
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Family Existence as Personality in Little Women: A Novel by Louisa May Alcott

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the main characters' personalities in "Little Women," a novel by Louisa May Alcott. The research employs a descriptive-qualitative approach to discern the character traits of these individuals. The investigation utilizes a two-fold framework for character analysis. It applies the four-factor character analysis model proposed by the Migrant Education Program Consortium Incentive, which focuses on assessing characters' appearances, spoken words, actions, and emotions. Then, it adheres to the Big Five personality traits concepts formulated by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae, emphasizing conscientiousness and agreeableness. In this study, data was collected by carefully reading the novel, dissecting it sentence by sentence, employing the four-factor analysis to comprehend the characters' personalities, and assessing through the lens of the Big Five theory. The results reveal that all character elements and traits showed unique personality characteristics. Specifically, agreeableness is most prominent in characters' personalities, primarily their emotional qualities. We find attributes like modesty, patience, Altruism, consideration, selflessness, helpfulness, humility, loyalty, and cheerfulness within the domain of agreeableness. However, conscientiousness within the characters' personalities is reflected in their appearances, spoken words, and actions, encompassing qualities such as being hardworking, ambitious, and persistent.

KEYWORDS

Little Women, Family Existence, the Big Five Personalities, femininity

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1. Introduction

Family is a priceless treasure, offering warmth, love, support, and fulfilment of our needs, as stated by the World Health Organization (1978, p. 7). Foster homes become necessary for some youth when family circumstances prevent proper care (Desetta & Wolin, 2014, p. 6). This theme of family struggle is prominently featured in novels like 'Little Women' by Louisa May Alcott, where she explores feminist implications, individuality, and female education. We use the 'Big Five Personality Theory' to analyze characters' personalities, focusing on conscientiousness and agreeableness. This study aims to enrich literary analysis and benefit writers and readers interested in this genre. It primarily delves into the personality of Josephine March and her family's portrayal in 'Little Women,' centred on their struggle for family existence based on the 'Big Five Personality Theory' proposed by Costa and McCrae.

Concerning the prior study, Laire (2009, p. 94) analyzes the feminist implication in Little Women and how Alcott influences many girls to affirm their identity. Meanwhile, Wester (2005), who emphasizes the patriarchy and domesticity issue, states, "In Little Women, the March family serves as an example of a reformed, egalitarian family in which women exercise self-reliance, employ their non-domestic talents, and still maintain femininity." He also points out that Little Women has successfully served some profound messages described by Alcott throughout the novel and through her own life about ideas of struggling women artists, domestic feminism and reform, patriarchy, and spiritualism (Wester, 2005, p. 42).

To analyze the characters' personalities, we understand the novel deeply by using the four factors analyzed by the Migrant Education Program Consortium Incentive (2012), which focuses on appearance, actions, feelings, and words. Furthermore, the data is analyzed more precisely using the "Big Five Personality Theory" proposed by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae (1990) to establish the sort of characters in the novel that the author portrays. Soto and Jackson (2013) state that the five-factor model is "a set of five broad trait dimensions or domains: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience." However, to limit the study, we will only analyze two traits of The Big Five Personality Theory: conscientiousness and agreeableness. Based on the explanation above, we would find the main character's personality, Josephine March, and other sub-characters, including her mother and her sisters, portrayed in *Little Women* as struggling for family existence.

This study is expected to be beneficial for further study and enrich literary works, especially for the following writers who like to analyze the same type of literary work (novel). Besides, it is hoped to be beneficial for readers who want to know the personalities of all characters in detail, as shown in the novel. Moreover, studies on the Big Five Theory still need to be found. Therefore, it improves the amount of literature on this theory. It is limited and only focused on analyzing the personality of Josephine March as one of the main characters and other sub-characters (her family) in struggling for family existence as portrayed in *Little Women*. All the characters will analyze the above theme, which Alcott presented intrinsically and extrinsically in her novel based on the concept of "The Big Five Personality Theory" proposed by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae (1990).

2. Literature Review

First, we have fictional characters, which are individuals in a narrative. Additionally, characters can refer to the concept of an individual's character, representing their relatively stable dispositions to think, feel, and behave in specific ways in certain situations (Webber, 2006, p. 95). This aspect of character is considered a part of psychology. A prevailing belief in modern literary theory is that literary characters do not belong to the real world, where they have internal motivations; instead, they exist in a fictional realm where every aspect of their being and actions contributes to a larger artistic structure (Paris, 1997, p. 5). Martin (2004) defines characters as 'credible,' 'real,' and 'consistent.' Vidhya and Arjunan (2015, p. 77) provide a broad definition, categorizing characters as "round" and "flat."

A round character is dynamic, adding depth and vitality to the story, whereas specific traits characterize a flat character and remain less developed. Characters are an indispensable tool for crafting a narrative. Weststeijn (2004, p. 55) emphasizes their historical significance, stating that a character's existence as a single entity has been fundamental to literature at various historical points. Characters bring a narrative to life, imbuing it with activity, excitement, and consistency. They are crucial in executing the anticipated movements within the dramatic timing (Vidhya & Arjunan, 2015, p. 77). As such, characters are regarded as a functional component that defines a story's essence and depth.

Migrant Education Program Consortium Incentive (2012, p. 1) suggests examining various aspects, including their appearance, actions, words, and emotions. People commonly use several methods to describe and interpret characters in a story, such as dialogue, physical appearance, thoughts, behaviour, and the comments or opinions of other characters. Candler (2012) lists character traits, including adventurous, bossy, brave, careless, cautious, clumsy, loving, honest, loyal, messy, imaginative, obedient, selfish, spoiled, shy, stubborn, helpful, happy, hardworking, and more. Moreover, various character types contribute to the richness of a story's plot, making it more engaging. Bernardo (2012, p. 1) defines several character types, including primary or central characters, minor characters, dynamic characters, static characters, round characters, flat characters, protagonists, antagonists, anti-heroes, foils, symbolic characters, and stock characters.

2.1 Personality

One personality psychologist, Gordon Allport (1961, p. 28), as mentioned in McLeod (2017), characterizes personality as the ever-changing organization of an individual's psychophysical systems, which ultimately shape their typical behavior and thoughts. On the other hand, according to Feist and Feist (2009, p. 129), personality is the exploration of each person's distinctiveness, applicable to all individuals and settings. In contrast, Mayer (2007, p. 1) defines personality as a system comprising various components that are structured, developed, and expressed through an individual's actions. Mayer also concurs with the prevailing idea that personality, in most definitions, refers to a psychological system comprised of interconnected components that evolve and influence an individual's behavioral expressions. Beyond these personality definitions, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), as referenced in Boeree (2006) within his psychoanalytic theory, posits that personality is subject to unconscious forces beyond our control, with childhood experiences significantly shaping adult personality and children's handling of sexual urges influencing their personality development. Freud (1936) also proposed that psychological forces operate at three distinct levels of awareness:

- Conscious Level:
- Preconscious Level:
- Unconscious Level:

- Factors Determining Personality

Meer (2017) determines personality as follows: 1. Brain 2. Physical Characteristics 3. Social Experiences 4 Culture and Religion 5. Heredity: Kuravatti and Malipatil (2017, p. 608) additionally highlight the influence of intelligence, gender disparities, and the nervous system on the progression of one's personality.

They assert that intelligence can enhance an individual's ability to adapt effectively in domestic, educational, and societal environments compared to individuals with lower intelligence. Furthermore, gender distinctions can significantly shape an individual's personality evolution. Boys exhibit greater assertiveness and energy, while girls tend to be quieter and more sensitive to personal, emotional, and social challenges. Types of Personality According to Mohita (2017), Hippocrates divides human beings into four types: the sanguine, the melancholic, the choleric, and the phlegmatic. However, Carl Gustav Jung (1921), as cited in Feist and Feist (2009, p. 122), divided personality into introversion and extroversion. The Big Five Personality Theory: Various psychologists (Lickerman (2011); Bell (2010); Pervin and John (1999); Freud (1961); Feist and Feist (2012); Costa and McCrae (2003), McAdams and Pals (2006, p. 204), as cited in DeYoung (2014), argue that character and personality differ in the time it takes to discern them and in their meanings. Personality traits can be readily perceived during interactions, while character traits, such as kindness and honesty, often surface in specific or uncommon circumstances Lewis R. Goldberg (1960s) (1981) and Robert McCrae (1992).

The five essential personality traits proposed by Costa and McCrae in 1990, known as "The Big Five" or Five Factor Model (OCEAN: openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism), have a significant influence on personality research (Ackerman, 2017). Allport (1897), as cited in Boeree, 2006), believes that the "Big Five" theory, initially proposed by Lewis R. Goldberg in the 1960s and later validated by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae in 1992, widely used in psychology to predict and explain behaviour. These five traits have become the cornerstone of personality research, and they are applied in diverse cultures and countries globally, making it the most popular personality framework. Wiggins (1996) suggested that "McCrae and John (1992) label the Big Five factors with their initials (E, A, C, N, and O) for more straightforward interpretation and memorization, highlighting their significance and clarity.

2.1.1 Openness to Experience

Openness to experience is described as the depth and intricacy of an individual's experiences and cognitive life (John & Srivastava, 1999). According to Ackerman (2017), it pertains to a person's willingness to explore new experiences, embrace vulnerability, and engage in creative thinking." "Pytlik Zillig, Hemenover, and Dienstbier (2002) observed that openness to experience predominantly has a cognitive dimension, while emotional stability primarily has an affective component." Common attributes associated with openness to experience, as outlined by John and Srivastava (1999), encompass intellectual curiosity, imaginative thinking, artistic appreciation, broad interests, excitability, and an inclination towards unconventional values.

2.1.2. Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is related to the ability to focus on and about achieving those goals. Traits within the conscientiousness factor, according to Ackerman (2017) as persistent, ambitious, thorough, self-disciplined, consistent, predictable, controlled, reliable, resourceful, energetic, persevering, planning, and hardworking.

2.1.3. Extraversion

Extraversion-Introversion represents a spectrum of a singular characteristic. Extroverts are often talkative, outgoing, impulsive, and uninhibited, with a wide social circle and frequent participation in group activities. Conversely, introverts are typically described as quiet, introspective, reserved, and less socially active (Riggio & Riggio, 2002). Notably, introverts tend to experience more depression from social interactions than extroverts (Srivastava et al., 2008). Traits falling under the extraversion dimension, as outlined by Wilt and Revelle (2008), include being active, assertive, energetic, enthusiastic, outgoing, and talkative, while introverts may exhibit qualities like quietness, reserve, and shyness.

2.1.4. Agreeableness

Agreeableness is a crucial component within the five-factor model of personality, reflecting significant individual differences. High levels of agreeableness are associated with qualities such as friendliness, warmth, Altruism, and a willingness to assist others, often a strong predictor of harmonious relationships. Conversely, low levels of agreeableness are linked to interpersonal conflicts, anger, and aggression (Nettle & Liddle, 2008). Ackerman (2017) further breaks down these traits into categories such as Altruism, trustworthiness, modesty, patience, politeness, kindness, loyalty, unselfishness, helpfulness, sensitivity, cheerfulness, and thoughtfulness.

2.1.5. Neuroticism

Neuroticism pertains to individuals who display emotional volatility, anxiety, maladjustment, sentimentality, and difficulty regulating emotions. This emotional instability can manifest as somatic symptoms. In contrast, emotionally stable, non-anxious, and self-assured individuals exhibit lower levels of neuroticism (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1968, as cited in Riggio & Riggio, 2002, p.200). Ackerman (2017) identifies several traits commonly associated with neuroticism, including clumsiness, pessimism, moodiness, jealousy, irritability, fearfulness, nervousness, anxiety, timidity, wariness, self-criticism, lack of confidence, insecurity, instability, and heightened sensitivity.

2.2 Family

Following DeFrain, Brand, Friesen, and Swanson (2008), who referenced David R. Mace, a prominent figure in the realm of marriage and family enrichment, Mace once stated that "There is nothing that can bring greater happiness to human life than a substantial increase in the number of strong families." This statement implies that the existence of families has a profound impact on the well-being of human life. On a different note, Elliot and Gray (2010, p.6), as cited by Abdul (2014, p.81), contend that the family is not inherently a biological entity; instead, it is a social construct. They argue that biological relationships have been utilized in discussions about property and inheritance. However, it does not align with how people function within families. Conversely, families serve as environments where individuals acquire life experiences, assimilate societal norms and cultures, and receive nurturing and education as they grow (Binh, 2012, p.173).

2.2.1. Characteristic of Family

According to the Caribbean Examinations Council (2009, p.157), there are several characteristics of the family:

- a. Universality:
- b. Emotional Basis:
- c. Limited Size:
- d. Nuclear Position in Social Structure:
- e. Social Regulations:
- f. Its Permanent and Temporary Nature:

De Frain, Brand, Friesen, and Swanson (2008) argue that every family faces many obstacles; one of its parts is building family-friendly and marriage-friendly communities.

2.2.2. The Function of Family

Macvay (n.d, p.30) divided three parts of family function, as follows;

- a. To Raise Children Responsibly;
- b. To Provide Economic Support;
- c. To Give Emotional Security;

It is essential to teach the family members, especially children, to understand the various structures of families and make them realize that different families may have different problems, needs, strengths and values (Morgan & Edwards, 2012).

2.2.3. Family as a System

Morgaine (2001) classify the family system as follows:

- 1) Having interrelated elements and structure.
- 2) Interacting in patterns.
- 3) Having boundaries
- 4) Having subsystems
- 5) Using messages and rules to shape members.

2.3 Brief Description of the Novel

"Little Women" (1868) is a highly successful novel by classic author Louisa May Alcott, published in two volumes. The first volume, "Little Women," also known as "Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy," was published in October 1868. This novel portrays the March family's experiences in Concord, Massachusetts, during the Civil War. The family consists of four daughters—Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy—and their loving mother, March (Marmee). Their father, a chaplain in the war, becomes ill, leaving the elder daughters, Meg and Jo, to work outside the home to support the family. The story revolves around the four sisters' diverse personalities, dreams, and challenges, including love, illness, and marriage. Despite the hardships, they support each other and strive to make their absent father proud. As the story unfolds, they experience both joys and sorrows, with Jo pursuing her dream of becoming a writer, Amy

aspiring to be an actress and artist, Meg marrying a friend of the family, and Beth recovering from a near-death experience due to Scarlet Fever while pursuing her passion for music.

3. Methodology

The data in this study is *Little Women*, a novel by Louisa May Alcott, published by The Penguin Group. To analyze this novel, we use the descriptive-qualitative method, including dialogue, and identify the meaning of the text. Sandelowski (2000) notes that "in doing such descriptive qualitative studies, researchers tend not to penetrate their data in any interpretive depth. These studies present comprehensive phenomenon and events." According to Lambert and Lambert (2012, p.255), "The goal of qualitative descriptive studies is a comprehensive summarization, in everyday terms, of specific events experienced by individuals or groups of individuals."

Similarly, Patton and Cochran (2002, p.2) note that the characteristic of qualitative research is its aims, which refer to understanding the aspect of social life in which the methods generally tend to produce words instead of numbers as data for analysis. We use a descriptive qualitative approach because it can describe each character's personality that highly affects the story through what they say, appear, do and feel, which the author portrayed in *Little Women* in detail explanation. To get the information, we go through the following steps:

- Reading and understanding the story of the *Little Women* novel (part 1), which contains 23 chapters and 217 pages.
- Finding the personality within the characters through the four factors of character analysis proposed by Migrant Education Program Consortium Incentive (2012), that is;

- a. appearance, which means how the author portrayed the characters in physical appearance. For instance, how they look or how they dress up in their daily life.
- b. Actions refer to manners or something they tend to do in daily life. For instance, they habitual actions and they work.
- c. Words, which refer to what they say and their conversation with one another
- d. Feelings are how the author described their feelings in their circumstances based on their point of view.

4. Results and Discussion

This article delves into the central characters of the novel, with a specific focus on Josephine March and her family members: Margaret (the eldest sister), Elizabeth (the second sister), Amy March (the fourth sister), and March (Josephine's mother), who collectively make up the core family in the story. This character analysis examines their challenges in maintaining family bonds and their joint efforts to support one another, which are prominently portrayed in the novel. To better understand their personalities, we explored four aspects related to their pursuit of a stable family life. We set certain limitations to keep this study focused and prevent redundancy and time constraints. In particular, the author concentrates exclusively on two aspects of The Big Five personality traits, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness, as these qualities are closely linked to the concept of 'family existence.' Through a thorough examination of the novel, a detailed sentence-by-sentence analysis, and the application of the four-factor character analysis, we uncovered the following insights:"

Based on the findings above, examining the main characters' personalities, namely Josephine March, Margaret March, Elizabeth, Amy March, and their mother, focuses on their struggle for family existence. Specifically, we delve into their efforts to maintain their lives using the four-factor character analysis proposed by the Migrant Education Program Consortium Incentive (2012) while identifying their characters through the Big Five personality theory advocated by Costa and McCrae (1990). Through these analyses, it becomes evident that each character's personality reflects their efforts and presence within the family.

4.1 Josephine March

Josephine, commonly known as Jo, is the second sister in the March family and is the central character in Louisa May Alcott's novel, "Little Women." Jo is an ambitious, courageous, hot-tempered, and compassionate girl. Her strong desire to become a writer and explore different countries empowers her in her struggles. She is regarded as the most assertive daughter among her sisters. Her father entrusts her with caring for the family, even going as far as affectionately referring to her as his "son." Jo's character embodies the idea that anything is possible, challenging societal norms and highlighting the potential of women (Neary, 2008).

- Appearance:

Alcott portrays Josephine as a daughter with boyish mannerisms. She tends to behave more like a boy, dresses femininely, and prefers boots over traditional slippers. Jo speaks in a loud and assertive manner, often using slang. She possesses a quick temper and sarcastically feels that her creator erred by making her a girl, perceiving it as a complete flaw, as explained below:

"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, grey eyes, which appeared to see everything and were 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 flyway look to her clothes, and the uncomfortable appearance of a girl who was rapidly shooting up into a woman and did not like it." p.5, c1

- words

The way Josephine expresses herself through language provides insights into her personality, particularly her determination to navigate life. In Chapter 4, on page 33, we discover Josephine's words that reflect her possession of one of the Big Five traits, specifically agreeableness, which manifests as patience. Denissen and Penke (2008) support this notion, suggesting that agreeableness is characterized by a motivation to cooperate rather than compete when resources are scarce. Moreover, the author presents another instance where Josephine's choice of words demonstrates her patience and dedication in pursuing her dreams and her sister, Elizabeth. So, we assumed that it referred to one of the Big Five traits, agreeableness, categorized as modest. King (2011) says that "forgiveness" is people's tendency to have high agreeableness and indicates that Josephine has a body that is inappropriate with her pretension, even though she tries to forgive and accept her imperfection. She does not care about the way she dresses up; she never asks to have a beautiful dress or other fancy things, such as:

"You will have me for the company if that is any comfort. I shall have to do much travelling before I come in sight of your celestial city. If I arrive late, you will say a good word to me, won't you, Beth?" p.132, c13

It shows that Jo encouraged her sister's future ahead with impulsive words by imagining their 'Castle in the Air', and she never used such words that brought down her shy sister.

- Action

Josephine is also a hard worker and never gives up caring for her family as long as her father is off to the Civil War. Jo has a sort of Big Five personality trait: agreeableness, which indicates Altruism, which means "How well people get along with others" (Ackerman, 2017). We found that the author portrayed Josephine's willingness to cut her hair as her prominent beauty as a reason to help her mother earn money and go off to Washington due to a severe illness that her father suffered. She did it willingly without complaining about the consequences.

- Feeling

March, a nurturing mother, stood as the sole support for her daughters during the challenging period of the Civil War while her husband was away in Washington. She was regarded as "the most sympathetic character" (Laire, 2009, p. 15), and March instilled values of simplicity, pleasantness, social interaction, and religious devotion in them.

Shortly, she related to the struggle for "family existence"; she played an essential role in the family and was described as a noble-looking mother, patient, helpful and guidance for her daughters. She worked hard to earn money for her family and replaced her husband's role as the biggest hope in her life to see her daughters grow into good people and happy people.

4.2. Margaret March (Meg)

- Appearance

Meg, is depicted as a lovely and independent young woman fond of elegant clothing and beautiful things. The author provides a concise description of Margaret as follows:

It is shown that "Margaret, the eldest of the four, was sixteen and very pretty, being plump and fair, with large eyes, plenty of soft, brown hair, a sweet mouth, and white hands, of which she was rather proud." p.5, c1

Meg is also portrayed as drawn to luxury and longs for a more comfortable life before her father faces financial difficulties. As shown on page 79, Chapter 9, regarding her appearance, Meg's personality is associated with one of the Big Five personality traits, specifically conscientiousness, which indicates ambition. This is reflected in Meg's efforts to integrate herself into high society and her desire to dress elegantly. John and Srivastava (1999) say, "Conscientiousness is a trait characterized by the tendency to control impulses and behave in socially acceptable ways."

- Words

Meg is someone who finds fulfilment in making others happy. She takes pleasure in guiding and nurturing those in her care, often adopting a maternal role for young girls. Additionally, she is known as a caring sister who eases her mother's responsibilities by looking after her siblings.

On page 80, Chapter 9, Meg's conversations illustrate a crucial aspect of the Big Five personality trait, agreeableness, particularly in its unselfish form. This is evident when Meg restrains her desire for the ornaments she wishes to wear. Further, Meg's selflessness described, "I am glad I live in it then. I do not like my work, but I get much satisfaction after all, so I will not complain; I wish I liked teaching as you do." p.125, c.12

She may not find her work appealing here, but she tries to derive satisfaction from it. According to Adler, as cited in Graziano and Eisenberg (1997), agreeableness stems from a successful resolution that involves "social interest," encompassing qualities such as cooperation, empathy, selflessness, and an ability to identify with others.

- Action

Meg is renowned for her diligent work ethic within the March family. She serves as a governess for the Kings, caring for their two children. When her father faced financial difficulties due to assisting a less fortunate friend, Meg, the eldest sister, and Josephine sought ways to contribute to their family's support. Meg is depicted as a supportive sibling, wholeheartedly dedicating herself to aiding her sisters whenever they require assistance.

On pages 62 to 63 of Chapter 7, it is shown that Meg possesses one of the Big Five personality traits, namely agreeableness, characterized as being helpful. De Jong, Van Eck, and Van Bos (1994) contend that agreeableness becomes significant, emphasizing traits like sociability. The author highlights one of Meg's actions: "Meg contributed her entire quarterly salary towards the rent." p. 151, c. 15.

It subsequently becomes the topic of discussion as Jo informs her mother and sisters about Meg's efforts to support their mother's journey to Washington.

- Feeling

Although Meg harbors numerous desires, including the wish for a more opulent and luxurious life, surrounded by fancy possessions, she seldom complains about her situation. She could handle her challenges independently and avoid burdening her family, particularly her mother.

On page 35, Chapter 4, it was shown that Meg exhibits one of the Big Five personality traits: agreeableness, characterized as patience. DeYoung (2014) explains that agreeableness involves "the ability to empathize." The author conveys one of Meg's most profound sentiments about her family, stating, "Then it was that Margaret, sitting alone with tears often dropping on her work, felt how rich she had been in things more precious than any luxuries money could buy—in love, protection, peace, and health, the real blessings of life." p. 1, c. 4.

4.3. Elizabeth March

She is recognized as a gentle, reserved, warm, and supportive family member, often acting as a mediator. Additionally, she has a passion for music. Beth, described as the homely one, is "physically fragile and excessively timid, even within her own family" (Wester, 2005, p. 9).

- Appearance:

Elizabeth is depicted as a modest and unassuming girl, always showing kindness. Despite her shyness, those who know her recognize her friendliness. She does not seek luxury or beautiful attire. On page 35, Chapter 4, we find Beth possesses a soothing personality and is considered beautiful, warm, and friendly. These traits point to one of the Big Five personality traits: agreeableness, characterized as humility (The Personality Insights, 2018). Agreeableness reflects a person's tendency to be cooperative and compassionate toward others. Her humility is illustrated on page 170, Chapter 18, when Beth falls seriously ill. Everyone misses her, as described: "Laurie haunted the house like a restless ghost, and Mr Laurence locked the grand piano because he could not bear to be reminded of the young neighbor who used to make the twilight pleasant for him. Everyone missed Beth. The milkman, baker, grocer, and butcher inquired about her well-being; poor Mrs. Hummel sought forgiveness for her thoughtlessness and arranged a shroud for Minna. Neighbors sent comfort and good wishes, and even those who knew her best were surprised at how many friends shy little Beth had made." Indeed, the author emphasizes Beth's humility by revealing the numerous friends she has made without anyone realizing it.

- Words

Beth consistently demonstrates unwavering support for her family, regardless of the circumstances. She speaks in a measured and patient manner, never expressing anger toward her sisters. Beth does not make plans or discuss aspirations; she finds contentment in her current life, staying safely at home and expecting things to remain unchanged. On page 133, Chapter 13, we ascertain that Beth possesses a personality trait from the Big Five, specifically conscientiousness, characterized as persistence.

According to an article titled "Personality Models" (2018) that provides an overview of the Big Five personality models, conscientiousness refers to a person's tendency to act in an organized and thoughtful manner. Beth is averse to any alterations in her life; her commitment to making those around her happy remains steadfast, and she is entirely satisfied with her life, as evident from her conversation with her sisters and their friend Laurie, portrayed on page 133, Chapter 13: "Since I had my little piano, I have been delighted. I wish we all keep well and be together, nothing else."

- Action

On page 38, Chapter 4, the author illustrates Beth's commitment to playing music for her family and herself. This account highlights Beth's possession of one of the Big Five personality traits, specifically conscientiousness, characterized by persistence. "Conscientious individuals are recognized for their organization, hard work, adherence to social norms and decorum, thoughtful decision-making, and maintaining cleanliness and orderliness" (Jackson et al. 2010).

- Feeling

On page 169, Chapter 18, she showed her agreeableness and patience. Also, on page 162, Chapter 17, she finds solace in an old gown when missing her parents and prays quietly. Beth is patient in handling her parents' feelings, emphasizing her agreeableness as she prays for them instead of sharing her sorrows. Nettle and Liddle (2008) state that agreeableness is about understanding others' mental states.

4.4. Amy

Amy shares a love for luxury with Meg and focuses on her appearance, which might seem inappropriate for her age (Elbert, 1984). Her hair is her pride, and she longs for a more aristocratic nose. Amy excels in art and strives to master the skill of drawing.

- Appearance:

Unlike her sister Josephine, Amy is characterized as a self-assured girl who places little importance on love and romance, instead focusing on financial advantages and fashion trends from a young age. Her distinctive curly hair and nose were sources of pride but posed challenges in her life. Furthermore, Amy displayed confidence in her taste for art, fashion, and luxury, with a consistent concern for her appearance. Her personality aligns with the Big Five trait of conscientiousness, associated with ambition.

As described by Warner (2016), conscientious individuals prioritize dates, grooming, neatness, and household chores, emphasizing their appearance's significance. Page 38, chapter 4, reveals a significant dent in Amy's vanity as she had to wear her cousin's clothes. This mismatched attire, chosen by Florence's mother, left Amy deeply dissatisfied, particularly during the winter when her school dress lacked the desired embellishments. In summary, Amy was consistently discontent with her appearance, unable to achieve her desired sense of style.

- Words

Amy's attributes suggest that she embodies one of the Big Five personality traits, specifically conscientiousness, associated with ambition, organization, and goal orientation (Psychologist World, 2017). Her ambition is evident in her fervent desire to travel and become a renowned artist, notably her aspiration to go to Rome. Her unwavering commitment to bettering her life and family is exemplified when she declares, "Jo and I are going to make fortunes for you all. Just wait ten years and see if we do not, p. 146, c. 15.

- Action

As the youngest in the family, Amy's contributions were limited to school and assisting with household chores. However, she cared for her ailing sister at Aunt March's and recognized her family's affection. While maintaining her desire for popularity and luxury, Amy became a gracious and empathetic woman, genuinely concerned for others. She strived to benefit her family (p. 180, c. 19). Amy's portrayal suggests that she embodies the Big Five personality trait of agreeableness, particularly loyalty. Such individuals feel a duty to others, understanding the impact of their words and actions (Psychologist World, 2017).

- Feeling

Despite Amy's reputation for her candid demeanor towards her sisters, she is vivacious and extroverted, consistently voicing her preferences and aversions openly. It portrays Amy's profound awakening during her temporary stay at Aunt March's house due to Beth's severe illness. This pivotal event triggers her realization of the countless blessings she has received from her family, leading to personal growth. Amy's emotional journey, portrayed on page 179, chapter 18, showed her alignment with one of The Big Five Personality traits, specifically, her cheerfulness. Cherry (2018) notes that agreeable individuals enjoy helping others and spreading happiness.

5. Conclusion

The final remarks in this article focus on examining the personalities of the main characters featured in Louisa May Alcott's novel "Little Women," focusing on Josephine March and secondary characters like her mother and sisters. This analysis is conducted within the framework of "The Big Five Personality Theory," developed by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae. After scrutinizing the characters' personalities in the fourth chapter, it is evident that Josephine March, Margaret March, Elizabeth, Amy March, and March herself exhibit traits that align with The Big Five Personality Theory, especially in the aspects of conscientiousness and agreeableness, as they navigate the challenges presented in their family life. All the characters display agreeableness and conscientiousness regarding the Big Five personality traits. The agreeableness trait is primarily characterized by modesty, patience, Altruism, consideration, selflessness, helpfulness, humility, loyalty, and cheerfulness. Similarly, conscientiousness is mainly marked by attributes like hard work, ambition, and perseverance. Regarding individual personalities, Josephine and Elizabeth share certain similarities, with Jo and Beth needing to pay more attention to their appearance, clothing, and material comforts. Conversely, Margaret and Amy exhibit similarities in their interests, both envisioning a more affluent lifestyle. In contrast to Meg and Beth, Jo and Amy set goals that extend beyond their domestic roles. However, all four sisters take on the responsibility of supporting their families. Jo and Meg choose to work and earn money, while Amy and Beth fulfil their duties in maintaining the household and creating a harmonious environment. Furthermore, March is a guiding figure for her daughters, embodying nobility, strength, hard work, and religious devotion. Based on the analysis of character personalities in literature, it is recommended that individuals interested in delving into the study of literary characters, particularly in novels, acquaint themselves with the storyline, grasp the circumstances depicted by the author, and understand the emotions conveyed through the characters' roles. Moreover, for those wishing to analyze character personalities in novels using The Big Five Personality Theory by Paul Costa and Robert McCrae (1990), it is advisable that future researchers explore a variety of sources related to the theory, such as books, journals, research papers, articles, websites, references, and other relevant materials. This study offers valuable insights for future researchers, especially those interested in conducting similar studies while encouraging the expansion of literary works that explore utilizing the Big Five personality traits in character analysis.

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