

**Evaluation of the
CORSTONE
Children's Resilience Program
in India**

Final report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Children's Resilience Program:

The Children's Resilience Program (CRP) developed by CorStone, a nonprofit organization based in Sausalito, CA, USA, was launched in October 2009 in India in the HOPE school run by The Hope Project, a local nonprofit organization in New Delhi. The program is based on Positive Psychology and Restorative Practices and is known to build emotional resilience in youth.

In India the program began with a 5 day training and provision of a detailed manual in Hindi for the teachers. Upon completion of the initial training the teachers conducted weekly sessions with a total of 97 girl students at the HOPE school. Each student was assigned to a group comprised of 11 to 18 students. There were 23 sessions in total, including specific sessions dedicated to assessments. The sessions were very interactive consisting of discussions as well as activities and games.

Evaluation of the CRP program:

The evaluation of the CRP program was conducted by Sangath, a non-profit organization based in Goa, India. The objective of the evaluation was to assess the feasibility and acceptability of the intervention within the Indian context and the impact on the program on the participants.

The evaluation process included data in the form of

- (a) Process data that included demographic data and rate of participation in the program
- (b) Feed back forms from the teachers and students to assess quality, facilitation aspects and adaptation of the modules of the program
- (c) Impact evaluation using four scales (YLOT – Youth life orientation test, NSLOC - Nowicki Strickland Locus of control Survey, Class cohesion survey score & SDQ – Strength and difficulty questionnaire) was conducted at base line, mid point and at the end line after completion of all the prescribed sessions.
- (d) Semi structured interviews conducted with six teachers and 10 students to obtain deeper understanding about the feasibility, acceptability, relevance and impact of the program and feed back on the training of the teachers.

The evaluation plan included data collection and analyses where in all quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS and qualitative data was analyzed either using Microsoft excel or Atlas T.i as per the requirement.

Key Findings:

The training of the teachers was well received and teachers found both trainings well conducted, the facilitators clear and the material used appropriate. The only limitation that was expressed by some attendees was that the second training should have been for five days instead of two.

The attendance of the students in the program was fairly high with 81.2% having attended all sessions. On an average, 11 students attended each session through out the program and attendance was lower in the later sessions which were held towards the end of the academic year compared to the earlier sessions. This was due to postponement of the second teacher training

until later in the academic year during a period when school attendance is generally poor at the HOPE.

On the feed back forms student's ratings were consistently high on all factors including relevance and quality of the topics as well as facilitation. What students found disinteresting was when groups were smaller due to absenteeism, when the language was not clear and when students hesitated to participate or the teacher spoke at length leaving less room for interactive activities.

The impact scores on the assessment scales indicate very encouraging results. On the YLOT the students did not improve on the optimism score significantly at the mid term assessment, however there was significant increase in optimism and decrease in pessimism at the end point assessment compared to the base line scores. Similarly the students showed significant change with a higher locus of control at both mid term as well as end line assessment on the NSLOC. However, the most significant results are apparent from the Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ). This test measures an overall mental health 'total difficulty' score that is generated from totaling the scores of the emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyper activity and peer problems and is a very good predictor of child psychiatric disorders. The SDQ scores showed significant improvement in scores of children who were scored 'borderline' and 'abnormal' scores at base line. The limitation of the assessment was a high drop out during the end line assessment.

In the in-depth interviews both teachers and students validated the impact of the program by describing positive effects on their relationship with peers, ability to handle problems, communication with peers and finally better ability to concentrate and focus on their studies.

Conclusions and recommendations:

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the CRP program was able to achieve high coverage, with a high level of participation from the students. The program was found highly feasible and relevant by the students as well as teachers. The teachers found it easy to facilitate the sessions and had to make only minimum adaptations.

The assessment of the impact of the program shows significant positive change on the emotional health of the students post intervention and the students. Teachers also described tangible positive change in students' behaviors in terms of relationship with peers, communication skills and problem solving abilities.

The CRP program has high potential to build resilience among children as has been demonstrated by the pilot program. As a next step, in order to confirm the effectiveness of this program we highly recommend a bigger study with a robust design using a randomized control component.

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1. THE CHILDREN’S RESILIENCE PROGRAM

The Children’s Resilience Program is developed by CorStone, a non profit organization based in Sausalito, CA, USA.

The Children’s Resiliency Program developed for the Indian project is based on an integrative model of facilitated peer support incorporating evidence-based methods from the fields of Positive Psychology (Seligman), Emotional Competence and Restorative Practices (conflict management/problem solving), known to support emotional resiliency in youth.

Resiliency training empowers individuals and communities to develop “*internal protective factors*” that help them to avoid maladaptive behaviours and deal more effectively and cohesively with challenge and trauma. Development of protective factors has been linked to decrease in depressive symptoms, anxiety and hopelessness, increased optimism, increased academic performance, and diminished likelihood of involvement with interpersonal conflict and violence.

In India, The CRP program was launched in the HOPE school. The school which has a non formal structure is located in New Delhi, and is run by the HOPE Project, a Delhi based non-profit organization providing health care and education to a low income, primarily Muslim community.

The program began in **October 2009** with a 5 day training of teachers. Follow-up 2 day training was conducted in March 2010. A detailed manual, translated into Hindi was provided to each teacher. The teachers conducted weekly group sessions based on the manual with groups of 11 to 18 students. Twenty three sessions, each lasting for an hour, were held for each class during the period November 2009 to May 2010 with a break in the month of March.

The sessions were very interactive consisting of a number of activities, games and discussions and the children popularly called them ‘circles’ since they were seated in a circle for each session. The break up of the sessions by topic is given in Table 1.

Table 1

NO	Topic Name	Session numbers
1	Introduction to CRP and creating group guidelines	1,2
2	Character strengths 1	3,4,5
3	Feed back / assessments	6
4	Recognizing feelings	7 -10
5	Communication Skills 1	11
6	Feedback/ assessments	12
7	Communication skills 2	13, 14
8	Restorative practices	15, 16
9	Character strengths 2	17
10	Communication Skills 3	18
11	Benefit Finding	19
12	Friendship and Problem Solving	20,21
13	Reviewing all skills / Concluding sessions	22, 23

2. EVALUATION OF THE CRP PROGRAM

The evaluation of the program was conducted by Sangath, a non-profit organization based in Goa, India. The objective of the evaluation was to assess the feasibility and acceptability of the intervention within the Indian cultural context and the impact or change, if any, in the emotional resilience of the participants.

2.1 Methods:

The evaluation process included the collection of 3 types of data.

- (1) Quantitative process and quality indicators
- (2) Impact Evaluation using four scales administered through the program period - *before, at mid point and at the end of the program*
- (3) Qualitative interviews held with the teachers and a small sample of students.

The program protocol and the evaluation process for the outcome were approved by the Institutional Review Board of Sangath. A written Informed Consent was obtained from all students and their parents before the start of the program. All students and their parents gave their consent.

2.1.1 Quantitative process and quality indicators:

The Process data collected included demographic details of all participating students and participation details for each session. After going through the manual, the sessions were divided according to the topics being covered and feedback forms were developed for each of the topics (*see details in Table 1*).

A standard feedback form was developed for teachers based on a protocol developed for the same, to be filled up after each session. (*Attached in appendix 2 & 3 are sample feedback forms for students and teachers*). The teachers' feedback form also included an evaluation of their experiences while facilitating the sessions, relevance and participation of the students and adaptation of the modules if any.

Since the two initial sessions were dedicated to introducing the program and the 6th and 12th sessions were used to obtain feedback from the respondents, no feedback from teachers are provided for these sessions. They gave a combined feedback for the last session. (*the total number of feedback forms for each teacher was 18*).

Students also had to fill out feedback forms rating the relevance of the topics, the quality of the facilitation and quality of the resources provided (e.g. hand outs). The students also provided reasons for their ratings, the most and least liked characteristics of sessions on each topic and suggestions for changes through the feedback forms. The forms for students were first translated into Hindi and then a bilingual version of the form (*that is with English and Hindi versions printed on the same form*) was provided to the students.

2.1.2 Impact evaluation: A baseline, intermediate and end line evaluation was conducted using structured scales that measured belongingness, locus of control, optimism and child mental health problems to look at impact of the program. The following scales were administered:

- ⇒ Class Cohesion Survey
- ⇒ Nowicki Strickland Locus of Control Survey for Children
- ⇒ Youth life orientation test
- ⇒ Strength and Difficulty questionnaire. (SDQ)

Overview of the 4 scales:

1. YLOT:

YLOT is a test that measures optimism as well as pessimism and has been developed for children and youth from the LOT (life orientation test) for adults. Though this 14 item self report questionnaire has been used earlier in several studies it has not been adapted or validated within the Indian setting.

2. Nowicki Strickland Locus of Control Survey (NSLOC):

Locus of control is a term that refers to the presumed internal states that keep some people functioning in difficult periods, while others are overwhelmed by negative emotions. The Nowicki Strickland locus of control scale has also been used in several studies, though not in the Indian setting. This is a paper pencil instrument that originally had 40 questions to which the respondent had to answer yes or no. Later this instrument was changed and 2 revised scales of 20 and 21 questions each were constructed. For the CRP program we use the 20 question scale.

3. Class Cohesion Survey Score:

This is a short scale of 8 statements adapted from the neighbourhood cohesion index. Each statement has to be marked on a 5 point likert scale. The scale is used here under the premise that class cohesion will increase with participation in the CRP program.

4. Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire (SDQ):

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is a brief behavioral screening questionnaire for 3-16 year olds. "Before" and "After" SDQs can be used to audit everyday practice (e.g. in clinics or special schools) and to evaluate specific interventions. Studies using the SDQ along with research interviews and clinical ratings have shown that the SDQ is sensitive to treatment effects.

Child and adolescent mental health services, and other specialist services for children with emotional and behavioral difficulties, can use an 'added value' score based on the SDQ as one index of how much help they are providing to the young people seen by them. The SDQ's emphasis on strengths as well as weaknesses makes it particularly acceptable to use among community samples. It is being used in many large epidemiological studies, e.g. the British nationwide surveys of child mental health, and the Avon longitudinal study. The SDQ is also used as a research tool throughout the world - in developmental, genetic, social, clinical and educational studies.

In community samples, multi-informant SDQs can predict the presence of a psychiatric disorder with good specificity and moderate sensitivity. The SDQ has been translated and used in several countries and has been validated in developing settings.

Translation:

All four scales were translated into Hindi and then back translated to English, before administration, to identify the most faithful Hindi translation. A few discrepancies on translation were corrected through consensus involving an adolescent and another Hindi speaking person.

2.1.3 Qualitative interviews:

Semi structured interviews were conducted with 10 students, representatives from the 7 classes and 6 teachers at the end of the program to understand the impact of the program, its acceptance and the feasibility of conducting it within similar settings in the future. A focus group discussion was held with the teachers after the first training and interviews after the second training to evaluate the training of teachers.

The interviews were mainly conducted in Hindi, a few teachers preferred speaking in English. The Principal Investigator (Gracy Andrew) interviewed all the teachers while a skilled researcher interviewed the students. The interviews held in the school on working days between 25th May and 27th May 2010 were first transcribed and later translated into English.

The interview guides covered the following topics:

- ⇒ Awareness about the CRP program including its objectives.
- ⇒ Experiences of the program and impact of it on their daily life.
- ⇒ Experience/ feed back on the facilitation of the sessions
- ⇒ Suggestions for improving the program.
- ⇒ Feedback on the evaluation process.

The training of the teachers was evaluated through a focus group discussion with the trained teachers immediately after the initial training and 3 of the 7 teachers were interviewed on the quality of the second training.

2.1.4 Data analyses:

All quantitative data was entered into Excel spreadsheets and analyzed using SPSS. Data from open ended questions in the feedback forms was analysed by themes using excel spread sheets. All interviews were transcribed, anonymized, and analysed thematically to assess the feasibility, acceptability and impact of the program as a whole and with regard to the various topics covered. The qualitative data analysis software program Atlas.Ti¹ was used to code the interviews. The

¹ ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development. www.atlasti.com

data was further analysed by the following themes: quality of the training, acceptability and feasibility, impact and suggestions for improvement.

2.2 Results:

2.2.1 Training of teachers:

First training (October 2009):

All seven teachers found the training to be well conducted, the facilitators were very clear, the material used appropriate and the knowledge of trainers adequate. Two of the seven teachers were moderately satisfied with the way the exercises were conducted while five of them found the training helpful in their work. In the focus group discussion the teachers expressed that one of the facilitators was softer and had a problem in understanding the participant's language. However, both were very clear and precise during the training and very observant of the participants body language.

In their assessment of specific sessions three of the group of seven found the session on Character Strengths most relevant, two found the session on listening most relevant, while one found the session on Restorative Practices most relevant and the last one found the session on Positive Psychology relevant.

The next most relevant session for the majority was the session on Restorative Practices. The response as to what was most liked by the teachers, found the exercises to be most appealing. In the focus group discussion the teachers explained why they liked the training.

“I liked it because many of the strengths being explored were what we actually have, but we sometimes used to feel those to be our weakness. But now we realize that it was not a weakness, but actually a strength that we have and we should not change but encourage it and this would give us a chance to explore other hidden strengths lying within us.”

“Till now, whenever we used to listen to our friends or family members, we always used to add or give our opinion or advice, now we know how to be a good listener.”

Second training (March 2010):

In the evaluation of the second training, which provided additional training in Restorative Practices, three of the HOPE project teachers rated the training as excellent in content, relevance and the quality of the facilitation. The reasons for their ratings were probed and it was seen that all of them found the training to be very participatory where they had to experience for themselves the exercises on Restorative Practices. The teachers mentioned that it had an impact on the comprehension of their emotions and stress and they found the problem solving techniques very useful. They found them relevance in the context of the children as they came to understand these problems as being universal which in turn impacted their interactions with the children. However, they felt that the training should have been for 4 to 5 days instead of 2 days.

2.2.2 CRP program:

(A) Process and quality indicators:

The attendance of the students for all the above mentioned sessions is summarised in **Table. 2**

Table: 2 ATTENDANCE IN CIRCLES (BY SESSIONS)			
NO	NAME OF SESSION	No. of Students attending sessions out of total no.(N=97)	Percentage of Students attending sessions
1	Introduction to CRP and creating group guidelines	94	96.9
2	Introduction to CRP and creating group guidelines	89	91.8
3	Character strengths 1	86	88.7
4	Character strengths 1	88	90.7
5	Character strengths 1	81	83.5
6	Character strengths 2	74	76.3
7	Feed back / assessments	91	93.8
8	Recognizing feelings	72	74.2
9	Recognizing feelings	79	81.4
10	Recognizing feelings	81	83.5
11	Recognizing feelings	70	72.2
12	Feedback/ assessments	81	83.5
13	Communication Skills 1	83	85.6
14	Communication skills II	76	78.4
15	Communication skills II	80	82.5
16	Communication Skills 2	74	76.3
17	Restorative practices	77	79.4
18	Restorative practices	75	77.3
19	Friendship and Problem Solving	68	70.1
20	Friendship and Problem Solving	72	74.2
21	Benefit Finding	71	73.2
22	Reviewing all skills / Concluding sessions	75	77.3
23	Concluding session	74	76.3
	OVERALL MEAN	79	81.2

The attendance of the students in the program is an important indicator of the coverage of the program.

Of the 97 female students who enrolled for the program; on an average 79 students (81.2 %) attended all the sessions of the program. There seems to be a decreasing trend of the attendance in latter sessions as compared to the earlier sessions. The lowest attendance was for Friendship and Problem Solving (70.1%) and highest for the introductory session (96.9%) and Character strength (90.7%) sessions. The reason for poorer attendance of the later sessions was elicited through the teacher interviews. The second training for the teachers had to be postponed to the month of March and the later sessions had to be held between March and May, towards the end of the academic year, a period when school attendance is generally poor.

The average number of students in each class was 14 and Table 3 provides details of attendance by class and teacher. The number of students attending sessions varied; Range = **9 – 18**. On an average 11 students attended each teacher’s classroom throughout the program. The lowest attendance was in the class of Teacher-6 (73.9%) and the highest in the class of Teacher-5 (91.3%). The teachers who had a larger number of students appeared more likely to have less attendance.

During the interviews teachers mentioned that some students only came for the CRP sessions and did not attend rest of the classes. Perusal of the regular attendance registers too indicated higher attendance for the CRP sessions compared to regular classes.

TEACHERS (N=7)	Total no. of students under each teacher	Average No. of Students attending sessions	Percentage of Students attending sessions
T01	18	14	77.5
T02	15	12	76.8
T03	13	11	86.0
T04	11	9	82.6
T05	11	10	91.3
T06	16	12	73.9
T07	13	11	85.6
OVERALL MEAN	13.9	11.2	82.0

The coding structure for the feedback forms for students followed the following scale: Strongly Disagree=**1**, Partly agree = **2** and Strongly Agree = **3**. Maximum possible score =**3**
 Table 4 describes the mean of Ratings of Strongly Agree, Partly Agree & Strongly Disagree, given by Students for all the sessions.

The analyses of the scores of the feed back forms indicates that most of the students have given a rating of strongly agree ‘3’ for all the feedback questions, which is why the all the mean of ratings are very close to 3. The mean totals and overall means on each opinion / question on the feedback forms for all the sessions are very close to 3 (a rating of “3” signifies strongly agree to the statement above e.g. Topics relevant, exercises interesting etc.) and also the standard deviations are small which signifies that there is consistent High rating / Positive rating in the feedback forms on all questions/opinions. This signifies the program as being accepted by the students. It also appears to indicate the program as being of good quality and hence liked by the students. The students have rated all the sessions on the higher side.

Table: 4								
STUDENTS FEEDBACK FORMS (N=80)								
Question/ opinions	Topics Relevant	Exercises Interesting	Valuable Learning	Sessions Well Conducted	Exercises Well Conducted	Materials Appropriate	Clear Instruction	Total
SESSIONS	MEAN SCORES							MEAN (SD)
Character Strengths	2.82	2.85	2.83	2.83	2.89	2.68	2.96	2.84 (0.25)
Benefit Finding	2.90	2.90	2.85	2.90	2.83	2.83	2.89	2.87 (0.23)
Communication skills	2.73	2.86	2.85	2.90	2.82	2.72	2.87	2.83 (0.24)
Restorative practices	2.80	2.83	2.73	2.89	2.88	2.75	2.94	2.83 (0.26)
Recognizing feelings	2.84	2.95	2.93	2.90	2.94	2.86	2.94	2.91 (0.21)
Friendship and Problem Solving	2.94	2.93	2.80	2.93	2.85	2.76	2.91	2.87 (0.19)
Reviewing all skills / Concluding sessions	2.95	2.84	2.89	2.92	2.86	2.77	2.93	2.88 (0.20)
OVERALL MEAN	2.85	2.88	2.84	2.90	2.87	2.77	2.92	2.86

The overall mean ratings & mean scores on all the specific feedback questions are above 2.8 except to question six (2.77) which means some students did not agree that the material was appropriate. This was further investigated through qualitative interviews.

The data very clearly indicates that the program was accepted very widely by the students and they found it very beneficial. In the interviews they indicated what was most relevant and acceptable to them. Some aspects of the program they found likable was the ability to talk freely in the groups, to be able to share things that they found difficult to share earlier and the confidentiality that was maintained in the group. They also felt that the circles helped them learn a number of new things about themselves as well as their friends; that they never realised that they had so many strengths and many things that they took for granted earlier were actually their strengths.

“What I liked very much is that I solved my problem. Those things which we wouldn’t tell our parents and friends, we would speak in the circle because we used to trust each other that this would remain confidential. We solved many problems in the circle” (student)

“The program is very good. It increases the children’s morale. And as children we are not

able to express our feelings and the circle has benefited those children a lot who were not able to share things which are there in their hearts. And because of the circle they are now able to share. So it has increased courage in children. And I want the circles to continue because I am feeling bad that the circles are getting over.” (student)

“When the circles started initially I used to feel bored and I used to think that this is of no use and why they are making us do these circles but later when Strengths I was done I felt this is something very important. They are teaching us some things about which we never think. I used these circles a lot. I got a lot of benefit in friendship.” (student)

In the following quote a student describes what she liked most in the session very clearly:

“I liked the feelings that is the last one. Everyone must have liked it but I am telling about myself. There were many things...I will tell about myself?

I-Yes.

R-There were some things which I had not discussed with anybody. I had not told my friends and in my family also but I discussed this in the circle and I felt good. Secondly in that session, they told us that If something bad happens then it is not necessary that everything about it will be bad. There is a good part in every bad thing that happens. We have to look at the good part of it. We shouldn't keep thinking about the bad thing and become upset because there may be something good hidden in it. So when I spoke about it, it was a little awkward and I was also feeling hurt but there was a very good thing in it which I came to know. So I learnt a lesson on how I have to carry on in our future life for the coming generation. So that others should not feel the guilt of that mistake, that limitation, that gap. All this was there so it was very good for me.”

In the in-depth interviews some of the sessions that were quoted as most liked were character strengths, understanding feelings, friendships, good listening and problem solving.

In the feedback forms the students described what they liked most and what was liked least about each topic. The table below lists the common aspects (that were mentioned by the students with regard to each topic.

TABLE 5

TOPIC	LIKED MOST	LIKED LEAST
Character strengths	Sitting together and discussing about feelings, talking about strengths, the teachers explanation	Students were absent from the session, some took time to understand and come up with strengths.
Benefit finding	Finding the good part in a bad event, sharing, learning to face difficult situations	Some do not participate actively
Communication skills 1	Teachers explanation, learnt to appreciate, liked to be in circle	Language not clear, some did not pay attention, some did not get gifts
Communication skills 2	Four corner game, I feel messages	Less students
Communication skills 3	I feel messages, candy game	

Restorative Practices 1	Liked the story, the way the man forgave Mary, the way my teacher explained	Did not like some of Mary's actions
Restorative Practices 2	I liked the exercises, teachers explanations, solving problems	Games are shorter, less girls were present
Recognizing feelings	Teachers explanations and exercises	Found it difficult to share, Hindi language was not understandable
Friendship and problem solving	Learning and knowing about friendship, finding good points in people we do not like and solving problems together.	Girls do not participate, girls give same answers which makes it un interesting

Data from the feedback forms as well interviews with the students bring out the following as barriers to the program:

- The translated version of Hindi in some cases was not appropriate and when teachers used these version students did not understand;
- In some classes if the absentees were large in number on the day when the CRP program was held, the teacher could not have some of the activities and this made it disinteresting and all students did not participate actively.

“Initially we used to find it boring because many children would remain absent. We used to feel that today the circle won't be there but teacher used to take the circle even with two children.”(student idi)

“Yes sometimes when teacher talks a lot I started feeling sleepy. I-Can you tell me did you feel sleepy in any of the sessions? R-Only one day I was feeling sleepy when teacher was telling about all the sessions that we attended. She was talking for a long time so I was feeling sleepy.” (student idi)

Table: 6									
TEACHERS FEEDBACK FORMS (N= 7)									
Question /opinions	Found Easy to Facilitate	Could complete within time	Students could easily understand	Students found it interesting	Students were participative	Exercises interesting	Materials appropriate	Total	Had to make changes to Session
SESSIONS	MEAN SCORES							MEAN (SD)	
Character Strengths	2.71	2.29	2.86	2.86	3.00	3.00	2.86	2.79 (0.14)	1.14
Benefit Finding	2.86	2.57	2.71	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.88 (0.15)	1.00
Communication skills	3.00	2.79	2.85	2.92	2.92	3.00	2.83	2.91 (0.63)	1.36
Restorative practices	2.86	2.57	2.86	3.00	3.00	2.86	2.86	2.86 (0.75)	1.29
Recognizing feelings	3.00	2.54	2.93	3.00	3.00	2.96	3.00	2.91 (1.04)	1.50
Friendship and Problem Solving	2.93	2.71	2.93	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.93 (0.63)	1.36
Reviewing all skills / Concluding sessions	3.00	2.71	3.00	3.00	2.86	3.00	2.60	2.90 (0.78)	1.57
OVERALL MEAN	2.91	2.60	2.88	2.97	2.97	2.97	2.88	2.88	1.32

Mean of Ratings of Strongly Agree, Partly Agree & Strongly Disagree, given by 7 teachers for all the sessions are presented in above table, **Table: 2**

Coding: Strongly Disagree=1, Agree Partly= 2 and Strongly Agree = 3.

Maximum possible score =3

All the teachers completed 100% of the sessions allotted to them, and after each session the teachers had to fill feedback forms – the teachers ratings is presented in the above table (Table 6). The teachers too have given very high ratings for the questions specified above for all the sessions. This indicates the program as being feasible for the Teachers to teach and as being well accepted by the students.

Some of the teachers agreed partly or did not agree to the statement “2”, that they “Could finish the sessions within the stipulated time given in the manual” which is signified by the comparatively lower score (2.60) on that question/ opinion

The last Question/Statement 8; was rated / answered as ‘1’ Strongly Disagree” by most of the teachers signifying that they did not have to make changes in the session / Module; but there were some teachers who Partly agreed ‘2’ that they had to make changes in the Session.

In the in-depth interviews the teachers' own perceptions about the purpose of the program, their experience of conducting the CRP program and their opinions on the relevance and usefulness of the program was probed.

They very accurately describe the purpose of the training which reflects on the quality of the training that they underwent – the quotes below summarises what they have to say:

“I felt the purpose is to make the children aware about their inner strengths, to bring out the feelings which they are not able to talk about or don't share. Then being a good listener and how we should understand others feelings which was the best of all. And it got over with friendship. I thought that motive was to teach them all this and make them use everything in friendship. (teacher)

“I feel the main purpose is to empower children at the time of crises. In order to face the world, they should know what they already have in them like their character strengths.” (teacher)

All the teachers found the program very relevant to the lives of the children, that they have number of interpersonal issues among them, as well in their homes with siblings or their parents. The program addressed these problems by helping them recognize their feelings, manage negative emotions like anger and deal with disappointments. They found that the children were very interested in the program and they would wait for the next session. Some children would specially come on the day when the circle time was being conducted. Some came in only for the CRP session and did not attend the other classes (in the informal setting of the school this was allowed). They found that all sessions were well sequenced and each session connected to the next very clearly.

When asked to describe the main strengths of the program what the teachers had to say was that the content was very well chosen and planned. Also, they stated that what was included in the CRP program was so close to everyone's life that they enjoyed facilitating these sessions. They saw a positive impact on the students in terms of higher confidence levels, children who were shy were more open and they also found that there were less interpersonal conflicts among the students.

“The content has been chosen very nicely and it is really very interesting for the facilitator and the students as well. the way it is planned first we talk about the character strengths about yourself and then what you feel and then how you become a good listener and then problem solving, friendship, benefit finding and everything.... The way it is sequenced... the idea itself is very good. I think we work at the basic level and it touches everybody, be it a 10 year old kid or a 18 years old girl and it touches part of everybody's life and it is very good and very nice to talk about it. As a facilitator I really enjoyed talking about these things.”

According to the teachers some of the favourite sections of the program for the students were the candy game and using 'I feel' messages. They also enjoyed the problem solving sessions and this was more so among the older children.

With regard to participation, the teachers found that in the beginning all the students did not participate and some found it difficult to participate in activities where they had to draw.

However, with time the participation became more active and often it became difficult to stop them from talking together. At times like this the ‘talking stick’ was very useful, for this did help them wait and listen to others. However, one difficulty that they faced was the time not being sufficient and all children not getting the opportunity to discuss their problem in the group due to time constraints.

“There was a child who didn’t participate much in one or two sessions because she had a lot of problems at home but when she started sitting in the circle and she got the support then she used to become very happy when the circle gets over. She would say “I am feeling good. I shared with everyone and I got a good message”. (teacher idi)

“No, not everybody was participating in the earlier sessions, some of them were very shy and they used to interrupt each other in between or sometimes speak together. But in the beginning when we made all the guidelines for the circle but then I have smaller children so sometimes they used to forget the guidelines and I have reiterate the fact that you shouldn’t interrupt somebody when they are talking. Sometimes we used the talking stick. just to make sure that the person who has the talking stick has the right to speak and you don’t have to laugh at the other person.”(teacher idi)

With regard to facilitation of the sessions all of them found the manual very clear but they used to prepare for their sessions in advance. Sometimes they had to give a lot of examples to introduce the sessions to the students. They also used to support each other especially with regard to the translation which had to be modified to match the dialects of Hindi being used by the children. Apart from the examples that they had to develop and the translation of the sessions there was no need to adapt most part of the program. During the later sessions, with the younger children, the teachers had to include more games and exercises. Some of the students found some concepts like ‘benefit finding’ difficult to comprehend in the beginning and the teachers had to give a lot of examples which in turn posed a constraint on time. The quotes below reflect the minor adaptations that the teachers had to make to the program:

“There were not many changes. Once or twice the color was changed in candy game and then there was a session recently in which students couldn’t draw. In that it was told to draw about your high and lows. The students were not able to draw and they just said it verbally. So we had decided to make them speak if they cannot draw because we knew that they won’t be able to draw.” (teacher idi)

“Except for the M&M Candy, we used gems and some of the translation we had to do in easier Hindi

The children were not understanding about the ‘ups and downs’ in the circle. They were saying “Teacher There was nothing such as ups and downs and nothing bad happened”. I-Which session was that? R-I think it was the 31st session. So I told them “Instead of that you write about the session in which you felt bad and the one in which you felt very happy”. (teacher idi)

Impact evaluation:

1. YLOT: The results can be found in table 7 (appendix I). Results from the mid term evaluation was compared to pre test and comparison was made between score at base line and end line. T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores was conducted to see if there is a statistically significant difference for Subscale pessimism score; subscale optimism score & total optimism mean scores.

SUBSCALE PESSIMISM

The T-Test showed no statistically significant difference at $P < 0.05$ level between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores. $t = -1.25$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.21$. These results signify that the mean score on the **Pessimism** of the 97 students **decreased from 7.9 to 7.2 (by 0.7)** at the mid-term test, but these results were not statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ level. The students became less pessimistic.

SUBSCALE OPTIMISM

The T-Test show no statistically significant difference at $P < 0.05$ level between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores. $t = -1.37$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.17$. These results signify that the mean score on the **Optimism Subscale** of the 97 students **decreased from 14.1 to 13.4 (by 0.7)** at the mid-term test, but this results were **not statistically** significant at $P < 0.05$ level. The students became less optimistic on Subscale.

TOTAL OPTIMISM

The T-Test show no statistically significant difference at $P < 0.05$ level between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores. $t = -1.20$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.22$. These results signify that the mean score on the **Total Optimism** of the 97 students **decreased from 24.3 to 23.2 (by 1.1)** at the mid-term test, but these results were **not statistically** significant at $P < 0.05$ level. The students became less optimistic on the Total Scale.

POST TEST / END-LINE

T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and post test /end-line scores was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference for Subscale pessimism score; subscale optimism score & total optimism mean scores.

SUBSCALE PESSIMISM

* The T-Test showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.01$ level between pre-test scores and post test /end-line scores. $t = -2.93$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.004$. These results signify that the mean score on the **Pessimism** of the 97 students **decreased from 7.9 to 6.2 (by 1.7)** at end-line / after the intervention, and these results **were statistically significant** at $P < 0.01$ level. The students became less pessimistic after intervention.

SUBSCALE OPTIMISM

** The T-Test show showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.01$ level between pre-test scores and post test /end-line scores. $t = 2.64$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.009$. These results signify that the mean score on the **Optimism Subscale** of the 97 students **increased from 14.1 to 15.1 (by 1)** at end-line / after the intervention, and these results were **statistically significant at $P < 0.01$ level**. The students became more optimistic on optimism Subscale after intervention.

TOTAL OPTIMISM

*** The T-Test show showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.01$ level between pre-test scores and post test /end-line scores. $t = 2.98$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.003$. These results signify that the mean score on the **Optimism Total scale** of the 97 students **increased from 24.3 to 26.7 (by 2.4)** at end-line / after the intervention, and these results were **statistically significant at $P < 0.01$ level**. The students became more optimistic on Total optimism scale after intervention.

One limitation of these analyses has been missing data. During the mid term evaluation data of 5 (5.15%) students was missing and in the post test/ end line Data of 24 (24.7%) student's was missing since they were absent on the days of the evaluation. During analyses the 'YLOT total scores' of the missing students were mutated with the mean scores of the available data for further analysis (t-test).

2. Nowicki Strickland Locus of Control Survey (NSLOC): (see table 8 – Appendix II)

MID-TERM TEST

* T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores was conducted to see if there is a statistically significant difference. The T-Test showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.05$ level. $t = -2.20$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.03$. These results signify that the mean score on the NS-LOC of the 97 students **decreased from 8.3 to 7.3 (by 1) at the mid-term test** & these results were **statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ level of significance ($P = 0.03$)**. This means that students had a higher Internal Locus of Control at mid-term test.

POST TEST / END-LINE

** T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and post test / end-line scores was conducted to see if there is a statistically significant difference.

The T-Test showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.05$ level. $t = -2.61$, $DF = 96$, $P = 0.01$. These results signify that the mean score on the NS-LOC of the 97 students **decreased from 8.3 to 7.2 (by 1.1) at the mid-term test** & this results were **statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ level of significance ($P = 0.01$)**. This means that students had a higher Internal Locus of Control at post test/end-line, after the intervention.

3. Class Cohesion survey: (See Table 9 – Appendix III)

MID-TERM TEST

For the Class cohesion survey the t-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference. The T-Test showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.001$ level; $T = -3.70$, $DF = 96$, $P < 0.0004$. These results signify that the mean score on the Class Cohesion survey of the 97 students **decreased from 30.4 to 26.5 (by 3.9) at mid-term** & these results were **statistically significant at $P < 0.001$ level of significance**. These results signify that the class cohesion & belongingness decreased at mid-term intervention.

POST TEST / END-LINE

T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and post test / end-line scores was conducted to see if there is a statistically significant difference

The T-Test **did not show any statistically significant** difference at $P < 0.05$ level; $T = -0.408$, $DF=96$, $P=0.683$. These results signify that the mean score on the Class Cohesion survey of the 97 students **decreased slightly from 30.4 to 30.1 (by 0.3) after** the intervention (end-line), but these results were **not statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ level of significance**. These results signify that there was no significant change in class cohesion & belongingness at end-line/post test, after the intervention.

4. SDQ

Table 10 :

PRE- MID-TERM & POST TOTAL SDQ SCORES OF QUSTIONNAIRES COMPLETED BY TEACHERS			
N = 97	NO. OF STUDENTS IN EACH CATEGORY SDQ TEACHERS -TOTAL SCORE		
SCORES	Total No. (%)		
	PRE-TEST	MID-TERM	POST-TEST
Normal	32 (33.0%)	59(60.8%)	55(56.7%)
Borderline	21 (21.6%)	24(24.7%)	2(2.1%)
Abnormal	44 (45.4%)	6(6.2%)	5(5.2%)
Missing	----	8 (8.2%)	35 (36.1%)
Total	97 (100%)	97(100%)	97(100%)

SDQ COMPLETED BY TEACHERS

The results show that the percentage of students having **Normal score** on SDQ Total had increased from **33.0%** in pre-test / base-line to **60.8%** in mid-term, and again decreased slightly to **56.7%** in the post-test/ end-line (after the intervention); though the percentage of students from **Borderline** had slightly increased from **21.6%** to **24.7%** in the mid-term, it has decreased to only **2.1%** in post-test and the percentage of student in **Abnormal group** had decreased considerably from **45.4%** at base-line to **6.2%** in the mid-term and has further decreased slightly to **5.2%** in post-test. A Chi-square test was conducted to see if the difference seen in Pre & mid-term tests and in pre & post/end-line test were statistically significant.

PRE & MID-TERM TEST

The Chi-Square test showed that the differences observed in pre & mid-term test scores were statistically significant differences at $P < 0.05$ level of significance **Chi-Square= 10.06, DF= 4, P=0.03**.

PRE & POST TEST

The Chi-Square test showed that the differences observed in pre & post test scores were **not statistically significant** differences at $P < 0.05$ level of significance. **Chi-Square= 2.98, DF= 4, P=0.562.**

The major drawback of this evaluation is that there is a huge increase in drop-outs/ missing responses 36.1% for whom the SDQ was not answered by the teachers in the post-test/end line. We suspect this is a critical reason why the statistical tests did not show the difference seen as significant at $P < 0.05$

TABLE 11:

PRE- MID-TERM & POST TOTAL SDQ SCORES OF SELF REPORTED QUESTIONNAIRES OF STUDENT			
N = 97	NO. OF STUDENTS IN EACH CATEGORY SDQ STUDENTS-TOTAL SCORE		
SCORES	Total No. (%)		
	PRE-TEST	MID-TERM	POST-TEST
Normal	51(52.6%)	64(66.0%)	63(64.9%)
Borderline	28(28.9%)	18(18.6%)	5(5.2%)
Abnormal	18 (18.6%)	10(10.3%)	5(5.2%)
Missing	---	5 (5.2%)	24 (24.7%)
Total	97(100%)	97(100%)	97(100%)

SELF REPORTED SDQ COMPLETED BY STUDENT

The results show that the percentage of students having **Normal score** on SDQ Total has increased from **52.6%** in pre-test to **66.0%** in mid-term, and again decreased slightly to **63.9%** in the post-test/ end-line (after the intervention);also the percentage of students from **Borderline** had decreased from **28.9%** in pre-test to **18.6%** in the mid-term, it has now decreased to only **5.2%** in post-test and the percentage of student in **Abnormal group** had decreased from **18.6%** in pre-test to **10.3%** in the mid-term and has now further decreased to **5.2%** in post-test.

A Chi-square test was conducted to see if the difference seen after in Pre-Post tests were statistically significant.

PRE & MID-TERM TEST

The Chi-Square test showed that the differences observed in pre & mid-term test scores were statistically significant differences at $P < 0.01$ level of significance **Chi-Square= 14.95, DF= 4, P=0.005.**

PRE & POST TEST

The Chi-Square test showed that the differences observed in pre & post test scores were **not statistically significant** differences at $P < 0.05$ level of significance **Chi-Square= 3.53, DF= 4, P=0.473.**

The major drawback of this evaluation is that there is a huge increase in drop-outs/ missing responses 24.7% of students self-reported SDQ which were not answered in the post-test/end line. We suspect this is a critical reason why the statistical tests did not show the difference seen as significant at $P < 0.05$

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The data very clearly indicates very high impact of the program on the students. While change in optimism scale is not significantly different between base line and mid line scores, the change is significant at the end line assessment which indicates a larger number of sessions required for change to be evident in areas like optimism. The scores on locus of control and SDQ show significant improvements both at intermediate assessment as well as at the end line assessment.

The only test that shows reverse effects is the Class cohesion survey. The reason for the reverse effect can be explained – when the students and teachers were asked about the scales used for the evaluation they said that the class cohesion survey was very confusing with the large number of options that it had.

In the in-depth interviews the teachers and students gave a number of instances of how the program had a positive impact on their lives.

The children described how the session on character strength boosted their confidence, how they started using the techniques with family members, they made more friends and got closer to their group members, how their mind got clearer on issues and their own problems. They said that now they are able to control their anger and speak politely to each other. In the interviews students have reported that the program has helped them with their studies – they can concentrate better and have also learnt to listen to the teacher more carefully.

These changes were also reflected in the interviews with teachers. Teachers describe how the students learnt to find benefits in the worst of situations, how they find the students closer to each other and they find the impact not just on their behaviour but also their motivation to study. The qualitative data indicates improvement in class cohesiveness which is not reflected in the quantitative data which indicates that the fault is of the scale that was used.

Student's quotes that reflect impact:

R-Yes because before also we were in the same class but earlier each one used to sit with their own friends but now since we joined the circle we are all one group. We were not sharing with everyone but now we share. If anyone is having any difficulty or some problem then we share and try to solve the problem together. Another thing which I liked most is that all listen to others carefully and in a nice manner because listening is very important. If you don't listen then we feel angry and it prevents them from saying anything to anyone because they feel no one is listening and I have no value. But when someone listens we feel that I am important for someone. (student idi)

Many things are there...I used to get very angry before and I used to say anything in anger and fight with everyone. I used to get angry on the young ones. Now I learnt to control my anger. If I say something angrily no one will listen whether the other is younger or older. If we say the same thing in a correct way then all will listen. (student idi)

I help others means from beginning I have been helping others. Then I understand other persons feelings and I feel when someone is telling me something then I should listen carefully. I-So you are practicing this. (student idi)

Teachers quotes:

Our school results are declared and some students got less marks and there were some students whom we felt that they should remain for some more time in this class. And we also promote some children in the middle of the year if we find the progress is good. Now the children know that if they are not promoted that is also for their good as they would learn more and become perfect in their subject and then go on to the next class. The program was very good for us. (teacher idi)

“There is a girl; I don’t want to take her name. She had a problem with her brother. She reacted very positively as well as she made her brother understand and she told this to me in the circle only so I felt really good that there is an impact of this in our children and whatever we did has not gone waste.” (teacher idi)

“We get feedback through the children. That our parents are saying “You have changed a lot and you don’t get angry much now. It is good and we like it”. There is a lot of change in those children who would get angry very easily. I have some children in my class also, now they have got a lot of control over their anger.” (teacher idi)

3. CONCLUSIONS & RECCOMENDATIONS

The evaluation of the CRP program in the pilot project implemented at the HOPE school in New Delhi, in the year 2009–10 indicates that the program was able to achieve a high level of coverage with the teachers completing 23 sessions in a 6 month period with a high level of participation from the students.

All students and teachers found the program very useful. The teachers found it easy to facilitate the sessions and could fit it in very easily within their weekly schedule. In the beginning the students found the sessions boring but with the session on Character Strengths the momentum of their interest gradually increased, participation in the sessions improved and except for levels of comprehension being a little less in the younger age groups which resulted in the teacher having to provide many more examples and this had an effect on the length of the sessions, with older students the impact was tremendous.

The assessment of the impact of the program shows significant change in optimism and locus of control after the program. On the Strength and Difficulty Questionnaire children who secured

borderline scores before the intervention showed marked improvement in the emotional and behavioural scores.

The CRP program has a high potential for building skills in children as has been demonstrated through this pilot program. The program is structured to work in small group settings rather than large classroom settings. This program can be successfully replicated in informal school or other institutional care settings for children living in or coming from difficult circumstances.

The way forward would be to launch a bigger program to study its effectiveness using more robust designs and larger samples where one would need to compare outcomes with a control group. Once there is considerable evidence on its effectiveness in impacting emotional resilience, mechanisms can be found to scale the program in appropriate low resource settings.

APPENDIX I: Table 7

The Youth Life Orientation Test (YLOT) Summary Report

N = 97	AGE OF STUDENTS	NO OF YEARS IN HOPE SCHOOL	YLOT SUBSCALE PESSIMISM SCORE			YLOT SUBSCALE OPTIMISM SCORE			YLOT TOTAL OPTIMISM SCORE		
			Pre	Mid-Term	Post	Pre	Mid-Term	Post	Pre	Mid-Term	Post
Mean (SD)	16.3(2.9)	2.9(2.3)	7.9(3.7)	7.2(4.1)	6.2(4.35)	14.1(2.8)	13.4(4.2)	15.1(2.50)	24.3(4.9)	23.2(7.5)	26.7(6.24)
Median/Cut-off	16	3	8	7	5	15	15	15	24	24	27
Range	11 – 26	0.25 - 10	1 - 17	0 - 18	0 – 16	6 - 18	7 - 18	7 - 18	12 - 33	9 - 35	12 - 36
			YLOT SUBSCALE PESSIMISM			YLOT SUBSCALE OPTIMISM			YLOT TOTAL OPTIMISM		
			Pre	Mid-Term	Post	Pre	Mid-Term	Post	Pre	Mid-Term	Post
Total No. of Students (%) Equal / Below Median/cut-off	BELOW AVERAGE ON PESSIMISM / OPTIMISM / TOTAL OPTIMISM (RESPECTIVE TO THE COLOUMN)		45(46.4%)	43(44.3%)	30(30.9)	46(47.4%)	41(42.3%)	41(42.3%)	40(41.2%)	40 (41.2%)	34(35.1)
Total No. of Students (%) Equal / Above Median/cut-off	AVERAGE OR ABOVE AVERAGE ON PESSIMISM / OPTIMISM / TOTAL OPTIMISM (RESPECTIVE TO THE COLOUMN)		28(28.9%)	35(36.1%)	30(30.9)	51(52.6%)	51(52.6%)	32(33.0)	57(58.8%)	52 (53.6%)	39(40.2)
(%) Equal / Above Highly pessimism score (12 & above)	HIGH ON PESSIMISM		17(17.5%)	14(14.4%)	13(13.4)						

APPENDIX II: Table 8:

Nowicki Strickland Locus of Control Survey (NSLOC) Summary Report					
N = 97	AGE OF STUDENTS	NO OF YEARS STUDENTS IN HOPE SCHOOL	NS - LOCUS OF CONTROL TOTAL SCORE		
			Pre	Mid-Term	Post
Mean (SD)	16.3 (2.86)	2.9 (2.32)	8.3 (2.88)	7.3 (3.45)	7.2(2.99)
Median/Cut-off	16	3	8	7	7
Range	11 - 26	0.25 - 10	2 - 15	0-15	1-14
T-Test P-Value[#]	---		---	0.03*	0.01**
			NS - LOCUS OF CONTROL TOTAL		
			Pre	Mid-Term	Post
Total No. of Students (%) Equal / Below Median/cut-off	HIGH INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL		37 (38.1 %)	41 (42.3%)	42(43.3)
Total No. of Students (%) Equal / Above Median/cut-off	HIGH EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL		60(61.9 %)	56 (57.7%)	30(30.9)

Appendix III: Table 9

Class Cohesion Survey (CCS) Summary Report					
N = 97	AGE OF STUDENTS	NO OF YEARS STUDENTS IN HOPE SCHOOL	CLASS COHESION SURVEY TOTAL SCORE		
			Pre	Mid-Term	Post
Mean (SD)	16.3 (2.86)	2.9 (2.32)	30.4 (5.40)	26.5 (8.87)	30.1(4.83)
Median/Cut-off	16	3	31	27	30

Range	11 - 26	0.25 - 10	8 - 39	8 - 40	11-40
T-Test P-Value [#]	---		---	0.0004*	0.68
			CLASS COHESION SURVEY TOTAL		
			Pre	Mid-Term	Post
Total No. of Students (%) Equal / Below Median/cut-off	LOW CLASS COHESION,BELONGING, INTERACTION ETC.		39 (40.2 %)	37 (38.1%)	32(33%)
Total No. of Students (%) Equal / Above Median/cut-off	HIGH CLASS COHESION,BELONGING, INTERACTION ETC.		57 (58.8 %)	53 (54.6%)	41(42.3%)

P-value of paired T-Tests performed to compare Mid-term & Post test means with the Pre test mean score.

Data of 7 (7.2%) students was missing in the mid-term test.

Data of 24 (24.7%) student's was missing in the post test / end-line, so the 'CCS total scores' of the missing students were mutated with the mean scores of the available data for further analysis (t-test).

MID-TERM TEST

* T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and mid-term test scores was conducted to see if there is a statistically significant difference

The T-Test showed a statistically significant difference at $P < 0.001$ level; $T = -3.70$, $DF=96$, $P < 0.0004$.

These results signify that the mean score on the Class Cohesion survey of the 97 students **decreased from 30.4 to 26.5 (by 3.9) at mid-term** & these results were **statistically significant at $P < 0.001$ level of significance**. These results signify that the class cohesion & belongingness decreased at mid-term intervention.

POST TEST / END-LINE

T-test for mean difference between pre-test scores and post test / end-line scores was conducted to see if there is a statistically significant difference

The T-Test **did not show any statistically significant** difference at $P < 0.05$ level; $T = -0.408$, $DF=96$, $P=0.683$.

These results signify that the mean score on the Class Cohesion survey of the 97 students **decreased slightly from 30.4 to 30.1 (by 0.3) after** the intervention (end-line), but these results were **not statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ level of significance**. These results signify that there was no significant change in class cohesion & belongingness at end-line/post test, after the intervention.