Chapter V

Summing up

The present researcher has analyzed the theme of good and evil, magical and mythical elements and the hero’s journey within the adventure of Harry in the world-renowned *Harry Potter Series*. The researcher has found that the main character Harry’s adventures imply a quest for victory over evil which lead him to maturity and freedom. Considering the elements of fantasy literature and defining its characteristic features have made an important part of the thesis. Prominently, the researcher has analyzed and evaluated the progress of good towards victory, through a heroic journey of the protagonist Harry and his companions. Further, the analysis shows how good and evil characteristics are classified in terms of the characters’ choices and how good choice leads the individual to victory. Apart from the examination on the main theme of good and evil other features of fantasy elements are magnificently explored.

Fantasy Literature is an essential genre not only for children but also for adults. Most works of Fantasy serve as effective imaginative tools for teaching. It benefits children both literally and psychologically and teaches social skills. *The Harry Potter Series* comprise of adventure stories with a search motif of quests, both internal and external. Quests help the characters to grow as they strive for an object or ideal. The struggle is between the two opposing forces trying to achieve their ends which are exemplified through the characters of Harry Potter and the dark Lord Voldemort. Themes of good versus evil, heroism and fanciful adventurers bring about growth in characters and plot. Other themes appear in this series are love, friendship, self-sacrifice, honesty, loyalty, kindness, courage, tolerance, respect, self-discipline, trust, hope and mercy. Commenting on the *Harry Potter Series*, a renowned American writer says: “They speak insistently to the issues with which writer on ethics have
traditionally been concerned: good and evil; friendship, love and loss; choice and character. These are books that, uncharacteristically in contemporary fiction, instruct their readers about how to live” (Armstrong). The value of friendship, love, loyalty, and betrayal are the motifs that are woven around the main theme of good versus evil.

Rowling’s inscription helps children and adults to make their personal choices between good and evil. Considering children as primary audiences Rowling highlights the theme of good and evil to show the difference between them. She insists on the importance of choice and uses choice as a key component. Through choices, she divides the morality line between good and evil and uses her characters to teach her readers with a set of personal values which decides whether they possess good or evil characteristics in them. She creates good Harry and evil Voldemort to classify and lets her readers to choose their own path. Though her characters’ choices are centered on the circumstances it only reflects the family and personal values they possess. Through the characterization of Harry and Voldemort Rowling states that choice plays a significant role in the life of individuals. Harry’s deliberate choice to be part of a good side and readiness to stand against evil show that he desires to be good. Voldemort’s desire to lead immoral life by wrong means and thrust of power reveal that he deliberately chooses to be evil. Though Harry and Voldemort sail on the same boat of quest, their destinations are different which lead them to what they deserve in terms of their choice. Harry’s quest for justice is accomplished only because of his choice and the values that he holds till the end. Though Harry and his supporters confront a series of unpleasant situations they remain to be in good side that led to triumph over evil. By stating so, she expects her readers to choose the righteous path to lead a blissful life.
Every instalment of the series, Rowling’s plot revolves around the triumph of good, which demonstrates strong morals, ethics, ethos and values. She expounds the two extreme ends of moral spectrum; hence representing the theme of good and evil is possible. Therefore, she chooses Harry and Voldemort as the representatives of the two sides of good and evil. She presents them as arch enemies along with their personal quest; further she proposes other characters to support their deeds and assist them to achieve their ends. Through the epic battle between Harry and Voldemort Rowling exhibits the characteristics of good and evil. Through Harry she demonstrates strong morals and values and through the representation of Voldemort she denotes the supremacy of power and social injustice and evils. Her intention is to convey to the readers that good is always competent to vanquish evil and win every time. Therefore, she highlights Harry as a seeker of justice, guided by good values rather than attracted by magical skills; Voldemort as a seeker of power, possess no values and attracted by alluring side of magic. Thus Rowling makes the evil Voldemort’s all efforts futile against good Harry.

Next to the theme of good against evil, the theme of love is quite effectively portrayed by Rowling. She expresses the belief that love is more powerful than any magic. In the very beginning, through the sacrifice of Harry’s mother Lily, she advocates to the readers that love is omnipotent and has power to withstand in any difficult situation. She successfully concludes that Harry’s ability to love leads him to defeat his arch-enemy, Voldemort. On the other hand, Voldemort’s hatred starts when he is young and this may be the cause of his fall. His selfish intention to be the greatest sorcerer in the world has blinded him. His egoistic aim makes him to exercise ultimate evil. He does everything to make his dream come alive, even he kills people who stand in his way. But at the end, before the goodness of Harry and his mother’s love Voldemort’s evil power does not work. This is evident that Rowling promotes
that love is invincible under any circumstances. She adopts the theme of love that makes his fantasy an allegory of the age because the world of love is losing its colour; thus she desires to stimulate the spirits of love though magic is the main element throughout the series.

Apart from the thematic concerns, Rowling’s magical world let the doors open in her fantasy world. She uses magic as the main element in the series. It makes the series more fascinating and exciting. She vividly describes the wizarding world, such as Hogwarts, Forbidden Forest and Diagon Alley. Her creation of the magical world supports surprising storylines and helps her to design the whole plot. Magic is woven through words and settings. No *Harry Potter* would be possible without the Hogwarts School and dragons. Rowling has created a combined world of magic and reality similar to that of Lewis Carroll in his *Alice’s Adventure in the Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-glass*, in which she creates the boundaries between magical world and real world. She introduces the magical elements right in the initial setting of Harry’s primary world in order to prepare him for the chosen tasks in the secondary one. The passage between these two worlds is the Platform Nine and Three Quarters, between the imaginative or secondary world of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and the realistic or primary world of King’s Cross station in London allowing her readers to back and forth from time to time by Hogwarts magical express. She offers them a chance not to escape reality but to recognize it consciously and to look at it magically.

In the magical world of Harry Potter, Rowling employs magical objects either to predict Harry’s destiny like the Sorting Hat, the Wand of Destiny and the Crystal Ball, or to make him a challenging ordeals like the Magical Chess and the Magical Time Tuner. Other tools are used to help him in passing these ordeals like the Magical Flute, the Invisibility Cloak, the Marauder's Map, the Pensieve and the Magical Gryffindor Sword. Magical Transportation
plays very important role in Rowling’s magic realistic world like Hogwarts Express, the Flying Car, Flying Broomsticks, the Knight Purple Bus, as well as the Floo Powder. In addition she technically helps her heroes and her readers to transfer between the two worlds. While magical stones and beasts like Centaurs, Unicorns, Basilisk, Phoenix, Hippogriff, and the three headed dog Fluffy are employed to deepen the mythical and religious implications in Harry’s heroic journey, they symbolically serve such archetypal themes like immortality, resurrection, which all in turn underline the themes of love, loyalty, friendship, family, and triumph over adversity.

Rowling’s creative imagination gifts numerous magical creatures, objects and words. Moreover, Rowling’s description of witches and wizards is very unique. She tries to distinguish between good magic and bad magic. She presents that witches and wizards are primary characters and they are not all evil. The protagonist Harry and all other wizards are magic users that show that they are not bound to be evil. They are the protagonist and antagonists, and they use magic to save others as well as to kill. Her writing raises the veil from the wizarding world and satisfies the curiosity of the readers. Especially, she succeeds in the revelation of mysteries of witches and wizards to the readers. In the past, people have seen witches and wizards in the negative light and brand them as the symbol of evil. In this series most of the witches and wizards play the role of the protagonist. In traditional fairy tales the representation of witches and wizards usually make the children afraid. Children believe witches and wizards are mysterious threats because of their mysterious evil power and the unusual magic they practise which has created wrong perception about witches and wizards among children. However, Rowling uncovers the mystery of the wizarding world. She arranges witches and wizards to be both antagonists and protagonists and she makes the readers to understand how witches and wizards practise and learn magic. They have rules and
regulations that they have to obey; they have punishments and have professors and mentors to
guide them to the right path. Through the splendid description of wizards lives she reveals the
secrets of wizards.

Apart from magical and mythical representation, Rowling’s *Harry Potter Series* serves as
the great example of how the Hero’s Journey to be presented in stories. Rowling’s
representation of Harry’s heroic journey follows the same mythological journey of a hero
which is presented the world of fiction across the globe. Harry shares many of the traditional
heroic characteristics of the mythic heroes. He bears the lightning bolt shaped scar on his
forehead. Most obviously, he is marked as a hero by his grand destiny. Harry begins the
hero’s journey when he receives the call to the adventure, which he initially refuses but
shapes his directions and faces many difficulties and performs higher tasks that test his
strengths and goodness. Through the journey Harry learns to fine-tune his social and magical
skills which lead him to maturity; thus he becomes the most talented but good wizard which
allows him to fulfill his ultimate quest of defeating his enemy Lord Voldemort. Throughout
Harry’s journey, he risks his life and encounters with Voldemort’s allies. At the end he is
successful in his quest of defeating evil and saving the wizarding world.

In the imaginative fiction of *Harry Potter*, Rowling creates a new mythology in an
invented world. The exploration of the role that mythology plays in her creation helps to
understand the emergent worldview that results in the huge success of the series. However,
her adoption of mythology allows her unlimited space to present the lore of the old days:
omens, beliefs, traditions and the stories behind the stories. Her use of symbols exposes her
knowledge in mythology. The symbols she uses in this series are almost always connected
with the mythologies. She creates her characters on the base of mythology and
gives them some extra personalities. She mostly uses characters and beasts from Greek mythology.

Rowling’s narrative structure combines page-turning plot with astoundingly rich characterization. The whole plot reveals Rowling’s intention that she crafts the series to communicate universal truths to readers of all ages. The charisma, humility, intelligence, and bravery of Harry Potter make him an archetypal hero. In addition, Harry’s troubles, sadness, and frustrations make him genuine. This series runs far deeper than fantasy because beyond fantastic elements like magic spells, Quidditch, evil wizards, magical objects and magical creatures, this series manifest many of the most complicated human emotions. Hence, even in a magical world of fantasy, Rowling’s representations give more importance to the most valuable human relationships and emotions, as they certainly are in *Harry Potter Series* which make the series successful over the past decade though *Harry Potter* has emerged from a simple wizarding world. These aspects render uniqueness and readability to the series and help the readers to read widely for knowledge and understand the different walks of life.

Readers of *Harry Potter Series* cannot resist their temptation of reading because it deals with fictitious world of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and with brave hero Harry Potter and his companions like Hermione and Ron in the magical kingdom. It is difficult to ignore the impossible fanciful elements of magic wands and magic chants, talking animals like Aragog, most powerful evil wizard Lord Voldemort and all other fictitious elements. They effortlessly capture the imagination of children and adult readers as well. Throughout the series readers witness that Harry grows from age eleven to seventeen, he chooses to be part of good side and learns all the virtues. Harry’s confrontation with Lord Voldemort and his allies, the Death Eaters, as well as Harry’s personal struggles as an orphan
and adolescence issues are magnificently fictionalized. Rowling’s sense of imagination is found not only in the description of Hogwarts and magical creatures but also in the recollection of her childhood experiences; that is splendidly expressed in the characters of Harry and especially in Hermione. All these qualities persuade the readers to read independently and set them up to become a lifelong learner and successful human.

In this series Rowling tries to make the story feel as real as possible, to entice readers not only to enjoy the story of quest, but make the readers think that this could really happen. She wants to reach even readers who do not normally like fantasy elements in stories. She intentionally sets the stories in fantastic worlds, having connection with reality. In terms of reality Rowling knows her target audience. She recognizes the interest of the readers and difference between children and adult readers in this genre. In crafting the stories, she identifies a few key ingredients that would help her to reach all the age group. Obviously, when Rowling starts writing the *Harry Potter Series* she focuses mainly on children. This is evident that the first three novels are slim and much shorter books than her later heavy bound 700 page novels. This is because she wants the series to attract adult audience as well; she has not written the novels specifically for adults but has written something that children can feel comfortable sharing with their parents as well. When an eight year old child brings home a copy of a book, he or she should not feel compelled to keep it hidden from their parents. In fact, the parents should be intrigued enough to want to read the novel with their children. That is much of the magic inherent in the *Harry Potter Series*. Parents become nearly as addicted as their children thus is the success of the series all around the world.

Through Rowling’s personification of real and mythical characters, children are relieved to encounter with virtues and vices which provide them with many emotional and
psychological aspects of life that help them to enlighten their mental maturity. Though the children attain the experiences in the form of fantasy they can develop their empathy towards others and generally tend to be more sympathetic and have better understandings of the world of reality. By reading *Harry Potter Series*, children can enhance their own social personality and become more empathetic and understanding of others. They are more likely to consider themselves optimists and will have more positive outlook on life. Throughout this study, the researcher finds that reading *Harry Potter Series* can have potentially positive effects on children and the series will positively influence children’s social skills such as making friendship, assertiveness and empathy. The wide popularity of this series will hopefully encourage more research in this exciting field of Children’s Literature. The fantastic description of magical world will promote future researches on the fantasy genre.

Rowling’s representation of good and evil, magical and mythical elements and the hero’s journey have been discussed by many writers. The framework of the *Harry Potter Series* is often compared to other fantasy novels, such as J.R.R. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* and C.S. Lewis’s *The Chronicles of Narnia*, those works which also discuss many of the elements presented in Rowling’s *Harry Potter Series*. In *Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien depicts the theme good and evil with magical and mythical elements. He represents evil in one Ring; it is one of twenty rings fashioned in the fires of Mount Doom by Sauron, the Dark Lord of Mordor. Tolkien’s hero Frodo Baggins takes the ring to Mordor to destroy it. At the end, he destroys the Ring and ensures peace and safety among the people. Frodo and Harry also follow the heroic path as described by Joseph Campbell. Frodo risks his life to save others from the hands of evil Sauron like Harry against Voldemort. Finally, he accomplishes his heroic quest by destroying the Ring. In the same way Harry fulfills his heroic journey by destroying Voldemort and his Horcruxes. Both Tolkien and Rowling series deal with the hero’s
archetypal journey symbolically to serve the human’s journey through life countering evil, struggling temptations, enduring trials, at the end faith on good wills to vanquish evil.

Rowling’s approach and pattern closely resemble that of C.S. Lewis’s *The Chronicles of Narnia*. C.S. Lewis’s world of Narnia also exhibits the theme of good and evil and largely influenced by Christian themes. *Harry Potter Series* also has strong moral ideas like *The Chronicles of Narnia* because of some Christian influences. Both series use magic in some form, and both have a strong set of morals behind the scenes. *The Harry Potter Series* would seem to have messages that are more representative and relevant to society at large. *The Chronicles of Narnia* presents a message which is really only relevant and can be genuinely appreciated by those that have the same religious beliefs. Ultimately, both series deal with the epic battle of good and evil and strive to grape the victory for good at the end. Granger states that. “Rowling reveals the influence of great writers like C. S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Jane Austen, and Charles Dickens. She shares the traditional background and philosophy with such great Inkling novelists and Christian apologists like C. S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien” (Granger 2002). She follows the same line of C. S. Lewis in her treatment of manners and morals as well as human relationships. On the other hand, her treatment of modern themes in the magical world gives evident to her influence of myth and her own perspective towards the modern society. In the light of analysis, it can be concluded that Rowling has reflected her time in different ways and different visions although she practises the same archetypal element of myth and magic as literary devices. Her mythological and magical treatments have added a deeper dimension to the dramatic value in the contemporary fantasy literature. A comparative study of Rowling with C.S. Lewis or J.R.R. Tolkien can be suggested for further research in Rowling.