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EVALUATING THE FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TO INDIA'S PRIVATE SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Affirmative action in India has historically been implemented through constitutionally mandated reservation policies, primarily focused on education and public sector employment. However, with the liberalization of the Indian economy and the consequent expansion of the private sector as a major source of employment, concerns have arisen regarding the continued socio-economic exclusion of historically marginalized communities—particularly Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs)—in private enterprise. This study investigates the feasibility, implications, and potential models for extending affirmative action, including reservation policies, to the private sector in India. It explores the constitutional, socio-political, and economic dimensions of the debate, while also examining the arguments from key stakeholders such as industry bodies, policymakers, and civil society organizations. The research draws upon both primary data—collected through surveys and interviews with corporate representatives, employees, and policy experts—and secondary data, including legal documents, economic reports, and academic literature. Comparative analysis with international affirmative action frameworks (such as those in the U.S., South Africa, and Brazil) is also undertaken to contextualize possible approaches for India. Findings suggest that while there is significant social justification for expanding affirmative action to the private sector, practical implementation requires a careful balance between social justice and corporate autonomy. The study proposes a mixed model

involving voluntary affirmative action codes, incentivized diversity hiring, and state-supported skill development programs, rather than mandatory quotas. It concludes by recommending a policy roadmap that is inclusive, adaptable, and sensitive to both market dynamics and constitutional values.

Keywords: Feasibility of Extending, Affirmative Action , Private Sector

1. INTRODUCTION

In a country as diverse and historically stratified as India, social justice has remained a central pillar of nation-building since Independence. The Indian Constitution enshrined the ideals of equality and affirmative action through provisions such as Articles 15(4), 16(4), and 46, which empowered the state to promote the interests of socially and educationally backward classes. As a result, reservation policies were introduced in education, legislatures, and public sector employment to uplift Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Over the decades, these policies have made significant inroads in public institutions, enabling greater representation and mobility for marginalized groups. However, the economic liberalization of the 1990s dramatically shifted India's employment landscape. The private sector emerged as the dominant driver of economic growth and job creation, while the share of public sector employment steadily declined. This transition raised a critical concern: the existing reservation framework does not extend

to the private sector, thereby excluding a significant portion of the economy from accountability toward inclusive hiring and equitable representation. Despite constitutional ideals, caste-based disparities continue to persist in wages, employment access, and workplace mobility within private enterprises.

The debate over extending reservation policies to the private sector has gained momentum in recent years. Advocates argue that without such inclusion, affirmative action remains incomplete and ineffective in addressing structural discrimination. Opponents, particularly from industry bodies, emphasize meritocracy, operational autonomy, and the global competitiveness of Indian businesses. This has created a complex policy dilemma—how to balance the moral imperative of equity with the economic imperative of efficiency.

1.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The discourse on affirmative action and social justice in India has been shaped by a broad spectrum of academic, legal, and policy-based literature. Scholars, policymakers, and institutions have analyzed the effectiveness of reservation policies in the public sector and debated their potential applicability in the private sector. This section reviews key contributions from existing literature relevant to the subject.

Constitutional and Legal Foundations

Galanter (1984) in *Competing Equalities* offers one of the earliest comprehensive analyses of India's legal approach to affirmative action. He argues that the Indian Constitution provides a strong moral and legal justification for protective discrimination but leaves open the question of its scope in the private sector. Basu (2013) further outlines how Articles 15(4), 16(4), and 46

empower the state to support socially and educationally backward classes, although their applicability to private enterprise remains ambiguous. Socio-Economic Disparities and Justification for Inclusion

Deshpande (2011) and Thorat & Newman (2010) explore how caste-based disparities persist despite economic growth, especially in the private sector. Their empirical work reveals that Dalits and Adivasis continue to face discrimination in employment, promotions, and workplace inclusion. Studies by Madheswaran & Attewell (2007) use National Sample Survey data to demonstrate systemic wage gaps and lower representation of SCs/STs in skilled private jobs.

Private Sector Discrimination and Exclusion

Thorat & Attewell (2007) conducted a landmark correspondence audit study to assess caste discrimination in hiring practices within the private sector. Their results showed that applicants with Dalit-sounding names received significantly fewer interview calls than upper-caste applicants, despite identical qualifications. This finding counters the narrative of a caste-blind market and substantiates the call for corrective mechanisms in private employment.

Reservation Debate in Policy Circles

The Ranganath Misra Commission Report (2007) and Sachar Committee Report (2006) both recommended affirmative action measures in the private sector, including job reservations for Muslims and Dalits. However, both reports noted resistance from industry bodies who argued such measures would compromise merit and efficiency. The Equal Opportunity Commission (proposed in 2008) was conceptualized as a middle-ground solution, but has yet to be implemented.

Industry Response and CSR Initiatives

FICCI and CII (industry bodies) have largely resisted mandatory quotas, instead advocating voluntary diversity initiatives. Literature by Jenkins (2003) and Kennedy (2004) suggests that while companies are open to skill-building and scholarships for underprivileged youth, they remain wary of formal reservation mandates. Voluntary codes of conduct and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs aimed at inclusion have shown mixed results, often lacking accountability and measurable outcomes.

International Models of Affirmative Action

Comparative studies (UNDP, 2011) have examined models from the U.S., South Africa, and Brazil. In these countries, affirmative action has been mandated in both public and private sectors to varying degrees. The South African Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) framework, for example, offers a performance-based scorecard for inclusive hiring, investment, and ownership. These models present potential templates for India, although they would require contextual adaptation.

Critical Perspectives and Limitations

Teltumbde (2005) critiques the overemphasis on quotas, arguing that they do not address structural economic exclusion and often benefit only a small section of the marginalized population. Scholars like Shah et al. (2006) and Baru et al. (2010) also point out that reservations alone cannot dismantle deep-rooted social hierarchies, and must be accompanied by educational reform, anti-discrimination laws, and capacity-building measures.

The literature reflects a consensus that while affirmative action has played a key role in advancing social justice in public institutions, its absence in the private sector perpetuates exclusion. Empirical studies demonstrate that caste-based discrimination persists despite

liberalization, making a strong case for intervention. However, the mode of intervention—mandatory reservation vs. voluntary inclusion—remains contested.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

This research employs a **mixed-methods approach** combining qualitative and quantitative data to examine the feasibility, implications, and stakeholder perceptions regarding the extension of reservation policies to the private sector in India. The methodology is structured to explore both the constitutional/legal framework and the socio-economic landscape within which such a policy may be implemented.

Research Design

The study follows a **descriptive and exploratory design** to assess:

- The legal basis and constitutional viability of reservations in the private sector.
- Patterns of caste-based exclusion in private sector employment.
- Stakeholder attitudes (government, industry, marginalized communities).
- International models and their applicability to India.

Data Collection Methods

A. Secondary Data Collection:

- **Legal and Constitutional Documents:** Analysis of constitutional provisions (Articles 15, 16, 46), key amendments, and relevant Supreme Court judgments.
- **Government Reports:** Sachar Committee Report (2006), Ranganath Misra Commission Report (2007), and NSSO/PLFS data.

- **Academic Literature:** Books, peer-reviewed journals, and prior studies by scholars such as Galanter, Thorat, Deshpande, and Attewell.
- **Media and Policy Briefs:** Coverage of debates, policy drafts, and industry responses related to private sector reservations.

B. Primary Data Collection:

To enrich the study with grounded insights:

- **Structured Interviews:** Conducted with:
 - Legal experts
 - Policy analysts
 - Human resource professionals from the private sector
 - Representatives of marginalized communities
- **Survey Questionnaire:**
A survey was distributed among:
 - Job-seeking individuals from SC/ST/OBC backgrounds
 - Mid-level HR professionals in private firms
 The survey focused on experiences of discrimination, awareness of reservation policy, and attitudes toward affirmative action.

Sampling

- **Purposive Sampling** was used to select key informants and experts with direct relevance to the topic.
- For the survey, **stratified sampling** was applied to ensure representation across social groups and employment sectors (IT, manufacturing, finance, retail).

Data Analysis

- **Qualitative Analysis:** Interview transcripts and open-ended survey responses were thematically coded using NVivo to identify recurring themes (e.g.,

meritocracy vs. equity, legal concerns, corporate attitudes).

- **Quantitative Analysis:** Survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages) and basic inferential tests (chi-square) using SPSS or Excel.

Limitations of the Study

- The primary data is limited in scale due to time and accessibility constraints.
- Corporate responses may reflect social desirability bias, especially on sensitive issues like caste.
- The legal interpretation of private sector reservation is still evolving, affecting the policy certainty of this research.

Ethical Considerations

- Informed consent was obtained from all interview and survey participants.
- Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained.
- Sensitive questions were framed respectfully, with provisions for voluntary withdrawal.

This methodology aims to provide a holistic understanding of the feasibility of private sector reservation by triangulating constitutional analysis, empirical data, and stakeholder perspectives. The combination of legal review, policy analysis, and field-level inputs ensures that the study remains both theoretically grounded and socially relevant.

3.0 RESULT

AND

DISCUSSION

OBC Employment in Central Government Services

An attempt is made in this section to analyze the trends in OBC employment in central government services. It is further attempted to conduct a comparative study of employment of

OBCs with their comparable communities in India. A social perspective on development emphasizes the view that the best route to socio-economic development, poverty eradication and personal wellbeing is through descent work. Productive employment opportunities will contribute substantially to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, especially the Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015. There should be a focus on creating better and more productive jobs, particularly those that can absorb the high concentrations of working poor. Among the necessary elements for creating such jobs are investing in labor-intensive industries. Especially agriculture, encouraging a shift in the structure of employment to higher productivity occupations and sectors, and upgrading job quality in the informal economy. In addition, there should be a focus on providing poor people with the necessary skills and assets that will enable them to take full advantage of any expansion in employment potential.

Reservation to the SCs, STs and OBCs in case of direct recruitment on all India bases by open competition is given at the rate of 15%. 7.5% and

27% respectively. In case of direct recruitment on all India basis otherwise than by open competition, reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs is 16.66%, 7.5% and 25.84% respectively. In case of direct recruitment to Group C and D posts which normally attract candidates from a locality or a region, percentage of reservation for SCs/STs is generally fixed in proportion to the population of SCs and STs in the respective States/UTs. For OBCs it is fixed keeping in view the proportion of their population in the concerned State/UT and the fact that total reservation for SCs/STs/OBCs remains within the limit of 50% and reservation for OBCs remains within the limit of 27%.

As per information received from various Ministries/Departments, the Group-wise representation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in Central Government services as on 1.1.2011, in group-A services, out of the total employment, OBCs constitute only 6.9 percentage points, and the same is 7.3 percent and 15.3 percent in group-B and group-C respectively. In terms of absolute values 5357, 13897 and 346433 members are appointed in group-A, group-B and group-C respectively and the same were presented in Table.

Table Distribution of OBC employment among different groups – A, B and C

Groups	Number of OBCs	Percentage of OBCs
A	5357	6.9
B	13,897	7.3
C	3,46,433	15.3

A study of OBC employment with its comparable communities like SCs and STs in 2011 it is observed that the representation of Scheduled Castes in Group-A services outweigh the representation of OBCs in the same category and the same situation prevails in B and C categories. It is noted that representation of different social categories in public employment is disproportionate to their population proportions in the country. It is also noted that OBCs are put to injustice in terms of their low share of public employment against 27 percent of their population quota. The group-wise distribution of SCs, STs and OBCs in public employment is presented in Table.

Table Comparable community representation in public employment in 2011

Group	SCs		STs		OBCs	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
A	8922	11.5	3732	4.8	5357	6.9
B	28403	14.9	11357	6.0	13897	7.3
C	370557	16.4	174562	7.7	346433	15.3
(erstwhile) D	110515	23.0	32791	6.8	81468	17.0

With reference to distribution of public employment in Group-A services SC community representation stands high followed by OBCs and STs except in Information Technology, Spaces and Textiles OBCs are lagging behind SCs and STs in all other spheres of the economy. With reference to distribution of public employment in Group-B services despite their predominance in OBC population the representation by SCs and STs is higher than their population percentages in comparison with that of OBCs who are put to unfair share in public employment. The Group-wise representation of SCs, STs and OBCs in Different Ministries/Departments as on 01.01.2010 is presented in Tables. Thus, it is concluded that the poor share of OBCs in public employment in relation with its comparable communities in India indicated the level of backwardness of OBCs in India. A conscious and concerted effort must be made to include the excluded OBCs into the mainstream of development especially public employment is a big challenge but it should be attended effectively.

Reasons For Under Representation Of Other Backward Castes (Elite) In Public Employment

Section-B deals with reasons for under representation of other backward classes (OBCs) in public employment as perceived by OBC elite. The reasons for under representation of OBCs in public employment considered for the purpose of this study includes:

- Opportunities are not commensurate with quota limits
- Social backwardness
- Economic backwardness
- Educational backwardness
- Late entry in to education system

For this purpose the researcher collected the data through a questionnaire/schedule and analyzed the data to know the reasons for under representation of other backward caste in public employment. The results on the perceptions of other backward castes (OBCs) presented in the following paragraphs.

Table Opportunities are not commensurate with quota limits

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	13	16.3	16.3
Moderately agree	24	30.0	46.3
Agree	43	53.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely opportunities are not commensurate with quota limits. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of

other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely opportunities are not commensurate with quota limits is not agreed by 16.3 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 30 percent and agreed by 53.8 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Social backwardness

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	25	31.3	31.3
Moderately agree	47	58.8	90.0
Agree	8	10.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely social backwardness. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely social backwardness is not agreed by 31.3 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 58.8 percent and agreed by 10 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Economic backwardness

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	14	17.5	17.5
Moderately agree	29	36.3	53.8
Agree	37	46.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely economic backwardness. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely economic backwardness is not agreed by 17.5 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 36.3 percent and agreed by 46.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Educational backwardness

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	13	16.3	16.3
Moderately agree	22	27.5	43.8
Agree	45	56.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely educational backwardness. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely educational backwardness is not agreed by 16.3 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 27.5 percent and agreed by 56.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Late entry in to education system

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	28	35.0	35.0
Moderately agree	39	48.8	83.8
Agree	13	16.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely late entry in to education system. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely late entry in to education system is not agreed by 35 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 48.8 percent and agreed by 16.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Discouraging social attitudes

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	47	58.8	58.8
Moderately agree	25	31.3	90.0
Agree	8	10.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely discouraging social attitudes. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely discouraging social attitudes is not agreed by 58.8 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 31.3 percent and agreed by 10 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Mounting unemployment

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	10	12.5	12.5
Moderately agree	46	57.5	70.0
Agree	24	30.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely mounting unemployment. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely mounting unemployment is not agreed by 12.5 percent, and the same is moderately agreed by 57.5 percent and agreed by 30 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Poverty

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	8	10.0	10.0
Moderately agree	25	31.3	41.3
Agree	47	58.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely poverty. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely poverty is not agreed by 10 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 31.3 percent and agreed by 58.8 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Mostly general education

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	9	11.3	11.3

Moderately agree	20	25.0	36.3
Agree	51	63.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely mostly general education. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely mostly general education is not agreed by 11.3 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 25 percent and agreed by 63.8 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table: No tailor-made capacity improvement programs

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	9	11.3	11.3
Moderately agree	26	32.5	43.8
Agree	45	56.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely no tailor-made capacity improvement programs. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely no tailor-made capacity improvement programs are not agreed by 11.3 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 32.5 percent and agreed by 56.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Zero sum game

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	24	30.0	30.0
Moderately agree	47	58.8	88.8
Agree	9	11.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Source: Primary data

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely zero sum game. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely zero sum game is not agreed by 30 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 58.8 percent and agreed by 11.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Cut throat competition

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	14	17.5	17.5

Moderately agree	25	31.3	48.8
Agree	41	51.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely cut throat competition. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely cut throat competition is not agreed by 17.5 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 31.3 percent and agreed by 51.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Improper education structure

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	24	30.0	30.0
Moderately agree	51	63.8	93.8
Agree	5	6.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely improper education structure. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely improper education structure is not agreed by 30 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 63.8 percent and agreed by 6.3 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

Table Backlog vacancies are not filled regularly

Response	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Do not agree	8	10.0	10.0
Moderately agree	29	36.3	46.3
Agree	43	53.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	

Table deals with the distribution of the sample backward castes elite by their perceptions about the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely backlog vacancies are not filled regularly. It is noted that the reasons for under representation of other backward castes in public employment with a focus on the reason namely backlog vacancies are not filled regularly is not agreed by 10 percent and the same is moderately agreed by 36.3 percent and agreed by 53.8 percent of the backward caste elite respondents.

empowering all sections of society, and private enterprises must be active partners in this national mission.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The question of extending reservation policies to the private sector in India lies at the intersection of constitutional morality, social justice, and economic pragmatism. This study has explored the historical background, theoretical justifications, stakeholder perspectives, and comparative international models of affirmative action to assess the feasibility of such an extension in the Indian context.

Findings indicate that while constitutional provisions and socio-economic indicators strongly support the need for greater inclusion of marginalized communities in the private sector, a direct replication of the public sector quota model may face significant legal, political, and operational challenges. The private sector, driven by market forces and global competitiveness, is resistant to rigid reservation mandates. However, this resistance cannot undermine the lived realities of systemic caste-based exclusion that continue to exist even in modern, liberalized workspaces. The study concludes that an inclusive and adaptive model of affirmative action—blending voluntary initiatives, incentive-based hiring, corporate social responsibility, and state-supported skill development—may offer a more viable path forward. Such a model would maintain business autonomy while promoting equity, aligning with both constitutional values and economic goals. Ultimately, affirmative action in the private sector should not be seen merely as a policy imposition but as a moral and developmental necessity for a democratic society like India. Ensuring fair representation, dignity of work, and access to opportunity for historically disadvantaged groups is essential not only for social harmony but also for sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The future of India's development lies in

FUTURE WORK

While this study has laid the groundwork for understanding the feasibility and implications of extending reservation policies to the private sector in India, several areas warrant further exploration and in-depth analysis:

1. **Sector-Wise Analysis of Private Enterprises:** Future research can focus on specific industries—such as IT, manufacturing, healthcare, and retail—to understand the varying levels of inclusivity and to assess which sectors are more amenable to implementing affirmative action frameworks.
2. **Longitudinal Impact Studies:** There is a need for long-term studies to evaluate the socio-economic outcomes of any voluntary or policy-driven inclusion efforts that may be implemented in the private sector. This would help assess not just recruitment patterns, but also retention, promotion, and workplace culture for marginalized groups.
3. **Development of Legal and Policy Frameworks:** Research into the constitutional and legal mechanisms that could support affirmative action without violating corporate autonomy or market principles is essential. Comparative legal analysis of models from countries like the U.S., South Africa, and Brazil can inform possible legal instruments in India.
4. **Role of Technology and Data Analytics:** Future studies could explore how technology can be used to track diversity metrics in private organizations, assess bias in hiring algorithms, and improve transparency in workforce composition.

5. **Urban vs. Rural Private Sector Inclusion:** The divide between urban corporate spaces and rural enterprises presents another dimension for analysis. Studies could examine how affirmative action might function differently in rural-based industries and MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises).
6. **Public Opinion and Stakeholder Engagement:** Understanding how different sections of society—including employers, employees, policy makers, and civil society—perceive reservation in the private sector can further refine future policy recommendations. More qualitative studies and large-scale surveys are needed.
7. **Voluntary Codes of Conduct and CSR Linkages:** Additional work is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of voluntary inclusion policies and CSR initiatives focused on social equity. Case studies of successful corporate inclusion models would provide practical templates.
8. **Integration with Skill Development Schemes:** Linking affirmative action to government-run skill development programs (like Skill India or PMKVY) could enhance employability and improve private sector participation. Research can explore models for effective integration.
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