

## **ANIMALS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL-HEALTH & IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN INDIA**

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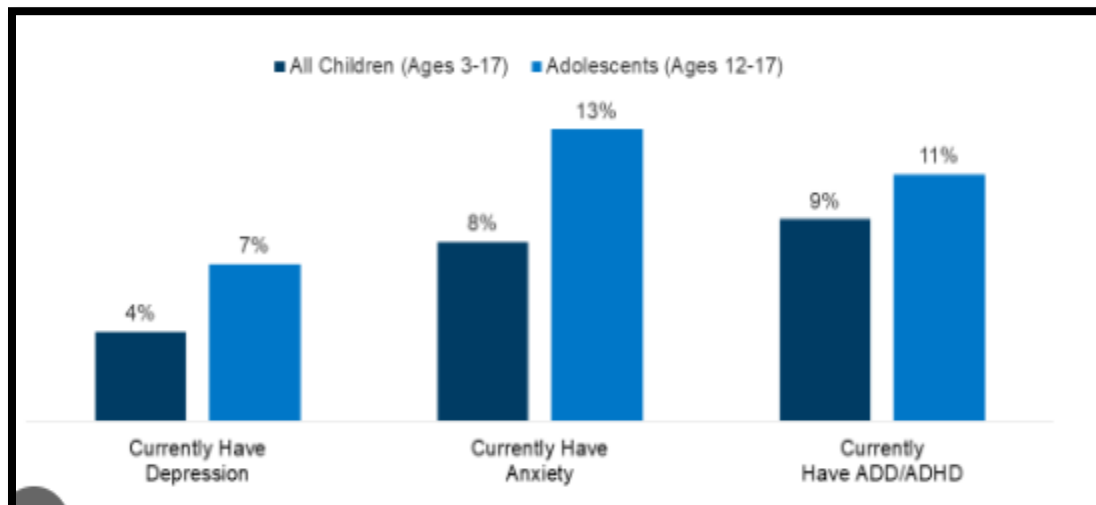
### **Abstract**

The building of the mindset of the children is very important as they are one of the future resources of the country. This development of the mindset among children starts in the very early stages of their life because of their fast-adapting nature at that age. The making of mental stability and the clearance of much confusion are very important tasks to be made in this life-making situation among the children. To describe the importance of animals in children is learning activities and making mental stability during their maturity session. As all humans do, children seek to find explanations that help them understand their surroundings. Animals in the literature stories can help children to understand that animals are part of living society and they need to be protected. Also living with animals helps in the mental stability and mental health of the children. Animals have important in providing a sense of stability as well as changelessness in a rapidly changing and confusing world. Animal's story in the literature can be beneficial for moral development built sense of stability among children.

**Keywords:** *Child Development, Literature, Mental Health, Concurrency, Learning Activities, Life-making Situations*

### **Introduction**

The building of the mindset of the children is very important, as they are one of the future resources of the country. This development of the mindset among children starts in the very early stages of their life because of their fast-adapting nature at that age. The making of mental stability and the clearance of much confusion are very important tasks to be made in this life-making situation among the children. These are influenced by many factors that help them make mental stability in the changing situation of the earth. In the making of mental stability and the ability to learn and adapt too many changes in the rapidly changing world nature and animals acts as one of the influential factors in the life of the children. The children feel relieved and they can do catharsis of all their feelings on animals. All their unexpressed feelings are shared with the animals which makes them healthier and stronger. The child development theory states the examination of the mental state of children and implements some factors for making them, mentally developed. The theory states that children naturally attempt to construct theories to explain their observations. Inductive reasoning and interpretivism philosophy is effective in the secondary thematic analysis method. The study makes the introduction of animals making influence the mindset of the children's literature. In children's literature, the animals are presented in varied ways, often pursuing a moral value to the reader of the book. The stories of the animal characters and the animal behaviors in the literary life of children make them understand the nature and the friendliness of animals.



**Figure 1:Percent of Children with Anxiety**

(Source: Influenced by Kff,2023)

In the recent days of the Corona pandemic in the year 2019, it caused the implementation of the lockdown all over the world. That also happens it in the case of the corona pandemic situation in India. The figure 1 suggests the percentage of children with anxiety. It made the children stay in one closed environment for many days making them get obstructed by rapid mental stability and gaining more knowledge about the outside world. Although after the end of the pandemic situation, everything normalized as the lockdown ended. The introduction of animals in the zoo made them understand the friendliness and nature of animals. Similarly, in the literature Life of children, the stories of animals above figure 1 show the issues of anxiety increasing due to the lockdown in corona pandemic it is seen that children from age of 3 to 17 faces major issues of mental instability (Kff,2023).

**Aim:** The aim of the study is to describe the importance of animals in children's learning activities and making mental health/stability during their maturity session.

The following are the objectives of the study

RO 1: To elaborate on the Concept of relating animals to the literary life of children

RO 2: To describe the Impact of Animal behavior affecting in the mind of Children and mental health/stability.

RO 3: To identify problems faced by Children in Literature

RO 4: To introduce some methods of including animal behavior in children's literature for their better mindset

The following are the questions of the study

RQ 1: What are the methods to have proper implement stories of animals in the literary life of children?

RQ 2: What are the benefits of introducing animals in children's education?

RQ 3: Why is it necessary to develop the mental health/ stability of the children?

RQ 4: How to provide a more eco-friendly environment to children in the primary age of learning?

### **Literature review**

#### **Concept of relating animals to the literary life of children**



**Figure 2: Informative children knowledge represented by animals' pictures**

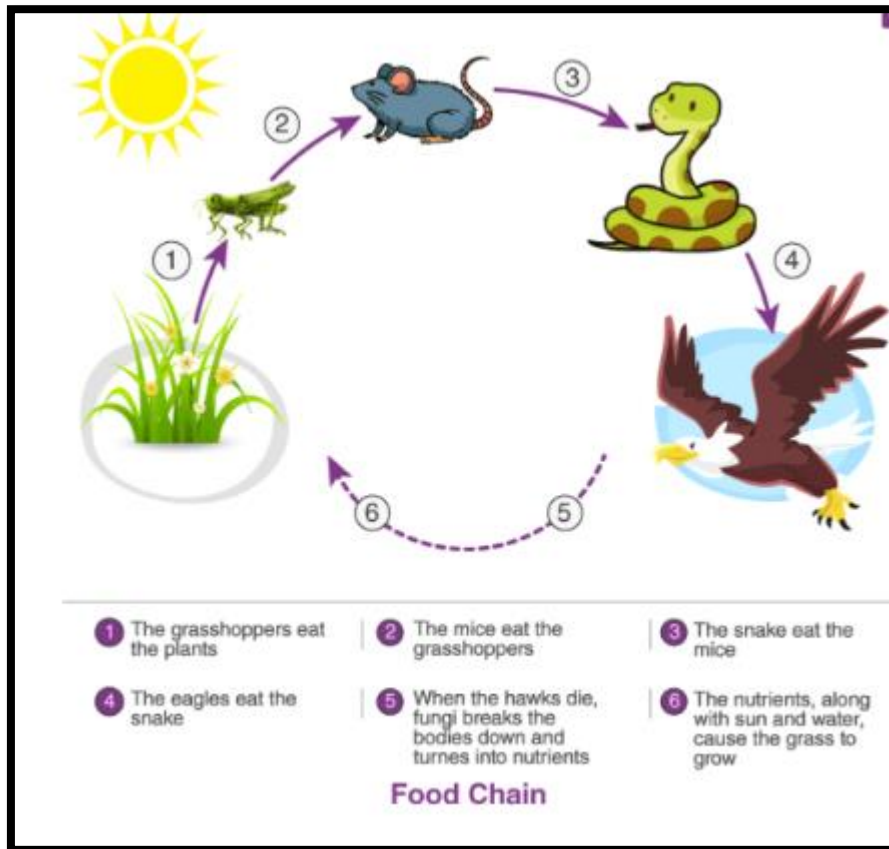
(Source: Influenced by Umbreş, 2020)

Children focus on or get attracted by the stories and the things that provide them happiness. Especially things that make them get potentially humorous making them intensify to get positively attracted by those. As per the views of Umbreş (2020), this making of the mental stability among the children and the adopting methods of them. The stories of animals in the literature mean the Fableacts with the help of different skills works as one of the key factors in providing all types of entertainment and a lesson of understanding some of the situations of their future session that are shown with the relation with animal characters as pointed out in the figure 2. On the other hand, OyeIwoðlei & Isòoðlla, (2022), argued that this story gives children impactful knowledge to adapt to the changes in the rapidly changing world as because animals change very less rapidly in time than humans do and because animals are one of a natural order full of beauty and spirituality.

#### **Impact of Animal Behavior stories affecting the Mind of Children**

On the corona pandemic situation in India it made the children stay in one closed environment for many days making them be obstructed by rapid mental stability and gaining more knowledge about the outside world. Although after the end of the pandemic situation, everything normalized as the lockdown ended. Based on the views of Bigos et al. (2023), the strong impact of the lockdown hugely affected the mind of children that gets emitted certain limits by the children's story. The animal stories act as the key provider in making the development of the mental stability and effective ability of the children in understanding the nature of other animals with humans.

#### **Problems Faced by Children in Literature and methods of including animals in children's Literature**



**Figure 3: Influencing informative knowledge by relating animal**

(Source: Influenced by Gracia et al.2022)

Children in the immaturity period do not know how to express their expression and understand the confusion generated in the daily life of them. Figure 3 shows that the stories of the animal characters and the animal behaviors in the literary life of children make them understand the nature and the friendliness of animals. Based on the views of Gracia et al.(2022),this often creates a barrier between adopting nature and understanding the environment around them In the making of mental stability and the ability to learn and adapt to many changes. This reflects on their mindset of them and sometimes can make them face anxiety. On the other hand,Smith& Pollak, (2021), argued that in the rapidly changing world nature and animals act as one of the influential factors in the life of the children. The study makes the introduction of animals making influence the mindset of the children's literature.

### **Theory**

#### **Child development theory**

The child development theory states the examination of the mental state of children and implements some factors for making them, mentally developed. The theory states that children naturally attempt to construct theories to explain their observations. As all humans do, children seek to find explanations that help them understand their surroundings. Based on the views of Umbreş, (2020), the making of mental stability and the ability to learn and adapt too many changes in the rapidly changing world nature and animals acts as one of the influential factor in the life of the children. The study makes the introduction of animals making influence the mindset of the children's literature. The stories of the animal characters and the animal behaviors in the literary life of children make them understand the nature and the friendliness of animals.

## **Methodology**

### **Data collection**

The inductive approach will be used in conducting this report as the research approach with the interpretivism philosophy. For the data collection, method secondary method will be used therefore previous articles will be gathered as the sample of the data. Previous research will be gathered based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. An inductive approach will allow the findings of the research to emerge from the dominant, frequent as well as significant themes in the raw data (Varpio et al. 2020). Interpretivism philosophy will be subjected to and can be demonstrated from multiple perspectives and the data will be subjective.

### **Data analysis**

Selected previous research will be analyzed by using the secondary thematic analysis and themes will be created based on the objectives of this study. Thematic data analysis is the method of analyzing collected qualitative data, which can be discussed based on developing themes (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

## **Findings**

### **The concept of integration of animals in the literature of children in India**

The significance of various animals in the literature allows nook writers to reinforce a few common themes, which can be considered fundamental for children's development. Most of the animals are familiar and beloved to the little readers, which can facilitate their learning in the life lessons of children. Animals have a role, which is valuable in fulfilling human needs, therefore writers have translated these roles over the literature to make a significant impact on the literature. As per the views of Hintz and Tribunella (2021), nature has been always offering literature for engaging in her various moods therefore literature is not only the reflection of the entire society but also encourages everyone to be attached to every spirit of nature. Implementaion of stories related o the animals and their life portray the bonding between the non-human and human relationship as well as encourages humans to understand the behaviors of animals. Indian literature is attached to the indirect and direct context of the natural world and it involves illustrating images of non-human and human kinship. On the other hand, Adam and Barratt-Pugh (2020), since immemorial time India has been popular to be a nation where animals were not only taken as an integrated part of the universe but also human has been worshipping animals.

### **Importance of the Animal on the Literature of Children in India**

R.K Narayana is a famous writer of India for his writings about the fictional town of Malgudi, which depicted misbehavior towards animals by human beings. The work of the fictional town of Malgudi presents that men are eaters as well as are deteriorating the love of animals. This helps children to understand that animals are part of living society they need to be protected and have the right to live peacefully among humans. As per the views of Shivakuma, (2019) animals are important in providing a sense of stability as well as changelessness in a rapidly changing and confusing world. Children can get stability, as changes in behavior are less rapid than in humans and it helps children to see the spirituality and beauty of nature.

According to the views of Budge (2019), animals have a significant role in moral development and the education of children, and the literature of children has nationalistic, cultural and ethical fiction. Characters of animals are generally specific to a culture and imbedded along with a few characteristics of the natural culture. In the literature, fables are short stories for teaching moral principles to children and often use animals as the core character of the story (Bisht et al. 2019). Children can relate to animal characters more than human characters there it can be based way to help them understand the social behavior and morality. Stories of animals can promote the tolerance of the belief of others and the ways of doing things. In addition, it can help to understand that people are important more than their species. These books are not only related to entertainment but also it has the practical aim to help children for learning to read, understand and count the world and environment around them. Children can assume their familiarity with different animals and can easily the meaning of the story that the stories want to convey (Precup and Vodnar, 2020).

### **Challenges faced by children for integration of animals in their literature**

There is a possibility that children can learn behaviors from what they read in their literature. Children can relate more to animals in stories than their parents or friends. Therefore, in the developmental age, children may be unable to relate their lives to animals and it may affect that they may fail to build communication with their parents. In the case of coping mechanisms, children can fail to learn how to cope with their feelings and emotions and try to follow what they have learned from animals' stories (O'Sullivan, 2023). Therefore, before writing any stories, writers need to consider which type of story will be helpful to the moral development of children.

#### **Methods of including animal behavior in children's literature for their better mindset**

Children in the immaturity period do not know how to express their expression and understand the confusion generated in daily life. This often creates a barrier between adopting nature and understanding the environment around them in the making of mental stability and the ability to learn and adapt to many changes. As per the views of Levin et al. (2021), the rapidly changing world nature and animals act as one of the influential factors in the life of children. The study makes the introduction of animals making influence the mindset of the children's literature. The stories of the animal characters and the animal behaviors in the literary life of children make them understand the nature and the friendliness of animals. The process of symbolizing the pictures of animals attracts the intention of children to read the informative story about the changes in the environment of the world. This also helps in creating an effective decision-making capability among the children.

#### **Discussion**

Indians speak a variety of languages, which all share the same culture, history, values, and beliefs. All Indian children's literature has its origins in folklore and oral tradition. This makes it impossible to determine the authors as well as the period of their composition practically. It has also been found that the same poems and stories are found in different languages, all over the country. Panchatantra, Hitopadesh, Kathasaritsagara and Jataka can be identified as some of the oldest children's literature in India with a high representation of different kinds of animals (Homegrown.co.in, 2023).

The Indian culture and moral stories are much found interlinked with the wild animals of the country. In the case of children's literature, it has been found that the animals are presented in varied ways, often pursuing a moral value to the reader of the book. Two main reasons can be discussed in this case, which can highlight the potentiality of the appearance of animals in children's books. Firstly, the diverse environmental conditions have given a vast background for animal representation. Based on the different regions of the country, different animals are found relevant as the center of moral stories for the local children. For instance, the Malabar Pied Hornbill has been found as a prominent figure in children's literature of Dandeli, Karnataka. On the other hand, the Children of Gujrat have grown up with the representation of the Thick Tailed Pangolin from the Gir forest. Similarly, the Royal Bengal Tiger has been found as a prominent figure in Bengali fables and stories (Homegrown.co.in, 2023). These representations are profound for the children to learn about the wildlife surrounding them and respect their places. In this way, these stories provide a great lesson about the animal kingdom of the country to all kids.

The second reason behind this prominent representation is the status of the animals in different cultures and religions across India. Most of the cultural groups, especially the majority of Hinduism and Buddhism view animals as part of their gods and the natural balance of the life cycle. For instance, Monkeys are very important to Indian mythology as they are worshipped all over the country as a major god of Hinduism. Due to these religious representations, children are prone to have stories and fables about these animals, which uphold some moral values. Thus these stories also provide great moral teaching to children through this literature.

#### **Conclusion**

Based on this discussion, it has been found that animals are very important in the development of Indian children. These animal representations provide a moral and ethical structure to them. Apart from that, they also have been provide natural and spiritual stability to the children, as they are more stable and rooted in the mythology of this country. They provide good personality examples and high-value emotions, such as kindness, compassion, justice and empathy for the kids. In these ways, the animal

representations in children's books act as a great teacher of values and morality, which helps them to be good people in future.

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