

Chapter Eight

Empathy

Empathy is regarded as one of the most desirable of personality traits due to its positive association with pro-social behaviours and its crucial role in the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (Schonert-Reichl, 1993). This chapter contains a literature review on empathy, which is followed by a critique of specific procedures of empathy training. A review of the intervention and assessment of the children's empathetic understanding are also discussed in this chapter.

With the view that we need to clarify our values in their original context to enable others to understand the importance of the values to us (McCormack, 2001) I begin this chapter with journal entry of a personal experience in the summer of 2002, in the USA. My journey of discovery becomes lucid in the narrative seeing that it enabled me to become sensitive to the perspective of my students. I believe that one of the most important skills for a teacher to possess is empathy. Empathic teacher are able to put themselves inside the shoes of their students and perceive the world through their student's eyes (Brooks, 2004). Empathic educators connect more effectively and constructively with students and thus enable effective learning.

Section 1

Understanding empathy

While on tour of the play I was performing in the USA I was prepared to face a bit of tight security. The troupe had visited USA in September 2001 and had heard and read about air-travel becoming bothersome after 9/11. However I was not prepared for what actually happened again and again at all the airports in USA.

The first flight I had to catch was to Tampa. Our team, nine of us had reached JFK three hours before the flight so as to have plenty of time on hand seeing that we had loads of luggage consisting of our personal and theatrical baggage. When I checked my bags, the computer signalled an extra security check. I was asked to stand aside, while the lady at the checking in counter asked an assistant to take my luggage, my ticket and boarding pass. I was politely but very firmly asked not to even touch my bags! On my part, I was not the slight bit concerned and followed the assistant to the x-ray machine. Obviously, my belongings passed the inspection. I was give my boarding pass and asked to proceed to the flight.

When the flight was announced, we walked towards the aeroplane with the other passengers. At the gate, I was asked to go for another check. The security staff went through everything in my hand luggage, she flicked through my books, opened my lipsticks, my purse, everything, I really felt violated. The worst was the humiliating body-check. I was asked to take off my jacket, belt and even my shoes. I could feel everybody's eyes on me as they walked passed me into in the flight.

This pattern was repeated for the next six flights. I started dreading checking-in. Trying to rationalise the act; I looked for signs, I compared boarding tickets with the rest of the troupe to see if I could decipher their code, which sent me to the extra check. Why did my ticket show up on the computer while the rest of the team didn't have a problem?

It was always my name that was picked up. I started feeling ... like someone who was being tried for a crime she had not committed. I could feel every ones eyes on me, as I stood there, red in the face, bursting with anger, nails marking my palm. I had done nothing wrong.

Before every flight I started feeling tense and grouchy. My eyes would go all swimmy. After all the 'checking' I would sit on the flight exhausted, belt up, close my eyes and sleep, as I tried to shut myself to the out-side world.

It was after the eighth or ninth flights that my thought went to my students with a learning disability and I began to feel like they probably do ...treated unfairly and sometimes even unkindly ...I began to understand how they must have felt when, for no fault of theirs they were picked on in class. I began to understand how children felt when they were labelled 'lazy' and a 'shirkers' when they actually had something amiss in the way they processed information. I put myself in their place, and my feelings began to suggest their feelings and the reason for their behaviour. From an interested observer I changed into an 'insider'.

...Empathy is when somebody has a similar emotional state as another as a result of perceiving that persons situation. I know I began to empathize with my students.

Understanding is a very personal thing. '*Only connect...*' is Forster's epigraph for Howard's End.

Journal: Summer 2002

Empathy is the ability to identify with another person's feelings, the ability to see and feel things as others see and feel them. Rogers (1959) maintains that:

'The state of empathy or being empathic is to understand the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy and with the emotional components and means which pertain thereto as if one were the person, but without ever losing the 'as if' condition.' (p. 210).

Rogers (1975), Heathcote (1984) and Newton (2000) argue that we are all born with this capacity to empathize, but it needs nurturing, modelling and developing by others around us. Both adults and children react emotionally to signs of others distress. However, reacting is not always based on understanding of how another feels. It is when the perspective taking skill is developed that their sense of empathy develops as well (Woolfolk, 2001).

Besides understanding and appreciating the other person's feeling, communicating meaningfully with the person is an important aspect of empathy. Haynes and Avery (1979) suggest that empathy is:

'The ability to recognize and understand another person's perceptions and feelings, and to accurately convey that understanding through an accepting response.' (p. 527).

Thus the focus is on the process whereby children come to care about one another and communicate that caring through their behaviour. The three important components of empathy are: understanding, appreciating and communicating (Blatner, 2002).

As empathy is the capacity to share another person's emotional response or in essence to 'feel with', children who have empathy with others are less likely to develop antisocial behaviour both during childhood and later in life (Eisenberg and Mussen, 1989). Feshbach (1983) suggests children who have difficulty feeling empathy are more likely to be aggressive. School based interventions in empathy training (Feshbach, Feshbach, Fauvre, and Ballard-Campbell, 1983; Schonert-Reichl, Smith, Zaidman-Zait, and Hertzman, 2001) reveal that the programmes promoted increased pro-social behaviours with peers (helping, sharing, co-operating) and decreased aggression with peers and decreased proactive aggression (e.g. bullying) in students.

A significant link between students' training and skills in empathetic understanding and their academic performance has been documented (Schonert-Reichl, et al, 2001, 2003). Schools where students are involved in programs designed to increase empathy and create 'caring communities' have higher scores than comparison

schools on measures of higher-order reading comprehension (Kohn, 1991) and these instructions additionally enhance both critical thinking skills and creative thinking (Gallo, 1989).

Thus a successful learner is knowledgeable, self-determined, strategic and empathetic (Jones, 1990). That is in addition to having (1) knowledge, including critical and creative faculties (2) motivation to learn and be confident about themselves (3) possess strategies for acquiring, evaluating, and applying knowledge, a successful learners should also have (4) insight into the motives, feelings, and behaviour of others and the ability to communicate this understanding-in a word, empathy.

This applies to children of all ages and characterises both full-scale empathy training programs and short-term treatments. The specific components within empathy training approaches that are associated with increases in empathy include:

- training in interpersonal perception and empathetic responding;
- focusing on one's own feelings (in chapter 6);
- focusing on the similarities between our self and others (in Chapter 7).

Among the empathy training techniques that are successful in school situations (Cotton, 1994; Schonert-Reichl, et al, 2003) are:

- Understanding emotions and focusing on one's own feelings should be initiated before instructing them to assume another's perspective (Schonert-Reichl, et al, 2003). The children should begin by understanding the different kind of feelings they have and the different feelings one can experience in different situations.
- Focusing on the similarities between one's self and others effectively increases affective and cognitive empathy (Clarke, 1984). Identifying these similarities is the logical next step following the focus on one's own feelings (Barnes and Thagard, 1997).
- Recognising different emotive states in themselves and others and how to respond to others, enhances children's empathetic perceptions and skills (Schonert-Reichl, et al, 2001). The ability to empathize does not come easily. Practice at perspective taking facilitates the augmentation of empathetic skills. Importantly, repeated practice at taking another's perspective is vital and more effective than sporadic attempts (Haynes and Avery, 1979).
- Role playing activities in which students assume the role of a real or fictional person. Imagining others' feelings increase both affective and cognitive empathy (McCurrach and Darnley, 1999). Empathetic skills are noted increased even when

children are asked to imagine the point of view of an animal, plant or inanimate object (Cotton, 1994).

- Modelling empathetic behaviour is an important feature of empathy training. When teachers model desired values, children are more likely to embrace those values rather than when they are merely pressurised to behave in a certain way (Kohn, 1991).
- Focusing the students' attention on the lives and achievements of famous empathetic persons, such as Mother Theresa and Mahatma Gandhi, encourage pro-social behaviour. When adults draw the attention of children to such personalities it has been observed that the children emulate the attitudes and behaviours associated with them (Cotton, 1994).

Section 2- In the Classroom

I begin the following narrative by demonstrating how after thirteen months into the programme the students were adept at sharing emotional experiences and sometimes did not need a cue to start. Equally, I had acquired confidence in my ability to teach and was willing to take a few risks during my classes (Chapter 5, p.70). A 'teaching-at-risk' lesson is when the teacher selects the lesson from the children's suggestions and then builds the curriculum needs and objectives around it. In the thirty-fifth class on 8.2.2003, Snehal set the tone of the class by wanting to narrate a scary incident. However, it was through the act of 'stopping to consider' that brought focus to an off-hand activity and set the theme of the curriculum on empathy training. The Narrative 'Kanha's Story' is built around the 'blind walk' lessons. The font Courier News represents Kanha's voice and my reflections are in Times New Roman Bold.

Kanha's story

We were going to create a play on scary stories. I think Miss had not planned scary stories or 'scared' emotion when she came to class, I think so because Snehal started it all.

"When we lived in our old house in Chakala," he started.

Miss who is always interested in listening to us said, "ummmm." Encouraging him to speak. Then she realised we had

already started the class without wishing each other, without taking attendance and without recording the date.

Miss interrupted saying, "But first you did not tell me the date and your name." "Oh!" he said rubbing his head. "I am Snehal, and the date is eighth." "Eighth what?" Miss asked.

"Eighth February 2003," he said hurriedly as he wanted to get on with the story. "When we were staying in Chakala, there was a ghost. Even if we tied the window closed it would open!"

"Yes?" Miss asked. She was amazed. Most of us did not believe him, but Miss picked up the idea.

I had not planned to do a role-play on the subject of being scared. We had recently performed for the annual program in January and then the children had completed the peer and self-assessment questionnaires to assess their friends' and their own behaviour and performance during the making of the play for the annual program and during the presentation of it. I had planned to start the lessons on concentration today (Class 35-8.2.2003) as I had felt Samir, Nihar, Chandani, Kanha and Mukul had great difficulty concentrating on the given task. Samir's mother had often suggested I work on his concentration. However the children were quite excited with the idea of scary stories and therefore I put my plans aside and went with the flow of the class.

"Let's perform a scary story. First I want you to tell your partner scary stories and then I want you to decide which story you want to perform. I want you to plan the action well and rehearse it before you share it with us," Miss said.

Shenal and I were dramatising a play on a blind man, when Miss interrupted the performance. "We 'stopped to consider' because Snehal and Kanha were doing a play with a blind character but they did not 'think' of how a blind person would behave," she said.

Shenal was playing a blind child and Kanha was helping him cross the road. However, pulling him rudely along would be a better way to describe the action. This was an interesting moment for me to introduce the idea of 'blind walk'. In the 'blind walk' one partner would be the guide

while the other partner wears the blindfold. It is very important that the guides keep their partners safe. They must at all times ensure the 'blind' child safety. I had previous experience of using the 'blind walk' exercise. Though in most drama games book (e.g. Brandes and Phillips, 1977; McCurrach and Darnley, 1988) 'blind walk' is a suggested exercise for trust building and sensitivity, I have determined it works effectively to enhance trust, empathy and communication skills. In the 'blind walk' or 'trust walk' exercise the children would learn to:

- experience what it would be like to be without the sense of sight;
- be reliable and safely guide each other on blind walks;
- identify things on their blind walk by using their other senses besides sight;
- practise both verbal and non-verbal communication skills.

An important aspect of the 'blind walk' is the discussions during reflection time at the end of the class where students discussed what they learned from their 'blind walk' with the whole class. Reflection-on-action during the class took place, as I would often stop the class to discuss and remark on the proceeding of the class.

The first attempt was not successful, as the guides pulled the 'blind'. One of the reasons for such actions was that the guide had not experienced being blind and secondly the 'blind' were so scared as they had lost 'sight' that they either moved reluctantly or tried giving the guides instructions to ensure their own safety. However, this was not disheartening as I believe it is necessary to practice perspective taking. Practise, posits Haynes and Avery (1979), is an effective means to increasing levels of empathy. Just as rehearsing a role is important, repeated practice at taking another's perspective is more effective than one-shot or infrequent efforts to do so (cf. Haynes and Avery, 1979).

"Samir and Nihar just laughed all through, Chandani's and Sarla's action was chaos, Lali was merely putting up an act and Snehal and Kanha just walked through the action." Miss asked all to repeat the action. She talked us through Pratik and Manni's role-play. " Look at Pratik...he is walking so slowly and helping her along as she cannot see. Now I want you to take your 'blind' friend for a walk round the class. Be careful and see that your partner does not get hurt."

At reflection time, Miss explained why she was not disappointed even though most of our actions were chaotic. She said we would work at it again and again.

That is when Pratik said he wanted to play the 'blind game' where as he said, "we have to only tell." Most of us had forgotten so we asked her what he meant.

"Remember I said we would play the game of the blind where we would give only oral instructions to the 'blind' partner?"

So it we decided we would play the game of " blind walk" in the next class, but we would move out of our normal classroom and go to what we at school call 'the basement'- the ground floor hall or the school compound. The reason Miss suggested the compound was because it was a large area.

"15 February 2003," we all shouted into the microphone at the beginning of the thirty-sixth class the following Saturday. We were eager to get on with the class. We quickly decided who would be blind and who would lead as we started working in pairs. This game was more fun on the ground floor as there were levels and pillars, a bus parked in the school compound, a few steps up and down, and the children's playing area with monkey bars, slides and swings. However, here we had to really be careful as if the guide did not take care of the blind partner, the blind one could get hurt.

I was glad I was permitted to hold my class in the ground floor area as it different levels. In the class on the first floor where we normally worked, there was no scope to develop this activity.

"When you were the seeing partner what did you feel?"
Miss asked.

I think this was the important issue; how well the seeing partner took care of the blind friend.

" If I could not take care of her ...she will..."Sarla tried explaining her feeling as the seeing partner.

" ...fall?" Miss suggested.

" So I said touch [the wall/railing] little down...little up..." Sarla said.

Miss was pleased with her and said very good.

Sarla then explained she takes care of her Ba [grandmother] and so she was similarly careful with her friend.

My aim was not just to praise Sarla but I wanted to also highlight her caring behaviour. I wanted to make her understand that she was child who cared for others and that it was her positive trait.

Chandani felt, "if we have a eye [sight] and we are holding a person who is blind we have care for him. If he falls down we have responsibility of him."

"We have to take them where they say they want to go and if we are catching them and they fall...then they ...the blind person will think...they will think she has an eye but she could not see!" Chandani continued, emphasising on the word 'see'.

Snehal who was my partner said he was concerned for my safety. During the conversation I realised that Kanha could not experience the feeling of taking a blind person on a walk as Samir, who was his partner, kept opening his eyes. To correct this, I paired Kanha with Snehal and asked them to explore the school ground together. I did not want to let Samir off either. I paired him with Chandani, whom I knew would be careful with him and sent them off too. I had to remind Samir at least three times not to open his eyes. Sarla paired with me.

Caring for others was a trait exhibited all the children. None of the 'blind' hurt themselves or even banged into anything. Samir however, mostly fooled around, he would keep opening his eyes. Moreover, when he was the guide his partners would feel too insecure to move freely and the walk would end abruptly.

All the children put their heart in the activity and had a novel experience of being blind and taking care of someone who is blind. From the way they held their blind partners hand and the way they gave directions, I knew that they had began to empathise with their friends' need for help. This activity worked in the second class as each child had become blind and the guide in turn. It may not have worked in an extremely safe area where the possibility of an accident was zero, like in the

classroom. The second reason they learnt to take care was because they had experienced the feeling of being blind themselves and understood the difficulty of sightlessness. I too experienced it afresh, when my student Sarla took me for a blind walk.

Empathy training

This chapter reiterates my stand on the inter-relatedness of life skills. Here I investigate the role of emotions and understanding emotions, and the role of understanding self in enhancing empathetic understanding in children.

I also review empathy measures and present the methods of assessment used to measure empathy. Finally, I offer the analysis of the assessment of the children's learning.

Empathy training did not start with the 'blind walk' exercise where my able-bodied students performed role-taking and identification of the blind, which in turn helped them to empathise with people who need care and help. Empathy training started in the first class of this research when the children started learning about emotions and emotional understanding.

In the beginning of the module when the children created statues they assumed the role of trees, stones, dogs, cats, beggars, school teachers, and so on. Merely becoming statues was not important in the class, detailing on the different aspects, like emotions and body language of the person or object conveyed through the statue was. For example, when they became trees in the class 6-23.2.02, at first they all assumed a pose of an upright tree, standing tall with arms out-stretched. After I side-coached them asking them if all trees were fully grown and upright, Manni knelt down to assume a pose of a small tree, Samir brought his out-stretched arms together to present a coconut tree and Pratik bent over to illustrate a tree that was tilting. After the first side-coaching incident, the children became statues using their imagination and feelings.



Pratik, Samir and Manni as trees.

When I asked them to become beggars only Sarla became a standing statue of a beggar. Pratik became a statue of a beggar with leprosy, Chandani sat down in a sad, depressed manner, hair falling all over her face and Kanha and Snehal sat near the footwear like the beggars one would find outside temples or mosques.



Kanha and Snehal as beggars.



Pratik as a leper.

When the children became statues it was not merely a physical act, they also assumed the feelings of the person or tried to understand what an object might feel if it could experience feelings, there was a sense of 'make-believe' involved (Bolton, 1998).

Exposure to different emotions, and focusing on one's own feelings, understanding the different kind of feelings they have and the different feelings one can experience in different situations were topics covered in the lessons developed for emotional understanding.

Focusing on the similarities between one's self and others and the different selves was experienced and reflected upon in the 'Understanding self' lessons. Activities which focused on similarities between oneself and one's feelings and the selves and feelings of others, were covered in the same lessons.

Activities which focus students' attention on the lives and achievements of famous empathetic persons like Mother Theresa and Mahatma Gandhi was a lesson which failed to materialise in Class 7- 3.2.2002. I had tried introducing this subject when we made 'statues, which tell stories'. To set the ball rolling I tried to model a statue with Snehal, of Mother Theresa nursing a patient. When the children could not think of another example I suggested they try creating a statue of Gandhiji leaning on his 'walking sticks', Manu and Abha, his grandnieces. Mukul and Lali tried the idea, but the statue was simply at a symbolic level there was no understanding involved. I tried to understand why it was difficult for them to make statues of famous empathetic people. I even agreed to vary the subject and:

I told them to make statues of a story they have learnt or heard in class. They all said they don't hear stories in class!!! And they did not know how to tell stories.

Journal: Class 7-3.2.2002

I had repeatedly remarked on their caring behaviour all through the module, as I wanted the children to see themselves as responsible and caring persons. By reinforcing their positive traits I wished to explain to them that this positive behaviour was something that they would exhibit even in the absence of a person of authority (e.g. Chapter 6, p.204).

When we were discussing whether one should hide one's feelings from others (Chapter 6, p.181, 204). Sarla replying in positive gave the example of hunger. Even though hunger is not an emotion, I let her continue her explanation, as I was curious to know her thoughts. She went on to explain, that if she was feeling extremely hungry and she was at someone else's house it would be extremely inconsiderate of her to say she

was hungry. Besides she continued that her parents would be worried and she did not want to upset them. Her concern for parent's feelings was something I had appreciated in the class. Lali had shown similar concern for her parent's when she had said she did not want them to worry when she was alone at home and bored (Chapter 6, p.181).

Sarla had empathised with Manni when (Class16-31.8.2002) Manni's partners would not listen to her story. Sarla said, "I think we should listen to Manni, I think we should all give her a chance to talk also." Sarla's remark pleased me as Manni was a child who could be described "as quite dominating and always made sure her everybody listen to her" (Appendix 5, p.28-9), whereas Sarla was a quieter child and usually nobody listen to her.

Social understanding and the extent to which the children were able to set aside privileged or personal knowledge and emotions and adopt the perspective of another person, the degree to which children could move out of egocentric thinking and utilize sophisticated perspective-taking, interpersonal understanding of relationships and conflict resolution, has been illustrated through the analysis of emotional understanding and understanding of self.

Empathy cannot be measured directly - but only through proxies such as criminality, terrorism, charity, violence, antisocial behaviour, related mental health disorders or abuse (Vakin, 2003). However, the ROE program (Schonert-Reichl, et al, 2001, 2003) used a self-report measure and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1983) comprises of four 7-item subscales (perspective taking, fantasy, empathic concern, personal distress) each of which taps a separate dimension of empathy.

I have not completed a pre-learning assessment and post-learning assessment in empathy training separately as many of the features of empathy overlap with the other life skills (p.4; Appendix 10), such as emotional understanding and understanding self. However, I can show that there was an increase in empathetic understanding in the children by the end of the present module. Empathy training began in the lessons when the children learnt about emotions, it continued in Cycle 3 - 4 when the children learnt about 'self' and 'self awareness' and was carried forward in lessons when they learnt communication skills.

In this study, children's behaviour was assessed in the drama class and also via teachers' and peers' reports. Teacher-rated children's social behaviour at pre-learning level (January 2002) and post-learning level (April 2003) is presented in Table 18. The

class teachers' rating of the children's social behaviour with reference to peer interaction during normal school-time is shown in Table 19.

Peer assessment is presented in Table 19 where the children rated their drama classmates after the annual program. I rated the students' pro-social behaviour relating to empathy skills from qualities like ability to: share, cooperates with peers, help others when they have a problem, be kind, be fair, and understand other children's point of view. These are determined from the features: ability to defer judgement, desire to share product and ideas, adaptability and eagerness to resolve disorder and flexibility (points 2, 3, 8, 9, 11 on the Creativity scale (Appendix 15). This assessment covers the children's behaviour from Cycle 1 through Cycle 6 (see Table 21).

Table 18: Teacher rated behaviour -1.

(from Teacher's multiple-choice questionnaire- Appendix 6)

Behaviour with other children.	Friendly	Shy	Avoids contact	Irritates others	Bullies	Withdrawn	Always fighting
No. of children in 2002	4	3	-	I	I	-	I
No. of children in 2003	6	2	-	I	-	-	I

Table 19: Teacher rated behaviour-2.

(from Teacher's multiple-choice questionnaire- Appendix 6)

Group Activity	Likes to working a group	Cannot work in a group	Bad sportsman	Bullies or dominates	Gets bullied	Remains aloof	Spoils others work
No. of children in 2002	4	I	-	2	-	I	1
No. of children in 2003	8	-	-	-	-	2	-

Table 20: Self and peer Assessment.

(Self Assessment-Annual program- Appendix 12)

	Mukul	Samir	Chandani	Lali	Manni	Kanha	Snehal	Pratik	Sarla	Nihar
Worked well with the group.	13	17	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27

Table 21: From creativity rating score.
(average scores of the group)

	Cycle I	Cycle II	Cycle III+IV	Cycle V	Cycle VI
2.Ability to defer judgement	2.2	2.7	2.9	3.4	3.8
3.Adaptability	2.3	2.7	2.9	3.5	3.6
8.Desire to share product and ideas	2.8	3.0	3.4	3.6	3.8
9.Eagerness to resolve disorder	2.4	2.7	3.1	3.6	3.6
11.Flexibility	2.7	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.7

[1 not present, 2. minimal present 3. somewhat present 4. moderately present 5 strongly present]

As it can be seen in Table 18 and 19 there is a marked increase the group's pro-social behaviour. Mukul, Kanha and Sarla were the shy children, however, according to the class-teacher Sarla had started becoming friendlier with her classmates. Kanha who is a quiet, well-behaved child continued giving the impression of being shy, however, during the recess time and while travelling home in the bus had become more open and talked a lot. Lali who was his classmate and travelled in the bus with him commented that 'out of class he is talkative, naughty and full of life' (see Table 16, in Chapter 8, p.213).

Nihar and Mukul are the two children, according to their class-teacher, who remain aloof and do not like to work with the class. However, as it can be seen from the peer assessment scores (Appendix 12, ref point 4) all the children in my drama class thought Nihar worked well with the group.

By the two above stated contradictions I am not reducing the class-teacher's opinion. However, I was interested in finding a reason for the discrepancy in the children's behaviour in my class and their behaviour during school time. I believe that in a large class (n=50) quiet children like Mukul, Nihar, Kanha and Sarla are usually not drawn out or sometimes are ignored. Whereas in my class as there were only ten children it was easier for me to pay attention to each and draw each one out. In the case of Nihar, his teachers were of the opinion that he irritated others. Nihar is a child with Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity (ADDH) therefore it is plausible that the teacher perceive his behaviour as 'irritating others', whereas in my class behaviour pattern such as this was not exhibited.

Mukul and Pratik were the two children who did not attend the class regularly therefore I cannot confirm that their behaviour changed by attending the drama class. However, the other eight children were regular. To illustrate the change in behaviour of those eight children I have drawn a table (Table 22) with the average scores of the children who were regular. The scores in Table 22 show the shift in learning of the children and their growth from Cycle 1-6. In Cycle 1 all the children had an average score of 2.2-3, which showed their pro-social behaviour, was at a level where it was minimally present. They progressed to a high score of 4- 4.8 (moderately present =4), which means they were moving towards an ideal score of 5 (strongly present).

Table 22: From creativity rating score -1
(average score of 8 regular children)

	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3+4	Cycle 5	Cycle 6
2.Ability to defer judgement	2.2	2.8	3.1	3.8	4.3
3.Adaptability	2.3	2.8	3.1	3.9	4
8.Desire to share product and ideas	3	3.8	4.3	4.5	4.8
9.Eagerness to resolve disorder	2.5	2.8	3.4	4	4
11.Flexibility	2.8	3.3	3.5	3.8	4.1

[1= not present, 2= minimal present, 3=somewhat present, 4= moderately present, 5=strongly present]

To conclude, a holistic assessment of the children's empathetic understanding reveals that the curriculum on teaching empathetic skills was effective. Importantly, this in turn facilitated in enhancing the children's emotional and social competence.