

THE ANALYSIS OF MORAL MESSAGE CONTAINED ON “LITTLE WOMEN” NOVEL BY LOUISA ALCOTT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines a moral lesson found in the novel "Little Women" by American white writer Louisa May Alcott. The life lessons depicted in the novel of little women is one in which people interact with each other through actions and behaviors. Through these morals, it also aims to study the roots of these morals as part of social values as well as the society of mid-19th century mirrored in the novel. According to Nurgiyantoro (1995), moral values in literature encompass the individual's relationship with humanity, God, social life, and the interconnectedness of life with nature. In the novel, characters face emotional challenges, prioritize financial gain through writing, believe money brings happiness at home, display stubbornness, value personal freedom, speak harshly, and harm their siblings' belongings. They also express their faith through prayers, praising God, and referencing religious figures. The main character maintains confidence in their wishes and shows gratitude to the divine. The characters teach valuable lessons about self-love, courage, overcoming inferiority, building confidence, and independent problem-solving, treating these experiences as life lessons. The novel emphasizes kindness towards those in need, encouraging readers to offer assistance and share with others. Overall, "Little Women" reminds us to slow down, appreciate what we have, and stand up for ourselves.. This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach to examine the moral components of the novel. Data collection involves reading, note-taking, and analyzing relevant quotes, remarks, and activities. All data utilized in the study are written texts, with the novel serving as the primary source. Supplementary materials such as books, journals, and online sources are considered secondary data. The research process encompasses data collection, selection, and analysis within the context of library research.

Keywords: *Moral lesson, little women, life lessons, characters*

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of literature always generates a lot of interest for further discussion. Through reading literary works like prose, poetry, and drama that we can both enjoy and learn from, we can have a better grasp of culture and



history around the world and learn about living in an earlier time period. Also, we can learn about the author's worldview from literary works, which can help us understand more about the events of time, such as the social conditions the author experienced and which are described in the novel or other literary works. Literature is also an idea that writers' imaginative minds create and then translate into written art. Several facets of life and its issues that are depicted in literature serve as inspiration for writers. According to Cuddon (1998:471), the term "literature" is in use to refer to works that fall into the key genres of epic, drama, lyric, novel, and short story. According to Klaler (2004:1), literature is typically understood to be the sum of all written expression, with the caveat that not every written work may be referred to as literature in the strictest meaning of the word.

Characters in literary works frequently mirror and resemble real human life, as well as being related with it (Nurgiyantoro, 1994:168). A piece of literature's content can be expressed by using sociological knowledge because there are typically multiple characters in every story. The performers of a tale are the characters. Character consists of several types, namely: (1) The main character, the character most told in the story a literary work, either as the perpetrator of the incident or who is subject to incident sanctions. A figure of the main role plays an important role and becomes the core of the story. This character can be protagonist and antagonist. (2) Additional figures or subordinate figures, do not play a role full and appear only a few times in the story as a helpful accompaniment to the

main character (Nurgiyantoro, 1994:176). Characters always have ties to the author and the setting they inhabit, according to the conventions of characterization. A person's place or position in a social group in relation to other groups within a bigger group is also referred to as their social status. There are many different ways to communicate literary works, including through novels, poetry, poems, rhymes, and others. The purpose of novels as literary works is to be enjoyed. The lessons of books can be applied to daily life by reading. This is so that readers' minds can be expanded and their horizons of knowledge and experience can be broadened by the novel's life lessons. The values presented in a literary work are implicitly given by the author, therefore when reading or comprehending one, care must be taken to base one's knowledge on an observant mind, which is perceptive enough to see what is presented in the literary work. Also, among readers who enjoy literature, novels are a particularly popular genre. As a novel's story is typically based on a mirror of human existence, it is intended that readers will comprehend the moral of the tale.

The novel is the most comprehensive literary work with a more extensive explanation of the theme, story, characters, and setting, so the writer picks the book as the subject of research. The novel is the most comprehensive literary work with a more extensive explanation of the theme, story, characters, and setting, so the writer picks the book as the subject of research by Louisa May Alcott's novel, *Little Women* in 1868. *Little Women*, a book by Louisa May Alcott, first published in 1868. The troubles,



challenges, and traits that affect young women's lives in society are illustrated in this book. Being good mothers and wives, taking care of the home, cooking, caring for children, serving their husbands, and other duties place a double weight on women. Women have the same rights that men do to pursue their goals in life, including employment and education. Jo, Meg, Amy, and Beth March, the sisters of the March family, are described in this book. They battled the discrimination against women at the time because they were born into a low-income family during the 19th century's wartime. Children's books rarely contain straight forward, common place tales that can amuse young readers. Some of it urges readers to reflect about how women were portrayed in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, like in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, which raises a significant issue. Children's books rarely contain straightforward, commonplace tales that can amuse young readers. Some of it urges readers to consider a serious issue, like *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott and the *Emily Series* by Lucy Maud Montgomery, which challenges them to consider how women were portrayed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

According to Kenny in Nurgiyantoro (2009) said that moral tales are typically meant to make suggestions on particular, useful moral lessons. The author's deliberate advice on different topics of behavior and social manners is provided in this book. The reader is undoubtedly given a very helpful and beneficial moral by the fictional work. The reader will benefit from the moral in "*Little Women*" in a similar manner. The lesson presented in this book has a strong connection to the battle for

survival. *Little Women's* story covers a variety of fascinating life issues and moral lessons that readers can learn from. many aspects of life, society, and dreams are shown in stories. and making it simpler for readers to locate the moral principles at issue. *Little Women* is a popular novel about a woman's struggle in life and her thoughts on suicide. Because the plot is so lighthearted, readers enjoy it. The author is interested in studying any moral principles in the book *Little Women*, how the main character deals with challenges in their life, and how the author transmits a moral message in *Little Women* based on the things that have been addressed.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 NOVEL

A novel holds significant value in the realm of literature as it allows authors to develop a central theme by skillfully crafting a sequence of words. According to Little (1970:68), a novel is a form of narrative text characterized by its extensive prose, inclusion of characters, and fictional events. Through descriptive portrayals, imaginative storytelling, personal experiences, dialogues, and various other elements, a novel vividly presents a depiction of the world and delves deep into the essence of human nature. What sets novels apart from other literary works is their exceptional ability to construct compelling narratives. The unique strength of a novel lies in its ability to intricately weave together complex, detailed, and captivating narratives while employing straightforward and accessible language that allows readers to truly immerse themselves in the author's imagination. Consequently, the art of crafting a novel presents a greater challenge as it



requires meticulous organization and the seamless integration of a multitude of events unfolding throughout its extensive storyline (Stanton, 1965:44). Based on Nurgiantoro's perspective (2010:10), a novel can be described as an extended prose composition that explores various narratives surrounding an individual's life and environment, with a particular emphasis on character development and the portrayal of human nature. This fictional work is constructed using distinct building blocks, namely intrinsic and extrinsic elements. Comprising of two integral components, intrinsic and extrinsic, both play a crucial role in shaping the evolution of literature (Simaibang, 2017:105). The novel is a genre of literary work that is written as a narrative with some conflict in the life stories of the story's protagonists. A novel has a theme that the author develops using their descriptions, fantasies, experiences, characterizations, dialogue, and other means of expressing the theme and moral principles. Every book has a specific message that the authors are meant to convey. With the course of events in the novel, they undergo thought and concept transformation. On large canvases, paintings of the civilization have been created (Little, 1970: 105). The social background has a significant impact on social beliefs because it is the primary factor in their formation. By reading a novel, readers not only had the pleasure of appreciating the plot, but they also became aware of the implications that the novel was implying. Despite the absence of an image to aid in their understanding, readers were able to picture the situation as they followed the story's progression. This helped us

comprehend human emotions, as well as other people's suffering and curiosity. Also, novel-length fiction could teach readers about comparable ideals and culture. Because the author of the story constructed the development of the characters who were highly intricate and had numerous issues, readers could increase their comprehension such as morals.

2.2 MORAL

Values with a moral dimension typically possess a strong social aspect and enjoy widespread acceptance within society. Unlike other values, morals are primarily concerned with distinguishing between good and bad. As Hurlock Elizabeth (1997:386) explains, the term "moral" originates from the Latin word "mores," which encompasses manners, customs, and folkways. Moral behavior refers to actions that align with the moral standards upheld by a particular social group. Such behavior is guided by moral concepts and the established codes of conduct that members of a culture have grown accustomed to, which define the expected behavioral patterns for all individuals within the group. Moral issues arise from what people's actions and behaviors have caused in society. According to Barcallow (1994:2-4), moral questions touch both action and character; they come up when people are faced with decisions like "what should I do (or not do)," "how should I act," etc. The most fundamental moral dilemmas occur when people's decisions will either increase or decrease the well-being of others, resulting in either injury or profit. The potential consequences for one's well-being encompass both physical and psychological harm. This includes (1) the



onset or escalation of distressing psychological conditions such as loneliness, fear, depression, hopelessness, despair, unhappiness, anxiety, and sadness, as well as (2) the decline of positive psychological states like self-confidence, self-respect, happiness, and a sense of self-worth. Nurgiyantoro (1995:324) states that moral values in the literature include those that are related to the individual human, to God, and to social life, including that life's link with nature.

a. From of moral values with God

God is the source of all of life's moral principles. Morriston (2001:128) said that God's commands are the only ultimate source of all moral standards and obligations. Additionally, every religion offers moral precepts that serve as a guide for its followers' behavior. God's moral principles are typically found in religions. Praying to God is, in essence, a type of moral value. It implies that we, as God's creatures, the human race, should be continually begging and thanking God for the bounties bestowed upon us by abstaining from all forbidden behaviors and adhering to all directives.

b. From of moral values in human life with itself

Moral Principles in Human Life as well by using all of their potential, skills, and abilities without harming others, it will inspire people to reach pleasure and perfection in their personal lives. Responsibility is a moral value that pertains to the human person. Responsibility, in the words of Lickona (1991:72), is the capacity to react or respond. It denotes that duty is oriented toward others through paying attention to them and actively addressing their

needs. Responsibility also highlights our duty to look out for one another. The capacity for responsibility can be used to gauge human qualities. Wherever he is, he must account for all that was done by humans. As a result, every human being must assume responsibility at some point in their lives.

c. From of moral values in the social life

As social beings, humans interact with other people on a daily basis in both family and societal settings. Therefore, in order for things to go as planned and without any misunderstandings, humans must comprehend the applicable rules. We refer to these as societal moral values. Human conscience is closely related to social moral principles. Humans can distinguish between those who are kind and those who are bad thanks to conscience. Daniel (2008:136) claims that in addition to the things we have already done, our conscience is also awakened by the things we plan to do or refrain from doing. We can infer from the following assertion that our conscience has the power to influence how we act and what we do. The conscience can also elicit very intense emotions in us.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

A descriptive qualitative methodology is used in this study. Hikmawati (2020) defines qualitative research as a methodological approach rooted in specific traditions of inquiry, aimed at comprehending and exploring social or human problems. By conducting qualitative research, a researcher generates descriptive data on the person or activity that was the subject of the novel. The data in this



thesis are quotes, sentences, statements, and actions by the main character in little women's novel, a work of genre fiction with 257 pages and 23 chapters, was written by Louisa M. Alcott and published by Global Grey in an illustrated version in 1868.

This study's focus is on the novel's moral components. Reading, making notes, and referring to quotes, words, remarks, and activities relating to the study's problem is all part of the data collection process and practice reading technique by reading the novel. The entire novel's main aim was to inform readers about identification in general. The first, learning about identification in general was the novel's main objective. Here is how to create a methodology or method from the given sentence: (1) Thoroughly reading and evaluating the novel's moral themes: the first step in this method is to carefully read and understand the moral themes present in the novel. After reading, the moral themes are evaluated using an analytical approach. (2) Recording information from the literature through paraphrasing or direct quoting: the second part involves recording relevant information from the literature under review. And this information is recorded using two methods: paraphrasing (expressing it in one's own words) or directly quoting from the literature. Prior to recording, the literature is thoroughly read to ensure accuracy and relevance to the study. (3) The data analysis method used in this study is descriptive qualitative: the chosen method for data analysis in this research is descriptive qualitative. And this method is selected because the data requires descriptive explanations. Data analysis is conducted by describing and explaining the findings derived from

the data. This method includes the following steps:

1. Thoroughly reading and evaluating the novel's moral themes.
2. Recording information from the literature through paraphrasing or direct quoting after careful reading.
3. Using the descriptive qualitative data analysis method to explain the findings from the collected data.

The description process is used to identify all of the research's objectives, and the steps that follow are taken. To facilitate further analysis of the data, the results are first compared to one another and then divided into existing categories. Little Women was an instant commercial and critical hit, and readers clamored for more information about the novel's moral lesson. Also, the research methodology employed in libraries is used, and all the data used in this study are written texts. The novel itself is regarded as the primary data, with books, journals, and many other written materials, including internet-based items, handled as secondary data. The steps in this library research are data collection, data selection, and data analysis. The analytical-descriptive method, which is also utilized in this study, analyzes and presents all the data in a descriptive manner. In this situation, in addition to the literary approach, historical, social, and cultural approaches are applied.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aims of the research are to find out the moral message on "little women" novel. Every novel always gives the message that make us interested in watching it. The message of the novel also make us learn about everything that can change our life to be the better.



Little Women holds a special place among the timeless novels that resonate throughout generations. It has earned its status as a true classic due to numerous compelling reasons. Recently, the researcher had the opportunity to revisit the novel following the release of the movie adaptation, and with each reading, they unearthed new valuable insights and life lessons. Despite being set in the 1860s, the novel's relevance endures, as it continues to inspire and empower girls to become strong, independent women in contemporary society.

1) Good behavior and God

a. Gratitude

"In that moment, as Margaret sat alone, tears streaming onto her work, she became acutely aware of the immense wealth she possessed. It was a richness that surpassed any material luxuries money could acquire, for it resided in the realms of love, protection, peace, and good health—the invaluable blessings that truly define a fulfilled life. Little Women beautifully captures this poignant realization, reminding us of the immeasurable worth found in life's intangible treasures" – Little Women

Margaret, also referred to as Meg, is portrayed as a character who genuinely cares for her family and strives to be content with what she has. However, despite her efforts, she finds it challenging to resist feeling unhappy or dissatisfied. She is envious of her wealthier friends who enjoy luxurious experiences such as wearing designer clothes, attending extravagant parties, and being free from work obligations. They have the privilege to visit theaters,

parks, and indulge in expensive dinners. It is not until her sister Beth falls ill that Margaret becomes aware of her own indifference or lack of appreciation. Prior to this event, she remains oblivious to her own sense of entitlement and desire for more. Margaret, who always harbors an underlying longing for greater material wealth and experiences, fails to recognize the hollowness or insignificance of worldly possessions. The passing of her sister Beth serves as a turning point for Margaret's understanding and realization. It is through this loss that she grasps the true meaninglessness of pursuing material possessions and experiences. This suggests that the death of her sister becomes a catalyst for Margaret's personal growth and a shift in her perspective towards a more profound understanding of life's values. Overall, this analysis highlights the internal struggles faced by Margaret, her eventual self-awareness, and the transformative impact of her sister's illness and death on her perception of wealth and materialism..

2) Values of morality in the course of human life

a. Be sure what you say has meaning.

"I like good strong worlds that mean something" – Little Women

b. You can handle whatever life throws at you as long as you try.

"I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning how to sail my ship" – Little Women

In "Little Women," Marmee plays a significant role as the moral compass for the four March sisters. As her husband serves as a chaplain for the Union army, Marmee assumes the role of a single

parent for much of the time. She faces the challenge of managing a perilous world with limited resources while also ensuring the stability of her family. Marmee runs a household filled with emotional intensity, raising four teenage children and guiding them through an uncertain environment, all while adhering to a tight budget. Despite these difficulties, she remains steadfast in instilling principles and values in her daughters.

This analysis highlights Marmee's importance as a guiding force in the March family. Her husband's absence places a greater responsibility on her to maintain order and provide moral guidance. Marmee's ability to navigate the challenges of a war-torn era, financial constraints, and the complexities of raising four daughters demonstrates her strength, resilience, and dedication as a mother figure. She becomes the anchor that holds the family together, imparting important life lessons and shaping the character of her daughters. Marmee's character exemplifies the nurturing and selfless nature of motherhood, and her influence is instrumental in the personal growth and development of the March sisters throughout the novel.

c. Let go of expectations

"But don't let it spoil you, for it's wicked to throw away so many good gifts because you can't have the one you want" – little women

In this passage, it is described that Laurie has harbored feelings for Jo for a long time. Amy informs Laurie that he is free to continue loving Jo indefinitely, despite her lack of reciprocation. Amy advises Laurie not to let this unrequited love have a negative impact on him. She

urges him not to discard all the beautiful things and experiences in his life just because he can't have the person he desires. Amy acknowledges that she, too, initially believed that Jo and Laurie should have been together but has come to accept that it's not meant to be. She emphasizes the importance of letting go and embracing change, as it is a fundamental aspect of being human. Amy suggests that clinging to one specific desire can potentially overshadow all the other positive aspects of life. The analysis depicts the emotional dynamics between Laurie, Jo, and Amy in the context of unrequited love. Laurie loves Jo, but Jo does not share the same feelings. Amy, as an observer, provides wise advice to Laurie, emphasizing the significance of moving forward in life despite unrequited love. She understands that she herself initially supported Laurie and Jo's relationship, but over time, she has come to accept the reality that it cannot happen. The conveyed message revolves around acceptance, the courage to let go, and appreciating the beauty and experiences in life, even when our desires are not fulfilled. It showcases the importance of personal growth and the ability to see the positive aspects of life, even when faced with unrequited love or failures in achieving our desires..

d. Maintain a balanced lifestyle.

"Have regular hours for work and play; make each day both useful and pleasant, and prove that you understand the worth of time by employing it well" – little women

As a workaholic, I can't help but feel this. But, Marmee is correct as usual. Making the most of every moment we

have is important since we never know how long we will be on this planet.

- e. If you can't love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love anyone else.
"Be worthy love, and love will come"
– *little women*

The quote from Little Women, "Be worthy love, and love will come," remains as relevant today as it was in 1860. It reminds us that we cannot rely on someone else to rescue us or complete us. Before we can fully embrace and appreciate the depth of love, we must first find contentment and confidence within ourselves as individuals. Only when we are whole and satisfied on our own can we truly unlock the boundless possibilities and joys that love can bring into our lives.

3) Values of morality in relation to society

- a. Kindness is the greatest value
"The humblest tasks get beautified if loving hands do them" – *Little Women*

In the passage of the novel, the girls stumble upon the realization that their mother, Marmee, has temporarily left their home to help with a childbirth. Despite their own lack of material possessions, they make a compassionate choice to bring their humble Christmas meal to a needy family. Marmee's emphasis on kindness as a guiding principle in raising her daughters has had a profound impact on them. Through this act of generosity, the girls learn firsthand the importance of incorporating kindness into their daily lives, regardless of their own circumstances.

The character in the Little Women literature is trustworthy, willing to make sacrifices, has a big heart, is self-assured, and converses about people who were able to get past their defects. The mother counsels the youngster and provides a positive role model. Insightful discussions and arguments regarding marriage are abundant in Little Women, which is beneficial to young people.

There are characters that have trouble controlling their emotions, write purely for financial gain, argue and believe that money is the source of happiness in the home, are obstinate, enjoy freedom, speak harshly, and harm their brother's assets, among other traits. First, the characters are praising God, referencing religious figures, and praying, as may be seen at a look. The main character claims that their wish would come true and always gratitude to the god that has. Second, the characters taught the readers love themselves and be courage, not feel inferior, be confident and solve problems by themselves. And the experience as a life lesson. Third, the novel informs all readers always be kind to all that needs our helping and sharing.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women," it becomes evident that the author utilized her novel as a means to express her thoughts and ideas specifically aimed at young adult girls. Alcott's portrayal of multidimensional characters with problems and flaws sets "Little Women" apart from contemporary works of its time. The novel offers numerous lessons that readers can draw upon, including the importance of being dutiful, selfless, hardworking, self-reflective, and true to

oneself, as showcased through the experiences of the four March sisters.

The researchers' study yields several conclusions. Firstly, the novel is a product of the author's personal experiences, the experiences of others, or the writer's imaginative capacity to create a story that carries moral messages. Secondly, moral messages can be gleaned from various literary works, including novels. Thirdly, "Little Women" delivers multiple moral messages encompassing strong women, love, togetherness, honesty, independence, discipline, wisdom, kindness, courage, and diligence. Lastly, reading the novel serves as a reminder to slow down, appreciate one's surroundings, express gratitude for what one has, and always stand up for oneself.

In conclusion, Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women" stands out as a novel that not only expresses the author's thoughts for young adult girls but also presents multidimensional characters and valuable lessons. The work emphasizes the significance of virtues such as resilience, integrity, and gratitude. By showcasing the complexities of the March sisters' lives, the novel encourages readers to embrace their duties, practice selflessness, work hard, engage in self-reflection, and stay true to their values. "Little Women" serves as a timeless reminder to cherish the present, express gratitude, and assert oneself when necessary.

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