CONCLUSION

Certain areas of interest immediately present themselves while considering the problem of creating literature for the young reader in India. A humble attempt is made here to establish a base from which literary critics can redefine, refine and modify their opinion regarding literature for the young readers in India.

However, as no study can claim to be comprehensive, the present one also may fall short of making an exhaustive survey of the current book scenario for the young readers. Many books are being written for this age group in the West, where the enthusiastic literary critics have accepted Teenage Fiction as a genre. In India we have a paucity of material as little research has been done in the Universities on this area of literature.

The main focus of this study being the analysis of Ruskin Bond's fiction as a part the problem of writing for an adolescent reader, the works of Ruskin Bond as an example of this genre have been examined in detail. During the process, Dr Ruskin Bond could clear a few doubts and discuss the problems he had to face as a writer. It is heartening to know that Garhwal University, Shrinagar in Utteranchal, has recognized his contribution to literature and awarded the highest honor, Doctor of Letters.

With the help of the reference material available on the Teenage fiction in the West, where a systematic literary criticism has been developed, I have tried to present a picture of the developments in this
field, to highlight the need for such literary criticism and advanced research in India.

In order to get a first hand information a survey was conducted and the authors, children, adults and Book Publishers and Editors of Children’s Books were also contacted and interviewed. It led to the conclusion that in order to create good literature for this eager audience in India, the 'book people' (publishers, authors and critics), and the ‘Child People’ (Parents, teachers and the child) must come together.

Certain basic issues related to the problem of writing for the young reader in India have been analyzed, leading to the following deductions:

In order to create literary consciousness which provides aesthetic experience and awakens in the young reader a desire to read further, the writer has to evolve a method that can combine wisdom and enjoyment with entertainment. When a book succeeds in doing this without making it obvious to the reader, one can say that a classic is born. That can be achieved only when the writer himself doesn’t do it consciously but makes it a part of his creativity. It should be there all the time like butter in the milk.

Ruskin Bond’s fiction comes closest to this description. During the conversation with the author he made it clear that he did not consciously write for the adolescent while creating his classic novel for adolescent reader, The Room on the Roof. It was a result of a sense of
alienation he felt when he was away from his home in India. He was an adolescent himself. As an elderly person, when he looks back at those days of youth he finds them, at best comical and laughs at them. While writing the book, his feelings were true and he wrote about them with earnestness. That is exactly what makes the book interesting for the adolescent reader.

It is extremely difficult for an adult to achieve that effect. Lewis Carroll and Daniel Defoe succeeded in doing it. They went back to their childhood and became children once again while creating literature and as a result, we have the greatest classics for children.

Critics have unanimously agreed that books for young readers should, as individual works of art, be allowed to appeal to the imagination, the mind and the heart. And that while writing for children, one should be writing with single mind and voice, telling the story plainly and roundly. Ruskin Bond’s fiction meets the criteria and hence is its appeal. His stories and novels are being read by two generations of adolescents for the last fifty years. They have stood the test of time.

The presentation or the narrative technique plays an important role while creating literature for the young reader. The reader should be addressed directly in simple language. Ruskin Bond uses the first person narrative technique while telling his stories. It also lends a sense of authenticity and belongingness. The factor of probability, which is an important element in fiction, is achieved easily through
this. His presence is felt everywhere. He is criticized for putting too much of himself in his fiction. But he says that he is being true to himself and being true to oneself is being true to others.

Ruskin Bond's writings reveal the author's skill in handling the plot and creating memorable characters. His writings being true to life have very little plot, as he feels life has no plot. Characters are important than the plot. People keep coming and going. Some of them stay and some others pass by like ships in a sea. His characters come alive. Like Robinson Crusoe, his protagonists live a life isolated from the world of adults. In their island they make a world of their own with their friends and companions who are a part of nature along with the trees animals and rivers. He creates awareness regarding the issues like ecology and environments. Thereby he fulfills his social responsibility as a writer. His stories are full of his love for nature.

Talking about good books for young readers, he feels that they should set in action certain truths worthy of lasting forever-truth and justice. Yet the message should not jeopardize the aesthetic aspect of the book. By deepening the experience of the reader, Ruskin Bond ultimately forms a link between individuals and contemporary issues. If Children's Literature is literature with purpose, then that purpose is achieved in his writings.

According to Jane Yoken, it is the presence of the inner voice that makes a book timeless. In Ruskin Bond's fiction. We keep hearing that 'Inner Voice' whispering to the reader all the time. He is a
writer who pursues relentlessly his task of talking to his gentle reader, and with his child-oriented vision conveys the profound truth, which the young reader can easily relate to and respond.

He feels that children have to be told gently that if there is violence in this world, there is also love. Human beings can destroy as well as create and the reality of pain can be endured and survived. There may not be ‘living happily ever after’ as life is not a fairy tale. But there is always scope for hope and dreams. Life can be joyous in spite of the difficulties. His books are ‘a celebration of life’.

Ruskin Bond agrees with C S Lewis that a book, which is not worth reading when you are sixty, is not worth reading when you are six. A book for the young reader should have universal appeal. He says that he keeps going back to the classics like Wuthering Heights which he enjoyed reading as an adolescent. They give him the same joy even at the age of seventy.

The acid test of a good writer lies in his ability to recollect his fears and fantasies of his youthful days and recreate the experience truthfully. This helps him to reach his young reader and awaken in him the reflective imagination, which will result in his responding readily. The writing that expresses their mischievous fancies and shares their joys and fears captures their attention. The characters should be lifelike, narration gripping, presentation exotic making them ‘listen with glittering eyes’ as in Silas Mariner.
“In some ways the lives of Indian children are not different from lives of children anywhere else,” says Ruskin Bond during the interview. “Their aspirations are universal. Jumping into a pool, playing games, making friends, losing friends, making friends again are common to children all over the world.

The differences are mainly in geography, customs and economy the rural children live in. He is the first Indian English writer who has been writing relentlessly for the young readers in India for the last fifty years.

An humble attempt is made here to analyze the area of adolescent literature in Indian writing in English. The writers, editors and the publishers agree that there is sufficient market for adolescent literature but we hardly have any good books from authors in India for this category of readers.

The reasons are manifold. The process starts with the writer who creates literature for young readers. The publisher takes the work to the reader. The editor recommending the book takes care of its presentation.

The survey of reading habits of young reader in India reveals that children go to the foreign author’s The popularity of Noddy Books, Famous Fives, The Lord of The Rings and the enormous success of Harry Potter series gives an ample evidence of the eager young reader waiting to grab a good book which is interesting to read which fires his imagination.
A modest search is made here to find an answer to the question why there is a dearth of good quality books for the young reader in India. The author, the reader and the publisher form a book. These areas of the 'book people' are examined in detail to arrive at the root of the problem. The young reader wants to see himself in the books. They are interest in reading about the problems related to their lifestyle, their fears, fancies and their worries.

The publisher is interested in selling the book. The book must have a market value. A good book always sells says Mr. Ravi Shankar of Children's Book Trust publications, during the interview. Paro Anand., ex-editor of National Council For Children's Literature, and at present Commissioning Editor for Children's Books for Rupa & Co., opines that the most difficult task for an editor of children's book is to find a good writer willing to write books for adolescents. Ultimately it is the author who is the creator. It is his responsibility to write a masterpiece that can sell. The reader buys a book that he can enjoy reading.

Having arrived at the author's responsibility to relate with the reader's psyche and understand his behavior, Ruskin Bond's writings provide an example. Being a prolific and successful write for the young reader in India, he has created rich literature for the teenager in India.
Recommendations:

First and foremost the literary critics have to accept the existence of the vibrant group of adolescent readers in India and recognize the need to create good literature for them. In order to create good literature for this audience the author has to understand the adolescent's mind.

The themes that interest this special category of reader are travel, wandering, running away from home, rebellion, fantasy, relationships, friends and family, infatuation, rebellion, isolation, separation etc.

The style of narration has to be simple. Overt and explicit moralizing should be avoided.

Human weaknesses and fancies should be handled with sympathy and understanding.

Authors should take utmost care to avoid pessimism and negative approach.

Life should not be treated as a problem to be solved but an experience of love and joy to be lived.

In India there is an urgent need for recognizing this genre of literature as a specialized field. It should be implemented as part of the study in the Universities.

Writers are recognized as mainstream writers for adults and they take up writing for children as a hobby.
The following suggestions are made for improving the literary scenario for the young reader in India.

a. The responsibility of the writer is greater while writing for the adolescent reader. He should provide a realistic picture of life and prepare them to face it with optimism.

b. It is the parents who decide and spend money on books. Therefore it is important to keep the price low. The survey reveals that spending money on leisure reading is the last priority for parents. Though the readers are children, buyers are the parents!

c. The government should establish testing centers all over the country to encourage good literature for the children who need to grow up into good citizens.

d. Writers should be encouraged by installing some funds and subsidizing books for children.

e. Workshops and training programs may be held for the writers.

f. Some incentive should be given to the publishers who publish books for the children.

References: