We truly thank the reviewer for those positive comments about our work. We are happy that the emphasis on disability inclusion in higher education strikes as relevant and worthwhile and that our work contributes meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge. Your encouraging comments inspire us to keep improving the research and distribute our results to help more inclusive campuses.

Comment 1:

Introduction

I believe this section could be further strengthened by incorporating findings from previous studies that examine the social barriers that students with disabilities face within the university environment. Additionally, references to the dynamics of interaction between students with and without disabilities could provide valuable context. Such an approach would offer a more cohesive transition to the central focus and findings of the present study.

Response:

Thank you for this valuable recommendation. In response, we expanded the Introduction in two key areas:

Social barriers (p. 2, Paragraph 2) – We discuss how inaccessible infrastructure, social stigma, and policy gaps continue to undermine inclusion for students with disabilities, citing recent national studies [7–9].

Interaction dynamics (p. 2, Paragraph 5) – We added a paragraph summarizing research showing that limited interaction between students with and without disabilities reinforces stereotypes and uncertainty about support approaches [19,20]. This addition bridges the gap between contextual barriers and the rationale for the structured awareness program.

These modifications offer a more cohesive transition to the present study's objectives and underscore the need for university-based disability awareness interventions.

Comment 2:

Materials and Methods

It would be particularly useful to present the tool you developed in a table. This table could include a description of the development process, the elements adopted from the relevant literature and other studies, as well as those that were ultimately excluded, along with the criteria for their exclusion. Highlighting the components that were retained in the final version of the tool would also enhance clarity and transparency.

Response:

Thank you for this helpful suggestion. In response, we added Table 2 in the Instruments section to clearly summarise the development process of the Disability Awareness Scale. The table presents:

Each stage of development (literature review, expert panel, pilot testing),
The number of items retained or excluded,
And the reasons for exclusion (e.g., overlap or ambiguous wording).
This addition enhances the transparency of the scale development process and addresses your request for clearer reporting of the tool's construction and final structure.

Comment 3:

References
Kindly ensure that all references are formatted consistently according to the journal's guidelines. Please include complete bibliographic information for each source, such as reference no. 33 appears to be incomplete. Additionally, there seems to be some confusion between references 29 and 30, which should be clarified. Furthermore, if you wish to include DOIs, please ensure they are provided for all the references. It is recommended to use DOI links in the standardized URL format (e.g., https://doi.org/…) for consistency and accessibility.

Response:

Thank you for this important observation. In response:
We completed the missing bibliographic information for reference no. 33.
We corrected the citation confusion between references 29 and 30, which are now clearly distinguished.
We reviewed the full list of references for consistency with the journal's formatting guidelines.
We also added DOI links where available and ensured they follow the standardized format (https://doi.org/...) for improved accessibility and consistency.
We appreciate this reminder, which helped us enhance the clarity and professionalism of the reference list.

Once again, we sincerely thank the reviewer for their thoughtful and constructive feedback, which has greatly contributed to enhancing the clarity, rigor, and overall quality of this manuscript. We truly appreciate your time and careful attention.