



# The Portrayal of Stereotypical Gender Roles in Harry Potter Series

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## Abstract

### Keywords:

Harry Potter Series, Gender

The Harry Potter series is one of the most phenomenal works of children's literature. It has attracted public attention since it was first published in 1997 and has received increasing attention as time goes by. This study is purposed to investigate whether the Harry Potter series, as one of the most successful, popular, and influential works of children's literature, is incapable of challenging stereotypes of gender. Contrary to the popular belief that says otherwise, this study demonstrates the part when the characters of this series are continuously behaving and interacting with each other using the typical gender traits. Several scholars may claim that this series is gender equal and gives the same opportunity to both boys and girls. The author states that she has the intention of gender equality. However, as the story is being conducted, it is shown that this series is still unable to challenge gender stereotypes.

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## Abstrak

### Kata Kunci:

Serial Harry Potter, Gender

*Serial Harry Potter merupakan salah satu karya sastra anak yang paling fenomenal. Serial ini telah menarik perhatian publik sejak pertama kali diterbitkan pada tahun 1997 dan semakin mendapat perhatian dari waktu ke waktu. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki apakah serial Harry Potter, sebagai salah satu karya sastra anak-anak yang paling sukses, populer, dan berpengaruh, tidak mampu menantang stereotip gender. Bertentangan dengan kepercayaan populer yang mengatakan sebaliknya, penelitian ini menunjukkan bagian ketika karakter-karakter dalam serial ini terus-menerus berperilaku dan berinteraksi satu sama lain menggunakan ciri-ciri gender yang khas. Beberapa pakar mungkin berpendapat bahwa serial ini setara gender dan memberikan kesempatan yang sama baik bagi anak laki-laki maupun perempuan. Penulis menyatakan bahwa dia memiliki niat untuk kesetaraan gender. Namun seiring berjalannya cerita, terlihat bahwa serial ini masih belum mampu menantang stereotip gender.*

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## Introduction

The Harry Potter series is one of the most phenomenal works of children's literature. It has attracted public attention since it was first published in 1997 and has received increasing attention as time goes by. To date, its popularity continues to increase and has been translated into more than eighty languages.

This story tells about the main character named Harry Potter, a young wizard, on his journey to defeat the villain Lord Voldemort. In his journey against criminals, Harry Potter studied the art of magic at a school called Hogwarts. There he met friends who later became good friends to him. The two closest were Ronald Weasley and Hermione Granger.

Being successful in terms of sales and also having an interesting plot Harry Potter isn't just great at capturing the attention of casual readers. This novel also manages to intrigue the scholars, and push them to do further study based on the book. One of the issues which seem to be interesting for scholars is the issue of the portrayal of gender in children's literature.

The portrayal of gender has always become something interesting to be discussed by scholars. The way gender issue is portrayed in the work of children's literature is quite important, for children's literature itself has been a great media for children to learn about self-identity. Also, Mary L. Trepanier-Street and Jane A. Romatowski (1999) in their book state that several research that have been done, prove that products of children's literature can give such impacts to their readers—especially young readers—and also give them such influence in term of gender-attitudes.

Therefore, the Harry Potter series as one of the most popular works and also being influential work of children's literature is considered to be a great media to promote and also introduce the portrayal of gender to young readers.

The portrayal of gender in an influential work of children's literature such as Harry Potter might deliver a significant impact on the ideas of femininity and masculinity which later on may be chosen by child readers in order to build their self-identities.

The creator of this work has stated that she has the intention of portraying gender equality in his work. As it is claimed by Julia Eccleshare (2002), J.K. Rowling states that, at the school which becomes the setting of this story, an equal opportunity for both boys and girls. For example, boys and girls have the same opportunity to take part in a magical game name quidditch. There is also no such gendered class in this book, both boys and girls have the same curriculum to be studied.

However, some scholars argue differently. Some scholars claim that a case of gender stereotyping has been repeatedly written throughout the series. Amy Mason (2016) in an article entitled *Harry and Hermione: Representations of Gender in Harry Potter*, argues that there are times when the cases of genders stereotyping are being repeatedly documented in *Harry Potter* book series. This series also, according to Elizabeth Heilman (2016, p. 31) often reproduces traditional stereotypes between men and women.

It is interesting because there are different opinions between the author of the series and the scholars. This somehow proves that the representations and portrayal of gender in this series have to be critically examined in order to answer a question about whether the books are really stereotypical or not. This study is highly interesting and concerned with the issue of gender portrayal in the Harry Potter series. This study also aims to investigate and determine the answer to the above-mentioned question. Not only providing the answer, but this study might also as well provide proves which will support the later finding of the question.

To be able to write an essay or understand gender roles and stereotypes, we must be able to differentiate between the two terms sex and gender. Sex refers to the biological traits and characteristics that define men and women, while gender refers to what society considers masculine or feminine, for example roles,

behaviors, activities and attributes. This means that ideas about sex do not vary much in different parts of the world, while ideas about gender can vary greatly. For example, knitting and child-rearing may be seen as belonging to the feminine gender in one culture, but not be considered gender-specific in another. All the same, men have male genitals, deeper voices, and are often more muscular than women because of the biological differences between the sexes (2009, p. 5). Simone de Beauvoir stated in her book devoted to women, *The Second Sex*, that “[o]ne is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (301). She states that sex is something natural but that gender is something constructed. One can interpret this statement to mean that being female and being a woman is two different things.

## **Method**

The best way to answer the proposed question related to the issue of the portrayal of gender stereotypes in the Harry Potter series is by doing a careful, deep, and close examination of the books. Despite the fact that there many studies and researches that have been conducted about the issue, the answers to the questions actually lie within the stories itself.

Through this study, I am analyzing the characters of the Harry Potter book series. I base my argument about whether or not these series are gender stereotypes, using a list of stereotypical gender roles which is formulated by Lois Tyson’s (1999). Lois Tyson (1999, p. 85) believes that authors often “cast men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive” and they “cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive.” By using the list, I look at how the characters of the series are performing their gender in everyday activities and when interacting with each other or other characters. In order to do this, I conduct a critical and close reading of the seven Harry Potter books and also pointed out several parts of the books in which the characters perform gender in a visible way.

## Result and Discussion

### Rational vs emotional

Boys and girls are believed to have specific traits which are different from each other. Those traits that they have often be portrayed in the product of literature. The first trait which happen to be different between boys and girl is that boys often portrayed to be rational when girls are shown to be emotional. This portrayal can be seen in several parts of the book.

Despite of being known as one of the smartest students at school, apparently, Hermione Granger shows such irrational behavior. This case happens in the first book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* when the trio has to face a challenge when they are on the way to defeating Voldemort. However, in the midst of the crisis, it is shown there that, unlike her two male friends, Hermione is unable to think straight and be rational. Hermione may be smart enough to remember the name of the monster they are facing. Yet she seems to be caught up in the emotion that she couldn't think of what to do to defeat the monster. It happens to be Ron, the male friend who is typically known to be rational who gives Hermione the idea that she can finally figure out how to get them out.

'Stop moving!' Hermione ordered them. 'I know what this is - it's Devil's Snare!'

'Oh, I'm so glad we know what it's called, that's a great help,' snarled Ron, leaning back, trying to stop the plant curling around his neck.

'Shut up, I'm trying to remember how to kill it!' said Hermione.

'Well, hurry up, I can't breathe!' Harry gasped, wrestling with it as it curled around his chest.

'Devil's Snare, Devil's Snare ... What did Professor Sprout say? It likes the dark and the damp-'

'So, light a fire!' Harry choked.

'Yes - of course - but there's no wood!' Hermione cried, wringing her hands.

'Have you gone mad?' Ron bellowed. 'Are you a witch or not?' (Rowling J. , 1997, p. 202)

Another episode about how Hermione being too caught up in emotion so that she is unable to think rationally also happens in the second book of the series,

*Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. At that time, young Hermione Granger is shown to be having a crush on a not-so-capable teacher named Gilderoy Lockhart. Harry Potter and Ron Weasley, however, are shown to be able to think rationally. They can easily spot how incapable the professor is according to some experience. Unfortunately, Hermione couldn't do so since she is blinded by her emotion towards him.

"Come on now - round them up, round them up, they're only pixies," Lockhart shouted.

He rolled up his sleeves, brandished his wand, and bellowed,

"Peskipiksi Pesternomi!" It had absolutely no effect; one of the pixies seized his wand and threw it out of the window, too. Lockhart gulped and dived under his own desk, narrowly avoiding being squashed by Neville, who fell a second later as the chandelier gave way.

The bell rang and there was a mad rush toward the exit. In the relative calm that followed, Lockhart straightened up, caught sight of Harry, Ron, and Hermione, who were almost at the door, and said,

"Well, I'll ask you three to just nip the rest of them back into their cage." He swept past them and shut the door quickly behind him.

"Can you believe him?" roared Ron as one of the remaining pixies bit him painfully on the ear.

"He just wants to give us some hands-on experience," said Hermione, immobilizing two pixies at once with a clever Freezing Charm and stuffing them back into their cage.

"Hands on?" said Harry, who was trying to grab a pixie dancing out of reach with its tongue out. "Hermione, he didn't have a clue what he was doing -"

"Rubbish," said Hermione. "You've read his books - look at all those amazing things he's done -"

"He says he's done," Ron muttered. (Rowling J. , 1998, pp. 102-103)

This act is being repeated once again later in the sixth book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*. There in the book, Hermione might be described as the portrayed pupil. Yes, she might be bright and brilliant, yet at some part of the book, she is still shown to be caught up in such emotion that she barely thinks rationally. It happens when Hermione intentionally casts a spell on Cormac McLaggen, one of the characters in the book. She purposely does that merely because she dislikes his attitudes. By seeing this, it can be seen that Hermione's

judgement can be easily clouded by emotion. Harry Potter, as the male, on the other hand, has a chance to think rationally and reminds her about it.

As they came into the castle, they spotted Cormac McLaggen entering the Great Hall. It took him two attempts to get through the doors; he ricocheted off the frame on the first attempt. Ron merely guffawed gloatingly and strode off into the Hall after him, but Harry caught Hermione's arm and held her back.

"What?" said Hermione defensively.

"If you ask me," said Harry quietly,

"McLaggen looks like he was Confunded this morning. And he was standing right in front of where you were sitting." Hermione blushed.

"Oh, all right then, I did it," she whispered.

"But you should have heard the way he was talking about Ron and Ginny! Anyway, he's got a nasty temper, you saw how he reacted when he didn't get in – you wouldn't have wanted someone like that on the team."

"No," said Harry.

"No, I suppose that's true. But wasn't that dishonest, Hermione? I mean, you're a prefect, aren't you?"

"Oh, be quiet," she snapped, as he smirked. (Rowling J. , 2005, p. 295)

Not only Hermione Granger, apparently there is also another character who is considered to be too emotional based on Harry Potter's point of view. It is Cho Chang, a girl who is Harry dating with. Turns out that Cho is a type of girl who often being caught up by her emotion. She cries a lot that it makes Harry feels frustrated.

"Women!" he muttered angrily, sloshing down the rain-washed street with his hands in his pockets.

"What did she want to talk about Cedric for anyway? Why does she always want to drag up a subject that makes her act like a human hosepipe?" (Rowling J. , 2003, p. 563)

The topic about the different trait between men and women is also being emphasized in a conversation between Hermione Granger and Harry Potter. Based on men's point of view, it is shown that women often act impractical and it takes time to figure out what they want. Men, on the other hand, behave differently. They are less emotional and more straightforward.

“Harry, you’re worse than Ron.... Well, no, you’re not,” she sighed, as Ron himself came stumping into the Hall splattered with mud and looking grumpy.

“Look – you upset Cho when you said you were going to meet me, so she tried to make you jealous. It was her way of trying to find out how much you liked her.”

“Is that what she was doing?” said Harry as Ron dropped onto the bench opposite them and pulled every dish within reach toward himself.

“Well, wouldn’t it have been easier if she’d just asked me whether I liked her better than you?”

“Girls don’t often ask questions like that,” said Hermione.

“Well, they should!” said Harry forcefully. “Then I could’ve just told her I fancy her, and she wouldn’t have had to get herself all worked up again about Cedric dying!” (Rowling J. , 2003, pp. 572-573)

### Strong vs Weak

Another different trait between boys and girls is in term of physical strength, boys are often being portrayed to be stronger than girls. Readers can find many of examples of this case from many products of children's literature in which female characters are always rescued by men. The pattern of girls being saved by men can be found the classic tales. This typical pattern also appears in this series.

The time when Hermione Granger is written as a typical damsel in distress happens in the first book of the series *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*. In term of intelligence, Hermione is surely proven to be the best among her friends. On the other hand, she is unfortunately known to be not so powerful in term of physical strength. Despite of the knowledge she has, Hermione is known to shrink when she has to face the troll. Meanwhile the other two male friends, Harry Potter and Ronald Weasley have a chance to showcase their power by defeating the troll.



'Hermione!' they said together. It was the last thing they wanted to do, but what choice did they have? Wheeling around they sprinted back to the door and turned the key, fumbling in their panic— Harry pulled the door open – they ran inside. Hermione Granger was shrinking against the wall opposite, looking as if she was about to faint. The troll was advancing on her, knocking the sinks off the walls as it went. 'Confuse it!' Harry said desperately to Ron, and seizing a tap he threw it as hard as he could against the wall. The troll stopped a few feet from Hermione. It lumbered around, blinking stupidly, to see what had made the noise. Its mean little eyes saw Harry. It hesitated, then made for him instead, lifting its club as it went.

'Oy, pea-brain!' yelled Ron from the other side of the chamber, and he threw a metal pipe at it. The troll didn't even seem to notice the pipe hitting its shoulder, but it heard the yell and paused again, turning its ugly snout

towards Ron instead, giving Harry time to run around it. (Rowling J. , 1997, pp. 129-130)

Similar thing also happens in the second book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Chamber o Secret*. At that time, Hogwarts is being terrorized by such an attack from an unknown enemy—who petrifies not only students. The three main characters take a part in the search of the enemy. Hermione Granger shows a brilliant contribution by supporting them with knowledges to help Harry Potter and Ron Weasley finding the enemy. It becomes unfortunate because in the end of the day, Hermione has no time to showcase her contribution because he is being attacked. Turns out Harry and Ron who get a chance to solve the problem and get marked as the school savior.

"There's just no point talking to a Petrified person," she said, and they had to admit she had a point when they'd taken their seats next to Hermione. It was plain that Hermione didn't have the faintest inkling that she had visitors, and that they might just as well tell her bedside cabinet not to worry for all the good it would do.

"Wonder if she did see the attacker, though?" said Ron, looking sadly at Hermione's rigid face. "Because if he sneaked up on them all, no one'll ever know ..... *But* Harry wasn't looking at Hermione's face. He was more interested in her right hand. It lay clenched on top of her blankets, and bending closer, he saw that a piece of paper was scrunched inside her fist. Making sure that Madam Pomfrey was nowhere near, he pointed this out to Ron.

"TG and get it out," Ron whispered, shifting his chair so that he blocked Harry from Madam Pomfrey's view.

It was no easy task. Hermione's hand was clamped so tightly around the paper that Harry was sure he was going to tear it. While Ron kept watch he tugged and twisted, and at last, after several tense minutes, the paper came free.

It was a page torn from a very old library book. Harry smoothed it out eagerly and Ron leaned close to read it, too. (Rowling J. , 1998, p. 247)

Hermione Granger, apparently, doesn't become the only character in this series whose weakness being pointed out. It is Fleur Delacour, who is being written in a similar way. She is student from a school names Beauxbatons. Fleur is invited as well as the other Beauxbatons students to be representatives of Triwizard Champions. Since the very beginning, she is known for her magnificent beauty.

"The champion for Beauxbatons," said Dumbledore, "is Fleur Delacour!" "It's her, Ron!" Harry shouted as the girl who so resembled a veela got gracefully to her feet, shook back her sheet of silvery blonde hair, and swept up between the Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff tables. (Rowling J. , 2000, p. 269)

Fleur manages to be one of the champions among the other men. Unfortunately, being similar to Hermione Granger, she doesn't get much time to show her strength. In the midst of the challenges Fleur often being unable the obstacle she is facing.

"Fleur Delacour, though she demonstrated excellent use of the Bubble-Head Charm, was attacked by grindylows as she approached her goal, and failed to retrieve her hostage. We award her twenty-five points." Applause from the stands. "I deserved zero," said Fleur throatily, shaking her magnificent

head. (Rowling J. , 2000, p. 506)

In the final challenge, Fleur finally gets to be defeated. Unlike the other male friends, she couldn't make it until the end for she is attacked in the halfway of the challenge. Based on this portrayal it can be seen that despite of the power that women have, it will always be men who manage to do it until the end. In term of physical strength and power, women will be considered to be secondary.

He paused at a junction of two paths and looked around for some sign of Fleur. He was sure it had been she who had screamed. What had she met? Was she all right? There was no sign of red sparks – did that mean she had got herself out of trouble, or was she in such trouble that she couldn't reach her wand? Harry took the right fork with a feeling of increasing unease . . . but at the same time, he couldn't help thinking, *One champion down...*

The cup was somewhere close by, and it sounded as though Fleur was no longer in the running. He'd got this far, hadn't he? What if he actually managed to win? Fleetingly, and for the first time since he'd found himself champion, he saw again that image of himself, raising the Triwizard Cup in front of the rest of the school. (Rowling J. , 2000, p. 625)

### **Protective vs. Nurturing**

Children are often introduced to the concept of protective males who are meant to rescue girls in distress, while females on the other hand are usually rescued by males. On the other hand, women have a responsibility to provide emotional support. The idea of women being in charge of caring for others occurs several times in the series.

As a woman, Hermione has a role to be the one who consoles others. It can be seen in several parts from the series. On of it happens in the third book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. In the early part of the book, students who are heading to Hogwarts are attacked by monstrous creature names Dementor. These creatures spread fears and affected the students, including Ginny Weasley, Ron's younger sister. Right after the attack of Dementor, Ginny is found to be weakened. Hermione is there to soothe her.

Ginny, who was huddled in her corner looking nearly as bad as Harry felt, gave a small sob; Hermione went over and put a comforting arm around her. (Rowling J. , 1999, p. 62)

Similar trait of Hermione can be seen again in the fourth novel of the series, *Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire*. Here she also shows such intention to soothe people, just like what she did to Ginny Weasley in the third book of the series. In the fourth book, Hermione initiates to approach Neville who is known being upset after the lesson of Defense Against the Dark Arts.

They were talking about the lesson, Harry thought, as though it had been some sort of spectacular show, but he hadn't found it very entertaining – and nor, it seemed, had Hermione.

"Hurry up," she said tensely to Harry and Ron.

"Not the ruddy library again?" said Ron.

"No," said Hermione curtly, pointing up a side passage.

"Neville." Neville was standing alone, halfway up the passage, staring at the stone wall opposite him with the same horrified, wide-eyed look he had worn when Moody had demonstrated the Cruciatus Curse.

"Neville?" Hermione said gently.

Neville looked around.

"Oh hello," he said, his voice much higher than usual.

"Interesting lesson, wasn't it? I wonder what's for dinner, I'm – I'm starving, aren't you?"

"Neville, are you all right?" said Hermione. (Rowling J. , 2000, p. 218)

It seems that being the only girl in a group of friendship which consists two males gives Hermione Granger such a role to be a mother. Hermione, throughout the series is, has already been known as someone who is always there and initiates to comfort and soothe people – just like mothers always do to their children. The portrayal of Hermione Granger as a girl who is in charge of nurturing and taking care of the other two boys is being obviously visible in the last book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows*. There in the book, the three main characters have to do such a quest of finding horcruxes – magical things which will be useful in defeating the villain, Lord Voldemort. During the quest, Hermione plays a role as a "mother" of the group. She prepares and pack things for their journey and carries essential things for them three.

"It's okay, I've got the Cloak, I've got clothes for both of you," said Hermione. "Just try and act naturally until – this will do." She led them down a side street, then into the shelter of a shadowy alleyway. "When you say you've got the Cloak, and clothes..." said Harry, frowning at Hermione, who was carrying nothing except her small beaded handbag, in which she was now rummaging. "Yes, they're here," said Hermione, and to Harry and Ron's utter astonishment, she pulled out a pair of jeans, a sweatshirt, some maroon socks, and finally the silvery Invisibility Cloak. "How the ruddy hell –?" "Undetectable Extension Charm," said Hermione. "Tricky, but I think I've done it okay; anyway, I managed to fit everything we need in here." She gave the fragile-looking bag a little shake and it echoed like a cargo hold as a number of heavy objects rolled around inside it. "Oh, damn, that'll be the books," she said, peering into it, "and I had them all stacked by subject... Oh well... Harry, you'd better take the Invisibility Cloak. Ron, hurry up and change..." "When did you do all this?" Harry asked as Ron stripped off his robes. "I told you at the Burrow, I've had the essentials packed for days, you know, in case we needed to make a quick getaway. I packed your rucksack this morning, Harry, after you changed, and put it in here... I just had a feeling..." (Rowling J., 2007, pp. 161-162)

### **Decisive vs. Submissive**

Harry Potter as the main character of this series, has automatically been chosen as the leader of the group, who is in charge to being the decisive one and make plans on their journey. In this novel there are times where Harry makes decision all by himself without asking opinion his friends or discussing with others. This behavior is similar to male traits in which boys have an authority to make decision and always have to be listened to.

The time when Harry Potter being all decisive happens in the sixth book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince*. This portrayal is visible in the part when Harry Potter is about to go in a journey with the headmaster of the school, Albus Dumbledore to take a magical thing named horcrux. At that time Harry is anxious because by the time they leave, Hogwarts is left unprotected. Being worried of the attack that might happen, Harry asks his friend to protect

the school. He decides thing all by himself by his intuition without discussing with his friends first.

“I haven’t got much time,” Harry panted,  
“Dumbledore thinks I’m getting my Invisibility Cloak.  
Listen...” Quickly he told them where he was going, and why. He did not pause either for Hermione’s gasps of horror or for Ron’s hasty questions; they could work out the finer details for themselves later.  
“...So, you see what this means?” Harry finished at a gallop.  
“Dumbledore won’t be here tonight, so Malfoy’s going to have another clear shot at whatever he’s up to. No, listen to me!” he hissed angrily, as both Ron and Hermione showed every sign of interrupting.  
“I know it was Malfoy celebrating in the Room of Requirement. Here –” He shoved the Marauder’s Map into Hermione’s hand.  
“You’ve got to watch him and you’ve got to watch Snape, too. Use anyone else who you can rustle up from the DA. Hermione, those contact Galleons will still work, right? Dumbledore says he’s put extra protection in the school, but if Snape’s involved, he’ll know what Dumbledore’s protection is, and how to avoid it – but he won’t be expecting you lot to be on the watch, will he?”  
“Harry –” began Hermione, her eyes huge with fear.  
“I haven’t got time to argue,” said Harry curtly.  
“Take this as well –” He thrust the socks into Ron’s hands. (Rowling J. , 2005, pp. 693-694)

Similar things also happen in the last book of the series, entitled *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows*. Hermione Granger as a female has a role to nurture his friends but Harry as a male, since the very beginning becomes the leader who makes decision for the group. At that time, Harry Potter, who has an ability to read the villain’s mind, sees something which terrifies him – he sees that their school might be under attack. By the time he sees this, he immediately changes the group’s plan. He and his friends are supposed to take a rest after they manage to steal horcrux yet after reading Voldemort’s mind, he decides they should get going. He decides it immediately all by himself without giving any chance for his friends to discuss. Hermione proposes to make plan to make them ready but Harry neglects the idea, saying that there will be no enough time for them. In the end, his friends have no choice but to follow his plans.

“Did you see where in Hogwarts it is?” asked Ron, now scrambling to his feet too.

“No, he was concentrating on warning Snape, he didn’t think about exactly where it is –”

“Wait, wait!” cried Hermione as Ron caught up the Horcrux and Harry pulled out the Invisibility Cloak again. “We can’t just go, we haven’t got a plan, we need to –”

“We need to get going,” said Harry firmly. He had been hoping to sleep, looking forward to getting into the new tent, but that was impossible now. “Can you imagine what he’s going to do once he realizes the ring and the locket are gone? What if he moves the Hogwarts Horcrux, decides it isn’t safe enough?”

“But how are we going to get in?”

“We’ll go to Hogsmeade,” said Harry, “and try to work something out once we see what the protection around the school’s like. Get under the Cloak, Hermione, I want to stick together this time.”

“But we don’t really fit –”

“It’ll be dark, no one’s going to notice our feet.” The flapping of enormous wings echoed across the black water: The dragon had drunk its fill and risen into the air. They paused in their preparations to watch it climb higher and higher, now black against the rapidly darkening sky, until it vanished over a nearby mountain. Then Hermione walked forward and took her place between the other two. Harry pulled the Cloak down as far as it would go, and together they turned on the spot into the crushing darkness. (Rowling J. , 2007, pp. 552-553)

Not only being the “leader” among his two friends, Hermione Granger and Ron Weasley, Harry Potter is also considered as the leader among his school friends, in which his decision is most likely listened to. This portrayal is visible in the fifth book of the series, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. At that time, several Hogwarts students are taking part in such group which focuses on learning the defense against the dark arts. The group is already made but the leader has not been chosen yet but it seems that every student in the group looks up on Harry in making decision.

It was immediately apparent on entering the Great Hall that Umbridge’s sign had not only appeared in Gryffindor Tower. There was a peculiar intensity about the chatter and an extra measure of movement in the Hall as people scurried up and down their tables confer- ring on what they had read. Harry,

Ron, and Hermione had barely taken their seats when Neville, Dean, Fred, George, and Ginny descended upon them.

“Did you see it?”

“D’you reckon she knows?”

“What are we going to do?” They were all looking at Harry. He glanced around to make sure there were no teachers near them.

“We’re going to do it anyway, of course,” he said quietly.

“Knew you’d say that,” said George, beaming and thumping Harry on the arm. (Rowling J. , 2003, p. 354)

By finishing the process of reading the whole series, the answer of the above-mention question about whether or not this series is capable to challenge the gender stereotype can be found. It turns out that the answer which lies within the series is different from what the original author has claimed. Several scholars may argue that this series promote equality for both boys and girls but throughout the books, I find out that no, this series is unfortunately incapable of challenging gender stereotype.

## Conclusion

This study is conducted because I find myself being intrigued by the existed difference between the scholars and the writer of the series. Several scholars believe that the Harry Potter series are portraying stereotypical gender roles yet the author claims that she has intention to promote gender equality. The different claims between them lead me to a question about whether this book is really stereotypical or not. Yes, several scholars may find it different and the writer may claim that she has intention to portray gender equality – means she is giving the same opportunity for both boys and girls. Unfortunately, after finishing the critical reading process the answer that I find is totally the opposite.

In order to answer the question about whether or not this book is really stereotypical, I am using a list by Lois Tyson as a base to see how the characters are behaving or interacting with each other. By doing a close reading to the whole series, I am convinced that this series often shows its characters to behave under



the stereotypical gender roles. Boys and girls in this series may have equal opportunity in several occasions yet there is more time when they are portrayed stereotypically—especially girls, who often be shown being submissive. However, by reading the whole books of the series and conducting the study, here in the last part, I provide a statement about how I end up with a conclusion that this series is portraying gender stereotype and seems to be unable to challenge them.

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