

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Women's emancipation is a term that is often heard, but not everyone understands what women's emancipation means. Women's emancipation is a movement that provides opportunities for women to work and study according to their abilities with men. Emancipation is women's liberation from classes, degrees, and low status, whether in education, work, or society. Even though it has entered the modern era, the gap is still being felt by women. Since ancient times, women have been looked down upon and have a degree below men's. Independence is just a meaningless word for women. They remain entangled in limitations that have no basis.

Women's emancipation is an effort to ensure women have the same rights as men. Women in this field want women to be equal to men in various areas, such as education, work, politic and family. In terms of education, education for women was minimal in ancient times. Schools that women can use have standards that are far below men's schools. In terms of employment, the public sector is always dominated by men. But as the times progressed, the job field began to be filled by women. In the emancipation of the family field, someone born as a woman will only have the opportunity to take care of the household. Women will cook and care for their children and husband, whereas, women also have the right to work to earn a living as men do.

Women's emancipation is a topic that is often discussed in various media. One of them is through a novel and a movie. *Little Women* is a story by a phenomenal writer, Louisa May Alcott. Louisa May Alcott was a pioneer of feminism in America. Louisa voiced feminism through the writings in her novels. One of her works that speaks about feminism and women's emancipation is *Little Women*. This novel was released in 1868 and coincided with the birth of the feminist movement in America. This

novel tells about the struggle of women to achieve their dreams. Louisa grew up in a family that supports education. For her family, education for women must be equal to men. This can be proven by the History of Education, which shows that she attended her father's school, Bronson. Her father is also a figure who cares about education. This is what finally made Louisa more interested in the issues faced by women. Louisa contributed to publications that spoke out for women's rights throughout her life. Her works introduce readers to educated women. This is what makes her writing style influence American literature at the time. Alcott was the first woman to register to vote in Concord, Connecticut.

Women's emancipation is often conveyed through movies, one of which is the adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's famous story "*Little Women*". This movie has the same title as the novel. After the success of becoming a phenomenal novel, this story was finally made into a movie several times. This movie, directed by Greta Gerwig, tells the story of a woman's struggle to achieve her dreams. Greta Gerwig is a director, screenwriter, and actress. Greta had received the best director nomination in the course of her career. In her last two works, she continued to create a movie featuring women in the leading roles. Her first movie, titled *Lady Bird*, tells the story of a woman who struggles to realize her dreams and find her identity.

Little Women movie takes place in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1868. This movie presents a light story full of moral messages for our lives. This movie tells the life of a small family consisting of a mother and four daughters. Every child has a different personality and life principles. Jo, the second child, is a tomboyish girl. She likes to write and dreams of becoming a reliable writer who earns much money to help her family's economy. Amy is the youngest child in this family. She is a spoiled but realistic child. She dreams of becoming a famous painter and marrying an authority man. Meg is the oldest child in this family. She loves dancing and dreams of marrying a rich man. While Beth is the kindest sister in this

family, she plays the piano well. In general, this movie tells about Jo's struggles in achieving her dreams that others consider unreal. This movie is also spiced with a love story between Jo, Laurie, and Amy.

Jo, as the main character, brings a lot of women's emancipation movements, ranging from education, work, and social status. Jo is an intelligent and educated girl. She loves education so much. She also applied the same to her younger siblings. She clearly said why the government restricted schools for girls after her sister, Amy, was beaten by her teacher at school. In the end, Jo also established a school for all children according to their abilities and desires without any gender restrictions. Jo told Aunt March that a woman could shine without sacrificing herself to marry and give herself to her husband. Jo also proved that every woman could find a job and make money for herself and her family just like a man did.

Little Women movie managed to get positive reviews from movie critics. Based on Metacritic, this movie scored 91 out of 100. Based on data from IMDb, Reviews show that audiences love Greta's way of re-imagining a story made into a movie more than twice into a very enjoyable one to watch. Even though it has a background story during the civil war, this story is still comfortable to be enjoyed in the present. Reviews also show that the audience liked the shooting in this movie. In addition, the audience also praised the clothes used by the characters in this movie. Despite receiving a positive response, this movie also received a negative reaction from the audience. Based on data taken from reviews on IMDb, reviews show that audience regrets the storyline change that doesn't match the original story. The audience also regretted Greta's decision because she chose to use a back-and-forth storyline. The audience finds it difficult to distinguish between different situations because Greta doesn't make any significant differences in dress style or hairstyle when the movie shows a different era or year.

Little Women movie first premiered on December 9, 2019, at the Rio de Janeiro international movie festival and was released in America on December 25, 2019. The movie has an estimated budget of \$40 million. The movie grossed \$206,006,503 overall, exceeding its production budget. In its opening weekend, the movie grossed a steady \$16,755,310 at the box office. Apart from earning a fantastic income, this movie has received various actresses and prestigious awards. This movie got six hits at the 2020 Academy Award, including best actress in a leading role, best costume design, best picture, best actress in a supporting role, best writing (screenplay adaptation), and best music (original score). Of the six awards, this movie won the Academy Award category for best costume design. In addition, this movie also won awards at other prestigious events.

Little Women movie is a movie that is often used as a research object. Even though researchers have researched it, the research on this movie only focuses on feminist topics, even though other things are more prominent in this movie, namely women's emancipation. Therefore, this study was compiled to discuss the emancipation of women in the 2019 *little women* movie. The researcher formulated a study entitled "Women's Emancipation in Greta Gerwig's *Little Women* Movie (2019): Sociology of Literature".

B. Research Questions

1. What are the forms of women's emancipation in *Little Women* Movie (2019)?
2. How does Greta Gerwig describe women's emancipation in *Little Women* Movie (2019)?
3. Why did Greta Gerwig address women's emancipation in *Little Women* Movie (2019)?

C. Objectives

1. To identify the forms of women's emancipation contained in *Little Women* Movie (2019).

2. To describe how the director describes the emancipation of women through *Little Women* Movie (2019).
3. To discover the reason why the director raised the issue of women's emancipation in *Little Women* Movie (2019).

D. Significance

1. Theoretical

This research is expected to give contributions and information of knowledge, information, and references to other research related to this research.

2. Practical

The results of this research are expected to be used to develop knowledge about women's emancipation and the researcher's experiences.