



Exploration of Magical Journey in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

Anuprabha B

Department of English

PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore

Dr. M. John Suganya

Associate Professor of English

PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore

Abstract

This article explores the connection between childhood and the imaginative fantasy world. Dorothy is a little girl, who experiences the enchanting journey into a world filled with Magic, adventure and wonder through the novel by Frank Baum. This article explores the Attachment theory, Cognitive development theory, psychosocial development theory and Behaviourism. The main idea of this article deals with cognitive development through imagination, dreaming and differentiating the fantasy world from reality. In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by Frank Baum, Dorothy was the central character who explores not only the physical journey but also a journey of self-discovery and personal growth. The Novel transports the reader to a realism of imagination and fantasy. The Novel chosen to exhibit the most magical elements of life often lie in our capacity to imagine and transform our own realities.

Keywords: Imagination vs. Reality, Cognitive development, Exploration.

Introduction

Lyman Frank Baum was an American author who was best known for his children's book, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. He was born on May 15, 1856, in Chittenango, New York, and Frank Baum led a modernized life filled with creativity and storytelling. He came from a strong entrepreneurial family, and his early years were filled with a variety of endeavours, from poultry farming to managing a theatre. These multiple experiences influenced his imaginative story writing. He wrote numerous fantasy works, particularly *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is part of the series. In addition to the 14 Oz books, Frank Baum wrote 41 Novels, 83 Short stories, 200 poems and 42 scripts. He also made numerous attempts to bring his work to the stage and screen.

One of his famous works, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was published in 1900. In 1939 the first movie adaptation of the Oz book became familiar in 20th-Century Cinema. This tale is set in the fantastical world of Oz filled with imaginary characters like Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin wood man and the Cowardly Lion. Frank Baum's Novel vivid imagination which captivates all generations of readers. In addition to his literary achievements, He also received acclaim and awards during his lifetime, including the Chicago Grand Opera House Trophy for his musical play. His impact on children's literature is uncountable, and his works enchant the reader of all ages. The work was chosen to experience the imaginative construction of character and the story.

The story revolves around the young girl, Dorothy and her companion Toto from Kanas, who whirled to Oz by the strong cyclone. It includes captivating characters like clever Scarecrow, the kind-hearted Tin Woodman, and the brave Cowardly lion. Their destination is to reach the Emerald city, where they believe that they can fulfil their strong wishes. Along the yellow brick road they face the numerous challenges, including the menacing wicked witch of the west. This tale is also an exploration of self-discovery, friendship and the innate power of self-belief. As Dorothy and her friends, through their journey learned the qualities which already possess in them.

The Protagonist Dorothy is characterized by her kindness, determination and innocence. She forms a strong bond with her friends whom she meets along her journey. Throughout the story, Dorothy's character undergoes self-discovery and growth as she faces various challenges and obstacles on the yellow brick road. She also represents the universal themes of courage and power of self-belief. Dorothy's determination to return home, Kanas and her compassion for her friends make her a relatable and endearing protagonist. Dorothy's character symbolizes the idea that one's greatest strengths are often found within themselves. Her journey in the Land of Oz continues to inspire the readers of all ages, making her the recognizable protagonist in literature.

Dorothy's connection with Scarecrow is characterized by her admiration for his problem solving ability and his quest for a brain and Scarecrow said to Dorothy as "No, indeed; I don't know anything. You see, I am stuffed, so I have no brains at all," he answered sadly (Baum 38). Dorothy is moved by Tin Woodman's empathy and kindness. The Cowardly Lion and Dorothy's friendship highlights the theme of courage. Toto, her dog serves as her constant companion. These relationships illustrate the power of friendship where each character seeks something external and internal qualities, and their bond with one another. *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* captures the heart and in the vivid picturization of the readers with better themes.

Ethical analysis

The companionship of Dorothy and her friends underscores the importance of working together and valuing the contribution of each individual which highlights the unity of strength. Throughout the story, Dorothy consistently demonstrates kindness and compassion towards others. The characters in Oz often face situations that require honesty and integrity. The defeat of the wicked witch of west triumph of good over evils. The Novel primarily serves as a fantastical adventure; it also conveys the ethical message through the interaction of the characters. The story encourages the readers to consider values of kindness, friendship, courage and honesty in their own lives, making it a tale that resonates with moral and ethical sensibilities. Food and gender plays a vital role in ethical analysis. Suganya et al has vividly spoken about it in two of her articles, "Communal Expectancy and the Authentic Self of Men and Transgenders - Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw and Birthday by Meredith Russo" and "Gender Performance on the Reinvigoration via Food". (Suganya et al.)

Identity vs. Role confusion

Dorothy's journey can be seen as an exploration of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. As she embarks on her adventure and meets new characters, she is developing her sense of self and her place in the world. Her interaction with other companions helps her to discover her own identity and strength. The wizard himself embodies various psychosocial stages, as he represents various roles and personalities throughout the story. His eventual revelation underscores the idea that self acceptance and authenticity are the vital aspects of psychosocial development. Incorporating the elements of psychosocial development into the characters journey in the novel helps the readers to understand how they grow, develop and come to terms with their identities.

The scarecrow, Tin Woodman, and Cowardly Lion explores various magical transformations and all receive gifts from the wizard that enhance their abilities which symbolizes personal growth and development. The mysterious wizard is the symbol of power and magic. Throughout their journey, Dorothy and her friends encounter various magical creatures, such as winged monkeys, the munchkins, and the quadings. The magical road serves as the guide for Dorothy to reach emerald city. The capital of Oz is a dazzling city which is entirely made of emeralds. The magical element in the novel captivates and transports the reader to the world of imagination and wonder.

Cognitive theory of Jean Piaget is also applicable for this novel. As Dorothy encounters various challenges in the land of Oz, she demonstrates problem solving skills, such as finding her way along the yellow brick road and strategizing how to defeat the wicked witch. This reflects cognitive development as she adapts to new situations and applies her cognitive ability to overcome her obstacles. The characters in the story constantly adapt to new environments, learn from their encounters and apply their new found knowledge to subsequent challenges. This reflects cognitive development as they assimilate and accommodate information.

Behaviourism is a psychological theory which focuses on observable behaviour as the primary subject of the study. The novel also explores a behaviouristic perspective. The characters in the novel frequently learn by observing the behaviours and actions of others. For instance, Dorothy and her friends learn from the helpful action of the good witches and the determinable action of the wicked witch. This novel contains the elements that can be examined through the behavioristic view. This analysis can provide insights into how behaviourism concepts manifest in narrative context.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this magical journey through the land of Oz introduces memorable characters and enchanting elements. These elements not only captivate the imagination but also convey profound moral and ethical lessons about kindness, compassion, and the strength of unity. This exploration is the mirror, which reflects the human capacity for growth, resilience, and self-discovery. The magical element serves not only to entertain but also to convey deeper themes like friendship and the belief in one's own innate ability. It is a timeless tale that continues to inspire and enchant the most magical and transformative journey begin from within.

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