

ATTRIBUTES OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN RUSKIN BOND'S ANGRY RIVER

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Abstract

Literature is a reflection of life; it reflects good and evils of the society. It brings imagery world into reality. The morals of life were taught through stories, fable tales, fictional characters and fantasy. It created great impact which led to the transformation of inner life. Foregrounding this insight the researchers would focus on Emotional Intelligence with reference to Ruskin Bond's *Angry River*. Emotional Intelligence plays a vital role in today's world to mould and shape an individual towards success. Emotional Intelligence increases the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions. It enables an individual to acquire the attributes of Emotional Intelligence that is self awareness and self management. 21st Century has become ultra modern because of its invention and innovation in the field of science and technology, this modern society lacks moral ethics and values. This paper aims to highlight the attributes of Emotional Intelligence through the characters of Ruskin Bond's *Angry River*. This approach emphasizes the need for control over emotions which is the need of the hour during the age of Adolescence. Imparting moral values like fairness, justice, respect, equality and empathy will enable the students to realise their stand which paves way for a holistic transformation.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, inner self, moral values, emotions

Introduction:

Literature has a power to transform lives. Every individual on earth has few innate skills, but few skills in life are acquired only through vigorous practice. Emotional competencies are not innate skills; rather they can only be developed by practice. According to Daniel Goleman the children's IQ has been steadily increasing in recent decades but their EQs are steadily falling. On

average, children are becoming unintended victims of their surroundings and society, mere academic education to the children will never help them to be successful person rather application of EI in their lives will enable them to be successful. This paper is an attempt to magnify various components of EI through the characters of Ruskin Bond.

Ruskin Bond

Ruskin Bond started his writing career at the age of seventeen. His first novel titled *The Room on the Roof* is a semi autobiographical story of an orphan Anglo Indian boy, Rusty. He has written over 300 short stories, essays and novels and more than thirty books for children. He has published two volumes of autobiography. This versatile writer has received the Sahitya Academy Award (1992), Padmashri (1999) and Padma Bushan (2014) for English writing. His first children's book, *The Angry River* in 1970's had its writing toned down on publisher's request for a children's story.

Emotional Intelligence

The word Emotional Intelligence (EI) was first coined and used in literary writing by Peter Salovey and Mayer in 1990. Some of the forerunner in the research on emotional intelligence like Mayer, Peter Salovey, and David Goleman etc listed various characteristics of EI. Mayer and Salovey (1990) considered EI as purely cognitive ability where as Goleman model has five attributes as its bottom line that is self awareness, self evaluation, motivation, empathy and social skills. These five attributes have been categorized under personal and social competence. Daniel Goleman defines EI as the capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in us and in our relationships. EI helps the individuals to reduce conflicts, increases cooperation, and helps to control tension between people anywhere.

In today's world, parents make all efforts to give the best materialistic things and set a conducive platform for the better growth of children, but many at times they fail to educate their children to handle conflicts, sadness and being independent to overcome setback. Imparting EI along with choicest things will definitely help the children to face life challenges with confidence and happiness.

Literature Review:

Indu Rani (2015) explores the environmental influence on the childhood development of Ruskin Bond's character, Rusty. The environment to which an individual is exposed to in his formative years, strongly influences the way he or she develops. In simple terms, for any individual, his or her childhood experiences play a pivotal role in creating the schemata of his personal makeup that comprises of his thinking, understanding, perception, attribution and personality. As an individual grows, his or her personality takes shape through various experiences. The personality of each individual is unique, not because an individual is born unique. It is because each individual is exposed to a different set of environmental contingencies which differently influences him or her and reinforces different set of behaviour. Personality begins to take shape from the childhood years, so the sort of people a child interacts will make a primary chunk of his environment and cast their effect on the child's personality. These people are the immediate family, neighbours, teachers, friends and peers. Keeping this as a yard stick the researcher has analysed the character Rusty and has highlighted how his personality has groomed.

Sanna Teivaala-Luck (2012) intends to argue that Austen had not only a very good eye for human nature but also recognised the fact that people have mixed capacity in understanding emotions. The researcher explains how intellect and emotions are unified in a theory and how it supports Austen's didactic literary voice -a voice which is applicable in this day and age.

Many Researches has been carried out in the works of Ruskin bond on various aspects like portraying the role of nature, comparative study, ecocritical approaches, social costumes, Indians Imparting moral values and interpersonal skills etc. Having, read the articles the researchers found a research gap, that emotions plays a vital role in shaping one's life and it becomes a pedestal for success. Hence the scholar has analysed the character Sita in Ruskin bonds *Angry River* through the attributes of EI in which emotions play a significant role in shaping an individual.

Summary

Ruskin Bond in his novel *Angry River* narrates a story, of a young girl named Sita who lives with her grandparents in a small hut near a peepul tree in an Island. River was the source of survival. Sita helped her grandparents in doing household chores. She had a doll named mumta. It was her companion to which she shared her joys and sorrows. One day Sita's grandmother fell sick. The little girl assists the old lady and offered her help by pressing her head. The persisting sickness of the old lady made her more ill. The old man of the house decided to take her to hospital in a nearby town, with the help of the boat. Climate of the Island changed and was ready for a heavy downpour. The old man who was about to leave the house gave Sita, clear instructions about the things which the little girl has to do if the river starts to swell. Sita, who has witnessed the rain earlier, nods her head and bids bye to them. As promised, she takes care of the house, hens and feeds them, hours later the situation of the island gets worsened. The river starts to swell; the rock in which Sita plays disappears in water. Before she could realise the hut was flooded. She quickly keeps all the sentimental things of her grandparents in a trunk, and runs for safety towards the peepul tree. Few hours later the wild flood uprooted the tree which Sita was clinging to. Fear grips her heart, looks around for a safe place. She witnesses a boy sailing towards her in the marooned flood. The little girl, who is exhausted, accepts the help rendered by the boy and they sail together in boat. The saviour, who saved Sita, gives her sweet mangoes and makes her more comfortable. As night crept in they stayed in the forest. Sita finds a perfect solace in the boat of the rescuer. Later, Krishna the saviour of Sita's life leaves her in the hut and gives her a flute as a mark of their friendship. Sita overwhelms at the sight of her grandfather who had bitter surprise for Sita. He unveils the death of her grandmother. Sadness grips the heart of Sita, when she taugt a life without her grandmother. Still she decides to go back with her grandfather to the same island and the hut to start a new life, planting, mangoes seeds in the place of the peepul tree and waits for the arrival of her friend Krishna with a ray of hope. In this paper the researcher has highlighted the two attributes of emotional intelligence, self awareness and self regulation, and used these attributes to analyse the character Sita.

Self awareness

It is defined as recognizing a feeling as it happens. Self-awareness is the key stone of emotional Intelligence. It enables to monitor an individual's feelings from moment to moment. It comprises of three competencies, they are emotional awareness, accurate self assessment and self confidence. It promotes to recognize one's emotions and their efforts. A person who is aware of his self will be able to understand, the link between their feelings and actions they do and say.

They have a clear insight about the strength and weakness and learn from experience, has open mind to learn things. Finally, an individual can make sound decisions despite uncertainties and pressures.

Self regulation

It acts as key component of EI. It is mostly about being able to control the emotions and respond to situations and other people. Some of the abilities that are part of self management are self control, trust worthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness. A person who has self regulation, will manage their impulsive feelings and distressing emotions, a person who posses these stay composed, positive and unflappable even in adverse conditions. A self regulated person thinks clearly and is focused under pressure. Honesty and integrity will be their standards. They can easily adapt or handle multiple demands, more flexible, skilled in generating novel ideas and can fix up problem daring to face challenges.

EI Displayed in the character Sita:

In the novel *Angry River* main character Sita, has personal competence of self awareness and self management. The protagonist of the novel is aware about her emotions. She knew her strength, limits and she is confident about herself. The fore knowledge about the island climate enabled her to predict things. Sita's grand mother taught her all the things a girl should know. She assisted her grandmother in household works, prepared herself mentally to take care of the hens, house and gets insight from her grandfather about preventive measure s during the flood.

"Grand father, if the river rises what I will do?

'You will keep to the high ground?

'And if the water reaches the high ground?

"Then take the hens into the hut, and stay there". (13)

Sita had a scar on her thigh it happened when she visited her mother's village. A hyena had entered the house fastened on her leg and tried to drag her, but Sita bravely screams and chases hyena. She also encounters a snake when was chasing the hens into the hut. She picked up a stick and scooped the snake up and had no quarrel with it. All these incidents prove the protagonist to be a self confident girl who takes right decision at the hard times. It also underscores that she was aware of her strengths. During the heavy rainfall and flood Sita swiftly takes the clean shirt and a sari along with that yellow curry powder, hookah, walking stick, spices and packs them in trunks, which were precious things to her grandparents. The flooding river entered the small hut and made her panic. She immediately leaves the house and finds safety in the peepul tree which stood for years. The situation clearly states even at the time of uncertainties, her thoughts and deeds went hand in hand. Hardships, anxiety, fear made her strong.

The old peepul tree which stood strong against al natural odds fails to save Sita, but she never gave up her hope. As a reward of her positive attitude a saviour Krishna sails towards her to rescue her from the flood. Sita readily accepts the help given by Krishna. This evidently shows Sita's willingness to take new perspective, and adapt her to changes in life. Even at her young age Sita was very determined in her ways, her trust on Krishna, that he would save her life from the flood depicts her readiness to encounter challenges of life.

Sita in her adversities of life stood calm and composed. Counsel from her grandfather, Positive outlook and foresight on the problem, made her to be focused under pressured situation. Her concern towards grandfather, grandmother, hens, mumta her doll enabled the heroin to

shoulder the responsibilities of life. Her apprehension on feeding hens amidst the chaotic situation, her grief on grandmothers' death, sad feeling towards mumta, and her doll washed in the flood, her steadfastness in packing the antique things in a trunk and her immediate aid in rebuilding the destroyed hut portrays that Sita is a responsible girl.

Krishna the saviour of Sita's life admits flood takes her in the boat. She never knew the person before, but gets introduced to the stranger, and becomes friend. Throughout night they stayed in a flooded forest. The good qualities of Sita like being flexible and adaptable to new place and stranger, controlling her emotions at news of grandmother death, and braveness to start a new life in the place where she witnessed flood and dangerous of life, strongly states that she is the icon of self awareness and self regulation. Sita can be called as an iron girl who wishes to taste novelties of life.

Conclusion:

Sita, in her sphere of her life she exercises personal competence of self management and self-awareness which is the corner stone of Emotional Intelligence. Applying EI to the characters of will create windows of opportunity to shape life, control emotions and embarks an individual towards success.

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