

## **EXISTENTIALISM FEMINISM REFLECTED IN ACEVEDO'S WITH THE FIRE ON HIGH**

**Berya Kamayan Adi Martinus**  
Fakultas Ilmu Budaya  
Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya  
[beryakamayan31@gmail.com](mailto:beryakamayan31@gmail.com)

### ***ABSTRACT***

*Women are frequently treated as second-class in patriarchal societies, which it eventually leads to feminist movements. There are various schools of feminism, such as liberal feminism, Marxist and socialist feminism, existentialist feminism, radical feminism, and so on. The focus of this study is on existentialist feminism exposed in Elizabeth Acevedo's *With the Fire on High* (2019). This study examines the domestication of women depicted in Emoni Santiago's character and Emoni Santiago's ways embrace her conditions and existing as a woman in the novel. To analyse Emoni's appearance as a real woman who can exist, Simone de Beauvoir's existentialist feminism is applied. This study is a descriptive qualitative research that applies a feminist approach. The result shows that the domestication of women reflects in pregnancy, mothering, and cooking activity of Emoni Santiago. She can work in domestic and public spheres as her efforts to embrace women's destiny, history, and myth. She also becomes an intellectual woman who is good at cooking because she is talented and creative. She also can play a significant role in the Culinary Arts program and become the transformative agent that can persuade her community that women can exist without being limited by women's conditions. She reflects existentialist feminism because she can do tasks in domestic and public spheres. She manages to become a woman who is not dependent and subordinate to men in terms of economics, life choices, and marriage. All how Emoni Santiago's existence can appear are called the transcendence of women in today's life. According to Simone de Beauvoir, women's lives today can transcend all boundaries by doing a state of transcendence. Women can go beyond being equal to men through 4 tactics - women can work, become intellectuals, and play roles that make them transformative agents and independent. By achieving a state of transcendence, Emoni can eradicate woman labels such as second sex, the Other, and the weaker. From the result of the analysis, the writer finds out that women can exist as real women by doing transcendence.*

**Keywords:** *Existentialist Feminism, Domestication of Women, Transcendence*

## INTRODUCTION

The term patriarchy is commonly used by feminists to describe the male-female power dynamic. According to Bhasin (2006:3), the term patriarchal is now more commonly used to refer to male dominance, power dynamics in which men dominate women, and a system in which women are kept submissive in a variety of ways. Patriarchy system has become feminist movement's most prominent reason. Feminism is a movement that seeks to recognize women's claims to equal legal, political, economic, and other rights as men (Hornby, 1962: 305). This movement called out all of the citizens all around the world to fight a thing that calls women second class in society or which is known as the patriarchal system. Women's understanding of their rights has evolved in many countries throughout the world since the first wave of feminism emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which is established to represent a movement aimed at achieving legal, economic, and social equality between men and women, as well as ending sexism and male oppression of women (Publishing & Mangan, 2019: 1). There are various schools of feminism such as liberal feminism, Marxist and socialist feminism, existentialist feminism, radical feminism, and so on. But the one that will be talked about in this research is existentialist feminism.

Existentialism, according to Panza and Gale (2008: 28), is a philosophical notion that allows people to live genuinely human lives in an absurd and pointless world. It is essentially a hunt for a person's condition of being, their state of liberty, and their continuous use of that liberty. Furthermore, a researcher named Raosaheb, M. V (2016: 13) explains that existentialists use the term "existence" to refer to human existence. The belief that only a concrete object may exist is commonly held. A person is described as a concrete individual capable of existence by existentialists. It can be concluded from the previous 2 statements that existentialism believes that humans can exist. It implies the existence of men, women, children, and adults. When it comes to women, a woman will demonstrate her existence by displaying her state of being, state of liberty, and continuous use of that liberty. When women can demonstrate that women can appear as women, it

means that they are concrete individuals capable of existing. This is what existentialist feminism is all about.

Existentialism can be used to define the existence of characters in a novel, short tale, or other literary work. In this context, the writer of this study focuses on women literature that demonstrates the presence of a female character. Women's literature and culture, particularly for women writers, can be a rich source of academic study in a range of works, including novels, novellas, short stories, poetry, and so on.

The data in this framework is taken from women's literature in the form of novel entitled *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo. This novel depicts the hardship of a young mother named Emoni who is falling in love with cooking. Unfortunately, she became pregnant at the age of fifteen and gave birth to a child at such a young age. Her mother died shortly after giving birth to her, therefore she now lives with her grandmother. Her father is a busy man who hasn't visited her since her mother died. So, from that time, she lives with her grandmother. After her pregnancy, she lives for her child. The only thing that she thinks about is only cooking and her child. She has to raise her child with her grandmother while she also has to go to school take Culinary Art class, run for her dreams and she also has to work to earn money for herself and her child, and her grandmother.

In today's era, women's existence in a literary works is becoming well-known. As a result, this study focuses on existentialist feminism in Elizabeth Acevedo's *With the Fire on High*. This novel is intriguing since it is taken from a woman author with a woman main character. Furthermore, this novel takes the culinary's theme and existentialist feminism based on today's era. Women and cooking are often related, that is why the female character's appearance very interesting to study

This study focuses on exposing existentialist feminism reflected in Emoni Santiago's character. It will examine domestication of women's role in Emoni Santiago and her transcendence to embrace women's destiny, history, and myth in *With the Fire on High*. While making the focus can describe well, there are two objectives of the study that helps the writer to arrange this study, which tries to describe the domestication of women that are depicted in Emoni Santiago's life and

to explain Emoni Santiago's ways of embracing her conditions and exist through a state of transcendence in *With the Fire on High*.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research focuses on the woman's journey to get their existences that equals with men in the patriarchal society in the novel *With the Fire on High* by Elizabeth Acevedo. This study uses qualitative research. Lambert and Lambert (2012: 255), state that descriptive qualitative method is designed to characterize anything that has an implicit or explicit relevance to the study issue. The goal of descriptive research is to describe something, such as a phenomenon or event that occurred at a specific period. Through descriptive study, the phenomenon's properties are described or explained. In addition Flick (2009), explains that qualitative concrete cases in the temporal and local contexts, originate from people's expressions, perceptions, and activities in their local contexts of specific social occurrences. In descriptive qualitative method, the data and the analysis are in the form of a written description that do not require statistical analysis. Therefore, descriptive qualitative methodology is suited for this study since this study will dissect and seek to examine the aspect of interest in Emoni Santiago's character and Emoni's journey to get her existence to be equal with men in Elizabeth Acevedo's *With The Fire on High*.

In this study, the researcher's framework for identifying, classifying, analyzing, interpreting, and assessing woman's journey to get her existence in patriarchal society in the novel uses the extrinsic approach. According to Wellek and Warren (1977: 139), the extrinsic approach is concerned with issues outside of the literary work, such as feminism, religion, culture, psychology, and so on. The extrinsic approach uses here because the primary instrument in this study is the text of the novel which shows the description of existentialist feminism in Emoni Santiago's character.

This research employs feminist criticism since the study will examine women's issues experienced by Emoni Santiago, which is in line with Simone de Beauvoir's existentialist feminism. Emoni's character is a woman in a patriarchal society who

is not married, but she still has to raise children alone. She tries to exist and is not subordinated to men or society. Instead, she can move and stand on her own, doing things men commonly do, even though she is raising a kid too. She can work outside the house while also doing household things. She can support herself and pursue her dreams by working in domestic and public spheres as a woman.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Simone de Beauvoir's existentialism feminism is in line with Emoni's journey to realise the perfect existence of feminism. Existentialist feminism, according to Beauvoir, is separated into destiny, history, myths about women, and women's lives today. This chapter will expose existentialist feminism in Emoni Santiago's life by dividing the discussion into two parts. The first section discusses existentialist feminism exposed in the domestication of women's role in Emoni Santiago's character, which reflects in her pregnancy, mothering and cooking activities. Furthermore, the second section discusses Emoni's transcendence from four tactics – women can work, women become intellectual, women play a significant role who is the transformative agent and women can be independent, as Emoni's way of embracing her destiny, history, and myth as a woman which results in her existence appearance not just in domestic but also in public spheres.

### **A. The Domestication of Women's Role in Emoni Santiago's**

#### **Character**

Women always said to be inferior and weaker than men. Simone de Beauvoir states destiny, history, and myths about women have appeared in the patriarchal society for years. They assume women to be the inferior, the weaker, the 'Other', the 'Object', and the second sex from men. It is because some women's conditions make them look weak. In this chapter, some data will explain how Emoni appears as the real woman who can exist in the domestic spheres.

## 1. Pregnancy

This is evident from Emoni's life which decides to become a single mother. Her existence also appears women are human beings with genital aspects that, according to de Beauvoir, they are capable of menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. Emoni is pregnant and gives childbirth to Emma or Babygirl, her daughter as the result of her intercourse with Tyrone, her ex-boyfriend.

The data number 1 in appendix 1 reflects existentialist feminism in Emoni's character. When Emoni knows she is pregnant, she keeps intercourse with Tyrone to make sure that their relationship is working well or not. Here, Emoni denotes her existence as a woman who knows what she wants to do with her body. It is her body, it is up to her if she wants to try to make her relationship with Tyrone go well or not, so several times they keep intercourse even though there is a baby inside her womb. She also denotes her existence as a woman who can accept her genital capability, which can reproduce and get pregnant.

Her existence as a woman appears from her conscious if a woman and man, who had intercourse, it will consequence in pregnancy. This condition depicts Emoni's existence as a woman who is firmly in control of her decisions regarding how she should do even though Tyrone and her parents make things difficult. She has a choice of responsibility because it is her body, even though Tyrone and his family abandon her. She presents existentialist feminism from her capability in choosing to take responsibility for the new life in her womb, in her body. Emoni tries to embrace her afraid and deal with it even though she gets labelled weak and naughty because of her pregnancy. Existentialist feminism is reflected in Emoni Santiago's character because, in the end, she is okay with all that happened to her body and her life. She keeps trying to get the solution and know what to do with her body and life. Existentialist feminism appears in Emoni's character because she exists as a brave woman who deals with the conditions she must be faced once she becomes pregnant.

Furthermore, which is still related to the role of domestication of women, it can also be seen in Emoni taking responsibility for her mothering Emma or

Babygirl. It follows Simone De Beauvoir's theory that a woman's identity as 'the Other' is shaped by her biology, especially her reproductive capacity, and also her socially imposed child-rearing responsibilities (Tong, 2009: 244). Emoni must become an adult woman when Emma or Babygirl was born because she would be a parent. As a result, Emoni must be ready and mature enough to accept the life of her kid, Emma or Babygirl, in place of her own. She must let go of her adolescent playing time and embrace her fate as a mother whose task is to give Emma everything, including her life. Emoni is in the same boat.

The data number 2 in appendix 1 refers to Emoni's existence transition from a young girl turn to a young adult woman even though her age is just teenager. If she chooses to be a mother, she must be ready mentally, psychically, and financially. Existentialist feminism reflects in Emoni's life because, in the end, she knows that whatever will be, she knows she has to choose. After all, it is her body, her life, and her new role, that will turn out so different from society's standard, from the usual teenager outside there.

Emoni appears as a mother who has the job of mothering Emma, her daughter. Her existence in the domestication spheres includes not just pregnancy, but also raising kids. Taking care of household jobs such as cleaning, cooking, teaching kids, and so on are the part of domestic spheres of Emoni's life. These kinds of domestic roles are taking mentally exhausted for Emoni as young mothers.

The data number 3 in appendix 1 explains the history and destiny of women that Emoni should take when she chooses to have Emma or Babygirl to be born. She will have a new existence by appearing as a woman who has a big stomach in the society, which makes much the sad attention and pity thrown at her because she is just a teenager. But even if the situation is not good for her, Emoni's existence as a pregnant woman reflects the existence of the domestication of women's roles. Emoni's existence as a pregnant woman shows there is a big responsibility as a woman when it comes to being a mother. And when she has been choosing to raise the baby, Emoni turns to be a woman who exists as a mother who can choose how she wants to exist even in the worst situations.

After Emma has been born, Emoni exists as a mother, where the existence of a mother who always wants to be close to her kid. She feels the afraid of losing her baby. The domestication of women's roles is appearing Emoni's psychological as a parent who exists to take responsibility for her life and her kid.

## **2. Mothering Activity**

The majority of mothering has focused on maternal-child interaction or, more recently, mother-daughter interaction and its effects on child development (Debold, Wilson & Malave in Barlow & Cairns, 1997: 233). The data number 4 in appendix 1 shows the existence of a woman's psychology being a mother after nine months of pregnancy, bringing a new life wherever she goes, giving child-birth and raising her kid alone. This condition considers Emoni is taking the domestication role in her life, which exists as a mother. The mental burden that arises in a woman whose existence is a mother seems very heavy. However, Emoni's life has reflected existentialist feminism because, with various ways women are present through work in the domestic sphere, she has succeeded, in carrying out these domestic roles very well.

The data number 5 in appendix 1 is a testament to a woman who can perform a variety of Emoni's existence in domestic spheres. The mothering shows Emoni's existence as a good mother. She is raising her child and providing time to read fairy tales for Emma. Existentialist feminism reflects in Emoni's destiny as a mother to take care of her child's life. She no longer had time to think only of herself. But being a mother is her new existence that she has been chosen so it is the consequences if she is not as free as she used to be because now her responsibilities have increased.

## **3. Cooking Activity**

The role of women in the domestic sphere in Emoni Santiago's life is not only seen when she is pregnant and raising children but also in her cooking activities at home. Emoni is considered a woman who has magic hands by Buella. It is her skill in cooking which makes every cook taste so delicious and unique.

The data number 6 in appendix 1 denotes Emoni's existence in the culinary field. She presents as a good cooker who has natural skills. She has magical hands like what Buela said from the way she learns about the feel and scent of every cuisine she creates by learning about the ingredients she uses in the kitchen. This denotes Emoni Santiago's existence in domestic spheres including her practice of cooking for her family. She cooks for Buela and Emma while she is practising the menu that she has learnt. She has existed as a woman, who is aware of the fusion and beautification of cooking cuisine. She has a specific conscious, that there is an art that is perfect for her because the kitchen makes her happier than ever. Because of that, she is being existed in the cooking activity, she knows she is talented so she knows what she has to do to make her existence in the cooking activity keeps alive.

Emoni has received some recipes from Aunt Sarah so she can practice the new menu for cooking. She sends the feedback on Aunt Sarah's recipe that she has tried. By emailing Aunt Sarah frequently, Emoni gets the stories about Aunt Sarah and Emoni's mother's childhood pastimes. Aunt Sarah tries to tell Emoni that just like her mother, Emoni is interested in cooking. Every recipe that Aunt Sarah presents to Emoni has enormous significance for Emoni, as evidenced by the letter written by Emoni. She has a natural talent for cooking, and thanks to Aunt Sarah's recipes, she has a better understanding of her mother's life, and the recipes assist Emoni in understanding her mother's family since her mother died shortly after giving birth to her.

The data number 7 in appendix 1 denotes that Emoni Santiago presents herself as a good cooker. Cooking is one of the domestications of women's roles that are taken by Emoni. This data confirms that Emoni shows her existence in cooking activities which is a domestication role of Emoni as a mother. It also confirms that her existence in cooking activities is her passion in life as a teenager who is still pursuing her dream and wants to know about her mother's story. She can show her existence in cooking activities because she feels enjoyment in cooking. Emoni likes to try the new recipes sent by her Aunt because, since her mother has passed away, Aunt Sarah's recipe helps her keep the presence of her

mother keeps existing in her mind. Her existence in cooking activity helps her stay alive and exist as a teenager who is pursuing her dreams. It gives her hope at the same time to have existed through her passion even though she is now a mother.

The other quotation that exposes existentialist feminism in Emoni's domestication role confirm in the data number 8 appendix 1. It is confirmed that Emoni's existence in cooking activity keeps appear even in the worst situation. When she is in the period of her pregnancy, she is getting so many sad, disappointed, and abandon feeling. It is because she is disappointed to people who comes and goes easily in her life, especially Tyrone who abandons her because of her pregnancy and her father, Julio who abandon her after her mother passed away.

The data number 8 in appendix 1 describes that cooking activity, is used as an instrument for the presence of Emoni. Through cooking, she can express her broken feelings. She made it vague by forgetting her anger at making food with no-measures ingredients, so at least her sadness feeling can be poured. It denotes that Emoni's existence, in women's domestication role makes Emoni's disappointment expressed as it is. Through this, Emoni has succeeded in becoming a woman who has succeeded in performing her domestic role. Especially in cooking activities, Emoni's existence can be seen clearly. It is because cooking is her favourite thing, and it symbolizes her existence as a woman, her existence of feelings, and the existence of Emoni's artwork as a woman who exists.

According to the first section analysis, existentialist feminism reflected in Emoni Santiago's life. It can be seen from domestication of women's roles in Emoni Santiago's life. The writer has been described the existentialist feminism through Emoni's pregnancy time, the way she is mothering Emma as a single mother, and her cooking activities. It can be concluded that Emoni Santiago is well doing her role in domestic spheres even in the good or worst situation, she becomes a real woman who exists as what women are form to be.

Through the data, it has also been known that Emoni Santiago is considered as the Other or the second sex. It is because her pregnancy at the teenage age brings

her looked down by Tyrone and his family. Her relationship with Tyrone and his family is not working at all and even gets worst. The pressure from Tyrone's family makes her limited in considering how she has to live after Emma comes to grow in her womb. Her decision to be a single mother is the first step of Emoni's existence in the public sphere. She wants to embrace her true conditions, regardless of the label 'the Other' deems low and exists as whatever she wants to be. So, she chooses to end her relationship with Tyrone and his family, being a single mother and managing her life alone.

## **B. Emoni 's Ways to Embrace Women's Destiny, History, and Myth**

Emoni has existed existentialist feminism through her character. She is an existing woman who can present herself by carrying out the duties of a woman during her job as a woman in the domestic sphere. According to Simone de Beauvoir, women's lives today must be capable of transcendence of their role in the domestic sphere as a woman if they want to eradicate their labels in society as 'the Other', the second sex, the weaker or the object for men. Women have to show that they do not just exist in the domestic spheres, such as women taking the role of reproducing, taking care of children, and taking care of the house, but they also can exist and work in the public sphere. Beauvoir states that there are four tactics of transcendence if women want to erase their labels of 'the Other': women can work, become intellectual, play a significant role in a group or where they live, and become independent.

Emoni Santiago appears to be working her way through all of these elements and has arrived at the whole of existentialist feminism in her life. The writer will go over each stage in these four sub-sections one by one to better comprehend Emoni Santiago's journey from her transcendence to embracing her condition and existing in public spheres.

### **1. Emoni is An Independent Woman**

When she was declared pregnant, Tyrone, her lover at that time did not want to be responsible and did not defend Emoni in front of her parents. Tyrone's parents also deny the truth that their child has impregnated Emoni, who is still a teenager.

They think Emoni is a bad girl who got pregnant because she had sex with another man, not with Tyrone. They even forced Emoni to have an abortion so, as not to embarrass the Tyrone family. The domination that happened to Emoni by Tyrone and his family made Emoni cornered by her situation and made her look weak. She has become an inferior who has been humiliated, trampled on by her pride, her body is used for the man's pleasure and is forced to abort a new life growing in her stomach as the result of his sexual relationship with Tyrone.

The data number 9 in appendix 1 denotes that Emoni's cornered condition prompted her to decide to become a single mother. She feels her relationship with Tyrone can't go well because the man and his family look down on her. Emoni doesn't want to feel like she's stepped on as a woman anymore. Her bravery is considered as existentialist feminism. Therefore, Emoni makes a big decision to be independently responsible for her own life choices. She chose to raise the child in her womb, to be a single mother, without begging Tyrone to be held accountable again. She wants to prove to them that she can be existed as a single woman by raising her kid alone.

Emoni is also an orphan since her mother passed away after give her childbirth. Her father, Julio abandons her after her mother is died. Since that times, Emoni lives with Buela, her grandmother. Unfortunately, Buela is disable to work since she gets injured. These conditions make Emoni have a must to work so they can live properly. Her conscious to work and survive confirm as her existence.

The data number 10 in appendix 1 denotes Emoni showing her existence as a woman who can work in domestic and public spheres. She is considered a woman who can manage her life with a clear purpose. Her condition is not stopping her keeps being existing and being a better person. She knows that she is a woman who cannot depend on any man or anyone because Emoni realises that she is responsible for her life no matter how old she is at that time. She realises that every decision she makes in her life is a decision that she wants and tries to continue to exist as a woman who has a position in society, regardless of her past and her family background. She wants a better future, so she tries earlier than the average teenager.

## 2. Emoni Can Work

Working in patriarchal capitalism was repressive and exploitative, according to Beauvoir, especially if the work required women to work in two shifts: one in the office or factory and another at home. Nonetheless, Beauvoir feels that no matter how difficult and exhausting women's labour is, it still gives a variety of opportunities for women, which, if not pursued, will be lost entirely (Beauvoir, 2014).

The phrase in the data number 11 in appendix 1 explains that Emoni can work. She works at Burger Joint, a restaurant where she fulfils customers' demands for numerous burgers. She works there to provide for her family. This quotation denotes that Emoni can work even though she is a young mother, a grandchild, and a student. She is capable of working, even though she is required to perform a variety of tasks that are typically not assigned to teenagers. Teenagers normally just hang around and go to school, figure out their dreams, fall in love and expand their horizons, pursue their interests, and chase after their goals. When Emoni is a teenager, she takes on a different role. She must perform tasks that are normally performed by grownups. She has to live with different risks because she doesn't have a father figure or even a husband figure. Simply said, she can live and function normally without the presence of a man in her life. This demonstrates how, like men, Emoni can reclaim their transcendence by working outside the home. Emoni will formally establish their standing as subjects, as individuals who actively shape their future.

The data number 12 in appendix 1 also explains the bustle life of Emoni. She tells her friend, Angelica about her very busy schedule so she can divide her times to her daughter, Buela, also Angelica, her friend. Emoni seems mentally stress to do her very busy life after being a mother because her routine increases. This phrase explains that Emoni can works and takes care of housework including taking care of children. A generous mother who genuinely wants the best for her child will, in most cases, believe that raising her to be a "true woman" is the greatest way for her to be accepted by society. (Beauvoir, 2014: 343). It is in line with Beauvoir's,

Emoni works hard to give a good life for Emoni and at least she doesn't want her children being suffer that's why to give a good life for Emma, her daughter, Emoni should take a chance by working harder. However, the way her very busy life denotes that she can shape and control how she wants to do with her life without being subordinate to men. And at least she can work to pay her demands for school project.

The data number 13 in appendix 1 denotes that Emoni can work, and fulfil her family demands, also she goes to school so she becomes a woman that clever and can teach the theory of life to her daughter. It denotes that as a woman, Emoni understands that she needs to run her dreams, so she can live better with her little family even though it's mentally exhausting for her. For all good futures, she has to work and earn money so she can live better.

In running the journey of life, Emoni consciously finds herself having a hard time at work. It happens because her schedule that is very busy so she can't satisfy his boss enough. However, because she has to live and needs money to live, she tries to keep working as best she can.

The data number 14 in appendix 1, especially in lines '...I do not eat the burgers here. I struggle to eat anything I can make 100 percent better in my own kitchen...' explain that Emoni is having two jobs that she's running for. The first one is in Burger Joint, the second one is making food in her house kitchen since she has an interest in cooking and can cooks better. Her job at Burger Joint actually is not really what she wants. All she wants from working there is the extra money she could earn to help keep her alive. However, in the end, Emoni can work and survive there because working there is still related to things about food which were in line with her interest in cooking. Emoni can survive at her job because she took her job as a chance to work and earn money so she doesn't have to depend on men. She exactly can deal with the hard times at work and keep going with what she wants for her life.

### **3. Emoni Becomes an Intellectual Woman**

Being intellectual or well educated is the next thing that important for women if she wants make a change for her life. Beauvoir's argument about why

women should be intellectual or well educated. She says that women can become intellectuals and members of organizations that promote gender equality. When a person thinks, perceives, or defines anything, it is considered intellectual activity. Yet, when a person becomes the subject of thought, observation, or definition, it is considered nonactivity. It is in line with Emoni's character that she chooses to be an intellectual or well educated as a woman who left by her father and also her partner.

She considers that being left by a man figure is nothing wrong. The way men do their job, being the head of the family, earning money for the family, all of these activities can be done with women. She wants to do the masculine protest that without man, woman still live their life well. Despite all that, according to Beauvoir, this is a form of women's protest using the term of 'masculine protest' against the arbitrary treatment of men in women's lives. (Beauvoir, 2014: 483).

Emoni is in immense pain when she is pregnant. But she persists, however. She wants to demonstrate that, despite the challenges of being pregnant at the age of a teenager, she can still manage herself properly. She is a freshman, a student, and she performed admirably.

The data number 15 in appendix 1 denotes that Emoni is well educated. She still attends the class even though she really hard to concentrate. The way she tries to hang on there, in the class, because she realizes that she has to responsible about the education to be pursued and since she has lots of absence, she tries her best to fulfil it. Moreover, the lines '...my hands still trembling after Culinary Arts...' refers to the excitement of Emoni in school program. She is just not well educated but she also wants to be someone who is mastering the culinary aspect. The Culinary Arts class is among the things that made Emoni want to go to school and stay in school. This program provides a variety of lessons and experiences for Emoni's life, which might vary depending on her cooking abilities and interests.

The data number 16 in appendix 1 explains Emoni's character who is very intelligent and well educated. She is involved in the Winter Dinner project, an event

that is held for collecting money for travelling to Spain. Emoni in this project explains her ideas which are very creative and describes her intelligence to Chef Ayden, her teacher in this program. When Chef Ayden finds that Emoni's options are very interesting, he allows Emoni to be the head of the committee. Because she develops and can influence and even head her other colleagues, she becomes an intellectual or well-educated woman by continuing to participate in-class activities. Even though she has children, her friends and teacher still perceive her as an outstanding woman because of her talent and hard work to continue with her studies in school.

#### **4. Emoni Becomes a Transformative Agent**

Emoni's character is that she is courageous, responsible, and a great cook. Her desire to achieve something with her talent and passion for cooking motivates her to be braver than she has been in the past. She also doesn't have time to be unhappy or angry about what has transpired in her life because she is focused on her daughter and also Buela. In the past, everything's been her mistake, and she recognizes that she must take responsibility for her actions. As a result, to realize her aspirations as a creative and fearless woman, Emoni aspires to find success for herself in the culinary arts.

Emoni must face various difficulties on her journey to achieve her dream to keep her interest in cooking alive. Her willingness to fight and the fact that she wasn't trapped in a bad circumstance seemed to not affect all this. This demonstrates that if women can make decisions about their own life without being led or pressured by men or others, they can finally be themselves, not the 'Other' and the second sex. She became the central figure in her life, and her existence will soon be as common as that of men. This means, Emoni must have to play a significance role to transcends its boundaries.

The data number 17 in appendix 1 denotes that Emoni uses her interest in cooking to attend the Culinary Arts program. The way Chef Ayden praises Emoni's skills in making the first recipe that he gives to the class, explains that Emoni is playing her first role because she is becoming the centre of attention after being

praised by Chef Ayden. She's becoming a role model for her classmates because her recipe is very unique. She even gets advice which advice can be applied by all of the Culinary Arts class members. When she finally finds herself following the instruction well, she has a courage more to give her voice in that class.

The data number 18 in appendix 1 denotes that Emoni can be bold in class and playing the role as the woman who can speak up about what she needs. The lines '...You need to adjust your measurement...' are the strong words that Emoni dares to say. In this situation, she transforms into a fearless woman, even though the rest of the class will speak about her afterwards or criticize her for her sassy statements. But she seems unconcerned about what others think of her, and she just reminded Chef Ayden of his regulations. Her bravery characterizes her as an intelligent woman since she is capable of bringing herself to any circumstance and controlling it on her own without feeling anxious.

Emoni's life continues busier than ever when Emoni's proposal is accepted by Chef Ayden. She's now playing the role to head and guide her committee in the Winter Dinner project. By taking this big role, she can prove herself that she really a person who has interest in cooking and not just that, it denotes that Emoni knows she's dreaming of to be someone in the Culinary Arts.

The data number 19 in appendix 1 describes Emoni as an intelligent and independent woman who can effectively split her time so that she may complete all of her responsibilities. She portrays the character of the independent woman who, regardless of the circumstances, can push herself to the best of her ability and achieve her goal. This denotes that she is no longer a woman who is easily pessimistic because she doesn't have enough money or is scared she won't be able to do anything because she has teenagers. This denotes that she is playing the role and has now proven to herself and to everyone who knows her story that she is a worthy woman who can and will succeed in any role she takes on, whether it is being a mother at a young age, working and taking care of the household requirements, or a student on her journey in achieving her goal. The presence of a

man makes no difference in her life either. It doesn't matter for her because she doesn't have a father figure in her life, or if she is raising a child alone without a spouse. She denotes that she can become a woman who can control her life path without a male figure in her life inspiring those around her. By playing a big role in the field that she loves and is good at, makes Emoni a more meaningful woman and can regulate her perspective on life.

She also denotes that she can head the committee well by doing all activities together, and makes no misunderstandings with all class members in all projects. Tolerating each other and helping each other makes her role perfect. She denotes that she can play the head committee role as well as she can and continues to have Chef Ayden's trust, even now everyone in his class believes that he is leading well so that they can do a Winter Dinner project with Emoni's leadership.

The data number 20 in appendix 1 explains by playing the significant role of the head of the committee, Emoni is proud of herself as a woman who can stand for what she wants in life. She continues to make good cooperation between herself and all her classmates. By following her interest in cooking, Emoni grabs her existence as a woman who is not The Other or The Second Sex anymore. She is a new version of herself, Emoni who is success in life using her personal ability. She is a woman who completely achieve the equality gender, apart from her past life. She even got a business card from Ayden's chef friend, Lisa, someone she had met before. She got great offers from the business card to get to know and learn or even work with Chef Lisa for her success in playing such a good role especially in the field of Culinary Arts.

The data number 21 in appendix 1, it denotes that Emoni has been changed into a woman with more culinary skills than most girls. The result of her bravery in playing a significant role, it makes Chef Ayden and even Chef Lisa are proud of Emoni, and they offer her a terrific deal since they want her to be more than this. Emoni also makes Buella really proud of her by handling the Winter Dinner project,

that denotes Emoni as the superior woman. Emoni has been transcends its boundaries and make her existence complete.

All of these discussions lead to the result that Emoni is an independent woman who can transcend all boundaries in a patriarchal society because she can exist in both domestic and public spheres. Emoni can transcend all labels that said women as the Other and the second sex because their destiny, history and myth make them domesticated. Her success in showing the existence of a woman, bring her to the whole of existentialist feminism.

The main factor of her success is that she has a strong desire to alter her life and to exist after her father abandoned her after her mother died, and she discovered she was pregnant and would soon have a child to raise. In both of these scenarios, Emoni has lost a male figure in her life, which forces her to assume the man's role in general for her and her grandmother, Buela, to exist. She chooses to be independent without a father who should have to pay for and raise her. She decides to work since Buela cannot work anymore, so if she is not working, they cannot live properly. She also chooses to be an independent woman who can raise her child alone, without begging Tyrone responsible to marry her or even give her an ideal family.

Her involvement with the cooking activity has encouraged her to continue learning and keep involved in Culinary Arts program. When Emoni continues to be involved with activities that are her passions in cooking, she has an instrument that helps her denote herself and her abilities. Therefore, she can achieve existentialist feminism because she has proven herself to be an independent woman who can carry out the duties of working in the domestic and public spheres by showing her existence in both spheres. To embrace her condition, Emoni tries to do the best she can in the domestic and public spheres. So she can provide a better life for herself, Emma, and Buela. However, to have existed in public spheres, Emoni should be extra so she can apply the four tactics of transcendence. Emoni through four tactics of transcendence that Beauvoir describes. She divides the four tactics into a woman

who can work, a woman who becomes an intellectual, a woman who becomes a transformative agent who plays a significant role, and a woman being independent.

To transcend all perspectives and get the same place and opportunities as men, Emoni is successful in applying Simone de Beauvoir's existentialist feminism reflected in her existence in working both in domestic and public spheres. She also becomes an intellectual woman and plays a significant role in the Culinary Arts program, which makes her cooking skills exist. Emoni's life as The Other or the second sex has been successfully erased.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the result of the analysis, it can be inferred that existentialist feminism is reflected in Emoni Santiago's life. The thesis writer finds that as a woman who lives in a society dominated by patriarchal culture, Emoni can exist in the domestic and public spheres. She also achieves equality by achieving a state of transcendence. Emoni's state of transcendence is shown through four tactics – working, becoming an intellectual or being educated, playing a significant role to be a transformative agent, and being independent. Her passion for cooking and her life journey encouraged her to keep existing as a woman in all aspects. Her consciousness to make a change in her life and her passion for cooking becomes the instrument of her existence. She has thus established that she is an independent woman who can handle the responsibilities of working, being an educated woman, and playing a big role in a group or community. As a result, Emoni Santiago is a woman who can appear as a real woman. Emoni Santiago's character presented the idea of existentialist feminism. The writer finds that a woman must be extraordinarily talented and brave to transcend all boundaries to exist. It means women have to be capable to equal to men by doing tasks in the public sphere not only in the domestic to exist. Next, having a strong desire to do or create something can be used by women to justify their existence in a patriarchal society.

## REFERENCES

Beauvoir, D. S. (2014). The Second Sex. In *Classic and Contemporary Readings in Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315840154-29>

Bhasin, K. (2006). *What Is Patriarchy*. Women Unlimited: New Delhi.

Crow, L.D., & Crow, A. (1956). *Human Development and Learning*. American Book Company: New York.

Flick, U. (2009). (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). *Sage Publications Ltd*.

Harackiewicz, J. M. (2017). *CHAPTER 18 Interest*. May.

Hidi, S., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2000). *Motivating the Academically Unmotivated: A Critical Issue for the 21st Century* (Vol. 70, Issue 2). <http://rer.aera.net>.

Hornby, A.S. (1973). *The Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, London Oxford University Press: New York.

(  
E

Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative Descriptive Research: An Acceptable Design. *Pacific Rim International Journal of Nursing Research*, 16, 255-256.

*Amble Kammerer Source : Criminal Science Monographs , Jan ., 1918 , No . 3  
The Unmarried Mother : A Study of Five Hundred Cases ( Jan ., 1918 ), pp .  
1-337 Stable URL : https://ww. 3, 1-337.*

8  
Ø  
3

Panza, C. & Gale, G. (2008). *Existentialism For Dummies*. Wiley Publishing: Indiana.

5

Priyadharshini, P., Mohan, S., & Hassan, A. (2022). A Feministic Discourse of Existentialism in Namita Gokhale's Select Works. *World Journal of English Language*, 12(2), 134. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n2p134>.

H

Publishing, D.K & Mangan, L. (2019). *The Feminism Book: Big Ideas Simply Explained*. Dorling Kindersley Publishing: United States.

E

Rao, M. V. (2016). Existentialism: A philosophic stand point to existence over Essence. *The South Asian Academic Research Chronicle*, 3(1), 13-20.

L

Schunk, D. H., Meece, J. R., & Pintrich, P. R. (2014). Goal and goal orientation. In *Motivation in Education: Theory, research and applications*.

K

"

h

h

t

p

p

:

Silvia, P. J. (2014). *Interest and Interests: The Psychology of Constructive Capriciousness*. June. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.5.3.270>.

(4), 445–460. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2015.1008429>

Tong, R. (2009). *Feminist Thought: A More Comprehensive Introduction (Third Edition)*.

Tuttle, L. (1986). *Encyclopedia of Feminism*. Facts On File Publications: New York.

Wellek, R. & Warren, A. (1977). *Theory of Literature*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Woodworth, R. D. (1923). *Psychology: A Study of Mental Life*. Henry Holt and Company: New York.

Yusuf, F., & Susilo, Muh. I. (2020). Existentialist Feminism of Woman's Struggle in Cigarette Girl Novel. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v8i1.1275>