

Overcoming Social Conflict in the Movie Little Women (2019): A Sociological Approach

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ABSTRACT

The research title of this film is “Overcoming Social conflict in the Movie Little Women (2019): A Sociological Approach. The purpose of this study is to describe the types and positive functions of social conflict in this film. The theoretical approach used in this research is a sociological perspective. The type of research used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The data collection method used is a literature study followed by listening and note-taking techniques. Meanwhile, the data analysis method was carried out using the Miles Huberman technique, namely data reduction, data presentation and verification. The data source in this study is the film Little Women, directed by Greta Gerwig, which was released on December 7, 2019. The results of the research from the Little Women film include (1) The type of social conflict found in the Little Women film is a realistic conflict which consists of two types, namely hostile feeling and hostile behavior (2) The positive function of social conflict in the film

Keywords: *Social Conflict, Sociological Perspective, Film, Little Women*

1. INTRODUCTION

The film Little Women by Gilliang Armstrong tells the story of the life of a March family during wartime in America. A family of a mother with four daughters, aunts and fathers who are fighting a war. “Marmee” is the nickname of the mother of 4 daughters. 4 daughters named Meg March, Jo March, Beth March, and Amy March. They all live in New England.

Complicated conflicts such as love, career, and even family occur in the lives of the 4 siblings. The conflict they went through made them able to live their own lives. Little Women is a film adaptation of the classic novel by American writer, Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888), which was published in two volumes in 1868 and 1869. The film premiered at the Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival on December 9 2019. This story is a true story of the author and his three sisters. This film is directed by Greta Gerwig with a back and forth flow, making the audience feel like they are being stirred up.

According to Boggs (1996) literature and film have many elements in common. The writer chooses social conflict as the topic because the

researcher has found the social problems experienced by the shopkeepers in the film Little Women. Social conflicts that occur in films often occur in real life. Then, the storyline in this film uses a back and forth plot that makes it interesting for the audience. According to Fisher (2001) states that conflict is a relationship between two or more parties who feel they have. From this explanation, the author is interested in researching the Little Women film using the sociological approach theory. So, the title of this research is OVERCOMING SOCIAL CONFLICT IN THE MOVIE LITTLE WOMEN (2019): A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

2. METHODOLOGY

This type of research is descriptive qualitative research which is not achieved by statistical procedures. The data in this study are conversation quotes and scenes containing social conflicts that occur in the Little Women (2019) film. There are two types of data sources needed to conduct this research; namely primary data sources and secondary data sources used to analyze the film. The object of this research is divided into two:

Formal object and material object. The formal object of this research is the problem of social conflict which is discussed in this research paper. The object of this research is the film *Little Women* (2019) by Gillian Armstrong. Literature study is a data collection technique by conducting a review study of books, literatures, notes and reports both written and electronic that have to do with the problem to be solved. To analyze the film *Little Women* (2019), researchers used qualitative techniques with descriptive methods. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) there are three streams of activities that occur simultaneously, namely; (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, (3) conclusion drawing and verification. For researchers the validity of the data, using credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Result

3.1.1. The kinds of social conflict.

Realistic Conflict

Realistic conflict is a conflict that starts from disappointment with the demands that occur in the relationship. Realistic conflict consists of two types, namely, (1) Hostile feeling, (2) Hostile behavior.

Hostile feeling

Hostile feeling is a conflict that comes from within oneself. So the conflict relates to the person's own feelings, not involving other people. The conflict of hostile feelings in the film *Little Women* (2019) is described when Jo is in New York City and gets a letter from Marmee's mother which states that Beth's condition is deteriorating and her mother tells Jo to go home. Jo took the train from New York City to her home in Concord. Jo arrives home to meet Marmee, Meg, and Aunt Hannah. There is a hostile feeling conflict with Jo. This can be illustrated by the following dialogue.



Figure 1 Minute Scene 0:44:10/2:14:55

Jo : Take this and find her the best doctor you can
Marmee : No, you need this money to live in New York
Jo : I'm not going back. I'm using the rest to take her to the sea and get her strong. When is Amy coming home?
Marmee : We didn't want to worry her
Jo : Does she not know?
Meg : Beth insisted we not tell her because she didn't want to ruin Amy's trip
Jo : Amy has always had a talent for getting out of the hard parts of life
Marmee : Jo, don't be angry with your sister.

Hostile behavior

Hostile behavior is a conflict that occurs because of hostility with other people. So this conflict involves more than one person. In the film *Little Women*, there is a social conflict where Amy is partying at the Paris Ballroom. She dances with Fred Vaughn most often, gossips with his sister and her friends, and is charming to everyone. Suddenly, Amy sees something that makes her look sour, and we follow her gaze to see Laurie entering. He is loud, drunk, has two girls with him. They all fall into a sofa, laughing and loud. Amy frowns and approaches. She stands before him, annoyed. This can be seen in the following dialogue.



Figure 2 Minute scene 0:20:07/2:14:55

Amy : Laurie
 Laurie : Amy
 Amy : I waited an hour for you
 Laurie : I feel caught. Amy, please!
 Amy : Do you want to know what I honestly think of you?
 Laurie : What do you honestly think of me?
 Amy : I despise you
 Laurie : Why do you despise me?
 Amy : Because with every chance for being good, useful and happy, you are faulty, lazy and miserable.
 Laurie : Oh this is interesting
 Amy : Selfish people do like to talk about themselves
 Laurie : Am I selfish?
 Amy : Yes, very selfish. With your money, talent, beauty and health
 Laurie : Beauty?
 Amy : Ah you like that, you old vanity with all these good things to enjoy, you can find nothing to do
 Laurie : I'll be good for you, Saint Amy, I'll be good!

Depiction of Social Conflict

According to (Nurgiyantoro, 2005), intrinsic elements are elements contained in the story so as to build the literary work. Depiction through theme, plot, setting, and characters.

Theme

The theme in the film Little Women (2019) is social conflict. The social conflict occurs in a family. This film depicts the struggle of four sisters who have their own ideals and experience various social conflicts in their lives.

Plot

The plot in the film Little Women (2019) is a mixed plot. Mixed flow is a combination of forward and backward flow. The story starts from the middle. As the story progresses, events from the past are shown several times that explain the background of the story. The presentation of the sequence of events begins with climax, conflict, introduction, anticlimax and ends with completion.

Setting

The setting in this film is depicted in several places and times. Their little life was spent at March's house in Concord. Other scenes besides March's house are also depicted in the tailor shop, gardiner's new year's party, Hummel house, Laurence house, river, and the sea. As adults, Jo and Amy pursue their dreams, Jo in New York and Amy in France. Then the time setting is described in the morning, afternoon and evening.

Characters

The main characters in the film Little Women (2019) are four sisters named Meg March, Jo March, Amy March, and Beth March who experience social conflicts between them. Not only happened between them, they experienced social conflicts with other people, namely Marmee, Laurie, Aunt March, and Mr. Laurence

Positive Function of Social Conflict in the Movie

Increasing inter-individual and inter-group interactions

In the film Little Women (2019), the social conflict that occurs between Jo and Friedrich while in New York does not merely show a negative function. Even though Jo had to end their friendship because of Friedrich's criticism of Jo's novel and Jo had to return home to care for his sister Beth who was suffering from a serious illness. But after not seeing each other for a long time, Friedrich visits Jo's house and the meeting increases the interaction between the two of them and Jo's family. The meeting created harmony and many conversations were discussed at that time. It can be seen in the following dialogue:



Figure 3 Minute scene 1:59:43/2:14:55

Friedrich : This is a beautiful instrument. Which one of you plays?
Jo : It was my sister, Beth
Amy : We all play a little
Meg : But none so well as her...
Friedrich : It is very hard to lose a sister. I'm sorry
Father : Do you play?
Friedrich : I do, yes
Marmee : It would make us so happy if you played now, she wouldn't want the piano to sit silent

Increasing inter-individual and inter-group solidarity

The conflict that occurred between Jo and Amy made solidarity increase between the two of them. The social conflict caused by Amy's disappointment with Jo when she was not allowed to go to the theater then Amy burned Jo's novel, causing Jo to be very angry. The next day Jo ignored Amy's chatter trying to make peace. Amy follows Jo to the river to ice skating, but Amy falls into the river ice shards and makes Jo feel very guilty. It can be seen in the following dialogue:



Figure 4 Minute scene 0:52:31/2:14:55

Jo : If she had died it would've been my fault
Marmee : She will be fine, the doctor said he didn't even think she'd catch cold
Jo : What is wrong with me? I've made so many resolutions and written sad notes and cried over my sins but it doesn't

seem to help. When I get in a passion I get so savage, I could hurt anyone and enjoy it
Marmee : You remind me of myself
Jo : But you're never angry
Marmee : I'm angry nearly every day of my life
Jo : You are?
Marmee : I'm not patient by nature, but with nearly forty years of effort I have learned to not let it get the better of me
Jo : I'll do the same, then

In the dialogue above, it can be seen that what happened to Amy made Jo learn to hold back anger because of disappointment and hatred for Amy's actions. Marmee as a mother who always reminds her children to love each other, and helps her siblings so that a sense of solidarity arises in the March family. Since then, Jo has managed not to get angry about what happened between him and his sister Amy. With solidarity, build strength and enhance cooperation

3.2. Discussion

The film Little Women (2019) is a film that tells the life of the March family. Complicated conflicts such as love, career, and even family occur in the lives of the 4 siblings. The conflict they went through made them able to live their own lives. Little Women is a film adapted from the classic novel by American writer, Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888). Researchers analyzed using a sociological perspective and the theory of social conflict by Lewis A Coser. By using these theories, researchers can study this film.

Lewis A Coser is a figure who gave birth to the theory of social conflict. Coser developed the idea of George Simmel and then developed it again into an interesting discussion about conflict. Coser pays attention to the origin of social conflict, as Simmel argues, that there is hostility within a person. Coser agrees with Simmel in seeing the basic element of conflict, namely, hostile feeling. Although Coser agrees with Simmel, he criticizes Simmel's opinion about the conflict which only stops at the hostile feeling element. For Coser, hostile feelings are not necessarily the cause of open conflict, so in his opinion adapted from Simmel he added hostile behavior.

Coser divides two basic types of conflict, namely, realistic conflict and non-realistic conflict. Realistic conflict is a conflict that starts from

disappointment with the demands that occur in the relationship. On the other hand, unrealistic unrealistic conflict is a conflict that does not originate from the goals of the antagonist's rival, but from the need to relieve tension, at least from one of the parties.

This film shows how the main character experiences social conflicts with his siblings and other people in achieving their respective dreams such as disputes that occur in the family, at work, and in the community. The social conflicts they experience are not only conflicts with other people but also occur in their own feelings. Disappointment over the circumstances and attitudes of others which can be a social conflict. So this research is analyzed using the sociology of literature because it shows social phenomena. Based on these findings, the researcher found that everyone can experience social conflict. This shows that the main character faces many social conflicts while achieving his dreams in life.

Researchers found similarities and differences between this study and previous studies. The similarity of this research with previous studies is discussing social conflict. While the difference lies in the object of research. Previous research was conducted by Syavitri and Rochmawati n.d. (2017) with the title Hannah Baker's Social Conflict from the Film Script "13 Reasons Why" discussed the various social conflicts faced by Hannah Baker, the relationship between social conflict and personality changes. The author of this study uses the theory of Seiddel. The results of this study show the types of social conflicts faced by Hannah Baker as the main character in the film 13 Reasons Why (2017) such as changes, strikes, and so on. However, this study is different from the research conducted by researchers who focused on discussing the kinds of social conflict and positive function of social conflict in the film Little Women (2019)

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion on the previous chapter, the study comes to the following conclusions.

First, realistic conflict is a social conflict in the film Little Women (2019). Realistic conflict is of two types, namely hostile feelings and hostile behavior. Hostile feelings are described when feeling disappointed over her sister Amy who always goes through difficult times in the March family. In addition, Amy also described feeling disappointed when she was not allowed to go to the

theater with Jo and Meg. Then the next type of conflict is the hostile behavior that is described when Amy is in Paris to party. Because of the presence of Amy and Laurie Amy had been waiting for an hour while Laurie was seen sleeping with two women.

Second, this study was analyzed using a sociological approach so that the literary elements in the film Little Women (2019) can be identified. The theme of this film is social conflict. It depicts the struggle of four girls who reach their dreams through all the social conflicts in their lives. Mixed plot is a plot that is reflected in the film. The story begins with Jo's social conflict with his friend when he was in New York, then Amy who had a disagreement with Laurie in Paris. The setting related to social conflict in this film takes place in Concord, depicted in March's house, Hummel's house, Laurie's house, tailor shop, gardiner's new year's party, river, and the sea. While the setting of time is described in the morning, afternoon, and evening. The characters in the story who experience conflict are Meg, Jo, Amy, and Beth who are depicted at odds with each other. In addition, conflicts occurred with Laurie, Marmee, Aunt March, and Mr. Laurence.

Third, from the analysis, it can be seen that social conflict is not only negative. However, social conflict has a positive function. The positive function of social conflict is described when Jo is angry with Amy while at the river, an unexpected event is that Amy falls into an ice shard that almost drowns. Jo helps Amy and she is very sorry if anything happened to Amy because of her anger. In addition, the positive function of social conflict is reflected when Jo is angry with his friend Friedrich in New York. Because of the conflict, Friedrich came to Jo's house which resulted in warm chats and interactions that made Jo like Friedrich.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors conceived and designed the study. All authors contributed to manuscript revisions. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript and agree to be held accountable for content therein.

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