CHAPTER III

Gender Stereotypes Reflected in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women

In the study focuses more to find out the answer of the question formulated in the research questions before. Firstly, by using theory of New Criticism, the analysis attempts to find out the character of Josephine March in the Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*. Then, by using theory of Stereotype is applied to know about the construction of gender stereotypes portrayed in the society and her reaction to the construction of gender stereotypes in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women.

The character of Josephine portrayed in Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*.

In this case, the writer would like to explain Josephine March as the main character in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women. She is the second eldest of the four March sisters. As described by Alcott in the novel;

3.1.1 Josephine is tomboy

The author describes the physical characteristic of Jo. She is tomboy. She hates being a girl and does not want to be a conventional female. It can be seen from the quotation in the first chapter;

> "Fifteen- year-old Jo was very tall, thin, and brown, and reminded one of a colt, for she never seemed to know what to do with her long limbs, which were very much in her way. She had a decided mouth, a comical nose, and sharp, gray eyes, which appeared to see everything, and were by turns fierce, funny, or thoughtful. Her long, thick hair was her one beauty, but it was usually bundled into a net, to be out of her way. Round shoulders had Jo, big hands and feet, a flyaway look to her clothes, and the uncomfortable

appearance of a girl who was rapidly shooting up into a woman and didn't like it." (7)

The quotation above clearly shows that Josephine is fifteen years old when the story begins. In her desires and her actions, she frustrates typical gender expectations. She feels uncomfortable on herself to be a woman. When the story begins, she is lying on the floor of the living room in her home. This is typical tomboy position. "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents, grumbled Jo, lying on the rug" (1). Even she rejects not to wear accessories of women and resists the culture that women should stay at home. It can be seen in this quotation below;

Jo immediately sat up, put her hands in her pockets, and began to whistle.

'Birds in their little nests agree,' sang Beth, the peacemaker, with such a funny face that both sharp voices softened to a laugh, and the 'pecking' ended for that time. 'Really, girls, you are both to be blamed,' said Meg, beginning to lecture in her elder-sisterly fashion. 'You are old enough to leave off boyish tricks, and to behave better, Josephine. It didn't matter so much when you were a little girl, but now you are so tall, and turn up your hair, you should remember that you are a young lady.' (5).

Besides, she called Josephine, a feminine name but she goes to be masculine sounding Jo. Her name is the first and clearest indication of her rebellions, she shortens the properly Victorian Josephine into the more pleasingly boyish "Jo". It can be seen from the quotation below;

"I hate my name, too, so sentimental! I wish every one would say Jo instead of Josephine. How did you make the boys stop calling you Dora?" (47)

^{&#}x27;Don't, Jo. It's so boyish!

^{&#}x27;That's why I do it.'

^{&#}x27;I detest rude, unladylike girls!'

^{&#}x27;I hate affected, niminy-piminy chits!'

She is boyish that her father has sometimes called her "son Jo", her father said "In spite of the curly crop, I don't see the 'son Jo' whom I left a year ago" (390). Jo prefers "strong words that mean something" and declares "I hate think I've got to grow up, and be Miss March, and wear long gowns, and look as prim as a China Aster! It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boy's games and work and manners! I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy" (6). She matures significantly during the first year of the story, her father notices that she has begun to act like a young lady, no longer uses slang or lies about on the floor. However, she will always be comfortable sitting on the ground or surrounded by young boys, she is herself and doesn't care what other people think of it.

Besides, Josephine hates romance in her real life and wants nothing more than to hold her family.

"She'll see those handsome eyes that she talks about, and then it will be all up with her. She's got such a soft heart, it will melt like butter in the sun if anyone looks sentimently at her. She read the short reports he sent more than she did your letters, and pinched me when I spoke of it, and likes brown eyes, and doesn't think John an ugly name, and she'll go and fall in love, and there's an end of peace and fun, and cozy times together. I see it all! They'll go lovering around the house, and we shall have to dodge. Meg will be absorbed and no good to me any more. Brooke will scratch up a fortune somehow, carry her off, and make a hole in the family, and I shall break my heart, and everything will be abominably uncomfortable. Oh, dear me! Why weren't we all boys, then there wouldn't be any bother." (357)

The quotation above shows that according to Jo, falling in love is dangerous because it will split her sisters apart. As each of them finds a love interest, she will be drawn away from the March family and into a new partnership that creates a different home. In chapter 23 also mentioned that Jo regards falling in love with man can make their affection lost or lessened "Hope the next will end better," muttered Jo, who found it very hard to see Meg absorbed in a stranger before her face, for Jo loved a few persons very dearly and dreaded to have their affection lost or lessened in any way." (409)

In other quotation exactly in chapter 20 also explained that Jo admits that she really does not understand about love.

"Mercy me! I don't know anything about love and such nonsense!" cried Jo, with a funny mixture of interest and contempt. 'In novels, the girls show it by starting and blushing, fainting away, growing thin, and acting like fools. Now Meg does not do anything of the sort. She eats and drinks and sleeps like a sensible creature, she looks straight in my face when I talk about that man, and only blushes a little bit when Teddy jokes about lovers" (355)

The quotation above shows that Jo knows nothing about love. She admits that she really does not understand what love is like in a practical, everyday sense. She knows that the heroines in novels act silly when they fall in love, and that her sister does not act silly, so she assumes that Meg is not in love. In other quotation also mentioned that Jo hates marriage because it will break her family.

"Of course not. It would be idiotic! I knew there was mischief brewing. I felt it, and now it's worse than I imagined. I just wish I could marry Meg myself, and keep her safe in the family." (356)

Jo wish intriguingly taboo, suggesting same sex desire and almost too intimate bond between sisters. It's also a reminder that marriage will divide the March girls, such as girl marries and becomes a wife, she will become the center of a new family, and separate from her siblings.

3.1.2 Josephine is short-tempered

Jo has quick temper and acts impulsively. She is also quick to apologize and the first to make peace in the event of any rivalry. She declares that the biggest of her problem is her "dreadful temper. You don't know, you can't guess how bad it is! It seems as if I could do anything when in a passion; I get so savage, I could hurt anyone and enjoy it. I am afraid I shall do something dreadful some day, and spoil my life, and make everybody hate me" (75). Jo is afraid that her anger makes her an evil person, a person who could harm another deliberately, but in fact, there seems to be no acceptable performance of anger in the March family. This control passion is encouraged by Mr. March when he helps Marmee keep from "being angry nearly everyday of her life" (75).

Besides, her anger will first rise to the surface in Chapter 8, Jo Meets Apollyon. The title of the chapter wisely refers to John Bunyan's allegory, in which Christian fights Apollyon, the destroyer. Indeed, Apollyon comes to Jo in the figure of her little sister, seeking revenge. The small child has been forced to stay at home while Jo and Meg visit the theatre. After the incident Jo wonders if her sister would try to make her sorry for it as apparently she usually does. Evidently, both girls do not always get on as they should, for they are both quick of temper. It can bee seen when Amy teases her and she irritated to Amy;

"Although the oldest, Jo had the least self-control, and had hard times trying to curb the fiery spirit which was continually getting her into trouble. Her anger never lasted long, and having humbly confessed her fault, she sincerely repented and tried to do better. Her sisters used to say that they rather liked to get Jo into a fury because she was such an angel afterward. Poor Jo tried desperately to be good, but her bosom enemy was always ready to flame up and defeat her, and it took years of patient effort to subdue it" (128)

Thus, although Jo has quick temper but she is so afraid of her temper that she resolves to conquer it and by the end of the story she succeeds in part. Jo always try to be better and keep calm when she is angry. It can be seen from the quotation below;

'I will try, Mother, I truly will. But you must help me, remind me, and keep me from flying out. I used to see Father sometimes put his finger on his lips, and look at you with a very kind but sober face, and you always folded your lips tight and went away. Was he reminding you then?' asked Jo softly" (140)

Jo is not the only one who must learn to manage her anger, her mother has also been forced to manage her anger. Evidently, her mother has been fighting her anger for forty years, but she has learned to repress her anger and she encourages her daughter to do the same, repress her feelings. It can be seen from the quotation in chapter 8;

"I hope you will be a great deal better, dear, but you must keep watch over your 'bosom enemy', as father calls it, or it may sadden, if not spoil your life. You have had a warning. Remember it, and try with heart and soul to master this quick temper, before it brings you greater sorrow and regret than you have known today." (67)

From the quotation above shows that Marmee makes this statement in Chapter 8 when she tells Jo that she too struggles with a quick temper. Throughout the novel, however, Marmee seems serene and composed,

which suggests that the appearance of a docile woman may hide turmoil underneath. Marmee's admission makes Jo feel better, because she realizes that she is not the only one with a temper. At the same time, though, Marmee's words suggest that there is no hope for Jo, Marmee is still angry after forty years, and perhaps Jo will be too.

3.1.3 Josephine is independent

As an independent woman, Jo declines Laurie's marriage proposal, as the quotation in chapter 35 "I can't say 'yes' truly, so I won't say it at all" (654). She thinks that woman can do anything and whoever they want without men. She supports her family because she is a working woman who is able to earn off the output of her mind. According to Jo, her first love is for her family and her initial goal is to keep her sisters, parents, and closest friends near at hand for her entire life. She has convinced herself that a marriage would not suit her as it ruins families "I just wish I could marry Meg myself, and keep her safe in the family" (319). By rejecting him, Jo stays true to her personal beliefs and sacrifices a possibility to end her family's poverty. She chooses independence. Laurie is left broken-hearted and changes for the worse. Indeed, he cannot face Jo after her rejection and leaves for Europe.

"I may be strong-minded, but no one can say I'm out of my sphere now, for woman's special mission is supposed to be drying tears and bearing burdens" (841)

From the quotation above, it shows that the character of Jo is unusual character with the nineteenth century's idea of woman's proper sphere. Jo is not turned into typical housewife, but she also does not get to go out into the world and become a celebrated author or playwright. Instead of entering the public world, she remains in the domestic one, even though she changes it significantly.

Jo speaks these words in Chapter 13 when the March girls and Laurie are discussing their dreams. It can be seen from the quotation below:

"I'd have a stable full of Arabian steeds, rooms piled with books, and I'd write out of a magic inkstand, so that my works should be as famous as Laurie's music. I want to do something splendid before I go into my castle—something heroic, or wonderful—that won't be forgotten after I'm dead. I don't know what, but I'm on the watch for it, and mean to astonish you all, some day. I think I shall write books, and get rich and famous; that would suit me, so that is my favorite dream." (265)

In contrast to the typical dreams of her sisters, Jo's dream is startlingly big and confidently expressed. The horses Jo wants, and with which she is constantly compared, represent the wild freedom for which she yearns. Significantly, Jo does not mention a husband or children in her dream, but says she wants books and ink. This powerful statement reaches well beyond the confines of a woman's small living room and demands lasting fame and independence in a man's world.

3.1.4 Josephine is jolly

Josephine always jollying their sisters in every situation and makes them happy and laugh, although sometimes it is nonsense. It can bee seen from the quotation below;

> "How ridiculous you are, Jo!" But Meg laughed at the nonsense and felt better in spite of herself. 'Lucky for you I am, for if I put on crushed airs and tried to be dismal, as you do, we should be in a nice state. Thank goodness, I can always find something funny to keep me up. Don't croak any more, but come home jolly, there's a dear." (62)

March's family is poor. They cannot afford presents at Christmas, their clothes are old, and they envy the other girls that they know. Actually they are hates being poor, one of them is Jo. It can bee seen from the quotation in beginning of novel "Christmas won't be Christmas without any presents, 'grumbled Jo, lying on the rug. 'It's so dreadful to be poor!' sighed Meg, looking down at her old dress" (2). Jo feels sad because she cannot afford presents at Christmas.

But in other side, Jo feels happier than rich people. Early in life, Jo and Meg along with their sisters begin to realize that possessions cannot make them happy, even when they are really nice. It can be seen from the quotation below;

'I don't believe fine young ladies enjoy themselves a bit more than we do, in spite of our burned hair, old gowns, one glove apiece and tight slippers that sprain our ankles when we are silly enough to wear them,' And I think Jo was quite right" (56)

Besides, poverty suits Jo better than wealth would, she imagines that if she married a rich man, she might have to learn how to behave properly and go around in society and boring stuff like that. She also ceases to envy with rich girl and try to stay comfort in the poverty situation. It can be seen from the quotation below;

"I am glad you are poor. I couldn't bear a rich husband, said jo decidedly, adding in a softer tone, Don't fear poverty. I've known it long enough to lose my dread and be happy working for those I love" (862)

"Wealth is certainly a most desirable thing, but poverty has its sunny side, and one of the sweet uses of adversity is the genuine satisfaction which comes from hearty work of head or hand, and to the inspiration of necessity, we owe half the wise, beautiful, and useful blessings of the world. Jo enjoyed a taste of this satisfaction, and ceased to envy richer girls, taking great comfort in the knowledge that she could supply her own wants, and need ask no one for a penny" (472)

3.1.5 Josephine is hard worker and ambitious girl in achieving her goals.

> Jo is working girl. She has a job, something a bit unusual for a young lady with an upper class background in nineteenth century America. Even when we first meet Jo, aged fifteen, she works as a companion for her Aunt March. Being a "companion" to a rich old lady, or even a rich young lady, was a common form of employment for nineteenth-century girls who came from good families but didn't have much money of their own. Like most companions, Jo spends time with her employer, reads to her, does little tasks for her like winding her yarn, and generally hangs around. This might not sound too hard, but Jo's Aunt March is a tyrannical, selfish old woman whose favorite phrase is "I told

you so." She constantly rebukes Jo for her unladylike behaviour, and Jo bristles under her watchful eye.

Jo eventually loses her job as Aunt March's companion to Amy, but she goes on to work as a governess to the children of a family friend, Mrs. Kirke, at boarding house in New York. In this case, Jo's employment continues to help her take care of her family, especially her ailing sister Beth, but it also gives her a chance to see the world beyond the New England town where she grew up. While working this job, Jo lands another as a contributor of sensational stories to a newspaper called The weekly Volcano, but this is the job the finally teaches her atsome things are not for sale including her honesty and integrity.

In another quotation mentioned that Jo decided to cut locks of her precious hair to sell for money. She did this so her mother could afford train fare to visit her father. It shows that Jo is a hard worker and wants to do anything for her family.

"My dear, where did you get it? Twenty-five dollars! Jo, I hope you haven't done anything rash? 'No, it's mine honestly. I didn't beg, borrow, or steal it. I earned it, and I don't think you'll blame me, for I only sold what was my own. As she spoke, Jo took off her bonnet, and a general outcry arose, for all her abundant hair was cut short. 'Your hair! Your beautiful hair!' 'Oh, Jo, how could you? Your one beauty.' 'My dear girl, there was no need of this.' 'She doesn't look like my Jo any more, but I love her dearly for it!" (287)

Like Amy, Jo also has grand artistic aspirations, writing. She wants to be writer. From the first pages it is clear that Jo is the bookworm of the family, which is the first characterisation of Jo in the novel "said Jo, who

was a bookworm" (2). She loves literature, both reading and writing it. Josephine who has a clear talent for writing, seems to excel when it comes to passionate tales. Indeed, their little play; The Witch's Cures at Christmas, including exotic characters as Don Pedro, Rodrigo and Zara, is described as the operatic tragedy, full of suspense, drama and heightened passion. Jo loves to write and is at her best at home, with her sisters as readers and audience. As they are all girls, Jo does not feel in the least inferior, she is proud of her writing. When she writes for her father, things are different, as she then labels her writing as silly little things, that could only amuse him; I made a pome' yesterday, when I was helping Hannah wash and as Father likes my silly little things, I put it in to amuse him (268).

She is very diligent in reading books, it is different with habit of her other sisters in spending their times. It can be seen from the quotation below;

"No,' said Jo, 'that dozy way wouldn't suit me. I've laid in a heap of books, and I'm going to improve my shining hours reading on my perch in the old apple tree, when I'm not having 1.. " (193)

Besides, she also composes plays for her sisters to perform and writes stories that she eventually gets published. She imitates Dickens, Shakespeare and Scott. Whenever she is not doing chores she curls up in her room, in a corner of the attic or outside, completely absorbed in s good book. Jo's excuse for writing is that she is supporting the family while her father is not. "The Duke's Daughter paid the butcher's bill, A

Phantom Hand put down a new carpet, and the Curse of the Coventrys proved the blessing of the Marches in the way of groceries and gowns." (472).

"I want to do something splendid before I go into my castle, something heroic or wonderful that won't be forgotten after I'm dead. I don't know what, but I'm on the watch for it, and mean to astonish you all some day. I think I shall write books, and get rich and famous, that would suit me, so that is my favorite dream" (255)

The quotation shows that Jo is clever enough to make money from her writing and make a name for herself, but whether it is her true calling remains to be seen.

"Well, I've left two stories with a newspaperman, and he's to give his answer next week,' whispered Jo, in her confidant's ear. 'Hurrah for Miss March, the celebrated American authoress!' cried Laurie, throwing up his hat and catching it again, to the great delight of two ducks, four cats, five hens, and half a dozen Irish children, for they were out of the city now. 'Hush! It won't come to anything, I dare say, but I couldn't rest till I had tried, and I said nothing about it because I didn't want anyone else to be disappointed. 'It won't fail. Why, Jo, your stories are works of Shakespeare compared to half the rubbish that is published every day. Won't it be fun to see them in print, and shan't we feel proud of our authoress?" (269)

From the quotation above it can be seen that Jo is ambitious girl. For her, trying to get her stories published is a serious matter. It will help her know whether or not writing really is her gift and it might bring in some much needed money for her family.

3.1.6 Josephine is outspoken

Jo also described as an outspoken girl and she also often use slang words, "Jo does use such slang words!' observed Amy" (5). Another quotation can be seen in the conversation with her sisters below;

"Do you envy her, Meg?' said Laurie. 'I'm afraid I do. 'I'm glad of it!' muttered Jo, tying on her hat with a jerk. 'Why?' asked Meg, looking surprised. Because if you care much about riches, you will never go and marry a poor man,' said Jo, frowning at Laurie, who was mutely warning her to mind what she said." (273)

Besides, in the novel clearly describes that Jo often interrupts conversation of other people. It can be seen from the quotation below when she interrupts her mother's conversation;

"He is younger than she, you know," began Mrs. March, but Jo broke in... 'Only a little, he's old for his age, and tall, and can be quite grown-up in his manners if he likes. Then he's rich and generous and good, and loves us all, and I say it's a pity my plan is spoiled. 'I'm afraid Laurie is hardly grown-up enough for Meg, and altogether too much of a weathercock just now for anyone to depend on. Don't make plans, Jo, but let time and their own hearts mate your friends. We can't meddle safely in such matters, and had better not get 'romantic rubbish' as you call it, into our heads, lest it spoil our friendship." (359)

In other quotation also mentioned that she interrupts Amy impatiently, when she will go to theatre to see The Seven Castle of The Diamond Lake:

"I can't, dear, because you aren't invited,' began Meg, but Jo broke in impatiently, 'Now, Meg, be quiet or you will spoil it all. You can't go, Amy, so don't be a baby and whine about it." (125)

Jo does not always stop to think that it might not be wise to express her opinions or feelings in every situation. It can be seen from the quotation below;

"But I think girls ought to show when they disapprove of young men, and how can they do it except by their manners? Preaching does not do any good, as I know to my sorrow, since I've had Teddie to manage. But there are many little ways in which I can influence him without a word, and I say we ought to do it to others if we can" (520)

From the quotation above shows that Jo always expresses her feeling or her opinion. In every situation, she always gives her argumentation. The quotation below shows that Jo is most outspoken of the four her sisters:

'I am not sure, but I think it was because his son, Laurie's father, married an Italian lady, a musician, which displeased the old man, who is very proud. The lady was good and lovely and accomplished, but he did not like her, and never saw his son after he married. They both died when Laurie was a little child, and then his grandfather took him home. I fancy the boy, who was born in Italy, is not very strong, and the old man is afraid of losing him, which makes him so careful. Laurie comes naturally by his love of music, for he is like his mother, and I dare say his grandfather fears that he may want to be a musician. At any rate, his skill reminds

him of the woman he did not like, and so he 'glowered' as Jo said.' (234)

3.2 The construction of gender stereotypes portrayed in the society in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women.

> Little Women is a novel that written in modern era, exactly in nineteenth century. The nineteenth century is often called the Victorian age, taking that name from England's Queen Victoria who ruled for 60 years. It was an age where the impact of the industrial revolution caused a sharp differentiation between the gender roles, especially of the upper and middle classes. Gender and gender role refers to society's idea of how boys or girls or men and women are expected to behave and should be treated. A display of gender, as with a gender role, represents a public manifestation of gender identity. It can be said that one is a sex and one does gender; that sex typically, but not always, represents what is between one's legs while gender represents what is between one's ears. The statement above clarifies that sex is visible and gender is invisible. It can also be meant that sex is biologically type which is created by God while gender is socially constructed because of the presence of gender roles, a stereotype has been created.

> According to Barker's *Dictionary of Cultural Studies*, stereotype is defined as a vivid but simple representation that reduces persons to a asset of exaggerated, usually negative, character traits and is thus a form

of representation that essentializes others through the operation of power (Barker, 188).

Gender roles are defines by behaviours, but gender stereotypes are beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and feminity. In the book entitled Gender Stereotypes: Masculinity and Feminity, Lewin says;

"Before 19th century, most people lived and worked on farms where men and women worked together. The industrial revolution changed the lives majority of people in Europe and North America by moving men outside the home to earn money and leaving women at home to mange household and children" (Joseph 161)

In Louisa May Alcott's Little Women, man was described at the time as powerful, active, brave, worldly, logical, rational, independent, individual, able to resist temptation, tainted, ambitious, and sphere in public. In contrast, woman was described as weak, passive, timid, domestic, illogical, emotional, social or familial, dependent, unable to resist temptation, pure, content, and sphere in private. To be female is not easy as to be a male human during the time because there are some restricting regulations regulating women's behaviour and even in law, women have less power than men do. Women must be dependent on men and what girls should do is to prepare themselves for the marriage since the aim of life for every woman must be to be married.

In the Victorian era women were seen by the middle classes at least, as belonging to the domestic sphere, and this stereotype required them to provide their husbands with clean home, food on the table and raise their children. Women's rights were extremely limited in this era, losing ownership of their wages, all of their physical property, excluding land property and all other cash they generated once married.

3.2.1 Josephine's reaction to the construction of gender stereotypes in society in Louisa May Alcott's Little Women.

In Louisa May Alcott's Little Women, the main character is Josephine who turns into a woman in a society in America during Victorian age. Unlike her sisters, she challenges the normative patriarchal society and does not try to fit in, as Amy and Meg so splendidly do, nor does she flee from it as Beth does. Instead she defies society. It can be seen from the quotation below;

> 'How I wish I was going to college! You don't look as if you liked it. 'I hate it! Nothing but grinding or skylarking. And I don't like the way fellows do either, in this country.'

'What do you like?'

'To live in Italy, and to enjoy myself in my own way.' Jo wanted very much to ask what his own way was, but his black brows looked rather threatening as he knit them, so she changed the subject by saying, as her foot kept time, 'That's a splendid polka! Why don't you go and try it?' (50)

From the quotation above shows that Josephine defies society, she hates the normative patriarchal society at the time. Besides, she also does not like the life of marriage. It can be seen from the quotation below;

> "Then we'll be old maids,' said Jo stoutly. 'right, Jo. Better be happy old maids than unhappy wives, or unmaidenly girls, running about to find husbands,' said Mrs. March decidedly. 'Don't be troubled, Meg, poverty seldom daunts a sincere lover. Some of the best and most honored women I know were poor girls, but so love worthy that they were not allowed to be old maids. Leave these things to time. Make this home happy, so that you

may be fit for homes of your own, if they are offered you, and contented here if they are not. One thing remember, my girls. Mother is always ready to be your confidente, Father to be your friend, and both of hope and trust that our daughters, whether married or single, will be the pride and comfort of out lives." (171)

At the time, marriage signified a woman's maturity and respectability, but motherhood was confirmation that she had entered the world of womanly virtue and female fulfilment. For woman not to become a mother meant she was liable to be labelled inadequate, a failure or in some way abnormal. Motherhood was expected of a married woman and the childless single woman was a figure to be pitied.

Josephine wanted to be as equal as men at the time, who were considered as independent. Jo wants to enter a man's profession and be adventurous and wild. In fact, she says "It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boy's game and work and manners! I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy" (13). She is a tomboy, and reacts with impatience to the many limitations placed on women and girls. To be a female is not easy as to be a male human during that period because there are some restricting regulations regulating women's behaviour and even in law, women have less power than men do. Women must be dependent on men and what girls should do is to prepare themselves for the marriage since the aim of life for every woman must be married.

Jo is conscious about those facts and thus she decides to be masculine as her way to show her disappointment on the discrimination and to show that she, as a girl who turns into a woman is not weaker than men. She wants to earn a living, such as a duty conventionally reserved for men. In the novel described that Jo as being more masculine than feminine and Jo herself openly admits her wishes to be a man;

"Mother didn't say anything about our money, and she won't wish us to give up everything. Let's each buy what we want, and have a little fun; I'm sure we work hard enough to earn it," cried Jo, examining the heels of her shoes in a gentlemanly manner "(2)

"I hate to think I've got to grow up and be Miss March, and wear long gowns, and look as prim as a China Aster! It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boy's games and work and manners! I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy.15 And it's worse than ever now, for I'm dying to go and fight with Papa. And I can only stay home and knit, like a poky old woman!" (4)

In Alcott's physical description of Jo, the reader also recognize masculine traits, as she has "round shoulders", big hands and feet, a flyaway look to her clothes" (6), furthermore she was bestowed with "the uncomfortable appearance of a girl who was rapidly shooting up into a woman and didn't like it" (Alcott 6). Her masculine traits, which make of her the archetypical tomboy, are not only emphasized by Alcott and asserted by Jo herself. They are also recognized by her family. On Mr. March's coming home he refers to his beloved daughters as his "son Jo" (348), Meg advises her sister not to behave as a boy, whereas Amy despires her sister's boyish manners.

Similarly, Laurie desires to cross over into the feminine pursuits. His desire to stay at home and study the piano are more feminine qualities. He wants to pursue music, at that time a culturally feminine pursuit, instead of business, a culturally masculine pursuit. Even his nickname, Laurie, which

he uses in favor of his much more masculine given name, Theodore, suggests his feminine side. It can be seen from the quotation below;

"Nicely, thank you, Mr. Laurence. But I am not Miss March, I'm only Jo,' returned the young lady. 'I'm not Mr. Laurence, I'm only Laurie. 'Laurie Laurence, what an odd name. 'My first name is theodore, but I don't like it, for the fellows called me Dora, so I made the say Laurie instead. 'I hate my name, too, so sentimental! I wish every one would say Jo instead of Josephine. How did you make the boys stop calling you Dora?" (47)

In *Little Women*, music has an interesting relationship to a character's degree of conformity. For the March girls, the more musically inclined a sister is, the more traditionally feminine and adherent to feminine duty she is. Marmee sings to the girls all the time and she embodies the ideal dutiful and domestic mother. Beth, similarly is both very musical and very passive. In contrast, Amy has a bad voice and Jo has the worst voice of all, both girls are independent and important with the limitations placed on women. Intererstingly, Laurie also likes music and wants to be a professional musician, but this interest makes him ill-adapted to the role expected of him as a man. It can be seen from the quotation below;

"After I'd seen as much of the world as I want to, I'd like to settle in Germany and have just as much music as I choose. I'm to be a famous musician myself, and all creation is to rush to hear me. And I'm never to be bothered about money or business, but just enjoy myself and live for what I like." (253)

Then, prior to hearing father's letter, Jo announces her wish to join the army and fight with her father in the Civil War. She dreams of doing something splendid and traveling abroad, and she tempt to run away with Laurie when he proposes. It can be seen from the quotation in chapter 2;

"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. 'I'll try and be what he loves to call me, 'a little woman' and not be rough and wild, but do my duty here instead of wanting to be somewhere else,' said Jo, thinking that keeping her temper at home was a much harder task than facing a rebel or two down South." (16)

According to the quotation above, join the fight was on contrast with the society at the time. Jo says that she would like to be doing something exciting, such as being in the Civil War like her father, instead of sitting at home. Jo points out that women cannot fight in the Civil War, and generally lead less adventurous lives than do men. In this statement, Jo also demonstrates a wish to make her father happy by acting stereotypically female. Jo struggles throughout the novel because she wants both to lead an adventurous, independent life and to help and please her family. In other words, the struggle for individual success conflicts with the duty and affection she feels for her family and with the domestic sphere that most women of the time accept.

At the time, woman must be dependent on men and girls should prepare themselves for the marriage since the aim of life for every woman must be married. Woman in the Victorian society had one main role in life, which was to marry and take part in their husband's interests and business. Before marriage, they would learn housewife skills such as weaving, cooking, washing, and cleaning, unless they were of a wealthy family. In contrast, Jo wants to be independent woman. She does not like

to wear dresses, she does not want to have to wear gloves, she would rather fight instead of her father, she longs to go to college, she hates needle work and other domestic chores, and she loves to run wild and cherishes independence. She thinks that woman can do anything and whoever they want without men. Besides, she also declines Laurie's marriage proposal, as the quotation in chapter 35 "I can't say 'yes' truly, so I won't say it at all" (654). Different with her sisters, she cannot cook and cannot make anything to eat. It can bee seen from the quotation below;

"Don't try too many messes, Jo, for you can't make anything but gingerbread and molasses candy fit to eat. I wash my hands of the dinner party, and since you have asked Laurie on your own responsibility, you may just take care of him." (200)

Josephine wanted to be as equal as men at the time, who were considered as ambitious. Like Amy, Jo has grand artistic aspirations, writing. Indeed, Jo has become best known for her writing and can thus be analysed as a model of literary achievement. From the first pages it is clear that Jo is the bookworm of the family, which is the first characterisation of Jo in the novel "said Jo, who was a bookworm" (2). It is only later that she is characterised as being gentleman-like. Indeed, her writing aspiration is more crucial for her own personal development than her gender transgression. Her rebellion against the typical Victorian womanhood should be treated as a logical result of her literary ambitions. Jo is constantly writing wild stories, plays and poetry. It can be seen from the quotation below;

"Well, I've left two stories with a newspaperman, and he's to give his answer next week,' whispered Jo, in her confidant's ear. 'Hurrah for Miss March, the celebrated American authoress!' cried Laurie, throwing up his hat and catching it again, to the great delight of two ducks, four cats, five hens, and half a dozen Irish children, for they were out of the city now. 'Hush! It won't come to anything, I dare say, but I couldn't rest till I had tried, and I said nothing about it because I didn't want anyone else to be disappointed. 'It won't fail. Why, Jo, your stories are works of Shakespeare compared to half the rubbish that is published every day. Won't it be fun to see them in print, and shan't we feel proud of our authoress?" (269)

Moreover, what attracts her most in Aunt March's mansion is the large library, where she devoured poetry, romance, history, travels and pictures, like a regular bookworm. Yet, Jo realises that as a woman she can never achieve true authorship, equal to male authorship. Patriarchal society did not allow women to have the same privileges as men. Consequently, women were ascribed the more feminine duties of caring for the home and pursuing the outlets of feminine creativity. In the first part of the novel Amy has deluded and silly ideas about society and seems as Foote says "happily enslaved by it" (74). However, through pain and humiliation, Amy will learn how to adjust and behave within this society and still be independent, true to oneself and respected. As Foote points out, Amy's understanding of the complex working of society and her acceptance of that society, will be rewarded (78).