

The Joy of Childhood in Ruskin Bond's The Hidden Pool

Ms. A.Gangamani^{1*}, Dr. S.Sivaraja²

¹Ph.D Research Scholar (Part time), Poompuhar College (Autonomous) – Affiliated to Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Melaiyur – 609 107. Working as an Assistant Professor, Department of English, A.V.C.College (Autonomous) – Affiliated to Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Mannampandal – 609 305.

²Research Supervisor, Assistant Professor, PG & Research Department of English, Poompuhar College (Autonomous) – Affiliated to Annamalai University, Chidambaram, Melaiyur – 609 107.

Abstract

Ruskin Bond is one of the most popular writers of Indo- Anglian fiction. Bond begins his writing in earlier stage. Bond depicts his own life in his novels. Ruskin Bond's The Hidden Pool captures the innocence, curiosity, and joy of childhood through the adventures of three young friends such as Laurie, Anil, and Kamal. The novel highlights the pure excitement of exploring nature, forming friendships, and discovering new places, which are central to the joys of childhood. The hidden pool itself symbolizes a secret world of adventure, reflecting the simple pleasures of youth. This study explores key themes such as friendship, adventure, innocence, and the significance of childhood experiences in shaping identity. The novel's portrayal of cross-cultural friendships and the boys' journey to the Himalayas underscores the spirit of exploration and personal growth.

Keywords: Ruskin Bond, The Hidden Pool, childhood, Joy, friendship, adventure, innocence, exploration

Introduction

Ruskin Bond, a writer of his own experience. He is the one delivered a Vast thinking about his past memories and recollected his paramount childhood. Ruskin has a unique talent on his writing techniques, he believed his writing skill. So, he never gives up his style of writing at any critical circumstances. Finally his hard work and consistency paved a brilliant way for his writing. The brilliant techniques of Ruskin stimulates the reader's imagination. His way of writing brings interest towards children, for reading books, then made the people to love literature, creates fantasy and fill their nature with imagination. Ruskin Bond's The Hidden Pool is a glorious celebration of childhood, emphasizing the thrill of discovery, the warmth of friendship, and the joy of adventure. Ruskin's narrative skill in Hidden pool depicts a different perspective to the adventure denoted on the three children compiled in their journey to the pool. Through the experiences of Laurie, Anil, and Kamal, Bond portrays a world where every moment is filled with wonder and excitement. The novel focuses on universal themes of childhood, friendship, and personal growth with the entire happiness in the life of Childhood.

Discussion

The Hidden Pool as a symbol of childhood adventure that represents the secret world of childhood. Laurie, an English boy, joins his Indian friends in exploring the hills, forests, and the pool. Their excitement in discovering this secluded place mirrors the simple joys children find in nature. The pool serves as a metaphor for childhood itself and it's an escape from reality to imagination, The simple way to find happiness is exaggerated in the hearts and in their friendship. The friendship between Laurie, Anil, and Kamal is central to the novel. Despite their diverse backgrounds, they form a strong bond, illustrating how childhood friendships are based on shared experiences rather than differences. Their companionship is filled with laughter, mutual support, and simple joys, emphasizing the universal nature of childhood friendships. The novel suggests that friendships formed in youth often leave a lasting impact. In their childhood they played with each other without any hesitation, they shared their bonding with equality.

The Journey of boys to the mountains reflects their adventurous spirit. Their determination to climb a Himalayan peak symbolizes the boundless enthusiasm of childhood, where every challenge is an exciting opportunity rather than a burden. This spirit of adventure fosters resilience, teamwork, and personal growth. The novel emphasizes how taking risks and stepping beyond comfort zones is an integral part of growing up. Unlike adults, the boys find joy in small thing like swimming in the pool, hiking, and telling stories. The novel captures childhood as a time when happiness is derived from simple, everyday experiences rather than material possessions. The boys' ability to find excitement in nature highlights the purity of childhood and the importance of cherishing life's simple moments.

Laurie is the English Boy Curious and adventurous in nature fascinated by India, eager to explore new places. He is friendly and open-minded that adapts quickly and values friendships over cultural differences his Imaginative and dreamy ideas depicts a new venture and he loves storytelling and appreciates nature's beauty. Laurie is well determined and brave in taking risks and encourages his friends. Laurie 's friend Anil is hardworking and responsible, he helps his father by working in his father's shop while enjoying adventures. He is lively and cheerful. He brings humour and positivity to the group. His adventurous and courageous nature embraces challenges with enthusiasm. Anil is a loyal friend and Strongly values his friendships. Kamal is ambitious and dreaming in nature . He is intelligent and resourceful, he Comes up with

ideas and navigates challenges. His Brave and adventurous character make him to faces difficulties with courage. Kamal is Loyal and supportive friend encourages and stands by his friends.

The Hidden Pool is a reminder that the best moments of youth come from simple joys, meaningful friendships, and the thrill of exploration. Ruskin Bond highlights how true friendships are formed through shared experiences and how adventure fosters growth and happiness. The novel ultimately presents childhood as a magical and transformative period, filled with wonder, excitement, and life lessons.

Ruskin Bond's *The Hidden Pool* beautifully captures the innocence, curiosity, and joy of childhood through the adventures of three young friends such as Laurie, Anil, and Kamal. The novel highlights the pure excitement of exploring nature, forming friendships, and discovering new places, which are central to the joys of childhood. The friendship between Laurie, Anil, and Kamal is central to the novel. Their diverse backgrounds do not prevent them from forming a strong bond, showing how childhood friendships are based on shared experiences rather than differences. The joy they find in each other's company is a key aspect of childhood happiness.

The Spirit of adventure depicts the journey to the mountains represents their adventurous spirit. Their desire to climb a Himalayan peak reflects the boundless enthusiasm of childhood, where every challenge is an exciting opportunity rather than a burden.

Laurie is the protagonist of Ruskin Bond's *The Hidden Pool*. He is a young English boy who moves to India because of his father's job. His character represents curiosity, adventure, and the joys of childhood exploration. Laurie is fascinated by the new world around him in India. He eagerly explores his surroundings and enjoys discovering new places, such as the hidden pool. His adventurous nature is seen when he joins his friends Anil and Kamal on a daring journey to the Himalayas. Despite being from a different culture, Laurie quickly befriends Anil and Kamal. He values friendship over differences in background or social status. His ability to adapt and enjoy simple pleasures with his friends shows his open-mindedness. Laurie enjoys storytelling and often dreams about exciting adventures. He is fascinated by nature and the beauty of the hidden pool, reflecting his deep appreciation for the world around him.

Laurie is not afraid to take risks, such as climbing a Himalayan peak with his friends. His determination helps him overcome challenges during their journey. His courage and enthusiasm inspire his friends to push their limits as well. Laurie is a well-rounded character who embodies the joy of childhood, the excitement of exploration, and the power of friendship. His experiences in *The Hidden Pool* highlight the beauty of adventure and the innocence of growing up.

Anil is one of Laurie's closest friends in *The Hidden Pool* by Ruskin Bond. He is a fun-loving, hardworking, and adventurous boy who adds energy and excitement to the group's adventures.

Anil is an energetic and friendly character who represents the spirit of adventure and the joy of childhood friendships. His hardworking yet fun-loving nature makes him an important part of their adventures. Kamal is poor in his status, he do some jobs for his survival, even from his childhood, on his first meeting with Laurie, Ruskin depicts the clarity of Kamal about the Psychological aspects of Humans.

'You buy a comb, which you do not need. But you will not buy buttons and laces, which you do need.' (13)

Kamal drives the part in a blissful way, his nature of fascinating ideas and his coming changes the life of Laurie and Anil with enormous happiness.

The Spring Festival in *The Hidden Pool* is a vibrant celebration Holi a major festivals in India during spring. The festival is inspired by Holi, Laurie and Anil would participate in throwing coloured powders and water at each other, enjoying the playful and lively atmosphere. If it resembles Baisakhi, they might witness traditional dances and rural fairs. They enjoy delicious Indian food, such as sweets and festive delicacies. Anil, being the son of a merchant, likely introduces Laurie to special festival treats. The festival is filled with folk music and dance performances, immersing Laurie in Indian traditions. Unlike Laurie's parents, who remain somewhat distant from local customs, Laurie fully embraces the culture. He finds joy in celebrating alongside Anil and the villagers, strengthening their friendship. Festival Serves as a moment of pure joy and adventure for Laurie, away from the structured life he leads with his parents. It reinforces his growing attachment to India. The festival enchanted with spring beautifully designed to make their friendship thicker.

Laurie's parents are typical British expatriates living in India. His father works for a British company, and his mother manages the household. While they provide Laurie with a comfortable life, they do not deeply engage with Indian culture. Laurie, however, is curious and eager to explore beyond his immediate surroundings. His friendships with Anil and Kamal allow him to experience India in a way that his parents do not. It allows Laurie to Experience India beyond the British lifestyle he was used to. As spring represents renewal, Laurie's experiences shape his evolving perspective on life and adventure. In their travel to the pool they diverted to different side, but uttermost happiness never ends in their journey. They never showed any partial attitude in their childhood.

Three boys decide to embark on an exciting trek to the mountains. The Decision take by them to travel which inspired by Kamal's dream of seeing the great mountains, Laurie, Anil, and Kamal decide to enjoy the uttermost happiness in journey to the hills. The Trek begins with the set off on foot, encountering beautiful landscapes, rivers, and forests along the way. Challenges and discoveries in the journey is filled with difficulties, such as rough terrain and exhaustion, but also moments of wonder as they explore the beauty of nature. Reaching the mountains when they finally arrive, the sight



of the majestic Himalayas leaves them in awe, making the journey worthwhile. A Life-Changing Experience for the boys whose adventure strengthens their friendship and gives them a sense of achievement, especially for Kamal, who had always dreamed of seeing the mountains.

Conclusion

The Hidden pool depicts the nature of friendship and childhood is the ultimate source of Happiness. Childhood is the first stage to get the simple and better happiness throughout our life time, getting friends and sharing childhood experiences induces a kind of peace and joy in life. Laurie's diversity , Kamal and Anil's economic status never culminate their bonding in their childhood. Happiness arrives in simple life and mostly simplicity embedded in childhood.

Work Cited

1. Bhatia, R. and Kumar, S. 2018. The autobiographical element in Ruskin Bond's works. International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities 6(6): 337-342.
2. Bond, Ruskin. "The Hidden Pool." Puffin Books, 2015. Pg. No. 23. Ovation
3. Abrams. M. H, Geoffrey Galt Harpham. A Handbook of Literary Terms. Cengage India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2011.
4. Sinha, M., Jauhari, R. and Dave, N. Ruskin Bond: A Critical Evalaution. 1^a ed. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. 2012, pp 156.
5. Quest for Self and Identity: A Study of Sherwood Anderson's Windy Mcpherson's Son Scopus Indexed Journal – SPECIALUSIS UGDYMAS / Special Education, Vol.1,No.43 October 2022
6. 8. "Conflict and Negotiations: Sherwood Anderson's Marching Men" Neuro Quantology-An Interdisciplinary Journal of Neurosciences and Quantum Physics, ISSN No.1303 5150, Vol. 20,No.11(2022), DOI: 10.14704 / NQ.2022.20.11.NQ66811 ,November 2022