Chapter 5

Conclusion

Let us give our children hope. Let's fill them with stories that tell them, over and over again, that peace is important, possible, worth striving for. Let's give them stories that allow them to understand the differences that separate us, to experience the humanity that connects us (Bauer n.p).

Children’s Literature encompasses multifaceted associations between three components, the literature, the children and the adult critic, because childhood and ‘child’ are challenging to define. Though the notion of ‘children’s literature’ faces problems related to its definition, it is often accepted and discussed by critics of the genre. As discussed in detail children’s literature is not clearly defined as mentioned in the first chapter of this study. ‘Child’ has been used in this current study from the age of eight to sixteen and teenagers are accommodated with in this term. ‘Children’s Literature’ used in this study has many facets. It discusses the problems faced by children in the spheres of society, it instructs and makes them aware of they being children; science throws light on children’s literature and ecological consciousness, liberates child, gives him freedom through adventure, improves wit and makes children ‘curious to know things (world)’ through detective stories, and lastly provides resolution to conflicts which are with in the mind of child and attempts to satisfy psychological and emotional needs. In this regard we can say children’s literature conveys and is designed to teach children how to become active members of society and maintain holistic interaction with society in which he/she lives. The main functions of children’s literature are socialisation and education. Children’s literature is written
by adults to forward information which is important for a child to learn in order to become a functioning member of the society.

There is a well-developed literary criticism in children’s literature in west where as in India we lack a literary critical discipline. There is a need of such discipline meant entirely for children. In India literature for children is recent phenomenon, and literary criticism on children’s literature has not developed yet.

In the second chapter I tried to focus on the importance of classical children’s literature of India in connection with global classical children’s literature and contemporary children’s literature and survey how classical literature shaped the contemporary children’s literary scene and how gradually ‘children’s stories’ or ‘children’s writing’ as a specific genre emerged in Indian context, particularly in English. It also provides some light on children’s literature in Indian regional languages and gives clear overall understanding about the Indian children’s literature and its roots. Throughout the globe literature for children abounds with retelling and adapting the accustomed stories of a culture like folktales, legends, stories of religious scriptures, stories about historical and fictional characters celebrated for their valour or holiness, adventure or mischief. India’s classical literature and oral tales have played a vital role in the development of children’s Literature in India. The existing oral tradition of India present from generations is now available in printed form. Michelle Superle writes, “This influence, which has had an impact at least equal to that of the ancient Sanskrit texts on the development of Indian Children’s Literature, began in the colonial period. By the time the British arrived there were well-established traditional narratives in circulation, both written and oral” (21). These stories serve important literary and social functions, inducting its readers into social, ethical and aesthetic values of producing culture.
India appears to continue to remain fascinated with moralistic and didactic stories like *Amar Chitra Katha* on one hand and colonial inherent stories on the other. But Publishers and organisations are trying to set new trends and create space for realistic stories. Realistic fiction is the product of social and economic changes.

We cannot deny totally the absence of didactic and moralistic literature for children. As Manasi Subramaniam writes “walk into any bookstore in India and the children’s section will be filled with dozens of different retellings of the *Panchatantra* and the *Jatak*. While this is a powerful and important shift, it has its disadvantages. Contemporary, original children’s writing in India seems to have taken a backseat” (32). “The didactic influence of these ancient texts and the oral tradition seems to affect the contemporary novels in this sample, many of which do prescribe current strategies for “intelligent living,” now on a national scale” (Superle 20). Didactism and pleasure has close proximity with children’s stories. As Darton et al writes, “Many teachers would reject didactic literature with a moral or ethical message that is too overt. Yet children’s literature has always been intended to instruct as well as to delight” (qtd. in Sipe 124). There is a noticeable shift from didactic and aesthetic to more pedagogic and social relevant issues in children’s literature in India. Although the writers borrowed techniques and literary forms from west but they shaped it to suit the local colour and setting. Literature for children does not remain only in the periphery of aesthetic pleasure but has crossed the threshold and focused on the minute as well as grave current social issues prevalent in society related to children. Ira Saxena writes about the growing reasoning capacity of the modern child and role of the realistic stories for children,

Today the intellectual level of the child has improved. He is definitely more aware and more exposed to the world around him. His thinking
is logical and permeated with scientific temper. In towns and cities, parent-child relations have undergone a change, sex roles are changing. Children in particularly are extremely involved with the growing society. Anything away from present trends seems distant to them. Real life stories are an answer to their individuality with entertainment. Anything deprived of casual relation and reasoning is unacceptable. Even the underlying ideals and values bear no meaning for them until its pros and cons are weighed and found convincing.

Today’s children know what they want (16).

The question arises here if the children are given adult positions, is the child’s innocence lost because of the narratives/stories which make him aware of the social evils in advance before they enter into the adult world or is he or she be able cope up with this situation. The situation is unclear and it needs to be clarified in order to get answers. Literature should not obstruct and mar the innocence of a child. At times the child does not like to be with characters he finds identical to him in the story, and may like to be in an imaginary world. In Adventure and mystery novels the child steps out from confined places, and no longer remains restricted to social, geographical, economic and socio-political spaces. Children’s literature does produce such literature where the child finds solace in dream lands, magical elements that are entertaining and thrilling, and captivates him to live in a world of mystery and adventure in novels.

Research has been regarded as a potential instrument for bringing about improvement in any human activity. It is particular so in the field of children’s literature where a growing generation is involved and publishers are required to be familiar with the latest trends and problems of children’s literature. It is encouraging to note after independence few research works have been conducted in Indian children’s literature. The main focus
and emphasis of this research is that child has a separate entity and recognition. The origin of children’s literature is in oral forms, folk tales and religious tales. It has a long heritage and tradition. It has been felt imperative to encourage the workers in the field to conduct active research by focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of children’s literature and identify the actual needs and requirements of children in the emerging world of science and technology, mass and electronic media, social troubles and turmoil’s. The findings of such research studies could provide future directions, insights and guidelines for the development of children’s literature in India. It is gradually being realised that adequate and objective research studies are essential for bringing about desired development of children’s literature in its various aspects and dimensions.

There are number of themes and trends involved in different categories of Indian children’s literature in English ranging from fantasy, realistic, sci-fi, informative, didactic, historical, folk, mythical, fables, environmental, and so on. The study focused mainly on the themes which are related to current situations prevailing in Indian society. The contemporary children’s literature on children and childhood in India has concentrated on issues of child labor, preservation of ecology, breaking stereotypes of presenting the girl child and the themes which have holistic developmental attitude towards children. Children’s literature in India is a mirror of contemporary social problems in India and are delivered to children through literature. These new themes are being reflected in Indian children’s literature.

In conclusion, therefore, Indian Children’s Literature today has considerable variety. The authors have explored almost every category ranging from myths and classics-retold to adventure, fantasy, stories of realism, both historical and biographical. Their approach to the themes is in keeping with the direct approach adults
are using nowadays in their relationship with their children. And with children absorbing more and more of the adult problems, the ‘happily-ever-after’ tag has been replaced by a more realistic rounding off (Menon 66).

After 1970’s literature for children in India developed and addressed contemporary issues and themes, intermingled with recurrent ethics and values. The shift from traditional literature to social concerns peculiar in Indian society like problems of untouchability, caste, communal tensions and riots figure in much of our contemporary children’s fiction. The other issues like disparities between rich and poor, the problems of the differently abled, child labour, environmental degradation are also being highlighted. “Apart from those in detective and adventure fiction, however, one can hardly locate in children’s literature any overtly larger cause that completely outside what affects the child protagonist directly. However, in rare instances, some injustices in the outside world provoke the child protagonist sufficiently in order for her/him to mastermind and lead a crusade on behalf of communal harmony, social equality, human rights, gender-sensitivity or some equal important cause. Such socially conscious campaigns, therefore, are more serious and crucial in the larger context than the voice of individual protests she/he registers in order to improve her/his own quality of life in an adult-dominated world” (Sen 180).

Child has a blank subconscious mind, and has nothing in store which he/she may relate with the outside of his/her mind, and does not have enough experience to know the world. Hence his discernment of human experience contrasts with adults’. “Childhood is the time to learn bridging the immense gap between inner experience and the real world” (Emmatty 4). Children’s literature conditions child through the stories in order to make him aware of society. As Weinreich claims, “the child … must be regarded as
a necessary condition which the author consciously or unconsciously relates to in the
creative process” (127).

These stories have fundamental ideologies and communicates individual hope. Thus
contemporary literature for children is woven around contemporary issues. In order to
do justice to the child Indian writers for children are more focused on child centered
stories. These stories have provided new dimensions to the genre. Children’s literature
has become a platform for introducing children to a world as it really is.

Speedy economic development has made India affluent, but spiritual discomfort
and frustration have spread extensively, and many social difficulties and problems are
prevalent. Adults don’t want children to fall prey to these issues which can halt the
progress of the young fertile mind. Children’s Literature can work as a catalyst in
addressing these issues in this regard. This study tries extensively to bring forth and
highlight these issues. Children’s literature increases vocabulary or other language
oriented enhancement as most parents/teachers have a notion that children’s literature,
or children’s literature are not mere stories to read, but allows them to speak their
voices, comfort them mentally, give them space in imaginary worlds; like any other
discipline. Children’s literature is changing day to day, and new themes are being
incorporated in it. Writers are conscious that they should not restrict children to
imaginary world only. The imaginary world does not remain once the child faces
reality. Imaginary world can expand the horizon of imagination in child and at the same
time socially relate through narratives and make them conscious of the society they
live. Adults should not shield the negative aspects of the society, as there are chances
if given early, the child may become aware about them. So in this way children’s
literature promotes understanding too. It has been seen in children’s literature, new
themes such as divorce, the loneliness of the aged because of the nuclear family system,
children running away from home or refusing to go school because of bullying, suicide and sexual harassment appear at length. The themes had been considered unsuitable for children’s literature and were taboo until recently, but large number of books and stories which provide information such about problems and make children aware are available at present. Contemporary children’s literature use tactics to initiate children with such problems. Dr. Ira Saxena writes,

In fiction, authors depict situations, attitudes, problems and experiences, which are similar to those in the lives of readers enabling them to identify with the characters and understanding the complexity of action reactions. The process alleviates hang-ups, informs viewpoints, makes them understand themselves and others eventually softening stress, in other words offering Book Therapy in the process (8).

The tendency today in India is to introduce serious subjects for younger children. The aim is probably to create early awareness about social problems like violence, drug crimes, divorce and the new family structures. A new range of themes, related to sexual abuse alcoholism are appearing in the literature for children. “They [writers] forget that their readers are, in the main, highly perceptive, intelligent children who are aware of being surrounded by family planning posters, talkative, indiscreet relatives, indifferent teachers, bullying classmates, quarrelling parents, none of these unsightly things can be wished away, or concealed under masses of candy floss words” (142). These books and stories aim to help a child cope with life from his earliest years, to understand risks and find survival. Nita Berry writes in her article, ‘The Loss of Innocence, Theme: Are Children’s Books Still an International Issues’
Let us give children frank stories that reflect their worries and heartaches—but let us also give them a world which dares to dream, where there is still beauty and wonder, where timeless values are not discarded forever and where role models still exist. Let us write a literature of hope that reflects faith in their resilience. Perhaps then we may give back in some measure their lost childhood—before our social fabric falls apart and it is too late (34).

Only recently social and psychological complications faced by children have begun to find their place in the Indian children’s literature. Major and sensitive issues like divorce and violence are being highlighted in the fiction of India. Social taboos like child abuse and sexual pervasiveness and related problems are being covered by these writers intensively. As Radhika Menon,

How else do we equip children to deal with death, divorce, class and gender inequities, communal and religious tensions, AIDS, teenage pregnancies, sexual abuse, the dangers of consumerism ... the list is endless. If the world has to be seen and portrayed to children in the light of the present day through books, taboos have to be breached and new styles and devices (n.p).

We can say that Literature is dedicated to the growing adolescence and these sensitive teenage years, which hang between childhood and adulthood can be considered an unsure, and often affected with physical, mental and social worries. These writers could provide an insight into relationships and teenage problems. On Indian setting Vrinda Kumble writes,

The first step is to encourage writing and publishing for children here, in our own land. Our readers deserve honest books that squarely face
the realities of life in India today that relate the readers’ own situations and surroundings that introduce them to other ways of life.

In our own and other countries, that entertain and make them laugh, that refuse to talk down and try to “improve” them (7).

Apart from these themes writers mostly tend to provide stories from their own culture. There is a growing agreement among the writers of Indian children’s literature that the use of texts representing the child’s culture will help the child develop better attitude towards over all development. If children do not find characters alike in stories they may feel that they are of less importance to the world they live in. They feel prejudiced and suffer the grief of being marginalised, and isolated. It affects their confidence and sensitivity. The cultural symbols are more important and necessary in children’s books.

Rudine Sims Bishop writes in *Kaleidoscope: A Multicultural Book list for Grades K-8*

> Literature is one of the vehicles through which we adults transmit to children our values, our attitudes, our world views, our philosophies of life. The cumulative message inherent in years of schooling in which children seldom see anyone in a book who resembles themselves and who shares their cultural values, attitudes, and behaviours, or in which children see themselves portrayed as laughable stereotypes, is that these children do not count and are not valuable by society at large. We should not be surprised, therefore, when such schooling also results in negative attitudes towards that society and institutions, and to literature itself (xiii-xiv).

Dr Shoba Sinha writes in her article, “Cultural Understanding through Stories”

> It is important that the stories are about characters from diverse cultures. If the details about the culture depicted in a story are not
authentic, they can mislead the readers instead of creating opportunities for cultural appreciation and understanding (124).

It has been observed that an awareness and attentiveness regarding children’s literature is growing in every country throughout the globe. Literature is the product of an age. Children’s literature in India, as in every other country, is influenced by many changing social factors. Children’s literature reflects the standards and beliefs of societies and communicates these standards to children. Adults are more aware now that children’s literature is a part of the mainstream literature. Like adult literature, it is worthy to think about what are the functions of children’s literature and what it delivers upon children. Among publishers the importance of literature for children is evident. Now children’s literature is rapidly becoming a field in itself. Indian children’s literature is now moving towards a significant leap forward. A good number of writers, young and old, have devoted themselves to writing for children. Number of publishing houses have started publishing books for the young readers. And few Government organisations have been developing and bringing out books and journals for children. With a view to bringing about improvement in human endeavour, research is regarded as a potential instrument or a necessary tool to accelerate the pace in the desired direction. It is only since a few decades attempts have been made for conducting research studies in the field of children’s literature. There is much scope in conducting a survey kind of research in this field particularly urban rural reading habits among children and reading materials available for both. Research can also be conducted at individual level of writers. Conducting research at age group level, researchers should go deep into the field of the study and should ponder over, “What children really Read? “Sub Genre’s liked by children” “Attitude of children towards reading” “whether they prefer animated stories or reading?” “more realistic or didactic”
The Expansion and growth of Children’s Literature is connected to social, educational and economic factors. The publishing trend gives the idea and status of children’s literature and it somehow indicates how much has to be added to it in order to gain overall growth. Publishers are mostly interlinked to growth of children’s literature. It takes considerable efforts to support the production networks. Children’s Literature is more dependent on Publishers as compared to adult literature and one of the most dominant factor is economic factor. Manish Chaudhary writes, “All children’s publishers face challenges…. With scattered information about different languages and socio-economic and regional variations, devising a marketing strategy is a hug difficult task…. There is always a tension the financially pragmatic decisions in the present moment” (n.p).

The published Children’s literature in India bears a history of hardly 150 years. But the post-Independence, children’s literature in India has witnessed a steep growth and development, despite several hurdles. Children’s literature in India has now gained a new dimension since it was considered as the sole preacher of didacticism earlier. The shift has changed from didactic approach to deliver more realistic narratives.

The third chapter of this study is “Contribution of publishers to Children’s Literature in India” and gives detailed information regarding children’s publishing scenario in India. As the second chapter of this study discusses, it is necessary to keep abreast with the distribution of children’s books. It is not only the author’s but also publisher’s decision that decides what children’s book are. So in this regard publishers and publishing institutions are involved in the growth of children’s books. It is also been observed publishers and institutions who publish children’s books encourage writers, artists for developing suitable materials for children. Few conferences and seminars are being conducted in higher institutions like universities and colleges in India. On the contrary
publishers are somehow keen on observing the status of children’s literature in India and they organise workshops, national seminars for discussing the problems related to children’s literature. Although Indian publishers are making their best efforts to spread their literature but there is lot more to be done. Manasi Subramaniam, writes, “It’s industry that is currently showing spectacular growth, and while that could very well change, especially given the ever-dynamic economy of the country, there’s plenty of reason to be optimistic for now” (28). The changing scenario of technology and its influence on every aspect of the life and on the children’s interests too is apparent. Interests of children has changed towards digital and electronic gadgets. These electronic devices has occupied the keen minds. Writers, publishers and policy makers should come forward to inculcate interesting study material for young minds. S. K. Ghai writes, “We, as the participants in the children’s publishing industry must make sure that these hearts and minds are not deprived of their childhood delights of travelling to fantastic lands…. We as publishers and authors have the responsibility to continuously innovate and evolve to make sure that books remain children’s best friend” (269-270).

Children’s Literature depicts scientific themes significantly and influence child’s personal understanding. A good children’s science fiction expands awareness in children, broadens children’s understanding not only of themselves, but also of the world at large. “Science fiction for children reflects the implications of technology and the possibilities for the future. Through it can be provided a method of developing an awareness of some of the alternatives of the world’s future” (qtd. Grady 195). These stories does not scheme to encourage and infuse morals but deal with weighty realities about life. These stories portray distinctive characters or situations from a unique viewpoint, it helps in stretching the minds of children, supply them new ways thinking
about the world. The selected stories are laden with spatial and temporal frame of narratives. The recurrent motifs of these stories are robots, and they permit writers to generate cognitive estrangement; a state that places children in a world dissimilar than their own, letting them interpret or observe from their own point of view. “This is an exciting genre for them. It meets their needs to verbalize societal concerns” (Grady 195). Children’s Literature focussing on science can be a stirring force to cultivate satisfying knowledge and information as well as arouse a sense of curiosity about the natural world. Children become inquisitive and their cognitive level gets enhancement.

“All children’s literature supports children’s science learning by offering opportunities to make observations, raise questions, and reach conclusions from evidence in an environment that is meaningful” (Castle and Needham 217).

All the themes are interconnected with each other and are instructional in nature. Somehow there are contradictions too. The questions arises if children’s literature promotes science through literature does it mean eco-consciousness is anti-science. Climate change concepts are being criticized as anti-science. Although my research is focused on explanatory methods, studies should not conceal these questions. These questions need to be answered in comparative studies between the two themes.

Ecology has been a very distinctive features of many ancient literature and literature for children has not remained divorced from this area. Due to the depletion and degradation of forests and its effect on every sphere of life, number of disciplines of knowledge spread awareness of ecology and relation between man and ecology. The approaching ecological imbalance leaves us no option but to escalate eco-consciousness. Literature has continuously been seen through the lens of ecocriticism. Raising consciousness is a very significant function of ecocriticism. Proper selection of children’s stories to inculcate the importance of nature and its preservations plays a
vital role in awareness of ecology among children. “Children’s literature, intertwined
with ecological issues, can render the most valuable service to humanity” (Adugna 40).
Indian children’s literature in English has created good number of stories themes related
to ecology. Children have close connection with nature and love exciting stories about
nature. They love and nurture nature instead of exploiting and destroying it. Children
do not see nature and ecology in decay instead they are very much close to it, therefore
stories about nature and it preservation at an early stage would be more beneficial.
Children’s books provide awareness for children and they influence adults and vice
versa. The feeling of oneness with ecology has been generated through children’s
literature. The threat of possibly destructive human interface with natural environment
exists within the stories of children’s literature in English. Such type of stories influence
both children’s observation of nature and their response to it and may affect and change
the reader’s attitude towards the environment. These stories in a way are ‘role models’
to bring a positive change. Ambika Bhalia writes,

Children’s literature can be an effective medium in kindling the
environment- consciousness. Children’s literature with a tinge of
ecological issues can help promote eco-consciousness among the
future generations….It will be highly beneficial because if children
are encouraged to explore nature from the beginning, they will not
face the extreme experiences. Children’s literature, intertwined with
ecological issues, can render the most valuable service to the
humanity in that context (6).

Children’s literature can be an effective medium in kindling environment-
consciousness and the ecological issues can help promote eco-consciousness among the
future generations. And lastly children’s literature, intertwined with ecological issues,
can render the most valuable service to humanity. Children’s literature is purposefully constructed to invigorate the child’s interest. Contemporary Indian children’s literature in English explores preoccupations concerning gender, sexuality and other current societal problems. Children’s literature is very useful for the development of the individual and other skills related to children, and plays a major role in communicating social culture. Gender roles are a vital part of the society. How gender is described in children’s books thus contributes to the image children develop of their own role and that of their gender in society. The stories discussed in the study portray more modern gender roles that carry a consciousness of gender equality among young readers. “If traditional Indian girls were dependent, then new Indian girls are interdependent, influencing as well as influenced by a multitude of relationships. Indian women writers create feminist texts for children” (Superle 50). These messages are provided by these stories to encourage and trigger their minds to be more guarded in future. Stories discussed in the section for gender consciousness plays a vital role to make girls active and participate in activities. Female characters have been given wide space and voice by contemporary writers for children. Marion Bauer, in ‘Sexism and the World of Children’s Books’ writes, “Currently there is a healthy emphases on finding children’s books with strong female characters, books which set the right example for girls and young women” (n.p).

Adventure novels in India has distinct themes, and child characters are from different strata’s of life; religion, caste, region. Adventure stories reflect real life, and child readers experience real life incidents and adventure of Indian regions.

In the past, there were certain set and rigid ideas about what should be given to children- an element of overprotection. Lately one finds a change in this attitude.... The leaning is more towards realistic
stories to project to the child that literature does reflect real life (Superle 57).

In adventure, mystery and detective novels girls gained place which was absent in the previous literature on India. “New India girl may be seen as a wish-fulfilment fantasy…. One of the most overarching ways by which the novels convey a feminist position in the creation of a central space for girls character, a consistent feature which extends across genre and place of publication” (Superle 46). In these adventure novels Indian children’s authors create striking child characters that readers can appreciate and confidently match with. All are easily identifiable by the child reader. Children are urban, middle class and created in local setting. They are active, take initiatives in any action and portrayed as strong. This is the reason mostly Indian children love to read adventure tales. They take Indian child to places where they have not visited, like forests, national parks and exotic locales. These stories create pleasure by arousing curiosity, to know ‘what will happen next’. They have ample advantages for the growth of children, and gratifies the psychological requirements providing thrill, and pleasant adventurous situations.

The impact of child psychology, as a result of imposing ideas of adult on children have changed the perspective towards children. New socially relevant books are available in market for children. Bibliotherapy is one more theme introduced in this study. Contemporary children’s literature in English has introduced ample stories/books for the bibliotherapatic purpose. Through bibliotherapy children finds emotional healing that comes from reading books. Although bibliotherapy is a not new concept but writers for children in India have given it shape and used it to tackle the day today social issues. Children find pleasure and hope to identify themselves with the characters facing problems alike. Child finds ‘shared experience’: identify
himself/herself with the character through a series of shared events within the text. There are stories in Indian children’s literature which can be used for therapeutic purpose. Ampaugh-Corson writes, “Today’s authors discuss death, birth, anger, mental illness, alcoholism, and brutality more explicitly than was acceptable in earlier times. Adults who have not read recently published children’s books may find the realism shocking: nevertheless, contemporary realism contributes to children’s self-understanding” (7). Usually these stories share cultural oriented problems which have considerable amount of effect on children. It also points out stories of children from the conflicted zones and the areas affected by natural calamities. The issues discussed in these stories are, school related issues such as bullying, self-esteem, bed time fears, child abuse, death, disability, floods, riots, tsunami, aftermath of divorce, sexual abuse and so on. After reading these stories child finds hope and resolution of these conflicts.

In this way children’s literature develops children cognitively. Lauren Myracle writes “Adults throughout the ages have viewed books as powerful tools with which to guide children’s thinking, strengthen their character, shape their behavior, and, more recently, even to solve their problems” (n.p). Biblio therapeutic is more appropriate for young adults because the period is transition period from dependency to independence, autonomy and maturity. Stories of therapy focus on the cognitive development of the target reader, and these stories are written in order to stimulate cognitive development. Literature of children could be more rich and effective if the writer is well versed in psychology, social issues, and skilled in linguistics so that he can use proper words for children, so that literature for children can contribute to children’s cognitive, social, linguistic development. Children’s literature is convenient in satiating a number of purposes. Used as a resource for language development, most importantly it provides a prospect for depicting various issues related to society as a whole through selective and
appropriate content for targeted readers. Children’s literature is instructional in nature whether it is being read as leisure or taught in the educational institutions, and irrespective of class and gender. Children’s literature not only entertains the young mind but it is instrumental in communicating knowledge. It is pivotal responsibility of an adult to make children develop an all-round well balanced personality through education or literature and other relevant activities. It would be wrong to say that children’s literature should be only instructional. Children’s literature should be ‘literature’ as the term indicates, and the text should be art based, substantiate and answer children’s questions of the world through critical reasoning, should elevate the connection between literature and literacy by developing child’s craving and passion for reading.

Children, our future generation, are special people. They deserve good books, as books play an essential role in their upbringing and their overall development. They expand their horizon and helps them to come to terms with reality. Children’s’ literature focuses on physical, emotional, mental, social and spiritual aspects of child’s personality. Michele Landsberg, writes “Good books can do so much for children. At their best, they expand horizons and instil in children a sense of the wonderful complexity of life. No other pastime available to children is so conductive to empathy and the enlargement of the human sympathies. No other pleasure can so richly furnish a child’s mind with the symbols, patterns, depths, and possibilities of civilization” (34).

Indian children’s literature has been used to provide instruction along with pleasure. Children’s Literature is most effective and stimulating medium through which adults can amuse children, inspire them and guide them. Shift has changed from creating aesthetic pleasure to more relevant social issues. Moral teaching and sermonisation as in the traditional stories will not help. Children need literature suitable to their needs
and mental development and the literature which reflect present day situation in the society. In a way it is time to give children suitable reading material which could be set in native surroundings. Deepa Agarwal eminent writer of children’s books in India writes, “They [children] need stories that deal with current issues, science fiction, the adventures of children like themselves and all the different kinds of stories that are being written for children in the other parts of the world”(11). The concepts related to children and their literature has changed. Children’s literature does not focus only on traditional idea and views children’s literature as a tool for acquiring reading and writing skills.

The instruction cum entertainment mode of creative writing for children is instilled with a noble urge to motivate and inspire young minds to scale new heights of achievement and become socially and morally integrated individuals. In this respect, the role of children’s literature is one of great significance as it involves a sense of social and cultural responsibility contributing immensely to the knowledge system. Translations of local language texts into the global language (English) are an enriching experience, enabling a process of cultural cross-fertilization as it introduces the local to the global (Dasgupta n.p).

Children’s Literature in India does not depart from depicting stark realities. The literature for children aim to help a child cope with life from an early age and confront them with realities and help find a way for survival. In children’s literature in India more has to be done, and as is evident that many approaches and areas have not been covered yet in the children’s books.
The research tries to highlight that children’s literature in India may inculcate the life skills. Children’s literature empower child through information, education and services that enable children to make informed choices in their personal and public life. This caters to and promotes creative and responsible behaviour for a child’s personal growth. The stories discussed in the dissertation in a way tries to develop in children, life skills like, thinking skills, social skills and self-management. Some stories focus on thought process and include self-awareness, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making planning or goal setting. This study tries to highlight the dominant themes present in Indian children’s literature in English and their impact on the holistic development of children. Children’s literature in a way has instructional elements in it that flows from text to the child reader. It has not remained an element of entertainment and aesthetics but has a purpose to serve. It helps and conditions children on how to deal with societal conflicts. Stephens writes, “Writing for children is usually purposeful, its intention being to foster in the child reader a positive apperception of some socio-cultural values which, it is assumed, are shared by author and audience” (qtd. in Hateley 2). Children’s stories dealing with self-esteem and self-confidence are meant for inspiration and intend to empower children to make their own choices, be their true selves, and exhibit confidence in who they are and what they like.

It is therefore recommended that children should be encouraged to inculcate reading skills and motivated to read children’s literature. It is noticed that children are usually discouraged from reading fiction as it is felt it will distract them from their academic study. Parents should also be involved and encouraged their children to read children’s literature rather help in enforcing them to read. They should be made to realize that children’s literature too plays a vital role in their overall growth and cannot be viewed as a waste of time. Suitable strategies for drawing children towards literature can be
adopted. Parents can form a reader’s club for their children and encourage them to discuss their views on the stories they have read. Children are drawn towards electronic gadgets rather than reading. Some incentives for reading can be given for children and reading through kindle and other means can also be promoted to develop interests in reading so that they may evolve and grow into a holistic personality. Parents and children can also recommend topics to writers and publishers, they would be interested to read about and the writers and publishers should actively involve children’s choice and taste in their writing.

1. Children’s literature should be recognised as an important and integral part of nation’s culture and should be supported by Department of Culture. There should be national awards for writers, illustrators, publishers and translators for children’s books in order to promote children’s literature. Certainly in this country, authors, publishers and illustrators of children’s books need recognition, but quality of the literature must be ensured.

2. Children’s literature should form an essential part of integrated child development programme.

3. There should be an apex body for research in children’s Literature in India.

4. In order to promote Indian children’s Literature Government of India should intervene and provide financial assistance and awards to Publishers for encouragement as it will provide impetus for further action.

5. Every bookshop should give a space for children’s section and reading rooms.

6. Books fares for children should be encouraged in rural towns, unless there is a market for children writers will not be encouraged. Mobile van bookshops should run in the rural areas.
7. Effective steps must be taken to draw more writers for children actively into the field

8. Seminars and conferences must be arranged frequently to bring together those interested in the preparation and production of books for children to discuss common problems.

9. Steps must be taken to provide training for writers for children on technological lines.

10. Literature for differently abled and special children is needed.

11. Academic attention is needed for children’s literature.

12. For researchers in higher education studies are needed on rural-unurban comparison on children’s reading interests and survey on representation of gender in texts and children’s books and also a survey of children’s reading interests across country.

13. Mobile or Movable Children’s libraries should visit remote parts of the country periodically and encourage the habit of borrowing books for children.

14. Technology can help in resolving the rural and urban gap in children’s Literature and at the same time media can take up more Indian stories for TV adaptations. There is great deal the electronic media can do in inspiring children to read, and promote good books.

15. Translation from regional languages to English and from foreign into Indian languages and vice versa will of course help in developing significantly the scope of Indian and world children’s literature.

16. Through Electronic media and social networking sites children’s books should be given promotion.
17. Parents, librarians and teachers as facilitators should provide appropriate books for children.

These are some recommendations that have been made to promote children’s literature so as to ensure that the recent trends in children’s literature contribute to evolve children into holistic human beings and also ensure that the future writers of children’s literature use these contemporary trends, in terms of their themes, style, publishing to produce a literature which make fruitful contribution in developing a child’s personality.
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