

## Empowering Divyangjan in Higher Education Libraries Using Information Services

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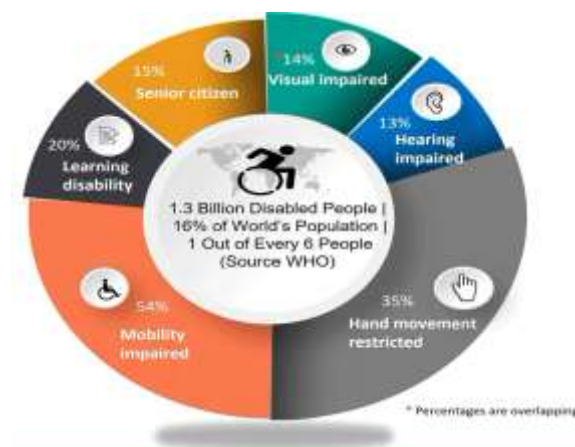
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### Introduction

Higher education libraries have made significant strides in supporting the academic success of all students, including those with disabilities, often referred to as Divyangjan. In recent years, these libraries have evolved to offer a range of information services explicitly tailored to meet the diverse needs of divyang students. These services include accessible library catalogs, specialized reading and study areas, and assistive technologies that enhance learning experiences. Additionally, libraries increasingly provide personalized research assistance and accessible digital resources that ensure all students have equal opportunities to succeed in their academic pursuits. By continuously adapting and innovating, higher education libraries play a crucial role in fostering an inclusive learning environment for divyang users. Higher education libraries have made significant strides in supporting students' academic success, particularly for Divyangjan or persons with disabilities. These libraries have evolved to offer various information services that cater to the diverse needs of divyang students. Among the innovative services provided are assistive technologies, which include specialized software and hardware designed to facilitate access to information and learning resources. In addition, libraries are enhancing their collections by acquiring materials in alternative formats, such as braille, large print, and digital media, ensuring that all students can engage with the content effectively.



Furthermore, many libraries implement inclusive design principles (design strategies that aim to create products and environments accessible and usable by as many people as possible) in their

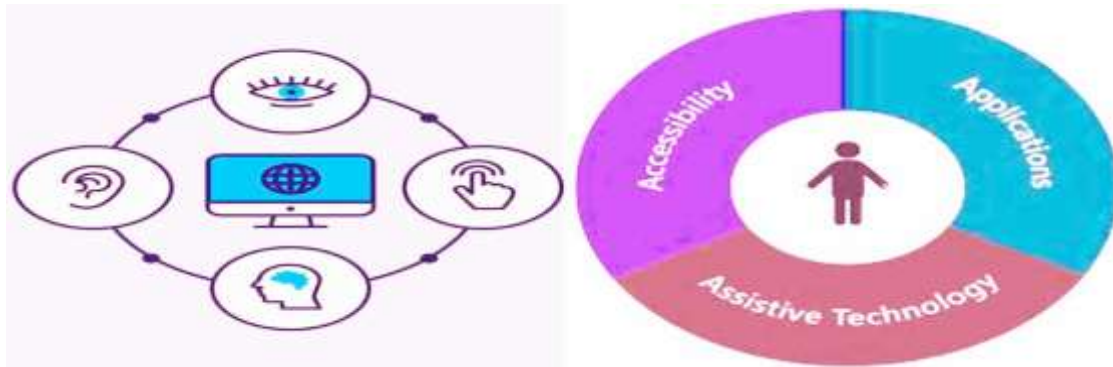
physical spaces, making facilities more accessible to those with mobility challenges. A key aspect of this inclusivity is the prioritization of training programs for library staff, enabling them to assist divyang students competently and sensitively. These efforts, along with collaborative partnerships with disability support services, reinforce the commitment of libraries to foster an inclusive and supportive academic environment for all students, irrespective of their abilities. This commitment is a testament to the crucial role that higher education libraries play in supporting the educational success of divyang students.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Higher Education; Library Services for Divyangjan; Divyangjan Education; Accessibility in Higher Education; Empowerment of Divyangjan; Information Accessibility;

### 1. Resources for Digital Accessibility

Universities are making digital resources more accessible to aid the academic achievements of divyang students. These resources consist of higher education libraries offering digital resources that are accessible to aid the academic achievements of students with disabilities. These resources encompass universities offering accessible digital resources to aid the academic achievements of divyang students. These resources, such as e-books and digital journals with advanced text-to-speech functionality, audiobooks with descriptive narration, and well-structured digital databases, empower divyang students to achieve their academic goals with a sense of accomplishment and pride. These resources are detailed as follows:

- E-books and digital journals have advanced text-to-speech functionality, allowing users to listen to the content being read aloud and adjustable font sizes for personalized reading comfort. E-books and digital journals have advanced text-to-speech functionality, allowing readers to listen to the content being read aloud and adjust font sizes for enhanced readability.
- Audiobooks and electronic audiobooks feature descriptive narration that enhances the listening experience for users. These formats include audio descriptions that provide additional context and detail, helping listeners visualize the story and its elements better. These enhancements are especially beneficial for visually impaired individuals, allowing them to immerse themselves in the narrative while gaining a deeper understanding of visual components, such as characters, settings, and actions within the story.
- Well-structured digital databases are crafted with intuitive search interfaces that allow users to enter their queries effortlessly. These platforms streamline the search process and showcase the results in a thoughtfully organized manner. Relevant information is prominently highlighted and aesthetically pleasing, ensuring users can quickly locate the required data with minimal effort. This design enhances the user experience, making information access efficient and enjoyable.



### 2. Assistive Technology

Higher education libraries play a crucial role in fostering the academic success of divyang students by offering a variety of assistive technologies tailored to meet their unique needs. These technologies encompass a range of tools and resources designed to enhance learning and accessibility. Examples include screen readers that convert text to speech, speech recognition software that allows users to dictate text, and specialized ergonomic equipment that aids in comfortable studying. Additionally, libraries may provide adaptive software for note-taking and reading and hardware like magnifiers and adaptive keyboards, ensuring that all students have the support they need to thrive academically.

- Screen readers and braille displays for visually impaired students.
- Speech-generating devices and communication aids for students with speech and language disabilities.
- Adaptive keyboards and mouse devices for students with physical disabilities.



### 3. Accessible Library Spaces

Higher education libraries are actively creating inclusive and accessible environments tailored to foster the academic success of divyang students. These thoughtfully designed spaces incorporate various features, such as adjustable furniture, wide pathways for mobility devices, assistive technology stations, and quiet study areas. Additionally, these libraries offer resources like braille materials and

audiobooks, ensuring all students have equal opportunities to engage with and benefit from library services regardless of their abilities. The goal is not just to provide access but to create a welcoming atmosphere that supports diverse learning needs and enhances the overall educational experience for every student, fostering a profound sense of belonging and acceptance among divyang users.



- Wheelchair-accessible ramps and lifts
- Accessible restrooms and drinking fountains
- Quiet and private study spaces for students with sensory sensitivities

#### 4. Personalized Support Services

Higher education libraries play a crucial role in fostering the academic success of divyang students by offering a comprehensive range of support services designed to meet their unique needs. These services encompass a variety of resources and assistance, including one-on-one consultations with trained staff, specialized workshops that focus on study skills and information literacy, and access to adaptive technologies that facilitate learning. Additionally, libraries often provide customized research support, helping students navigate complex academic materials and quiet and accessible study areas to create a conducive learning environment. These comprehensive services are not just supported but a lifeline for divyang students, providing them with the individualized assistance they need to thrive academically.

- One-on-one research assistance and study support.
- Accessible study materials and course reserves.
- Referral services to campus disability support services.

#### 5. Digital Literacy Training

Colleges and universities are providing training in digital skills to support students with disabilities in achieving academic success. Higher education libraries are actively implementing training programs that focus on enhancing digital skills, ensuring that students with disabilities have the essential tools and resources they need to excel in their studies. These initiatives are designed to improve students' ability to navigate online resources, utilize technology effectively, and access information vital for their educational achievements. These training programs include:

- Workshops and tutorials on using assistive technology and accessible digital resources.
- Online tutorials and guides on digital literacy and information literacy.
- Peer-to-peer support and mentoring programs.

## 6. Collaborations and Partnerships

Higher education libraries collaborate with disability support services, student organizations, and external organizations to provide accessible resources and services to divyang users. These collaborations include:

- Partnerships with disability support services to offer accessible study materials and assistive technology.
- Collaborations with student organizations to provide peer-to-peer support and mentoring programs.
- Partnerships with external organizations to provide accessible digital resources and assistive technology.

### Conclusion:

Higher education libraries play a vital role in ensuring divyang patrons—those with disabilities—have equitable access to information services. These libraries are dedicated to creating an inclusive environment where all students can thrive. By utilizing advanced technology and innovative tools, libraries can offer tailored support that meets the unique needs of divyang students. This personalized assistance may include specialized research help, adaptive learning resources, and user-friendly interfaces that enhance accessibility.

Moreover, libraries actively seek to foster collaborations and partnerships with various organizations and educational institutions. Through these alliances, they can expand the range of resources and services available to divyang students, ensuring they have the support necessary to navigate their academic journeys. By empowering these students with the right tools and resources, libraries help them achieve their educational aspirations and succeed in their future careers, promoting a more inclusive and diverse workforce. Higher education libraries are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and accessible information environment for divyang students— individuals with disabilities. These libraries recognize the importance of accommodating diverse needs and are committed to providing resources and services that support the academic success of these students. By strategically leveraging advanced technology, libraries can offer tailored support that is responsive to divyang students' unique challenges. This may include implementing adaptive learning technologies, specialized research assistance, and a range of accessible formats to ensure that information is readily available and usable.

In addition, libraries actively pursue collaborations and partnerships with various organizations and educational institutions. These efforts aim to expand the breadth of resources and support services available to divyang patrons, facilitating their academic and professional development. By empowering these students with the necessary tools and support, libraries play a crucial role in helping them realize their educational ambitions and succeed in their future careers, ultimately contributing to a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

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