



# Teaching Disabled Students in Higher Education

Rajasi Ray<sup>1</sup>, Partha Pratim Paul<sup>2</sup> and Akash Mondal<sup>3</sup>

Faculty, Department of Basic Science and Humanities (English Section), Narula Institute of Technology, Kolkata, India<sup>1</sup>

Student, Computer Science and Engineering, Narula Institute of Technology, Kolkata, India<sup>2,3</sup>

**Abstract:** Disabled students are somewhat deprived from the education system. Even if they were able to study in high school later difficulties arise. They are not having such good opportunities for pursuing around the world. However, in recent years this scenario not totally changed but much more changed. The disabled students now find some facilities what they can't find last few years and the latest survey also proved that. This section briefly reviews the key provisions of the anti-discriminatory disability laws to inform discussion on the teaching and learning of disabled students. These provisions could be grouped under the four major headings: Jurisdictional and Procedural tests; disability tests; discrimination and justification tests; disability tests; and enforcement test. These tests are very important but discrimination tests generally at the expansion of justification test. It is one of the most important and popular tests in India.

This test concern two major discrimination one is 'Less favourable treatment' and the next is, 'Reasonable adjustments. And in that case one of the most important matter is, the disabled applicants and students should meet the key academic and professional requirements of their courses and professions. And thereafter the final test (or) enforcement test also being very important. The communication also be very important in this object, the communication between the teacher and the student (disabled) and more importantly the communication between the teaching able and disabled students and these two communications might bring up the disabled students in higher education. In this object we briefly described about some curriculum adjustments (or) we say some "Curriculum access". Education providers must take curriculum steps to make adjustments in a reasonable time. And these adjustments can be made in classroom; In the playground; To excursions and camps and the premises. And that's why they take some process – Providing access to classroom materials through assistive technologies such as screen readers and this process is very interesting; Adopting the physical environment for example installing ramps; Reducing the distance between classes for students who have physical disabilities; Modifying the curriculum and assessments.

**Keywords:** Accessibility, Inclusive Teaching, Accommodations, Universal Design.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years this scenario not totally changed but much more change. The Disabled students now find some facility what they could not find in last few years and the latest survey also proved that thing. Teaching disabled students in higher education is a dynamic and transformative endeavour that embraces the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, and equity. As our society becomes increasingly aware of the diverse needs and potential of all individuals, the realm of education is evolving to ensure that every student, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, has equal opportunities to pursue knowledge and achieve academic success.

In this context, the landscape of higher education is undergoing a significant shift. Educators, institutions, and stakeholders are recognizing the importance of creating learning environments that cater to the unique strengths and challenges of disabled students. This approach is not merely an ethical imperative but also a strategic investment in cultivating a more diverse and resilient educational community.

Teaching disabled students in higher education involves adopting innovative teaching methodologies, leveraging technology, and fostering a culture of empathy and collaboration. By embracing this philosophy, educators aim to break down barriers, provide tailored support, and empower disabled students to fulfil their academic potential and contribute meaningfully to society. In this exploration of teaching disabled students in higher education, we will delve into a range of topics. These include the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), the role of assistive technology, the significance of continuous feedback and improvement, and the transformative potential of immersive learning experiences such as virtual reality.

We will also highlight various business ideas that can play a pivotal role in enhancing the educational journey for disabled students. As we embark on this journey, it is essential to remember that teaching disabled students is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each student brings a unique set of abilities, challenges, and aspirations to the educational setting. By embracing this diversity and proactively engaging in creating accessible and inclusive educational environments, we can truly unlock the potential of all students, enabling them to thrive academically, personally, and professionally.



## II. CONTENT

**The policy foundation:** This section briefly reviews the key provisions of the anti-discriminatory disability laws to inform discussion on the teaching and learning of the disabled Students. These provisions in essence reflect the perspectives of the Policy-makers. Now we discussed about these provisions which is group under four major headings:

- Jurisdictional and Procedural tests
- Disability tests
- Discrimination and Justification test
- Enforcement test

**Jurisdictional and Procedural Tests:** Under these laws and the related regulations on the operation of the courts and tribunals, disabled applicants should comply with a series of rules on the jurisdiction and procedure of these courts and tribunals in first instance. One other major issue raised in recent years in the USA is the “Sovereign Immunity” of the state licensing boards for monetary claims.

**Disability Test:** The disabled applicants next should establish that they are “Disabled” in compliance with the respective “Disability Test”. The UK is stricter about this test. Disabled applicants must establish that they have an “Impairment”, their impairment adversely effects one of the normal days to day activity such as hearing, walking etc that this adversely effect in substantial and it lasts over 12 months. In contrast Australian applicants should only establish that they have an impairment, the other establish test is UK-DDA.

**Discrimination and Justification Test:** As those earlier provision tests are not discussed in detail in public domain, the focus has rather been on the discussion of the discrimination tests generally at the expense of “Justification test”. This tests generally similar in many countries as well as India. This test exists two major discriminations. The first test concerns the “less favourable treatment duty” of universities where they are prohibited from treating disabled students less favourably on the ground of the disability. The second one is “Reasonable Adjustments”. For disabled students enable to have equal excess to the curriculum, admission process and examinations on par with non-disabled.

**Enforcement Test:** The final test is concerned with the enforcement. In general, there are two types of remedies available for disabled applicants. The first type of remedy is “Injunctive Relief” and the second type is “Compensatory damages. And it is such as the order for the reinstatement of rejected applicants of expelled students.

## III. IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

**Expression of Needs and Desire:** Effective communication enables disabled students to express their needs, desires, and preferences. It empowers them to communicate their physical, emotional and psychological requirements, allowing others to understand and assist them better.

**Social Interaction and Relationships:** Communication skills are vital for establishing and maintaining social relationships. Disabled students, like their peers, benefit from socializing, forming friendships and participating in group activities.

**Academic participation:** Communication plays a crucial role in the academic environment. It allows students to engage in classroom discussions, ask questions, and seek clarification. Effective communication facilitates learning, knowledge sharing, and active participation in educational activities, ensuring that disabled students can fully access and benefit from their education.

**Independence and Empowerment:** Effective communication equips disabled students with the tools to become more independent and self-reliant. It allows them to make choices, express their preferences, and actively participate in decision-making processes. By developing communication skills, disabled students gain a sense of control over their lives, fostering independence and empowerment.

**Inclusion and Effective Opportunities:** Effective communication is essential for fostering inclusion and providing equal opportunities for disabled students. It enables them to participate in all aspects of life, including education, employment and social activities. Effective communication also increased Advocacy and self-advocacy, access to information and other several things.



#### IV. STOCKHOLDERS PROSPECTIVE

This section presents a review on the finding of the research on the teaching and learning-disabled students from four prospective key holders:

- (1) Disabled students
- (2) Higher education programs
- (3) Academic staff
- (4) Non-Disabled peers

It complements the section on the perspectives of the policy-makers presented as policy foundations. All 15 studies were published in 2003 reflecting on the most current experiences of the stockholders. Now we discuss about some point of stockholders prospective.

**Social Responsibility and Reputation:** Companies that actively support educational initiatives for disabled students demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility. This can enhance the company's reputation as one that cares about inclusivity and equal opportunities.

**Ethical and Moral Considerations:** Stockholders may recognize the ethical and moral imperative of ensuring that all members of society have access to quality education. By investing in programs that cater to disabled students, businesses align with broader societal values and contribute to a more equitable world.

**Talent Pool and Workforce Development:** A focus on teaching disabled students equips them with the skills they need to enter the workforce, expanding the potential talent pool. This can lead to a more diverse and skilled workforce, contributing to innovation and competitiveness. Companies may benefit from accessing a wider range of perspectives and problem-solving approaches.

**Corporate Diversity and Inclusion:** Businesses that actively support educational opportunities for disabled students promote diversity and inclusion within their own ranks. A diverse workforce can lead to improved decision-making, enhanced creativity, and better problem-solving, all of which can positively impact a company's performance and growth.

**Long-Term Economic Benefits:** A well-educated and empowered disabled population can contribute to economic growth by becoming productive members of society. This growth can lead to increased consumer spending and market expansion, indirectly benefiting the company's financial outlook.

**Government Regulations and Incentives:** In many regions, there are government regulations and incentives in place to encourage businesses to support disabled individuals through education and employment. Companies that align with these initiatives may access subsidies, grants, or tax benefits, leading to potential cost savings or improved financial performance.

**Innovation and Market Potential:** Companies that invest in programs to teach disabled students may discover untapped market potential. By catering to the needs of these demographic, businesses can create innovative products and services that address unique challenges and open new revenue streams.

**Corporate Sustainability:** Businesses that invest in teaching disabled students contribute to the sustainability of their own operations and the broader society. By fostering a skilled and empowered workforce, companies can mitigate future labour shortages and reduce dependency on external talent sources.

In conclusion, from a stockholder's perspective, investing in programs to teach disabled students aligns with broader social values, contributes to a diverse and skilled workforce, enhances a company's reputation, and can have positive long-term economic and financial implications.

It's a strategic approach that not only demonstrates ethical responsibility but also positions a company for sustained success in an inclusive and ever-evolving global marketplace.

#### V. CURRICULUM ADJUSTMENTS

Education providers must take some curriculum steps to make adjustments in a reasonable time. And these adjustments can be made in classrooms, playgrounds, the camps and some premises of them include here:



- ✓ Providing access to classroom materials through assistive technologies such as screen readers and this process is very interesting and its fully benefited by hearing disable students.
- ✓ Adapting the Physical environment, for example installing ramps.
- ✓ Modifying the curriculum and assessments, for example allowing a student to answer assessments orally (or) use a computer.
- ✓ Reducing the distance between classes for students who have physical disabilities.
- ✓ Allowing more time to complete an exam (Or) assessment (or) giving the student most rest breaks.

## VI. INDIA DEVELOPING IN TEACHING DISABLED STUDENTS

**Rights and Politics:** The Rights of persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 is a landmark legislation in India that mandates equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation of persons with disabilities. The Act covers various aspects of education, including higher education and emphasizes the creation of inclusive environment.

**Assistive Technologies:** There has been an increasing focus on leveraging assistive technologies to enhance learning opportunities for disabled students. These technologies include screen readers, text-to-speech software, speech recognition tools, magnification software, and tactile devices. Efforts are being made to provide these tools in educational institutions.

**Support Services:** Universities and Colleges in India are establishing support services for disabled students. These services may include accessible infrastructure, assistive devices, note-taking assistance, sign language interpreters, and resource centres equipped with specialized software and tools.

**Scholarships and Financial Aid:** Various scholarships and financial aid programs are available for disabled students pursuing higher education. These initiatives aim to reduce financial barriers and encourage disabled students to pursue their academic carrier. India has also increased the Accessibility Standards, Disability Resource Centres, Reservations and quotas, Collaboration and Partnerships.

## VII. SOME NEW IDEAS TO ENHANCE TEACHING DISABLED STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

**Universal Design for Learning:** Implement the Principles of Universal Design for learning in course design and instructional strategies. UDL focuses on creating flexible learning environments that accommodate the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities. By offering multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression, UDL can promote inclusivity and accessibility for all students. UDL emphasizes flexibility in how students access and engage with the learning content. This flexibility accommodates students with different learning paces, preferences, and needs. It also provides students with choices, which can enhance motivation and engagement. By providing different ways for students to engage with the material and express their understanding, UDL supports deeper learning. Students are more likely to achieve their learning goals when they have options that align with their strengths and preferences.

**Assistive Technology Innovation:** Encourage the development of new assistive technologies tailored to the specific needs of disabled students in higher education. This could involve advancements in screen reader technology, tactile feedback devices (or) innovative solutions for students with cognitive impairments. Collaboration between researchers, engineers, and disabled student communities can drive the creation of impactful assistive technologies. Disabled students have diverse needs, and one-size-fits-all solutions may not always be effective. Assistive technology innovation allows for the creation of tools and devices that can be tailored to individual preferences and requirements, providing a more personalized learning experience. Disabled students often face unique challenges that can impede their learning. Advancements in assistive technology can directly address these challenges, whether they involve visual impairments, hearing impairments, mobility issues, cognitive impairments, or other conditions.

**Virtual Reality Learning Materials:** Utilize virtual reality technology to create immersive learning experiences that cater to different disabilities. VR can provide simulations, virtual field trips, (or) interactive environments that allow students to explore and engage with the subject matter in a more accessible and interactive manner. VR creates immersive 3D environments that engage multiple senses, making learning more interactive and memorable. For students with disabilities, this immersive nature of VR can be particularly beneficial, as it helps them experience the subject matter in a way that traditional methods might not allow. VR can engage visual, auditory, and sometimes even tactile senses simultaneously. This multi-sensory approach can be especially helpful for students with sensory impairments, providing them with a more comprehensive understanding of the content.

**Continuous Feedback and improvement:** Foster a culture of continuous feedback and improvement by actively seeking input from disabled students. Regular surveys, focus groups, (or) individual conversations can help identify barriers, challenges and areas



for improvement. Incorporating the perspectives of disabled students can drive meaningful change in teaching practices and campus accessibility. Actively seeking input from disabled students places them at the centre of the educational process. By involving them in decision-making, educators and institutions demonstrate a commitment to addressing their unique needs and concerns. Regular surveys, focus groups, and conversations provide a platform for disabled students to voice their experiences and identify barriers they encounter in their learning journey. This information is vital for understanding and removing obstacles that might hinder their academic progress. The feedback collected from disabled students helps educators and institutions develop targeted solutions. By understanding specific challenges faced by these students, interventions can be tailored to effectively address those challenges. Also, online accessibility certification, Sensory-inclusive practices, collaborative learning spaces are those processes which aim to promote inclusivity, accessibility and engagement for disabled students in higher education.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

The number of disabled students in higher education has increased in recent years, teaching them in compliance with the public policies while maintaining academic and professional standards has become a crucial academic and policy issue. The paper focusing on curriculum access, reviewed the key features of the key four anti-discrimination laws and outlined the practice on key adjustments to the curriculum for these students' mode by academic staff. This research priorities also the attitudes of disabled students, attitudes of academic and other staff towards curriculum adjustments, effect of adjustments on academic performance for disabled students and the finally the attitude of non-disabled students.

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