

Representation of Gender Roles in Children’s Fictional Tales: A Semiological Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

The goal of the current study was to examine gender portrayals in children’s fantasy literature using a few chosen significant school storybooks. The gender ideology that underlies the representation of gender stereotypes in language and semiotics is shown by the current research. Gender ideology is shaped by children’s storybooks. Schoolchildren are exposed to stories that perpetuate stereotypes through the portrayal of characters. Stories are created within cultural frameworks. Since they are the offspring of this specific cultural setting, children have a tendency to act in ways that align with the gendered ideals that permeate popular culture. Historical records are found in fantasy literature. The current study, which is qualitative in nature, looks at gender portrayals in narrative books. Five children’s fantasy fiction storybooks are examined in this study. Purposive sampling is the method used to choose the data. The Barthes (1974) paradigm has been utilized by scholars for semiological study. The results show that children’s fantasy literature from the twenty-first century emphasizes the issue of gender portrayals. It has been noted that in a patriarchal society, males have authority. They are free to utilize their free will in any circumstance simply because they are powerful, but women are only valued in the home. However, there are instances where gender roles are inverted, as seen in stories where women are represented as witches and males are shown to be dependent on women. The research also demonstrates the influence of customs and traditions on women’s results. By analyzing picture books, the study expands our understanding of the phenomena of gender representations and encourages future scholars to investigate gender representations in more detail.

Keywords: Semiological Discourse Study, Sensual roles, Kids’ Make-believe Narrative, Print Broadcasting Stories

INTRODUCTION

Examining gender representations in children's fantasy literature via a selection of elementary school storybooks is the aim of the current research.

The current study investigates language choices that depict gender representations in storybook discourses. Audio-visual components are employed today to communicate meanings that have been socially and culturally formed. Discourse analysis was once limited to written texts alone, but with the advent of semiotics, it is now critically necessary to do both semiotic and critical discourse analysis of the words and illustrations found in children's picture books.

Background of the study

The study also demonstrates the role customs and traditions have in influencing women's results. The study encourages future academics to do more in-depth academic research on gender representations and advances information on the phenomena of gender representations through the examination of tale books. School textbooks have a greater ability to modify the mindset of school children. Through the study of texts and books, meanings are assigned to ideas, and objects and identities are constructed. This frequent use of specific linguistic items for constructing specific meanings acts as an important signifier to signify those significant things that gradually become linguistic behaviors in academic institutions. Thus, linguistic habits foster gender stereotypes that contribute a great deal to reshaping or damaging the gender identity of a speech community.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the study's main objectives:

1. To examine how gender stereotypes are represented in language and semiotic discourse.
2. To draw attention to how important individuals are portrayed, paying particular attention to language, gender, and ideology.

Research Design

Additionally, the research demonstrates the role customs and traditions have in shaping women's experiences. By using storybook analysis to examine gender representations, the study advances our understanding of the phenomena and encourages future scholars to investigate gender representations in more detail. The researcher examines the organizational linguistic and semiotic contexts of narrative books in order to interpret gender representation through the language's hidden layers.

Literature Review

Cutheo (1998) states that children's fantasy fiction literature began to appear in the late eighteenth century and peaked in the nineteenth century. Children's fantasy fiction was created with morality in mind, and children's picture books were a useful resource.

According to Crew (2002), the term "fantasy" in literature refers to works of fiction that often have magical and creative aspects and are novels in length. He went on to discuss the two subgenres of fantasy literature, High Fantasy and Low Fantasy. In "High Fantasy Fiction," reality is revealed through various literary methods like symbols, pictures, etc., but in "Low

Fantasy Fiction,” fake things happen in the actual world, and the irrational aspects function rationally.

In their research, Jabeen and Mehmood (2014) showed that while children’s literature is an excellent teaching tool, it also molds minds and establishes gender identities. Youngsters who read picture books come to learn that roles are distinctive to gender. The recognizable, stereotyped characters in classic children’s literature have been developed. Men are represented as powerful, muscular princes who strive to save their princesses, while women are portrayed as frail, delicate princesses who face adversity. Therefore, youngsters are unintentionally prepared to accept stereotyped gendered ideologies of behaving like male or female members of society through gender depiction in fantasy literature. The personality of youngsters is shaped by fantasy fiction. This is how youngsters are socialized.

According to Stephen (1992), there is a relationship between linguistic and ideological representations. Gender representations are brought to light through the storytelling process. Thus, readers’ ideologies and views are shaped by literature. Ideology was described by Van Dijk (1993) as common beliefs connected to several characteristics, including identity, goals, objectives, and interests, among others. The paradigm presented by gender ideology contrasts terms like good and terrible, genuine and artificial, and beautiful and ugly. Because these phrases are used in tale books, they have a big impact on how kids behave. The behavior of children in many circumstances, both inside and outside of their families, is significantly influenced by tale books.

Bradford (2007) highlights the deconstruction of children’s tale books as a means of highlighting the text’s meanings and the ways in which gender is created. Characters in storybooks typically build their identities in stereotyped ways, which might encourage youngsters to act in sexist ways. The characteristics of the characters in the narrative books are revealed in a variety of ways.

Louie (2012) presented his arguments about the functioning of story books as they shape girls’ thinking to behave like proper female characters in specific social and cultural settings. Thus, gender representation in storybooks is signified according to set criteria of being masculine and feminine. Furthermore, the storybooks convey ideas such as beauty and innocence, which are always rewarded, whereas ugliness and savagery are punished. These Ideas inculcate girls’ thinking to emphasize the significance of physical attractiveness.

Peterson and Lach (1990) highlight didactic power in literature to inculcate the idea of gender socialization. The ideology portrayed by the author reflects different socio-cultural settings, which further influences children’s thinking and behaviors as readers. When school-going children enter academic contexts, different textbooks influence their minds. Books are a useful teaching tool for geography, ethics, history, and culture. The way gender norms are depicted in books has an impact on how youngsters view themselves. In addition to providing children with entertainment in an educational setting, picture books also have the task of influencing their conduct in many social contexts. They conducted a thorough analysis of how male and female characters were portrayed in picture books. The norms for behavior adjustment are defined by the pictures in picture books.

According to Ramzan and Khan (2019), nawabs in Baluchistan may contribute to the reinforcement of stereotypical ideological conceptions. Furthermore, Ramzan et al. (2021) have shown that politicians and other influential individuals manipulate and abuse the public.

According to Khan et al. (2017), print media serves as a tool in the hands of capitalists. According to Bhutto and Ramzan (2021), the media has a pacifier agenda and a collusive position that is encased in a power strategy. According to Nawaz et al. (2021), power is aiming for positive us and negative them. Ramzan et al.(2023) have elucidated that motivational factors, e.g., memory, cognition, and social effects, influence language learning strategies. Ramzan et al.(2023) have said that grammar has practical benefits as well as cultural and social importance. Subsequently, Ramzan et al. (2023) asserted that social media can play a major role in boosting students' academic enthusiasm.

Narratives serve as gendered scripts that uphold social hierarchy and validate patriarchal ideologies. One of the most influential childhood impressions that contribute to the formation of self-perceptions is fairytales. They are strong socialization tools because they are ingrained with cultural beliefs. Picture books with stories promote gender norms and teach young children what society expects of them.

Theoretical Framework

This study looks at the stories of a few elementary school picture books to see how gender is depicted in children's fantasy literature. This study qualitatively analyses the verbal and visual discourse contained in storybooks in order to uncover the established gender ideologies that represent female servitude under patriarchy and power relations through the selection of certain linguistic components.

The semiological discourse analysis framework developed by Barthes in 1974 is used in this study. The data is qualitatively analyzed in the study. Finding linguistic and semiotic decisions in picture books is the main focus. Gender representations in narrative books are to be shown via analysis.

Barthes' Model of Semiological Discourse Analysis (1974)

The researchers have analyzed gender representations, gender-stereotyped ideology, and different features between both genders at the language and semiotic levels using Barthes' (1974) Semiological Discourse Analysis (SDA) methodology. Furthermore, the researcher considers the following levels to exclude meanings from semiotic discourses of the chosen picture books in order to uncover how words and images collaborate to express gender ideology. The three levels at which Barthes' (1974) SDA operates are as follows:

Linguistic Level

The first level is the linguistic level, which focuses on words used in pictures. Words describe pictures and highlight certain constructed ideologies and belief patterns.

Iconic Level

The second level is the Iconic level, which focuses on semiotics. Meanings are analyzed through visual discourse, i.e., pictures used in story books. This level has two forms: an iconic message that is coded and displays the visual meanings obtained from the compositions of the items that are captured. The second type is an iconic message that is not coded and emphasizes the "literal" meaning—that is, the identification of recognizable things in the picture—regardless of the wider social code.

Level of Signification

In order to determine meanings within a cultural context, the third level of semiological discourse analysis relies on signals. At this level, power is produced through certain thought patterns and socially created meanings in semiotic discourses that dictate social representation. Barthes (1974) asserts that myths and strange connotations create social meanings at the language and semiotic levels. In a similar vein, semiotics and language are products of society. Language's meanings are always contextualized within society. These interpretations are as important as societal representations. The aim of semiotics is to create the truth that is portrayed in semiotic discourse.

Data Analysis

The researchers examined the phenomena of gender representations by concentrating on the chosen data, which is Children's Fantasy Fictions: Five Story Books. The aim objectives of this research study are most significantly met by the fifteen narrative novels that were chosen. The narrative books have been examined using Barthes' framework (1974). Although the researchers have only chosen five narrative novels, there are many more that are worth studying since they are replete with ideological content.

Introduction of Story *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*

Chris Russell is the illustrator of the wonderful children's book *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. The narrative introduces a family of bears that consists of Father Bear, Mother Bear, and Baby Bear, as well as a girl dubbed "Goldilocks" due to her golden hair. The Bear family is shown in the story's opening, talking about walks and porridge. They all decide to go for a morning stroll because it's too hot to eat the porridge that Mother Bear has cooked. When they vanish from their residence, Goldilocks—a mischievous girl—enters their household. She consumes all of the baby bear's porridge and then sits on a chair. Despite her fondness for the chair, she eventually smashes it. She then heads to her bedroom and curls up on the infant bear's bed. The presence of a chair and porridge surprises the three bears as they return to their den. When they go into the bedroom and see a girl dozing off on the baby bear's bed, they realize the truth. The girl abruptly wakes up and flees their home through their words.

Linguistic Level

Semiotic passages in the designated storybook are the main subject of semiological discourse analysis at the first level. A mother, father, and one child are seen in the family of bears in the accompanying picture. The image depicts a mother cooking meals for her family. As a result, the image illustrates gender inequalities as the male family members are preparing to dine while the female family member is engaged with household chores. This picture demonstrates how men view domestic work as a right and that women are supposed to perform it at home.

The image indicates family system consisting of father bear, mother bear and baby bear.



Representation at Iconic and Signification Level

This is semiological discourse analysis at its second tier. The narrative highlights the phenomena of gender representations; hence, it concentrates on the sign system. The man in the photo below is an aggressive figure who wishes to instill enough terror in Goldilocks for her to leave his house. The image portrays men as strong and powerful and women as the scared gender.

The picture shows that father bear is very angry due to girl's presence at his home. This shows rage of male gender over female gender.



Level of Signification

In terms of signifier and signified, the third level illustrates the sign system.

The picture shows running girl that indicates power of father bear that made this girl running from his home.



The image illustrates the function of signifier and signified. Power struggles between the sexes are highlighted by the signifiers, which are Goldilocks and Bear family members.

Signifier	Signified
Father Bear	Power
Goldilocks	Powerless

Introduction of Story *Thumbelina*

Among the finest picture books for kids is *Thumbelina*. Petula Stone did the illustrations for it. The narrative presents “*Thumbelina*,” a lovely little girl. Her little stature is the sole reason for her moniker, *Thumbelina*. She is a member of the family of flowers. A kind woman without children is introduced at the beginning of the novel. She prayed for a child, and a wise woman granted her desire by giving her a plant with lovely blooms. The little girl soon emerged from the yellow blossom, and the lady raised her at home as her own daughter. Because the little child was smaller than the lady’s thumb, she was given the name *Thumbelina*. A large toad entered the house via the window after hearing *Thumbelina* sing one day. She took the little girl to the creek so that she may wed her son. Fearing for her life, *Thumbelina* attempted to flee Toad’s residence. *Thumbelina* was transported to their house and saved by butterflies, but as winter arrived, the butterflies vanished, and *Thumbelina* was left on her own. She asked a field mouse she came across one day for assistance. She was taken to Mouse’s house and given food, but he told her that she had to marry Mole in order to save her own life and that she could not remain longer. Before going below to live with the moles, *Thumbelina* noticed a frail swallow that was about to perish. He healed and flew away thanks to *Thumbelina*’s care, but she was devastated because she had to marry a mole in order to survive the winter. However, as summer came to a close, she spotted the swallow approaching him in an attempt to save her life, so she followed him to a warmer place. She eventually located her land there and met several flower folks. She had a happy marriage to a stunning prince.

Linguistic Level

First-level semiological discourse analysis concentrates on the semiotic texts found in the selected storybook. The image below is from the *Thumbelina* tale, and it depicts a good-hearted woman who beams with joy at seeing *Thumbelina*. This has brought attention to gender representation and portrayed the feminine gender as a kind and honorable individual. Thus, there is a small family that consists of *Thumbelina*, a small daughter, and a kind woman. The following image illustrates the happiness of the family:

The image shows tiny beautiful girl named Thumbelina emerging from flower.



Representation at Iconic and Signification Level

Gender representations are highlighted, and the sign system is the subject of the second level of semiological discourse analysis. The narrative highlights the issue of gender portrayals by depicting males as strong and women as subservient. Men are shown in the next image as domineering individuals who attempt their utmost to utilize Thumbelina for their own gain. Thumbelina needs a place to live, but no one is willing to assist her; instead, they want to use her presence to further their own agendas. For example, Big Toad wants to wed her son. This situation is depicted in the following image:

Level of Signification

The picture shows worried Thumbelina who has been trapped by powerful male gender who want to use her for their own purposes.



The picture shows male as powerful gender as Thumbelina begs for residence but mouse tells her terms and conditions.



The signifier and signified are included in the third level of signification in Barthes' concept. Through the interplay of a powerful field mouse and a terrified Thumbelina, the image illustrates the roles of signifier and signified as well as power dynamics. Thumbelina is a passive signifier that represents dread, passive circumstances, and the idea that one cannot survive on earth without the help of others. Moles and field mice are potent symbols of independence and authority.

Signifier	Signified
Girl	Fear
Mouse	Power

Story Overview: Jack and the Beanstalk

A fantastic children's novel, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, masterfully illustrates the phenomena of gender representations through power systems. Martin Salisbury is the composer of this piece. The mother and her kid, Jack, are the only family members introduced in the novel. They live in poverty and possess a cow. One day, the mother requests her son to sell her cow so they might perhaps make ends meet financially. Jack leaves his house to sell cows. A kind guy begs Jack to give him a cow in exchange for some beans, which work out better than cash. Jack takes beans home after agreeing. Jack offers his mother some beans when she asks him for money, but when she realizes the beans are useless, Jack gets upset and tosses the beans out the window. Jack chooses to climb the beanstalk the following morning in order to investigate after noticing that the beans have grown into a big beanstalk. As he ascended, he noticed a lengthy path that led to a castle. As soon as he entered the castle, he met a terrified woman who told Jack about her terrible husband. Jack begged the woman for some food since he was quite fatigued. The woman gave him some soup, but they were both startled by the sound of the giant's footsteps. The lady used a cabinet to conceal Jack. The giant appeared; the woman brought dinner and then showed off his golden-egg-laying fowl. The youngster ran with his golden hen and brought it to his mother while the giant slept. They got wealthy. The youngster returned to the palace with bags full of golden money. When Jack made the decision to visit the castle for the third and final time, the giant awoke and pursued him when he attempted to flee with a golden harp. When Jack yelled, his mother arrived with an axe, and he chopped the beanstalk. The giant perished after falling. Jack and his mother had a happy life after that.

Linguistic Level

The semiological discourse analysis starts at this level. It concentrates on writings that are semiotic and have been emphasized by storybook semiotics. As the image below depicts, Jack's family consists of Jack and his mother, whereas Giant's family consists of Giant and his spouse. Giant is a powerful beast, and Jack is a poor lad at the beginning of the narrative. The next pictures demonstrate Giant's strength and his avaricious tendencies as he cheers at discovering his hen laying golden eggs.

The image shows male as powerful and independent gender as the giant has been portrayed as greedy person who always treats his wife rudely.



Representation at Iconic and Signification Level

The function of the sign system in society is the subject of the second level of semiological discourse analysis.

The phenomena of gender representations are demonstrated by the photographs from the tales that follow. The image demonstrates how Jack has now amassed a fortune as a result of using his influence to steal the golden hen from Giant. He has demonstrated strength, activity, and power. As shown in the image below:

The image highlights Jack as strong character who snatches golden hen from giant when he is asleep.



The image depicts Jack holding the golden hen and his happy movements. This demonstrates

the materialistic element of gender psychology as well.

Degree of Significance

The third level of Barthes’s model shows the sign system in terms of signifier and signified. As the following pictures indicate:

The image highlights power-play between male genders. Giant tries to kill Jack but Jack is cleverer and he cuts beanstalk and kills giant.



The level of meaning in the images illustrates the function of signifier and signified. Jack is the signifier, and the wealth-based power play is the signified. In the narrative, Jack prevails in power struggles amongst the male genders.

Signifier	Signified
Jack	Power
Giant	Greed

Introduction of Story *Treasure Island*

A fantastic children’s novel is *Treasure Island*. K Y Chan has provided illustrations for it. The narrative opens in the motel owned by Jim Hawken’s family. Jim is warned to stay away from a “one-legged man” by Billy Bones, an outsider who rents a room at the motel. Billy eventually receives a visit from a beggar named “Blind Pew,” who gives him the “dark spot.” Billy passes away after Pew departs. Jim discovers a navigational map within Billy’s Sea box shortly before Blind Pew returns carrying a gang of hateful pirates. Jim and his mother quickly took to hiding. The map is nowhere to be found despite the pirates’ search. When the cops arrive, the pirates flee the scene. Jim gives the guide to Doctor Livesey, who recognizes that it indicates the location of Captain Flint’s treasure, which is where the villainous pirate has hidden his wealth. Jim is invited along by the Doctor and the Squire. The Squire buys a yacht called “Hispaniola” and assembles a team under the command of Captain Smollet, who is well-liked. Everyone respects Long John Silver, the one-legged chef on the yacht. Jim discovers Silver and other team members preparing to kill them all the night before they go to *Treasure Island*. He realizes that most of the group, including Long John Silver, are actual pirates who were

formerly members of Captain Flint's crew.

They first sail the Hispaniola to America to get more crew members and find there for one night. In the first part of the day, they find that Silver and a portion of the fortune have vanished. Finally, they get back, the captain makes a full recovery, Ben Gunn turns into a good resident, and Jim swears never to pursue fortune again. Nobody ever knows about Long John Silver again.

Linguistic Level

The first level of semiological discourse analysis focuses on semiotic texts that are conveyed through the story's depictions of violence, slaughter, and power. As the image below illustrates, evil people's avaricious deeds:

The image shows industrial revolution.
The story highlight's role of machines
to help humanity to find treasure.



Representation at Iconic and Signification Level

The second level of semiological discourse analysis emphasizes many ideologies related to politics, oppression, power, and money, as well as the function of the sign system in society. The story's accompanying image illustrates how gender is portrayed and emphasizes how dominant the masculine gender is. The image highlights the search of people for something very precious that is hidden from people:

The image highlight's role of
wealth and machinery to fulfill
materialistic needs.



Level of Signification

In terms of signifier and signified, the sign system is shown in Barthes’ model at level three. The following images show how Billy and Silver, the one-legged guy, used cunning to conceal riches from onlookers. But in the end, they found a huge amount of gold and divided it among them. All types of misunderstandings were resolved, and they started living happily.

The image shows happy condition of people by finding treasure. It shows greedy nature of human beings.



The degree of signification in the images above illustrates the function of signifier and signified. Jim, the doctor, and the squire are the signifiers, while the signified emphasizes authority and possession. Exercises on power dynamics between men.

Signifier	Signified
Jim	Wealth
Squire	Power

Introduction of Story *the Princess and the Pea*

The Princess and the Pea is a beautiful storybook that shows the phenomenon of love and marriage. Robert Ayton has provided the illustrations. A royal family is introduced in the novel, with the king and queen having just one attractive prince who is on the lookout for a true princess. There are many marriage proposals by beautiful ladies, but the prince is adamant about having a marriage with the real prince. So, he starts the journey. He meets

several beauties, but his heart doesn't agree. So, he loses his heart and returns to the palace. One stormy night, there is a knock at the door. All the servants didn't notice as they were busy hiding in safe places, so the king himself opened the gate to see who was knocking in terrible weather. The king was surprised to find a very beautiful and delicate girl at the door and quickly asked her to come to the palace. Next, he took her to the room where the queen and prince were present. The prince loved that girl at first sight as she was very beautiful. The girl told the royal family that she was a real princess. The king and prince were happy, but the queen thought that she would accept it after a test and then would recognize whether she was a real princess or not. At night, the queen makes a bed for a girl to sleep in, but she arranges it in a distinct style. She keeps a tiny green pea right on the very first mattress. Then she kept more mattresses that a ladder was needed to reach the bed. Then, the queen asked the girl to sleep on her bed. The next morning, the queen went to the girl's bed and asked how the night was. She was very happy with the girl's answer as she said that she felt uncomfortable due to something hard inside the mattress. The queen shared her experience and showed delight that, ultimately, the prince had found the real princess. The prince and princess got married and lived happily.

4.5.1 Linguistic Level

The first stage of semiological discourse analysis is concerned with semiotic texts that are conveyed in the tale through visuals.

The following picture tells us about the intelligence of the queen and how she keeps a tiny green pea on the mattress. As the picture shows:

The picture highlights beauty and delicacy of princess through special bed prepared by her future mother-in-law to test her



The picture clearly portrays a test of the queen to know how delicate the princess is.

Representation at Iconic Level and Signification Level

The second level of semiological discourse analysis emphasizes gender ideology and concentrates on the function of the sign system in society. The story's accompanying images portray the male and female genders as passive and active members of society, respectively. The picture shows that the princess faces a test given by the queen to show whether she is the real princess or not. The princess passed the test with success as she was uncomfortable during the whole night due to something hard inside the mattresses. The picture shows the

terrible condition of a princess:

The picture shows princess in disturbed condition as she awakes as being tired and in pain.



Level of Signification

In terms of signifier and signified, the sign system is shown in Barthes' model at level three. The following images demonstrate the queen's deceit in determining the princess's true identity.

The princess passes the test, and the queen becomes satisfied. She marries her son with the princess. The following picture shows the princess as a bride in her beautiful costume:



The image shows princess in beautiful condition as she is going to marry princess.

The degree of signification in the images above illustrates the function of signifier and signified. The signified emphasizes marriage and love, while the signifiers are the princess and prince.

Signifier	Signified
Prince	Marriage
Princess	Beauty

Findings and Conclusion

Men and women are portrayed in children's fantasy literature as either brave figures or as creatures under control. The current study examines children's picture books critically and

highlights significant issues with gender portrayal. Certain language elements in the narrative books draw attention to the issue of gender portrayals. It has been noted that males are typically presented as heroes in narrative novels. Women are represented as weak, meek, and subservient human beings, yet they are energetic and independent. They draw attention to domesticity. Women are expected to uphold family honour, reputation, and biological connections since they are seen to be capable of handling any challenging circumstance. They are not weak personalities because they never lose courage and are always willing to make sacrifices or compromise in trying situations. The current study recognizes the strength of women and values them for their ability to compromise under various conditions while maintaining a strong faith in God. Gender representations have, therefore, brought attention to reversible gender roles. A gender stereotype is a condensed opinion or bias regarding particular characteristics of men and women that are connected by members of a patriarchal society. When gender stereotypes limit the potential of men and women by negatively impacting their lives, they are inherently harmful. Negativity is exposed by harmful assumptions regarding gender stereotypes, such as the idea that women are caring or foolish. The current study extensively examines the discourses found in narrative books with an emphasis on gender portrayals. Language items have been examined using linguistic and semiotic methods to investigate gender representations in order to conduct an efficient research study.

The chosen children's novels have illustrated the contrasts between powerful and weak, wealthy and impoverished, oppressors and the mistreated and afflicted, and so on. Men have been seen to be amazing under patriarchal societal structures in a variety of circumstances. They use their dominance over women in servitude. Men are free to abuse their dominance over weaker women. Because they are autonomous and dynamic human beings, they are able to enjoy freedom in a variety of situations. Women are perceived as domestic ladies, although they are powerful. In such cases, women are portrayed as witches and males as the rescuers. A detailed analysis of the stories illustrates how traditions and conventions shape the lives of women. Men have been seen to have autonomy in making decisions regarding their personal lives. They are not forced to adhere to rigid family traditions. The lady is the one sacrificed for the sake of rigid family traditions and customs.

Recommendations for Future Researchers

This study used semiotic and linguistic analysis to show how men and women are portrayed in children's fantasy literature. Fifteen stories were examined. The significance of the current research lies in its ability to offer insights into future research endeavors. To start, gender representations in tale book titles may be examined through study. The titles of the five chosen stories go into the themes of gender identification in a patriarchal culture. Researchers in the future may utilize this current study to psychoanalysis women who experience mental and physical oppression both within and outside of their homes. Since patriarchal constraints on women's psychology were examined in the current study, more research in this area can be done. Furthermore, the researchers have the option to investigate the derogatory representation of female characters in various socio-cultural contexts. The current study highlights an important fact: although women are typically represented in stories as domestic ladies who look after their families, there are some circumstances in

which women assume the roles of witches. Future scholars can study reversible gender roles as women not only oppress but also take advantage of other women. Additionally, this research may be utilized as a tool to access, assess, and analyze many types of gender portrayals, including talk programs, morning shows, and commercials.

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