

The Mental and Behavioural characteristics of children is the dominant entity of Ruskin Bond's fiction and non-fiction

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Abstract

In this paper an attempt has been made to interrogate the Child's mental and behavioural characteristics which is an interesting topic to study. The children are most ingenious and most innovative in thinking and they live in their own world. The Researcher has studied the stories of Ruskin Bond with respect to Child's mental and behavioural characteristics. Ruskin Bond (born 19 May 1934) is an Indian author of British descent. He lives with his adopted family in Landour, in Mussoorie, India. The Indian Council for Child Education has recognized his role in the growth of children's literature in India. Ruskin Bond is considered a pioneer of children literature in India. Ruskin Bond came close to children's literature. Since Ruskin Bond liked his boyhood very much therefore all his children stories whether autobiographical or semi- autobiographical expressed his longing for a happy childhood. Ruskin Bond likes children because they are more frank, open minded and emotional.

Key Words: Mental, behaviour, psychology, infants, adolescent development, attitude, ego, cognitive etc.

Ruskin Bond spent his early childhood in Jamnagar (Gujarat) and Shimla. At the age of ten, Ruskin went to live at his grandmother's house in Dehradun after his father's death that year from jaundice. Ruskin was raised by his mother and stepfather. He did his schooling from Bishop Cotton School in Shimla, from where he graduated in 1950 after winning several writing competitions in the school including the Irwin Divinity Prize and the Hailey Literature Prize. He wrote one of his first short stories, *Untouchable*, at the age of sixteen in 1951. Following his high school education, he went to his aunt's place in the Channel Islands (U.K.) in 1951 for better prospects and stayed there for two years. In London, he started writing his first novel, *The Room on the Roof*, the semiautobiographical story of the orphaned Anglo-Indian boy named Rusty; he did various jobs for a living. It won the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize, (1957) awarded to a British Commonwealth writer under 30. He moved to London and worked in a photo studio while searching for a publisher. After getting it published, Bond used the advance money to pay the sea passage to Bombay and settle in Dehradun. Ruskin Bond is a well-known Indian Writer in English. He has written more than hundred short-stories, six novels, three collections of verse and over thirty books for children. Ruskin Bond received Sahitya Academy award for his book *Our Trees Still Grow at Dehra* in 1992 and was honoured with title Padma Shree in 1999, for his life time contribution to Indian literature in English. He has been writing for the last fifty years in different genres of literature. Ruskin Bond Stories and novels got wide publicity worldwide in India Specially the various Director's produced films on his Novels. He was also appreciated by various prizes and awards at national level. To brief Filmography The 1978 Bollywood film *Junoon* is based on Bond's historical novella *A Flight of Pigeons* (about an episode during the Indian Rebellion of 1857). It was produced by Shashi Kapoor and directed by Shyam Benegal. The

Rusty stories have been adapted into a Doordarshan TV series Ek Tha Rusty. Several stories have been incorporated in the school curriculum in India, including The Night Train at Deoli, Time Stops at Shamli and Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra. In 2005, the Bollywood director Vishal Bhardwaj made a film based on his popular novel for children, The Blue Umbrella. The movie won the National Award for Best Children's film. Ruskin Bond made his maiden big screen appearance with a cameo in Vishal Bhardwaj's film 7 Khoon Maaf in 2011, based on his short story Susanna's Seven Husbands. Bond appears as a Bishop in the movie with Priyanka Chopra playing the title role. Bond had earlier collaborated with Bharadwaj in The Blue Umbrella which was also based on one of his works.

The mental and behavioural characteristics is the scientific study of how and why human beings change over the course of their life. Originally concerned with infants and children, the field has expanded to include adolescence, adult development, aging and the entire lifespan. These two characteristics are of the aim to explain how thinking, feeling and behaviour change throughout life. This field examines change across three major dimensions: physical development, cognitive development and socio emotional development. Within these three dimensions are a broad range of topics including motor skills, executive functions, moral understanding, language acquisition, social change, personality, emotional development, self-concept and identity formation: Early Adolescence: 9 to 13 years (preteen), Mid Adolescence: 13 to 15 years and Late Adolescence: 15 to 18-year. It's very important to inculcate the importance of developmental psychology in the minds of children. Following points shan't be avoided at any cost: To know the child better, to know the skills of the child and develop them in positive way. To find out dislikes of the child. To identify the strengths of the child at young age. To teach best things in life to child through morals and stories. To

understand behavioural problems in child. Following issues are faced by Children in today's world: Lack of Guidance Support and motivation from parents, school pressure expectations from family and society. Changes in their bodies as peer pressure, emotional imbalance, family conflicts, illness problems and anger, ego and stress related problems. Solutions to above issues and problems:

1. The Children require healthy environment in family so parents should be happy and healthy themselves first.
2. Faith and better understanding between parents and child.
3. Reducing School Pressure.
4. Guiding properly and in considerable manner to the children
5. All-round development by identifying the skills of the child and motivating them.

Ruskin Bond is considered a pioneer of children literature in India. Ruskin Bond came close to children's literature. Since Ruskin Bond liked his boyhood very much therefore all his children stories whether autobiographical or semi- autobiographical expressed his longing for a happy childhood. Ruskin Bond likes children because they are more frank, open minded and emotional. According to Ruskin Bond two children can become good friends merely by exchanging a piece of marble, a coin, a doll and bangles. Children do not like the restraints put on them by their elders. Ruskin Bond loves children because they are not deceptive. All children love freedom, jumping in pools, climbing on trees and are always curios to know about their surroundings so Ruskin Bond is more close to children of the world. Ruskin Bond had published many casual short stories for children in magazines and newspapers in India

and abroad. Through writing children's stories, he also fulfilled his own unfulfilled wishes and longings as a child. He writes in scenes from a writer's life that.

I don't suppose I would have written so much about childhood or even about other children if my own childhood had been all happiness and light Ruskin Bond does not like the traditional children stories of India but he prefers stories like Maugli by Rudyard Kipling. Ruskin Bond's art of characterization is unique and different from others although many critics find fault with him for being autobiographical and subjective but Ruskin Bond can be defended by comparing him with Charles Lamb. Ruskin Bond's characters are both types and individuals and most of them represent the middle class. Ruskin Bond like Maugham chose characters from his own surroundings neither abstract nor based on his imagination. The rich and poor, small and grown up, vendor, trader, schoolboy, gardener, all are portrayed in their respective way of living. Some of his characters resemble his father, Somi, Mr. Kapoor, Meena, caricatures like Rusty, Kishan, and some others are adjusted in the fictional world. His book for children, *The Hidden Pool*, is a collection of short stories. *The Hidden Pool*, is the story of three friends, Laurie, Anil and Kamal. Laurie is the son of a British engineer in India and Anil and Kamal are his Indian friends, who introduce him to the festivals, foods and traditions of India. Laurie finds out a hidden pool in the mountains which varnishes their friendship. *Hidden Pool*, is the place where they swim, wrestle, and make plans a trip to a glacier at 12,000 feet above sea level. Ruskin Bond's another children's book, *Grandfather's Private Zoo*, is a collection of ten short stories that had been published at an earlier time in a various magazines and newspapers, some of these stories are written in the early 1960s in Delhi. The collection of the stories refers the happy times which Ruskin Bond had spent at his grandmother's house in Dehra, in these stories he takes the theme from

the statements, heard through the people of village about his Grandfather, Clerk's fondness for unusual house pets. Ruskin Bond presents the book in first person narration as an autobiography, only to make it authentic. He respected all religions reflected through the characters of his stories that belong to different sects, culture, and religions. Ruskin Bond regarded India and Indians superior to western civilized individuals. Many of his stories are direct satire on western culture and civilization. In India he found humanism whereas western people have become only a machine of amassing wealth. India is the land of fables because here in India children are fond of listening to stories related by their grandparents before going to sleep. Ruskin Bond got success as a writer for adults, and then he became interested in writing stories about children. In his introduction to *The Night Train at Deoli* and other Stories he writes that in the 1970s, when he was facing all kind of problems, his stories relating to children coped with the difficult situation. Earlier he had written a few stories for children and published in magazines and newspapers in India and abroad, but while in Mussoorie, after shifting to his new home, Ivy Cottage he started writing more frequently for children as he played the role of grandfather to Prem Singh's children. He was always thinking of new stories to tell Rakesh, Mukesh and Savitri. His innovation was to make children protagonist in his stories. Also these stories satisfied his own urge and desire to write about his lost childhood. He writes in *Scenes from a Writer's Life* to the following effect: I don't suppose I have written so much about children if my own childhood had been all happiness and light. I do not find that those who have contended, normal childhood, seldom remember much about them; nor do they have much insight into the world of childhood

Fortunately, his trauma was channelized toward children's classics, which gave an outlet to his own agonies. Ruskin Bond found a resemblance with *David Copperfield* who

sustained himself in an unfriendly world. The thought that children are rarely given attention by their elders, made him more sympathetic towards them. The children he came across in villages, their everyday experiences suggested themes for his stories. Ruskin Bond always enjoyed their company. Ruskin Bond's children stories can be put into two categories: personal and impersonal ones. Personal stories are autobiographical or semi-autobiographical in tone, where he records his own reflections, unfulfilled passions and small adventures. These are stories like My Father's Trees in Dehra, The Funeral, When I can't Climb Anymore, The Tiger in the House, The Playing Fields of Shimla, Life with Uncle Ken, the Cherry Tree, The Last Tonga Ride, Coming Home to Dehra, All Creatures Great and Small, The Tree Lover. These stories show young Ruskin Bond's affinity with trees and pets and his love for the town, Dehra. He was deeply attached to the places where he spent his childhood; hence his stories are nostalgic and vivid bringing to life and charming little places, colonial bungalows and fruit laden orchards where he wandered about as a boy. His stories for children reflect his rich imagination. Ruskin Bond has very nicely related the child's behavior and expectations in his short stories. If they are seriously read by the young children, they will get better understanding of the problems and the parents will be benefited by these stories. The Stories are very interesting and are widely accepted and read. The Paper is decent contribution to the child's mental as well as behaviour issues such as how we can relate the stories of Ruskin bond with this important issue of the children. The Stories can be best way to educate the children in major issues faced in this young age. The world of children is different from the adults. The Children are more imaginative, creative and most natural in behavior. These qualities when utilized in best way they can become better citizens of the world.

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