

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of the Research

In the past, the differences between men and women were things that were often in the public spotlight. In this case, inequality often occurs which made women feel neglected in the midst of society, where this gave a variety of pain and bitterness for women in living it. That triggered the emergence of feminist flow which was a women's movement that opposes inequality that occurs in women. This feminist movement struggles to obtain the same rights as men. It was about the struggle to make their own decisions about their lived and the struggle to obtain their freedom, which in this mindset assumed that every human being had the right to get the same opportunity. Based on Hartiningsih (2011) statement as a reporter in Kompas: *Perempuan Dalam Belenggu Budaya*, stated that the mothers world, the women world are the world contrariness in a silence, the world of rebellion in obedience, the world of silence in the midst of the hustle and bustle of life, the world of solitude boisterous and lonely, the world of surrender in fear and helplessness. It described the pain and bitterness felt by women, and that was one of the reasons of woman to struggle in their life for their right.

The novel "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott was very interesting when examined with a feminist approach, especially in the analysis of women's

struggles. This novel has the advantage of being that the main character of the story turns out to be able to struggle against various life phenomena even though there are many conflicts. The situation in the novel was similar in real American's life during in that period. It was firstly published in 1868. In the novel the main character was a woman who struggle during her life to pursuing her dream. She was against the rule that limits women's freedom at the time. She was a woman who has rational thought to solve her problem.

One of the struggles of her to against the inequality was when she can earn money by herself. She proved that as a woman, she also can work and earn money same as man.

As long as THE SPREAD EAGLE paid her a dollar a column for her 'rubbish', as she called it, Jo felt herself a woman of means, and spun her little romances diligently. But great plans fermented in her busy brain and ambitious mind, and the old tin kitchen in the garret held a slowly increasing pile of blotted manuscript, which was one day to place the name of March upon the roll of fame. (Alcott, 2018: 372)

The quotation above explained the phenomenon that happened at that time. In where as a young woman, it is not easy to be a writer. But the main character proved that women can also be a writer and get the money from her paper. Her resistance also showed her different characteristics as a real lady as a stereotype in her society. Her being different in personality also influenced herself to be a woman writer.

The researcher was interested to choose this title because as a woman, the researcher wants to explain about how women lived in the past, and how hard it was, where they had to struggle to get their rights. In this title, the researcher tried

to give the other woman support to get their rights in society. The researcher hopes that the other woman respect and appreciated it.

The researcher was interested in analyzing this novel because the novel was based on the real life of women in 19th century during the America civil war period. This novel also still popular until now, and was made for film, musical drama, and also animation version. This novel described about the inequality of women based on the author experienced in her life. It was because the author of the novel that known as Jo March was the main character.

Several studies had described feminist. One of the studies was by Selvi Eka Putri and Yenni Rosana from Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu. Their research it's about liberal feminism in the novel "Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott. It's about the women struggle in little women that lead to women emancipation from the feminist perspective. The results of this research, female characters in this novel were classified into two themes. The first theme was leadership which includes being a leader and being an influential figure. The second theme was independence, which is also divided into independent and independent thinkers to support oneself and family. (Putri & Rosana, 2018)

Regarding in the phenomenon above, the researcher would like to do a research in "Little Women" novel from the other perspective. In this perspective, the researcher chose to analyze it for the research because it described that woman can struggle for her right. And the struggle of woman at the time it's not easy.

## **1.2. Identification of the Problem**

Based on the background above, the researcher identified the problem as follows:

1. The inequality woman that described in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott
2. The struggle of the main character against the inequality reflected in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott
3. Underestimating of woman by man in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott
4. Subordinations of woman in the novel “Little Women” by Louisa May Alcott
5. Disadvantages of woman in the novel “Little Women” by Louisa May Alcott

## **1.3. The Limitation of the Problem**

There are some cases that be analyzed in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott. In the research, the researcher used feminist approach to analyzing this research, and the researcher just focus in equal liberty of liberal feminism. In this research, the problem was limited by researcher as follows:

1. The inequality of woman in equal liberty that described in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott
2. The struggle of the main character against the inequality in equal liberty reflected in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott

#### **1.4. The Formulation of the Problem**

Concerning with limitation of the problem, the researcher formulate the problem as follows:

1. What are the inequalities faced by the women in equal liberty that described in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott?
2. What are the struggles of the main character against the inequality in equal liberty reflected in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott?

#### **1.5. The Objective of the Research**

Below was the objective of the research that could be formulated:

1. To describe the inequality of women in equal liberty that described in “Little Women” novel by Louisa May Alcott.
2. To describe the struggle of the main character against the inequality in equal liberty reflected in the novel “Little Women” by Louisa May Alcott.

#### **1.6. Significance of the Research:**

##### **1.6.1. Theoretically**

The theoretical significance of this research is to enhance the study of literature which focus on the woman’s struggle from literary work and also used as reference for the readers especially the students at English Department of Putera Batam University who wants to and interested to analyze feminist as their object in their thesis writing and enhance their knowledge.

### 1.6.2. Practically

The practical significance of this research is to increase the reader's awareness of feminist especially the woman's struggle and it to be used as an example how to conduct literary analysis from feminist perspective.

### 1.7. Definition of the Key Terms

- Struggle** : The decision to fight for women's rights and interests in social, politics, or economics fields. (Sugihastuti & Suharto, 2015)
- Main Character** : Main character is a person who struggle to fight for their rights and oppose the injustices that occur between men and women. Usually in a story there are figures that are structural elements of fiction that give birth to events. (Sayuti, 2000)
- Inequality** : The inequality occurs because of differences between one another, where one of them occupies a higher position than the other. In daily life, inequalities between men and women often occur. (Ilyas, 2005)
- Feminist** : The conditions are considered unfair for women. In other words, feminist is a women's movement to reject everything that limits their rights as humans, and humiliate women. (Ratna, 2008)