



# From an Aspirational District to Academic Excellence: How NFSC Support Empowered Dr. Abinash Mandal

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For scholars from socially and economically disadvantaged communities, pursuing advanced education can be difficult when financial limitations and geographical disadvantages restrict access to academic opportunities. Timely fellowship support can provide the stability needed to continue research and build a meaningful career in academia.

**Demonstrating the impact of the National Fellowship for Scheduled Caste Students (NFSC) Scheme, Dr. Abinash Mandal, a 33-year-old scholar from Udalguri, Assam, overcame socio-economic and geographical barriers to earn his Ph.D. from Pondicherry University.**

Hailing from an aspirational district, Dr. Mandal faced considerable financial constraints and limited access to advanced academic opportunities. The geographical disadvantages associated with living in a remote and underdeveloped district further restricted his access to quality educational resources, research exposure and opportunities for higher studies.

Belonging to a socially and economically disadvantaged community, he also encountered social barriers linked to his marginalised background. Together, these challenges made the pursuit of doctoral research particularly demanding. Nevertheless, his determination, perseverance and commitment to education enabled him to continue striving for academic excellence.

Dr. Mandal aspired to attain the highest level of academic qualification and contribute meaningfully to the fields of commerce and forensic accounting. His long-term goal was to engage in teaching, research and knowledge creation while inspiring students from deprived communities to pursue higher education and academic careers.

The encouragement of his family, combined with the opportunities provided by educational institutions, gave him the confidence to persevere. A decisive turning point came when he received assistance under the NFSC Scheme for the period from 2020 to 2024.

The Scheme provided him with a monthly fellowship of Rs 37,000 as a Junior Research Fellow (JRF), which was subsequently enhanced to Rs 42,000 per month following his progression to Senior Research Fellow (SRF). This sustained assistance enabled him to undertake full-time doctoral research without the burden of financial hardship.

## SUCCESS STORY

NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP FOR SCHEDULED  
CASTE STUDENTS (NFSC)

**FROM AN  
ASPIRATIONAL  
DISTRICT TO  
ACADEMIC  
EXCELLENCE**

**DR. ABINASH MANDAL**

33 YEARS | GUEST FACULTY  
UDALGURI, ASSAM



### NFSC SUPPORT

- JRF: ₹37,000 PER MONTH
- SRF: ₹42,000 PER MONTH
- SUPPORT PERIOD: 2020-2024



Ministry of  
Social Justice and  
Empowerment  
Government of India



### CHALLENGE

Financial constraints, geographical disadvantage and limited access to advanced academic opportunities.



### FELLOWSHIP SUPPORT

Sustained assistance enabled full-time doctoral research and reduced dependence on family resources.



### ACADEMIC IMPACT

Published in reputed international journals; presented at IIM Bodh Gaya, IIM Indore and IIT Delhi.



### CURRENT ACHIEVEMENT

Earned his Ph.D. and now serves as Guest Faculty, Department of Commerce, Pondicherry University.

“

NFSC support enabled me to overcome socio-economic barriers, complete my Ph.D. and contribute to teaching and research.

”

SUPPORTING EDUCATION.

ADVANCING RESEARCH.

EMPOWERING SCHOLARS.

The fellowship reduced his dependence on family resources and enabled him to access quality research materials, participate in academic conferences and pursue scholarly publication opportunities. The resulting financial stability allowed him to remain focused on his research and academic requirements.

With support under the Scheme, Dr. Mandal successfully progressed from JRF to SRF and completed his Ph.D. His research capabilities were strengthened during this period, resulting in publications in reputed international journals and presentations at prestigious institutions, including IIM Bodh Gaya, IIM Indore and IIT Delhi.

The fellowship also improved his economic well-being during his doctoral studies and opened better career opportunities upon completion of his Ph.D. It provided the foundation required for him to move from a financially constrained academic journey to a professional role in higher education.

Today, Dr. Mandal serves as Guest Faculty in the Department of Commerce at Pondicherry University, where he actively contributes to teaching, research and academic development. He continues to pursue his goal of advancing knowledge in commerce and forensic accounting while encouraging students from disadvantaged backgrounds to aim higher.

Dr. Abinash Mandal's journey reflects the transformative role of the NFSC Scheme in enabling scholars from Scheduled Caste communities to overcome socio-economic barriers, achieve academic excellence and contribute meaningfully to academia and society.

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