APPENDIX –I

QUESTIONNAIRES

A) Demographic Details

Respondent Information: Thank you for your valuable time. The data that is being collected will be used to design and implement supports for faculty, staff, and students. All responses are anonymous and will be held in strict confidence.

a. Gender

Female □ Male □

b. Age

25-35 □ 36-45 □ 46-55 □ 55+ □

c. Academic rank

Highest level of formal education completed

Bachelors □

Masters □

Doctoral Degree □

d. Teaching experience with students having learning disability

Excellent □ Very Good □ Good □ Fair □ Rarely □

e. Frequency of contact with students having learning disability

Great deal □ Moderate amount □ Occasionally □ Rarely □
**B) Faculty Survey on Learning Disability**

**Survey Directions:** Please rate the following items to the best of your ability. If you feel that you have insufficient information to make a choice, mark “DK= Don’t Know.”

**Response Format**

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree,  
DK = Don’t Know

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I am familiar with UAE Federal Law on Rights of Disabled Persons 29/2006 as it applies to students with LD in college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I am familiar with the college Special Needs Policy LP217 as it applies to student with LD in college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I know what the term “learning disability” means.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I believe that students with learning disabilities can be successful at the college level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Students with learning disabilities are reluctant to disclose their disability to me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I would like more information about the needs of students with learning disabilities at this College</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I am sensitive to the needs of students with learning disabilities in this college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Students with learning disabilities are able to compete academically at the college level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Students with learning disabilities attend postsecondary schools at rates proportionate to the rates of postsecondary attendance among students who do not have disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>College admission requirements are modified for students who have indicated that they have a learning disability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I think it would be appropriate to allow a student with a verified learning disability to substitute an alternative course for a required course if the substitution did not dramatically alter the program requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I am willing to spend extra time meeting with students with verified learning disabilities to provide them with additional assistance as needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I believe that I make appropriate individual accommodations for students who have disclosed their learning disability to me if needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I am familiar with the campus resources offered for students with LD at this college.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I am familiar with the counselor/s and student services office at this college.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Students with learning disabilities will not receive any support services unless they disclose their disability with documentation.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I would like more information about referral procedures for students with learning disabilities at this college.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>When students with learning disabilities are having difficulties, I am uncertain about where I can find additional support at this college.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Making adequate accommodations for students with verified learning disabilities in my position is unrealistic given time constraints and other job demands.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Currently, in my role, I do not have sufficient knowledge to make adequate accommodations for students with learning disabilities.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I receive adequate support from my department/college in working with students who have verified learning disabilities.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I would be interested in attending staff</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>development sessions related to the needs of students with learning disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. All faculty members should receive an orientation on the needs of students with LD.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. I would be interested in attending a panel presentation where students with LD share personal information about their LD and their experiences in college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. The college has an easily accessible collection of reference materials about students with LD.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26. Funding should be available for key staff and administrators to attend workshop/conferences on LD.</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. When students have to complete paper work or forms for my office, I invite every student to be sure to request assistance if needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. I would be prepared to read paperwork or forms aloud and explain them, if requested.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29. I would be prepared to make a tape recording with an oral version of the paperwork or forms.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. If I were working with a student who had disclosed their LD to me, I would be willing to</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>If a student frequently missed appointments or was very late I would be frustrated and not be willing to reschedule.</td>
<td>8  5  5  2  1 DK</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>I am willing to be an advocate for a student with LD and help them navigate the various processes and procedures to secure financial aid, library services etc.</td>
<td>8  5  5  2  1 DK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>I am willing to be an advocate for a student with LD and help them secure needed accommodations.</td>
<td>8  5  5  2  1 DK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>I am willing to be an advocate for a student with LD and help them solve problems they may encounter while teaching, learning etc.</td>
<td>8  5  5  2  1 DK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**C) Survey Instrument of Teacher Attitudes towards Disability**

**Response Format**

Please rate the following questions

1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3= undecided, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I respect students with learning disabilities as individuals with differences as I respect all students in my classroom.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I believe all students are capable to learn in inclusive setting.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I am aware of the individual capabilities of students.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I believe that I can employ classroom management.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I expect the best from all students in the classroom and I am aware of their capabilities.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Students with learning disabilities should be excluded from mainstream classes as they disrupt other students</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>I think it is impossible to try and accommodate too many differences in one classroom.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I am comfortable communicating with the counselor and student services team.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I help students to find appropriate avenues to express their feelings.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Professional training is necessary to teach effectively.

11. No sufficient equipment’s to facilitate learning for students with learning disabilities.

12. Most colleges use education corners.

13. I think you need to be a special kind of a teacher to teach students with learning disabilities.

14. Education has a responsibility to look after the interest of students with learning disabilities.

15. Most colleges do not have services to support students with learning disabilities.

16. Most colleges are not prepared to include students with learning disabilities.

17. There is a gap between theory and practice regarding learning disability in higher education.

18. The period of training is too limited.

19. I would prefer to teach in special school if I have to teach LD Students because it has more facilities than regular colleges.

20. It is necessary to make modifications in the college to meet the needs of each student with learning disabilities.
D) Interaction of Disabled Persons Scale

Here is a list of statements that some people have said describe how they feel when they have contact with a person with a disability. Of course, how we respond to people depends on how we know them as individuals. However we would like to know how you feel in general when you meet a person with a disability. Please read each statement carefully and decide how much it describes how you feel.

**Response Format**

Please place one tick next to the question under the column that describes how you feel.

1. I disagree very much
2. I disagree somewhat
3. I disagree a little
4. I agree a little
5. I agree somewhat
6. I agree very much

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>It is rewarding when I am able to help.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>It hurts me when they want to do something and can’t.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel frustrated because I don’t know how to help.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Contact with a person with a disability reminds me of my own vulnerability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I wonder how I would feel if I had this disability.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I feel ignorant about people with disabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I am grateful that I do not have such a burden.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I try to act normally and ignore the disability</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I feel uncomfortable and find it hard to relax.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I am aware of the problems that people with disabilities face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I can’t help staring at them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I feel unsure because I don’t know how to behave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I admire their ability to cope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I don’t pity them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>After frequent contact, I find I just notice the person not the disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I feel overwhelmed with discomfort about my lack of disability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I am afraid to look at the person straight in the face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I tend to make contacts only brief and finish them as quickly as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I feel better with people with disabilities after I have discussed their disability with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I dread the thought that I could eventually end up like them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX – II

PHOTOS OF THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Psychological skills training at Dubai College

Psychological skills training at Dubai College
Knowledge of LD training at Abu Dhabi Colleges
Psychological skills training at Sharjah College

Group on positive attitudes at Sharjah College
Knowledge of LD training at Al Ain College

Group activity on building empathy at Al Ain College
APPENDIX – III

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The training program was intended to provide a comprehensive understanding on LD from definition, types, characteristics, how to identify LD in classrooms to services provision. It also encompassed psychological skill training to improve the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and interactions of faculty towards students with LD, which involved the cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects in dealing with students having LD.

The training program was implemented for a period of 6 months in various colleges. The training program was divided into 2 distinct parts. Part 1 included training on knowledge of LD only and the part 2 included training on psychological skills in addition to knowledge of LD.

Part 1 of the training pertaining to the knowledge of LD consisted of 2 sessions of 5 hours each conducted over a period of 2 days. Part 2 of training pertaining to the psychological skills consisted of 2 sessions of 5 hours each conducted over a period of 2 days.

Experimental group A was imparted training only on part 1 which included training on the knowledge of LD. Experimental group B was imparted training on both part 1 & part 2, thereby receiving training on both knowledge of LD and psychological skills.

Hence experimental group A received training for a period of 2 days and the experimental group B received training for a period of 4 days.
Each session was carefully constructed so that the training and activities covered all dimensions of LD training. Every session was timed. Handbook, brochures, case studies, videos and faculty exchange of information and experience was provided.

Faculty members met to discuss students’ behavior during the course of the training program.

**Blue Print of the Training Program:**

The training program has been customized to meet the needs of the faculty at the higher educational set up. Although professional development for teachers is widely made available at the colleges in the UAE much of it does not involve transmission of evidence based practices in the field of special education needs and LD.

Data collection timeline: September 2012 – February 2013 (a period of six months)

Colleges participated in the Study:

- Dubai campus
- Al Ain campus
- Sharjah campus
- Abu Dhabi campus

Since the professional developmental sessions were conducted in the respective campuses, logistically the researcher had to travel to different emirates to conduct the study.
# Blue print of the training program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Knowledge of LD</th>
<th>5 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| DAY – 1 | 1) Introduction to LD  
| | a) Sample definitions.  
| | b) Types of LD.  
| | 2) Legislations, knowledge of procedures and service coordination.  
| | 3) How to identify LD?  
| | 4) Characteristics of LD.  
| | 5) Knowledge of resources.  
| | 6) Teaching strategies. |         |
| DAY-2 | 1) Willingness to provide accommodations  
| | 2) Willingness to undertake training  
| | 3) Willingness to advocate for students with LD.  
| | 4) Faculty preparedness.  
| | 5) Checklists:  
| | f. Handwriting evaluation scale .  
| | g. Vanderbilt ADHD Diagnostic Teacher Rating Scale (ADTRS).  
| | h. Dyslexia checklist.  
| | i. Scotopic sensitivity checklist.  
| | j. Challenging behavior checklist. |         |
| Day -3 | 1) General beliefs and attitudes.  
| | 2) Importance of positive attitudes.  
| | 3) Building positive attitudes.  
| | 4) Feeling comfortable with students having LD. |         |
| DAY – 4 | 1) Building empathy.  
| | 2) Vulnerability or Fear of disability.  
| | 3) Perceived level of information.  
| | 4) Coping.  
| | 5) Conclusion. |         |
**Dimensions of the training program.**

Endorsing the evidence that the training program should encompass knowledge on LD, willingness to provide support accommodations, attitudes and interaction the present study stressed the significance of the four spheres:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislations and Service Coordination</td>
<td>To provide accommodations</td>
<td>General beliefs and attitudes</td>
<td>Empathy building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LD and types</td>
<td>To advocate for students with LD.</td>
<td>Positive attitudes and importance of positive attitudes</td>
<td>Coping / succumbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics and identifying LD.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Building positive attitudes</td>
<td>Vulnerability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching strategies</td>
<td></td>
<td>To undertake training and teacher preparation</td>
<td>Fear of disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge of services and resources</td>
<td>Feeling comfortable with students having LD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Day -1: Outline of the training on knowledge of LD

This part of the training program was developed to provide the faculty members with the knowledge, awareness and the skills to identify LD in classroom and provide support through teaching strategies and accommodation provision.

1. Introduction to LD

The participants were provided with the introduction to special needs in higher education, the legislations and services provision. The specialist then moved on to what LD are, the definition, the various types of LD and how LD can affect students while pursuing higher education.

Objectives: Create knowledge and awareness on what LD is, the types of LD students can have in colleges and how it affects the students in different aspects of life

Procedure: The training focused on the various definitions that help understanding LD in the context of higher education. Particular emphasis was given to second language learners as Arabic is the primary language and English is the second language for most students who are admitted in colleges in the UAE.

LD such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia emerged as the most common types of LD prevalent among college students. At the end of the session the specialist discussed how to distinguish second language learners from students who have LD.

Time taken: The above activity was followed by interaction from faculty where the faculty members were interested in learning about how to distinguish students who were second language learners and students who suffered a LD. The faculty was very
interested in understanding the various types to disabilities as they come across students who have issues with reading, writing, math or coordination. The time taken was 1 hour.

**Outcome:** The faculty members were very interested in understanding the different types of LD as many of them started to relate the differences to their students in class. After the completion of this session the faculty members could begin to make associations with the different types of difficulties and have a broad understanding of the meaning of LD.

2. **Legislations, knowledge of procedures and service coordination.**

**Objectives:** Create knowledge and awareness on legislations and service provision in the colleges. To train faculty members to have a better understanding of special needs in higher education and the legislations, policies and procedures that the colleges developed to address students having LD in higher education. This session stresses on the knowledge and awareness of faculty members in dealing with students having LD, whom to contact and procedures to follow in the mentoring process.

**Procedure:** This session started with an ice breaking power point slide which had all the famous personalities diagnosed with some form of LD. The faculty members were asked to identify the faces displayed as they all had something in common. Introduction to special needs services in the colleges was provided and the legislations regarding the rights of students having disabilities was discussed. The same session also discussed in great detail the service coordination and the procedures that the colleges followed with regard to students with LD.

**Time taken:** The above activity was followed by interaction from faculty where the faculty members requested more clarity on the procedures that the college follows in
working with students having LD. The time taken was 30 minutes. The faculty members were asked to meet their respective college counselors to discuss in further detail if they had specific doubts on the service coordination in their respective campuses.

**Outcome:** As observed by the researcher the faculty members were shocked to see the number of famous personalities which had some form of LD. They were very interested in understanding the procedures that was followed in their respective campuses in dealing with students having LD. A flow chart explaining the service coordination in the colleges was explained in detail. This information was directed to help faculty understand the legislations, policies and procedures that the faculty should be aware off.

Legal Mandates such as the UN Convention on the rights of individuals with disabilities, the UAE Federal Law 29/2006 and the Special Needs Policy (LP213) that was developed by the federal colleges was discussed by the specialist. College procedures and service coordination in the colleges relating to services for students with LD, the procedures to follow during college exams and system wide exams and the role of faculty in the process was discussed in detail.

**3. How to identify LD.**

After learning about the definitions, various types of LD and how LD can affect students while pursuing higher education, the faculty were trained on how to identify LD.

**Objectives:** The aim of the session was to identify learning difficulties in classroom and out of classrooms by providing a clear understanding of the characteristics and signs of LD in the context of higher education. This session will help bridge the gap between theory and practice as the faculty members will be able to identify students having different learning needs. The following activity was carried out to help faculty
members brainstorm the different characteristics and challenges which students have with respect to learning.

**Activity:** Brainstorming characteristic features of students who have learning difficulties.

**Procedure:** The faculty members were asked to write down any 5 characteristic features they have encountered in students in classrooms. The faculty members were given 10 minutes to jot down 5 or more characteristics in a few words or phrases that best describe the challenges students face. When they finished they were prompted to share what they wrote sometimes giving examples. As they shared the characteristics were jotted on the flip chart by the specialist.

At the end of the exercise the specialist discusses how most of the points that the faculty discussed happened to be the characteristic features of LD. The specialist then moved on to explaining how faculty can play an important part in the student’s learning experience as they are the first persons to be in contact and identify a students learning need. After completion of this activity the faculty members started to get more involved in the session that addressed the various characteristics of students having LD.

**Time taken:** The group activity lasted for 1 hour. The discussions between specialist and faculty members were held in the session that addressed the signs and characteristics of having LD.

**Outcome:** The faculty was eager to read out their responses, providing clarifications where ever necessary. The exercise with faculty appealed very much to them as they reflected how they could relate to challenges that students faced in their classes.
4. Characteristics of LD.

The faculties were next trained on understanding the characteristics of LD.

**Objectives:** Create an understanding of the characteristics of LD, the various challenges that students with LD face and how it affects them in higher education.

**Procedure:** This session focuses on the various characteristic features that help faculty members to identify students with LD in classes. The specialist developed a rich module comprising of an exhaustive list of problems that can be noted in one or more areas of the a) Cognitive Processing  b) Executive Functioning c) Academic Achievement d) Technology Skills e) Social Skills.

The specialist explained how a LD affects students in a postsecondary setting. At the end of the session the specialist highlights the importance of faculty understanding the characteristic features of LD, as faculty are seen as the first point of contact for a student’s success in higher education.

**Time taken:** The above session was a very intensive session loaded with information on signs and symptoms that students can project when they have a LD. The faculty was very keen on understanding the characteristics in detail as they did have students in their classrooms who are struggling to cope with the academics. The time taken for this session was 1 hour including the time taken for the activity.

**Outcome:** The faculty members were very interested in understanding some of the symptoms especially those which they could relate with the students and wanted to know if there were specific checklists that they can administer to learn more in order to provide appropriate support. Upon the completion of this session the faculty members had clearly learnt the characteristics to identify LD among students in higher education.
The following activity was also conducted as a part of this session

Activity: A group activity aimed at helping the faculty identify the handwriting and spelling characteristic features of students with LD was conducted as a part of the training program.

Procedure: The faculty members were asked to identify the characteristics from the sample 1 of the handwriting projected to them. It was a writing of picture comprehension of a student having dysgraphia (writing difficulty). The time allotted to look at the picture and the writing sample was 5 minutes and 15 minutes to discuss. The faculty members discussed with the specialist various writing difficulties like poor penmanship, spelling mistakes, punctuations, difficulty in comprehending, completing written assignments, trouble with spacing, poorly formed letters, incorrect use of capitalization etc. Similarly, sample - 2 of a spelling test was projected to the participant faculty members. The time allotted to look at the spelling sample was 5 minutes and 10 minutes was provided to discuss the sample. The faculty members were prompted to discuss the difficulties that the student would have had in giving the test which included, wrong spellings, reversal of page, poor and illegible handwriting and having most of the spelling wrong in the test.

At the end of the exercise the specialist urged the faculty members to share samples of writings of students which they encountered in class having similar difficulties. These samples provided faculty with a deeper understanding of the various difficulties students can have.

Time taken: The group activity lasted for 30 minutes. The discussions between specialist and faculty members were held in the session that addressed the signs and red flags of LD, particularly writing difficulty.
**Outcome:** The faculty members were very interested in understanding the characteristics through the samples and were willing to share some of the samples of their students for discussion. This exercise helped faculty look into the handwriting of their student to spot learning difficulties.

5. **Knowledge of resources.**

After the faculty were trained on the teaching strategies they were next provided information about the resources available at the colleges to support the students with LD.

**Objectives:** Create an understanding of the available resources on the campus for the students and encourage faculty and students to utilize these resources available at the college.

**Procedure:** This session focused on the various resources that were available on the campus for the students having LD which included the assistive technology resource center, special needs library, workshops and professional development sessions for faculty and students, separate room for invigilation, student services support and support from community organizations. These resources varied from campus to campus and hence the specialist addressed only the resources that were available in the respective campuses.

**Time taken:** The time taken for this session was 30 minutes.

**Outcome:** This was a very important session for the faculty members for them to have a good understanding of the available resources. Upon the completion of this session all the faculty members had clearly learnt the resources that were available on campus.
6. Teaching strategies.

After learning how to identify students with LD, the faculty were next trained on the teaching strategies that can be adopted by the faculty while dealing with the students having LD.

Procedure: This session focuses on the various teaching strategies to teach students having dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia.

The topics that were covered during this session comprised of the following:

- Support during lectures
- Examination and assignments
- Study accommodations
- Assistive technology

The specialist explained the importance of incorporating learning for students with different learning styles. At the end of the session the specialist highlights the importance of faculty understanding of the various teaching strategies for improving reading, writing and mathematics.

Time taken: The above session was a very intensive session loaded with information on various teaching strategies to teach students having LD. The faculty was very much interested in understanding how a particular strategy can impact students having LD especially to improve reading and writing. The time taken for this session was 1 hour including the activity listed below.

Outcome: The faculty members learnt that different styles can be incorporated into teaching. The faculty showed a lot of interest in adopting the various forms of support that they can offer through teaching such as use of different colors while writing on the board, highlight the key words, provide an outline of the lecture, summarize the key points of the lecture, provide extended time to complete assignments and projects,
separate invigilation, assistive technology such as reader software, word prediction software and tape recorders to record lectures. Upon the completion of this session the faculty members noted all the support they can provide to students having learning difficulties in their class.

**Activity:** As a part of this session a group activity was conducted for the faculty aimed at improving their understanding of the different teaching strategies that can be used while teaching students with LD.

**Procedure:** The faculty members were put in groups of ten. A passage was provided to each group. One faculty member was asked to be the teacher, one faculty member was an observer, one became a student who was the dyslexic learner and the rest of the faculty members would help in provide appropriate strategies to teach the student. The time allotted for the exercise was 15 minutes to discuss the best teaching strategy.

At the end of the exercise the specialist urged the faculty members to share the exercise by letting the teacher discuss their experiences. The observers had to relate the experience of the group while preparing the lesson and teaching the student and the experience of the student having dyslexia.

**Time taken:** The group activity lasted for 20 minutes. The discussions between specialist and faculty members were held in the session that addressed the various teaching strategies for students having LD.

**Outcome:** The faculty members were very interested in understanding the various teaching strategies and most of them were discussed during the activity. This exercise helped faculty look into the various teaching techniques that faculty members can try during their teaching sessions.
DAY-2: Outline of the willingness dimension of the LD training

The first session of day 2 of the training program was aimed at improving the faculty willingness to provide accommodations

1. Willingness to provide accommodations.

Accommodations are academic adjustments or auxiliary aides and services which help a student with impairments in overcoming the barrier imposed by the condition or the environment. The faculty members are primary mentors of students having LD and can provide reasonable accommodations. Accommodations are the services that faculty provide to students to support them in their academic pursuits.

Objectives: The main aim of this session is to train faculty on the various accommodations that they can provide to students having LD and to ensure that the faculty have a thorough knowledge about the various ways they can support students academically to help students succeed.

Procedure: In this session the ‘Handbook on Accommodations’ for students with special needs which is a very comprehensive handbook explaining in detail the various special support that they can provide as mentors was discussed in detail. Along with the same a document that enlisted the different forms of LD along with the alternate forms in which the student can be taught was explained to the faculty. A video on a student having LD who has succeeded through mentoring and support provided by a faculty member was played for faculty members.

Activity: The following activity was conducted for the faculty aimed at improving their willingness to provide accommodations to students with LD.
The faculty members were asked to go over the ‘Willingness to Provide Accommodations’ scale by (Lewis, 1998; Matthews et al., 1987; Nelson et al., 1990) and see if they were willing to provide the accommodations that were enlisted in the scale.

**Willingness to provide Accommodations scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Accommodation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Allow student to tape record classroom lectures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Provide copies of instructor’s lecture notes after they attend lectures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Extend deadlines for completion of class projects, papers etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Allow student to complete alternative assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Allow student to do extra credit assignments when this option is not available to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Provide student with a syllabus before the term begins to give ample time to complete reading and writing assignments when this option is not available to other students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Allow student to give oral presentations or tape-recorded assignments rather than complete written projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Allow student to take alternative form of examination (example computer scored answer sheets or multiple-choice tests instead of essay tests or vice versa).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Allow a proctor to rephrase test questions that are not clear to students (example a double negative may need to be clarified).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Allow student extra time to complete class tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Allow student to dictate answers to a scribe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Allow student to respond orally to essay questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Analyze the process as well as the product (giving partial credit if the correct mathematical computation was used although the final answer was wrong) when this option is not available to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Allow student to use basic calculator during the test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Allow misspelling, incorrect punctuation, and poor grammar on tests without penalizing the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Allow use of proofreaders to assist in correction of grammar and punctuation in student’s first draft of written assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Allow use of proofreaders to assist in reconstruction of student’s first draft of a written assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Allow use of proofreaders to assist the student in substitution of higher level vocabulary for original wording.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Time Taken:** The time taken for this topic was 1 hr.30min, including the time taken for the activity.

**Outcome:** The faculty members welcomed the reference handbook on accommodations that was provided to them. This handbook will serve as a guide to understanding the provision of appropriate support that can be provided to students having LD. The faculty members showed willingness to use the handbook and liked sharing the handbook with their other colleagues in the college.
2. Willingness to undertake training

In the next session the faculty were trained to improve their willingness to undertake training related to LD.

**Objectives:** The success of the training will reflect on the willingness of the faculty members to feel the need to be trained on teaching and dealing with students having LD. Thus the main objective of this session is to help enhance the willingness of the faculty to request for and believe in the importance of professional training in dealing with students having different learning needs.

**Procedure:** As teachers are the most influential in playing valuable roles as mentors it is very important to understand their attitude towards professional development opportunities and encouraging the need to training in the field of special needs and LD. In this session the faculty members were provided with information on the importance of professional development and need for developing the skills and knowledge to willingly support students with different learning needs so that they can work collaboratively with other stakeholders to ensure student success.

Two group activities were conducted as a part of this training session

**Activity 1:** The following list was provided to the faculty to explain why this training is essential. The faculty were asked to review the list and reflect on three most important reasons why professional development was necessary in the field of LD.

1. To help students willingly to achieve their educational pursuits.
2. To boost the self-esteem of students.
3. Teach students self-advocacy skills.
4. Prepare faculty to participate in collaborative discussions and work as a team for providing appropriate support.
5. Current faculty models do not appear to provide training in LD.
6. Increased knowledge about LD improves their attitudes to teach students with LD.
7. Professional development will help faculty to improve their interaction towards
   students with LD.
8. Professional development will help faculty understand why students with learning
difficulties behave in a particular way and help faculty address challenging behaviors.
9. Professional development sessions help faculty build their relationships with students
   having LD rather than having negative stereotypes about them.
10. Faculty through training overcome their cognitive thoughts and feelings of
    vulnerability, fear of having a disability, coping with a disability etc.
11. Professional development in LD will empower faculty to advocate for students having
    learning difficulties.
12. If students having LD have to be successful, the faculty has to be trained to mentor.
13. To provide an introspective look at one’s own attitude.
14. Professional development in LD also offers collegial and professional growth.

   **Time taken:** This session was necessary to highlight the importance of
   professional development of faculty in LD. The time allotted was thirty minutes.

   **Outcomes:** Getting involved in this session and reviewing the need for training
   helped the faculty to gain a lot of perspective about the need for training and professional
   development.

   **Activity 2:** The following list was provided to the faculty to explain why this
   training is essential. The faculty were asked to review the list and reflect on three most
   important reasons why professional development was necessary in the field of LD.

   1. What would be the type of training you would like to attend?
2. Would you like to train other faculty on working with students having LD?

3. What would be the resources and support you will need?

**Time taken:** This activity was necessary to allow the faculty to feel the need for professional training in learning difficulties to work with the learning needs of the students. The time allotted was 30 minutes.

**Outcomes:** This activity helped faculty to self-introspect on the need for training and professional development.

### 3. Willingness to advocate for students with LD

The next session focused on improving the faculty awareness regarding advocating for students with LD.

**Objectives:** To create awareness among faculty regarding advocating for students with learning difficulties and taking appropriate action.

**Procedure:** This segment of the training module emphasized on the motivation of the teacher to advocate for the rights and services of the students having LD. A brief introduction to advocacy was shared by the specialist and a message to involve in advocating for the students having learning difficulties in college. The following activity was conducted as a part of this training session.

**Activity:** The faculty were asked to choose one student who is in need of help and plan all the support the faculty can give, to get the student where you want him/her to be and where you think the student can get.

**Time taken:** The time taken for this activity is 30 minutes to make an advocacy plan for the student.

**Outcomes:** The specialist made the teachers aware that advocacy is an effective training strategy while dealing with students who have learning difficulties. An invisible
disability such as learning difficulties makes it very difficult for the students to self-advocate and hence in this training program the faculty members are training on the importance of advocating for the students.

4. Faculty preparedness.

The next session focused on improving the faculty preparedness to support students with LD.

Objectives: Enabling faculty to understand the need to prepare themselves to support students in providing appropriate accommodations, look for students who are at risk and work with them and work on the strengths of these students.

Procedure: Faculty members were provided with information on the need to develop their skills necessary to work with students having LD. Two activities were conducted as a part of this session.

Activity 1: The faculty were instructed to read the passage given below, silently and answer the questions at the bottom of the page.

“Wants pawn term, dare worsted ladle gull hoe lift wetter murder inner ladle cordage honor itch offer lodge, dock florist. Disk ladle gull orphan worry ladle cluck, wetter putty ladle rat hut, end fur disk raisin pimple colder Ladle Rat Rotten Hut.

Wan moaning Rat Rotten Hut’s murder colder inset. Ladle Rat Rotten Hut, heresy ladle basking winsome burden barter and shirker cockles. Tick disk ladle basking tudor cordage offer groin murder, hoe liftis honor udder site offer florist. Shaker lake, don stopper laundry wrote, end yonder nor sorghum stenches don stopper torque wet strainers.

Hoe lift wetter murder inner florist?

Hoe gut dot ladle basking?”


**Translation**

Once upon a time, there was this little girl who lived with her mother in a little cottage on the edge of a large, dark forest. This little girl often wore a little cloak, with a pretty little red hat, and for this reason people called her Little Red Riding Hood.

One morning Red Riding Hood’s mother called her inside. Little Red Riding Hood, here is a little basket with some bread and butter and sugar cookies. Take this little basket to the cottage of your grandmother, who lives on the other side of the forest. Shake a leg, don’t stop along the road and under no circumstances, stop to talk with strangers.

Who lived with her mother in the forest?

Who got that little basket?

(Adapted from Anguish Language by Howard Chace. Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1956.)

This simulation is designed to illustrate how a student with LD might feel when trying to read a passage. You can read all the words (just like many students with LD can read the words) but you have difficulty discerning the meaning of the passage. Students with LD often feel frustrated and discouraged when they see their classmates easily comprehending a textbook chapter, when they spend hours reading and rereading, struggling with what comes easily to other people.

Often students with LD have difficulty comprehending print but do very well if they can hear the same material. This simulation also illustrates why books on tape and computer screen readers are so helpful to many students with LD. You can help by selecting all course materials well before the course begins, so that if needed, the office for student’s services will have ample time to make recordings. Also, in your class, if you use power point slides, it is very helpful to mention each point orally.
**Time taken:** The time allotted for this activity was 30 minutes.

**Outcomes:** This session helped faculty members to understand the issues students having LD such as reading can have especially when they are asked to read a passage. After having to go through this activity, the faculty members were enlightened on the troubles students can face and how they can identify these students and help them.

**Activity 2:** A Self Evaluation Audit tool was provided to the faculty members to help them prepare for a LD friendly classroom. The items in the tool were under the following heads.

1. Text resources available in the classroom/study room/lecture theatre
2. Room arrangements
3. Affective aspects
4. Room interactions
5. General dyslexia-friendly teaching and learning

**Time taken:** The time allotted for this activity was 30 minutes.

**Outcomes:** The significance of the exercise was the learning process which emphasized on the aspects of preparation. For the faculty to be prepared in meeting the needs of students having LD it was essential to learn how to be prepared in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude.

**5. Checklists**

During the final session the faculty were provided with checklists that would help the faculty in supporting students with LD.

**Objectives:** An important aspect of the training program was helping faculty improve their willingness to provide accommodation, support and to advocate for students having LD.
**Procedure:** In this session the specialist discussed the checklists that will help faculty identify learning issues in students and help provide relevant support in mainstream classes. The following checklists were discussed;

- **a.** Handwriting Evaluation Scale
- **b.** Vanderbilt ADHD Diagnostic Teacher Rating Scale (ADTRS)
- **c.** Dyslexia Checklist
- **d.** Scotopic Sensitivity Checklist
- **e.** Challenging Behavior Checklist

**Time taken:** The time taken for this session was 1 hour.

**Outcome:** This was a very important session for the faculty members and the outcome was very positive. The faculties were very interesting in using the checklists on the students. The checklists also served as red flags to identify students at risk. The specialist also provided the faculty with information that will help them use the checklists.

**DAY -3 Outline of the attitude dimension of the psychological skills training**

Day 3 and day 4 were focused on the psychological skills training. The first session of this module started with training the faculty on their attitudes.

Attitudes are often defined in terms of mood, thought processes, behavioral tendencies and evaluation (Hernandez et al, 2000).

Researchers suggest that there are several different components that make up attitudes.

1. An Emotional Component: How the object, person, issue or event makes you feel.
1. General beliefs and attitudes

The first session of the psychological skills training started with training focused on promoting teacher success through positive attitudes.

Objectives: This module of training was focused on fostering teacher success through positive attitudes. This dimension on positive attitudes of faculty members was designed to empower the faculty with psychological input to improve their general beliefs and attitudes towards students having LD.

By completing the session, the faculty will be able:

- To have an understanding of positive and negative attitudes
- To have a more positive attitude towards students having LD

Procedure: In this session the specialist started the training with a video of Nick Vujicic of 15 minutes which focused on having a positive attitude in life. Nick has no arms or legs and is a motivational speaker. In this video he stresses the importance of having a good attitude to life, be thankful for what life has given you and make the best you can.

After the faculty watched the video by motivational speaker Nick Vujicic, a presentation was made to the faculty on positive attitudes and its impact based on the presentation titled “Attitude is Altitude” created by Nick Vujicic.

The core idea of the talk threw light into the two most important words which are “Beliefs and Attitudes” which gives idea of how, what one thinks about one’s self which can in turn affect how one feels.

Activity: The following activity was conducted as a part of this session. The faculty was asked to answer the following questions;
Q1: Are you in support of teaching students with LD?

Q2: What are some of the things that can affect your attitude towards them?

The faculty were asked to reflect on the resources available, the internal and external influences like, managerial support, family, time, curriculum, environment, cultural sensitivity which are in favor of supporting students with LD and list them in the “In Control” column. Aspects that they not in control off for instance - difference in educational backgrounds, lack of contact, preparation time, no training, complexity of the condition, extent to which they can provide accommodations and the other features that are holding them from supporting students with LD were to be listed in “Not in Control” column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Control</th>
<th>Not in Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once the faculty finished writing their answers they were encouraged to share what they have written in their activity sheets and it was discussed

**Time Taken:** The total time taken for this topic was 1 hr. 30 min.

**Outcome:** It was a great ice breaking session through which the faculty members got introduced to what they believe and their attitudes towards students having LD. As this session was aimed at developing reflection of faculty beliefs and attitudes, the video of Nick Vujicic and the motivation talk coupled with the activity helped faculty develop better attitudes and introspect their own perceptions about their students.
2. Importance of positive attitudes

In the next session the faculties were provided training on the importance of positive attitudes.

**Objectives:** The objective of this session was to establish an understanding of the various ways to have positive attitudes, the power of using positive words and the importance of positive words.

**Procedure:** Three activities were carried out as a part of this session

**Activity 1:** In this session faculty members were put into two groups. A list of positive words and negative words given below were displayed on the screen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Words</th>
<th>Negative Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winner</td>
<td>Loser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Hate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pride</td>
<td>Shame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Unfair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>Weakness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable</td>
<td>Disable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow</td>
<td>Restrict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able</td>
<td>Unable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique</td>
<td>Handicapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice</td>
<td>Forced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>Impossible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Include</td>
<td>Exclude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>Crippled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential</td>
<td>Confined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Condemn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talent</td>
<td>Deficit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist</td>
<td>Impair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>Lazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enduring</td>
<td>Suffering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage</td>
<td>Disengage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Befriend</td>
<td>Ignore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embrace</td>
<td>Avoid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care</td>
<td>Bother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One group was asked to look at the positive words and the other group was asked to look at the negative words. Then the positive group was asked to jot down as many positive words and the negative group was asked to jot down as many negative words as possible. They were given 15 minutes to jot down the words. Then the negative group was asked to read each word one by one and the positive group was asked to give the positive word for it. The time taken for this activity was 30 minutes.

**Activity 2:** Subsequent to the above activity a thirty minute module on the ten positive attitudes was displayed with emphasis on each principle.

1. Positive thinking principle
2. Proactive principle
3. Appreciation principle
4. Small stuff principle
5. People principle
6. The self-esteem principle
7. Overwhelm principle
8. The flexibility principle
9. Response/ability principle
10. The self-awareness principle

As a take home activity faculty were asked to discuss with their families the principles they used most at home and at work.

**Activity 3:** In the next activity the specialist started the discussion with the need to have a positive attitude which is a key to success in many areas of life. Positive attitude can significantly impact relationships, health, overall well-being and self-confidence. The overall impact of a positive attitude is far reaching and undeniably an important factor in
maintaining meaningful relationships, good health, increasing your wellbeing, and lifting self-confidence.

This talk was followed by a small group work where the faculties were divided into groups of 5 were they were asked to discuss the following:

- Discuss one example of a situation with a student that may have “challenged” your attitude and your reaction to it?

The time taken for this activity was 30 minutes.

**Time Taken:** The total time taken for this topic consisting of three activities was one 1 hr. 30 min in total.

**Outcome:** This session helped faculty develop positive perceptions about their competence in academic and nonacademic domains. The process then leads to a positive attitude of self and towards others which is an overall evaluation of one’s self as well as positive feelings towards students having LD.

3. **Building positive attitudes**

After training the faculty on the importance of positive attitudes, they were next trained on how to build positive attitudes.

**Objectives:** The objective of this session was to enable the faculty boost their attitudes, and a chance to sharpen their social, communication and empathetic skills through mentoring, and in the process build skills necessary to help and possibly shape a young students life in a positive way.

**Procedure:** Powerful thinking is positive, constructive, fearless, optimistic and realistic. Since staying positive takes knowledge and training, the faculty were given a brief up on the following concepts relating to building positive attitudes.

a) Recognize the unseen power of thoughts:
b) Decide what you want

c) Identify negative thinking patterns

d) Monitor your thoughts

e) Control your inner dialogue

The faculty were then provided with tips on how they can have a positive impact when dealing with students having LD as follows;

- A positive classroom climate can be created by using student’s name and knowing something about each student.

- It is important to convince the students that you like them (even though you may not always like the way they behave).

- Take time when you greet students at the door when they first arrive at the classroom. Express an interest in their activities. Build up a store of positive comments to individual students, so that if later you must deliver negative feedback, it is not the first evaluation you have made of the student.

- Make eye contact with each student in the class, and pay attention to all quadrants of the classroom.

- Don’t be afraid to look straight in their face.

- Move towards the students and stay close to the learners.

- Reinforce them with positive comments, and encourage desirable tasks etc.

- Providing wait time - Pausing to allow a student more time to answer instead of moving on to another student when you don’t get an immediate response.

- Dignifying responses – giving credit for the correct aspects of an incorrect response.

- Restating the question – asking the question a second time
• Rephrasing the question- using different words that might increase the probability of a correct response
• Providing guidance- giving enough hints and clues so that the student will eventually determine the correct answer.

**Time Taken:** The total time taken for this topic was 1 hour.

**Outcome:** Faculty spent sufficient time to interact during discussion time, and did introspect into their attitudes through the talks and exercises that were given. The attitude dimension of the training program sought to provide avenues to help faculty introspect into their core values.

4. **Feeling Comfortable with students having LD.**

The faculty were next trained on improving their level of comfort when dealing with students having LD.

**Objectives:** To provide faculty with the opportunities to improve the level of comfort in interacting with students having LD and apply them in everyday life.

**Procedure:** The faculty were given a brief up on social discomfort relating to students having LD in classrooms and encouraging positive interactions through positive attitudes. The core topics addressed in the classroom session included the following:

a) Contact with the student having LD

b) What if you lack knowledge on dealing with the LD in class

c) How to overcome feeling of discomfort

Some of the tips included on what can be done if one cannot stop staring at the student who looks or behaves in an awkward manner, cannot stop being afraid of working with a student or wanting to have brief contact with the student.

Two activities were conducted as a part of this session.
**Activity 1:** This exercise was initiated to help faculty gain insights about the positive and the negative ways in which students having disabilities view their teachers.

**Negative Comments from Students on Teachers:**

- Our lecturer did not let us take notes while we were listening. He would dictate notes only in the last 10 minutes and is always in great hurry to finish his lecture.
- I always feel too embarrassed and shy to ask questions, because my teacher hardly gives me eye contact or feels comfortable holding a conversation.
- “When my class mates would be taking turns to read passages one after another in class, I would get very anxious as my turn was nearing. It would frustrate me even more with my teacher’s comment “come on there is clearly no reason why you can’t do this, as you are good at everything else”. I always knew that there was more to it than my difficulty in reading.
- My English lecturer would ask me a question in class and before I could assimilate my thoughts and answer she would move on to the next student thinking I do not know the answer.
- My teacher would stare at my clumsiness and my behavior I was once told that I was not fit to be in her class.
- The teacher would give my friend very hard spellings to practice and it was impossible for her to accommodate her in the class. She would use her red pen liberally without understanding her difficulty to write extensive comments. This destroyed my friend’s esteem completely.
Positive Comments from Students on Teachers:

- My teacher took great interest in me. She praised me liberally and encouraged me every time I did something right.

- Oh my teacher guessed I had problems and was very comfortable approaching me after class several times till I got comfortable with her. She dictates slowly in class and repeats to ensure I had written everything.

- My Math teacher was excellent. He had a great sense of humor and treated each and every one very respectfully.

- It was my English lecturer who identified that I genuinely had trouble reading and writing and I was not just lazy or stupid. She was obviously not ignorant and referred me for an assessment too where I was diagnosed of dyslexia.

Time Taken: The above activity was followed by a discussion where the positive and negative statements were read aloud as well as individual perceptions on comfort towards students with disabilities were discussed. The time taken was 30 minutes. They were also asked to jot down their experiences while doing this exercise.

Outcome: As observed by the specialist the faculty were very interested to know about the range of feelings that faculty in the group had about the students. This exercise was more of a reflective exercise in which the faculty spent considerable time self-analyzing and engaging in abstract as well as concrete thinking on the level of comfort and clear understanding of the best ways communicate with the students having LD. The faculty were free to discuss their thoughts about their comfort levels.

Activity 2: The following exercise was presented on the screen and the faculty were asked to read the words and then say the color and not the word.

Read the Words

BLUEPURPLEREDGREENYELLOW
Subsequently they were asked to say the colors and not the words.

Say the color not the word

\textbf{BLUEREDGREENYELLOWPURPLE}

When the faculty were asked to read out loud the colors, they experienced a sense of difficulty. The specialist addressed the discomfort that faculty felt. Similarly, faculty may experience discomfort in dealing with students who have challenges and difficulties in learning. Discomfort that can result in a condition of stress, staring at an awkward behavior, not sure about how to react to a particular situation, afraid of looking at the face or even making contact very brief and limited.

**Time Taken:** The duration of this activity was 30 minutes

**Outcomes:** This session enabled faculty to understand that discomfort can be overcome by getting to learn more about learning difficulties which will directly help in improving the attitudes and interaction towards them.

**DAY - 4: Outline of the interaction dimension of the LD training**

Day 4 started with a session focusing on building empathy.

Duan and Hill (1996) define empathy as;

1. Primarily an affective phenomenon, referring to the immediate experiences of emotions of another person;
2. Primarily a cognitive construct, referring to the intellectual understanding of another’s experience or perspective-taking;
3. A combination of cognitive and emotional components; or
4. Either cognitive or affective depending on the situation.
1. Building empathy.

   **Objectives:** Empathy being the significant aspect of experiencing the emotion of another person sets the standard in bringing core ethical values and skills in dealing with students having LD. As higher levels of empathy improve the level of interaction leading to better mentoring, the following empathy building exercises were carried out.

   **Procedure:** Faculty was given a brief up on the concepts relating to empathy and this was followed by a group activity.

The faculty were trained on the following concepts relating to empathy;

1. What is empathy?
2. How to respond to others empathically using David Levine’s approach (2006) of EEA Event Empathy Action (EEA a three-step advanced listening approach that teaches faculty how to respond to students empathically. When something unfortunate, disappointing, or sad (a family separation, doing poorly on a test, being embarrassed in front of others) happens in another person's life, students ask themselves these open-ended question about the person and event:

   a. What happened? (Identify the event)

   b. How is that person feeling? (An understanding of the other person's feelings leads to empathy)

   c. What will I do? (Decide on a specific action to respond to the event) The EEA method is presented to the group using empathic situations, which are hypothetical scenarios to discuss in order to explore various empathic responses.

   “Think about the many words you know that express emotions. As the person is speaking, keep thinking about what emotion they are expressing. Your goal is to accept
the person totally, not to judge them, but to try your best to understand them.” Empathy is when there is an understanding of what happened in the situation, how the person feels about it which can be expressed through the emotion the person expresses and as a teacher you are able to help the student a particular way.

The following are some examples of words that express emotion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerned</th>
<th>Worried</th>
<th>Disappointed</th>
<th>Excited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>Jealous</td>
<td>Surprised</td>
<td>Worried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>Tired</td>
<td>Relieved</td>
<td>Furious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overwhelmed</td>
<td>Confused</td>
<td>Exhausted</td>
<td>Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated</td>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>Reassured</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of statements and empathetic responses:

I don’t know what is happening……………….You seem to feel confused.

I’m so tired of trying………………………….You sound discouraged.

Why can’t he change?………………………….You sound frustrated.

In this session the faculty learnt more about an important counseling skill which is Empathy and the importance of empathy in mentoring students with LD.

**Time taken:** The time taken for this session was 1 hour

After the faculty got familiar with the concept of empathy, the following classroom exercise was carried out.

**Activity:** To become more aware that compassion involves understanding and engaging in another person’s life, students view images of people and creatively interpret what they see. This exercise used to observe how closely and accurately the faculty were able to interpret facial expressions even if the images were ambiguous. The aim was to
elicit empathic responses from them and discuss these responses at the end of the exercise.

**Materials Required:** Photos cut from magazines (all headlines, captions, and associated articles describing the scene are removed).

**Procedure:** Faculty members are given a few magazines and newspapers and instructed to cut photos that provoke an emotional response, featuring at least one person. They are asked to choose images in which the emotions of the person are not overt (screaming, crying, laughing, etc.) and their mood or situation is ambiguous. The pictures are then put in a box on the specialist’s table. Each faculty is asked to pick a photo from the box and wait for the instructions.

The following instructions are then given to the faculty;

“There is an old saying: "A picture is worth a thousand words." We're going to look at a picture and describe it in a thousand words. But before we do, we need to ask how to feel compassion for another person and why it's important.” Pointing out to them –“that part of caring involves empathy — seeing another’s perspective and feeling what he or she is going through. Our purpose is to look at the people in the photo with compassionate eyes. Imagine their lives, thoughts, dreams, fears. Invent a story for them”.

The faculty are then asked to start writing about the picture they have randomly picked. At the end of the exercise faculty shared their stories about the pictures.

**Time taken:** The time taken for this activity was 30 minutes.

**Outcome:** Faculty spent sufficient time to make their stories. During discussion time, faculty could identify the number of empathic responses they included and those responses that were not.
2. Vulnerability or fear of disability.

After receiving training on building empathy and its application the faculty were next trained on how to overcome their fears in having to deal with student having LD.

**Objectives:** To gain insight into one’s emotions and examine the various aspects to overcoming fears about having or dealing with LD in college contexts.

**Procedure:** The faculty were provided with the following information to help them understand redesigning strength by addressing their fears which can be tackled efficiently through the tips explained.

What is Fear? What are faculty often afraid of working with students having learning difficulties? How can body language indicate fear? How knowledge on dealing with students having learning difficulties help improve interaction between faculty and students having LD?

**Redesigning yourself for Strength: Body Language**

*Positives*

- Open body language
- Sweeping gestures
- Palms up
- Leaning forward
- Natural, smooth hand gestures

*Negatives*

- Tapping your fingers or feet
- Arms crossed
- Glancing at watch
- Leaning back
- Tense body
Working things out – The specialist discussed the ways faculty can overcome fears about having a similar difficulty.

- Worrying about the student having learning issues need not be an easy experience which could be a natural reaction.
- Accept that you don’t have to feel this way going forward.
- Survivor’s guilt is common.
- Reach out to your colleagues, friends and family to discuss about it and overcome.
- If necessary, find the right professional to help with the situation.

**Discussion:** “Fears are relative events that keep changing with the context. It is essential to understand the nature of fears in order to regulate it and have better control instead of reacting impulsively.” Keeping the above statement as a discussion point, faculty were asked to share their experiences when they have felt fears about disability or handling students with difficulties in colleges.

**Time Taken:** The time taken for this activity was 1 hour.

**Outcome:** While most faculty members were comfortable discussing their fears, few faculties did not have much to share. This exercise served to look at fears from a different perspectives and also learning that fears can be modified by improving one’s beliefs and attitudes toward something.

3. **Perceived level of information.**

The faculty next, received training on their perceived level of information.

**Objective:** The main objective of this session was to make the faculty members aware about how each person’s perception of students with LD differs depending on their experiences and levels of training.
Procedure:

The following picture was provided to the faculty and they were questioned on what they perceived first.

After the faculty discussed how they viewed the picture the specialist explained how people perceive things differently by identifying only the old man or by identifying only the young women or identifying both. Similarly faculty can undergo feelings of frustration and dreaded thought about disability and how that can affect their interaction with students having LD. They should be perceived as those having their own strengths which need to be tapped and this can be done only by faculty members.

Time taken: The activity led to a discussion on how fears, feelings of frustration, ignorance about LD and dreaded thoughts of having a disability can influence the interaction towards students with LD. The time taken for the session on was 30 minutes.
Outcomes: Following the briefing on the perceived level of information of faculty, it was discussed and concluded that the special abilities that students with LD can have may not be recognized if faculty interaction was less. The highlights of the discussion as briefed to the faculty are as follows:

1. Students with LD are talented, having their own special abilities
2. Listen to student’s needs or concerns
3. Engage student in conversation if invited by student
4. Invite student to meet with you if you have concerns about performance, attendance, etc.
5. Be aware of campus resources- Disability Services, Counseling Center, Assistive Technology Center.
6. Provide modifications where appropriate.

4. Coping.

The faculty next were next trained on coping, when dealing with students having LD.

Objectives: To help students develop positive ways to assist and interact with students having LD without having feelings of hurt or guilt when they are not in a position to help. The process then leads to an overall evaluation of their own ability to positively support students in their educational pursuits

The aim was to elicit responses that will reflect upon their feelings towards students who struggle to learn at the end of the exercises

The following activity was carried out as a part of this session

Activity: The faculty were given a talk on appreciating the ability and strengths of students irrespective of their challenges in learning. This was a session of self-
introspection on how faculty can take a glimpse at their levels of coping when encountered with a student having a disability.

The faculty were then asked to answer the following question that was displayed on the screen.

- Do you think you could say or do something that would make students with LD more comfortable interacting with you?
- Give an example

**Time taken:** Time taken for this session was 1 hour.

**Outcome:** Faculty spent sufficient time to self-reflect and jot down their responses. The discussion involved those who were willing to share their examples and feelings. During discussion time, faculty could identify the number of responses they revealed positive feelings about themselves and about students.

5. **Conclusion.**

**Objectives:** Enabling faculty to have access to more information and open up to self-evaluation and allowing them to be self-constructive in assessing their own impact post training.

**Procedure:** This part of session comprised of the power point presentations on LD, attitudes, new research and statistics, a video on perceptions and examples of first people language. The following activity was also carried out as a part of this session.

**Activity:** The faculty members were asked to complete the below exercise as a result of the training.

- One specific way in which my attitude has changed towards students with LD is
- One specific thing I will do to support students with LD is:
The trainer summarized the training providing information on LD as well as psychological aspects for a holistic approach in the training module.

**Time Taken:** The time taken for this session was 1 hour.

**Outcome:** The final presentations were successfully carried out as a flow of activities. Discussions on the training program, its impact on faculty and the lessons learned were discussed in detail.

**Conclusion.**

To provide mentorship to students having LD the faculty need to improve their knowledge and nurture good attitudes, by applying principles such as positive attitudes, beliefs, practices, willingness, empathy, responsibility, and equality of opportunities. Through repeated experiences and training programs faculty can mentor students having LD in higher education through psychological and student support services.