST faculty members, which not only affects the diversity of the teaching staff but also limits the opportunities for ST students to learn from role models in their community. Furthermore, the underrepresentation of ST teaching staff and students in higher educational institutions in Manipur has far-reaching implications for the State's social and economic development. It perpetuates the existing social and economic disparities between the ST community and other communities, hindering the State's overall progress. Additionally, it undermines the principles of social justice and equality enshrined in the Indian Constitution. Therefore, it is essential to investigate the underlying causes of the underrepresentation of ST teaching staff and students in higher educational institutions in Manipur and to identify effective strategies for promoting inclusive education and representation. This study aims to contribute to this endeavor by examining the reservation issues pertinent to faculty appointments in higher secondary institutions, Manipur University, and RIMS, and by exploring the social class dynamics prevalent in Manipur.

4. Research Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Sources of Data - The study utilized various secondary data sources, including:

Textbooks, ST Census of India (2011), UGC Order relating to reservation policy, Newspaper articles, Central Educational Institutions Reservation Admission Act (2007), Central Educational Institutions Reservation in Admission Amendment Act (2012), Manipur University prospectus (2019-2020), RIMS annual report (2014-2019), MPSC notification and advertisement relating to recruitment, Manipur High Court writ petition and orders relating to reservation policy,

All India Survey of Higher Education report (2019-2020), Manipur Reservation in Post and Services SC and ST Rules (2011), Gazette order by Manipur government, India Statistical Institute data relating to reservation in admission (2018-2019), Website data on enrollment of ST students in higher education (2011-2019)

Data Analysis Methods - The secondary data was analyzed using:

Quantitative Analysis: (i) Descriptive statistics - To summarize and describe the quantitative data. (ii) Inferential statistics: To draw inferences and make conclusions based on the data.

Qualitative Analysis: (i) Thematic Analysis - To identify and analyze themes and patterns in the qualitative data. (ii) Content analysis - To analyze the content of newspaper articles, government reports, and other documents.

5. Introduction

The State of Manipur, situated in northeastern India, is culturally rich and diverse with a complex social hierarchy. Various castes and tribes characterize the social class system in Manipur, each with its unique identity and status. Among these, the Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST) are recognized as socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Representing these groups in various professions, including teaching, is critical to social equity and inclusion. The State Government allocates 2% for the SC, 31% for ST, and 17% for OBC[1] The aim is to govern appointments to State Government offices and services related to professional and technical education. The reservation policy is in place to address the disparities between the SC, ST, and OBC populations[2] In recent years, Manipur has witnessed several controversies and disputes about implementing reservation policies in educational institutions, particularly at Manipur University. The University's reservation policy has been a subject of debate, with the tribal students' union demanding a 34% reservation for ST students based on the State's 2001 Census data. However, the university administration has been following the Central Government's reservation policy, which has led to a significant reduction in the number of seats reserved for ST students.

The issue of reservation policy implementation is not limited to Manipur University alone. The State's Government higher secondary schools have also been facing similar issues, with the Manipur High Court intervening in a case related to appointing assistant professors. The Court's decision highlighted the need for the state government to follow the reservation rules and ensure that the rights of reserved category candidates are protected. Implementing reservation policies in educational institutions is crucial for promoting social equity and inclusion. However, the experiences of Manipur University and the State's Government higher secondary schools suggest several challenges and controversies surrounding implementing these policies. This study aims to examine the issues and challenges related to the implementation of reservation policies in educational/medical institutions in Manipur, with a focus on the experiences of ST students.

1. Reservation Issues at Manipur University: ST Students' Admission

The reserved quota for Scheduled Tribes (ST) at Manipur University is 31%, while it is 17% for Other Backward Classes (OBC) and 2% for Scheduled Castes (SC). Poverty and deprivation are disproportionately high among the ST population in Manipur. Although these statistics are not exhaustive, they convey significant societal implications. A common concern raised during recruitment is the mismatch between the number of candidates from marginalized communities and the population. This statement warrants examination solely in the context of applicant numbers, as fewer applicants may account for fewer successful candidates. Furthermore, a smaller application pool does not necessarily imply backwardness if community preferences receive consideration. Another crucial question is: What factors contribute to the substantial variation in reservation rules across the State, and how can this discrepancy be addressed?

The University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines of 2006 stipulate that 22.5% of vacancies in different seats get reserved for SC/ST candidates. [3]However, Manipur University follows the state government's reservation policy in admitting students to various courses and providing access to hostels.

The Manipur University Tribal Students' Union (MUTSU) has been advocating for implementing the state government's policy, demanding a 34% reservation for ST candidates based on the 2001 census data.[4] Given Manipur's unique ethnic composition, the Government may amend India's reservation policy at central universities to facilitate the adoption of state government norms regarding the reservation of posts at Manipur University.

In 2016, the administrators of Manipur University violated the University's reservation policy, prompting protests from students and the students' union. The protesters demanded that the state reservation policy be applied instead of the central Government's reserve policy for university admissions and hiring. In 2008, the Manipur tribal union met with the Prime Minister to discuss the reservation policy for ST candidates at Manipur University. However, the administration pushed the Prime Minister to prioritize the state government's reservation policy over the University's. The controversy surrounding the reservation policy at Manipur University began when the Vice-Chancellor invited three guest lecturers to the history department.[5]

Further complications arose when the University changed its admission policy from 31% to 7.5% for ST candidates. This reduction was less than half of the percentage specified by the Indian Government. On August 21, 2017, Manipur University defied the High Court of Manipur's ruling to follow the 31% ST reservation rule and the UGC's affirmation on the same topic. The MUTSU and ATSUM (All Manipur Tribal Students Union Manipur) filed a petition, alleging that the authorities deceived ethnic minorities by diverting their seats to mainstream students. "We were surprised that Manipur did not meet the 31% reservation requirement for tribal students," said Duigaipao, President of the Tribal Students Union, and Seiboi Haokip, General Secretary of ATSUM. "According to the Manipur University admission exam results published on August 23, the issue recurs every year, but it is never resolved, proving that Manipur University officials never cared about indigenous students." They questioned, "Why do non-tribal students receive more reservations than native students?"[6]

Tribal students expressed dissatisfaction with Manipur University's reservation policy, which provided only 7.5% of the reservation instead of the stipulated 31%.

The percentage of reservations should be proportional to the State's population. However, the Manipur University authorities computed the rate incorrectly, resulting in a mismatch with the population. Due to the limited number of student admissions at Manipur University, all Manipur tribal student organizations revolted and protested. Tribal students demanded 34.3% job reservations and 34.3% admissions to Manipur University.[7] The Kuki Students' Organization (KSO), MUTSU, and All Naga Students' Association of Manipur (ANSAM) advised ST students not to enroll in Manipur University to support their demands for better rights. They further requested that ST students not enroll at Manipur University until the CEI (Central Educational Institutions) Reservation in Admission Amendment Act 2012 goes into effect. Almost all Manipur University ST students fled the campus a few weeks ago due to the reservation issue.

Students criticized Manipur University's motivation for reducing tribal reservations from 31% to 7.5%. [8] As part of its agitation against the cut-off reservation from 31% to 7.5%, Manipur University's tribal students' association barricaded the University's main gate. MUTSU President M. Joute termed the new policy "very offensive" and suggested that the University scrap it in favor of the previous reservation system. The MUTSU had previously staged protests on April 30 and May 1, 2016, demanding reconsidering the entry reservation scheme. The University's Deans' Committee resolved on April 4, 2016, to reduce the entrance reservations for indigenous students. Subsequently, on October 12, 2016, the Students' Union organized a protest rally against Manipur University's reservation policy, emphasizing that it is a Central University. However, the University's Academic Council adhered to the Central Government's stance, which tribal students vehemently opposed. In response, the Manipur University Tribal Students' Union (ATSUM) has been advocating for the implementation of State reservations and has threatened to stage a series of protests if their demands are unmet.[9]

The ongoing protests caused disruptions, resulting in the suspension of classes. Furthermore, the Academic Council's decision on Manipur University's Postgraduate (PG) admission policy has raised severe concerns regarding law and order in Manipur. Although Manipur University is a central university, the situation has significantly impacted the State's law and order.

A tribal students' organization has issued an ultimatum, threatening to blockade the State of the University's hastily enacted resolution, which remains in effect within four days.[10] Moreover, the students have been advised not to submit assignments or participate in in-class activities until the CEI (Central Educational Institutions) Reservation in Admission Amendment Act, 2012, becomes operational.

A Central University in Manipur provides a clear example of the impact of reservation regulations on educational institutions. The educational disparities between the upper caste and the Scheduled Tribes (ST) were stark. When examining the percentage of STs who benefited from the reservation policy, it is possible to conclude that they benefited from the reserve. Most STs who previously did not have access to education have been able to fill all of the reserved places at higher education institutions. Following the implementation of the Principal Act of 2006, all Central Educational Institutes nationwide had to follow the reservation norms outlined in sections 3 (ii) and (iii), i.e., a third of the seats reserved.[11] Adopting the State reservation regulations after Manipur University and other Government Colleges revised the Act is unjust.

The Court concluded that the reserve proportion for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) must be computed based on the second clause, i.e., by using the SC and ST reservation pricing before the Act of 2006. The addition of two provisos to section 3 will have a prospective impact. As a result, even after the Act's revision, Manipur University must follow the percentages for reservations established for SC and ST, particularly in Section 3 (i) and (ii), i.e., (reservation of seats in CEI). Before implementing the 2006 Act, the percentages of reservations for OBC, ST, and SC admission to various programs at Manipur University were 17 percent, 31 percent, and 2 percent, respectively.[12] The Judge ruled that provisos were introduced to Section 3 of the Act to preserve ST rights. The second proviso inserted into Section 3 of the Act of 2006 came into existence to primarily protect the interests of ST in the Northeastern States.[13] This article presents the facts and concludes with observations on the issues of reservation policies in educational institutions in Manipur. For ST student reservations to be effective, they must include reserved school seats and ensure their graduates are well-prepared for suitable jobs.

2. Manipur's Medical Departments' Reservation Policies: Issues and Concerns

The overall reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Scheduled Castes (SC) in Manipur's medical departments shall not exceed 50 percent. As a result, the actual reserve percentages for SC, ST, and OBC in Manipur are 3%, 34%, and 13%, respectively. The All Tribal Students' Union Manipur (ATSUM) has advocated for the rigorous and efficient execution of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) reservation policy. ATSUM has also requested special recruitment for ST to fill backlog vacancies in all Manipur State agencies and central institutions. As a result, Manipur's administration informed all State Central institution heads, including Regional Institutes of Medical Science (RIMS) and Jawaharlal Nehru Institutes of Medical Science (JNIMS), of the reservation policy on June 28, 2016.

However, ATSUM claims that all central government institutions operating in the State deliberately disobeyed the DoPT reservation policy. For example, in 2016, RIMS Imphal attempted to recruit 134 Multitasking Staff with reservations for Unreserved 68, OBC 36, SC 20, and ST 10 (only 7.5% for ST), which is unacceptable.[14] ATSUM has asked the State Government and the RIMS authorities to halt the recruitment process for the 9 Lower Divisional Clerk (LDC) posts until the issue has cleared up. If the reserved quota remains unset, ATSUM warned that it will resort to "any type of agitation to voice our dissatisfaction and anguish." On July 2, 2019, the ATSUM cited "consistent denial of tribal constitutional rights." They urged the State Government and the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) to take the necessary steps to correct the reservation quota. According to an ATSUM statement signed by Seiboi Haokip, the latest announcement of RIMS LDC recruiting is a "total violation of reservation policy" for recruitment to Group "C" and "D" jobs in Central institutions. [15]

Preference for ST and SC candidates is based on their demographic proportion in individual States/UTs, except in Delhi, according to Chapter 2 of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) reservation booklet. The non-teaching employees stated they would not back down from their demands and escalate their requests if the Director did not listen.

ATSUM has also opposed the advertisement, demanding a 34 percent reservation for ST candidates. Although the RIMS administration professes to follow the Central Government Reservation Policy of 2% for SC and 31% for ST, the policy has never come into force at the institute. As a result, the number of teaching posts in RIMS is relatively low, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Teaching Staff, Regional Institutes of Medical Science, Imphal, Manipur

Name of Departments	Overall Teaching Staff	ST Teaching Staff
Academic	09	00
Anesthesiology	19	00
Anatomy	13	01/02
Biochemistry	06	00
Cardiology	01	00
Clinical Psychology	06	00
Community Medicine	09	00
Dermatology, Venereology, Leprosy	04	00
Forensic Medicine	06	00
Medicine	23	01/02
Microbiology	10	01
Nephrology	02	00
Obstetrics and Gynecology	19	01
Ophthalmology	07	00
Orthopedics	09	02
Otorhinolaryngology	08	01
Paediatrics	09	02
Pathology	25	02/03
Pharmacology	08	00
Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation	06	00
Physiology	13	01/02
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	05	00
Psychiatry	05	00
Radiodiagnosis	05	00
Radiotherapy	05	00
Respiratory Medicine	03	00
Surgery	23	03
Transfusion Medicine	05	00
Urology	08	00
Biostatistics	01	00
Computer Section/it cell	04	00
Physical Education	01	00
Telemedicine Centre	01 (Total: 278)	00 (Total: 12-16)

[16]

A closer examination of the faculty composition at the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) reveals a stark disparity in the representation of Scheduled Tribes (ST). Out of 278 teaching staff, only 12-16 faculty members from ST service constitute a mere 6% to 9% of the total faculty. The representation falls significantly short of the mandated 31% reservation for ST candidates in faculty and teaching positions. The breakdown of the faculty composition is telling. While ST individuals occupy a paltry 12-16 positions, the remaining 262 teaching staff comprise individuals from the OBC, SC, and general categories.

Furthermore, 23 out of 33 departments do not have a single ST faculty member on their teaching staff. According to the reservation policy, RIMS must advertise for positions; if no qualified candidates exist, they may hire others. However, the excuse that qualified candidates from the tribal community are scarce is unacceptable, given that ST individuals occupy less than 10% of the reserved positions. The data indicates a scarcity of qualified teaching staff and faculty from the reserved group.

Moreover, the authorities have claimed that while they received numerous applications from PhD holders, these candidates did not meet the requirements stipulated by the appointment authorities. However, faculty members have countered that only a handful of PhD holders are eligible in the first place, and the number of reserved category applicants is significantly lower. Implementing the new University Grants Commission (UGC) 13-point roster system has further exacerbated the issue. This system would reduce the number of faculty positions allocated to SC, ST, and OBC and the number of SC and ST faculty members. In contrast, the old 200-point system reserved teaching jobs by considering a single University entity.[17]

3. Reservation Issues in ST Teachers' Appointments at Government Higher Secondary Schools

The Indian Government's Higher Secondary School quota system has a long history, dating back to India's Independence. The underlying idea was that education was the primary means for lower castes to achieve social mobility. There was a widespread perception that higher castes, nearly as numerous as Indigenous people, had monopolized employment opportunities.

In this context, the Manipur High Court's decision is noteworthy. The concept that each department should be treated as a unit and adhere to reservation regulations is theoretically sound. However, following the roster method, these quotas may not be met within a lifetime. Departmental percentages can only occur introduction after regular recruitment processes are in place.

A more pressing concern is that numerous recruitment opportunities have been left unfilled across higher secondary schools. With such a significant backlog, discussions about reservations seem futile. A department-by-department professor quota system would be logical if this issue gets resolved. Nevertheless, reservation policy rules continue to overshadow academic and intellectual considerations, jeopardizing the Higher Secondary School's purpose. Implementing this policy will undoubtedly alter the social composition of university professors, particularly at senior levels. The following evidence table illustrates the employment of lecturers on a contract basis for various Government higher secondary schools in 2018:

Table 2: Appointment of Lecturer on a contract basis in 2018

Subject	Social Category				Reservation Category			
	UR	OBC	SC	ST	UR	OBC	SC	ST
Botany	15	29	03	21	35	11	01	21
Chemistry	11	27	06	20	34	09	01	20
English	29	48	12	45	69	22	02	41
Home Science	15	22	02	17	29	09	01	17
Political Science	07	33	03	33	40	12	01	23
Zoology	09	33	05	20	34	12	01	20
Geography	03	10	01	06	11	03	00	06
Education	05	05	02	05	10	02	00	05
History	05	08	01	09	13	03	00	07
Economics	04	01	00	03	05	01	00	02
Physics	01	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Math	01	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Total	105	216	35	179	280	84	07	162

[18] **Abbreviation:** UN – Unreserved

Table 3: Appointment of Lecturer in 2015

Subject	Category				Total
	General	OBC	SC	ST	
Anthropology	00	02	00	05	07
Bengali	02	00	00	00	02
Botany	01	10	00	14	25
Chemistry	04	04	00	25	33
Computer Science	00	00	00	07	07
Economics	00	04	00	05	09
Education	00	00	00	30	30
English	00	00	00	11	11
Geography	00	00	00	02	02
Geology	00	08	01	22	31
Hindi	01	03	02	25	31
History	00	00	00	20	20
Home Science	00	00	00	25	25
Mathematics	03	05	00	24	32
Philosophy	00	00	00	07	07
Physics	02	04	00	33	39
Political Science	00	00	00	07	07
Sociology	00	00	00	08	08
Statistic	00	04	00	03	07
Zoology	00	03	00	11	14

[19]

Table 4: Appointment of Lecturers in 2014

	No. of Post	ST with percent	31%	Shortfall
Regularised	707	114 (16 percent)	219	105
Direct Recruitment	217	172 (79 percent)	67	-105
Total	924	286 (31 percent)	286	00

[20]

In 2016, the Government regularized 707 lecturers, with only 114 (16 percent) belonging to the Scheduled Tribes (ST). The current figure is less than the mandated 31% reservation, resulting in a deficiency of 105 lecturers. To rectify this error, the Government announced new direct recruitment on November 9, 2014, with 172 seats allocated to ST candidates (79 percent). However, this move was a direct violation of existing recruitment legislation. This decision unwittingly disappointed the aspirations of eligible tribal students by failing to uphold their policy and comply with the statute.[21] The Government's questionable actions do not end there. Examining the positions filled before this recruitment reveals a persistent under-representation of ST candidates despite the reservation requirement to meet the requirement in 2014.

Various student and teacher organizations have urged the Government to pass an ordinance restoring the 200-point roster for reservation in teaching positions, which considers the college or University a unit. As illustrated in Table 5, there was a clear violation of the reserve principle for teachers in Manipur:

Table 5: Manipur's Social Classes and Teacher Numbers

Total Overall		Total	SC		Total
Female	Male		Female	Male	
2174	2557	4731	79	169	248
OBC			ST		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
359	299	658	345	273	618

[22]

The total number of teachers in Manipur is 4731, comprising 618 teachers from Scheduled Tribes (ST) and 658 from Other Backward Classes (OBC). Notably, the number of OBC teachers exceeds that of ST teachers, which is inconsistent with the allocated reservations. The reserved quota for OBC is 17%, whereas for ST, it is 31%. This disparity raises concerns about the equitable distribution of reservations. Furthermore, the overall number of teachers from Scheduled Castes (SC) and ST is inequitable, given that the reservation provision for ST is 31%, while for SC, it is only 2%. This disparity suggests that the Manipur Government has distributed reservation percentages inequitably.

4. Reservation Issues in the Appointment of Assistant Professors, 2015

The Manipur High Court witnessed disputes surrounding the appointment case of Assistant Professor—Lisham Henthoba vs State of Manipur, High Court, January 11, 2017. On October 27, 2015, the Manipur Public Service Commission (MPSC) examined Assistant Professor positions in the State. According to information obtained from the MPSC, the following are the names and roll numbers of candidates who applied for the advertised Assistant Professor positions:

Table 6: Names and roll numbers of candidates who applied for the Assistant Professor

Name	Roll No	Name	Roll No
Henthoba	105862	Wahengbam Bisheshwar Singh	113663
Ashok Kumar Oinam	105764	Loitongbam Romeo Sing	1134420
Ibotomba Singh	113296	Taibangjam Loidang Chanu	114267
Bonny Singh	113549	Khomdram Guneshwor Singh	104708
R.K Sona Devi	1132410	Leishangthem Surendrajit Singh	1068712
Bibolnanda Singh	1123615	Moirangthem Bijoy Singh	1040313
K. Mangijaobi Devi	1106518	Thangjam Premkumar Singh	1132014
Ibosana Sigh	106425	Khumanthem Orlendro Singh	1063616
Salam Roman Singh	1143221	Thiyam Rojita Chanu	1105217
Jameson Maibam	11219	Yumnam Bembem Devi	1141719

[23]

A group of candidates who took the screening/written test on October 27, 2015, for the position of Assistant Professor, as advertised, failed to qualify. Consequently, these candidates filed a petition at the Manipur High Court. The petitioners submitted a writ petition to set aside the Manipur Public Service Commission's (MPSC) advertisement dated November 15, 2014, and the Corrigendum dated November 26, 2014.[24] The petitioners claimed that they hold Master's degrees, with some also holding PhDs and possessing qualifications such as JRF/NET or SLET. Therefore, they asserted they are competent and eligible for Assistant Professor Positions in Government Colleges. According to the Manipur Government, there were 285 vacant Assistant Professor posts. However, the Government approved 418 Assistant Professor Vacancies to regularize Part-time Lecturers in Government Colleges. The reservation policy stipulated that there would be 15 posts for OBC (Meitei Pangals), 20 posts for OBC (Meitei), 58 seats for Unreserved (UR), and 184 posts for Scheduled Tribes (ST).

A Corrigendum dated November 26, 2014, added three posts for persons with palsy, three seats for persons with hearing impairments, and three positions for persons with visual impairments. Additionally, there were three positions for OBC (O). [25] The challenged advertisement broke up the reservation quota in violation of India's and Manipur's reservation policies. The State Government did not utilize all the newly created positions to recruit Assistant Professors in Government Colleges through the MPSC.

Therefore, by issuing the contested advertisement, the State Government violated both the Manipur Reservation Rules, 2011, and the Honorable Supreme Court's 50% rule. The petitioners filed the current writ petition, alleging that the challenged advertisement had wronged them. The calculation consisted of 703 openings instead of 280 for Assistant Professors. Consequently, OBC, SC and ST reservations do not exceed the required jobs. All 703 Government College Lecturer/Assistant Professor positions exist.

The responding deponent affirmed that places booking for places followed the Manipur Notification No. 9/1/91-DP (SC/ST) dated 17-05-2011 and the Manipur Gazette on 20-05-2011. The arrangement makes for 280 vacancies and 418 part-time academics who now occupy such positions, according to the replying deponent's advertisement dated November 15, 2014. A group of petitioners filed a writ against the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Department of Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC). They claimed that the reservation of posts for Assistant Professor appointments had surpassed the 50 percent ceiling set by the Supreme Court of India. After hearing the learned counsel for the parties, the Court issued an interim order dated January 28, 2015, in WP (C) No. 993 of 2014.[26] According to the impugned advertisement dated November 15, 2014, the total number of vacancies for the post of assistant professor was 280. Approximately 79.3% of the total seats, 184, were set aside for ST, 20 for OBC (M), 15 for OBC (MP), and 3 for OBC (O). The 50 percent reservation rule, established by the Supreme Court of India and reiterated in the Manipur Reservation Rules, 2011, is not being followed.

Reservation based on vacancies is no longer permissible in light of the legislation the Hon'ble Supreme Court handed down. As a result, securing posts for Assistant Professor appointments contradicts the requirements of the Manipur Reservation Rules, 2011. Schedules I and II should maintain a distinct Model Roster for Direct Recruitment and Promotion.[27] The State Government has not prepared for the model roster's first operation in the Assistant Professors cadre. The model roster is mandatory when making appointments to achieve the State Government's reservation policy goals. Following filling 280 advertised part-time teacher positions,

the State could not argue that it had failed to reserve appointments. It is also important to emphasise that the State's claims in its affidavit remain silent in the contested advertisement.[28] The impugned MPSC advertisement dated 15-11-2014 is invalid in the law regarding the reservation of positions.

The contested advertisement has two aspects: the excessive post reservations and the other relating to the screening exam and personality test. Undeniably, the State Government imposed severe reservations without the candidates' consent. Moreover, the candidates have yet to learn the personality test results. According to Rule 3 of the Manipur Reservation Rules 2011, the State Government must allocate the reservation quota among reserved categories based on the percentage of reservations.[29] The State Government must also ensure that the rights of individuals participating in the selection process are protected. The Henthoba case was filed due to excessive reservation, violating Supreme Court principles and the Manipur Services Rules, 2011.[30] In contrast, the All Tribal Students' Union Manipur (ATSUM) urged the State Government to fulfil their August 2019 agreement regarding ST backlog jobs. The union expressed gratitude for the State government's cabinet decision on June 5 to fill 190 assistant professor positions at Government Colleges.[31]

However, the backlog vacancies remained unfilled until the High Court of Manipur intervened, as the recruitment notice failed to specify ST backlog vacancies. On November 17, 2017, ATSUM and the State Government agreed to notify assistant professor recruitment to fill ST backlogs concurrently with the recruitment announcement. Unfortunately, this agreement remains unimplemented. Regarding indirect recruitment of Group C and D jobs at Central institutions, ATSUM requested careful monitoring of the reservation quantum, which is precisely 34% in Group C and D posts. The rules apply to institutions, including Manipur University, Central Agriculture University, and the National Institute of Technology. ATSUM also advocated abolishing "piecemeal recruitment," which distorts ST reservations in the recruitment process.

5. Issues in Higher Education Enrollment and Admission

The reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in higher education did not exist as a national policy in the 1950s. However, its implementation remains incomplete in India. The population proportions of these categories determine the percentages of reserved seats. Some states allocate fewer seats to Other Backward Classes (OBC). The general admission process fills slots based on merit, with applicants selected from the top of the relevant test results.[32] This Analysis examines the existing evidence on the positive and adverse effects of reservation policies on higher education admissions in Manipur over the past half-century. Although the data is relatively limited in scope, particularly regarding long-term implications, relevant research has accumulated over the past four decades, shedding light on the impact of reservation systems on higher education admissions. The table below illustrates the percentage of tribal students enrolled in higher educational institutions based on the reservation policy.

Table 7: ST Enrolment in Higher Education during the last 8 years in Manipur

State	Scheduled Tribes	Scheduled Tribes	
Manipur	Male	Female	Total
2011-2012	16367	14475	30842
2012-2013	16482	14801	31283
2013-2014	19324	19603	38927
2014-2015	17350	15273	32623
2015-2016	16192	14306	30498
2016-2017	16214	14913	31127
2017-2018	17636	16100	33736
2018-2019	18323	17453	35776

[33]

Table 8: Manipur's Scheduled Tribes Gross Enrollment Ratio over the last eight years

Years	Scheduled Tribes (Male)	Scheduled Tribes (Female)	Total
2011-2012	20.5	18.2	19.4
2012-2013	20.8	18.7	19.8
2013-2014	24.6	25.0	24.8
2014-2015	22.2	19.6	20.9
2015-2016	20.9	18.5	19.7
2016-2017	21.0	19.4	20.2
2017-2018	23.0	21.0	22.0
2018-2019	24.1	23.0	23.5

[34]

The Indian Government's quota policy for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in higher education admissions is one of the most challenging and contentious measures undertaken. Despite its controversy, the reservation policy has steadily increased the number of ST students enrolled in higher education. In Manipur, the quota policy has undoubtedly improved ST students' access to higher education. However, a closer examination reveals that only a tiny percentage of ST students complete their higher education. The primary reasons for this disparity are twofold. Firstly, the reservation policy has failed to bridge the socioeconomic gap between ST students and the general population. Secondly, the policy has yielded unfavorable outcomes, including increased dropout rates, prolonged stagnation, and poor academic performance.

The root cause of these negative consequences lies in the poor execution of the reservation policy and other affirmative measures. Despite these challenges, the ST ratio in higher education institutions in Manipur increased from 19.4% to 23.5% between 2011 and 2018. This growth is notable, considering that ST students comprised approximately half to a third of the total enrollment in higher education institutions by the end of 2018. Closer data analysis reveals that around 60% of all higher education enrollment of students from Manipur are in low-status arts programs. In contrast, ST students comprise 71% of enrolled students in these programs. Conversely, the enrollment rates of ST students in prestigious disciplines like medicine, law, engineering, and technology are significantly lower than those of the general population.

Expectedly, ST students make up a smaller proportion than expected in Master's and doctoral programs than in bachelor's degree programs. These findings underscore the impact of the Reservation Policy on ST enrollment. India's reservation regulations have contributed significantly to enrolling ST students in Manipur's higher education institutions. A key finding of this study is that the reservation policy has helped boost college attendance rates among disadvantaged groups like the ST. Affirmative action faces frequent questioning about its effectiveness, but the research suggests that it operates as intended.

6. Conclusion

The implementation of reservation policies in Manipur turns into controversy and inequity. Despite the State Government's efforts to provide reservations for Scheduled Tribes (ST), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), the policies suffer from poor implementation, leading to underrepresentation and unequal opportunities. The article highlights several issues, including the manipulation of reservation quotas, the failure to fill backlog vacancies, and the inadequate representation of ST candidates in teaching positions. The reservation policy faces criticism for being inadequate, with a notable underrepresentation of ST communities in higher education institutions. Furthermore, the article notes that the reservation policy has had limited success in improving the socioeconomic status of STs in Manipur. While the policy has increased access to higher education for ST students, it has not translated into better outcomes, with high dropout rates and poor performance being significant concerns. Overall, the article concludes that the reservation policy in Manipur requires a thorough overhaul to address the existing inequities and ensure that efficient implementation characterizes policy execution to benefit the intended beneficiaries.

References

1. All Tribal Students Union Manipur, Halt recruitment process of RIMS LDC until rectification in reservation quota. (2019, July 2). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
2. All Tribal Students Union Manipur, Moots stir over recruitment backlog. (2018, November 19). *E-pao*, Imphal, Manipur.
3. All Tribal Students Union Manipur, Warns national high way bandth. (2019, July 28). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
4. All Tribal Students Union Manipur, Alleges red-tapism. (2019, November 10). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
5. All Tribal Students Union Manipur, Reminds the Government of its charter of demands. (2018, November 18). *The People's Chronicle*, Imphal, Manipur.
6. All Tribal Students Union Manipur, Regional institutes medical of science, Multitasking. (2019, March 5). *The Sangai Express*. *e-pao.net*, Imphal, Manipur.
7. Annual Report. (2014-2019). *Regional institutes of medical science, Imphal, Manipur*.
8. Chandramouli. (2011). *Data highlights: The scheduled tribes census of India 2011*. Registrar General and Census Commissioner, New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs.
9. Central Educational Institutions. (2012). *Reservation in admission amendment act, Act 031 of 2012, India*.
10. *Enrolment of scheduled tribe students in higher education in Manipur from 2011-2019, Imphal, Manipur*.
11. Government of India. (2007, January 3). *The central educational institutions reservation in admission act, 2006, Act No. 5 of 2007*.
12. Gupta, A., & Aaleya, Giri. (2019, July 2). Violation of reservation in top posts at University. *The Hindu Times*, India.
13. Indian Statistical Institute. (2014). Policy for Reservation in Admission. (2018-2019). *In the Court of Manipur at Imphal, Writ Petition (C) No. 753 of 2014*.
14. Lh Seitinthang. (2014, August 24). Exposition of reservation norms in Manipur university. *The Sangai Express, Imphal, Manipur*.
15. Lisham Henthoba vs. the State of Manipur. (2017, January 11). *Manipur high court, Imphal Manipur*. Available at <https://www.casemine.com>
16. Mishra, U. (2019, May 27). *Impact of reservation on education system*. Available at: <https://wrytin.com>.
17. Manipur University. (2019-2020). *Academic department e prospectus*.
18. Manipur Public Service Commission. (2014, November 15). *Advertisement No.15 of 2014, for direct recruitment to Assistant Professor of Government Colleges, Imphal, Manipur*.
19. Manipur Public Service Commission. (2015, September 18). *Result in higher secondary school lecturer, notification No.7/15/2014-MPSC (DR), Imphal, Manipur*.

20. Meetei, T. Phulen. (2019, November 25). *Secretariat: Education department, school section, appointment of lecturer on contract basis at government higher secondary school, Imphal, Manipur.*
21. Ministry of Education. (2019-2019). *All India survey of higher education report*. Available at: <https://www.education.gov.in>.
22. Mukherjee S. (2014). *Reservation policy*, New Delhi: Variety Books Publisher's Distributors, pp. 101-102.
23. Manipur reservation of vacancies in posts and services (for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes) rules, 2011, Imphal, Manipur.
24. Manipur Public Service Commission. (2014, November 15). *Recruitment of 280 assistant professors on various subjects, advertisement No.15/2014, Imphal, Manipur.*
25. Public Awareness on Reservation Norm in Manipur in Higher Education. (2016, September 15). *Organised by kuki students' organization general headquarters, Imphal, Manipur.*
26. Reservation in the Principal Rules. (2016, March 9). *Notification No. 1201, 2016. gazette extraordinary*. Published by the Authority, India.
27. The reservation row hits Manipur Varsity. (2016, September 26). *The Telegraph*, India.
28. Regional Institutes of Medical Science, Yet to adopt reservation norms of Centre. (2014, June 16). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
29. Union grant commission directed all universities to implement the reservation policy in admissions and appointments in 2016, India.
30. Union Grant Commission. (2020). *Regulations and eligibility of assistant professor, JRF and Ph.D. degree holders, India.*
31. Yumkhaibam, R. (2016, October 18). What reservation should usually be followed at Manipur University?. *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [1] Mukherjee, S. (2014). *Reservation policy*. New Delhi: Variety Books Publisher's Distributors, pp. 101-102.
- [2] C. Chandramouli. (2011). *Data Highlights: The Scheduled Tribes Census of India 2011*. New Delhi: Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs
- [3] Union Grant Commission directed all universities to Implement the Reservation Policy in admissions and appointments 2016, India.
- [4] All Tribal Students Union Manipur Warns National High Way Bandh. (2019, July 28). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [5] Yumkhaiba, R. (2016, October 18). What reservation should usually follow these steps at Manipur University? *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [6] All Tribal Students Union Manipur Alleges Red-tapism. (2019, November 10). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [7] Lh. Seitinthang. (2014, August 24). Exposition of Reservation Norms in Manipur University. *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [8] The reservation row hits Manipur Varsity. (2016, September 26). *The Telegraph*, India.
- [9] All Tribal Students Union Manipur. (2018, November 18). It Reminds the Government of its charter of demands, *The People's Chronicle*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [10] All Tribal Students Union Manipur Warns National High Way band. (2019, July 28). *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [11] Government of India. (2007, January 3). The Central Educational Institutions Reservation in Admission Act, 2006, Act No. 5 of 2007.
- [12] Manipur University. (2020). Academic Department E Prospectus, 2019-2020.
- [13] In The High Court of Manipur at Imphal, Writ Petition (C) No. 753 of 2014
- [14] All Tribal Students Union Manipur. (2019, March 5). Regional Institutes Medical of Science, Multitasking, *The Sangai Express*, *e-pao.net*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [15] All Tribal Students Union Manipur. (2019, July 2). Halt recruitment process of RIMS LDC until rectification in reservation quota, *The Sangai Express*, Imphal, Manipur.
- [16] Annual Report. (2014-2019). Regional Institutes of Medical Science, Imphal, Manipur.
- [17] Central Educational Institutions. (2012, June 19). Reservation in Admission Amendment Act 031 of 2012.

[18] Meetei, T. Phulen, (2019, November 25). Secretariat: Education Department, School Section, Appointment of Lecturer on contract basis at Government Higher Secondary School, Imphal, Manipur.

[19] Manipur Public Service Commission. (2015, September 18). Result in Higher Secondary School Lecturer. Notification No.7/15/2014-MPSC, Imphal, Manipur.

[20] Public Awareness on Reservation Norm in Manipur, in Higher Education. (2016, September 15). Organised by: Kuki Students' Organization General Head Quarter.

[21] Gupta, A., & Giri Aaleya Giri. (2019, July 2). Violation of reservation in top posts at University, *The Hindu Times*, India.

[22] Ministry of Education. (2019-2020). All India Survey of Higher Education Report, Available at <https://www.education.gov.in>.

[23] Lisham Henthoba vs. the State of Manipur. (2017, January 11). Manipur High Court, Imphal, Available at <https://www.casemine.com>.

[24] Manipur Public Service Commission, Advertisement No.15 of 2014, for direct recruitment to Assistant Professor of Government Colleges, Imphal Manipur.

[25] Union Grant Commission. (2020). Regulations and eligibility of Assistant Professor, JRF and PhD degree holders, India.

[26] Lisham Henthoba vs. the State of Manipur. (2017, January 11). Manipur High Court, Imphal, Manipur. Available at <https://www.casemine.com>.

[27] Manipur reservation of vacancies in posts and services (Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes) rules, 2011, Imphal, Manipur.

[28] Manipur Public Service Commission. (2014, November 15). Recruitment of 280 Assistant Professor on various Subjects. Advertisement No. 15/2014, Imphal, Manipur.

[29] Reservation in the Principal Rules. (2016, March 9). Notification No. 1201, 2016, Gazette Extraordinary, published by the authority.

[30] Lisham Henthoba vs. The State of Manipur. (2018, January 17). Item No. 15, Court No.12, Section XVI – A, Imphal, Manipur.

[31] All Tribal Students Union Manipur. (2018, November 19). Moots stir over recruitment backlog, *E-pao*, Imphal, Manipur.

[32] Mishra, U. (2019, May 27). Impact of Reservation on Education System. Available at <https://wrytin.com>.

[33] Enrolment of Scheduled Tribe Students in Higher Education in Manipur from 2011-2019, Imphal, Manipur.

[34] Indian Statistical Institute. (2018-2019). Policy for Reservation in Admission.

Disclaimer / Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Journals and/or the editor(s). Journals and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.