THE DAUGHTERS’ PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT INFLUENCED BY THE MOTHER’S SELF-ESTEEM AS SEEN IN LOUISA MAY ALCOTT’S LITTLE WOMEN

A SARJANA PENDIDIKAN THESIS

Presented as Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements to Obtain the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Language Education

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
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FACULTY OF TEACHERS TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

I honestly declare that this thesis, which I have written, does not contain the work or parts of the work of other people, except those cited in the quotations and the references, as a scientific paper should.

Yogyakarta, July 11, 2017

The Writer

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ABSTRACT

Erene, Ayu Priska Puspita. (2017). *The Daughters’ Personality Development Influenced By The Mother’s Self-Esteem As Seen in Louisa May Alcott’s Little Women*. Yogyakarta: English Language Education Study Program, Department of Language and Arts, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Sanata Dharma University.

Parents play an important role in taking care of their children. However, the situation that the society faces is that many families only consist of one of parents, either father or mother. This situation is currently caused by divorce between father and mother. Surprisingly, this fact does not exist nowadays since long time ago many families only consist of children and mother since the father must join the army. Whereas, their positions as parents are really crucial to children.

In this study, the researcher formulated three research questions: (1) How do the mother’s behaviours reveal the mother’s self-esteem? (2) How do the daughters’ behaviours reveal their personality traits? (3) How does the mother’s self-esteem influence the daughters’ personality development?

This study applied a psychological approach since it provides detail information about personality and characters which are needed in conducting a research on personality development. The major source of this study is the novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled *Little Women*. Then, the secondary sources are books related to psychological approach, the critical reading about the novel, and the books related to personality theories.

Based on the analysis, there are three main conclusions of this study. First, the character of mother in the *Little Women* novel has high self-esteem which can be seen from five components. The components show that she is likely to report fewer negative emotion, able to socialize with their social circles effectively, experiencing less depression, having more confidence to judge herself, and good in handling stress. Second, the character of daughters in the story have high dimension of personality traits. Third, mother’s self-esteem gives big and positive influence to the daughters’ personality. The development is reflected through emotional determinant, social determinant, and family determinant. Moreover, the high dimension of the daughters’ personalities remains high or stable, and the negative emotions which indicate the low dimension of personality change become high dimension or positive emotion through positive behaviours.

**Keywords**: personality development, self-esteem, personality traits
ABSTRAK


Dalam penelitian ini, terdapat tiga pertanyaan pokok: (1) Bagaimana tindakan-tindakan tokoh ibu mencerminkan rasa menghargai diri sendiri? (2) Bagaimana tindakan-tindakan anak-anak perempuan mencerminkan sifat-sifat mereka? (3) Bagaimana rasa menghargai diri sendiri yang dimiliki oleh tokoh ibu dapat mempengaruhi perkembangan kepribadian anak-anak perempuannya?


Kata kunci: personality development, self-esteem, personality traits
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Ayu Priska Puspita Erène
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of five important parts. The first part is background of the study. It concerns on the rationale of why this study is conducted. The second part is research questions. It explains about the problems that lead this study to set the limitation of the problems. The third part is significance of the study. It presents the meanings that readers can draw from this study. The last part is about definition of terms that may be very helpful to understand some important concepts that are used in this thesis.

A. Background of The Study

Personality development and family relationship are related to each other. The family relationship affects the personality development of the family members. In the case of this study, the family relationship has a role in developing the daughters’ personality. Hurlock (1955) stated that when children get their needs through the proper home environment, it will also bring them a healthy and well-balanced personality when they grow into adolescence and adulthood. It means that parents and siblings have important duty to improve someone’s personality in the family as Hurlock (1955) proposed, “of all the factors that influence the adolescent’s self-concept, control of the family influence is, unquestionably, the most difficult” (p. 675).
Nowadays, many families only consist of single parent and his or her children. In most of the cases, it is the result of parents’ divorce. Absence of mother or father is believed to lead the family into a chaotic situation for the family, especially for the children. Without father or mother in a family, children will lose opportunities to grow. In consequence, their personality development is negatively influenced. We know that when children live with their parents, they have enough affection and care (Hurlock, 1955). But, when their parents get divorced, unfortunately they have to live separately with their parents. Some of them only live with their mother, some of them live with their father, and the rest live neither with father nor mother. Living separately from parents especially mother, will bring negative impact such as disruption of their development process. Parents, especially mothers, have really a crucial role in guiding and caring their children. When a mother cannot handle her children well, it will cause a serious problem of the children’s personality. Hurlock (1955) stated “emotional problems of adolescents can often be traced to feeling of insecurity on the part of the mother, resulting from her lack of training for the parental role and her confusion about how to bring up her children” (p. 672). Therefore, a mother has a special and important position in taking care of children. Mother’s role as the most important agent cannot be replaced by other family member such as father, siblings, or any other people.

In fact, this issue does not only exist at the present time, but also at the previous time even long time ago. Many families had the same situation, when the fathers had to leave the families to join the war. As a result, the children only live
with their mothers. This situation can be seen in a novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled *Little Women*. In the novel, there are four daughters who lived only with their mother since their father was away to join the American Civil War (1861-1865). The researcher chose this novel because it reflects the influence of mother’s self-aspect towards her daughters’ personality development. The researcher analysed the personality development of the daughters in the novel by considering the presence of the parents especially mother. Further, the aim of this study is to analyse the daughters’ personality development through their personality traits as the influence of mother’s self-concept, particularly self-esteem.

### B. Research Questions

In this study, the researcher analysed the novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled *Little Women* to answer these three questions:

1. How do the mother’s behaviours reveal her self-esteem?
2. How do the daughters’ behaviours reveal their personality traits?
3. How does the mother’s self-esteem influence the daughters’ personality development?

### C. Significance of The Study

The researcher conducted this research to fulfil the requirements to obtain the *Sarjana Pendidikan* Degree. The researcher hopes that the findings even all
stages of this study will be worthwhile for the common society and the development of science or knowledge. Therefore, the researcher suggests some benefits for teachers, students, future researchers, and general society.

Teachers, educators, and trainers may use this study as the additional source in learning process in the class. Besides, they can use the novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled *Little Women* as the material in learning literature subjects such as Prose and Introduction to Literature or reading skill subjects such as Basic Reading and Critical Reading and Writing. In addition, teachers may use the findings of this research for the consideration in teaching psychology and personality development. Therefore, it may not merely be beneficial for English teachers, but also for teachers with different subjects.

Students or learners may use the findings of this research as the individual learning related to literary work and personality development. The researcher hopes the students will have better understanding about both textual structure and the non-textual context. They can learn both the historical value of the story and the technique the author wrote the story.

The researcher hopes that this research will lead future researchers to be more critical in doing literature research. They may use the findings of this research as the consideration points of the other related topics. The future researchers can elaborate the topic of this research or doing elaboration more on the character of mother.

The researcher wants to introduce the literary work to the general society through this research. The novel of this study may become the media to amuse
people in enjoying their activities. Besides, it can be the way to understand the historical and cultural events of other countries in the past. The researcher also hopes that the findings may help the society especially parents to understand the personality development process of their children through the simple way of understanding.

D. Definition of Terms

There are some terms need to be defined in order to help the readers in having the same understanding with the researcher. Those terms are:

1. Personality Development

   The word personality will be used very often in this thesis. It has some specific and rather complicated definitions. Therefore, the definitions that will be discussed are only those which are suitable and appropriate for the topic of this thesis. The first definition is by Ryckman (2008), he wrote “personality is the dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviours in various situations” (p. 4). The second elaboration of personality came from Woodworth and Marquis, they stated that personality is “quality of the individual’s total behaviour” (as cited in Hurlock, 1965, p. 462). Furthermore, Hjele and Ziegler (1981) noted personality deals with the general impressions that an individual makes on others that is sum of characteristics or dominant characteristics that a typical of individual and thus observable in various social settings. Therefore,
personality is closely related to behaviour, uniqueness in all individuals, life developmental and perspective.

2. Self-Esteem

The psychologist, Baron (1995) defines self-esteem as some influence of feeling good or bad about ourselves. Baron also proposes that self-esteem is closely related to behaviours. Then, Campbell (1990) and Epstein (1983) define self-esteem as the area to which our self-quality is favourable or unfavourable (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 488).

3. Personality Traits

Robert S. Feldman defines trait as the “consistent personality characteristic and behaviours displayed in different situations” (2011, p. 388). In 1995, Baron defines personality traits are the firmly fixed dimensions or personality along which people can vary, and people usually use it to describe other people specifically. Baron also adds that personality traits are a strong habitual behaviour or tendency to think about others in terms of particular characteristics.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The second chapter of this study is about the review of related theories that are used in the process of writing this thesis. It consists of three main parts; the review of related studies, review of related theories and the theoretical framework. In the review of related theories, the researcher provides the theories that will be used in analysing the topic. There are three major theories used in this study; theory of critical approach, theory of character and characterization, theories related to personality development. The last part of this chapter is theoretical framework that explains the connection of the theories used and the study.

A. Review of Related Studies

The novel by Louisa May Alcott is one of the famous classic novels. It is not surprising if many people use this novel to their research. There are four researchers who used this novel in different topic. The first topic is about feminism which is written by Wulandari (2000). She discussed feminism revealed in the novel. The second researcher is Widyaningtyas (2002). She discussed one of the characters in the novel, Josepine. The major topic of her research is Jo’s self-sacrifice and independence. The third researcher is Wibowo (2003) who conducted the literature research on Jo’s perception. The last is Puji (2007) who did research on Jo’s masculinity.
From those four topics, people may see that their interests were on the individual character. In contrast, this study sets to investigate the personality development of all children, especially the improvement of their personality traits. It is argued that it is the mother’s self-esteem and self-monitoring that heavily influence the personality development of her four daughters. Therefore, this thesis is quite different since I discuss the broader part of the novel.

B. Review of Related Theories

There are six theories used in this study; theory of critical approach, theory of character and characterization, theories related to character of mother, theory of self-esteem, theory of personality development, and the theory of personality traits.

1. Theory of Critical Approach

The theory of critical approach leads people to understand that literature is one of the precious artistic works since it teaches something to the public as the statement of Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Reesman, and Willingham (2005).

Anything that could so move and interest large number of people, including the most cultivated and enlightened, and that had such obvious and pronounced didactic uses was in the judgement of academicians bound to be worthy of intellectual analysis. Such a view may well have motivated educators to make literature an academic subject: it “taught” something; it was source of “knowledge” (p. 1).

Guerin et al. (2005) also state that doing interpretation in literature may cause the feeling of enjoyment or satisfaction.
On the contrary, this book is predicated on the assumption that such knowledge and the intelligent application of several interpretive techniques can enhance the pleasure that the common reader can derive from a piece of literature (p. 5).

Finally, Kennedy and Gioia (2010) state the importance of using the theory of critical approach in interpreting literature by saying that the approach leads the imaginative literature to be more perceptive (p. 678).

Moreover, Guerin et al. (2005) propose that the theory of critical approach consists of some approaches such as historical and biographical approach, moral and philosophical approach, formalist approach, feminism and gender studies, and psychological approach. First, the *historical and biographical approach* is an approach which covers the author’s real life and its reflection in the character’s life in the literary work. “Put simply, this approach sees a literary work chiefly, if not exclusively, as a reflection of its author’s life and times or the life and times of the characters in the work.” (p. 51). Second, the *moral and philosophical approach* is an approach which reviews that literary work reflects philosophical and morality issues.

The basic position of such critics is that the larger function of literature is to teach morality and probe philosophical issues. They would interpret literature within a context of the philosophical thought of a period or group (p. 77).

Third, the *formalist approach* explains that the literary work is the one which covers all information needed in a literature study,

The formalist approach, as we use the term in this book emphasizes the manner of reading literature that was given its special dimension and emphases by English and American critics in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century (p. 96).
Fourth, the *feminisms and gender studies* enclose the gender issues on literature study, “feminism is an overtly *political approach* and can attack other approaches for their false assumptions about women.” (p. 223). Fifth, the *psychological approach* focuses on human growth and development process in the literary works as seen from psychological side. This approach is quite different with the other approaches since it deals with the detail information in the works.

In turn, the crucial limitation of the psychological approach is its aesthetic inadequacy: psychological interpretation can afford many profound clues toward solving a work’s thematic and symbolic mysteries, but it can seldom account for the beautiful symmetry of a well-wrought poem or a fictional masterpiece (p. 153).

This study employs the psychological approach to identify the personality development and the factor of self of the characters. This approach is the most suitable tool to analyse the specific behaviours of the characters in the novel. Moreover, it provides the strong argument based on the psychologists’ research.

2. Theory of Character and Characterization

According to Stanton (1965), the term character can be understood from two different perspectives; to indicate the individuals who appear in the story, and to identify the variety of interests, desires, emotions, and moral principles that construct the image of the characters (p. 17). In identifying the character of the story, the researcher needs the theory of character and characterization since it helps the researcher to determine the personality of the characters by looking through their speech, thought, and behaviours. Based on the idea of Kennedy and Gioia (2010), characterization is a technique to develop the characters. According
to Murphy (1972), there are nine techniques for authors to make their characters become more understandable and alive; those techniques are personal description, character seen by another, speech, past life, conversation of others, reaction, direct comment, thoughts, and mannerisms (pp. 161-173).

The first technique is *personal description*. It explains that an author describes the character’s personal appearance and her or his clothes. In other words, it is the way the author communicates to the readers about the characters and their personalities (p. 161). In this way, the author describes the characters in detail images; the face, skin, eyes, and the castaway’s extraordinary clothing (p. 162).

The second is *character seen by another*. This second way of revealing characteristic can be seen when an author describes a character through other characters. The pointed character will be reflected. The readers can see it from the choice of words and phrases, shape, cleanliness, firmness, smoothness, or coloured described.

The third technique is *speech*. This way leads the readers to understand a character through what the person says, “whenever a person speaks, whenever he is in conversation with another, whenever he puts forward an opinion, he is giving us some clue(s) to his character” (p. 164). The key is in the character’s own dialogue and behaviour. Additionally, Stanton (1965) states that every speech, every action is a manifestation of character in good fiction (p. 18).

The fourth is *past life*. According to its name, this type of portraying a character is based on her or his past life. Usually, it employs some ways such as
the character’s thought, the character’s conversations, the medium of another person by direct comment by the author. Then, the knowledge may help the readers to understand the character’s behaviours and acts as he or she does at the present time.

The fifth is *conversation of others*. It explains that other characters’ conversation may also give clues to the pointed character. “The author can also give us clues to a person’s character through the conversation of other people and the things they say are often given as a clue to the character of the person spoken about.” (p. 167). The sixth is *reactions*. Sometimes, an author gives clues to the readers though the character’s response or reactions to different phenomenon, “The author can also give us a clue to a person’s character by letting us know that person reacts to various situations and events.” (p. 168).

The seventh is *direct comment*. This way of portraying the character help readers to understand the character easily since the author describe the character directly or in straightforward description. The eighth is *thoughts*. The author can give the readers direct knowledge of what a person is thinking about. “The reader then is in a privileged position; he has, as it were, a secret listening device plugged in to the inmost thoughts of a person in a novel.” (p. 171). The ninth or the last is *mannerisms*. The readers may understand one’s character by paying attention to the author’s description about a character’s mannerisms, habits or idiosyncrasies.
3. Theories Related to a Character of Mother

a. Mother’s Role

According to Feist and Feist (2006), anyone, woman or man, owns the archetype of a great mother which has connection with both positive and negative feeling. A person which is labelled as a great mother, acts for the two opposing forces; fertility and nourishment are on the one hand, then the power and destruction are on the other hand (p. 109). Fertility and nourishment explains that a mother is able to produce and sustain a life. However, a mother also able to devour or neglect her offspring or it is called destruction.

Jung (1954/1959c) as cited on Jess Feist and Gregory J. Feist (2006) see his own mother as having two kinds of personality, the one are loving and nurturing, the second are uncanny, archaic, and ruthless. Jung thought that people’s view about a terrible mother and a personal loving is almost completely overrated, “All those influences which the literature describes as being exerted on the children do not come from the mother herself, but rather from the archetype projected upon her, which gives her a mythological background” (p. 83). Based on this Jung’s view, then Feist and Feist (2006) make a clearer explanation, “the strong fascination that mother has for both men and women, often in the absence of a close personal relationship, was taken by Jung as evidence for the great mother archetype” (p 109).

Hurlock (1955) says that the girls’ idea of mother’s role tends to change more than boys’, the emotional weighting of the girls’ concept of the mother’s role is less favourable than the boys’. Hurlock also states that according to the
traditional concept, a mother has a duty to guide her children with sympathy, to manage the house and quickly, immediately, willingly to do things for and with her children, to instruct or give the children knowledge about moral and religious values, to establish the good behaviours for the children to follow. Meanwhile, the developmental concept focuses on mother’s impact in the development and growth of the children rather than the physical attention, the importance of mother having interests outside the home and sharing many involvements and experiences with her children at the time they reach the adolescent years. In addition, mothers tend to prefer the developmental concept even they seem frustrated when the environment put them in the traditional concept (p. 624).

b. Family Relationship

According to Hurlock (1974), family has direct influence towards the personality development of the sons or daughters through moulding and communication. Then, it also gives influence indirectly through identification, conscious imitation of attitudes, behaviour patterns.

In Hurlock’s book *Personality Development* (1974), she states that in a family when one parent is absent because of death, divorce, desertion, separation, or some other cause, the condition of the home becomes a “solo” home with one parent, which usually mother who plays the role of both father and mother (p. 376). The solo family may become either the point of embarrassment or point of pride for the family members. The embarrassment usually can be seen from the result of divorce or desertion of the father. Meanwhile, the pride feeling usually
when the father leaves the family because of serving his country overseas in the armed forces or engaging in an occupation that puts him in a frequent and long absences from his home. When father is away from home, mother tends to be less demanding and more indulgent toward her sons or daughters. This situation leads the children to be independent and less mature than his age-mates-conditions that jeopardize the social relationship and guide to unfavourable social judgements (p. 377).

c. Home Climate

Hurlock (1955) suggests that every home or family has its own home climate or different psychological atmosphere of the home. Usually, the home climate becomes poor when the children reach early years of adolescence, but normally improves when the adolescence progresses. Parents are primarily responsible in managing and controlling over it. In addition, parental occupation has effects on the home climate of the family. The idea is when the father’s occupation is satisfying, the mother and the adolescent will be happier and it will have favourable effect on home climate (p. 617).

Hurlock proposes that mother has the occupation as important as father’s job because “mother’s occupation always disturbs the homeostasis of the family more than the father’s does” (p. 617). It means that mother gives more influence to the family more than father. There are some conditions of mother’s occupation that affects the home climate; age of children, reason for working, and children attitudes. The age of children focus on the mother’s care of her children affected
by their ages. When in a family there is a younger child, then it will really affect the home climate when mother goes to work since the younger child needs more intensive care of a mother. On the other hand, the adolescent does not need the intensive care as the younger child. The reason for working focus on two main points of the reasons behind a mother decides to work. The first reason is selfish reasons or reasons other than to help the family condition. Unfortunately, this reason will lead to guilty feeling since that mother is not conforming to the cultural stereotype of a good mother. The second reason is unselfish reasons or to help her family. Fortunately, this leads mother to compensate in all ways for any inconvenience. The last factor is the children attitudes which focus on the adolescents’ idea about the working mother. The working mother is likely to introduce the efficiency methods of the working world into the family which may lead them to criticize the way adolescents do the tasks assigned to them. Then, the working mother usually puts greater pressure and has high aspirations on adolescents than the nonworking mother.

4. Theory of Self-Esteem

Benesch and Page (1989) argue that “Our self-concept or our beliefs and knowledge about ourselves plays a crucial role in our total personality” (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 488). Then, Baron (1995) strengthens that idea said that “much current research on personality is concerned with various aspects of the self”. He adds that there are two aspects of the self that becomes the central point of attention; self-esteem and self-monitoring.

According to Brown and McGill (1989), people who have high self-esteem are good in handling stress, and experience fewer negative health effects. According to Straumann and Higgins (1989), people who are in high self-esteem are likely to report fewer negative emotions and experience less depression than those who are low in self-esteem (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 488). The other findings related to self-esteem are; people in high self-esteem are less susceptible to influence (Wylie, 1974), they are having more confidence to achieve their goals (Wells & Marwell, 1976), and Baron and Byrne (1994) say “they make more favourable impressions on others” or effectively socialize with their social circles (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 489). Meanwhile, Campbell (1990) proposes some findings related to low self-esteem; they are less confidence in their judgement when somebody asked them to rate themselves on many different traits, they show less consistency in their self-ratings. In other words, people low in self-esteem are having less clear or less well-developed self-concept than those of people high in self-esteem. In conclusion, Baron (1995) says “Under most conditions, high self-esteem persons do a better job of regulating their own behaviour than low self-esteem person” (p. 490).
Brown & Marshall (2006) states that self-esteem has three faces: *global self-esteem, feeling of self-worth, and self-evaluations*. Those three faces can be the various definition of self-esteem. The *global self-esteem* is also called *trait self-esteem* which refers to a “personality variable that represents the way people generally feel about themselves” (p. 4). Then, the *feeling of self-worth* is also called *state self-esteem* refers to “self-evaluative reaction to valenced events. This is what people mean when they talk about experiences that ‘threaten self-esteem’ or ‘boost self-esteem’.” (p. 5). Then, *self-evaluation* is also called *domain specific self-esteem* refer to “the way people evaluate their various abilities and attributes.” (p. 5). The most important point of this concept is, *self-evaluations* refer to the way persons evaluate their physical attributes, abilities, and personality characteristics.

Crocker (2006) argues that one's self-esteem may influence other people's life, “For me, the aim is to be on the path of accomplishing our most cherished goals—goals that are both good for the self and good for others.” (p. 119). It is clear that, it may also influence the personality development of other people. Crocker also states that people with high self-esteem have positive views or self-confident. In contrast, people with low self-esteem can be so excessively negative about their own abilities and all condition of themselves. Besides, they usually take too much blame for failure. However, the high level of self-esteem may lead people to another problem; people are unrealistically positive about their ability and about themselves such as over confidence.
5. Theory of Personality Development

a. The meanings of Personality

Based on Kahn and Wright (1980) based on etymology, the history of how the words’ meaning have changed and developed, the word “personality” is derived from the word *persona*. The word *persona* “denoted the mask of the theatre in Greek drama to indicate the character which the actor was portraying” (p. 9). Another derivation comes from Latin origin is the phrase *per sonare* “which applied to the device in the mask through which the actor projected his voice” (p. 9). The word personality becomes the important and crucial term in psychology. Feldman (2011) defines personality as the pattern of long time existing characteristics that result in consistency and individuality. Personality includes the behaviours that make all of us unique and it differentiates a person from others. The other experts; Burger (1990), Carver and Scheier (1992), and Wallace (1993) draws the meaning of personality as the “individual’s unique and relatively stable patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and emotions” (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 460). Hurlock (1955) gives rather different definition related to personality; personality is “not one definite, specific attribute”, it is the standard of the individual’s total behaviour as known in the “individual’s habits of thought and expression, his attitudes, and interests, his manner of acting, and his personal philosophy of life” (p. 650). The last, Feist and Feist (2006) state that personality is the arrangement of relatively permanent traits and special characteristics that result in consistency and individuality to a person behaviour. Ryckman (2008) tells us that for the layperson, definition of personality is usually simpler, it is the
social attractiveness. In other words, somebody with good personality is one who can impress other people with his or her ability in getting along with people in a good way. Then, he concludes that personality is the “dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviours in various situation” (p. 4).

b. Personality Development

There are some important factors in the process of personality development. Based on Alfred Adler’s thought, the birth order of the children gives influence to their personality development, “each child is treated uniquely by his or her parents, and that this special treatment is typically, but not inevitably, related to the child’s order of birth within the family” (as cited in Ryckman, 2008, p. 122). Adler says, the distance of the siblings ages may cause important implications for how children are treated and how they developed. Another factor which is proposed by Adler is the sex of the siblings; children development depends on the treatment that she gets and the way she interprets it. In other words, when boys live in a family full of girls, they will face much more difficulties in developing their personality, and vice versa. Adler proposes the key concept of birth order; “if the older child is protective and supportive of the younger siblings attempts to excel, healthy development is more probable” (p. 123). Hurlock (1974) proposes some determinants which can affect somebody’s personality. Those determinants are physical, intellectual, emotional, social,
aspiration and achievement, sex, educational, and family determinants. Some of those determinants will be elaborated in the next paragraph.

The physical determinant focuses on the influence of physical growth, development, and appearance to somebody’s personality. Directly, the body influences the personality by determining what people can and cannot do. In contrast, the way people perceive their body in relation to others’ body, people’s ideal, and the evaluation of their physical abilities and disabilities by others are influencing people’s adjustment indirectly. The physical changes directly affect the personality through their influence on the person’s characteristics pattern adjustment.

The intellectual determinant directly influences personality through the kind of life change by individual, and its indirect effect through the judgement of others on somebody based on her or his intellectual achievements. Further, intellectual determinant focuses on the capability of problem solving. People’s intelligence will determine the success of their adjustment.

The emotional determinant may affect the personal and social changes. Its direct effect can be seen from the capability of somebody to handle her or his emotions to discover emotional relationship with others.

The social determinant is the judgement whether somebody is able to socialize or not able to socialize well which depends on the social experiences in home and outside. The influence of social circles on personality covers how well somebody socialize and the how much the society’s acceptance meant to him or her.
The family determinant is the most unquestionably important factor of personality development. It influences all people though they are at different ages. The reasons behind those ideas are person and family spend time together in home. Besides, the family also has control over the person’s behaviours. Next, it values the emotionally toned relationship of person with her or his family. The last, the home climate affords security feeling to the family members.

6. Theory of Personality Traits

a. The Trait Perspectives

The trait theories focus a surface oriented approach to personality. Those theories describe the conscious ad concrete features of personality in simple terms for example, “friendliness” and “ambitiousness”, while deemphasizing the unconscious and general explanation of human behaviour (Ewen, 2003). Those are grounded on empirical research, rather than on clinical observation. Trait theories reflects the determined tendency to consider about others in terms of particular characteristics and it gives attention on identifying key dimension of personality, the most crucial manner in which people differ (Baron, 1995). In 2003, Matthews, Deary, and Whiteman mention that personality traits are consistent across time and different group of people in different cultures. They show the evidence to signal that some of them could have a tractable biological basis. Therefore, it is good to enquire to what extent individual differences in personality traits are caused by genetic and environmental factors.
b. Five-Factor Model of Personality

Some psychologists, Costa and McCrae (1994), Digman (1990), McCrae (1989) review that many years ago, since 1970s, psychologists conducted research to draw a simple conclusion that in fact there are only five main aspects of personality (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 482). Feldman (2011), Feist & Feist (2006), Baron (1995) call these five main and basic concepts of personality as the “Big Five”. Baron strengthen the idea by saying that many researchers believe the “Big Five” is very basic concept. Funder and Colvin (1991) suggest that “these dimensions are ones to which most people in many different cultures refer in describing themselves (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 483).

Feldman (2011), Feist & Feist (2006), and Baron (1995) review the “Big Five” has five robust factors; extraversion, neuroticism, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Each dimension has different traits, below are the description of those traits proposed by Costa and McCrae (1985) which is reviewed by Feist and Feist (2006, pp. 414-415). The sample traits for high scores on first dimension or extraversion are, affectionate, joiner, talkative, fun-loving, active, passionate. While, the sample traits for low scores extraversion are, reserved, loner, quiet, sober, passive, unfeeling. The second dimension is neuroticism which has sample traits anxious, temperamental, self-pitying, self-conscious, emotional, and vulnerable for the high-scores people, while calm, even-tempered, self-satisfied, comfortable, unmentionable, and hardy are the sample traits for low-scores people on neuroticism. The third dimension is openness with the sample of high-score traits; imaginative, creative, original,
prefers variety, curious, liberal, and the sample low-score traits; down-to-earth, uncreative, conventional, prefer routine, uncurious, conservative. The fourth dimension is agreeableness with the sample high-scores traits; soft-hearted, trusting, generous, acquiescent, lenient, good-natured, and the low-scores sample traits of the agreeableness are ruthless, suspicious, stingy, antagonistic, critical, irritable. The fifth or the last dimension is conscientiousness which has high-scores sample traits as conscientious, hardworking, well-organized, punctual, ambitious, persevering, while the sample of traits for low-scores are negligent, lazy, disorganized, late, aimless, and quitting. Matthews, Deary, and Whiteman (2003) explain that the existence of the five-factor model of traits is found to be consistent across the cultures, providing more and greater evidence that personality traits may be universal psycho-biological constructs.

c. The Other Model of Personality Traits

Based on the research of Cattel (1977), there are sixteen pairs basic dimensions of personality (as cited in Baron, 1995, p. 482). The first sixteen traits are cool or reserved, concrete thinking, easily upset, not assertive, sober or serious, expedient, shy or timid, tough-minded, trusting, practical, forthright, self-assured, conservative, group-oriented, undisciplined, and relaxed. Then, the rest sixteen traits are warm or easy-going, abstract thinking, calm or stable, dominant, happy-go-lucky, conscientious, venturesome, tender-minded, suspicious, imaginative, shrewd, apprehensive, experimenting, self-sufficient, self-disciplined, and tense or driven.
Wilson (1978) combines and compares the old Greek typology (melancholic, choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic) and the two-major dimension of personality (stable-unstable and extrovert-introvert). The first group is melancholic traits which are unstable and introverted; moody, anxious, rigid, sober, pessimistic, reserved, unsociable, and quiet. The second group is choleric traits which are unstable and extroverted; touchy, restless, aggressive, excitable, changeable, impulsive, optimistic, and active. The third group is sanguine traits which are stable and extroverted; sociable, outgoing, talkative, responsive, easy-going, lively, carefree, and leadership. The fourth group is phlegmatic traits which are stable and introverted; calm, even-tempered, reliable, controlled, peaceful, thoughtful, careful, and passive.

C. Theoretical Framework

Referring to the objective of this study, the researcher applies six major theories. The first theory is the theory of critical approach which strengthens the research by giving concept about the literature research. The second theory is the theory of character and characterization. It helps the researcher in identifying the way the author describes the characters in the novel. The third theory is related to mother character which consists of mother character, family relationship, and home climate will be used in analysing the first research problem related to the mother’s behaviour. The fourth is self-esteem theory. The researcher uses the second theory to identify the first research question about mother’s behaviours which reveal her self-esteem. The fifth theory is the personality which is
consisting of two points; the meaning of personality and the personality development. These theories will be used in answering the second problem about the daughters’ personalities and behaviours. The sixth theory is personality traits that will be used in discussing the second problem related to the daughters’ personality traits improvement. In addition, to analyse the third problem of this research, the influence of the mother’s self-esteem toward the daughters’ personality traits improvement, the researcher combines almost all of the theories in the second chapter.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The third chapter of this study consists of two main parts, namely object of the study and approach of the study. Object of the study will elaborate the physical description of the literary work that being observed. While approach of the study will focus on the approach and procedure to conduct the study.

A. Object of The Study

This study analysed the novel entitled Little Women by Louisa May Alcott. She is an American author. In 2002, Silverthorne reviewed that Louisa May Alcott was born on 29 November 1832 in Germantown, Pennsylvania. She was the second daughter in her family. Her mother’s name was Abigail May and her father’s name was Amos Bronson Alcott. She liked to write stories and she had lots of friends. In her life, Louisa lived in some different places. Unfortunately, she died on 6 March 1888 in Boston, Massachusetts.

As the matter of fact, the novel by Alcott is divided into two volumes. The first volumes entitled Little Women and the second volume entitled Good Wives. However, both of them are in the series of Little Women. The whole series is written in 47 chapters of stories. In the first volume, Little Women consists of 23 chapters, while the rests are in Good Wives part. The series of the novel was first published by Robert Brothers. The first volume of the novel was published on 1868, while the
second volume on 1869. The story of *Little Women* has been adapted three times as a film. Besides, it has also been transformed into a play, an opera, and a musical (Shmoop Editorial Team, 2008).

This novel tells a story about a family consists of mother, father and four daughters. Unfortunately, the father has to join the army in the war. Therefore, the daughters only live with their mother. At the beginning of the novel, we can see that the family is a rich family. However, when the father is not at home with them, the situation is totally different. They have to live hard especially for the mother. She has to work hard to survive and take care of her daughters. Then, the daughters also have to share what they have to their siblings. Readers may say that they live a tough life. However, it is not the reason they have to be arrogant and selfish to other people around them. Although they do not have much money, they can still share what they have with their neighbour. It is because their mother always teaches them to be a generous person.

Mother has important role in the daughters’ life. She does not control and limit her daughters, but she guides them to behave as a good lady. Therefore, the mother character becomes the focus of this study. She has very different characteristics than the other main characters. She is the symbol of lady who fights for the obstacles in the real life.

**B. Approach of The Study**

The researcher implemented psychological approach for this study. According to McDougal (1952), psychology is a science with positive perspective
about the behaviour of living things. He states that behaviour is the characteristic of living things. In other words, psychology as an approach which deals with individual such as the person’s characteristics, personality, self-concept, and others. Psychological approach is appropriate for this study to analyse the characteristics of the characters in the novel. Meanwhile, Rohrberger and Wood (1971) argue that using psychological approach needs higher interpretation towards characters which are actually the reflection of human’s personality, behaviour, and motivation. Guerin et al. (2005) argued that psychological approach is a kind of interpretation that can provide many profound signals and those can be very beneficial in solving both thematic and symbolic enigma, but it may account for the beautiful symmetry of a well-wrought fiction or poem.

The researcher applied a library study to answer the formulated questions. To support the library study, the researcher needed some sources. Those sources were categorized into primary source and secondary source. The primary source was a novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled Little Women. While, the secondary source were books and journals related to the psychological topics as the references of the research.

There were six steps to get the answers for the main problems of this study. The first step was reading the novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled Little Women. The researcher read the novel many times to understand the content of the novel. After reading the novel, the second step was finding some interesting topics. The researcher found topics that might grab people’s attention such as feminism, personality development, the character’s masculinity, and others. Some of them,
such as feminism and character’s masculinity were already discussed by other researchers. Therefore, the researcher decided to analyse the personality development issues in the novel. The third step was formulating the research problems. These research problems guided the researcher to find some proper theories and approach. When the researcher formulated the research problems, she also constructed the hypothesis of the study. The fourth step was deciding the most suitable approach and theories for the study. The researcher used many theories related to personality development, literature research, and the life story of Louisa May Alcott. The fifth step was doing analysis on the object of the study. The researcher considered the selected theories and approach in analysing the novel. The sixth step was drawing conclusion based on the findings. After having the conclusion, the researcher could add some suggestions related to the findings and conclusion of the study.
CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS

The fourth chapter in this study is about the analysis of the findings. There are three major findings. The first is the character of the mother in the novel especially seen from her behaviour. The second is the character of the daughters in the novel which focus on their personality trait. The third is the influence of mother’s self-esteem toward the daughters’ personality development.

A. Mother’s Self-Esteem

In the novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled Little Women, the major characters are the four daughters of the family and a mother. The mother is Mrs. March who devoted her skill and energy to Social’s Aids Society. She worked every day from early morning to evening. Then she spent the night with her dearest daughters before she went to sleep. The researcher found some of the mother’s behaviours which reflect self-esteem. Grounded on the theory of self-esteem, there are five components which reflects self-esteem. Those five components show that she is likely to report fewer negative emotion, able to socialize with their social circles effectively, experiencing less depression, having more confidence to judge herself, and good in handling stress.
1. Reporting Fewer Negative Emotion

According to Straumann and Higgins (1989), people who are high in self-esteem are likely to report fewer negative emotions (as cited in Baron, 1995, p.488). The character of mother in the novel shows a kind of high self-esteem by behaving cheerfully to her daughters although she is tired from her working busy day. It can be seen by the characterization of mannerisms.

While making these maternal inquiries, Mrs. March got her wet things off, her warm slippers on, and sitting down in the easy-chair, drew Amy to her lap, preparing to enjoy the happiest hour of her busy day (p. 16; bk. 1, ch. 1).

In addition, the mother’s behaviour that shows negative emotion can be seen when she likes to watch out her two oldest daughters go to work, and tries to show them her motivating face. This simple behaviour means something precious for the daughters. Mannerisms by Murphy is implied in this part to identify mother’s behaviour.

They always looked back before turning the corner, for their mother was always at the window, to nod and smile, and wave her hand to them. Somehow it seemed as if they couldn’t get through the day without that; for, whatever their mood might be, the last glimpse of that motherly face was sure to affect them like sunshine (p. 47; bk. 1, ch. 4).

Mrs. March lives with her daughters and her housemaid. Their house is beside the Laurence family house which the people inside are rarely going out the house and spending time with neighbours. This leads the daughters to think that the Laurence family members are not friendly, selfish, arrogant and other negative traits. However, when they start to make friend each other, and one of the daughters wants to go to the Laurence family’s house, the mother does not forbid
her to come. Through mannerisms, mother shows her positive emotion toward the Laurence family.

For Mrs. March said, “He was ‘a little gentleman’, and did honour to the coming guest by brushing his curly pate, putting on a fresh collar, and tying to tidy up the room, which in spite of half a dozen servants, was anything but neat.” (p. 61; bk. 1, ch. 5).

The mother tries to make her daughters have positive judgement about Mr. Laurence family. She describes Laurie’s physical appearance to show that he is a kind and respectable person.

Additionally, the author describes the mother through mannerisms to show her another trait of reports fewer negative emotion. One day, when Amy gets angry with Jo since she does not allow Amy to come with her to see The Seven Castle show. Unfortunately, the anger inside Amy’s heart leads her to do something ruthless to her older sister. She knows that Jo likes to write, and she has a quite beautiful journal of her writings. But, Amy destroys the book by burning it. Finally, the mother knows the serious trouble among her daughters, and she decides not to express her fury.

The storm cleared up below, for Mrs. March came home, and, having heard the story, soon brought Amy to a sense of the wrong she had done her sister. Jo’s book was the pride of her heart, and was regarded by her family as a literary sprout of great promise. It was only half a dozen little fairy tales, but Jo had worked over them patiently, putting her whole heart into her work, hoping to make something good enough to print (p. 92; bk. 1, ch. 8).

The mother does not get angry with Amy, but she still considers Amy’s behaviour as a mistake. She tries to be fair with her daughters; she assists Jo by putting Amy on the position of trouble maker. But, she does not punish and hate Amy because of her mistake.
Moreover, the mother’s high self-esteem through her report of fewer negative emotion is reflected by her speech. It happens when she speaks to Meg after Meg having party with her friends who come from rich family. Meg tells her mother that all of friends in the party are mocking at her in a soft voice. Then, her mother answers, “‘We are prepared’ said Mrs. March, smiling but looking little anxious.” (p. 116; bk. 1, ch. 9). Those are the parts which show one factor of mother’s high self-esteem.

2. Effectively Socializing with Social Circles

Then, the other evidence of mother’s high self-esteem is she effectively socialize with their social circles which can be seen through her reaction and speech. She finds a poor family which needs help and some food, she is willing to help and easily becomes the kind and friendly person to them rather than acts as a stranger.

“Merry Christmas, little daughters! I am glad you began at once, and hope you will keep on. But I want to say one word before we sit down. Not far away from here lies a poor woman with a little new-born baby. Six children are huddled into one bed to keep from freezing, for they have no fire. There is nothing to eat over there; and the oldest boy came to tell me they were suffering hunger and cold. My girls, will give them your breakfast as a Christmas present” (p. 24; bk. 1, ch. 2).

The next exploration about mother’s relation with her social surrounding is when the old Mr. Laurence tells her that he has an old but great and fine piano. He wants to invite anybody from the Mrs. March family to come and play piano in his house. He does it since he loves to remember about his granddaughter who loves playing piano but she is gone. Then, he says to Mrs. March if they do care,
then they just need to come whenever they want, but if they do not care, then Mr. Laurence will not get mad at it. Mrs. March answers with the pleasure feeling. “Oh, sir, they do care, very, very much!” (p. 75; bk. 1, ch. 6).

Then, the other evidence that Mrs. March is able to socialize well can be seen through her reaction when she has conversation with Beth related to the piano from Mr. Laurence. She agrees for Beth to do what she wants as far as it is polite to be done.

“Mother, I’m going to work Mr. Laurence a pair of slippers. He is so kind to me, I must thank him, and I don’t know now other way. Can I do it?” asked Beth, a few weeks after that eventful call of his. “Yes, dear. It will please him very much, and be a nice way of thanking him. The girls will help you about them, and I will pay for the making up,” replied Mrs. March, who took peculiar pleasure in granting Beth’s requests, because she so seldom asked anything for herself (p. 76; bk. 1, ch. 6).

Beth wants to express her gratitude feeling to Mr. Laurence and wants to say thank you for his generosity in letting them to play the great piano in his house. Mrs. March accedes Beth’s wish and tell her to behave nicely.

3. Experiencing Less Depression

The author gives a clue that mother experiences less depression through the way of character seen by another. Once, the mother talks to Jo about her experience in handling anger. She tells Jo how she struggles much to hide her depressed feeling. Jo thinks that her mother is really successful to adjust the situation of her hard time so that she never falls into depression.

The patience and humility of the face she loved so well was a better lesson to Jo than the wisest lecture, the sharpest reproof. She felt comforted at once by the sympathy and confidence given her; the knowledge that her mother had a fault like hers, and tried to mend it, made her own sister to
bear and strengthened her resolution to cure it; though forty years seemed rather a long time to watch and pray, to a girl of fifteen (p. 97; bk. 1, ch. 8).

After her mother’s sharing, Jo feels better because she knows that she is not alone. The sharing shows that her mother experiences hard time in life, but she is not depressed. She still has positive mind and tries to do all her best to control and manage herself.

4. Having More Confidence to Judge the Self

According to Crocker (2006), people with high self-esteem have more confidence that those who are in low self-esteem. The confidence is particularly in showing the real face or condition of one’s self. In the novel, the author gives clue through the mother’s speech and past life. Mother tells Jo and people in her past life about her weakness and troubles confidently.

“But I lost her when I was a little older than you are, and for years had to struggle for alone, for I was too proud to confess my weakness to anyone else. I had a hard time, Jo, and shed a good many bitter tears over my failures; for, in spite of my efforts, I was so happy that I found it was easy to be good. But by and by, when I had four little daughters round me, and we were poor, then the old trouble began again; for I am not patient by nature, and it tried me very much to see my children wanting anything” (p. 98; bk. 1, ch. 8).

The mother is confident to say that she has weakness and she has to struggle for it all alone. She does not hide it from public, but she tries to be honest with herself. She does not pretend to be good and strong enough to face the tough life. Some people may not as confident as the mother in the story in showing her real condition. Some people may fake some bad reality of life so that other people do
not know the truth. However, the mother shows that she is confident enough to state that she is in a bad situation and has weakness in life.

5. Good in Handling Stress

One of the indicators of high self-esteem is the ability to handle stress. The author draws clues through the character’s speech and past life. The mother talks to Jo about her effort to control her anger and hide her bad temper. She tries not to show her stress and behave badly.

“‘I’ve been trying to cure it for forty years, and have only succeeded in controlling it. I am very angry nearly every day of my life, Jo; but I have learned not to show it; and I still hope to learn not to feel it, though it may take me another forty years to do so.’” (p. 97; bk. 1, ch. 8).

The mother’s patience is one of the important traits to control herself. It takes long time for her to be better and success in handling her stress. When she is able to handle her stress, she can manage herself not to get angry easily.

The other evidence about her ability in handling stress is when mother tells her secret about her way to hide her anger. She hardly not to show and express it randomly. She wants to teach her daughters too how to control the stress so that the anger will not spoil other people.

“Yes, I’ve learned to check the hasty words that rise to my lips; and when I feel that they mean to break out against my will, I just go away a minute, and give myself a little shake for being so weak and wicked,” answered Mrs. March, with a sigh and a smile, as she smoothed and fastened up Jo’s dishevelled hair (pp. 97-98; bk. 1, ch. 8).

Those are the evidence that mother character in the novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled *Little Women* has a high self-esteem in taking care her adolescent daughters.
B. The Daughters’ Personality Traits

There are four adolescent daughters in the family. The oldest one named Margaret March or people call her Meg who is more domestic in nature. Her younger sister is Josephine March and she prefers to be called Jo who is tomboyish and independent. The third-born child in the family is Beth March or Beth, a shy and sensitive girl. The youngest daughter in the family is Amy March who is childish and selfish at times. From the novel, the researcher could draw the daughters’ personality traits through their daily behaviours by considering the suitable theories.

1. The Personality Traits of Meg or Margaret March

Margaret or Meg is the eldest of the four siblings. She is in her age of sixteen and she does not go to school, but she finds a place as nursery governess, and feels rich with her small salary. She is very pretty, being plump and fair, with large eyes, plenty of soft, brown hair, a sweet mouth, and white hands, of which she was rather vain. Meg is very fond of pretty clothes and things, and she is also fond of dancing. The researcher identified three main characteristics of Meg; self-pitying, self-hearted, and calm.

Grounded on the theory by Costa and McCrae (1985) which is reviewed by Feist and Feist (2006, pp.414-415), the researcher found some personality traits of the character named Meg in the novel. The first personality trait is self-pitying which is shown by the character’s speech. It happens when she complains to live in a poor family, “It’s so dreadful to be poor!” (p. 9; bk. 1, ch. 1).
The second personality trait of Meg is soft-hearted which is reflected the high agreeableness. It can be seen through her reaction and mannerisms when she feels sorry to listen her mother reads the letter from father who join the army.

Everybody sniffed when they came to that part; Jo wasn’t ashamed of the great tear that dropped off the end of her nose, and Amy never minded the rumpling of her curls she did her face on her mother’s shoulder and sobbed out, ‘I am a selfish girl! But I’ll truly to be better, so he mayn’t be disappointed in me by and by’. ‘We all will’ cried Meg. ‘I think too much of my looks, and hate to work, but won’t any more, if I can help it (p. 18; bk. 1, ch. 1).

Meg is very sympathetic about the condition of her father. She really misses her father, but she could not do something to help him. Therefore, she wants to do better in her days. She promises not to be a lazy girl anymore, but she will help her surrounding particularly her mother and siblings.

The third characteristic of Meg is calm. According to Cattel (197), calm is one of basic traits. Then, based on the comparison done by Wilson (1978), calm is categorized into stable introverted trait or Greek typology called it phlegmatic personality. This characteristic of Meg can be identified from her thoughts and the author’s mannerisms. When Meg joins the party with her rich friend’s families, many people mock at her because of her old-fashioned gown. Some people also gossip negatively about her. They say that Meg’s family is very materialistic.

She was proud, and her pride was useful just then, for it helped her hide her mortification, anger, and disgust at what she had just heard; for innocent and unsuspicious as she was, she could not help understanding the gossip of her friends. She tried to forget it, but could not, and kept repeating to herself, ‘Mrs M has made her plans’, ‘that fib about her mamma’, and ‘dowdy tarlatan’, till she was ready to cry, and rush home to tell her troubles and ask for advice (pp. 106-107; bk. 1, ch. 9).
However, Meg does not respond and take any cruel attitudes. She just keeps silent and tries to pretend that she is fine with all those chats.

As that was impossible, she did her best to seem gay, and, being rather excited, she succeeded so well that no one dreamed what an effort she was making. She was very glad when it was all over, and she as quiet in her bed, where she could think and wonder and fume till her head ached, and her hot cheeks were cooled by a few natural tears (pp. 106-107; bk. 1, ch. 9).

Meg tries hard to fake her expression. She feels real pain inside her heart, but she does not want other people to recognize her sadness. Her only way to overcome the situation is stay alone in her bed. After the party, she prefers to go to her bed and cries. She feels better when she can cry to express her painful feeling.

2. The Personality Traits of Jo or Josephine March

Josephine or Jo is the second-born child of the four siblings. Jo is a tomboy girl with almost too much energy for her own good. She is fifteen years old, and same as her older sister, she does not go to school. She works as the care taker of an old aunt March which is still her relative. Jo is very tall, thin and brown. She never seems to know what to do with her long limbs which are very much in her way. She has a decided mouth, a comical nose, and sharp grey eyes, which appeared to see everything, and were by turn fierce, funny, or thoughtful. She is beautiful with her long thick hair, but she bundles it in a net to be out of her way. She has round shoulders, big hands and feet, a fly-away look to her clothes and the uncomfortable appearance of a girl who is rapidly shooting up into a woman, and does not like it. The researcher found five main characteristics of Jo March; self-pitying, self-hearted, creative, negligent.
Grounded on the theory by Costa and McCrae (1985) which is reviewed by Feist and Feist (2006, pp.414-415), the researcher found some personality traits of the character named Jo in the novel. The first personality trait is self-pitying which is considered as the high neuroticism. It happens when she wants to buy books for herself since she is so fond of reading books. The author uses the technique of the character’s speech to characterize her personality trait. Jo really wants to spent her money to buy her favourite book. She thinks that other girls can have whatever they want, so she has right to have anything she wants.

“But I don’t think the little we should spend would do any good. We’ve each got a dollar, and the army wouldn’t be much helped by our giving that. I agree not to expect anything from mother or you, but I do want to buy Undine and Sintram for myself; I’ve wanted it so long.” (p. 1; bk. 1, ch. 1).

From that quotation, Jo feels pity about herself. With her little amount of money, she prefers it to buy her favourite book rather than to help other people who need money. Jo says that it is because she only has little amount of money, and it will be nothing if she donates it. The truth deep down in her heart is that she wants to spent it for her own needs.

The second personality trait of Jo is creative which is reflected the high openness. The author characterizes Jo’s characteristic through her speech. It can be seen when she is creating the way to give surprise for her mother when the Christmas day is coming.

“How will we give the things? Asked Meg. ‘Put them on the table, and bring her in and see her open the bundles. Don’t you remember how we used to do on our birthdays? Answered Jo. ‘Let Marmee think we are getting things for ourselves, and then surprise her.” (p. 14; bk. 1, ch. 1).
When Jo and her sisters want to give surprise to their mother, Meg and the others do not know the way to make the surprise more interesting. Jo is the one who proposes the idea about preparing the surprise.

The third personality trait of Jo is soft-hearted which is reflected the high agreeableness. It happens when she feels sorry in listening her mother reads the letter from father who join the army. The author characterizes Jo’s character through Jo’s reaction and mannerisms.

Everybody sniffed when they came to that part; Jo wasn’t ashamed of the great tear that dropped off the end of her nose, and Amy never minded the rumpling of her curls s she did her face on her mother’s shoulder and sobbed out, ‘I am a selfish girl! But I’ll truly to be better, so he mayn’t be disappointed in me by and by’; ‘We all will’ cried Meg. ‘I think too much of my looks, and hate to work, but won’t any more, if I can help it (p. 18; bk. 1, ch. 1)

Jo is so sympathetic about her father to join the war. Just like her sister, Meg, Jo also miss her father so much. When her mother read the letter from father, Jo is aware that she is not a good daughter. She cries and feel ashamed.

The fourth personality trait f Jo is negligent which is described from her speech with Meg. She spoils her only one gloves with lemonade. Then it also can be understood by the conversation of other characters. Meg says that the incident of Jo spoils her gloves with lemonade is a kind of Jo’s careless.

“You can’t ask mother for new ones, they are so expensive, and you are so careless. She said, when you spoilt the others, that she shouldn’t get you anymore this winter. Can’t you make them do?” asked Meg seriously (pp. 34-35; bk. 1, ch. 3).

The same trait also can be seen from Jo’s careless behaviour. She spills coffee into her gown when she is panic. Once, Meg and Jo are joining the party.
Unfortunately, Meg’s sprains her ankle. Then, she cannot walk to take some foods and drinks.

So, Meg reclined, with rubbers well hidden, and Jo went blundering away to the dining room, which she found after going into a china-closet, and opening the door of a room where old Mr. Gardiner was taking a little private refreshment. Making a dart at the table, she secured the coffee, which she immediately spilt, making the front of her dress as bad as the back (p. 42; bk. 1, ch. 3).

The incident of Jo March spoils the coffee into her dress proves that she is a careless girl. If she is a careful girl, she may act as a good lady in a party. If she is not careless, then she will be careful on her single behaviours.

3. The Personality Traits of Beth or Elizabeth March

Elizabeth March or Beth is the third-born child of the four siblings. She is thirteen years old girl with bright eyes, rosy smooth hair, timid voice, shy manner and peaceful expression which is seldom disturbed. Although she has shy manner, but she makes friends through her music. She does not go to school since she prefers to study by herself at home and help Hannah the housemaid. Her father calls her “Little Tranquility”, and the name suites her excellently; for she seems live in a happy world of her own, only venturing out to meet the few whom she trusts and loves. The researcher identified three main characteristics of Beth; affectionate, self-hearted, and quiet.

Grounded on the theory by Costa and McCrae (1985) which is reviewed by Feist and Feist (2006, pp.414-415), the researcher found some personality traits of the character named Beth in the novel. The first personality trait is affectionate which is considered as the high extraversion. It can be seen through her speech
when she convinces others that they have family though the life is hard. “We’ve got father and mother and each other,’ said Beth contentedly.” (p. 9; bk. 1, ch. 1).

The other evidence of Beth’s affectionate trait is shown when she wants to contribute in helping the poor neighbour, “May I go and help carry the things to the poor little children?” said Beth, eagerly (p. 24; bk. 1, ch. 2). The most touching part of the story which tells Beth’s affection is when she takes care of the house by helping the housemaid in doing the housework and taking care the pets even the dolls.

Even when he went away, and her mother was called to devote her skills and energy to Soldiers’ Aid Societies, Beth went faithfully on by herself, and did the best she could. She was a housewifely little creature, and helped Hannah keep home neat and comfortable for the workers never thinking of any reward but to be loved. Long, quiet days she spent, not lonely nor idle, for her little world was peopled with imaginary friends, and she was by nature a busy bee.

Beth likes to help other people around her. She never asks something as the payment nor reward for her help. She just needs to be loved by her sisters, her mother, and her housemaid, Hannah. Beth also like to take care of her stuffs such as dolls and pets. She loves them just like she loves her own sisters.

There were six dolls to be taken up and dressed every morning, for Beth was a child still, and loved her pets as well as ever. Not one whole or handsome one among them; all were outcasts till Beth took them in; for, when her sisters outgrew those idols, they passed to her, because Amy would have nothing old or ugly. Beth cherished them all the more tenderly for that very reason, and set up a hospital for infirm no harsh words or blows were even given them; no neglect ever saddened the heart of the most repulsive; but all were fed and clothed, nursed and caressed, with an affection which never failed (pp. 50-51; bk. 1, ch. 4).

Those points prove that Beth is an affectionate girl. She loves her surrounding very much by taking care of them fairly and heartfully.
The second personality trait of Beth is soft-hearted which is reflected the high agreeableness. It is reflected through her reaction and the mannerisms by the author when Beth feels sorry in listening her mother reads the letter from father who joins the army.

Everybody sniffed when they came to that part; Jo wasn’t ashamed of the great tear that dropped off the end of her nose, and Amy never minded the rumpling of her curls s she did her face on her mother’s shoulder and sobbed out, ‘I am a selfish girl! But I’ll truly to be better, so he mayn’t be disappointed in me by and by’. ‘We all will’ cried Meg. “I think too much of my looks, and hate to work, but won’t any more, if I can help it.” (p. 18; bk. 1, ch. 1).

Just like her other sisters, she also misses her father very much. But, at that time, the only thing that Beth can do is crying and promising herself to do her best in living her tough days. She is very sympathetic about her father, and she wants to help him by becoming a good daughter in the family.

The third personality trait of Beth is quiet trait. The author shows Beth’s characteristic through mannerisms. When Beth feels sad, she prefers to be alone and cry in her place. She prefers not to tell anybody about her suffering.

Beth had her troubles as well as the others; and not being an angel, but a very human little girl, she often ‘wept a little weep’, as Jo said, because she couldn’t take music lessons and have a fine piano. Nobody did, however, and nobody saw Beth wipe the tears off the yellow keys, that wouldn’t keep in tune, when she was all alone (p. 51; bk. 1, ch. 4).

Beth is quiet and shy. She does not like to show her sadness in front of other people. She prefers to be alone and expresses her feeling in her own room and mind. She likes to cry in her own, and does not let anybody know about that.
4. The Personality Traits of Amy March

Amy March or Amy is the youngest of the four siblings. She is twelve years old girl and she goes to school unlike her older sisters. She is the most important person – in her opinion at least. She is like a regular snow-maiden, with blue eyes, and yellow hair, curling on her shoulders, pale and slender, and always carrying herself like a young lady mindful of her manners. She often tries to impress with big words and fine manners. The researcher found three main characteristics of Amy March; self-pitying, self-hearted, and curiosity.

Grounded on the theory by Costa and McCrae (1985) which is reviewed by Feist and Feist (2006, pp.414-415), the researcher found some personality traits of the character named Meg in the novel. The first personality trait is self-pitying which is reflected from her speech. It happens when she feels envy of other people’s stuffs. “I don’t think it is fair for some girls to have plenty of pretty things, and other girls nothing at all.” (p. 9; bk. 1, ch. 1). The second personality trait of Amy is soft-hearted which is reflected the high agreeableness. It can be seen by her reaction when she feels sorry in listening her mother reads the letter from father who join the army.

Everybody sniffed when they came to that part; Jo wasn’t ashamed of the great tear that dropped off the end of her nose, and Amy never minded the rumpling of her curls s she did her face on her mother’s shoulder and sobbed out, ‘I am a selfish girl! But I’ll truly to be better, so he mayn’t be disappointed in me by and by” (p. 18; bk. 1, ch. 1)

Amy’s third personality trait is curiosity which is revealed through her speech and the direct comment of the author. When she wants to know where their older sisters want to go. She really wants to know and ask for several times.
“Girls where are you going?” asked Amy, coming into their room one Saturday afternoon, and finding them getting ready to go out, with an air of secrecy, which excited her curiosity (p. 88; bk. 1, ch. 8).

The other page also still reveals her curiosity, “Do tell me! I should think you might let me go to; for Beth is fussing over her piano, and I haven’t got anything to do, and am so lonely.” (p. 89; bk. 1, ch. 8). She still presses her sisters to tell her about their business. She wants to join her sisters whenever they go. But, Meg and Jo do not allow Amy to join since they do not get permission from mother. It makes Amy to be more curious about their going. She wants to know and wants to join them.

C. The Influence of Mothers’ Self-Esteem to the Daughters’ Personality Development

Based on the theories that were stated in the second chapter of this study, the experts state that mother is a crucial agent in taking care the children in the family especially with their development process. The researcher found some evidence that the mother’s self-esteem gives influence to the improvement of the daughters’ personality development. The development means that the daughters’ personality traits become better or well-developed.

Grounded on the theory by Hurlock (1955), the improvement of personality means that there are changes of behaviours. Since the term is “improvement”, then it deals with the adjustment for better traits (p. 676). Then, she also emphasises that the improvement of personality happens on the specific
or detail traits, “When improvement in personality occurs, it is more likely to be in specific traits than in the total personality pattern.” (p. 676).

Grounded on the theories in the second chapter of this study, the researcher refers to three main determinants of personality development; emotional determinant, social determinant, and family determinant. In emotional determinant, the daughters are able to improve their negative emotions become positive emotion even better. Moreover, or the social determinant, it clearly appears when the author tells about the daughter’s social life with their surrounding particularly the nearest neighbourhood. They adjust their manner and behaviours in making friends. They are friendlier in maintaining relationship. Then, for the family determinant, the researcher found that family really plays an important role in developing the personality of its member. Family becomes the zone of development for people who live inside.

The first improvement happens in emotional determinant when mother shows her ‘motherly face’ to her daughters before they go in order to motivate them. The daughters especially Meg and Jo always feel happy because if it. They usually feel unmotivated and they are not enthusiastic in going to work. But, when mother makes an expression of ‘motherly face’, they forget all of the burden and working time that they are going to face. Then, they go to work in high spirit and cheerfully. They are not to be quitting anymore, but they improve their feeling become more persevering.

For, whatever their mood might be, the last glimpse of that motherly face was sure to affect them like sunshine, “If Marmee shook her fist instead of kissing her hand to us, it would serve us right, for me ungrateful wretches
than we are were never seen,” cried Jo, taking a remorseful satisfaction in the snowy walk and bitter wind. (p. 47; bk. 1, ch. 4)

The second improvement happens in social determinant when mother gives her idea about the Laurence family. In this context, mother’s self-esteem is reflected through her effectiveness in socializing with her social circles and her ability in reporting fewer negative emotions. When her daughters think that the Laurence family is different and seems such a stranger in their neighbourhood, but mother tells them that the Laurence family is kind and not as bad as they think, and not as frightening as they imagine. Then, someday, when the time comes to them to make friend with the Laurence family, mother’s thought changes the mindset of the daughters.

Before he could say more, the bell rang, and Jo flew up, exclaiming with alarm, “Mercy me! It’s your grandpa!” “Well, what if it is? You are not afraid of anything, you know,” returned the boy, looking wicked. “I think I am little bit afraid of him, but I don’t know why I should be, Marmee said I might come, and I don’t think you are any the worse for it,” said Jo. (*Little Women*; p.66, ch.5)

The third improvement of the daughter’s personality also happens through social determinant when Beth the shy one, feels afraid of Mr. Laurence and shows passive act to him. Fortunately, because of mother’s ability in socialising with other people and her ability in showing fewer negative emotion towards Mr. Laurence family, then Beth does not feel shy anymore. Beth has a new spirit and will not act passively anymore to Mr. Laurence.

“Mother, I’m going to work Mr. Laurence a pair of slippers. He is so kind to me, I must thank him, and I don’t know any other way. Can I do it?” asked Beth, a few weeks after that eventful call of his (p. 76; bk. 1, ch. 6).
The fourth improvement happens through family determinant when Amy expresses her anger to Jo by burning Jo’s book. As a good mother with high self-esteem, Mrs. March behaves wisely to her daughters and makes Amy realizes her fault. Since the day when Amy burns the Jo’s book, she does not feel guilty about it. But, after her other gives her advice, she changes her manner suddenly. She realizes that she needs to say sorry to her older sister and they have to love each other as before.

Amy felt that no one would love her till she had asked pardon for the act which she now regretted more than any of them. When the tea-bell rang, Jo appeared, looking so grim and unapproachable, that it took all Amy’s courage to say meekly: “Please forgive me, Jo; I’m very, very sorry.” (p. 93; bk. 1, ch. 8).

Those four points reveals the daughters’ personality development as the influence of mother’s self-esteem. Each point has the specific explanation and subject. However, the personality development happens to all daughters of the story.

Moreover, there are three crucial factors which also take part in the process of personality development. Those factors are mother, family relationship, and home climate. In the third point of analysis in this chapter, the researcher shows the direct influence of mother’s self-esteem to the daughters’ personality development. Then, the factor of family relationship can be seen in every sibling rivalry part. Besides, the relationship between mother herself with the daughters also clearly appear in the novel. Finally, the home climate shows that it also gives contribution to influence people who live inside. When the home climate is good, then people tend to be happier than the home climate in in poor condition such as anger, sadness, and complaint.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS

The fifth chapter of this study consists of two parts. The first part is the conclusions based on the analysis of the findings. The second part is the suggestions for future researchers and parents.

A. Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher concludes three major points which answer the three research questions of this study. The researcher also concludes some additional points related to the findings. Firstly, the researcher concludes the additional points since they are important in formulating the three major conclusions.

From this study, the researcher finds that mother plays important role in taking care her children especially their personality development which can be seen through the personality traits improvement. Then, parents both father and mother are important agent in growing and developing their children. Surprisingly, through this study, the researcher sees that the daughters can still develop their personality well through improving their personality traits without father in their house. In fact, when the mother can handle the home climate well, then it will give positive effect to the daughters’ personality development.

Finally, the researcher concludes the three major points. First, the character of mother in the novel entitled Little Women has high self-esteem which can be seen
from her ability to report fewer negative emotions, socialize with her social circles, experiences less depression, judge herself confidently, and handle the stress well.

Second, daughters have different personality traits or characteristics of each other. Meg is a self-pitying, a soft-hearted, and a calm girl. Jo is a self-pitying, a creative, a soft-hearted, and a negligent girl. While Beth is an affectionate, a self-hearted, and a quiet girl. The last, Amy is a self-pitying, a soft-hearted, and a curious girl in the family.

Third, mother’s self-esteem gives big and positive influence to the daughter’s personality development. The development clearly seen from their personality traits which are reflected through emotional determinant, social determinant, and family determinant. The high dimension of the daughters’ personalities remains high or stable, and the negative emotions which indicates the low dimension of personality change becomes high dimension or positive emotion through positive behaviours guided by the mother.

B. Suggestions

The novel by Louisa May Alcott entitled *Little Women* is one of the amazing literary works that needs to be considered for education field. This novel may be used to teach Basic Reading, Introduction to Literature, and Prose. In Basic Reading subject, students may learn about new vocabularies form the novel through individual assignment. Besides, students can also learn in groups to analyse some reading comprehension questions based on the story. In Introduction to Literature subject, the students can learn how to analyse the symbol and imagery of the story.
in pairs. Teachers may only use some particular parts of the novel which have symbol and imagery. Furthermore, in Prose class, students can identify some aspects of the story such as, the theme, characters, setting, plot, moral values, and other aspects. The teachers may implement individual task, then ask students to exchange their works with other friends.

The researcher has some suggestions for future researchers. If they are interested in doing the same research, they may analyse the character of the mother, Laurie, and Mr. Laurence since this study is limited on the daughters’ personality development. Furthermore, the limitation of this study is on its analysis of all chapters of the novel. This study only provides some chapters which reveal strong evidence of the object analysis. In order to make it more valid, future researchers may look at the detail information of all chapters that can prove their analysis.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES
Biography of Louisa May Alcott

Louisa May Alcott was born on November 29, 1832 in Germantown, Pennsylvania. Her mother’s name was Abigail May Alcott, and her father’s name was Amos Bronson Alcott. Louisa May Alcott was one of the four siblings in the Alcott’s family. She had three sisters named Anna, Lizzie, and May. Louisa’s father was an educator and a philosopher. The Alcott’s daughters did not go to school, only May the youngest. They were taught by their father, Amos Bronson Alcott in their house, and they studied informally with their father’s friends such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Theodore Parker, and Henry David Thoreau.

Louisa May Alcott worked as a domestic servant and as a teacher to help her family when they resided in Boston and Concord, Massachusetts. Louisa wrote many books, and the most notably Little Women, remain famous till these days. Her novel Little Women gave Louisa May Alcott financial independence and a lifetime writing career. She was a best-selling novelist in the late 1800s. While, during the Civil War, she worked as a nurse in Washington, D.C.
The novel of *Little Women* became very popular over the countries. It was adapted to films and acts. As the matter of fact, the characters in the novel were the reflection of the real persons in Louisa’s life. The character of Margaret March was based on Anna, the eldest daughter in the family. Sometimes, she suffered from envy of wealth, particularly as the March family was not well-off. Josephine March, the second-born daughter was based on Louisa herself. Louisa or Josephine was a tomboy and an independent girl. Elizabeth March reflected Louisa’s sister named Lizzie. She was a shy and sensitive girl, but she liked to help other people. The youngest daughter was Amy March which showed May, a cheerful girl, but sometime she was selfish.

Louisa May Alcott wrote many books such as the *Little Women* series; *Little Women, Little Men, Jo’s Boys, An Old-Fashioned Girl, Eight Cousins, Rose in Bloom, Under the Lilacs, and Jack and Jill*. She also created some splendid works on children’s book; *Flower Fables, Morning Glories*, and *Lulu’s Library*. The other works were in the form of short story series; *Spinning-Wheel Stories, Silver Pitchers, Proverb Stories, Garland for Girls, Aunt Jo’s Scrap-Bag, My Boys, Shawl-Straps, Cupid and Chow-Chow, My Girls, Jimmy’s Cruise in the Pinafore*, and *An Old-Fashioned Thanksgiving*. Furthermore, she also wrote five adult novels; *Hospital Sketches, Moods, Work, A Modern Mephistopheles*, and *The Inheritance*. Finally, Louisa died on March 6, 1888.

Source of image: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4f/Louisa_May_Alcott_headshot.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4f/Louisa_May_Alcott_headshot.jpg)
The Summary of *Little Women*

The family of Mrs. March consists of a mother and four daughters named Margaret (Meg) March, Josephine (Jo) March, Elizabeth (Beth) March, and Amy March. Their father has to leave them for he joins the army in the American Civil War. Once evening, they gather in a room to discuss what Christmas presents they are going to buy for themselves. Everyone has a dollar to buy anything that they want. But, finally they decide not to spend the money on their needs. They want to buy some things for Marmee – the sweet call for mother. When they plan to have the nice things for Marmee, suddenly Marmee comes home from her work. She brings a letter from her husband or the daughters’ father.

The four daughters wake up in Christmas morning, and they find something under their pillow. Each of them get a nice book from the mother. They have a great experience in the Christmas day. They give their breakfast for the poor family consists of a sick mother, a new-born baby, and six other children who huddle on a bed trying to keep warm. In the evening, they have Christmas celebration for Mr. Laurence, their neighbour sends over cake and ice cream along with flowers and decoration.

Meg and Jo get their chance to meet the Laurence boy at a New Year’s Eve dance. They have a serious discussion on what costume they will use. Jo’s dress is burned in the back because she has a habit of standing too close to the fireplace. Jo’s gloves are stained. Finally, both of them wear a good glove, and carry a stained one. Unfortunately, Meg sprains her ankle when she dances with a man. Jo comes with her new friend, Laurie to help Meg walk to the carriage. Then they go home early, before the end of the party. Laurie is Mr. Laurence’s grandson.

The morning after the New Year’s Eve party, all girls in the family complain about their burdens. Meg complains about her works with some naughty children. Jo complains her work with aunt March who usually wants Jo to read books of historical and political essays that the teenage girl finds impossibly dull. Beth
complains that she wants a fine piano, and she is tired of the housework. While Amy complains for her school and naughty friends.

They live beside the Mr. Laurence house. The March family think that the Laurence family is not kind. They never socialize with their surroundings. In contrast, the Laurence family is so nice and kind. The daughters finally make friend with Laurie. Then, Mr. Laurence offers the daughters to come home for having fun. He also offers Beth to come if she wants to play a piano. He has a really fine piano in his house.

Amy takes the limes to school and hides them in her desk, but can’t resist flaunting them a little before tucking them away until recess. Miss Snow finds a way to report the limes to the teacher, Mr. Davis, who has declared the limes a contraband article and vowed to punish any girl caught with them. Amy is forced to take her limes to the teacher’s desk, then toss them out the window. After that, Mr. Davis slaps her hand with his ruler, then makes her stand on a platform until recess. Marmee is not entirely sympathetic with Amy as she believes Amy should not have broken the rules. However, she does not agree with Mr. Davis’s method of correction either.

Laurie has invited Jo and Meg to go with him to the theatre to see The Seven Castles of Diamond Lake. When Amy finds out where they are going, she begs to be taken along. Meg would relent, but Jo refuses, saying that Amy wasn’t invited, and that it would not be fair to Laurie to bring along an unexpected person. Amy takes revenge on Jo by burning a book of stories she has been labouring over. Jo gets angry with Amy for several days.

Meg spends a couple of weeks with the fashionable Moffats. Some people mock at her old-style fashion. They make Meg feel sad, but Meg tires to act as cheerful as she can. Meg allows the girls to loan her a very low-cut blue gown for the next party. Her discomfort is complete when Laurie appears at the dance and is obviously displeased at her appearance. She is hurt and angry at Laurie until she
overhears one of the guests say that "they have spoilt her entirely, she’s nothing but a doll tonight."

It is the first of June, the mother allows the girls to have their workfree lives as an experiment that will last one week. The first day seems to be a success, but succeeding days become longer and more boring, and the girls are irritable with each other. The girls decide that they do not wish to continue their experiment, and that life proceeds more smoothly when every member does a fair share of the work.

One day, Laurie invites the girls to a picnic in Longmeadow with the Vaughn’s, Mr. Brooke, the Moffats and a few others. After taking boats to the meadow, they play a round of croquet which nearly leads to a quarrel for Jo when she catches Fred cheating at the game. Frank, a crippled youth is found in friendly discussion with Beth, and Mr. Brooke spends a little time chatting with Meg. Jo likes to write story so much, then secretly she takes her story to a newspaper publisher and shares secrets with Laurie who happened to catch her trying to get up enough nerve to go into the publishing house.

One morning, Marmee receives a telegram telling her that her husband is sick and that she should come to Washington immediately. Everyone rushes around trying to help her. Laurie takes a hurried letter to Aunt March from whom Marmee borrows money for the trip. Mr Laurence sends Mr. Brooke to accompany her. Jo makes the ultimate sacrifice in an attempt to prevent her mother from needing to borrow money. She sells her abundant hair, receiving 25 dollars which she gives to her mother to take to Mr. March. By the time Mrs. March has been gone a week, the girls begin to slack off in their duties and resolves to keep things operating as usual. Beth alone continues in her work and often completes her sisters’ as well. Some days later, Jo and the Laurie has already sent a message and that Mrs. March is expected that night for Beth has a severe case of the scarlet fever. Around midnight the crisis point is reached and Beth’s fever breaks. Mrs. March arrives home early in the morning.
Long after that, Laurie composes a series of letters for Meg, ostensibly from Mr. Brooks confesses his love, and Meg answers by saying that she is too young to marry and prefers to be friends for a long while. Jo refuses to forgive Laurie for what she considers a crude joke, but she finally becomes good friend anymore with Laurie.

In the next chapter, the girls and Marmee celebrate another Christmas along with Hannah and Laurie. While occupying themselves with such blessings as they have, however, they are surprised by the appearance of Mr. Brook and Father at the door. He still has some convalescent time ahead of him, but is able to sit in an easy chair along with Beth and enjoy the company of the family. Laurie, Mr. Laurence and Mr. Brooke dine with them. Finally, on December 26, Meg confides in Jo, declaring that she would turn Mr. Brooks down because she is too young to think of marriage.