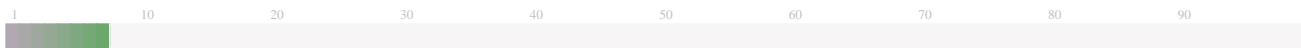


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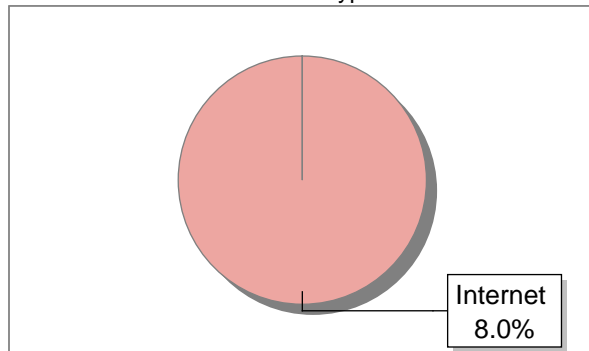
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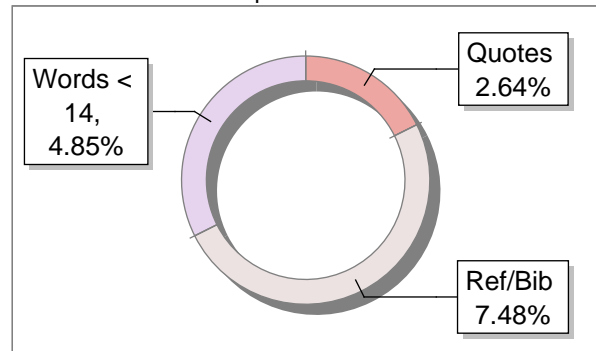
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## Gender Inequality Experienced by Jo March in the Film “Little Women (2019)”

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### ABSTRACT

This research investigated the forms of gender discrimination experienced by the female character Jo March in the film "Little Women (2019)" and Jo's efforts against the discrimination in her societal life during the post-Civil War era in America. The study is conducted through a contextual approach and utilizes Simone de Beauvoir's feminist study approach. This research identifies the forms of discrimination experienced by the character Jo March in aspects of work, life, and family. Additionally, the research also reveals the forms of resistance carried out by Jo March in confronting gender discrimination including (1) continuing her work; (2) rejecting gender conventions; (3) pursuing independence in education and financial matters; and (4) advocating for women's rights. This research provides insights into the gender inequality faced by women in America at that time. The findings are expected to inspire women to further advocate for their rights and not give up in the face of the discrimination they experience. This study contributes to the field of gender studies by highlighting the pervasive impact of patriarchal norms on gender discrimination, thereby inspiring women to advocate for their rights and fostering a deeper understanding of gender equality. Additionally, it offers valuable insights for future research, encouraging a broader exploration of feminist issues and the diverse cultural contexts affecting women's roles and autonomy.

**Keywords:** *feminism, gender discrimination, gender inequality, women's right*

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### 1. Introduction

Gender is a concept that includes differences in roles, attributes, traits, attitudes, and behaviors that grow and develop in society. This includes productive roles related to work and economic contributions, reproductive roles related to biological functions in reproduction, as well as social roles that involve interactions and relationships in society. David (2015) argued that the feminist movement was aimed at improving women's lives by promoting gender and social equality, becoming a political, educational, and pedagogical effort. Although feminism has significantly impacted women's lives and knowledge creation, it has not yet broadly influenced gender and sexual relations. In his overview, David emphasizes that the purpose of feminism is to enhance women's lives, particularly by achieving gender equality between women and men. Meanwhile, according to Maroto et al. (2019), gender discrimination is unequal or disadvantageous treatment of an individual or group of individuals based on gender.

Feminism is the belief in full social, economic, and political equality for women (Britannica,

2023). According to De Beauvoir, feminism means treating women and men equally, allowing women to live freely and make their own choices about the future without being pushed or guided by others. In simpler terms, De Beauvoir encourages women to pursue their desires, be intellectual, and reject being shaped by others. Women are even free to say no to societal rules, values, and norms that limit them.

In "The Second Sex," Simone de Beauvoir explores the concept of feminism, which is the belief in and advocacy for equal rights and opportunities for women. De Beauvoir is considered a foundational figure in feminist philosophy, and her work delves into the ways women have historically been oppressed and treated as the "other" in society.

In her book, de Beauvoir emphasizes the importance of women being independent and deserving of it. Independent women enjoy certain advantages. They stand out not just physically but in their mindset and attitude, captivating men. These women are not overly reliant on men, as de Beauvoir aims for women to be self-sufficient and fulfilled. In relationships, women should perceive themselves as complete individuals ready to share their lives. They are inclined to reject those who seek completion through them. Gender rights should be equal, challenging the notion that men inherently have more rights.

Independent women can take care of themselves, handling situations without burdening men. Not only are they self-sufficient emotionally, but they are also financially independent, not relying on others for their finances. De Beauvoir's theory advocates for women's right to be financially self-reliant. It encourages women to use their own earnings to buy what they desire, fostering independence and equality in relationships.

Simone de Beauvoir's book "The Second Sex" explores the role of women in society, particularly focusing on the concept of "The Married Woman." The traditional path society offers women is marriage, and many women today are or aspire to be married. Marriage involves a solemn vow between a man and a woman, and once married, they are bound by rules that govern their relationship. De Beauvoir observes how, in a patriarchal culture, domestic life is controlled by the male lineage, determining a woman's destiny (Beauvoir, 1949).

In this culture, an unmarried woman's fate lies in her father's hands, and once married, it shifts to her husband. According to Asri (2018), culture is used to control the social roles of women and men. Within the patriarchal framework, a wife is expected to serve her husband, follow his orders, and accompany him in all situations. The dynamics are said to resemble those of a master and slave, with wives being treated arbitrarily and their freedom of movement is limited. In this societal structure, the wife is viewed as the property of her husband and children, working for their benefit rather than for herself. According to Widiyantari et al. (2017), the cultures of the source language can be seen in several forms. For example, the names of the characters and events that happened in that story.

In real life, many tasks and roles can be performed by both men and women, with a few exceptions like giving birth. However, misunderstandings about gender roles are often caused by societal stereotypes, which link certain tasks and qualities to specific genders. This gender bias can result in unfair treatment of women and broader negative effects on society. When women are left behind or treated unequally, equal partnership with men becomes challenging, leading to an imbalanced relationship. Harmful consequences can result from such inequality. To address this issue, "harmony in difference" should be aimed at, where diverse abilities and contributions are recognized and valued equally, promoting fairness and balance. (Rahminawati, 2001)

Literature can be defined as a piece of written work with artistic merits created by the author Arafah et al. (2021). Literary works, regardless of genre, include many useful lessons and are dependable sources of information about people's lives and values in society (Arafah et al., 2020). According to Rahayu (2015), "Literature is one of the elements of culture used to express human thoughts and ideas." Literature encompasses various genres to convey human thoughts and ideas,

including prose, drama, poetry, essays, fiction, and non-fiction. Non-fiction refers to literature based on reality, without fabrication. Goga et al. (2021) stated that "Nonfiction is typically fact-based or fact-oriented." Examples of non-fiction literature include textbooks, journals, and reports. Fiction, on the other hand, is literature based on the author's imagination, not on factual events. Its purpose is to entertain the audience. Examples of fiction literature include fables, legends, comics, and fairy tales. Additionally, fiction can also be expressed in different forms, such as movies.

According to Britannica (2023), a film also called a movie or a motion picture, is a series of still photographs on film projected onto a screen using light in rapid succession. In the movie "Little Women (2019)" Jo March experiences gender inequality in several ways. One clear example is when Jo tries to sell her stories to publishers. Despite her talent and hard work, the publishers often dismiss her work simply because she is a woman. They suggest that women's writing is not as valuable or interesting as men's writing. This shows how society and the male-dominated publishing industry do not take her seriously as a writer just because she is female.

Another example is when Jo decides to live independently and <sup>30</sup> pursue her career rather than get married. Many people, including some men in her life, judge her harshly for this choice. They believe that a woman's primary role should be to get married and take care of a family, not to have a career or personal ambitions. This judgment highlights the societal belief that women should conform to traditional roles and not seek personal or professional fulfillment outside of marriage. This gender discrimination can occur because of gender stereotypes that exist in society. According to Brower (2017), "Gender stereotypes are assumptions, both positive and negative, regarding how a particular gender should act and think." He asserts that these stereotypes reflect the opinions, whether good or bad, held by both men and women about certain behaviors and thoughts associated with gender. However, according to Dinella & Martin (2001), "beliefs about the traits of men and women are known as gender stereotypes." Different meanings are attributed to stereotypes across various cultures and eras. These expectations are often connected to the roles played by men and women in society. <sup>6</sup> It can be concluded that the roles of women are affected by gender stereotypes. Over time, stereotypes about women that permeate our environment have come to be associated with more and more roles for them. These examples show the gender inequality Jo faces because she is a female and a writer, with society and men giving negative judgments toward her decisions. Inequality between women and men is not just a thing of the past; it persists today. Yarrow & Afkar (2020) stated that, even though girls outperform boys in school, women work less, earn less, and are promoted less. Women continue to be under-represented in leadership roles in both schools and government.

Many films address the theme of gender inequality, particularly discrimination against women, as a means to advocate for women's rights and voices. One portrayal of this struggle can be found in the film *Little Women* (2019) which <sup>1</sup> tells the story of the character Jo March. The film is adapted from the novel of the same name by Louisa May Alcott, depicting Louise's pursuit of her dreams as a female novelist in America.

In this film, the female characters are portrayed as individuals with personal desires and aspirations, striving to overcome social limitations that restrict their opportunities. The main character, Jo March, challenges social conventions that dictate women should solely focus on marriage and family. She values her freedom, has a passion for writing, and fights to be accepted as a professional writer in a world dominated by men. By linking this film to feminist theory, we can observe how the female characters in the film confront social conventions, pursue their dreams and aspirations, and fight for equality and freedom in their lives.

This study examined different parts of women's struggles in "Little Women" and related works from various perspectives. The first research by Sutrisno et al. (2023) focused on the challenges faced by Jo March in the 2019 film, emphasizing her efforts to pursue her dreams despite societal expectations.

They used a feminist approach to identify how Jo struggles against traditional gender roles and societal norms. This research highlighted the broader issues of gender inequality faced by women during that period.

The second one, Asriyanti et al. (2022) explored the theme of women's dependence on men in "Little Women," particularly through the lens of the Cinderella Complex. Their study showed how this complex affects the thoughts and behaviors of the characters, both consciously and unconsciously. By examining how women are portrayed as reliant on men for their happiness and success, this research sheds light on the deep-rooted gender stereotypes prevalent in the story.

Third, Setyabudi & Laili (2022) investigated the social conflicts in "Little Women" using a sociological approach. They identified types of realistic conflicts, such as hostile feelings and behaviors, and explored the positive functions of these conflicts in the narrative. This study provided insights into how social conflicts contribute to character development and the overall storyline.

Fourth, Jannah (2018) analyzed the personalities of the main characters in "Little Women" using the Big Five personality traits. This study revealed the diverse traits exhibited by each character, such as conscientiousness and agreeableness, and how these traits influence their actions and decisions. By understanding the characters' personalities, this research offered a deeper understanding of their motivations and struggles.

Fifth, Septiana (2020) focused on Jo March's depiction of liberal feminism in the 2019 film. The research highlighted how Jo challenges traditional women's stereotypes and fights for her own identity and independence. This study emphasized Jo's role as a feminist icon who rejects societal expectations and proves that women can succeed without conforming to traditional gender roles.

Sixth, Wardana & Ulya (2021) discussed the image of women in the poem "Dongeng Marsinah" by Sapardi Djoko Damono, using a feminist approach. They explored how the poem responds to contemporary social issues and represents women as resilient and strong. This research aimed to address the treatment of women in society and advocate for their rights through literary analysis.

The last one, Panuntun & Chusna (2021) examined patriarchal culture in the film "Hidden Figures," focusing on how it affects the female characters. They identified various aspects of patriarchy, such as characters, settings, plotting, and conflict, and showed how these elements reflect gender-based power structures.

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of how patriarchal culture impacts women in different contexts and uses some previous studies that have similarities to the object of analysis, to support the researcher in analyzing the movie.

The research findings and approaches from various studies have been synthesized to offer a comprehensive comparison. The primary focus of this study, which explores gender discrimination encountered by Jo March and her responses to it, was compared with previous studies that delve into related themes. These include studies on women's struggles, dependence on men, social conflict, personalities of main characters, liberal feminism, the portrayal of women in poetry, and patriarchal culture in films like "Hidden Figures."

The methodological approaches of these studies were also contrasted. This study employed a contextual and feminist approach inspired by Simone de Beauvoir, while other studies utilized feminist approaches, descriptive qualitative methods, and sociological perspectives. These diverse approaches underscore the different lenses through which gender-related themes have been examined.

When comparing data sources, the current study and several others primarily drew upon "Little Women" (2019), though some studies also incorporated additional sources such as journal articles, film scripts, and other literary works like the poem "Dongeng Marsinah" and the movie "Hidden Figures." This indicates a shared reliance on similar literary sources while also showing variations in supplementary materials used.



The forms of discrimination and conflict analyzed across the studies varied significantly. While this study focused on the intersection of work, life, and family, others explored gender stereotypes, dependence on men, realistic conflicts, gender limitations, and various psychological and societal representations of women. This comparison highlights the wide array of gender-related challenges depicted in literature and film.

In terms of resistance actions, the current research emphasized Jo March's efforts to continue her work, reject gender conventions, and advocate for women's rights. Other studies highlighted actions such as pursuing dreams, engaging in women's movements, overcoming social conflicts, and reflecting on women's positions in patriarchal societies. These actions represent different forms of resistance against gender-based oppression.

The focus on main characters also varied, with this study centering on Jo March, while others explored a broader range of characters, including Meg and Jo, multiple characters, and general representations of women. This comparison shows that while Jo March is a prominent figure, other characters and their experiences have also been crucial in exploring gender themes.

Finally, the outcomes and implications of these studies were compared. The current research aims to inspire women to advocate for their rights, while other studies focus on highlighting women's struggles, examining dependence on men, analyzing personality traits, showcasing liberal feminism, and advocating against violence and patriarchy. These varying outcomes reflect the diverse impacts of gender-focused research on societal understanding and empowerment.

Despite the extensive research on "Little Women" and related themes, previous studies have not fully explored the specific forms of gender discrimination faced by Jo March in the 2019 film adaptation using Simone de Beauvoir's feminist theory. There is a need for a more focused analysis of the various types of discrimination Jo encounters as a female writer and how societal and male judgments impact her decisions and actions.

Furthermore, previous studies have not thoroughly examined the strategies Jo employs to combat these forms of discrimination. While some research has mentioned Jo's rejection of traditional gender roles and her pursuit of independence, there has been little detailed exploration of her specific resistance tactics, such as continuing her work, seeking financial and educational independence, and advocating for women's rights. This gap leaves room for a deeper understanding of how Jo actively fights against the limitations imposed on her by society.

Additionally, there is a potential for exploring the broader implications of Jo's experiences and resistance for contemporary women. Previous research has primarily focused on the historical and literary aspects of "Little Women," but there is an opportunity to draw connections between Jo's struggles and the ongoing fight for gender equality today. By examining how Jo's actions can inspire and inform modern feminist movements, valuable insights into the relevance of her story in today's context can be provided.

Many studies have examined the depiction of women's struggles in "Little Women" from various angles. This study brings a fresh perspective by focusing on the specific forms of gender discrimination faced by Jo March in the 2019 film "Little Women" through Simone de Beauvoir's feminist lens. This research examines how Jo experiences discrimination in her work, personal life, and family, and highlights her efforts to combat these challenges by continuing her work, rejecting traditional gender roles, seeking independence, and advocating for women's rights. This study provides a detailed analysis of Jo March's experiences and her resistance to discrimination, aiming to inspire contemporary women to advocate for their rights. Based on those statements, this research aims to analyze the forms of gender inequality and how the characters in the film "Little Women" (2019) confront gender inequality.

## 2. Methodology

In this study, the movie "Little Women (2019)" is analyzed using a contextual approach. The

contextual approach examines a work not simply as an independent piece of art but concerning its broader social, cultural, and historical contexts. By situating the movie within these contexts, a deeper understanding of its meanings and the societal issues it addresses can be gained

The main framework used in this research is based on the feminist ideas of Simone de Beauvoir, particularly from her book "The Second Sex". De Beauvoir's work scrutinizes the status of women in society, elucidating how women are often treated as objects, dependent on men's views. She advocates for gender equality and challenges traditional roles and stereotypes that confine women. De Beauvoir emphasizes that women should seek independence and control over their own lives, a crucial perspective for analyzing the characters in the movie "Little Women (2019)".

The goal of this research is to identify the forms of discrimination and gender inequality experienced by the female characters in "Little Women (2019)" and to understand how these characters confront these challenges. The methodology includes the following steps:

1. Data Collection, was conducted through watching the movie several times and reading the "Little Women (2019)" movie script carefully. This thorough review aided in understanding the story, dialogues, and character interactions.

2. Data Identification, carried out by identifying scenes, dialogues, and actions of the characters that illustrate gender discrimination and inequality. This step focused on pinpointing specific parts of the movie that address these issues.

3. Data Analysis, in which the identified scenes and dialogues were analyzed using Beauvoir's theory. This step included examining how the characters' experiences and actions reflect de Beauvoir's ideas about women's oppression and their fight for independence.

4. Data Interpretation which the analyzed data were interpreted through Beauvoir's theory. This step highlights how the movie depicts the characters' efforts to overcome societal limitations and pursue their dreams.

In this study, all the data collected are classified as both sample and population. This is because the study belongs to literary analysis and aims to find gender inequality within the entirety of the film's content. There is no separate sample; instead, the entire body of collected data serves as the focus of the analysis. By using this methodology, the study ensures a thorough and detailed analysis of the film "Little Women (2019)". The contextual approach helps in understanding the film's connection to real-world issues, while de Beauvoir's feminist theory provides a strong foundation for examining gender inequality and the characters' struggles. This approach allows readers to critically evaluate the study's findings, offering insights into the film's portrayal of women's roles and the importance of feminist ideas.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 Result

In these findings, the data related to the forms of discrimination and how gender inequality is confronted by Jo March in the film "Little Women (2019)" will be revealed and described as analysis results.

##### 3.1.1 The forms of discrimination against Jo March in the film Little Women (2019)

"Little Women" is set in post-Civil War America, showing a time when traditional elements of everyday life persist. During this era, women mostly did not have equal opportunities in education or work due to the patriarchal nature of society at that time.

##### 3.1.1.1 Discrimination Against Female Writers in the Publishing Industry

At the beginning of the movie, Jo March wants to enter a room to submit her writing to a publisher. When she submits her own story, she does not admit that it is hers and says it belongs to her friend. The citation is presented below:

*Jo : Excuse me (Clearing her throat)*  
*Mr. Dashwood (the oldest, smokiest gentleman) looks at her.*  
*Jo : I was looking for the Weekly Volcano office... I wished to see Mr. Dashwood?*  
*Mr. Dashwood stares silently.*  
*Jo : A friend of mine desired me to offer a story, by her, she wrote it – she'd be glad to write more if this suits.*  
*He stands and extends his rough, large hand. She gives him the manuscript.*  
*(Page 1)*

*Mr. Dashwood : What name would she like put to the story?*  
*Jo : Oh, yes – none at all if you please.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : Just as she likes, of course.*  
*(Page 3)*

Figure 1. Dialogue between Jo March and Mr. Dashwood

The statement shows that there is fear of discrimination if she admits that the work is hers. She might not be accepted or paid for her writing because, during that time, it was uncommon for a woman to engage in writing. The other citation is when Jo asks if Mr. Dashwood might take another story of her if she makes it better than before.

*Jo : Should I tell my, my friend that you'll take another if she had another than this?*  
*Mr. Dashwood : We'll look at it. Tell her to make it short and spicy. And if the main character's a girl make sure she's married by the end (casually) or dead, either way.*  
*(Page 3)*

Figure 2. Dialogue between Jo March and Mr. Dashwood

In the citation above, Mr. Dashwood made it clear: he said that if the main character is a girl, she needs to make sure the characters are either married or dead by the end. He prefers a short story where the girl ends up married or dies. This quote indicates a bias toward portraying women as married in stories. Mr. Dashwood, representing patriarchal views, opposes the writer's desire for a different narrative. He wants stories that bring happiness, but only from his perspective.

In reality, women have the freedom to choose their paths. Gender should not dictate how women live their lives. Even if Jo wishes to publish her story as she likes, societal norms may restrict her. She might fear that people will not accept her unconventional story.

### 3.1.1.2 Discouragement by the male publisher

The character Jo March, at the end of the story, finally dares to publish her own story and admits that the story belongs to her. However, the story she presents features a female protagonist, and the ending

Jo March creates is against the societal norms of that era, leading to discrimination from Mr. Dashwood. The citation is given below:

*Jo sits where she originally sat across from Dashwood, but now she is more grown up, more together, more herself-*  
*Mr. Dashwood : frankly, I don't see why she didn't marry the neighbor*  
*Jo : because the neighbor married her sister!*  
*Mr. Dashwood : right, of course. So who does she marry?*  
*Jo : no one, she doesn't marry either of them.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : no, no, no, no that won't work at all*  
*Jo : she says the whole book that she doesn't want to marry.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : WHO CARES! Girls want to see women MARRIED. Not CONSISTENT.*  
*Jo : it isn't the right ending.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : the right ending is the one that sells.*  
*Jo thinks. Dashwood pounces.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : if you end your delightful book with your heroine a spinster, no one will buy it. It won't be worth printing.*  
*Jo shifts. She considers.*  
*Jo : I suppose marriage has always been an economic proposition. Even in fiction*  
*Mr. Dashwood : it's romance!*  
*Jo : it's mercenary.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : just end it that way, will you?*  
*Jo : fine.*  
*(Page 120-121)*

Figure 3. Dialogue between Jo March and Mr. Dashwood

Mr. Dashwood believes that a happy ending for the main female character is essential in that era. He thinks the most popular stories are about ordinary men and women getting married. He expresses this viewpoint in the quote, "If you end your delightful book with your heroine a spinster, no one will buy it. It won't be worth printing."

This situation highlights Jo's limitations in expressing her ideas because her stories challenge societal morals and traditional views on women. The stories she writes deviate from the norms of that time, creating obstacles due to gender inequality. Jo's creativity faces hindrance, especially since the main character in her upcoming story remains unmarried at the end.

### 3.1.1.3 Marriage as an Obligation for Women

The character Jo March in the story has a friend named Laurie. They used to play together with her other sisters. However, after Meg March gets married, Laurie tries to confess his feelings to Jo, thinking that Jo also loves him. However it turns out that Jo does not have romantic feelings for Laurie,



and she does not want to get married. The citation is given below:

*Jo : You'll find some lovely accomplished girl, who will adore you, and make a fine mistress for your fine house. I wouldn't. I'm homely and awkward and odd and you'd be ashamed of me and we could quarrel – we can't help it even now! – I'd hate elegant society and you'd hate my scribbling and we would be unhappy and wish we hadn't done it and everything will be horrid.*

*Laurie : anything more?*

*Jo : Nothing more – except that... (honest) **I don't believe I will ever marry. I'm happy as I am, and love my liberty too well to be in any hurry to give it up.***

*Laurie : You will care for somebody, and you'll love him tremendously, and live and die for him. **I know you will, it's your way, and you will and I'll watch.***

*Jo : Teddy*

*He straightens up and walks away. Jo cries and cries. Her heart is breaking, even though she is the one who broke it.*

*(Page 98)*

Figure 4. Dialogue between Jo March and Laurie

In that statement, Jo explains that she does not love Laurie and is sure their relationship will not work because they are not a good match. Jo said Laurie deserves a better woman than her, and she also mentioned she will not get married because she values her freedom and does not want to let go of it. However, Laurie discriminates against Jo by saying she will surely love someone, be willing to die for her future husband, and eventually get married as if it is something every woman must do.

#### **3.1.1.4 Family Rejection**

The main character, Jo March, faces discrimination not only from culture and society in the movie but also from her own family. She does not receive support to become a writer, and there is pressure for her, as a woman, to get married.

In the movie, Jo has a job reading books to her aunt to earn money. Then, Aunt March and Jo argue about how a woman can only make money by marrying a wealthy man. The citation is given below:

*Aunt March : You mind yourself, dearie, one day you 'll need me and you 'll wish you had behaved better (examining her)*  
*Jo : Thank you, aunt march, for your employment and many kindnesses, but I intend to make my own way in the world. (carefully)*  
*Aunt march : **No one makes their own way, not really, least of all a woman. You 'll need to marry well.***  
*Jo : You are not married, aunt march.*  
*Aunt march : Because I was rich and madesure to keep my money.*  
*Jo : **So the only way to be anmarried woman is to be rich.***  
*Aunt march : Yes*  
*Jo : **But there are precious few ways for women to make money.***  
*Aunt march : **That's not true. You could run a cat house, or go on the stage. Practivally the samething.***  
*Jo : (says nothing)*  
*(Page 38)*

Figure 5. Dialogue between Jo March and Aunt March

The citation shows that Jo faces discrimination from Aunt March regarding how a woman should live. Aunt March believes Jo will not be able to do and earn a lot of money on her own. According to Aunt March, a woman must get married to have money. She believes that making her way, especially as a woman, is challenging, and marrying well is crucial for a better life. Aunt March thinks that unmarried women might face criticism and be labeled as strange. Society tends to believe that women can not be happy or successful unless they are married.

In Jo's everyday life, she experiences the expectation that women must marry to have a better life. It seems like marrying is seen as a necessity for women. The belief is that women do not have any other options but to marry and manage the household. Even though there are numerous ways for women to improve their lives beyond marriage, this ingrained expectation restricts women's opportunities.

### **3.1.2 Jo March's actions to overcome the discrimination in the film "Little Women (2019)"**

The main female character in the movie faces gender inequality because of societal norms at that time. These norms make it difficult for women to have the same rights and opportunities as men in all aspects of life.

#### **3.1.2.1 Perseverance as a Female Writer**

Jo March dreams of becoming a writer and pursuing her literary career. Even though during her time, it was not common for women to have writing careers, Jo remains determined to chase her dream. She writes stories and articles for magazines, even facing challenges and criticism from those around her. The citation is given below:

*An intense moment between them. Her book hangs in the balance. She leans forward, resolute.*  
**Jo : You keep your \$500, and I'll keep the copyright, thank you. Also, I want ten percent of royalties.**  
*Mr. Dashwood : five point five percent and that is very generous.*  
*Jo : nine percent.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : six percent – and that's it.*  
*Jo : if I'm going to sell my heroine into marriage for money, I might aswell get some of it.*  
*Mr. Dashwood : six point six percent*  
*Jo : Done*  
**Mr. Dashwood : and you don't need to decide about the copyright now.**  
**Jo : I've decided. I want to own my ownbook.**  
(Page 120-121)

Figure 6. Dialogue between Jo March and Mr.Dashwood

The dialogue is the part at the end of the story where Jo March continues pursuing her dream as a writer. She creates a new book that tells the story of her and her sisters' struggles and happiness throughout their lives. This story catches Mr. Dashwood's attention, and finally, Jo March bravely admits that the work is hers and does not hide it. This shows how Jo fights against the discrimination she faces as a writer. She does not give up and remains determined to prove that a woman can do a job just like a man. Eventually, her abilities are acknowledged by everyone.

### 3.1.2.2 Rejecting Gender Conventions

Jo refuses the traditional rules that set women's roles in her time. She does not want to be tied down by society's expectations for women, like getting married and having a family. Her choice to stay single and live independently is her way of rebelling against social norms. The citation is given below:

*Meg : I can't believe today is my wedding day!*  
*Jo : me neither. (sadly)*  
*Meg : what's wrong?*  
*Jo : nothing.*  
*Meg : jo..*  
*Jo suddenly kneels before her, wild, and desperate:*  
*Jo : we can leave. We can leave right now.*  
*Meg : what?*  
**Jo : I can make money : I'll sell stories, I'll do anything-cook, clean, work in a factory. I can make a life for us.**  
*Meg : But, jo..*  
**Jo : and you, you should be an actress and have a life on the stage. Let's run away together.**

*Meg : I want to get married*  
*Jo : WHY?*  
*Meg : I love him.*  
*Jo : you will be bored of him in two years and we will be interesting forever.*  
*Meg : just because my dreams are not the same as yours, doesn't mean the're unimportant.*  
*Jo sits back, heartbroken.*  
*Meg : I want a family and a home and I'm not scared of working and struggling, but I want to do it with John.*  
*Jo : I just hate that you're leaving me.*  
*Meg : oh, jo. I'm not leaving you. Besides, one day it will be your turn.*  
*Jo : I'd rather be a free spinster and paddle my own canoe (hugging her, crying.*  
*(Page 91-92)*

Figure 7. Dialogue between Jo March and Meg March.

The statement above takes place in a scene where she tries to convince her sister Meg not to get married. She says that she will earn her own money and support her family. However, Meg insists on getting married, and Jo is also expected to marry. But Jo limits it by saying, "I'd rather be a free spinster and paddle my own canoe." This shows that she refuses to marry and is determined to choose to work and earn money on her own.

### 3.1.2.3 Education and Financial Independence

Jo values education a lot and takes steps to improve her skills. She works hard to achieve financial independence, so she does not have to rely on a man. Jo works as a teacher and writes to earn her own money. The citation is given below:

*Jo looks up the stairs to see the two little girls prancing.*  
*Jo : my students need me*  
*Friedrich : always working*  
*Jo : money is the end and aim of my mercenary existence. (joke-dramatically)*  
*Friedrich : no one gets ink stains like yours just out of a desire for money*  
*Jo feels intense pleasure and pain of being seen by someone, of knowing that they know you.*  
*Jo : well my sister amy in paris, and until she marries someone obscenely wealthy, it's up to me to keep the family afloat, goodbye.*

Figure 8. dialogue between Jo march and Friedrich

The statement shows that when Jo works as a teacher, she tells her friend Frederick that money is the goal of all her work. She works to support her family, showing her independence in making her own money and not relying on men. This highlights Jo's determination to be financially independent,



showcasing her effort to generate her income without depending on men.

#### 3.1.2.4 Supporting women's rights

Jo March quietly supports women's rights. Through her character, the movie conveys a message about the importance of giving women equal rights and opportunities in education, work, and social life. The citation is given below:

*Meg : what will you do?*  
*Jo thinks for half a second, but she already knows:*  
*Jo : I'd like to open a school. We never had a proper school, and now there are women's colleges opening – there should be a school, for daisy.*  
*Amy : and what will you do?*  
*Jo : I'll open a school for boys and girls, both.*  
*Amy takes her sister's arm on one side, while Meg is on the other side.*  
*They walk and talk confidentially.*  
*(page 108)*

Figure 15. Dialogue between Jo, Meg, and Amy March.

In the statement above, Jo March and her sisters are discussing. Jo inherits a big house from Aunt March, and she considers selling it. However, she decides to open a school instead. In the past, Jo and her sisters couldn't get a proper education because they were girls. So, she wants to open a good school for both girls and boys. She also thinks about her niece, Daisy as Meg March's child.

#### 3.2 Discussion

Despite extensive research on “Little Women (2019)” and related themes, previous studies have not fully explored the specific forms of gender discrimination faced by Jo March in the 2019 film adaptation using Simone de Beauvoir's feminist theory. While researchers have touched upon Jo's struggles and societal expectations, they have not delved deeply into how these struggles manifest in her work, personal life, and family dynamics. There is a need for a more focused analysis of the various types of discrimination Jo encounters as a female writer and how societal and male judgments impact her decisions and actions.

In this study, the forms of discrimination faced by the main character, Jo March, in the film “Little Women (2019)” are identified. Jo's experiences reflect patriarchal culture and societal norms in post-Civil War America, where women faced significant challenges in achieving their aspirations. Through analysis, it is evident that Jo experiences discrimination both in society and within her own family.

The forms of discrimination against Jo March especially stem from patriarchal culture and societal norms common in post-Civil War America. The patriarchal society depicted in the film limits Jo's aspirations as a female writer, as seen in her struggle to submit her work to a male-dominated publishing industry. Simone de Beauvoir's theory emphasizes the historical oppression of women by men and societal expectations of women's roles. Jo's hesitation to claim authorship of her work reflects her fear of discrimination due to her gender, as evidenced by her interaction with Mr. Dashwood, her publisher. His pressure on conventional endings for female characters highlights societal expectations of women's behavior and strengthens gender stereotypes.

Moreover, Jo faces rejection from her family, particularly from her Aunt March, who believes that marriage is essential for a woman's financial security. This aligns with de Beauvoir's critique of

society's view of marriage as a woman's primary destiny. Jo's refusal to conform to traditional gender roles, such as her rejection of marriage and efforts to achieve financial independence, aligns with de Beauvoir's advocacy for women's autonomy and independence.

Furthermore, previous studies have not thoroughly examined the strategies Jo employs to confront these forms of discrimination. While some research has mentioned Jo's rejection of traditional gender roles and her pursuit of independence, there has been little detailed exploration of her specific resistance tactics, such as continuing her work, seeking financial and educational independence, and advocating for women's rights. This leaves room for a deeper understanding of how Jo actively fights against the limitations imposed on her by society.

In Jo's actions to overcome discrimination, she demonstrates resilience and determination, embodying de Beauvoir's idea of women's agency in shaping their destinies. Jo's insistence on pursuing her writing career despite societal barriers reflects her commitment to challenging gender norms and asserting her autonomy. Additionally, her decision to open a school for both girls and boys signifies her support for women's rights and equal opportunities in education, reflecting a progressive mindset that transcends societal constraints.

Additionally, there is potential for exploring the broader implications of Jo's experiences and resistance for contemporary women. Previous research has primarily focused on the historical and literary aspects of "Little Women (2019)", but there is an opportunity to draw connections between Jo's struggles and the ongoing fight for gender equality today. By examining how Jo's actions can inspire and inform modern feminist movements, valuable insights into the relevance of her story in today's context can be provided.

Comparing the findings of this research with previous research, we observe parallels with de Beauvoir's theory, which highlights the pervasive influence of patriarchal norms on women's lives. However, the present study offers new insights into the nuanced ways in which gender discrimination manifests in different contexts, such as the publishing industry and familial dynamics portrayed in the film. Jo's actions to defy societal expectations and pursue her aspirations contribute to a deeper understanding of women's agency and resistance against patriarchal oppression.

Many studies have examined the depiction of women's struggles in "Little Women (2019)", from various angles. This study brings a fresh perspective by focusing on the specific forms of gender discrimination faced by Jo March in the film "Little Women (2019)" through Simone de Beauvoir's feminist lens. This research examines how Jo experiences discrimination in her work, personal life, and family, and highlights her efforts to combat these challenges by continuing her work, rejecting traditional gender roles, seeking independence, and advocating for women's rights. This study provides a detailed analysis of Jo March's experiences and her resistance to discrimination, aiming to inspire contemporary women to advocate for their rights.

Overall, this research highlights the relevance of de Beauvoir's feminist philosophy in analyzing gender discrimination and women's empowerment, providing valuable insights into the challenges women face in navigating patriarchal societies and asserting their rights. Based on these findings, *the forms of gender inequality and how the characters in the film "Little Women (2019)" confront gender inequality* will be analyzed.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to explore the forms of gender inequality experienced by Jo March, the main female character in the film "Little Women (2019)", and analyze her actions to overcome discrimination. By examining societal, familial, and work-related discrimination, it becomes clear that Jo faces many challenges due to the cultural norms and societal expectations of her time. However, Jo's determination to pursue her dream of becoming a writer showcases her defiance against gender conventions and her desire for independence.

Jo's struggle with the male-dominated publishing industry highlights the difficulties women face in getting their work recognized and respected. Her reluctance to claim authorship of her own stories shows her fear of discrimination, but her continued efforts to write and publish underlines her resilience. By rejecting the notion that marriage is the only path to a better life, Jo demonstrates her commitment to achieving financial autonomy and pursuing her passions on her terms. This defiance against traditional roles reflects Simone de Beauvoir's ideas about women's need for independence and self-determination.

Furthermore, Jo's interactions with her family, especially her Aunt March, highlight the societal pressure to conform to traditional gender roles. Aunt March's insistence on marriage as a means of financial security reinforces the societal expectation that women should rely on men. However, Jo's refusal to marry for financial stability and her efforts to earn her own money challenge these outdated beliefs. This aligns with de Beauvoir's critique of society's view of marriage as a woman's primary destiny.

Jo's establishment of a school open to both women and men exemplified her advocacy for women's rights to education and self-improvement. This action reflects her belief in equal opportunities for all genders and her desire to create a more inclusive society. By providing education to both boys and girls, Jo challenges the traditional notion that education is more important for men and helps pave the way for future generations to have equal access to learning.

Jo March's journey serves as a powerful reminder of the struggles faced by women in patriarchal societies and the importance of resilience and determination in the pursuit of gender equality. Her actions and choices illustrate the ongoing fight against gender discrimination and the need for women to assert their rights and independence.

Through this research paper, several suggestions emerge from the findings presented. Firstly, it is apparent that gender discrimination in the film stems from the entrenched patriarchal norms within society. It is hoped that this revelation can serve as inspiration for women to persist in their fight for equal rights despite facing discrimination. Secondly, this study offers an opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of gender equality within feminist studies, enabling them to contribute more comprehensively to future research endeavors. Additionally, the presence of diverse cultures in contemporary society should encourage women to pursue their literary aspirations without fear of societal judgment.

Moreover, readers are encouraged to embrace the freedom to choose their paths without fear of societal backlash. In today's world, the possibility for women to lead fulfilling lives on their terms is abundant, and the decision to pursue independence should not be hindered by societal pressures. By learning from Jo March's story, modern women can find inspiration to challenge traditional gender roles and seek their paths in life.

Jo's experiences in the film "Little Women (2019)" remind us that while progress has been made, the struggle for gender equality continues. Her story underscores the importance of fighting against discrimination and advocating for women's rights in all aspects of life. This research not only highlights the historical challenges faced by women but also serves as a call to action for contemporary society to continue pushing for equality and justice. By drawing parallels between Jo's journey and today's fight for gender equality, we can better understand the ongoing challenges and work towards a more equitable future.

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