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Examining the Effect of Educational Qualification and Academic Position on Faculty Motivation in Higher Education Institutions of Rajasthan

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***Abstract*— Faculty motivation is an essential determinant of teaching efficiency, research production, and institutional effectiveness in higher education. The importance of understanding the determinants of faculty motivation has become crucial against the background of increasing academic responsibility and the adoption of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India. In this context, this paper studies the impact of educational qualification and academic rank on the faculty motivation of faculty members working in higher education institutions in Rajasthan. Under the light of Self-Determination Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the study used a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to answer its research questions. The primary data of 167 faculty members including central, state, private, deemed universities, and affiliated colleges were collected using a structured questionnaire. The obtained data were analyzed using the statistical software of IBM SPSS Statistics 29 using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Tukey's post hoc test, and multiple regression analysis. The reliability of the faculty motivation scale was satisfactory (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.891$). The results indicated significant differences in faculty motivation in relation to educational qualification level ($F = 5.982$, $p = .001$) and academic ranks ($F = 6.771$, $p = .002$).**

The faculty members having doctoral and postdoctoral credentials, as well as those holding senior academic positions, had greater motivation levels compared to others. Regression analysis further indicated that educational qualification ($\beta = .312$, $p < .001$) and academic position ($\beta = .286$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of faculty motivation, collectively accounting for 29.3% of its variability ($R^2 = .293$). This study implies that professional competence, career progress, and institutional recognition are important aspects in motivating faculties. The results have useful implications for higher education policy makers in developing faculty development programs and effective institutional environments.

***Keywords*—Faculty motivation; Educational qualification; Academic position; Higher education; Self-Determination Theory; Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory; Rajasthan.**

I. Introduction

The contribution of higher education towards building the intellectual capacity of any country, driving innovations, and fostering sustainable growth is highly valued. The faculty members form the backbone of all higher education institutions, not just in terms of teaching but also research, mentorship, curriculum planning, and even management within these institutions. The success of education that takes place in universities and colleges relies on the enthusiasm, dedication, and motivation of the academic staff members. Motivated faculty members are expected to innovate in the teaching methods employed, conduct research, facilitate student learning, and participate in the growth of their institutions (Daumiller et al., 2020; Watt & Richardson, 2020).

Motivation can be understood as those forces which trigger, guide, and energize an individual to engage in behaviors in pursuit of their objectives or goals. In the academic community, motivation is determined by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors where the former includes professional autonomy, intellectual stimulation, and recognition, while the latter consists of remuneration, promotions, institutional environment, and work context (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The Indian higher education sector has seen significant growth over the last two decades and has become one of the largest higher education sectors in the world. Based on AISHE 2021-22, there are more than 58,000 higher education institutes in India, and there are around 1.5 million faculty members in the country. At the same time, NEP 2020 has raised expectations for high-quality teaching, research output, multidisciplinary approach, innovation, and digitalization from the faculty members.

Educational qualification is viewed as one of the major indicators of faculty competence and professional development.

Academics who have doctorate or post-doctorate degrees tend to have more opportunities to engage in research activities, obtain grants, collaborate abroad, and develop their career paths. Such factors can positively affect professional motivation and self-confidence. However, according to prior research, educational qualifications might not necessarily be responsible for academic motivation, because organizational support, institutional climate, and opportunities for professional development are also relevant factors (Daumiller et al., 2020; Wilkesmann & Vorberg, 2021).

Moreover, an academic position may affect motivation due to varying levels of responsibility, autonomy, recognition, opportunities for leadership, and prospects for advancement. Senior academic positions held by professors usually offer higher levels of decision-making power and professional recognition; nevertheless, this position also entails increased administrative duties and expectations of success. Therefore, the link between academic position and motivation is complicated and needs further research (Daumiller et al., 2022; Watt & Richardson, 2020).

While there have been many past studies on faculty motivation based on the organizational climate, leadership, remuneration, and job satisfaction, little empirical data exist on the role played by the combination of the educational qualification and academic status, especially in the higher education institutions of Rajasthan. Filling the existing knowledge gap will be helpful in developing evidence-based policies for developing, promoting, and retaining faculty for improving the performance of the institutions (Daumiller et al., 2020).

II. Review Of Literature

The motivation of faculty members has emerged as a strategy issue in higher education due to its direct impact on the quality of teaching, research, students' involvement, innovation, and performance of institutions. The evolving roles of universities in light of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India have transformed faculty members into multi-faceted roles including teaching, research, engagement of the university with the community, institutional governance, and digitalization of the institution. Therefore, having an insight into the motivation drivers of faculty members has become necessary for effective human resource management in higher education institutions. It is argued by researchers that faculty members can be best explained in light of psychological and organizational approaches such as SDT and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory.

Self-Determination Theory: The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) postulated by Ryan & Deci (2000) describes the mechanism of motivation in terms of the satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The SDT claims that people display increased levels of intrinsic motivation when they feel independence in making decisions, confidence in professional skills, and strong relations within working environment. This theory is especially important for higher education due to the nature of academic activities.

According to Daumiller et al. (2020), self-determination theory (SDT) offers the best theoretical support for studying the motivation of academics since, at university level, teachers feel satisfaction through academic freedom, meaningful teaching, research, and development but not just through financial gain. In like manner, Watt and Richardson (2020) stressed that motivational theories grounded in psychological needs can offer a better explanation of faculty motivation than demographic variables, as the former require an environment that supports autonomy and competence.

Recent studies have shown increased use of SDT in the field of higher education. Daumiller et al. (2020) analyzed the theoretical and empirical literature about faculty motivation and found out that academics are mostly motivated by intrinsic motives, which are characterized by such factors as intellectual interest, professional autonomy, and meaningful teaching.

In their study, Watt and Richardson (2020) pointed out that the motivation of the faculty members influences the research output, teaching efficiency, and wellbeing of faculty members. It was stressed that the environment created at the university should be able to meet the psychological needs of the academician and not just the performance-based incentives alone.

Various empirical studies carried out using SDT theory show that university lecturers who have more educational qualifications tend to feel more professional competence, thereby making them confident about their research work, innovative, and academically motivated. Equally, higher university rank may give an individual more independence and chances for leadership, thereby increasing intrinsic motivation through more accountability and professional recognition. It can therefore be concluded that educational qualification plays a major role in competence while academic position is key in autonomy and relatedness.

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Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory: Herzberg's Two Factor Theory identifies factors that motivate employees (achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and growth), while others are hygiene factors (compensation, organizational policy, supervision, work environment, and security). Hygiene factors only minimize the feeling of dissatisfaction, but motivators generate genuine job satisfaction and commitment.

Higher education offers an ideal setting to test Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory because academic staff prioritize their intellectual achievements and recognition as well as professional autonomy in comparison to monetary rewards. As revealed by Zhang and Gandham (2025) in a recent systematic review of 45 empirical articles, recognition, autonomy, intellectual stimulation, and professional development boost staff motivation while pay, workload, governance, and promotion mainly affect dissatisfaction.

Herzberg's theory has widely been used to explain the satisfaction of faculty members in various institutions of higher learning. Saglam (2007) noted that hygiene and motivators were both significant when considering academics' motivation. According to the research, professors viewed more hygiene factors compared to assistant and associate professors; however, good working conditions, salary, interpersonal relations, and job security were critical in developing countries.

In addition, Mehrad (2019) noted that academic staff motivation depends on the balance between intrinsic and extrinsic factors of motivation. Satisfaction of academic staff members was caused by recognition from institution management, professional development, proper supervision, and fair promotions, but unsatisfactory organizational policies and working conditions created dissatisfaction.

In recent times, Zhang & Gandham (2025) conducted a synthesis of the findings reported by higher education institutions located in several nations and found that motivators of an intrinsic nature such as recognition, academic freedom, intellectual stimulation, and research activities were more significant determinants of faculty satisfaction than external or monetary factors. However, hygiene factors such as governance, equal distribution of work load, clear avenues for promotion, and institutional backing were critical to ensuring that the faculty was not dissatisfied.

Educational Qualification, Academic Position, and Faculty Motivation: Educational qualification is seen as an indication of one's academic and professional competence. Educators who have earned their doctorate and post-doctorate degree have more chances to do research work, mentor doctoral students, get research funding, and engage in international cooperation. All of this makes them look competent and thus motivates them intrinsically according to SDT. Higher educational qualifications help people rise professionally and contribute to Herzberg's motivator needs.

The academic rank also affects motivation due to factors such as career progressions with more responsibility, opportunities for leadership, professional prestige, and organizational influence. Assistant professors are usually motivated by career security and progress, while associate professors and professors are motivated by their academic independence, recognition, and policy-making capabilities. Recent research findings confirm that academic qualifications and academic ranks are two important motivational factors that complement each other

Synthesis and Research Gap

However, it is found that the above two motivational theories complement each other in explaining the motivation of the faculty members. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) suggests that faculty members can be motivated through the satisfaction of three needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness. On the other hand, Herzberg's Two-Factor theory categorizes the motivation factors into intrinsic (satisfiers) motivators and extrinsic hygiene factors that affect the job satisfaction of the faculty members. Most of the studies have explored organizational climate, leadership, workload and job satisfaction as the motivating factors of the faculty members but fewer studies have analyzed educational qualification and academic position as the motivating factors of faculty members especially in Indian higher education institutions. Also, studies from Rajasthan are very few.

III. Research Methodology

The following research design is quantitative, cross-sectional, and explanatory to study the impact of educational qualification and academic status on motivation among faculty members in Rajasthan state higher education institutions. The study intends to measure the level of faculty member motivation, difference in motivation between various levels of educational qualification and academic status, and the cumulative impact of both these variables on faculty member motivation.

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On the basis of Self-Determination Theory by Ryan & Deci (2000) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), the study hypothesizes that educational qualification and academic status have an impact on faculty member motivation.

The targeted population consisted of faculty members working in central, state, private and deemed universities and affiliated colleges of Rajasthan. Multistage sampling was used, where institutions were chosen from various regions of Rajasthan, and then faculty members were purposively and conveniently sampled. A sample size of 167 respondents was considered to be sufficient for statistical purposes (Hair et al., 2022). The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire in online and offline modes. The questionnaire was pilot tested with 30 faculty members.

The questionnaire contained demographic data such as the educational qualification and academic rank of the participants. The motivation of faculty was assessed using a five-point Likert Scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The measurement of constructs was taken from the existing literature and included autonomy, competence, recognition, responsibility, and professional development.

IBM SPSS Statistics (version 29) was used to analyze the data collected. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the demographic information of the respondents, and Cronbach's alpha was computed to establish the reliability of the instrument used for measurement. One-way analysis of variance was utilized to identify any possible variations in faculty motivation in relation to the education qualifications and academic rank of the faculty members, with Tukey's post hoc test following where appropriate. The multiple regression analysis was done to see how much the dependent variable could be influenced by the independent variables.

Research Objectives

The present study aims to examine the influence of educational qualification and academic position on faculty motivation in higher education institutions of Rajasthan. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of faculty motivation among faculty members working in higher education institutions in Rajasthan.
2. To examine whether faculty motivation differs significantly across different educational qualification levels.
3. To determine whether faculty motivation differs significantly across academic positions.
4. To investigate the combined effect of educational qualification and academic position on faculty motivation.

Research Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in faculty motivation among faculty members with different educational qualifications in higher education institutions of Rajasthan.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in faculty motivation among faculty members occupying different academic positions in higher education institutions of Rajasthan.

H_{03}: Educational qualification and academic position do not significantly influence faculty motivation in higher education institutions of Rajasthan.

IV. Results And Discussions

A total of 167 valid responses were received from academic professionals employed at various institutes of higher education in the state of Rajasthan. From the demographics presented in table 1, it can be noted that 61.1% of the respondents were males, whereas 38.9% were females. Maximum number of respondents (43.7%) belonged to the age group of 31–40 years, followed by 25.1% respondents belonging to the age group of 41–50 years, 16.8% respondents who were below 30 years of age, and 14.4% respondents who were more than 50 years old.

Table I
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	102	61.1
	Female	65	38.9
Age (Years)	Below 30	28	16.8
	31–40	73	43.7
	41–50	42	25.1
	Above 50	24	14.4
Educational Qualification	Master's	29	17.4
	M.Phil.	18	10.8
	Ph.D.	106	63.5
	Postdoctoral	14	8.4
Academic Position	Lecturer / Assistant Professor	118	70.7
	Associate Professor	31	18.6
	Professor	18	10.8
Teaching Experience	<5 Years	37	22.2
	5–10 Years	64	38.3
	11–20 Years	46	27.5
	>20 Years	20	12

**Source Author Calculations*

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With regards to education level, 63.5% of the respondents had obtained their Ph.D., 17.4% were Master's Degree holders, 10.8% were M.Phil., and 8.4% were postdoctoral candidates. Maximum number of respondents (70.7%) were Assistant Professors, followed by 18.6% Associate Professors and 10.8% Professors.

Faculty motivation was measured using a ten-item scale developed from Self-Determination Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The construct recorded a mean score of 3.92 (SD = 0.58), indicating that faculty members generally reported a high level of motivation. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.891, which exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022), confirming excellent internal consistency of the measurement instrument. The findings suggest that the faculty motivation scale is reliable and appropriate for further inferential analysis.

TABLE II.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Construct	No. of Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
Faculty Motivation	10	3.92	0.58	0.891

*SOURCE AUTHOR CALCULATIONS

In order to investigate the differences in the motivation level of the faculty members based on their educational qualification levels, a One-way ANOVA analysis was performed. Based on the findings in table 3, it can be concluded that there exists a statistically significant difference in faculty motivation across faculty members of various educational qualifications (F=5.982, P=.001). Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected.

TABLE III
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION AND FACULTY MOTIVATION

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	5.614	3	1.871	5.982	0.001
Within Groups	50.973	163	0.313		
Total	56.587	166			

*SOURCE AUTHOR CALCULATIONS

Mean scores of the groups showed an increasing trend of motivation as there was an increase in the level of educational qualifications of the participants.

Motivation levels were found to be the least amongst the Masters level faculty (M=3.63, SD=0.61), followed by M.Phil faculty (M=3.71, SD=0.54), PhD faculty (M=4.01, SD=0.49), and finally the Post Doctorate faculty (M=4.18, SD=0.43). Furthermore, post hoc Tukey HSD analysis revealed that there existed significant differences between Master's faculty and PhD faculty (p=.004), Master's faculty and Post Doctorate faculty (p=.001), and M.Phil faculty and PhD faculty (p=.041); however, the latter did not exist between PhD and Post Doctorate faculty (p=.276).

The above-mentioned results indicate that educational qualification is positively correlated with faculty motivation. These results confirm the idea put forward by Self-Determination Theory according to which increased competence leads to greater intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The faculty members with a doctorate degree and a postdoctoral degree have more chances to be involved in research, mentorship, research funding, and collaboration on both the national and international level, hence gaining confidence and motivation. Moreover, the results agree with Herzberg's assertion regarding professional development as an intrinsic motivating factor.

Secondly, an additional one way ANOVA was carried out to test the influence of the academic position on faculty motivation. From the results in table 4, it is evident that there were significant differences (F = 6.771, p = .002).

TABLE IV
ACADEMIC POSITION ON FACULTY MOTIVATION

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	4.226	2	2.113	6.771	0.002
Within Groups	51.167	164	0.312		
Total	55.393	166			

*SOURCE AUTHOR CALCULATIONS

The descriptive statistics revealed an increasing trend in motivation with advancement in their careers. Assistant Professors showed the least level of motivation (M=3.82, SD=0.56), whereas Associate Professors had the second lowest level of motivation (M=4.05, SD=0.49), and Professors showed the highest level of motivation (M=4.24, SD=0.42). The results suggest that there is a positive link between academic advancement and motivation of faculty members.

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This phenomenon could be attributed to the greater autonomy, prestige, leadership roles, and decision-making power of higher academic positions. Based on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, achievement, responsibility, and recognition are the intrinsic factors that contribute to better job satisfaction and commitment. In addition, according to Self-Determination Theory, autonomy plays an important role in motivating people intrinsically. Normally, professors have more academic freedom and influence in the institution, and hence they are intrinsically motivated.

To analyze the joint effects of education and position of academics on faculty motivation, the method of multiple regression was used. The regression equation shown in table 5 was found to be statistically significant ($F = 33.91$, $p < .001$) and accounted for 29.3% of variance in faculty motivation ($R^2 = .293$; Adjusted $R^2 = .284$).

Both predictor variables were found to be statistically significant in explaining faculty motivation. Education had a standardized beta weight $\beta = .312$ ($t = 4.153$, $p < .001$) and position $\beta = .286$ ($t = 3.740$, $p < .001$). Between the two predictor variables, education appeared to be a more powerful predictor of faculty motivation.

TABLE V
MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Predictor	β	t	p-value
Educational Qualification	0.312	4.15	<0.001
Academic Position	0.286	3.74	<0.001

*SOURCE AUTHOR CALCULATIONS

TABLE VI
MODEL SUMMARY

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	p-value
0.541	0.293	0.284	33.91	<0.001

*SOURCE AUTHOR CALCULATIONS

From the regression results, it can be seen that increased qualifications and career prospects have positive associations with greater motivation levels. Despite the fact that the regression model accounts for about one-third of the variance in faculty motivation, the rest of the variance is left unexplained, implying that some organizational factors such as institution leadership, salary, organizational culture, workload, research environment, and work-life balance may play a role in faculty motivation.

Statistical results give evidence for all three alternate hypotheses. Significant differences have been found in faculty motivation with respect to education qualification and academic status of faculty members, while regression analysis shows that both these factors have a significant impact on faculty motivation. All null hypotheses have been rejected.

TABLE VII
STATUS OF HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis	Statistical Test	Result	Decision
H_1: Educational qualification significantly influences faculty motivation	One-way ANOVA	p = 0.001	Supported
H_2: Academic position significantly influences faculty motivation	One-way ANOVA	p = 0.002	Supported
H_3: Educational qualification and academic position significantly predict faculty motivation	Multiple Regression	p < 0.001	Supported

*SOURCE AUTHOR CALCULATIONS

From the results obtained in the current study, which have been tabulated in Table 7, it can be concluded that educational qualification and academic rank play an important role in determining the motivation of faculty in the institutions of higher learning in Rajasthan. The faculty with higher academic qualifications had high motivation, implying that education contributes towards improving professional competence and research capability. Similarly, the motivation level of the faculty kept increasing with the increase in the academic rank of the faculty member.

The above observations conform to the principles of Self-Determination Theory, whereby motivation is said to be enhanced by the sense of competence and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). High qualification levels boost the sense of competence, whereas the senior position in academia enhances the level of autonomy, thus fulfilling important psychological needs leading to intrinsic motivation. These observations further support the theory of Herzberg's two-factor theory, whereby achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement are some of the intrinsic motivators.

The findings have significant implications for educational institutions in Rajasthan. The universities must provide the necessary support for the faculty to obtain their doctorates and post-doctorates in terms of monetary support, research, and development programs.

Policies such as promotions, mentorship, recognition, and good leadership within the institution will add to the motivation of the faculty. This will not only enhance faculty satisfaction and retention but also teaching quality and research output.

V. Conclusion

The current study aimed to assess the impact of educational qualification and academic position on faculty motivation amongst faculty members employed in higher education institutes of Rajasthan. On the basis of theories of Self Determination Theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory, it was determined whether educational qualification and academic position are responsible for the difference in faculty motivation. The results of the study found that educational qualification and academic position play an important role in motivating faculty members. Faculty members having doctorate and post-doctorate qualification had more motivation level as compared to faculty members having less academic qualifications. In addition, Professors and Associate Professors were motivated more as compared to Assistant Professors. The results of regression analysis show that educational qualification and academic position together have a significant share in explaining the variation in motivation level of faculty members.

These findings support the theory of Self-Determination that states competence and autonomy as basic psychological needs, which contribute to intrinsic motivation. The more educated one is, the better his/her competence will be as it increases the ability to do research, professionalism, and self-confidence, while a high academic position provides autonomy, recognition, leadership roles, and power to make decisions. The same findings can also be used to support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory as it shows how achievement, development, recognition, responsibility, and promotion serve as intrinsic motivators.

This study is an addition to the existing literature regarding motivation of faculties by presenting an empirical study related to motivation of faculties in higher education institutions in Rajasthan, where very little literature exists in the area of combination of education qualifications and academic status. The results of this study have important implications for university administrators and policymakers who can take steps in developing faculties, providing high academic qualifications, developing promotion policies, appreciating academic accomplishments, and creating favorable environment.

There are some constraints in spite of the usefulness of the study. The research has been conducted among institutions of higher education in Rajasthan and has used cross-sectional study design; hence the results cannot be generalized because they do not cover the changes in motivational level of faculty members over time. Furthermore, the faculty motivation has been analyzed on the basis of educational qualifications and academic status alone, while there are other variables like leadership style, organizational culture, remuneration, work-life balance, etc., that may affect the results.

In future studies, researchers can employ longitudinal and comparative approaches where multiple states or regions of India are taken into account to increase the generalizability of results. Additionally, it is possible for researchers to consider moderating or mediating factors such as organizational commitment, organizational support, leadership, psychological empowerment, and institutional culture to gain a more holistic understanding of factors influencing faculty motivation. The use of sophisticated methods of data analysis, such as structural equation modeling and multilevel analysis, can be beneficial as well.

Conclusively, from the results obtained from the study, one can conclude that educational qualification and status in academics play a critical role in motivating teachers in universities. It is therefore important to develop policies that would ensure continuous learning and career development of faculty members, their participation in research activities, and other factors in order to have a motivated faculty.

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