

THE MOTHER'S WISDOM IN LOUISA MAY ALCOTT'S LITTLE WOMEN

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to reveal Mother wisdom in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and to find out Mrs. March as a wise mother of her daughters. In this research, the writer used qualitative research and descriptive method, a research method that used non-numerical data to explain a phenomenon accurately. The writer classified the sources of the data into two categories: They are primary and secondary sources. The primary source is the novel entitled *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott and the secondary source are taken from books, articles, journal and internet data that related to the topic. In analyzing this research, the writer used objective approach, The results of the study show the wisdom of Mrs. March who plays the role of a mother in educating her children on the relationship between humans and God, human relationships with others, and human relationships with themselves in *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott.

Keywords: *Mother, Wisdom, Family, Love*

INTRODUCTION

The figure of a mother is certainly very important for her children. Mrs. March's character as a wise mother in *Little Women* is an important role model for readers because the wisdom of a mother in *Little Women* can educate mothers, prospective mothers and women who wants to be a mother, through the character of Mrs. March the readers can see how Mrs. March educates her children and makes it a role model or evaluation material for the readers.

Based on the description above, the writer sees that the character of Mrs. March is very important for her children in various ways, in terms of character, mentality and society. The figure of a mother is the foundation for her children because the role of a mother is very important as a mother, as an educator, as a supporter, as a director of her children. Therefore the author thinks that it is important to reveal Mother's Wisdom in *Little Women*.

Wisdom is an attitude of someone who is able to accept and consider something and make firm decisions with stable emotions (Bangen, K, J, Meeks, T.W, & Jeste, 2013). In depth knowledge, implementation of ideals, achieving positive results that influence others, feedback adjustment actions facilitated by work experience, life experience, social interaction, observation, family teachings, professional development, religion, and reading. Wisdom is the basis of a person's character which is based on the positive nature obtained from his life experience and choosing to take wisdom and positive lessons from that and apply it (Chen et al, 2011); (Onthoni et al., 2022); (Talumepa et al., 2022). Wisdom includes regulating emotions, knowing what is important, moral reasoning, compassion, humility, altruism, patience, and dealing with uncertainty. Wisdom is a person's ability to control one's emotions well, and knowing what is important to do, acting out of love and full of patience (Hall, 2010). Wisdom is a balance between active agency and passivity as well as acceptance of finding oneself in difficult situations and recognizing one's moral responsibilities again. Wisdom is the choice and decision of someone who is not concerned with their own ego and understands their responsibility and that of others in dealing with difficult situations (Nayak, 2016). Wisdom is an individual's intelligence in using his mind based on experience and knowledge, as well as the integration of thoughts, feelings, and behavior, as well as the willingness to self-evaluate, in assessing and deciding a problem, so as to create harmony between the individual and the environment. Wisdom is the nature of a person who has learned from his life experience and creates good results in a social or individual environment for a problem (Sahrani et al., 2014); (Nanlohy et al., 2021); (Maru, 2014); (Maru, 2018).

Mother is the first role model for her children because a mother is the first figure their children encounter, therefore the influence of a mother's upbringing and attitude is very influential on her children (Werdiningsih, A. T. A., & Astarani, 2012). Mother is the caretaker of the family and the nation's generation so that the existence of a woman who is physically, spiritually and socially healthy is needed. The attitude and behavior of a mother is the essence of the whole family, a strong foundation in a family is the figure of a wise mother (Suparyanto., 2011). Parenting by providing psychosocial stimuli to children will be able to improve motor, cognitive, social emotional and moral and character development in children. This shows that the role

of the mother as the main caregiver can affect the level of child development. Parenting style of a mother is very influential for the character development of her children, therefore it is very important for a mother to provide the right parenting style in the life of her children (Setyowati, Yuli Dwi, Diah Krisnatuti, 2017). Mother is the most important school in shaping a child's personality, as well as advice, to fill it with various noble qualities. A mother is the core educator in their children's lives and a mother has the responsibility to guide and protect her children (Bilih Abdu, 2011). A family is a social unit that consists of members who share a home, collaborate economically, reproduce, and are bound together by legally recognized social ties such as marriage or adoption. Members of the family interact with one another in accordance with their respective social roles (Aziz, 2015). Family is a small group that has a leader and members, has a division of tasks and work as well as rights and obligations for each member. Family is the first and foremost place where children learn. Within the family, they learn to learn about beliefs, noble qualities, communication and social interaction, and life skills (Helmawati., 2014).

A mother is a figure who has many roles, including the role of a wife, as someone who conceives and gives birth to her children, as well as being a mother to them. A mother can also be protectors for families who can strengthen every family member they have. A mother has an important role in family harmony, if her role goes well then her family will be well taken care of (Farid, 2016). The role of a good mother emanates from the character, nature and treatment of a mother to her child, therefore the importance of a mother's dedication and perseverance in raising and educating her children (Barlow, K. & Chapin, 2010).

In terms of family health, a good mother is one who makes moral, responsible and safe health choices. A mother has a big role in her family, in the welfare of a family, the mother's role in carrying out her duties and responsibilities greatly influences the condition of her family (Liamputtong, 2009).

Based on the description above, the writer sees that the character of Mrs. March is very important for her children in various ways, in terms of character, mentality and society. The figure of a mother is the foundation for her children because the role of a mother is very important as a mother, as an educator, as a supporter, as a director

of her children. Therefore the author thinks that it is important to reveal Mother's Wisdom in Little Women.

RESEARCH METHOD

Method used in this research is descriptive method. Creswell states in Principles of Qualitative Research, Designing a Qualitative Study: "Qualitative research is a tool for examining and understanding the meaning people or groups attach to a social human dilemma. Inductively evaluating the data, moving from specifics to broad themes, and providing interpretations of the data are all steps in the research process. Emerging questions and techniques are also involved. The written report's final form includes a flexible writing structure. (Creswell, J. W, & Clark, 2004).

In conducting this research, the writer collected the data from two kinds of sources: primary source, the work itself Louisa May Acclot's Little Women and secondary source are other references such as journals, books, or internet sources that are related and relevant to the research.

The object of this research is a literary work by Louisa May Acclot's Little Women In analyzing this data, the writer uses an objective approach. An objective strategy in qualitative research is defined as a methodical, rigorous approach to research that minimizes human biases and subjective judgments (Creswell, 2012). The objective method in qualitative research is founded on the rigor, transparency, and reflexivity principles, enabling researchers to give a fair and accurate depiction of the data gathered. The objective method in qualitative research, according to Creswell, does not mean total disengagement from the research process or the absence of interpretive insights.

The objective approach in qualitative research has the following important features:

- Reflexivity: Qualitative researchers who use an objective method practice reflexivity, realizing their own viewpoints and potential biases and how these could affect the research process and conclusions.
- Data collection for objective qualitative research is the methodical gathering of information using a variety of techniques, including interviews, focus groups,

observations, and document analysis. For transparency and replication, researchers meticulously record their processes.

- **Data Analysis:** The objective method in qualitative research entails thorough data analysis, frequently using methods like thematic analysis, content analysis, or narrative analysis. Researchers try to spot emerging themes, patterns, and meanings in the data.
- **Credibility and Trustworthiness:** Researchers using an objective approach take steps to establish the credibility and trustworthiness of their findings. This includes techniques such as member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing.
- **Contextualization:** To provide a thorough grasp of the phenomena being studied, objective qualitative researchers place their results within the larger social and cultural context.
- **Transparency:** Researchers employing an objective approach are transparent in their reporting, providing clear descriptions of the research design, data collection methods, and data analysis process.
- **Interpretation:** Although qualitative research leaves room for interpretation, an objective strategy tries to reduce subjectivity and subjective judgment in the interpretation of results.

Instead, it emphasizes a dedication to doing research in a methodical and thorough manner in order to increase the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions.. The objective approach is used to analyze *Mother Wisdom in Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott's for deserving of the character Mrs. March in terms of her role as a wise mother to her daughters.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

Mother Wisdom

As a parent, especially as a mother who gives birth to her children, she is someone who is expected to be a good role model for her children. It is not enough for a mother to only be a good mother but also to be wise in educating her children so that they become good individuals. Good parents must be a good example for their children, not just telling what their children should do, but must be balanced by giving a direct example how she as mother set a good example in how they speak and act to their children, to the people around them, to the God they believe in, and to themselves.

Because basically children learn from what they hear and see in their surroundings and they will practice it in their daily lives. A wise mother must set a good example for her children because a mother is the first and foremost role model for her children. Mrs. March gives the best she can give to her child. The meaning of giving the best is to set an example of good behavior in speaking, acting both at home and in social life so that their children have positive behavior and care for fellow human beings and as a mother who gives advice to her children when they have problems and when they will make a decision. Therefore it is very important for a mother to be a wise mother.

In the novel, Mrs. March is a mother of four children, The role of a mother in raising four children with different characters is very important.

In the novel *Little Women* Mrs. March is described as someone who believes in and relies on God and Mrs. March also educates her children about it. In the novel it is shown that Mrs. March educates her children through books that contain stories about religious values for her children, and are accompanied by the good deeds of Mrs. March who likes to help people in trouble. Mrs. March teaches to pray and work in dealing with problems, relying on God when facing problems because according to Mrs. March is impossible when they rely on their own strength, then accompanied by their actions to overcome the problem . So with this the children heard and saw the upbringing and actions that Mrs. March gave and happily followed the upbringing given by their mother. Mrs. March is also described as a person who is patient and able to control his anger well. She learns to control herself through the life experiences she has gone through and the help of those closest to her so that she can successfully control it. Mrs. March educates and gives examples of her children through stories of his life experiences to be a lesson for her children.

Wisdom of a mother In the Novel *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott broadly covers the life problems of her children. Nurgiantoro distinguished that in general human problems can be grouped into the relationship between humans and God, the relationship between humans and other people and the relationship between humans and themselves (Nurgiyantoro, 2015)

The following is the explanation of the mother's wisdom to her children in terms educating her children the wisdom of life.

Teaching the Values of Human Relationship with God

Mother is the caretaker of the family and the nation's generation so that the existence of a woman who is physically, spiritually and socially healthy is needed (Suparyanto., 2011) A mother has an important role in educating her children because the mother figure is the first and foremost figure in raising and instilling positive values in her children so that their children have a good foundation of life principles, therefore it is very important for a mother to instill these values, spiritual values in their children so that they become people who rely on God. As taught in (Philippians 4 : 6-7) Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guide your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. A mother has an important role in educating her children because the mother figure is the first and foremost figure in raising and instilling positive values in her children so that their children have a good foundation of life principles, therefore it is very important for a mother to instill these values, spiritual values in their children so that they become people who rely on God. It can be seen in the dialog below.

"it's my dreadful temper! I try to cure it, I think I have, and then it breaks out worse than ever. Oh, mother what shall I do? What shall I do?" cried poor Jo, in despair.

"What and pray, dear never get tired of anything, and never think it is impossible to conquer your fault," said Mr. March, drawing the blowzy head to her shoulder and kissing the wet cheek so tenderly that Jo cried even harder (121)

Teaching the values of human relationship with God is seen from the quote above which shows that her daughter blamed herself for her hot temper and asked her mother for help on how she should deal with her and her mother reminding and getting used to her children to always pray and learn about the events that happened. Mrs. March tells her children that it is impossible to overcome problems with their strength, hence the importance of prayer and study in dealing with problems.

In the conversation below it can be seen that Jo asked her mother because she saw that her mother was so patient, looked fine and never complained when her father went to war and Mrs. March taught her child Jo to rely on God for every problem.

“My child, the troubles and temptations of your life are beginning and may be many, but you can overcome and outlive them all if you learn to feel the strength and tenderness of your Heavenly Father as you do that of your earthy one. The more you love Him and trust Him, and the less you will depend on human power and wisdom. His love and care never tire or change, can never be taken from you, but may become the source of life long peace, happiness, and strength. Believe this heartily, and go to God with all your little cares, and hopes, and sins, and sorrows, as freely and confidently as you come to your mother.” (125-126)

In the dialogue above, Mrs. March demonstrates the strength she must be by leading such a life. She had to provide for her husband, who sacrificed a lot for both his family and the country. She demonstrates that the best solution to every issue they encounter will come from perseverance and a firm belief in God. On the battlefield, Mr. March behaved in this manner. They will continue to make serious efforts to meet the requirements of March's family. The human relationship with God can be seen from the figure of a mother who equips her children for the problems they will experience in life in the future, The relationship between humans and God can be seen from the figure of a mother who equips her children to face the life problems they will experience in the future. Mrs. March teaches her children that in every problem they will experience God is definitely there for them, Mrs. March teaches her children not to worry and to trust God in facing life's problems, so that they can face all the problems of their life.

Teaching The Values of Human relationship with other people

Parenting style also refers to how parents raise their children to become mature members of the community and society by providing them with guidance, discipline, and protection (Damayanti, 2017). In life everyone needs one another. Parents, especially mothers, have an important role in educating their children about social life in society because humans are interdependent and need help from one another, both family and other people, therefore the importance of the mother figure in educating

her children to understand human relations with other people as taught in Ephesians (4 : 32) Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you. Luke (17 : 3-4) Pay attention to yourself! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents forgive him. The following are excerpts from human relations with other people taught by Mrs. March to her children. The sentence below tells about the fight between Jo and Amy. Mrs. March as their mother taught and made Amy aware of the mistakes she made to her sister Jo and taught Jo to be able to forgive.

“My dear, don’t let the sun go down upon you anger. Forgive each other, help each other, and began again tomorrow.” (116-117)

In the sentence above it can be seen that her two children have problems with one another and Mrs. March as a mother told and made Amy realize the mistake she had made to her sister Jo and Amy regretted what she had done and after that Mrs. March told Jo at the right time to forgive each other. From here, it can be seen that Mrs. March as their mother acts as a mediator instead and gives advice to their children to realize the mistakes they have made and forgive each other.

In the sentence below it can be seen that Mrs. March taught her children to help others but not by coercion but the willingness of their own children.

“Merry Christmas, little daughters! I’m 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 newborn 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 you give them your breakfast as a Christmas present?” (25)

The sentence above contains a relationship between humans and other people taught by Mrs. March to her four children. Mrs. March's actions display her empathy, which is a quality she possesses. Mrs. March told her daughters a story about a poor neighbor. Mrs. March fosters empathy so that her daughter may relate to the circumstances faced by her neighbor and is prepared to assist them. Mrs. March demonstrated moral compassion and empathy through her actions.

In the sentence below that Mrs tells Jo her child how she controls himself when she is angry.

"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 disheveled hair. (123)

In the sentence above Mrs. March told Jo that he also had the desire to say cruel words and he controlled himself from saying those words by avoiding them and clearing his mind. Mrs March's words contained teachings about the values of relationships between humans and other people. From here, Mrs March tells and teaches Jo to be better at controlling herself.

Teaching the Values of Self Confidence

Norms and experiences within the family, traditions, habits, and the environment or group to which the family belongs all have an impact on self-confidence. Every person's primary environment for developing their sense of self-worth is their family (Hakim, 2002) Parental social support, such as attention, assistance, affection, counsel, and knowledge, facilitates improvement in self-confidence building, Therefore a mother has an important role in educating her children because the mother figure is the first and foremost figure in raising and instilling positive values in her children so that their children have a good foundation of life principles, therefore it is very important for a mother to instill these values. The value of confidence in their children so that they can be guided and supported so that they are confident. In the sentence below Amy tells her mother that she wants try to change into a selfless person like her sister Beth.

"Yes, but i have more faith in the corner of the big closet. Wear your ring, dear, and do your best. I think you will prosper, for the sincere wish to be good is half the battle. Keep up your heart, little daughter, and we will soon have you home again." (313)

Teaching the values's of self confidence can be seen In the sentence above when Amy told her mother about her short comings and knew that her sister Beth was better than her because she was not selfish and Amy told her mother that she wanted to try to follow her sister's character and Mrs. March responded by not comparing them, but educating and supporting Amy to be confident in trying to become a better person.

In the sentence below Jo tells Mrs. March that she wanted to leave to get out of his comfort zone and try to develop her potential.

“My dear, go out to service in that great boarding house!” and Mrs. March looked up surprised, but not displeased. (508)

Based on the sentence above teaching the values of self-confidence can be seen when Mrs. March allowed and supported her daughter Jo's desire to develop her potential even though Jo told and explained her ideas to Mrs. March was abrupt about what she wanted to do, Mrs. March allowed and supported Jo's decision even though she had to be away from home.

In the sentence below Beth tells her mother that she want's to make a pair of slippers for Mr. Laurence as a token of his gratitude to her.

“Yes, dear. It will please him very much, and be 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 (94)

Based on the sentence above teaching the values of self confidence can be seen the response that Mrs. March gave it to her daughter. Mrs. March supports Beth to be confident in her desire to create pair of slippers to Mr. Laurence because Mr. Laurence has supported and facilitated Beth for her hobby of playing musical instruments.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the wisdom of Mrs. March as a mother to her children in the novel *Little Women*. This study is being analyzed using an objective approach. After analyzing Mother wisdom in Louisa May Alcott, the author realizes that mothers have a very big role and impact in educating their children.

The novel shows how Mrs. March acts as a wise mother for her children who teaches her children about the values of human relationship with God, so that her children understand and rely on God in their lives, teaches about the values of human relationships with other people which makes her children have a sense of empathy, cooperation and helping each other and teaching the values of self-confidence which builds children's self-confidence in their abilities, desires and interests so that they can develop them.

Mrs. March 's upbringing of Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy shows a good impact in the form of positive personality, attitude and behavior. Mrs. March was able to become a

role model in raising her children well. Her involvement as a wise mother can be shown directly. The behavior, attitude, affection, advice and good personality that she showed towards her daughters had a very good impact on the development of her children. The positive attitudes and personalities of the March girls, and the way they honor and cherish their parents shows that the wisdom of a mother from Mrs. March works. Based on the results of this analysis it can be concluded that a mother's involvement in child development is very influential. A good environment and parenting pattern will raise children with good behavior and personality.

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