A Theoretical Critique of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series

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*Abstract***:** *Every once in a while, someone comes along and takes the world by storm. This holds true of a skinny spectacled boy with green eyes and a lightning scar on his forehead who first appeared on June 26, 1997. This boy, Harry Potter, captivated a generation of readers and turned them into believers.*

The success of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series is not out of luck. It is not because of marketing or popularity. It has immense literary credit as well. This paper is an attempt to analyse J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series as a literary text. In this paper, the researcher proposes the elucidation of literary theoretical concepts like Sign, Langue and Parole, Plot Structure, Binary Opposition, Deconstruction, Narratology, Todorov's three-part narrative structure, Simulacrum, Marxist concepts, Freud's concept of Personality, Psyche and Feminism in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series. This paper is thus proposed as a theoretical critique of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series.

Keywords **:** *J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter Series, Theoretical critique, Literary Theories, Structuralism, Marxism, Sign, Langue and Parole, Plot Structure, Binary Opposition, Deconstruction, Narratology, Todorov's narrative structure, Simulacrum, Psyche, Feminism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Every once in a while, someone comes along and takes the world by storm. This holds true of a skinny spectacled boy with green eyes and a lightning scar on his forehead who first appeared on June 26, 1997. This boy, Harry Potter, captivated a generation of readers and turned them into believers. Harry Potter still continues to captivate the gadget addicted present generation kids as well. When the young wizard, Harry Potter, first appeared in Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone two decades ago, the fanaticism that he would give rise to wasn't expected. The universe simply hadn't seen the likes of him before.

The story of J.K. Rowling, the author of Harry Potter Series is that of pauper to prince. The manuscript was rejected by many publishers. Rowling held with her three chapters of what would become Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone for two years before Bloomsbury accepted it. But not even in their slightest dream did the author and the publisher think that it will eventually become their golden goose.

The final book in the seven-book Harry Potter Series was released in 2008, but still Rowling's world of magic has continued to thrive and grow crossing over genres through the filmic adaptations or theme parks or as spin off novels like Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them and so on. The characters Harry, Ron and Hermione have become house hold names. They are known by all.

Harry Potter characters have become part of reader's personality. The readers grew up with the characters. Hermione, Ron and several other characters in the book have aged along with the readers creating a strong connection. They help the readers a chance to relate to important life lessons—good versus evil, being an outsider, dealing with familial and social issues.

The success of Harry Potter Series is not out of luck. It is not because of marketing or popularity. It has immense literary credit as well. This paper is an attempt to analyse J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series as a literary text. By stating it as a literary text, the difference between a literary work and literary text must be first highlighted. J.K.Rowling's Harry Potter Series is usually considered as a literary work- as a fictional novel that tells the story of Harry Potter- the boy who lived, who was orphaned by the evil Lord Voldemort and who at the end won over Lord Voldemort and saved both the muggle and the magical world. When it is considered as a literary work, it remains a closed entity, the reader merely reads the work and doesn't change or interpret it. The reader finds meaning out of it by taking into consideration the social and cultural context. By considering J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series as a literary text, it is considered as a linguistic construct and it becomes an open entity wherein the reader makes as many interpretations out of it. This interpretation may be done by viewing it through Structuralist, Poststructuralist, Postmodernist, Narratological, Psychoanalytical and Feminist lens. In this paper, the researcher presents a literary theoretical critique of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series.

The first literary theory discussed in this paper is Structuralism. 'Structuralism' began with the thoughts of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. Structuralism doesn't consider a literary text in isolation rather it is considered a part of a larger structure. In Structuralism, the meaning of a word isn't found in the word, it lies outside and is attributed by the world surrounding it. For example, if the word 'mother' is considered it doesn't have a meaning of its own. Rather a female who loves and cares a child she gives birth attributes the meaning to the word mother. In structuralist approach, the focus is also on the interpretation of the text towards the larger structures it is a part of. Structuralists consider the text as an object from which various interpretations can be obtained by understanding

the linguistic construct or the language of the text. Structuralist approach toward a text find a structure or pattern in a text. If more than one texts are considered then they must have a common structure or must be part of the same larger structure. According to structuralist, language is the base of the text and by understanding and interpreting the language, various meanings can be derived from the text.

Ferdinand de Saussure has postulated certain important principles of Structuralism. One important principle is language has a structure. Ferdinand de Saussure gave an important concept in the field of Structuralism - 'Sign'. Sign refers to any word- the unit of language. Sign is further divided into 'Signifier'- the physical existence and 'Signified'- the mental concept. For example, the word car is a sign. According to Saussure, the spelling of the word 'Car' is the Signifier whereas the reader's mental thoughts- the thoughts that comes into their mind when they read the word car is the Signified. The Signified varies based on an individual's perception, one reader might think of a BMW car while another reader may think of a Benz when they come across the word car. This implies that there is no fixed meaning to the word and the Signifier and the Signified is different and isn't connected. According to Saussure, Signifier is more important than Signified. This is because according to Structuralist, word is the most important and essential thing as it doesn't change whereas the meaning is culturally constructed. The character of Professor Snape in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series can be taken as an example for Sign. As there is no fixed meaning to Sign and as it keeps on changing based on one's mental thoughts, the Signified or mental concept of Professor Severus Snape's character changes based on the other character's perception. For Draco Malfoy, Professor Snape is like a role model and is someone whom he likes a lot. For Harry Potter, initially he hates Professor Snape and believes that Professor Snape works for the evil Lord Voldemort. But towards the end of the Harry Potter Series, in the seventh book, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, when Harry goes through the memories of Professor Snape through the Pensieve finds out that Professor Snape lived and died to save Harry Potter because he loved Harry Potter- Lily's son a lot. This changed the mental conception of Harry Potter and he started having a different perspective of Professor Snape so much that Harry at the end of the Series named his son as "Albus Severus" (Rowling 619) after Albus Dumbledore and Severus Snape.

The next concept of Structuralism analysed is that of langue and parole. Langue is the system of rules and patterns of a language and Parole is the utterance or instance of the use of langue. Langue and Parole is also used by structuralists to discuss the larger structures that are a part of literature. According to this concept, a literary text is considered as a Parole and it is an example or part of the larger structure, Langue. Langue may be the genre conventions or the collection of the works of the text's author. The Harry Potter Series is a parole and it's Langue is the literary genre to which it belongs to – fiction novel.

The plot structure of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series is analysed through the lens of Structuralism. According to structuralists, each literary text is a Parole which has an inbuilt structure and follows a pattern that relates it to its Langue, the genre. Similarly, J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series, follows a pattern- the plot structure- which relates it to it's genre- fiction. Plot structure is the basis for a narrative. The plots relate to one another in a pattern forming the structure. In 1863, Gustag Freytag, a German writer put forward a dramatic structure known as 'Freytag's pyramid'. This dramatic structure divides a story into five parts: Exposition, Rise, Climax, Return or fall and Denouement or Catastrophe. In Exposition, the protagonist, main characters, relationship between the characters, their moral stand and the task of the protagonist are laid out. In the second phase, Rise, the inciting event that incites a conflict is laid out. The obstacles that the protagonist faces and how they overcome it forms the second phase. In this phase, the events get complicated. The third phase, Climax, is where the twist in the story occurs. Also, the protagonist and the antagonist plan to win over the other. It is in this phase that the protagonist takes a decision that will shape the end. The fourth phase, Return or Fall, consists of events that lead to the end. The conflict begins to resolve in this phase. In the fifth phase, Denouement, the conflict is settled and the story ends with a glimpse of the future of the main characters. In J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Exposition covers the story where Harry Potter's muggle world, the Vernon and Petunia Dursley, his nephew Dudley Dursley and Harry's normal life are introduced. Also, Harry finds from Hagrid, the gate-keeper of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, that he is a wizard and was orphaned by the evil Lord Voldemort. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Hagrid says, "Harry – yer a wizard" (Rowling 55). Then, Harry receives the letter to join the prestigious Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and joins, "Harry stretched out his hand at last to take the yellowish envelope, addressed in emerald green to Mr H. Potter, The Floor, Hut-on-the-Rock, The Sea. He pulled out the letter and read" (Rowling 55). The second phase, Rise, begins with the journey from Platform Nine and Three Quarters from where Harry's life at Hogwarts begins. Harry learns that He is the boy who lived and also about evil Lord Voldemort and his acquaintances. The third phase, Climax, is where Harry learns about the break-in at Gringott's bank and also about the philosopher's stone as "A stone that makes gold and stops you ever dying!" (Rowling 236). Harry then vows to stop it from getting into the hands of evil Lord Voldemort or his followers. The fourth phase, Return or Fall, covers the return of Lord Voldemort through Professor Quirrell, "Where there should have been a back to Quirrell's head, there was a face, the most terrible face Harry had ever seen. It was chalk white with glaring red eyes and slits for nostrils, like a snake" (Rowling 315). Harry overcomes many obstacles like the troll in the bathroom, winning the Quidditch match during his fight against the evil Lord Voldemort. The final phase, Denouement, Harry finds out that the philosopher's stone is hidden in the Forbidden corridor. Harry overcomes the obstacles and reaches the end where he gets to meet Lord Voldemort. Harry victoriously finishes the task as he successfully defends the philosopher's stone from getting into the hands of Lord Voldemort and Lord Voldemort's plan return to power was thwarted.

Thus, J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, is a parole that follows the plot structure to relate it to it's Langue, Fiction genre.

Another important concept given by Saussure is Binary Opposition. Binary Opposition refers to the understanding of a word by looking at its opposite. A word is defined by contrasting it with things which it is not. For example, the word evil is understood as the absence of good. A car is understood as what it is not, it is not a bus, auto, train or plane. Thus, according to Saussure, language is arbitrary as the meaning is culturally constructed and the meaning can be understood by looking at it's binary opposite. Structuralism can be summed up through the words of Peter Barry. According to Peter Barry in Beginning THEORY: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory, Saussure's Structuralism:

"… can be summarised as three pronouncements in particular. Firstly, … the meanings we give to words are purely arbitrary, … Secondly, Saussure emphasised that the meanings of words are relational. … Thirdly, for Saussure, language constitutes our world" (40-42).

The next concept of Structuralism discussed in this paper is Binary Opposition. Binary Opposition is a language system by which theatrical opposites are defined by setting them one opposite another. Binary Opposition is an important concept of Structuralism and is a fundamental organiser. According to Ferdinand De Saussure, Binary Opposition is the way through which a language unit gets it's meaning. J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series has the Binary Opposition theme running throughout the series. The theme Good Vs Evil is prominent. The protagonist, Harry Potter is good and so are his friends and supporters. He fights against the evil antagonist Lord Voldemort and his supporters and eventually wins. The entire theme of the series can be summed up through the Binary opposition Good Vs Evil and in the end Good wins.

Poststructuralism is the next literary theory focussed in this research paper. Poststructuralism is the response literary movement of Structuralism. Jacques Derrida, the French Philosopher expanded on the theory of Ferdinand de Saussure to create the theory of Deconstruction. Derrida accepted Saussure's theory of Sign – Signifier and Signified, only to dismantle it and put forward Deconstruction. The major feature of Deconstruction is that Literature is composed of contradictions and is not fixed. Deconstruction asserts that a literary work is made up of contradictions. Deconstruction is an analysis of Structuralism. Deconstruction questions the fixity of Centre in a literary text and contends the position of Centre and margin. It argues that language is in a constant state of diffusion and that a text is multi-layered and there can always be new interpretations for a text.

The character of Draco Malfoy in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series is deconstructed in this research paper. Draco Malfoy is the son of Lucius and Narcissa Malfoy, followers of Lord Voldemort. Draco being the son of a death eater grew up favouring pure bloods and hating muggles and impure bloods. In J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series, the character of Malfoy begins as someone who was intolerant and disdainful towards others. He treated others based on whether they were pure bloods and their social status. He belonged to the Slytherin group known for its sly nature. Draco hated impure bloods which sided him with Lord Voldemort who also wanted only pure bloods to be at Hogwarts. Draco became a death-eater at a very young age and was assigned the task of killing Professor Albus Dumbledore. On the night of Professor Albus Dumbledore's death it was Draco who let in the death eaters into Hogwarts through the magical Vanishing cabinet. Lord Voldemort made Draco responsible for killing Professor Albus Dumbledore. In Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince, J.K. Rowling has shown that Draco who belonged to Slytherin, known for his slyness couldn't kill Professor Albus Dumbledore, "We've got a problem, Snape, ... the boy doesn't seem able" (495). He couldn't manage to kill Professor Albus Dumbledore and at that moment Professor Snape stepped in and finished the task. Thus, Deconstruction of the character of Draco Malfoy questions the point of fixation in Draco's characterisation. Though from small age, he is characterised as sly, intolerant and heartless towards treatment of others, his centre changes as he fails to kill Professor Albus Dumbledore. Deconstruction of Draco's characterisation highlights the contradictions of his characterisation.

The next section of this paper focusses on Narrative theory and analyses J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series as a narrative fiction. The Harry Potter series is analysed using Vladimir Propp's Narrative Theory. Vladimir Propp is considered a pioneer of Narratology. Vladimir Propp in his book Morphology of the Folktale puts forth the seven 'spheres of actions' namely,

1. The sphere of action of the villain.
2. The sphere of action of the donor.
3. The sphere of action of the helper.
4. The sphere of action of a princess (a sought for person) and her father.
5. The sphere of action of the dispatcher.
6. The sphere of action of the hero.
7. The sphere of action of the false hero (79-80).

With the help of these seven spheres of action we can create any tale. These spheres do exist in the Harry Potter Series as well. In the Harry Potter Series, we have the Villain – Voldemort; the Donor – Dumbledore; the Helper - Harry's friends Ron and Hermione; a sought for person - Harry is in search of the truth about his parents' murder and to take revenge; the Dispatcher - all the professors and friends of Harry; the Hero - Harry Potter and the False Hero - Prof. Snape. These principles of narrative theory classify the characters and their actions into clearly defined roles and functions.

Another narrative theory discussed is that of Tzvetan Todorov. Todorov points out that all narratives follow a three-part structure- Equilibrium in which the protagonist leads a normal life. This is followed by Disruption when the normality is disrupted by an external force which is fought against and in the end, Resolution a new state of equilibrium is established. This narrative theory of Tzvetan Todorov is prevalent in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series as well.

Equilibrium is about the normal life of Harry Potter both in muggle and magical world. This is disrupted by the evil Lord Voldemort who attempts to kill Harry to reclaim his lost glory as Harry survived his death spell. Finally, resolution occurs as Harry defeats the evil Lord Voldemort and the series ends as Harry sends his son to his own school Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry where it all started.

Postmodernism started after the Second World War. It gave birth after the pillars of faith were shaken leading to the theory that the entire world is fragmented and that there is no scope for betterment. The pillars of faith - the power of God, power of King, Individual power, power of democracy and power of science were shaken. The power of God pillar was shaken by Darwin's theory of Origin of Species which questioned God in creation. The power of king was shaken of by Marxism which broke the power hierarchy. Sigmund Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams talked about the levels of mind and put forth that human mind is not under control questioning the power of an individual. The world wars questioned the pillar of democracy as the world wars resulted in no conclusion. The destructive power of science, the invent of atom bombs and the destruction it caused questioned the pillars of science as well. This shake of the pillars of faith and human existence led to Modernism where the major principle is fragmentation of the world and that there is nothing to rely upon and help mankind out of problems. So modernism was about looking for solutions in a literary work. As time moved on Postmodernism came into being. In Postmodernism, the search for solution ended and problematisation of problems arose stating that being aware of the problems is a rebellion. A major concept of Postmodernism is that contradictions must be embraced favouring multiethnicity in our world. Postmodernism is used to define the diverse and controversial contradictions of the twentieth century. Using the postmodern concepts of Simulacrum J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series is analysed in this paper.

Simulacrum is a postmodern concept wherein reality is replaced with it's representation. Jean Baudrillard in The Precession of Simulacra gives the following definition: "Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal … It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real (1-2)." This concept of Simulation abounds in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series. Rowling has created a simulation of the real world – the magical world of Harry Potter Series. The magical world is representation of our real world along with embedded magical elements.

In the Harry Potter Series, Rowling takes the readers to her own magical world of Hogwarts. She presents the readers two different worlds: wizarding world – the world of the wizards, Hogwarts School of Magic and Wizardry, Diagon Alley, Platform 9 ¾, Dementors, Merperson, Basilisk, Goblins, Pixie, Werewolves, Trolls, elves; and the real world- our own world. Muggles are the link between the real and wizarding world. Muggles are wizards or witches born to non-magical parents.

The wizarding Harry Potter world as created by J.K. Rowling is a magical version of our own world. It follows similar governing structure, school system, festivals and sports. The magical world is governed by the Ministry of Magic. The Ministry of Magic acts as a link between the magical and real world. It works hand in hand with the muggle government to maintain the safety of the muggle world and secrecy of the wizarding world.

The Ministry of Magic follows the same governing structure as our own sciences government. The Ministry of Magic has under it, its own departments governed by ministers, assistants and advisors. Similar to our own government jobs, there are qualifications for each post and exams need to be cleared for holding certain posts while the others are elected posts. Like our own Prime-minister post, the Minister of Magic is the supreme governing head and enjoys a position of immense prominence and prestige.

The Harry Potter Series follows very closely the School of our real world as well. Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is the leading school of the wizarding world and the protagonist Harry Potter studies here. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Rubeus Hagrid comments Hogwarts as "the finest school of witchcraft and wizardry in the world" (Rowling 63). It resembles our own school culture as it follows the House System, Three-term year, Homework, Periods, Bell signals, Permission slip to walk to nearby villages, Hard disciplining- minus house points for misdeed and plus house points for good actions, Expulsion for serious offences all resemble our own school culture. The professors, school caretaker- Filch- all are copies of our teachers and wardens but with magical powers and duties.

Rowling has also devised sports for in the Harry Potter world. Quidditch is the sports of the wizards. It is played in air by the wizard or witch players who fly on brooms and try to score a goal. It is like football on air and flying instead of running on the ground and chasing the ball. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Rubeus Hagrid highlights this similarity as he comments Quidditch as "It's our sport. Wizard sport. It's like – like football in the Muggle world" (Rowling 85).

The magical world of the Harry Potter series enjoys traditional festivals like Christmas and Halloween. Christmas is full of enchantment and extravagance. Gifts are placed at the student bed's foot, Christmas trees are decorated at the great hall, armour suits sing carols, sumptuous and extravagant feast awaits, and wizarding crackers explode. Halloween is celebrated on the same day as the real world on 31 October with typical events like trick or treat, pumpkin carving, costume party, playing pranks, visiting haunted spots and sharing scary stories. These facts substantiate that J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter world is a simulacrum of our real world.

The next literary theory considered in this paper is Marxism. The idea of Marxist literary theory is that the text is seen in relation to the economic conditions. Marxist theory is based on the political and economic theories of Karl Marx. Marxist literary criticism highlights the class struggle and materialism in a literary work. Marxism is of the view that the society is propelled by economy and is manipulated by class system.

Marxist criticism aims to reveal the finite view of the social structures and the life experiences that are prearranged by the socio-economical system. Marxist criticism criticises the fact that economy is the primal influence of a life and that the society is an oppression between the capitalist and the working class. It is concerned with the sufferings of the lower class.

In J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series, the social structure of the magical world is divided between the pure bloods and the impure bloods. The pure bloods are the children of wizards and witches. They possess magical powers and occupy the higher strata in the society as they are descendants of magical parents. They form the 'bourgeois' society. The impure bloods are children with magical powers born to normal or muggle parents. They form the 'proletariat' society. In the Harry Potter Series, there is a struggle between the pure and impure bloods. The antagonist, Lord Voldemort, holds stand that only pure bloods must be allowed entry into the magical world and also into Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The protagonist, Harry Potter along with Professor Albus Dumbledore supports that Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is open to all both pure and impure bloods. The first battle is based on this as it is also a fight for supremacy by the those siding the pure bloods headed by Lord Voldemort. Draco Malfoy also suppresses the impure bloods. In Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, this is evident when he illtreats Hermione Granger and says: 'Want one, Granger?' said Malfoy, holding out a badge to Hermione. 'I've got loads. But don't touch my hand, now. I've just washed it, you see, don't want a Mudblood sliming it up'. (Rowling 252)

Economy and Materialism also plays an important role in the wizarding world. Gringotts Wizarding Bank is the bank of the wizarding world and is run by magical creatures- goblins. The wizarding money comes in denominations of knuts (copper coins), sickles (silver coins) and galleons (gold coins). Marxism is concerned for the economically poor and downtrodden. It claims that the society is a conflict between the rich who are the controller and the poor who are being controlled. The power of money and the ill-treatment of the poor by the rich can be analysed through the characters of Ron Weasley and Draco Malfoy. Draco Malfoy being the privileged son of the rich Lucius Malfoy always looks down and ill-treats Ron Weasley because Ron is not rich. Draco even goes on to say that Harry must be careful in choosing friends. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Draco says, "My father told me all the Weasleys have red hair, freckles and more children than they can afford … Potter You don't want to go making friends with the wrong sort" (Rowling 115-116). Such is the power of money, and through the character of Draco Malfoy, the economic conflicts as put forward by Marxism is well brought in the Harry Potter Series.

Sigmund Freud believes that every person is different from the other because each person responds differently to a situation. This difference in response is related to personality and the internal conflict going on in between a person. A human personality has three parts- Id, Ego and Super Ego. Id is known as pleasure axiom. The main concern of Id is to maximise pleasure. Id is the childish and impulsive part of a personality. Id is concerned with the inability to resist oneself to enjoy a pleasure. Id doesn't think about right or wrong, it is about what pleases one's self. The next component Super Ego is the morality axiom. Super Ego is the part of a personality that checks whether the person behaves in a socially appropriate manner. Super Ego checks one's actions and ensures that a person acts in a morally appropriate manner. The third principle, Ego is a reality axiom. Ego is the part of the personality that balances between Id and Super Ego. Ego is concerned with fulfilling a person's Ids in a socially appropriate manner. In J.K Rowling's Harry Potter Series, there is a myriad of characters that can be analysed using Freud's model of personality.

Ron Weasley represents the Id because his actions are concerned about satisfying his own self. Ron often fails to control his impulses and succumbs to his own emotions and desires. Hermione Granger represents Super Ego as she is always rational, sensible and morally righteous. Her character fulfils the social expectations. Harry Potter represents Ego and he balances between Ron and Hermione. Harry Potter doesn't always give in to his emotions and isn't over concerned about social expectations as well. As Harry Potter is the protagonist, he represents the direction of the Id and Super Ego.

Another concept of Sigmund Freud is the concept of Psyche. The three elements of the personality: Id, Ego and Superego together comprises the Psyche. The Psyche is divided into the conscious and unconscious. The conscious is what we are aware of; the unconscious contains memories and information that we aren't aware of, but which influences the conscious. The conscious part of mind hides or ignores fear or conflicts in the unconscious mind which are expressed through dreams. According to Freud, dreams are the road to one's unconscious mind. Dreams reflect the unconscious mind and it's fears. This is evident through Harry's dreams which brings out the events that happened when he was a baby, events he wasn't aware of. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Harry says, "'I had a dream about a motorbike … It was flying'" (Rowling 27). This dream is what Harry's conscious mind stored in his subconscious mind about the event that happened on the day Harry's parents died, and Harry was brought to the Dursley's by Hagrid in a flying motorbike. This event from Harry's unconscious mind comes out as dreams, because as said by Sigmund Freud, dreams are the road to one's unconscious mind.

The next concept discussed is Feminism. Feminist Theories are usually categorised into three types: Gender Reform theories- theories that emphasis on similarities between sexes and seeks justice and equality for women in terms of socio-political and family rights; Gender Resistant theories- theories that fight against patriarchy and social order; Gender Rebellion theories- emphasises on intersectionality of inequalities and seeks to overthrow rigid identity formation of the oppressed. Feminism in literature examines the characterisation of women in literature and the tension between male and female imagery within a literary work and explores how they are treated. It is concerned about whether the female character is being suppressed or how they are subjected to patriarchy.

Feminism is about equal political, economical and social rights for women. Feminism in literature also portrays strong feminist characters. Hermione Granger is one such strong feminist character of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series.

Hermione Granger is one of the best friends of the protagonist Harry Potter in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter series. She is Harry Potter's friend, companion, house-mate, acquaintance, class-mate, confidant and well-wisher. She is an impure blood- a person who has magical powers inspite of being born to normal humans. But still she outperforms everyone at school as she is a very bright student. Hermione is exceptionally talented and outclasses everyone academically Though she may seem bossy at times, she is extremely compassionate and caring.

Hermione Granger is a strong character. She possesses great inner-strength as she is the one who saves her friends. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, during the Quidditch match, Harry's broom was jinxed because of Dark Magic. Hermione caused the needed distraction that cut off Professor Quirrell's eye contact which saved Harry.

Hermione Granger is protective. She protects and safeguards her friends. Once when Harry, Ron and Hermione Granger are caught by Professor McGonagall for violating the rules, Hermione takes the blame on herself to get Harry and Ron out of trouble. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, on being caught for loitering when the troll was out, "Hermione hung her head. Harry was speechless. Hermione was the last person to do anything against the rules, and here she was, pretending she had, to get them out of trouble" (Rowling 191). She is fearless as well as she is ready to defend her friends from anything even if it is Voldemort or the death eaters.

Hermione Granger is ambitious and competitive. She is a prodigious intellect. She competes in wisdom and takes pride in learning her books before hand so that she might correctly answer her teachers. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, she succeeds as well as she was the topper of her year, "Hermione, of course, came top of the year" (Rowling 330).

Hermione Granger is hard enough to overcome her obstacles of being a muggle. She is often despised by Draco Malfoy, a fellow student, for being a muggle and not a pure-blood. But still, she overcomes it all as she emerged the topper. When Hermione is tortured by the evil Bellatrix, to tell how she got the Gryffindor sword, she remains hard and doesn't give off the details.

Hermione Granger is aggressive and authoritarian. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, there is initially a tiff between her and Ron as she stops Ron and Harry on their way to a midnight duel, as she fears that late night wandering by them might cost minus points for their team Gryffindor, "Hermione wasn't going to give up that easily. She followed Ron through the portrait hole, hissing at them like an angry goose" (Rowling 166).

Hermione Granger is independent. Usually girls are portrayed as the ones who need help. But it is Hermione Granger who is independent and the one who helps the boys in trouble. Once when Ron had trouble with a spell, she helps him out. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, she also helps Harry out, "It was really lucky that Harry now had Hermione as a friend. He didn't know how he'd have got through all his homework without her," (Rowling 194). In Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Harry reveals that it is Hermione who found out that "the monster was a Basilisk" and gave clue to Harry that the monster moves through "Pipes" (Rowling 306). Using this clue only, Harry was able to solve the mystery of the Chamber of Secrets.

Hermione Granger is rational rather than intuitive. Her decisions ayes based on logic. In Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, when she realises that some Dark magic has jinxed Harry's broom, Ron doesn't know what to do. But Hermione interferes and saves Harry.

'Leave it to me.'

Before Ron could say another word, Hermione disappeared.

……

It was enough.

Up in the air, Harry was suddenly able to clamber back on his broom.

(Rowling 204-205)

Hermione loves studying and for this she was gifted Time-Turner by Professor Minerva McGonagall. This is said by Hermione herself in Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, "It's called a Time-Turner … and I got it from Professor McGonagall." (Rowling 420). Hermione is a perfectionist who finished all her works perfectly and on time. In Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, it is said that "Hermione of course was up to date with all her work (Rowling 324). As Hermione Granger is strong, protective, ambitious, competitive, prodigious intellect, aggressive, authoritative, rational, independent and successful, she holds a strong stand for feminism in J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series.

II. RESULT AND CONCLUSION

J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series is considered by many as a pulp fiction who attribute it's success to its marketing strategies. But the truth is that readers are hooked to Harry Potter not because of marketing and promotion. This fact can be validated as the huge success of the first book Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone wasn't expected even by it's own publishers. This paper titled 'A Theoretical Critique of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series' analyses the Harry Potter Series through the lens of literary theories. A Theoretical critique is a systematic study of a literary work using literary theories. This paper analyses J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series as a literary text. In this paper, the researcher has done an exposition of theoretical concepts like Sign, Langue and Parole, Plot Structure, Binary Opposition, Deconstruction, Narratology, Todorov's three-part narrative structure, Simulacrum, Marxist concepts, Freud's concept of Personality, Psyche and Feminism in a systematic way to prove that Harry Potter Series has immense literary value and is worthy of viewing from theoretical point of view thereby proving that Harry Potter Series is not a pulp fiction . To conclude the researcher, in this paper, puts forward J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter Series is a literary text with varied shades of literary theories.

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