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**The Quest for Feminine Identity in Sandra Cisneros' *The House On Mango Street* 1984**

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## **Dedication**

To my lovely and wonderful parents

Mohammed Lamine and Dalila whom I love the most.

They provided me with great support along the whole path and light my way with their guidance and unconditional love.

To my brothers Fares Abderahime, Mohammed Souhaib, and my Sister Hanane.

To my friend Ahlem who was with me in every moment.

To my uncle Hamza for his support.

To my soulmate and beloved husband Kamal for his endless support and love.

Nadjima

**Dedication**

To all my family and all who support me

Manel

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## Abstract

This dissertation tends to capture the struggles of the protagonist Esperanza Cordero and other women in Mango Street, who failed to shape their identities in Sandra Cisneros's *The House On Mango Street*. This examination aims to analyze the issue of The Quest for Feminine Identity, through the feminist point of view by Simone de Beauvoir in her famous book *The Second Sex*, in addition to the psychosocial approach through Erik Erikson's development stages theory, with the help of other tenets such as Psycho-Feminism, Gender Roles, Patriarchal Oppression, and Ethnic Identity. The first chapter is about historical backgrounds and theoretical framework. The second chapter is for the analysis of the issue of identity formation and its boundaries. As a result, we discover that Esperanza changes the traditional patterns of male domination through challenging her community beliefs, by breaking the boundaries and creating her own identity through writing that allows her to leave Mango Street mentally despite she failed to escape it physically.

**Keywords:** Patriarchy, Oppression, Gender roles, Feminine identity.

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# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

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Chicano or Mexican American literature tends to focus on the theme of identity, discrimination, culture, and history with highlighting and authenticating the Mexican American experience or Chicano culture in the U.S. Moreover, Chicano literature is associated with the social and cultural privileges of the Chicano movement.

Women within the first world are under capitalist patriarchy, the same case for Latin America women who are suffering from oppression by men in different aspects of their life economically, politically, and socially. Due to the stereotypical gender roles and the notion that women should be soundless and obedient, their battle for equality is often met with a hostile response, while their identities are belittled or even demonized. However, many Latin American feminist works considerably contribute to the women's rights movement, by providing new exemplifications of women and their roles in the society while devastating the stereotypical "ideals" of a woman.

Women of color believed in revolution, they laid political and theoretical framework for a feminism of color in the late 1970s. Being gender not as central in the political agenda of Chicano movement and feeling excluded from mainstream feminism, Chicana feminists found this absence and exclusion, and started to discuss their struggles as working-class women of color from that standpoint. Central to the theorization of gender subordination and liberation were not only Chicana feminist scholars, but also artists and writers. In fact, this feminist awakening developed a distinctive expression of a feminine racial voice through the renaissance of ethnic women's writings as part of feminist discourses.

Chicana writers, create a distinct voice where Chicanas are subjects as well as agents of a literary discourse. Through their widespread works, Latin American writers like Sandra Cisneros, Cristina Peri Rossi, and Elena Poniatowska create a sense of their worlds and the complications, conflicts, and various experiences that

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describe their presences. their fictional works also emphasis on the violence that women encounter within their homes, uncovering the concern and signifying that it need to be addressed by the entire society. Writing hence, became a subversive act in a woman's conflict concerning self-liberation from the patriarchal society. Moreover, a movement to rediscovery of her own identity and self-value.

As noted by Madsen, conventional forms were subverted to express the experiences of these colored women, the subject of Chicana writing is the Chicana subject: "feminine subjectivity in a Mexican American context" and thus being "the quest for self-definition" and voice, the primary subject matter of Chicana literature. Through her first novel *The House on Mango Street* (1983), the Chicana author Sandra Cisneros (1954) forged her style, by introducing personal experiences, feelings, and thoughts while suggesting how these attributes have been influenced and prescribed by political, racial, economic and cultural forces (Madsen05).

Cisneros relating her narratives to male-oriented, misogynistic Chicano culture, Cisneros's main focus is to voice urgent issues of Chicana feminism by highlighting the potential of feminine subjectivity and sexuality. (ibid)

Since the quest for feminine identity is one of the major themes in Chicano literature. So the thesis focuses on women writing and the way they treat women issues in their works. The problem of the quest for feminine identity in literary works has attracted the attention of many critic writers, including Sandra Cisneros who attacks the patriarchal society ,through her artistic work *The House On Mango Street* to change the traditional patterns of male .The researcher intended to explore how Sandra attacks patriarchal society in Chicano society during the twentieth century through the novella *The house On Mongo Street*, and how does Sandra portray patriarchal oppression ,and how does she treat women issues?. Also How does Sandra reflect the feminine identity?

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The general objective of the study is to show how does the writer depict the Chicano society, with its conflicts trying to reform the traditional society. The specific objectives of this study are to identify the issues of women's oppression within the ethnic group. Furthermore, to identify women's issues focusing on women writing's, and the way they treat women issues in their works. Also to identify feminine subjectivity, and to show how Sandra Cisneros tends to break the English roles by implicating the Spanish language in her literary works.

This paper can be used as a facilitator for other researchers, who are interested to conduct a study on a similar topic. The significance of this study is that it attempts to show how does the writer depict the Chicano minority in the United States of America, with the issues of women's oppression within ethnic group, gender role, and the quest for feminine identity in Mexican American society.

Before conducting our research, we looked for recent works and researchers about the theme of the quest for feminine identity in Sandra Cisneros's novella "*The House On Mango Street*". But, we did not find any dissertation. We found only criticism works that are relevant to the topic are going to be critically reviewed.

In terms of Chicana Movement, an author who has decided to concentrate on the place of Sandra Cisneros's novel within the American literary tradition is Randy Ontiveros (2014), who specifically focuses on the relevance this novel has within the Chicana movement and Chicana fiction according to his study.

The works of Sandra Cisneros are characterized by a mix of preserving cultural tradition (Chicanismo's pride in cultural practices), with encouraging personal freedom for women (feminism). By showing "how the raw life of Mexican American women could serve as a source for literature" .Cisneros plays a key role within the evolution of Chicano cultural politics towards a more feminist perspective. This view of Cisneros as a great renovator of Chicana

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literature is shared by Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs (2016), who highlights Cisneros's contribution in presenting "borderless cultural (Chicana) characters".

The other researcher who conducted a research on Cisneros's "*The house On Mango Street*" is Mirna Curic, that explores the relationship of space and identity in the novel. Based on spatial theories and ethnic studies, she demonstrates how specific spatial characteristics interact and translate into the main character's identity traits. The spatial narrowness of homes and the isolation of Mango Street reflect a sense of social confinement, isolation, and subjugation of Latino people in the U.S., predominantly Latino girls and women. As a minority people, they occupy the space on the social periphery where Latino and Anglo cultures meet. The spatial contact of Latino and Anglo-American culture generates de-territorialized, diasporic, and hybrid identities which are further compromised by gender issues in the Chicana case. In this setting, the main character Esperanza strives towards identity reconstruction which strongly relies on spatial and mental repositioning.

In addition to that, the research conducted by Christine Cepada that explores how one Chicana adolescent is going from childhood to womanhood, even as living on Mango street and her refusal to simply accept those Mexican archetypes, with the intention to assemble her identity as a Chicana unwilling to fit in to those ideals.

The works mentioned and reviewed above were carefully chosen, because they are all important and relevant to this study, as well as it addressed and tackled the subject that will be addressed in this study in a restricted and variable number of ways.

Sandra Cisneros, succeeded in portraying the struggles of Mexican-American women in a male dominated society, where their roles are decided by their men as well their identities are shaped by men according to society restrictions, she takes the women of Mango Street as an example to Chicanas oppression and subjugation, as well as she depicts their combat of quest for feminine identity.

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This is essentially what sparked our curiosity and interest in conducting the research to fill the gaps of the previous works, in the light of several theories that serves the topic, such as De Beauvoir 's feminist thoughts in her famous book *The Second Sex* and Erikson's development stages theory with the help of Psycho Feminism. This research is based on a critical analysis of the novel, it explores how Sandra Cisneros changes the traditional patterns of male domination by writing a growth novel from the feminine perspective to write about the pursuit of the quest for feminine identity.

The following questions are asked in order to achieve our goals:

- 1- What are the kinds of oppression that Mexican-American women (Chicanas) suffer from?
- 2- What are the traditional and cultural norms of the Mexican-American society?
- 3- How do Mexican-American women (Chicanas) struggle for their feminine identity formation?

This research is divided into two chapters, the first chapter is devoted to illustrates the historical background and the definitions that introduces the work. The second chapter as the body of the research devotes to analyzing how does the writer depict the identity of Mexican American women in society, by shedding the light on the protagonist's mental journey through growing up experience. This paper is going to explore the construction of feminine identity and the awakening of Esperanza's self-consciousness and her voiceless resistance to patriarchy.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **HISTORY OF CHICANO LITERATURE, PSYCHO-FEMINIST LENSES, HISTORICAL AND THEORITICAL BACKGROUNDS**

## CHAPTER ONE: HISTORY OF CHICANO LITERATURE, PSYCHO-FEMINIST LENSES, HISTORICAL AND THEORITICAL BACKGROUNDS

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Literature has an intertwined relationship with society, culture and history. Its quality along with its content, style, and form involve a mirror on social realities and cultural ideals.

The 1960s, were a turbulent period in American politics. The civil rights movement, anti-Vietnam sentiment, and broad social unrest dominated the news of the day. However, it was also a period of literary upheaval and the rebirth of the Chicano movement, in which Mexican-American writers and artists strove to reconnect with their culture and assert their rights as equals in the pursuit of the American dream.

Since then, Mexican-American writers have explored Latino culture via narrative, by creating a rich and diverse contemporary literary heritage. And most of them become America's best writers today.

My endeavor in this first chapter is to explore the social, cultural, and historical events that marked the period, in which Sandra Cisneros' s novel *The House On Mango Street* was written, and to demonstrate the movements by which her work was influenced.

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### 1. The Roots of Chicano literature, Historical Overview, and The Rise of Chicano Minority from the Womb of Civil Rights Movement

Chicano fiction, that is written by Mexican descent people, who residing lastingly in the US. It is often considered as phenomenon rising at the period of the Civil Rights Movement. While the disapproval period involves a moment of intensified literary production yielding a vital body of texts, a subculture of Chicano literature starts before the 1960s. As Philip Ortego denotes, to that flourishing of the protest era as a renaissance. Consequently, emphasizing a need to identify former texts and to tracing the relationship between contemporary and previous writings. Since that Renaissance, Chicano fiction has received a world-class reputation, and its spread over the last two decades attests to prosperous and tradition. (Verity190).

As Chicano identity establishes an ethnic involvement of being stuck between two cultures, and at the same time of being a part of the later, it is no surprise that questions of subjectivity and community have been fundamental concerns in literary production. That is not to imply that Chicano literature is homogeneous in its portrayal of the ethnic experience. Rather, the diversity of Mexican-American experiences has resulted in a wide range of reflections on identity and community, and the literary legacy is marked by its diversity. (ibid. p116)

Verity mentioned that the Zoot Suit Riots, initiated by assaults on Chicanos by US servicemen in Los Angeles, mark the beginning of current Chicano literature in 1943. These episodes highlighted the ambiguous situation of Mexican-Americans, who were discriminated against at home, despite serving their country overseas during WWII. Recognizing the injustice demonstrated by the riots is critical for understanding, Chicano culture since it represents a turning point in the latter's politicization. That politicized consciousness is stoked by returning

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Chicano troops, whose acute awareness of prejudice drove them to become active members of Mexican American organizations dedicated to the quest of civil rights, and socioeconomic and political empowerment. (ibid)

Towards the end of the 1960s, in the midst of the climate of challenge, the early politicization of the 1940s comes to fulfillment, with the activism of diverse bunches whose endeavors are collectively alluded to as the Chicano Development. Inferring much of their technique and talk from the dark Gracious Rights Development, Chicanos endeavored to coordinate territorial and localized concerns into a cohesive national organization. However, the differing qualities characterizing Chicano identity and its representations undermines any similarity of a bound together front reflecting all circles of encounter. (Verity358)

The only common factors among the latter, have been and continue to be, residence in the United States and Mexican heritage and, furthermore, identity resists homogenization. Even Spanish, in view of regional differences and different language and writing skills, can be assigned a divisive role, rather than being a standard form of communication. Thus, the movement can best be seen as a collection of separate organizations, with localized concerns that share the goal of certain forms of empowerment. (ibid. p359)

Women have been banned from speaking and writing about themselves, and their experiences of subjugation within their ethnic community. In addition to sexual differences, differences in sexuality were not taken into account in a community project that was defined by heterosexual biases. Homosexuality was taboo, as it opposed the traditional family unit, the preservation of which was prioritized by the movement as a means of protecting heritage and cultural values. (ibid)

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Although the Chicano writer John Rechy had published three high-circulation novels in 1970, and received international acclamation, his works were ignored. The refusal to accept Rechy as a member of the ethnic group was due to his homosexuality, and his approach to later ones in novels such as *City of Night*, 1963 and *Numbers*, 1967. However, in the middle of 1970s, as the Politicization and oppositionality defended by the cultural-nationalist sections in the movement diminished, the literature was identified as Chicana on the basis of the author's legacy, rather than on how that legacy was articulated or manifested. (ibid)

This led to a more open conceptualization of Chicano literature, as Rechy and others became gradually known and accepted as Chicano authors. The change, which accompanied the decreasing influence of certain ideological currents in the production, publication and reception of literature, was announced with a flourishing of writings, which were repressed by the prevailing cultural nationalist discourse in the movement. This change was heralded, mainly by the appearance of important works by women in the years 1975-76: the collection of short stories *The Rain of Scorpions*, 1975, and the work *El día de las golondrinas* (1976, published for the first time in 1971) by Estela Portillo, the novels *Baja del mound* (1975) by Berta Ornelas and *Victuum* (1976) by Isabela Ríos, and *the volumes of poetry Restless Serpents* (1976), and *La mujeres la tierra*, 1975, (*La mujer es la tierra*) by Bernice Zamora and Dorinda Moreno. (Verity118)

This work marked the beginning of two important processes. First, they initiated the articulation of a repressed feminist consciousness on the issue of the oppression of women, within the ethnic group. Second, the works of Portillo et al were crucial, because they ushered in a time when previously awkward literary voices flourished across genres. The writings of women, as regional literary works do not focus on the subject or put ethnicity in the foreground in an oppositional sense, their writings began to dispel all notions of a monolithic

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community and literary tradition. The heterogeneity of Chicano prose is accentuated in the late 1970s and early 1980s, by narratives that challenge the previously prevailing ideology of militant sectors of the movement. (ibid119)

Verity has revised the works that enrich chicano literature, especially in the early 1980s, where numerous works have enriched Chicano prose. *The Rain God*,1984 by (Arturo Islas), *Face*,1985 by (Cecile Piñeda), *The Hidden Law*,1992 by (Michael Nava) and *The Rag Doll Plagues*,1992 by (Alejandro Morales) are some of the most outstanding novels, along with the autobiographical narratives *Living Up the Street*, 1985 by (Gary Soto), Continuing the work started by writers like Portillo, the most recent fiction is increasingly concerned with the position of women within the ethnic group, and tries to negotiate and portray female subjectivity. (ibid)

Also several works by Sandra Cisneros (*The House on Mango Street*, 1984), Sheila Ortiz Taylor (*Faultline*, 1982), Ana Castillo (*The Mixquihuala Letters*, 1986), Denise Chávez (*The Last of the Menu Girls*, 1986), and Alma Villanueva (*The Ultraviolet Sky*, 1988) examine gender and sexuality issues, both within specific aspects of minority experience and, at the same time in a broader trans-ethnic feminist context.

The terms Hispanic / Latin American refer to Americans originating from the Hispanic countries of Latin America or Spain, and generally refer to anyone in the United States, who identifies as Hispanic or Latino. Hispanic as an umbrella term, however, abandon the different national origins of its subcultures, besides their different racial, class, language, and gender experiences. On this basis, it can hardly be a homogeneous group when the Hispanic ethnic group is made up of in excess of 23 million citizens, economic migrants and political refugees. (Shejbalová08)

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As Giménez clarifies, the term Hispanic strips people of their historical identity, and decreases them to assumed similarities. Literature marked Hispanic or Latin American includes the national literatures of South and Central America, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and parts of the West Indies ,and is written in English or Spanish or even a fusion of the two languages. (ibid)

The greatest substantial improvement of Latin American literature in 20th century is mostly considered the growing of New Narrative, or new novel in 1940s -1950s, which later ended into the Prosperity in 1960s. The New Narration, is agreed as the reaction to social realism, which had been traditionally dictatorial to Latin American literature, and which providing rather simplified and contracted explanation of reality. (ibid)

The New Narrative seems to appeal to traditional conceptions of realism, and at odds with its simplistic and understandable reality. The new literary style seems to replace the traditional form of the Hispanic novel. (Shejbalová09)

The core trends in literature in Swanson's New Narrative are modernism, avant-garde, and magical realism. Modernism is perceived as a special phenomenon of Latin American literature, centered on poetry, the aesthetic potentials of style and mood, and a sense of escapism as a crisis of faith. It calls into question conventional belief systems in which the material is judged against the spiritual, the destruction of social values through technological developments, urbanization and immigration. Modernism reflects one of the basic tenets of the New Narrative: language alone cannot effectively describe reality, which is too complex and ambiguous. (Shejbalová10)

It is often an esoteric question, fascinated by alternative worlds and revealing the crisis of modernity. The avant-garde style is based on a whimsical mix of humorous and anxious attitudes towards modernity. According to Swan, it is very distinctive in Argentina province and

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is further divided into urban and existential groups, which not only replace the traditional way of writing, but focus on the natural improvement and continuous progression of change that leads from realism to New Narrative Stream. The avant-garde authors highlighted the importance of Latin American local issues and the search for its identity. (ibid. p09)

Magical realism, bonds the distance among social realist nearby literature and fantasy, the way targeted at the distinction among the notion and the fact. The writers agree with that Latin America is uncommon due to its historical, non-secular, and ethnics extremes and hence its fact is near fantasy. The narrative style of magical realism tolerated to explain even weird activities pretty naturally. With New Narration, fact isn't to be captured exactly in writing anymore, however new narrative strategies offer greater complicated and ambiguous environment. Thus, the brand new fashion calls for better involvement and greater lively method from the reader. As it become stated above. New Narration wave reached its height in Nineteen Sixties with inside the duration of Boom. (ibid)

The Boom approach, in lots of components the landmark whilst Latin American fiction have become mentioned with inside the relaxation of the world. Amongst fundamental Latin American writers who first have become outstanding with inside the United States with inside the Sixties we, are able to locate the names together with Argentina 's Jorge Luis Borges, Colombia 's Gabriel García Márquez, Chile 's Pablo Neruda, and Brazil 's Jorge Amado. (ibid. p10)

Since that first wave of popularity, authors of color have observed their audience. Latin Americanism, has been diagnosed as instructional subject and numerous pupils together with Lawrence Levine (*The Opening of the American Mind: Canons, Culture and History, 1996*), and

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Ronald Takaki (*A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America, 1993*) offer worthwhile context for know-how multiethnic literature and its meanings. (Spanckeren116)

After the Mexican battle in 1848, whilst the Treaty of Guadalupe changed into signed, Mexico misplaced the northern territory in prefer to the United States. Concerned population have been given a desire to head south to Mexico or to turn out to be American residents. However, according with the Treaty they have been allowed to preserve their language and culture. The basis for brand new ethnic minority have been laid. Although their quantity unexpectedly extended with the aid of using monetary immigrants from Mexico, they have been taken into consideration as second-elegance residents, and marked as invisible minority as these days as 1969. Rapid increase of Chicano motion in 1960s, additionally referred to as Boom, delivered good sized growth of literature (regularly written in an aggregate of English and Spanish), theatre and literary reviews. (Shejbalová14)

Spanckeren, in short defines Mexican-American Culture. Various Mexican-American authors are living with inside the Southwest, as they have got for centuries. Distinctive issues consist of the Spanish language, the Catholic tradition, folkloric forms, and in latest years, race and gender inequality, generational clash, and political action. (Spanckeren118)

The subculture is highly patriarchal. However, new girl Chicana voices have arisen. In fact, the time period Chicano designates, additionally the social and racial discrimination, and the monetary exploitation of a migrant operating magnificence. Elena Poniatowska in her lecture (1996), exemplifies the manner Chicanos are being separated with the aid of using each society, they are speculated to be the second class Mexicans and the fifth class Americans. This system gives practical photograph of mutual relationships among Mexicans, Americans and Chicanos. The modern-day named, moved in no man's land, had misplaced their experience of belonging and combat a steady war to gain a social recognition. (Poniatowska02)

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The capabilities of Chicanos attempt to go looking their roots, are seen additionally in linguistic discipline and were capable of hint many examples of that during Cisneros' books, which might be going to be analyzed later. Chicanos controlled to create their personal tradition with their personal manner of life, tune, and language of older era that could not talk English, and the Spanish get worse with each era. Therefore, English words were mexicanized: "truck" converted "troca", "yard" became "arda", words like "si", man" instead of si, yes", "migra," "pason," "parquear," "friquearse," "alivianado," "buena vibra" [good vibes], and others, that fit to prison language. (Shejbalová15)

While the US nonetheless understand Chicanos as undesirable immigrants, bringing all social issues collectively consisting of robberies, rapes, vandalism, and unlawful business, to Mexicans they remained forgotten humans, and Chicanos lifestyle has been left out them until recently. (ibid)

Elena Poniatowska enlists the cultural occasions, while Chicanos have been taken under consideration in Mexico Even now, only a few Mexican writers take care of Chicano authors and poets, or even fewer ladies writers take Chicana writers under consideration. (Poniatowska03)

Carlos Monsivais, Jose Emilio Pacheco, Jose Agustin, and Gustavo Sainz who has been in touch with Chicanos whilst running in Albuquerque are the handiest ones, who have promoted Chicano literature. In 1987, the Colegio de los angeles Frontera Norte and the Colegio de Mexico based the Chicano Mexican Writers Congress, that turned into additionally held in Tijuana in May 1989. Just closing year, 1990, a Chicano film competition befell in Mexico City. In Mexico, the paintings of Chicano writers like Tomas Rivera, Tino Villanueva, Rudolfo

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Anaya, and Miguel Mendez has been published, however no Chicana could make the same claim. (Shejbalová15)

It is ideal to say here, that this statement has misplaced its truthfulness via way of means of nowadays, amongst others, additionally because of Elena Poniatowska's contribution. Another instance of unfair mind-set to authors of color, focused on female authors by Debra A. Castillo, and springs from noticeably current beyond It is a truism of fashionable Latin American literary records, that Latin American women do now no longer write, and certainly do now no longer write narrative. What little they do write merits oblivion. What narrative they produce, simple neorealist home fiction, does now no longer get up to assessment with the great male authors of the Boom and after.'(ibid)

The term Chicana, is used to represent female counterpart of Chicano, as well-defined in Webster 's dictionary an American of Mexican origin. To the identity of Mexican - American women in the society who are portrayed in literature. Especially on women's texts who centers on the way they treat women 's concerns and explore it in their productions. (ibid)

Before the flip of twentieth century, women have been defined with the honor to their bodily look only. Generally, Mexican women have been defined as lovely, however with horrific recognition of this beauty, which ends up in sexual promiscuity. This mindset is exquisite as an example in works with the aid of using Harvey Fergusson or Bret Harte. (Parr and Ramírez01)

In The Conquest of Don Pedro, as an example Fergusson affords extensive spectrum of female characters, at some point of the society from outcast to aristocratic matron, all of whom hold the expertise for sexual intrigue. In his extra work, Wolf Songs' male character warns other men against involvement with Chicanas, that women breed like prairie puppies, and jest as

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careless. Their appearance accurate whilst they may be younger, however when they have calved a time or they swell up like a cow in a truck patch as you want a wagon to move. (ibid)

Southwestern narrative of the first half of the twentieth century, can be characterized by John Steinbeck as one of the most important authors of that era. While we may find some attempts to treat Chicanas more realistically and fairly, the description retains the stereotypical characteristics of its predecessors. The characters, both male and female, live in an unrealistic picture of the world, but women are portrayed as primitive, naive and promiscuous, as we can see from her statement about Señora Teresina Cortez in *Tortilla Flat*. Her regularity as a mother always amazed Teresina. Sometimes he could not recall who the father of the child was, and sometimes he was almost certain that a lover was not needed. (Shejbalová17)

Alternatively, primary works by Chicano authors examined chiefly history and cultural legacy of Mexican society. Here, traditional gender roles and family entity were the fundamental themes. With the intention of fighting, the representation given by Anglo-American authors, Chicanos shaped their own models of woman.

As Parr and Ramírez itemized in their article, Mexican idealized feminine image comes from Christianity, which views women as divine creatures integrating the quality of the virginal wife mother. As virgin symbol in Mexican culture, is denoted as Virgin of Guadalupe, linked with the Aztec goddess mother. The image of good, pure, understanding and distress woman gave the birth to the new depiction of female literary characters. The means how Chicanas categorize with or dissociate from those religious images exemplifies a significant decisive trait of their identity. (Parr and Ramírez04)

Women's principal roles as mothers and/or grandmothers are depicted in the first and most typical portrayal. Women are shown as kind, compassionate, and strong individuals who

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frequently sacrifice themselves for the sake of their children. The picture of a woman as a sexual symbol represents the second part of femininity. Mexican women are portrayed in the position of Eve the temptress. (ibid)

Aside from the concept of the virgin mother, literary works frequently featured mistresses and prostitutes. They are, however designated as victims who were pushed into prostitution as a source of revenue, rather than as the subjects of moral judgment or condemnation. Prostitution is simply defined as the act of selling one's body to another. Prostitution is just a The third group of women shown in Chicano literature of the time is wives, who play the typical submissive role of spouses, whose responsibilities are limited to housework and child care. (Shejbalová18)

Wives frequently develop other personas to round out the patriarchal universe. Parr and Ramirez explain how women judge their own social position, by seeking contact with other generations and enjoy in the company of their mothers and grandmothers, revealing the changes in women's role in current society, by contrasting their life experiences accepted as a fact of life by everyone in society, including women and children. (Parr and Ramírez02)

Latin American literature was to a greater or lesser degree, linked to the ups and downs of national politics, although also regional and international during the twentieth and twenty first centuries. In general, Latin American literature was inclined towards the political left and social demands, and despite the diverse styles and approaches realist, magic realist, modernist, surrealist, etc. the militant burden did not diminish, but progressively increased a symbolic social centrality. With the beginning of the 21st century, Latin American literature lost part of its traditional claims and transformed them into new and current ones denouncing violence and inequalities in the continent. (Baisotti20)

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### 2. Tendencies in Latin American Literature in the 20th Century: A Closer Look to Feminine Literature (Chicana literature)

Machismo, a term for masculinity in Latin American culture, has become a common phrase in gender studies discussions. Scholars have made significant efforts to monitor and analyze the influence that Machismo has on gender roles. Nevertheless, because Machismo is a cultural phenomenon, each person expresses their culture differently.

As a result, Machismo is defined as a set of attitudes that enable a man to appraise his presence, not just on women but also on other men. Machismo has become "the single most important or profoundly established aspect of sexual culture in Latin America," according to Dr Richard G Parker, a professor of socio medical sciences and anthropology at the State university of Rio de Janeiro. (Dabrowski03)

Dr Parker defines Machismo as an ideological framework with a gender hierarchy in which males are considered as dominant, "expansive, and almost uncontrolled" characters, while females are portrayed as more passive and subservient "things of masculine control." As an end result of those closely gendered identities, marriages are frequently primarily based totally at the idea of "respect" with a hierarchal strength structure, that is every other element of Dr Parker's study (ibid)

He focuses on the societal expectations placed on both genders, especially the behaviors that lead to marriage. Women, for example must abstain from sexual activity prior to marriage and remain faithful to one man throughout the "marriage." To follow the image of La Virgen de Guadalupe, they must remain pure and faithful. In addition, women are primarily expected to be *amas de la casa* (housewives), responsible for the home and children. Males on the other hand, are expected to start sexual activity as early as adolescence and to have several partners before

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and after marriage. They are required to satisfy their wants as well as display their manliness, by dominance and building a reputation, not only among women but also among their peers, by having several partners. Men frequently turn to domestic violence as a means of attempting to dominate their love partner in order to retain their reputation as "the man of the home."(ibid)

Dabrowski in her thesis, mentioned that Machismo acquired a negative connotation during the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, when it was used to denote masculine aggression and violence. While Machismo can refer to healthy male attributes, such as hard labor and protecting one's family, it is now more commonly connected with the idea of a man attempting complete control over his love partner. As previously stated, the power imbalance between a man and a woman in a relationship adds to the Machismo social norm, in which males are continuously seeking to display their masculinity and strength. Violent encounters are fueled by jealousy, competition, and pride they are often followed as protest of superiority. (ibid.p06)

It is vital to realize, though that Machismo has a psychological impact on men. From a young age, boys are socialized into Machismo views. Males are born to be the leader of the household, powerful and capable of handling the responsibilities of having a family, they are told. That belief is reinforced by their daily encounters in their surroundings, which frequently include domestic violence incidents. Seeing abuse in one's home can have a significant impact on a youngster, particularly young boys, for whom violence may become more acceptable after witnessing a parent or close relative as a victim. Eventually, the guys may decide to perform the same acts of violence that they have noticed at a young age to their wives. (Pigeon03)

Men are unable to articulate their sentiments and concerns, while they strive to satisfy Machismo's high standards, which "discourages them from exposing the discomfort,

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bewilderment, or doubt generated by changes in the family's power structure." As a result of suppressing their emotions, some men become more authoritarian and, as a result, resort to violence or threats to keep control over their spouses, resulting in a dangerous and toxic atmosphere for the family within one's own home. "Homes have become a location where women are more at risk for encountering violence in initiatives," according to a 2005 World Health Organization report on women's health and domestic abuse. (Johnson155).

Women are subjected to a variety of sorts of abuse, including emotional, physical, and even sexual assault. Worse, many crimes against women go unreported, because women feel inferior and reliant on their husbands and male relatives, who are frequently the abusers, as well as the law working against them because of male-dominated structures. In Brazil, for example court battles have focused on the so-called "defense of honor," which allows men to murder their wives if they are detected having an affair. Domestic abuse is treated as a health issue rather than a criminal in Guatemala. Torture of female inmates is prevalent in Argentina and Bolivia, where they are accused of failing as spouses and mothers. However, in recent years the Latin American feminist movement has entered the political arena to challenge Machismo, and expand beyond patriarchal constraints that have traditionally constituted "women's issues." (Sequeira23)

Women have always been significant participants in political and economic life in Latin America, not just in the home and society, but also in politics and the economy. The majority of their political identity, on the other hand, remained inextricably linked to the nurturing function. Motherhood provided them with a unique entry into politics and important cultural value, allowing women to gain authority while also imposing some limits due to gender relations. Despite the challenges, women have gained a bigger voice and presence in the region's politics over time, and as a result, have had an impact on the growth of citizenship. (Craske09-10)

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Regardless of their strategy or position, whether they devote themselves to gender studies and research or fighting the patriarchal society that is seen as the source of women's oppression, many feminist women are devoting their very existence to raising women's awareness of their human rights and the sociopolitical implications. The force of unification gave a boost to the rising feminist movement. Women are increasingly banding together to combat conventional gender roles, modify and improve legislation in order to achieve protection and equality, and seek retribution from those who have wronged them. Mexico, Argentina, and Colombia are among the countries where the spark can be seen. These three countries have recently come under the media spotlight as a result of ongoing study and horrible events that highlight the perilous lives, that Latin American women face on a daily basis. (ibid. p12)

Mexico has the sad distinction of coining the word femicide, which came from the disappearance and/or murder of 300 women in the city of Ciudad Juárez in the 1990s. This shocking occurrence has recently been proven to be part of a statewide trend of rising violence against women just because they are female. The current military situation in Mexico has a huge influence on women, as it has increased the incidence of rape by military and police officers, as well as increased concerns about people trafficking as organized crime has grown. (Dashner06)

Mexico's position has become a popular topic of discussion, as well as a literary one. For example, in 2014 Alicia Gaspar de Alba a renowned poet and prose writer, published *Desert Blood*, “*The Juárez Murders*”, a work that examines the impacts of patriarchy and gender identity in the context of femicide in Ciudad Juárez. In addition, not only in the social/artistic movement, but also in the political movement, there have been changes. (Dabrowski07-08)

Since the 1990s, Mexico has seen a surge of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to women's rights, with the goal of providing benefits and services to women who

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have been victims of gender violence, that were previously slashed from government budgets. The presence of NGOs reshaped the women's organizing movement, particularly in rural areas of the country, where women are sometimes denied economic and political participation or support during difficult times. (ibid)

### 2.1 A closer look to Feminine Literature (Chicana Literature):

Many Mexican-Americans organize rallies, boycotts, and other forms of community action in order to fight for equality and human rights. These activists reappropriate the name "Chicano," which was formerly used as a disparaging epithet, as a phrase of cultural pride and political unification. Chicano Literature originates as a result of this social context. However, masculine voices and stories predominate in Chicano literature, as well as the Chicano movement, marginalizing both women's labor and rights. (ibid)

Chicana literature first developed several centuries ago, even as early as the 1800s, with cultural influences reaching back to the 16th century. It received a substantial boost in the 1960s, during the Mexican American civil rights movement. During this time, Chicana authors rose to prominence and used their platforms to raise awareness of social injustices, feminism, and the difficulties of being a Latina in America. (ibid. p14)

Chicana Feminism and Chicana Literature, are products of this long and complicated history. Chicana authors were fighting not only traditional and economic discrimination, as were their male colleagues, as well gender harassment within their own societies. (Madsen08).

From the middle-1980s through the 1990s, there was a surge in Chicana Feminist writing, which was fueled by a wish to focus on it. Chicanas or Mexican American women, have generated a rising body of literature that is part of a contemporary revival of ethnic women's writing, that has evolved since the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's. In literary terms this

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has meant the improvement of a distinctive feminine ethnic \racial voice through literary themes, imagery, and style all reworked so that elements of a racial cultural tradition become expressive of a feminist voice instead of expressing traditional patriarchal Mexican values. (ibid).

In the mid to late 1980's, Chicana authors such as Gloria E Anzaldúa, Cherrie Moraga, Ana Castillo, Sandra Cisneros, and others were becoming more visible on the U.S scene. Their works characteristically are highly experimental, through their hybrid narratives and their fusion of prose and poetry, autobiography and essay, myth and history, and their blending of English and Spanish attest to the innovative nature of these texts. (Elisabeth07).

Feminine models from the Mexican past, play an essential role in Chicana culture for women's subjectivity. This considered as the core issue of Chicana literature, such archetypes have long been associated with Catholic-patriarchal conceptions of womanhood. The Virgin of Guadalupe, La Malinche, and La Llorona are idolized, and the most common images of female sexuality and motherhood revolve around the passive virgin. (ibid)

The treacherous mother and the immoral seductress. The Virgin of Guadalupe is marketed as a role model for women, because she reflects the patriarchal ideal of femininity. The patriarchy and the Catholic Church, on the other hand, identify Guadalupe's negative opposites, La Malinche and La Llorona, as "whore" and "bad mother," respectively. As a result, they serve as anti-role models. Traditional descriptions of these feminine models might be perceived as creating an image of woman that is damaging to female subjectivity, according to Chicana feminism. Despite the fact that there are three characters, these models conjure a binary opposition that labels women as either "good" or "bad," "virgin" or "whore." As a result, they stifle and restrict Chicana improvement. (ibid)

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Chicana feminists, have hired innovative writing to pledge the Catholic-patriarchal treatise at the Virgin of Guadalupe, La Malinche, and La Llorona. As they discover those cultural standards of their novels, brief stories, and poems. Chicana feminists try to show the mechanisms via way of means of which the unique pictures of those mythic figures had been subverted, disempowered, and distorted. But maximum importantly, they searching for to deconstruct the virgin/whore dichotomy via way of means of rewriting the mythic figures. Through a revision of current myths, Chicana writers are capable of create a feminist mythology this is rooted in cultural culture however concurrently functions as an act of confrontation to the dominant discourse. (ibid)

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### 3. Sandra Cisneros as an outstanding Chicana feminist writer:

In Latin America, the history of women's engagement in literary culture and political life is still being written. By the second half of the nineteenth century, a sizable number of female writers had championed concerns of women's rights, particularly in regard to civil status, family, and creative engagement. Sandra Cisneros is one of those writers who has achieved worldwide acclaim for her work.

Sandra Cisneros, who was born on December 20, 1954, was the only daughter in a family of six boys. Cisneros who grew up with a Spanish-speaking Mexican father and an English-speaking Mexican mother, battled with her family's continual travel between Mexico and the United States, but found solace in her writing. Her mother was a major female influence, because although being reliant on her husband and unable to reach her full potential, she assured that Cisneros would not have the same difficulties. (www.dbpedia.org)

Cisneros' writing frequently reflects her personal experiences, particularly from the time when she was eleven years old, and her family moved to Humboldt Park, a primarily Puerto Rican neighborhood on Chicago's West Side.

Her classic work *The House on Mango Street* was inspired by this locale. Cisneros became a literary pioneer as the first female Mexican-American writer, to have her work published by a mainstream publisher thanks to that novel. *The House on Mango Street* garnered mostly excellent reviews after its release. Nevertheless, because the plot revolved around the difficulties of being a woman in a primarily patriarchal society, several male Mexican-American critics accused Cisneros of reinforcing bad stereotypes about Chicano men. (Athawale05)

Cisneros and her supporters say that men and women have distinct perspectives on life and that it is crucial to be able to see both sides of the story, rather than presenting a unified front.

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Cisneros an ardent feminist, who continues to shatter barriers and empower the less fortunate to resist stereotypes and take action against what influences their individual lives, continues to express her culture via her major characters to this day. Her main goal is to contribute to the formation of a new movement, by developing strong female characters who do not fit the stereotype of the stay-at-home mother, but rather express their femininity by embracing their true self. (ibid)

Sandra Cisneros is a Mexican-American novelist, poet, and short story writer who is best known for her collection of short stories *Women Hollering Creek* (1991) and *Other stories*. Cisneros attributed her work's experimentation with literary forms that study emergent subject positions to growing up in an environment of cultural hybridity and economic disparity, which provided her with unique stories to tell. She has received various honors, including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship, and was one of 25 new Ford Foundation Art of Change fellowships in 2017. She is widely acknowledged as a prominent player in Chicana writing and *Caramelo* (2002). (www.papersowl.com)

Chicanos also faced discrimination in their fight for equality. It depicts injustice, racism, exploitation, and crimes against women. Chicano writers in the United States have investigated and assessed the value of fiction written on the quest for identity, and have exposed such a clash. Sandra Cisneros is a novelist and Chicana activist from Chicago. *Caramelo* is a wide book with a great heart that transports you to a rich and delightful universe. *Caramelo* is about her family's annual trip to Mexico to see their relatives. Her history stimulates her imagination as she learns about herself and the world's diversity of beauty. It's the narrative of numerous generations of a huge Mexican-American family. (Athawale12)

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According to ([www.wndrwmm.com](http://www.wndrwmm.com)) ,Cisneros' work examines the construction of Chicana identity, examining the difficulties of being stuck between Mexican and Anglo-American cultures, confronting misogynist views in both cultures, and living in poverty. Cisneros is known far beyond the Chicano and Latino communities for her astute social commentary and compelling language style. This writer has worked as a teacher, a counselor, a college recruiter, a school poet, and an arts administrator, and has maintained a strong dedication to community and literary issues throughout her career. She launched the Macondo Writers Workshop, which offers socially aware writing seminars, as well as the Alfredo Cisneros Del Moral Foundation, which honors brilliant Texas writers.

Many themes emerged in her novels, such as place through her works, she conveys the experiences of Chicanas confronting Mexican culture's "deeply rooted patriarchal values" through interactions not only with Mexican fathers, but also with the broader community, which puts pressure on them to conform to a narrow definition of womanhood and a subservient position to men. (ibid)

Because identity is such an important issue in this thesis, I'll begin by defining the term and quickly introducing various facets of identity. The simple inquiry "Who are you?" generates an infinite array of responses based on a variety of factors, including the context in which the question is posed. According to Shejbalová Gender, faiths, family position, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, and ethnicity may all be on the list. As a result, we could say that identification encompasses both the collection of personal features that identify an individual and those that determine one's membership with a group, particularly in terms of gender, color, age, and religion. (Shejbalová102)

In other words, observing individuals around us and connecting ourselves with them shapes our sense of selfhood. This process of group affiliation begins as soon as the child is born and

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continues throughout his or her life. These key characteristics we acquired early in life have a direct impact on our mature perceptions of ourselves and how we act. The humanist theory of self focuses on the idea that one's identity is made up of a blend of unchanging qualities, known as essences that define an individual in all circumstances, regardless of what happens in the outside world. However, I believe that most people continue to establish new identities throughout later life. (ibid)

Virginia Cyrus identified four components of identity, such as race and ethnicity, gender, economic status, and stereotypes, as well as how these factors influence the construction of one's identity in "*Queer Theory*" by Mary Klages, University of Colorado at Boulder, 1997. She studies how people learn to accept gender norms in society, the effect of socioeconomic background on the sense of self, and how we build stereotypes towards different social groups in her work "*Experiencing with Race, Class, and Gender in the United States.*" However, because the focus of this thesis is on ethnic and gender identity. I will concentrate on these two components of identity, but I acknowledge that all four dimensions are overlap to some extent and interact, thus the others cannot be fully ignored. (Shejbalová11-12)

The fundamental issue in terms of gender identity, according to Judith Butler is the contrast between sex and gender. The difference between sexed bodies and culturally produced genders is suggested by the sex/gender distinction. Assuming for the time being that binary sex is stable, it does not follow that men's construction will be limited to their bodies or that women would understand men's construction only via their bodies. (ibid)

Sex is commonly defined as a system of biological signs that divides beings into binary pairs of male and female. As such, it is regarded as a biological attribute that everyone is born with, as well as something (relatively) stable and unchangeable. Gender on the other hand, is

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unique. It is socially determined, which means that one is not born with it but must learn to fulfill behavioral expectations of what is considered feminine or masculine in a given culture. These patterns are commonly referred to as gender roles, and they do not have to correspond to one's gender. (ibid)

According to Simone de Beauvoir "one becomes a woman, but always under a cultural compulsion to do so." And it's apparent that the compulsion has nothing to do with sex. This information will be crucial in my subsequent analysis of Mexican American women's gender identification. The question is how much society and traditional gender preconceptions influence the characters' personality. The next topic I'll discuss is whether women must repress their identities in order to adapt to generally accepted standards, and how their upbringing can affect their performance in life. (ibid. p15)

Ethnic identity is another component of identity that is influenced by societal factors. Sex is similarly unchangeable, but unlike gender one cannot select or impact the national entity to which one is born. Because the most important element of ethnicity is well-defined as membership in a subgroup within an environment conquered by another culture, being born as a member of ethnics usually means being socialized into two cultural backgrounds, which brings specific features to the development of one's identity. It focuses on the issues of assimilation vs. preserving former cultural history, as well as the challenges of achieving equal standing within the larger society. (Shejbalová13)

Women in Latin America have struggled to break free from society's imposed dependent on men since the beginning. According to Shejbalová writing is one of the most significant components of their liberation struggle. Women have been able to reinvent their status in society and assert their independence via writing and literature. Machismo, which constantly tries to

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“place women where they belong” according to patriarchal ideals, is one of the most difficult challenges women face. As Sandra Cisneros shows in her novel *The House on Mango Street*, machismo may take many different forms. Despite the fact that the novel was published in 1984, it still properly represents the violence and harassment that women face today. (ibid)

Women, on the other hand, are no longer doomed to combat alone, as they were in the novel. Machismo and violence remain problems in the lives of Latin American women, but women are progressively and continuously banding together to battle gender standards and persecution as they seize and create opportunities for themselves, opportunities to take matters into their own hands and push forward to have their voices heard and play an active role in their region's political and economic life. (ibid)

Chicana writing presents fresh ideas and interpretations of a social reality, that has considered women as marginalized voices, restricted to the interior realm and victims of a series of barriers that prohibit them from emerging as self-sufficient individuals. According to Gilroy "the effect of feminist movements has recently insured that the significance of struggles against patriarchal oppression has been raised as a political and theoretical concern," which is evident in Chicana literature (Young 2004,4). Gender hierarchy, as well as "mother's gendered behavior" (Del Castillo 1996, 215), are culturally accepted and maintained structures. (Alonso23)

After giving biographical and literary backgrounds, it is time to sketch out the theories and methodologies that will guide this project to understand the principles of psycho-feminist and be able to deduce its relevance to the present research, it is preferable to make a quick recapitulation of the principles of psychoanalysis, psychosocial, and Feminism as an independent movement.

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### 1.2. THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 1.2.1 ERIK ERIKSON 's Development Stages THEORY

Erik Erikson was born on June 15, 1902, and died on May 12, 1994. His full name was Erik Homburger Erikson, but he was also known as Erik H. Erikson. Erikson was a psychoanalyst whose studies on social psychology, human identity, and psychology's linkages with history, politics, and culture affected professional approaches to psychosocial problems and piqued public interest.( <https://www.britannica.com>)

Erikson's theory goes beyond the traditional psychological theories; it deviates from the Freudian traditional psychoanalytic theory. Erikson believes that humans personalities keep developing past age five. According to Erikson the person's personality passes through eight developmental stages that build on each other, we face a crisis at each stage. By resolving the crisis like trust, autonomy, intimacy, individuality, integrity, and identity. we develop psychological strengths or character traits that help us become confident and healthy people. For Erikson these crises are of a psychosocial nature because they involve psychological needs of the individual conflicting with the needs of society. (ibid)

Generally speaking, the crisis which temporarily disrupts the regulation mechanisms of an individual or a group of individuals, can only be defined as the subjective experience of social factors. For there to be an organizational crisis, there must necessarily be a specific psychological factor responsible for the particular rigidities which makes the disruption difficult to bear, which is calls the structural cause of the crisis. A fortiori, the organizational identity crisis focuses on this psychological factor, since the organizational identity reflects the psychology of the organization par excellence. (ibid)

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This psychological dimension is reflected in the work of Erikson (1968) who states that any crisis of identity is due to the new identity. It may be thought to be triggered when the paradox of change and stability, contained in the change of organizational identity, becomes such that it is no longer bearable. For extension and with reference to Erikson's work on the identity crisis (1968), one can think that the organizational identity crisis appears as a collapse of the sense of identity of the organization for its actors, a loss of reference (Erikson19).

Erikson and Dubar meet together in a mutual point of view about identity forms, that forge an identity crisis, where Dubar opposes two forms of identity: community forms and societal forms. The former is based on "the belief in the existence of groups called "communities" which are considered to be systems of places, and names assigned to individuals and reproduced identically throughout the generations. Each individual defines himself and is defined on the basis of belonging to a community and the place he occupies. The second, emerging in contemporary societies, assume the existence of multiple, variable, ephemeral collectives to which individuals adhere for limited periods of time and which provide them with identification resources that they manage in a diverse and temporary manner. (Dubar07)

Each individual is then defined by a multiplicity of memberships that can change during existence. This second form of identity is the expression of the belief in the primacy of the individual over collective belonging. It is the consequence of a crisis in the symbolic system of designation and classification which sets out all the categories shared by the greatest number, by which each person defines himself or herself in relation to herself and to the others (Dubar14).

According to Dubar earlier forms of identification of individuals, especially cultural, genealogical and statutory, lose their legitimacy in favor of emerging, reflective and narrative forms. The narrative identity would ultimately be the expression of this crisis. It is defined as an

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autonomous construction of the individual starting from the putting into words of a personal history that makes sense for “self”. It is opposed to other forms of identity, more traditional, and even conservative. Based on name, genealogy, occupation, membership in a social, cultural, ethnic or religious group. Thus Community identifications would be defensive in the sense that they block the emergence of constructive but uncertain identifications of the «Members» type. (ibid)

On the other hand, the narrative identity a notion that the author seems to assimilate to the notion of subject, would be able to construct and invent something new to escape the determinations and weight of history. “The intimate identity is the story of its uprooting from the family of origin, from the traditional roles, it is the access to the autonomy of a project “to oneself”, it is the story of its breakups as much as well as its continuities, its “crises” (inevitable) as well as its (possible) achievements” (ibid.).

From childhood to maturity, Erikson believed that personality develops in a fixed order through eight phases of psychosocial development., according to ([www.verywellmind.com](http://www.verywellmind.com)) website those stages are :

**1-Trust Vs Mistrust:** This stage starts at birth continues to approximately 18 months of age, during this age the infant is uncertain about the world so he only looking for stability and care from his caregiver.

**2-Autonomy VS Shame and Doubt:** this is the second stage it starts between the ages of 18 months to approximately 3 years. At this stage child rise their sense of independence through developing a sense of personal control over physical skills.

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**3-Initiative VS Guilt:** it is the third stage, at this stage child start asserting their social interaction and explore their interpersonal skills through initiating activities, such as play and their school relations, whereas their parents see their behavior as aggressive actions.

**4-Industry VS Inferiority:** this is the fourth stage, it occurs between the age of five and twelve. At these stage children start acquire new skills such as reading and writing, wherein The child has the desire to win approval by demonstrating specific competencies that are valued by society and begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments.

**5-Identity VS Role confusion:** it is the fifth stage, it occurs from age of twelve to eighteen years, this period called adolescence which is a transition from childhood to adulthood, it is the most important period in life, at this stage the adolescent start developing the sense of self and personal identity.

**6-Intimacy VS Isolation:** it is the sixth stage, it occurs between the ages of approximately 18 to 40 years, it takes place during young adulthood, at this stage the person start to make an intimate relationship which creates a conflict for him in forming this kind of relations.

**7-Generativity vs. Stagnation:** this seventh stage takes place during the middle adulthood between the ages of forty to sixty-five, at this stage the person becomes productive in terms of work, family, society.

**8- Ego Integrity vs. Despair:** it is the eighth and the final stage of Erikson's psychosocial development theory, this stage begins at approximately age 65 and ends at death. During this period the person becomes a senior citizens, he tends to slow down his productivity and explore life as a retired person where he measures his success of life.

Erikson 's psychosocial development theory, that consists with the stages development of human life, has influenced the feminist perspectives which focus on the women psychology and position in society, especially the issue of identity crisis which faces many women of minority

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groups those women who confront the patriarchy and traditional standards that rises their struggle in forming their identities. (ibid)

Erikson 's theory expresses the psychological struggles that affects the woman 's life from childhood to adolescence , those struggles are created by the dominance of men over women in all their aspects of life where women find it hard to express clearly what they feel most deeply, and they could not find the right words for what to them is most acute and actual, and without saying it with defiance or apology , they found their selves in point zero , they are powerless and weak because their power has been stolen by their men (ibid).

Women who lives in minority groups and especially in patriarchal societies find their selves in a situation of otherness and sympathy, thus leads them to have a dominant identity which depend on being dominant, this dominance make it hard to grant them a real equality since they are dominated. The man conquest in outer spaces of womanhood experience has affect the women on all their lives stages resulting them an identity crisis which could be explained by Erikson's psychosocial development theory. (Kimberle03)

### 1.2.2 Gender, Patriarchal Oppression, and Ethnic Identity

Ethnic Identity is a result of Multi group Ethnic Identities, these groups have emerged after the discovery of The American Continent. America at that time witnessed a high range of immigration, thus helps in the emergence of minorities, it was considered as a New World, refuge, and a land of opportunities.

According to Britannica website ([www. Britannica .com](http://www.Britannica.com)), it stated that by the twentieth century the United States has raised and started to be a world power. The ethnic and racial makeup of the population is extremely diverse. A continual stream of immigration, particularly from the 1830s onwards, created an unrivaled pool of foreign-born people, 60 million people moved to American shores in the 18th and 19th centuries. Many were enticed by a desire for

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workers, plentiful natural resources, and expansive inexpensive land, while others were pushed by political or economic difficulties. The majority of those who arrived hoped to reinvent themselves in the New World.

The USA people at that time have a shift in their lives regarding to the industrial revolution, so they start moving from rural areas toward cities. One of the well-known and the largest population in US are Hispanics who known also as Latinos, those people are the largest ethnic group who make up between one-sixth and one-fifth of the U.S. population. Hispanics has been identified differently through time regarding to times and places, they were various and divided to many groups such as: Spanish, Spanish American, Californios (old families who lived in California), Latino, Latin American, Spanish speaking and Spanish surname, Neoricanos (who were living in Puerto Ricans, New York, and Mainland), Chicanos (Mexican Americans). ([www.history.com](http://www.history.com))

Lampe defines the term Hispanic in his book entitled *Mexican Americans: A Sociological Introduction* as follows. The term Hispanic (or Latino) refers to a wide range of ethnic groups, including Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and others, each having their own history, identity, and culture. (Lampe04)

Lampe declares that Hispanics are an umbrella to many origins, it contains different peoples from different identities and cultures. Despite the fact that Hispanics or as they named Chicanos are representing the largest part of American population they were represent the largest and fastest growing ethnic minority group in USA, but they have less attention politically, economically, socially, educationally .... etc.

Ethnic Identity is a psychological term, which consists of minorities people that may defined as an aspect of a person's self-concept that constructs the person's self-awareness, sense of

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belonging, and membership in a social group. It is a complex psychological process which determines how individuals think about themselves through their cognition and perceptions. (ibid. p20)

Literature shows that there is a bridge between Ethnic identity and Genre, those two concepts build up the conventions which are established as a result of a society's values, practices, and traditions. (ibid. p38)

Identity creation among ethnic minorities is becoming an increasingly important subject of research, and when gender is factored in, the process becomes much more complicated, however since the issue of ethnic identity which is the impact of ethnic minorities is highlighted it becomes considered as an important qualifier of the relationship between two independent variables which are gender and ethnicity, those variables serve the role of mechanism which consists with women from ethnic minorities self-awareness and identity formation. (ibid p44)

Chicanas are an example for gender and ethnic identity formation, through their experience in the United States, they were discriminated according to their historical and cultural heritage, they were treated according to their ethnicity and they were living in a society that built upon mythical constructions of gender roles which paralyzed the consciousness of women and weakening their process of identity formation. (ibid)

The Chicana feminism is a mirror of the issue of Gender and Ethnic Identity, this wave of feminism has emerged after the civil rights movement during the 1960s where the Chicano minority raised and began calling for their rights, at this time Chicanas feminists raised the feminist consciousness by rebelling against the tradition standards of patriarchal societies, they were trying to bring a sharp shift to transform their culture in order to ban the oppression toward women in which they trying to create the concept of womanhood where women are

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expected to be weak , innocent , and obey their men in all aspects of life , hence the aim of Chicana feminists is to gain equality in the outer world and fulfill their individuality and freedom by breaking the boundaries of gender and ethnic identity. ([www.cliohistory.org](http://www.cliohistory.org))

later on Chicana realize that it is difficult to gain freedom in such traditions and societies, which does not support women and does not believe in them, they come to understand that this is a collective problem which needs to be solved in organizations to direct their own destiny. Literature was a tool that helps Chicanas to express their selves and make their voice heard, chicanian writers were influenced by the work of Virginia wolf “a room of one’s own “, such as Sandra Cisneros who is one of the most famous chicanian authors who defend the rights of the oppressed Chicanas. (ibid)

Patriarchy is a hardship that faces women in general, especially those women of minority groups such as Chicanas who suffered a lot from this issue. Patriarchy has long been embedded in Western culture. In its historical context, its roots go back to the ancient Greeks, who betted gender discrimination by declaring the superiority of men over women. They used to prevent women from attaining their full potential. In the centuries that followed, some philosophers and scientists carried on the same gender discrimination (Bressler171).

Within the women's movement, the notion of patriarchy has been utilized to examine the concepts that underpin women's oppression. The concept is not novel in and of itself. It has a long history with feminist philosophy, having been employed by women such as Virginia Woolf, the Fabian Women's Group, and Vera Brittain. Max Weber, an anti-Marxist sociologist, used it as well (Weber13)

Patriarchy is concerned with historical and cross-cultural variances in gender inequality, as well as distinctions between women, particularly in respect to ethnicity, in order to provide a

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critical examination of some of the uses of the notion of patriarchy within modern feminist discourse. (ibid)

It has a long history of use among social scientists, including Weber, who used the term to describe a form of governance in which males governed society through their roles as family heads. The dominance of younger men who were not family leaders was just as essential, if not more important, than the element of men's dominance over women through the household in this usage. Patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices in which men oppress, dominate, and exploit women. (Julliet50)

The concept of patriarchy which has been developed within feminist writings, has defined by Millett as it is not a single or simple concept, but has a whole variety of different meanings. At the most general level patriarchy has been used to refer to male domination and to the power relationships by which men dominate women. radical women's activist journalists (feminist) like Kate Millett, who have centered exclusively upon the framework of male mastery and female subordination, She states that there's a fundamental division between men and ladies which includes connections of mastery and subordination without clarifying what it is approximately the organization of all human social orders which leads to the institutionalization of such control connections and to the distinctive shapes which male mastery and female subordination expect in numerous social orders. (Millett06)

In addition to that Julliet uses patriarchy to refer to the employments of patriarchy that allude to family relationship frameworks in which men trade ladies, and to the typical control which fathers have inside these frameworks, and the results of this control for the” interiorized psychology of women “(Julliet402).

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Eisenstein characterizes patriarchy as sexual progression which is showed within the woman's part as mother, household worker and shopper inside the family. (ibid)

Patriarchy is considered as the meta-ideology that has spawned all of the social institutions under the direct influence of men, and is the source of the majority of the major social ills around the world, from wars and global conflict to gender relationships and domestic violence. It permeates and radiates from religious, educational, political, and economic systems and the interpersonal relationships, but primarily it emanates from the arrogantly self-assumed superiority of men. (Lang AG26)

The patriarchal family is the social space that is typically scrutinized and deconstructed in the literature of Chicanas, those families which positions women in subordinate and marginal spheres. It is linked to the questioning of identity in terms of family, surroundings, place, and community. In fact, the very representation of the rearrangement of roles within the family constitutes a challenge to the tradition of strong family domains constructed in the literature of Chicano writers whose fiction focuses upon the reconstruction of traditions and beliefs by rearranging gender roles. (ibid)

This fact that pushes Chicana writers to focus on contemporary family structures, thus perhaps helps explain shifts in the constitution of gender and family identities in their texts. The very construct or notion of family fragmentation with a reordering of spheres and roles, the representation of the increasing recruitment of women, and the rendering of single-women households dismantle the traditional construct of women within patriarchal spaces, where they were positioned as housewives and mothers. ([www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com))

This is an evidence, for example, in the representation of women as inferior than men neither a housewife nor a mother, but rather an artist with the sexual freedom to choose and even seduce

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her partners, a new positioning that does. However, find itself somewhat at odds with the woman's desire in a stable relationship, a more traditional arrangement, even as she comes to grips with the contingency of any sexual relation. (ibid)

### 1.2.3 SIMON DE BEAUVOIR “SECOND SEX”

Simon De Beauvoir is an influential French writer and existentialist philosopher. whose work is widely known today “*The Second Sex*” represented the customs of sexism that controlled society and history. It articulates sex gender discrimination and its impact, it would be considered as an attempt to confront human history from a feminist perspective. she aims to reevaluate values by challenging inherited or socially established notions pertaining, among others, to gender and power. Beauvoir, may aid in the de-essentialization and de-naturalization of the concept of Women on her famous claim: “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman. “(De Beauvoir283)

By this claim Simon illustrates that Women are not born women, they become women, according to a new twist. It is a logical extension of the proofs de Beauvoir provides in her book, which argue that femininity is not based on biological, psychological, or intellectual distinctions. Femininity, on the other hand, is a product of civilization, reflecting not fundamental differences between men and women, but disparities in their circumstances. She was implying that women tend to accept men's perceptions of what a woman is.

Beauvoir may both accept the weight of social construction, including gender in her account of women as "in situation" subjects. But refuse to reduce the self to an effect in the construction of the self. She can give the self a certain amount of autonomy in order to keep crucial concepts like political action accountability, and self-oppression while still recognizing the genuine restrictions on autonomous subjectivity imposed by oppressive settings.

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In another situation De Beauvoir states:

“If her functioning as a female is not enough to define woman, if we decline also to explain her through “the eternal feminine,” and if nevertheless we admit, provisionally, that women do exist, then we must face the question: what is a woman? . . . The fact that I ask it is in itself significant. A man would never get the notion of writing a book on the peculiar situation of the human male. But if I wish to define myself, I must first of all say, “I am a woman”; on this truth must be based all further discussion. “(De Beauvoir15)

Here She is pointing out the limitations of defining woman solely, on the basis of her biological functions or a wide definition of the "eternal feminine." And that men are held up as models, whilst women are viewed as second-class citizens. As well de Beauvoir advances her argument, she makes the bold claim that Men and women should always be defined as humans first and foremost, and "woman" does not exist as a broad category.

De Beauvoir discussed the issue of patriarchy societies and men superiority, she states that men are feel superior than women without any excuses, this idea is coming out of them and it is not proved, whereas they change the reality according to their own perspective, as she states: “Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men; they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with absolute truth.” (De Beauvoir143)

According to De Beauvoir gender is a characteristic of identity, which is increasingly acquired. However, woman’s historic destiny has prohibited her from developing into a self-awareness as an autonomous ontic unit and agent. Since De Beauvoir has a link to existentialism, we may relate her point of view to the existentialist idea of blank state, in which the person has no identity but it is created for him, she represents this idea on women ‘s identity

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that created by men, it means that women are in the blank state whereas their identities are formed by their environment. (ibid)

As long as Simon is an outstanding second wave feminism activist, she tackles the issue of the formation of women identity and female consciousness as one of feminism's primary concerns from ancient times to contemporary analytical studies, identity and related words have been contentious issues in philosophical and social contexts. Identity as ambiguous as it is, has a wide range of connotations and sparks heated disputes. She emphasizes the impact of socially imposed gender roles on gender identity formation. The notion of female essence, which is strongly tied to bodily anatomy and sexual qualities, is questioned from this perspective. (ibid. p145)

De Beauvoir maintains that it is impossible to compare male and female "character" without taking into account the vast variations in their circumstances, and in her second book, "*Woman's Life Today*," she focuses on the accurate physical realities of this predicament. She depicts feminine growth through the stages of childhood, adolescence, and sexual initiation. Her purpose is to show that women are formed by a thousand external processes rather than being born "feminine." She demonstrates how, at each step of her upbringing, a girl is conditioned into accepting passively the rules imposed by men.

De Beauvoir brings a shift in writing by presenting her own perspective, which has a reflection on many authors productivity where they adapt her thoughts to represent feminist issues, such as rebelling against community which portrays women as different and reliant on men, and which attributes inferiority and imperfection to womanhood where any attempt by women to interrogate the patriarchal structures of their local communities becomes equated with betrayal. (ibid)

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Mexican -American people or as they called Chicano, those people who represents a large part of the American population has a long historical roots, however they were oppressed until their emergence as a minority through The Civil Rights Movement, that gives them birth and the opportunity to express their selves through many ways. The most famous way is literature by which they create their own genre of literature that used as a mean of transmission for their voice. (*www.britannica.com*)

### 1.2.4 Chicanas Literature and Psycho-Feminism

In economic, political, and social elements of their lives, Latin American women are subjected to abuse by men. Because of conventional gender roles and the notion that women must be soundless and subservient, their battle for equality is frequently met with hostility, with their identities being dismissed or even demonized. Most Latin American women's activist works. On the other hand, effectively participate in the women's rights movement by giving modern images of women and their roles in society while destroying stereotyped "ideals" of women. (*www.cepal.org*)

Sandra Cisneros, Cristina Peri Rossi, and Elena Poniatowska are Latin American authors who make sense of their worlds and the intricacies, inconsistencies, and diverse experiences that describe their lives. Their literary works also brought attention to the domestic abuse that women face, highlighting the problem and emphasizing that it should be addressed by the entire society. As a result, writing became a subversive act in a woman's fight for self-liberation from patriarchal society, as well as a movement to reclaim her own identity and worth. As well as they dedicate their writings to portray the harsh situation of Chicanas in patriarchal societies , this genre of writing matches to the Psycho\_ Feminism lenses , as it attempting to describe what is women and what is their role in society , this idea is highly discussed in psychoanalysis issues

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especially by Freud who composes that “psychoanalysis does not attempt to depict what a lady is that would be a errand it may barely perform but sets approximately enquiring how she comes into being, how a lady creates out of a child with a promiscuous mien. (Freud112)

In this passage Freud declares that psychoanalysis is intends to not describe what is women, rather it focuses on the development of women from childhood to adolescence, the same idea is tackled by Erik Erikson who explains the development stages in his theory and he highlights the issue of identity crisis that could face many women of minorities. This issue is embodied on Chicano people especially on women who raised in patriarchal societies where they could not define their selves and form their identities through their development age stage. (ibid)

The feminist Simon De Beauvoir her thoughts correlates with the mentioned ideas, where she said “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.” (De Beauvoir283). De Beauvoir emphasizes that a man never begins by establishing himself as an individual of a certain sex, meaning that women are obliged to be a woman not in its literal meaning rather in other way which is being powerless, silenced, dominated, dependent. Thus leads to limit her role to be only a mother and housewife in other words being a property of man. (De Beauvoir283)

Psychoanalytic feminism is an oppression theory that argues men have an innate desire to dominate women. Men's urge to dominate women and women's minimal resistance to servitude have their origins in the human mind. This branch of feminism seeks to benefit perception into how our psychic lives expand that allows you to higher apprehend and alternate women's oppression. The sample of oppression is likewise incorporated into society, as a consequence developing and maintaining patriarchy. Through the application of psychoanalytic strategies to analyzing variations among men and women, in addition to the methods wherein gender is constructed, it is miles viable to reorganize socialization patterns on the early ranges of human

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life. This concept is a combination between psychoanalysis and feminism theories which give birth to Chicanas writings, it helps them to defend their rights and create their voice and make it heard, as a consequence this concept may be used as an analytic tool to their writings. (Biana22)

### Conclusion

Chicano literature is the corpus of work created by citizens and residents of the United States of Mexican heritage, for whom ethnicity is an important aspect of their literary sensibility, and for whom portraying their ethnic experience is a primary priority of their art. It may also be demonstrated that the Chicano novel's purposes in the 1980s will be primarily critical and ideological.

This is not to say that the Chicano novel must just express a set of beliefs. Rather it means that the Chicano novel as an ideological machinery, represents the imagined ways in which historical men and women experience reality. Its main goal will be to demonstrate how men and women live in a class society, and how the values, beliefs, and ideas that bind them to their social roles prohibit them from gaining a true understanding of society as a whole.

Individually and as a genre, the Chicano novel will continue to confront and overcome the confining assumptions that have shaped its trajectory in many situations. This epistemological philosophy of reflection is logically sterile, and the goal of the Chicano novel in the future decade will not be simply to show, describe, or communicate a certain alien reality or even a certain vision of reality.

Instead, it will be used to reveal theme figures' agency in the process of demystifying the old world and creating a new one. The literary developments represented in the works of many Chicanian authors such as Sandra Cisneros in her well known work *The House On Mango Street*, where she portrays the daily life, traditions, customs, beliefs, and women position.

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Through her novel to give the full image about her culture to the reader, she focuses the most on the feminine characters by depicting their struggles with patriarchy, and their attempts of identity formation.

Cisneros's work is criticized by many critical thoughts and literary theories mainly by the Psychosocial theory of The Development Stages by Erik Erikson, in addition to the tenets of Gender Roles, Patriarchal Oppression, and Ethnic Identity. Along with the light of the of the feminist pillar Simon De Beauvoir with her book of "*Second Sex*" that sheds the light on the issue of female oppression and patriarchy.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

**HOME AS A SENSE OF BELONGING TO  
CHICANA IDENTITY IN SANDRA CISNEROS'**

***THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET***

## **Chapter Two: HOME AS A SENSE OF BELONGING TO CHICANA IDENTITY IN SANDRA CISNEROS' *THE HOUSE ON MANGO STREET***

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This chapter is the practical part of this dissertation. Thus, Sandra Cisneros's protagonist Esperanza, the point around which analysis is based on. It is to be explored by views of the psychosocial theory of Erik Erikson, and in the light of critical view of Simone De Beauvoir ingrained in her important book *The Second Sex*, with the tenets of Gender Roles, Patriarchal Oppression, and Ethnic Identity. To clarify how the social and physical environment in the novel *The House on Mango Street*, written by Sandra Cisneros, affects the protagonist's home and the value of house upon the detection and acceptance of social and feminine identity progress, and change from a negative and reliant perspective to a good one and independent one.

The analysis of the social and physical environments based on an in-depth reading. Throughout the narrative, including the final worth of property, she assists in determining and monitoring the value of home to the protagonist, by highlighting the main issues that characterized the style of writing of Sandra Cisneros, which is reflected on her protagonist character Esperanza Cordero that resulted the formation of feminine independent identity.

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### 2.1 Esperanza and the value of Home:

Home is a material or physical place, this place is where the person lives in, but it does not require belonging, it might be considered only as a location. However, the real home is an emotional refuge and source of protection where the person feels the belonging. This idea is clarified by Esperanza as she stated: "A home in the heart ..... a house made of heart" (Cisneros 41)

In *The House On Mango Street*, the core of this work is house, home, and street. According to Ivy: those items appear not only in the title, but also in the themes of innocence, optimism, identity, gender, and class. In their own ways, the book centers around the symbol of home., those themes might be expressed through the opening and the ending of the novel where the narrator opens with a description of the living places where her family used to live in, and she ends up with the same statement but with different perspective. (Ivy04)

In this regard Esperanza says:

"We didn't always live on mango street. Before that we lived on Loomis on the third floor, and before that we lived on Keeler. Before Keeler it was Paulina, **and before that I can't remember. But what I remember most is moving a lot.**" (Cisneros 03)

In another situation, she declares: "... But what I remember most is Mango Street, sad red house, the house I belong but do not belong to." (Cisneros 109)

This claims shows that Esperanza does not live in Mango street before, but it is the first home which her family owned and where her story is going on. House is a symbol that represents Esperanza's hope, freedom, pride, dreams, desires, life. while it does not represent Esperanza's belonging. Wen stated that a "house" and a "home," according to Esperanza, are

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two different things. She refers to her house as a real entity different from what she imagines to be a "home" in her dreams. *The house on Mango Street* is not Esperanza's home of dreams, it is tight with no play yard, sad red house in a poor street. (Wen12)

In this case Ivy comments at first, she uses the pronoun "we" while talking of their ideal home, but as the story progresses, she primarily uses the pronoun "I," instilling an innate understanding of the significance of being independent from her parents and the rest of the town. (Ivy06)

Esperanza describes the house by saying: "... it's not the house we'd thought we'd get. .... But the house on Mango Street is not the way they told it at all. "(Cisneros03-04)

The claim declares that Esperanza was shocked about the house which breaks down her dreams, she was disappointed because the house is the opposite to what her parents have told her. Careri, Elisabeth says Esperanza's body is imprinted in the area she lives and covers, but her look, the directions she chooses, and her motions inscribe these locations, assigning value and meaning while constructing them, all of which are the outcome of the link between space and subjectivity. House symbolizes the instability of the life of Esperanza's family, in addition to that it represents.

Ivy stated that A Mexican-American family's take on the "American dream." They come to America to establish a better life for themselves, and this is accomplished by changing residences until they no longer have to relocate, which is one of the most major milestones completed. (Ivy03)

Esperanza as an innocent child dreamt of house of her heart, of her dreams but later on through the process of her coming of age she starts to be more conscious about the realities around her, she realizes that they will not leave the house which is in contradiction with her

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expectations, she says: "I knew then I had to have a house. A real house. One I could point to. But this isn't it. The House on Mango Street isn't it. For the time being. Mama says. Temporary, says papa. But I know how those things go." (Cisneros05)

She discovers that it will be last longer and that she cannot leave it, but she still determines that home is about being together as a family. In this regard Ivy states that with the understanding of her "otherness," Esperanza's knowledge of her "otherness" grows, and she begins to communicate in a variety of voices and perspectives. (Ivy02)

Feeling powerless made her feel disempowered, prompting her to seek out her own social identity, as she wishes to develop a social identity that will make her proud. Esperanza makes a difference between house and home, she points that house is only a physical place where people only live, it is only a place that considered as a location, whether home is where the person feels that he is mentally and emotionally stable, it is the place where the person does belong to, as well as Esperanza being more aware. Wen says she is constructing a house within herself. It's a personal emotional space she can call her own. On Mango Street, the location is nowhere to be located. (Wen11)

Esperanza does not fulfill her dream about the house of her heart, this is the case for all women on Mango Street, wherein house is representing the cage where women of minorities who live in patriarchal conditions are prisoned in, it also represents the boundaries of women that settled by the dominance of men. All women in the barrio<sup>1</sup> has a sense of home that shaped by their cultural environment which does not represents them , their real houses are outside Mango street where they do not reach , so they kept them in their hearts . For Esperanza her real home is in her stories that she kept in her mind through those stories she can live her dreams, go

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<sup>1</sup> a part of a city where poor, mainly Spanish-speaking people live, neighborhood .

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beyond her situation, dream about future, and leave Mango Street. Esperanza recognizes that this is the only path to her real home is by education and writing. (ibid)

As Wen says Esperanza acquires an understanding of what her ideal home will be by observing and internalizing everything around her. She appears to take everything in and process it to make it fit or not fit into her worldview. Her inner monologue is always commenting on the nature of everything in her environment. In her realizations of other people's futility and sorrow, she finds truth. She observes their lives and vows to herself that she will not follow in their footsteps. (Wen10)

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### 2.2 In search for Identity in *The House On Mango Street*:

*The House On Mango Street* is an exploratory collection of vignettes chronicling the development of a nascent writer named Esperanza from childhood to adolescence. This central protagonist witness's psychic, sexual, and economic crisis in the lives of those around her, as a result of which she consciously cultivates self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and self-esteem, which builds her confidence in the future.

In light of her interactions and experiences with residents on Mango Street Bloom Harold states that Esperanza starts form her longing for a home in a way that is both honest and heartfelt." She recognizes that this is necessary in order for her true self to emerge. Her dream home. On the other hand, has to be her own. And: "Not a man's house. Not a daddy's" (Cisneros108).

Through this living situation Esperanza explores three principle wishes, that are a desire to move away from her impoverished neighborhood, her objective to turn into writer, what's more, in particular, her longing to build up a singular personality. Esperanza sees her home as an exacting portrayal of her character. She reviews how a Nun responded to her living space on Loomis Street: "You live there?" Esperanza cringes:

"There. I had to look to where she pointed—the third floor, the paint peeling, wooden bars Papa had nailed on the windows so we wouldn't fall out. You live there? The way she said it made me feel like nothing. There. I lived there. I nodded" (Cisneros05).

By this coincidence Esperanza points to herself, displaying her own poverty and embarrassment, as she points to the broken-down third-floor apartment. As a result, she wishes to point to a different house and a different self. Esperanza's desire for a real house redirects her

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need to be considered as a real person in mainstream society, to be treated with respect, and to live freely and creatively.

Esperanza as a member of Mango Street, she was afraid from her fate as the other women over there whose identities are controlled and formed by their men. Esperanza were afraid and disgusted from women around her she describes what happened in there and how women are suffering.

Surprisingly, the women of Mango Street are also isolated. Women lean out of windows, women who are unable to leave their homes, women who are literally or figuratively imprisoned in their homes, inhabit the neighborhood. Marin cannot come to light of her house because she has to babysit all day: "but she stands in the doorway a lot" (Cisneros23-24). Rafaela who is: "getting old from leaning out the window so much, gets locked indoors because her husband is afraid Rafaela will run away since she is too beautiful to look at" (Cisneros79).

Sally has to go directly home after school, to a: "house can't come out from" (Cisneros82). Minerva" has many troubles, but the big one is her husband who left and keeps leaving" (Cisneros85). He was confining her to the home by leaving her to raise two children all by herself. In short women in Mango Street are restricted, confined, isolated, prisoned at homes by their men, where the house signifies not the space contentment rather a place of sorrow.

Thomas states that Sandra Cisneros' main character Esperanza is individuated in *The House on Mango Street*, both from unflattering pictures of herself in the mass media and from restrictive expectations of her cultural heritage. As a result, Esperanza is able to emphasize herself as an individual and more importantly, as an artist. (Thomas08).

Esperanza acquires the need of putting away her worries of male doctrine to find a self through art in the vignette "A *Smart Cookie*. " Esperanza's mother is an example of someone

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who is conscious of her oppression but also recognizes how to escape it. Esperanza says of her mother, "She can speak two languages: She can sing an opera... But she doesn't know which subway train to take to get downtown. I hold her very tight while we wait for the right train to arrive" (Cisneros90).

Esperanza learns to define herself in this way. Even though Esperanza is prohibited in, she has a mother who can lead her out. Her mother is an example of a lady who is interested in the arts, in activities that are more than just survival routines. (Wen04).

In this occasion Esperanza declares that her mother has many abilities and talents as well as she can sing opera, thus, she is a skillful artist. She also can speak more than one language which help her to communicate. Her mother is a mark of how she is capable to express the aspects of her own identity within the restrictions of her environment. She struggles to raise and appreciate art. However: "Now she draws with a needle and thread" (Cisneros90).

Wherever alongside the mother's abandonment of art, her abandonment of the interior struggle to identify what is significant, what is essential, in order to function as a housewife. On the other hand, Esperanza still acquires from her mother's case that art is self-expression, and self-expression is only coming from a person with a solid self, autonomous of any oppressive, external effects. (Wen15)

Ramirez claims that Another important impact on the development of individual identity is parents and family members. As well as Esperanza affected a lot by her mother's life style and experience, thus push her to look for change as possible as she can. (Ramirez09)

Esperanza's main objective is to be an independent person who makes her own decisions, a desire fueled by her views of the many confined and weak people on Mango Street. This desire is tangibly expressed by her fantasy of a new house in a different location - at first, it is a house

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for her family, but at the end of the story, it is a house that she owns alone and can write in. She also demonstrates her desire for autonomy by attempting to change her name to something more representative of the real her. (ibid)

In terms of femininity and gender, *The House on Mango Street* also depicts individuality and autonomy. The novel is about a Chicana's coming of age, and it portrays the challenges of forging a feminine identity in the midst of agony and injustice. In terms of gender, Esperanza desires to be adored by men, but she also does not like to become caged woman, like the preponderance of her married female neighbors. Esperanza's ultimate ambitions are to have her own home, master writing, and escape Mango Street, and it is through these that she will be capable to achieve her own identity and autonomy. (ibid)

According to Ramirez Childhood and early adolescent events have a significant impact on identity formation. Cisneros makes it apparent from the start of *The House on Mango Street* that external events have an impact on Esperanza's dual personality. Cisneros clearly declares that the external factors affect Esperanza's search of identity, the major factor is living conditions of women in Mango Street and the rituals of patriarchy. (ibid. p10)

Esperanza has a tough time making *The house on Mango Street* her home. If it has the ability to effect views and visions like Bachelard claims that Esperanza's desire to move away from Mango Street is understandable. She isn't interested in the associations that come with residing in that home. According to Bachelard:"a house is a collection of images that provide humankind with proofs or illusions of stability. Nevertheless, this is not the case with Esperanza: she does not sense that she has that stability. Thus she desires to move into a house of her own. She enlightens in the vignette: "*A House of My Own*" that she wants "Only a house quiet as snow, a space for [herself] to go, clean as paper before the poem" (Cisneros 108).

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She desires a house to catch her individuality as well as her creativity. Bachelard also points out that It's a wonderful dream to live alone. For it is a hope that, at life's darkest moments, is shared by everyone, both strong and weak, in defiance of men's and fate's injustices. Esperanza wishes a house that is “not a flat. Not an apartment in back. Not a man’s house. Not a daddy’s” home in order to upheaval against the injustices of both poverty and the patriarchal society within her father’s house and her community especially on Mango Street. (Bachelard10)

*The House on Mango Street* is a reflection of Esperanza Cordero’s identity, all members and events over there have molded Esperanza’s identity and serves as bridge that helps her in exploring her own identity exclusively her feminine identity.

### 2.3 Feminine Ordeal VS Textual Representation of the Oppressed Chicanas

“The boys and the girls live in separate worlds. The boys in their universe and we in ours. My brothers for example. they ‘ve got plenty to say to me and Nenny inside the house. But outside they can’t be seen talking to girls. Carlos and Kiki are each other’s best friends ..... Not ours. “(Cisneros 12). Esperanza says.

According to Esperanza’s claim it is obvious that Chicana women were aware of their oppressed condition, such as there is inequity and a double standard at all levels of the women's predicament, they recognized that they are exploited in their relations with men where The man elevates himself by ascribing to himself the superior position of being the primary provider of household necessities, by neglecting the existence of women in all aspects of life. Here is where the patriarchal ideology fulfills its role. Men are Justifying their act by Women are placed in a low position due to their biological, mental, and psychological inadequacies. For women no woman escapes that position of inferiority.

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In patriarchal societies, the absolute reality is that All women regardless of race or social position, are subjected to some form of subordination or discrimination. Exploitation has occurred according to gender and culture. However, all women of minorities are treated as sinful because they born as women. This idea is discussed by De Beauvoir who claims "One is not born but rather becomes a woman" (De Beauvoir283). It means that women are not born as women but they are created to be in this position, in other words being woman does not mean that you are inferior and weak. De Beauvoir believe in equality of genders, she maintains that there are no differences between men and women. women need just opportunities to prove their selves, women can compete men if they offered chances. (De Beauvoir283)

Women of minorities come to understand and recognize that their inferior position is accepted, this acceptance is due to a large part of patriarchal ideology's influence, which has justified and rationalized the acceptance of that subjection. And they take the responsibility to transmit this ideology to their children by rising them with the principle of preserving the values inherent in the patriarchal ideology. The exploitation of women becomes "natural." and a social situation which is accepted by Chicanas.

All women in Mexican American families are well-thought-out as victims of patriarchy, this external factor has affected the identity of Chicanas resulting inner effects, according to Snow, Identity is divided into two parts: the visible outside world, which includes all interactions with people, and the hidden inner world, which includes emotions and dreams."(Snow06)

Anzaldua states that The ambiguity created by the collision of voices causes mental and emotional confusion. Insecurity and indecisiveness are the outcome of internal turmoil. According to this restlessness, Chicana woman does not know correctly where she belongs.

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Their acquiescence becomes a tragedy which results them a psychological disaster and internal devastation this effects lead them to the loss of personal identity. (Anazaldual7)

As a reaction to the living conditions and the position of Chicanas in Mexican American families and societies, many Chicano authors have portrayed this fundamental issue in their works, they describe the state of women through their characters and the textual representation within their fictions. Sandra Cisneros is a famous figure who defends Chicanas rights, she succeeded in the depiction of the tragedy of Chicanas in her novel *The House On Mango Street* through the experience of Esperanza Cordero who expresses all Chicanas. (ibid)

Sandra Cisneros in *The House On Mango Street*, exhibits an approach to identity through the protagonist Esperanza Cordero who creates a progressive identity from her childhood to adolescence, she negotiates history and culture with her relationship to both which is a fluid and progressive notion of Chicana identity. Esperanza narrates a short stories from her experience portraying the daily life in the Chicago neighborhood, Esperanza discusses her experiences and views in the vignettes; these stories can be identified as an overt process of negotiating various aspects of one's life using languages that transcend geopolitical borders. (ibid)

This is an extension to Erik Erikson psychosocial developmental theory as mentioned by Schultz and Schultz it can be used throughout one's life, with a greater emphasis on companionship and social effects over sexual needs. He claims that a person's dedication to the world around them is what drives them and determines their actions. This hypothesis describes the interaction between the infant, the family, and the environment. (Schultz and Schultz05)

Through a close reading to Esperanza 's stories the reader recognizes that Cisneros put an importance to the text more than the reference in which she creates an intertextuality between the English language and the Spanish language by including some Spanish words within the text

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to pass her native identity through English language for example.: (Barrio, tamales, abuelito .... etc.). The use of Spanish and English in conversation, engaging in a hybrid language which is a part of ethnic identity, this called "Spanglish" that is currently recognized as a legitimate variety of Chicano English.

Cisneros includes her experience for a specific cultural purpose which is self-identification and empowerment through Esperanza who considered as a mirror to all Chicanas. Despite the fact that Esperanza is existing in a Spanish-speaking community, little Esperanza's identity is pull out between her English tongue which offered to her by the Catholic school and the Chicago context and her traditional roots in the Spanish-speaking domain.

Although she is living in a Spanish speaking surrounding but she chooses to stick in the English language out of Chicago neighborhood, this point illustrates that both Cisneros and her character Esperanza are escaping from Spanish to English to prove their selves as English writers and independent women. In this case Esperanza says:

"In English my name means hope. In Spanish it means too many letters. it means sadness, it means waiting. it is like the number nine. Amuddy color. It is the Mexican records my father plays on Sunday mornings when he is shaving, songs like sobbing." (Cisneros 10).

Esperanza's saying display that Cisneros and by extension her character Esperanza are placing the English language on the positive side unlike Spanish, as she provides the Spanish meaning of her name as a negative connotation to her identity whereas the English meaning is positive and delightful. Even though her name means traditions, ancestral legacy connection, belonging, and identity, but she rejects this connection, by the disapproval of the Spanish meaning of her name.

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Cisneros select her diction in a stupendous way in which she provides an adjective that present the position and the situation of Chicana those adjectives narrates about their oppression and discrimination. As Esperanza mentions: "My great – grandmother. ...., a wild horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry until my great- grandfather threw a sack over her head and carried her off. .... she looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow ..... She sorry because she couldn't be all the things she wanted to be. Esperanza. I have inherited her name, but I don't want to inherit her place by the window. "(Cisneros 13)

Esperanza defines her grandmother as a wild horse who does not want to marry, but she forced to, as a result she cannot achieve all what she was desire to be, Esperanza adds that she inherited her grandmother's name but she does not want to inherit her passive place on the window, in addition to that Esperanza mentioned that all women are taking the same place on the window as her grandmother.

Her language demonstrates her unhappiness about undisputable fate, the reason why she desires to create a new identity far away from her grandmother's footsteps, she keep portraying the horrifying reality of the dependent women who she may consider them as a slaves to their husbands she declares that through the story of her friend sally: "Sally says she likes being married because now she gets to buy her own things when her husband gives her money. she is happy, .... and he doesn't like her look out the window ..... She sits at home because she is afraid to go outside without his permission. "(Cisneros101-102)

Esperanza insists that all women in the neighborhood are confronting the same fate, they live dependently rather autonomously. Abalos indicated that Women were denied the right to be physically alone, the right to go away to renew themselves (isolation), denied any autonomy

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(autonomy), and ironically, forbidden to rebel in any way (incoherence) lest it cast a shadow on the family image of contentment. Latina women were traditionally raised to feel ashamed and worthless if they disobeyed authority. (Abalos13)

According to Rivera It is obvious that if Esperanza accepts it as her fate in life, she is adhering to the dominant culture's concept of who she is says the author. In other words, if she decides to stay in her neighborhood, she will never have the fortuitous to breakdown the cycle of the current living conditions. she decides to create a new identity that breaks down the norms of her restricted society. (Rivera26)

Abalos in his chapter "*A Theory of Transformation*," asserts the failure of Latina women and Latino men to succeed in our society has severely harmed their self-identity. The prevailing culture's perspective on them distorts their self-image. As well as Esperanza decides to create her own world with her own rules. By this saying she proves that. "Not a flat. Not an apartment in back. Not a man's house. Not a daddy's. A house all my own "(Cisneros108). She decides to create a house of her own far away from men dominance, whereas a house of her own means her own identity. (Abalos14)

### **2.4 Towards The Assertion of Feminine Identity**

As mentioned before, Sandra Cisneros represents the struggles of women who live in Mexican American community, through her character Esperanza Cordero who she follows her identity development from childhood to adolescence. Esperanza reveals the struggle of women pursuing their identity in a mixed culture community that governed by traditional patriarchal Mexican culture, and a new melted culture where they could not classify their selves and could not balance the two sides, because of that Esperanza attempts to act as bridge between her

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Mexican culture and the introduced culture, the American culture she challenges to make a connection between both sides through the stages of her quest for identity.

*The House On Mango Street* portrays the Mexican American community standards in which The boy becomes a man by gaining self-sufficiency and then taking his due place as a community leader, whereas the girl must give up her freedom and feeling of uniqueness in order to become a wife and mother in the community. Thus Cisneros creates the character of Esperanza to challenges the traditions and break the boundaries by creating an identity for herself that allows her to take charge of her own destiny while maintaining a strong connection to her community

Throughout the novel Esperanza gives her observations about her surroundings and her society, she narrates about people, tradition, houses, traditions. At first she has mentioned those details from an innocent childish view since she was a child. For Esperanza her family as well as the people living on the Mango Street, those who have left their motherland have their traditional culture deep rooted in their collective unconsciousness, so that they can never get rid of their own culture and totally adapt to the American culture. They keep struggling in the cracks between the two cultures.

After Esperanza grows up she raises her awareness about collective identity or what is called hybrid identity, this kind of identity creates a conflict between a strong culture and a weak one, which causes intense shock in mind and tremendous disaster in spirit. Esperanza's observance is concerned toward women, she demonstrates how Chicanas are forced to the blindly abeyance to men and to stay rooted in their cultural traditions.

Cisneros represents the female Chicana identity through many character of the novel such as Esperanza's Grandmother whose dreams stolen by her husband who imprison her at

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home to be a housewife and mother only, as all women in Mexican American community, where she narrates about her and says: “she looked out the window her whole life, the way so many women sit their sadness on an elbow. I wonder if she made the best with what she got or was she sorry because she couldn’t be all things she wanted to be.” (Cisneros13)

By this quote Esperanza depicts her grandmother’s misfortune of being a woman in such traditional community, where she is restricted by her grandfather who catch her and put her in a cage that she cannot escape forever.

Marin the girl who wish to have a job downtown relying g on her feminine appearance, aiming to meet a man over there to offer her a new life better than her own. Esperanza observed her and says: “Since you always get to look beautiful and get to wear nice clothes and can meet someone in the sub way who might marry you and take you to live in a big house far away” (Cisneros21)

Here Marin declares the real reason behind her job application which is meeting a man who will save her from actual life using her femininity and her sexy appearance.

Sally Esperanza’s friend who is abused by her father, she has a horrible childhood, Sally has a lot of relationships with boys. In this regard Esperanza says: “Sally is the girl with eyes like Egypt and nylons the color of smoke. The boys at school think she’s beautiful because her hair is shiny black like raven feathers and when she laughs, she flicks her hair back like a satin shawl over her shoulders and laughs.” (Cisneros81)

Sally exploits her femininity to attract boys in order to escape her reality, she thinks that marriage will save her from her father. She expresses all her hidden dreams whom she expects that it would be realized by the man who will marry her, the man who she considers as a savior.

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Esperanza observes all women in the barrio, one of them is Rosa Vargas who considers herself as powerless because she is neglected by her husband in which Esperanza says:

“Rosa Vargas ’kids are too many and too much It’s not her fault you know, except she is their mother and only one against so many. They are bad those Vargases, and how can they help it with only one mother ..... Who cries every day for the man who left without even leaving a dollar for bologna or a note explaining how come.” (Cisneros29)

Rosa Vargas has an excessive number of children. She does not have the time or energy to worry about them all, whether they're hurting or killing themselves. It is almost as if she does not care. She feels weakness and uselessness, as if she is lost in the void without the father of her children, she thought that her strength is go with the leaving of her husband, she realized that she is nothing without a man. Rosa Vargas and all women in the barrio are victims of gender culture of patriarchy where women cannot survive without a man.

Mobility is an important factor in creating the sense of belonging, Esperanza experienced that with her family, she narrates about her own experience by saying:

“We didn’t always live on Mango Street. Before that we lived on Loomis on the third floor, and before that we lived on Keeler. Before Keeler it was Paulina, and before that I can’t remember, but what I remember most is moving a lot. Each time it seemed there’d be one more of us.” (Cisneros03)

Belonging is the first obstacle which confronts Esperanza’s identity formation, through her family moving from one place to another this creates a gap on Esperanza’s identity, wherein she could not discover her belonging and subjective identity. She struggles to cope with her community because she feels that she does not belong to them but she is obliged to cope with them, especially that she is hybrid, her mother is American while her father is Mexican, she

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influenced by her mother's culture she likes the American culture and language more than her own.

Esperanza tries to escape her root firstly by using English or as it called Spanglish (a mixture between English and Spanish language), she expresses that by rejecting the meaning of her name in Spanish while she likes the English one. She claims: "In English my name means hope, In Spanish it means too many letters. It means sadness; it means waiting." (Cisneros10)

As a child, she finds it easy to transition from her community's Spanish to her English since she is anxious to find a sense of belonging outside of her group. Moreover, Esperanza tends to change her name because she does not find it suits her and it does not present her. As a consequence, she decides to find a new name that suits her wherein she says: "I would like to baptize myself under a new name, a name more like the real me, the one nobody sees." (Cisneros11)

Her belonging does not stop here but it belonging extends to her house also wherein Esperanza does not feel that she belongs to this poor and ugly house, she believed that she deserves more than that for this reason she cannot belong. where she consists that she does not belong to this house:" I am going to tell you a story about a girl who didn't want to belong " (Cisneros109).

In another vignette she mentioned: "No, this isn't my house I say and shake my head as if shaking could undo the year I've lived here. I don't belong. I don't ever want to come from here" (Cisneros106)

Esperanza regrets her house and the barrio that she thinks that the other women are take it as a shelter to hide their weakness, they choose to be in the in-group rather that the outgroup, as

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that she decides to not follow her ancestors' footsteps, she tries to do not adhere to their traditions and ceremonies, so she takes the challenge to discover her identity by herself.

As a child, Esperanza was only observing and commenting about her surroundings and environment that she does not like at all. She feels the Otherness despite her race and gender, it means that she feels that she does not belong to her group and tries to identify herself out of it, consequently she becomes more conscious about the forces in her environment that imposes limitations and segregation, she expresses that in her narrative poetic vignettes.

Esperanza's coming of age leads her to recognize her dissatisfaction about her identity and life situation. Mark declares that through her experience she discovers her strong need for a fulfilling home, doubts about one's own identity and gender roles, and above all, the search for a good friend who can provide acceptance and understanding, later she realizes that her mind state and self-consciousness is on the foreground and that she must focus on them, as well as she starts digging inside herself to form her real identity. (Mark09)

Through the novel Esperanza grows up, she becomes more aware about herself as an adolescent and as a female, therefore she tries to be sexual and autonomous, she was reflected by her friend Sally who she is very envious of, and would like to have smoky nylons, and have black suede shoes. Esperanza sees herself as the "the ugly daughter" and sometimes settles for being the "one nobody comes for." and Marin the sexually mature girl who she considers as a lucky and attractive girl who can have a boyfriend easily, she thought that sexuality gives women a certain kind of power over men.

In the case where Esperanza talks about waking up and realizing she had hips in the vignette "*Hips.*" She says about her hips that they are like flowers blooming overnight. It was a

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new experience for which she had most likely been waiting, but it also symbolized her transformation into womanhood, which can also be interpreted as sexuality. She says:

"You gotta be able to know what to do with hips when you get them. I say making it up as I go. You gotta know how to walk with hips, practice you know like if half of you wanted to go one way and the other half the other" (Cisneros50)

Esperanza has an innocent mind, that does not allow her to think that hips is a maturation sign and she could use them attract men whereas she thinks that she needs them in walking and rocking babies. The next vignette " *The First Job* "differing from the previous one. It shows how Esperanza refuse to be sexual any more, after the shocking incident with the coworker who requests a birthday kiss Esperanza expects a simple kiss on the cheek, but she is taken aback when he turns around and kisses her on the mouth, making a mockery of her.

Esperanza was shocked and she realizes that she cannot do that, she cannot be sexual and cruel. She merely wishes to possess a home without the assistance or presence of a man in her life. She expresses that on the vignette of "A *House of My Own* : " "Not a flat. Not an apartment in back. Not a man's house. Not a daddy's. A house all my own"(Cisneros108).

She also states:" You just remember to keep writing, Esperanza. You must keep writing. It will keep you free. " (Cisneros39)

Through her long experience in the Mango Street Esperanza recognizes that the only way to escape Mango Street is by writing, which allow her travel by her thoughts far away from the barrio. In this case she says:

"I remember most is Mango Street, sad red house, the house I belong but do not belong to. I put it down on paper and then the ghost does not ache so much. I write it down and Mango says goodbye sometimes. She does not hold me with both arms. She sets me free. One day I will pack

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my bags of books and paper. One day I will say goodbye to Mango. I am too strong for her to keep me here forever. One day I will go away. "(Cisneros110)

Esperanza proves that she is stronger than Mango Street, she was proud that she does not follow her grandmother footsteps, she is delightful because she is not a victim as all women on Mango street, she can break the boundaries and rebel against the adhering traditions, she is now free and powerful. For her she leaves Mango Street emotionally, she travels through her thoughts to discover the outer world, the world she desires to belong to.

### 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter is dedicated to an analytic view of the novel *The House On Mango Street*, in the light of several theories like Feminism and Psychoanalysis. It was analyzed from a Psycho-Feminist view to prove that *The House On Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros explores the identity issues. She demonstrates how specific spatial characteristics such as home interacts and translated into the main character's identity traits. The spatial narrowness of homes and the isolation of Mango Street reflect a sense of social confinement, isolation, and subjugation of Chicano people in the U.S, predominantly Chicana girls and women as a minority people.

Cisneros delineates a significant level of interdependence between Home and identity. Focusing on the twelve-year-old character Esperanza Cordero, Cisneros shows that place or home plays an important role in Chicana perceptions of self, that is reflect the main character's most intimate feelings of displacement, isolation, and shame which evolve into her prominent identity traits such as low self-esteem, insecurity, and discontinuity.

On the other hand, the bicultural reality of the border space induces the development of hybridity and reterritorialized identities shared by all characters in the novel. Cultural hybridity generates the issue of cultural belonging, further fueling the need for identity negotiation, mainly

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through the transgression of borders. Additionally, the patriarchal organization of both domestic and public places weighs down on Chicana identities and forces Cisneros's female characters to succumb to passivity, despair, silence, and subordination. Esperanza however, chooses to battle the imposed identity restrictions that occurred through mobility, Patriarchy, and ethnicity.

In an attempt to attain more personal, cultural, and social integrity in the U.S, the main character wishes to decouple herself from Mango Street to pursue both parts of her Chicano and Anglo-American identity equally, as a consequence she chooses to be a writer in which she achieves her goals and to shape her feminine autonomous identity.

# **General Conclusion**

## General Conclusion

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Identity is a term, that has been increasingly important in literature and literary criticism, and it is a troublesome issue in a variety of contexts, particularly in literature that has been utilized by numerous authors over time. It explains how one can identify or characterize oneself as different or close to others, because the person has to achieve his sense of self, which leads him being content with his life and challenges with all variables that occur during his life to create and form his identity.

Feminine identity, is a concept that can be linked to the fulfillment of the social role of women, including aspects related to motherhood, to marital and family relations and to the practice of domestic and professional activities. For women the relationship between their vision of the universe and the influence of society on their ideas and actions shapes their sense of self.

The objective of identification and self-image is to explain how their experiences with familial ties, social pressure, community, and friendships shape who they are, rather than to interpret individual characters in the novels studied in a certain way.

Sandra Cisneros in her novel *The House On Street*, highlights the issue of identity exploration and formation through illustrating the social and cultural forces that shape and define her female character. She shows the struggles that face Chicanas to find their identities, as they were oppressed and could not rebel against their culture and tradition, as they were prisoners of their community.

The story involves a year in Esperanza's life. Esperanza goes to a house on Mango Street in a Chicago barrio, but it is still not the place she or her family dreams of, and she feels like she doesn't belong there throughout the novel.

Sandra Cisneros, suggests that Esperanza's house is more important than she is. Throughout Esperanza's coming of age process she depicts brief descriptions and observations of her

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neighbors. Moreover, some of these depictions comprises the experiences of male oppression over women in the barrio, those experiences of oppression lead to Esperanza's growing creativity and desire to write in order to realize her dream of a house of her own, which enables her to escape Mango Street. Cisneros attempts to mirror the struggles of women of minorities, more specifically Chicanas who suffer from patriarchy and many social issues that is serve as an obstacle that prevent them from decide who they are.

Our study is going around the issue of the quest for feminine identity, it is an analytic review to the current issue. Chapter one was a theoretical framework. In the first part we include the historical background of the novel and Chicano literature. On the second part we explain the methods that we worked with, which is Erik Erikson's psychosocial development stages theory, and a psycho feminist views, in the help of Simone De Beauvoir's critical views which is engrained in her famous book *The Second Sex*, and some views related to patriarchy and ethnicity.

The second chapter was the practical part, it highlighted in the first section the significance of "Home" in Esperanza's identity exploration and formation. The second part dealt with the different forms of oppression that Chicana women meet and how does Cisneros represent them, then we explain how does Esperanza confront her community rituals and defeat them by creating her own female independent identity and finding her belonging. As well as She decides to keep writing and travel with her thoughts far away from Mango Street regarding that writing is the only solution for her.

We wish that we succeed in discussing and exploring the issue of feminine identity by showing the struggles and difficulties that Chicanas suffered from, and showing the factors that prevent their identity formation. We hope that we succeed in passing the message that Cisneros

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tried to pass through her novel which is the sufferance of being a woman from minority and highlighting the importance of identity especially the feminine one.

We greatly encourage others to carry researches on Sandra Cisneros' novel, and keep digging and making researches on the issue of feminine identity. At last, we hope that our analysis would be a useful source for those who are interested in Chicana literature and the quest for feminine identity.

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## المخلص

تهدف هذه المذكرة إلى تصوير نضالات بطلة الرواية إسبيرانزا كورديرو ونساء أخريات في شارع مانجويث فشنلن في تحقيق هوياتهن في  
تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل قضية البحث عن الهوية الأنثوية من خلال رواية ساندراس سيسنيروس المنزل في شارع المانجو من خلال  
وجهة النظر النسوية لسيمون دي بوفوار في كتابها الشهير الجنس الثاني ، بالإضافة إلى النهج النفسي الاجتماعي من خلال نظرية مراحل  
تطور إريك إريكسون ، بمساعدة معتقدات أخرى. مثل النسوية النفسية ، وأدوار النوع الاجتماعي ، والاضطهاد الأبوي (البطريكية) ،  
والهوية العرقية. الفصل الأول حول الخلفيات التاريخية والإطار النظري. الفصل الثاني لتحليل مسألة تشكيل الهوية وحدودها. ونتيجة لذلك ،  
اكتشفنا أن إسبيرانزا غيرت الأنماط التقليدية للسيطرة الذكورية من خلال تحدي معتقدات مجتمعها ، من خلال كسر الحدود وإنشاء هويتها  
الخاصة من خلال الكتابة التي تسمح لها بمغادرة شارع مانجو عقلياً على الرغم من فشلها في الهروب منه جسدياً.

الكلمات المفتاحية: البطريكية (النظام الأبوي) ، القهر (الظلم) ، أدوار الجنسين ، الهوية الأنثوية.