



## RESEARCH PAPER

### Existential Reflection: Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) Caused by Excessive Existentialism in 'A Streetcar Named Desire'

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## ABSTRACT

In this paper, it is hypothesized whether Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire's* portrayal of over- existentially motivated behavior might cause or worsen BPD in Blanche DuBois. The research links literature and mental health as a way of exploring psychological disorders from an existential perspective. Thus, referring to the existentialistic paradigm of Kierkegaard which stresses freedom, choice and meaning, the paper performs the thematic analysis of the play and concludes that the links between the existential anxiety of the play's characters and the signs of BPD like affective instability and identity disorder are rather profound. Information was gathered from textual analysis of the play and theoretical mind writings with the emphasis on the concept of existential crises influencing character's machinist. What the results illustrate is how characters like Blanche are seen as existing existential anxieties comparable with BPD traits in illusions, abandonment, and mood swings. This multidisciplinary approach offers a fresh perspective on existential and mental disorder revealing an association between increased existential phobic symptoms and BPD.

**KEYWORDS** Blanche Dubois, Borderline Personality Disorder, Critical Reading, Existentialism

## Introduction

Kierkegaard argues that Existentialism is about the freedom and anxiety we feel when we understand that we are free to make decisions for ourselves without following any given norms, according to Søren Kierkegaard in his book "*The Concept of Anxiety*" (1844). Because it is our duty to pick our own path in life, this responsibility can bring us great anxiety. According to Kierkegaard, in order to live truly, we must accept this freedom and the unease it causes, as well as make the "leap of faith" to stick to our own principles and convictions in the face of life's uncertainties. Building upon the existing view of Kierkegaard the researcher is of view that with embracing and confronting this anxiety, people can learn more about their purpose and values, which in turn builds resilience and a better sense of self. Those who avoid confronting existential anxiety often encounter significant issues in their social and mental lives (Kierkegaard, 1844).

Sartre is of opinion that humans are fundamentally free to design the lives they live. Sartre believed that humans are meaningless creatures who must give their lives meaning by the decisions we make and the things we do. This freedom involves responsibility for our choices and their effects, which makes it rewarding and difficult. Many people, according to Sartre, attempt to avoid this duty by acting in "bad faith," believing that other forces control their lives. True authenticity and fulfillment, on the other hand, result from recognizing our freedom and the accompanying fear because, in the end, our decisions define who we are. In addition to Sartre's perspective, the researcher thinks

that although people have the right to make their own decisions, they shouldn't rely too much on other people or have unreasonable expectations. This dependence and unfulfilled expectations may make it more difficult for them to succeed. People can more effectively navigate their existential freedom by concentrating on their own decisions, accepting complete responsibility for their acts, and not relying on approval or assistance from others. This strategy reduces disappointment and the possible harm that results from unmet expectations, fostering a more resilient and independent search for personal fulfillment and meaning (Sartre,1943).

(Kernberg, 1975) He identifies BPD as a serious psychological condition in which patients fight with their emotions, impulses, sense of self, and relationships with others. BPD, according to Kernberg, often stems from traumatic childhood experiences and relationship with other. He also discusses the methods of coping that individuals with BPD may employ to control their emotions, such as viewing the world as entirely positive or entirely negative. Further, there are relations between pathological narcissism and BPD, it is associated with the instability of the self- images and relationships with other people. Besides the Kernberg's point of view, it is also found that reflexivity on life and future can have an effect on the Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). This viewpoint places emphasis for the existential aspect of BPD and presents a thesis postulating that introspective thinkers who ruminate about their existence, purpose and the future are likely to experience heightened levels of existential dysphoria. This can be a serious aggravation of the general symptoms of identity disorders and mood swings that are characteristic in BPD. Hence it can be suggested that existential issues can also be involved in the formation and expression of the symptoms of BPD besides the childhood experiences and interactions with the environment. These points of view majorly present the extent to which psychological, relational and existential perspectives intertwine in an effort to explain and treat BPD.

This research aims at trying to find out the possibility that an understanding of existentialism might actually increase the severity of BPD. In the play "*A Streetcar Named Desire*," characters such as Stanley Kowalski, and Blanche DuBois have symptoms of border line personality disorder such as mood swings, and impulsiveness. Most of the features of BPD, in this play, are seen through Stanley's violent behaviors and through Blanche's inability to grasp meaning. Studying how these characters react to such existential notions as freedom and meaninglessness helps one understand how psychology and the illness at that are applicable in literature.

### Literature Review

This chapter covers the theoretical structure that the researcher uses to examine general articles and data. This chapter analyses relevant literature from various theorists and critics to see how it benefits current research. This chapter covers several perspectives from scholars on how they look at and assess texts and comparative theory.

According to the play's analysis by Ghasemi, the characters rely on their dreams for that coping mechanism with regard to their existential issues where Blanche is an example. Situating this analysis, it is also pertinent to mention that Blanche's primary motive turns out to be kept busy by her fantasies to flee from her ugly reality which imposes themes of the dualism of illusion & reality as well as spiritual search. This is the core of the analysis because the audience comprehends that all the actions of Blanche are motivated by her existential fear that leads her to perdition. Essentially, this article explores the characters' inner desires that in one way or the other influence their actions, as analyzed

from a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective thus offering a psychological view of Tennessee Williams iconic drama. (Ghasemi, et al. ,2017)

Sasani and Pilever Despite the importance of the ideological dimension of the play and existential questions as the major themes, the characters' interactions and their stAKHE in particular are far from being exhausted with those aspects. Existentialism often deals with the concern of a person in search of identity and meaning in a world which may not seem to have any. Existential themes are also evident in the play when matters regarding setting are being considered for the concerns of the characters such as Blanche and Stanley are concerned with their identity, their sexual needs and the oppressive social structures that regulate their behaviors. For instance, Blanche struggles for purity in a very hostile world as demonstrated by her efforts to preserve appearances, and escaping from her past. Stanley, on the other hand, displays an assertiveness of power domination included in his character's traits in a disorderly environment, due to the search for authority and mission. The study clarifies the play's deeper philosophical roots by applying an existential lens to analyze the actions and struggles of these characters.(Sasani and Pilevar ,2017)

In the chapter "The Tragic Downfall of Blanche DuBois," L. Berkman explores how Blanche's battle with reality and identity, as well as her existential crises, ultimately led to her demise in Tennessee Williams' drama "A Streetcar Named Desire." This relates to your topic because it illustrates how Blanche has symptoms similar to Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) as a result of her obsessive attention to existential issues, like her fear of ageing and loneliness. Blanche exhibits characteristics of both BPD and existential fear, including her unstable sense of self, emotional instability, and frequent fantasy escapes. Blanche's psychological collapse might thus be attributed to her extreme existential concerns, demonstrating how profound existential problems can materialize as severe personality disorders.(Berkman,1971)

This Qanbari seeks to show that Blanche's anxiety comes from her fear of dying, which manifests in several forms such as dread of ageing, worry of her partner leaving her, and so on. She tried to protect herself from this dread by thinking that she was unique and that there would be a perfect saviour, but ultimately she failed. Blanche's incapacity to deal with reality, accept the facts of her life, and strive to avoid and conceal them led to her eventual insanity. She is guilty of ill faith, failing to live up to her true self, and rejecting her real life.Genetic and Environmental Causes of Individual Differences in Borderline Personality Disorder Features and Loneliness are Partially Shared.(Qanbari, 2017)

Schermer implies that interpersonal interactions play a role in the development and persistence of the illness, however many concerns remain to be resolved. In particular, rather than doing extensive daily measures of the dynamic contextual influences in the lives of individuals with BPD, the majority of research focuses on a limited set of stressors (such as allegations of abuse). The information that is available is biased in favor of a poor opinion of people with BPD and the people who love them. Therapies that emphasize on positive relationship components and validating oneself can be a fresh approach to therapy development. In the absence of further investigation, development of treatment, application to clinical settings, and lobbying of insurance companies, people with BPD can keep having relationship difficulties—figuratively "biting the hand that feeds them.(schermer et al.,2020)

Studies in the past investigated into existential themes in Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire," but they didn't show any relationship between these themes and BPD. While studies have explored at existentialism in the play, they haven't looked at the

idea that a severe form of existentialism might result in BPD. This research tries to fill the gap by highlighting how the play's overly existentialist characteristics can result in BPD while providing fresh insight into the relationship between existential ideas and mental health problems.

## **Material and Methods**

### **Research paradigm**

In light of this, this research employs qualitative approach and a constructivist research framework when describing the process through which people make sense of their experiences. In this study, the author attempts to present how the extreme existential crises of Blanche DuBois, the character from Tennessee Williams' play, '*A Street Car Named Desire*' result to Borderline Personality Disorder BPD. Applying closer reading and thematic analysis the paper investigates the connection between the problems of existential concern and BPD and presents new insights on how such feelings and thoughts can cause psychological issues.

### **Design of the study**

Following the deployment of a qualitative research approach, the study aims at analysing the correlation between a preposterous level of existentialism and Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) as portrayed by Tennessee Williams in "*A Streetcar Named Desire*." Secondly, in a bid to identify the research niche and provide a theoretical framework, an evaluation of the existing literature will be conducted. After that, a closer look will be made on the play with special focus on identifying language and moments that depict existential crisis of Blanche DuBois. Finally, the thematic analysis of the film will be performed to categorise existential themes and to identify how these themes contributed to the formation of BPD in the character.

### **Data Collection**

For this study, critical reading, scanning and skimming techniques were used in order to source data needed for the study. Some quotes and scenes were extracted from Tennessee Williams' "*A Streetcar Named Desire*" pay particular attention to the key scenes and dialogues with the leading character Blanche DuBois. Such information as existentialism, BPD and literary analysis of the play were collected from various related research papers, journals, and theoretical texts. The combination of primary and secondary sources provided a comprehensive foundation upon which to examine the association between hyper/productive existentialist phenotype and borderline personality disorder.

### **Data Analysis Method**

The data analysis in this study was done through a qualitative approach with particular emphasis on thematic analysis. First of all, the main text reading and secondary sources analysis enabled to outline significant topics concerning existentialism and Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). After that, these themes were sorted and categorized in the hope of finding some patterns and connections between Blanche DuBois' existential issues and expression of BPD symptoms in "*A Streetcar Named Desire*." The research tried to provide a systematic analysis of how oppressive existentialism results in emergence and manifestation of BPD in the character with references to continuous comparison and analysis of the findings.

## Framework

The concept of how intensive existentialism results in BPD can be explained by the following framework or be viewed as the big picture. It enables us explain how much thinking about existential issues could lead to the development of BPD in a person. There are concepts such as Psychological development of personality and existentialism, and search for the meaning of life. By so doing, this will help explain why people with high existential preoccupation are more likely to have diagnosis of BPD.

## Results and Discussion

I don't want realism. I want magic! Yes, yes, magic! I try to give that to people. I misrepresent things to them. I don't tell the truth. I tell what ought to be the truth. And if that is sinful, then let me be damned for it! Don't turn the light on!" (Williams,2009, P145)

These lines of Blench represent her rejection of the harsh truths of life in favor of an illusionary one, emphasizing deep existential topics that is linked to BPD. Her preference for "magic" over realism and her inability to accept realism point to a deep existential battle in which she uses her creation of a subjective world that she can control to escape the harshness and absurdity of existence. Blanche removes herself from her actual personality and her prior traumas by acknowledging that she makes up truths and creates idealized versions of reality, which reflects existential concerns about authenticity and the meaning of life. Her cries to keep the light off represent her desperate attempt to avoid facing reality, underscoring her already precarious mental state. Her fractured identity and powerful, erratic emotions are a direct result of her created illusions and rejection of reality and this is where the relationship to BPD is apparent in her unstable self-image and emotional volatility. Her actions, which exhibit sharp fluctuations between illusion and reality, reveal the emotional instability typical of borderline personality disorder. "Whoever you are – I have always depended on the kindness of strangers". ( William, 2009,P156)

This quote from "*A Streetcar Named Desire*," Scene 11, captures the pinnacle of Blanche DuBois's existential dilemma and her deep sense of alienation and dependence. In highlighting, her incapacity to form lasting and significant relationships, this statement stresses Blanche's basic dependence on the fleeting and untrustworthy goodwill of strangers to legitimize her life. Her need on external validation from others for her sense of self and security exposes a deep-seated insecurity and fear of abandonment, revealing an extreme existential fragility. Because she clings on sporadic encounters to provide a semblance of security in her broken world, Blanche's existential dependence on strangers reveals her battle with identity and belonging. Really seeking reinforcement and assurance from others, individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) have severe fears of being rejected and an unstable sense of self, which makes them constantly reliant on others. This connection to BPD is clear from this desperate need. Similar to the BPD trait of an unstable self-image that is greatly impacted by outside judgments and interactions, Blanche's existential reliance is evident in her persistent desire for affirmation. By putting her emotional well-being in the hands of erratic and frequently untrustworthy external sources, her dependence on the kindness of strangers also demonstrates the emotional volatility and impulsivity characteristic with BPD. Intense and unstable relationships are a hallmark of borderline personality disorder (BPD), and this existential yearning for affirmation and connection exacerbates her emotional instability. In Tennessee Williams' portrayal of Blanche, existential issues and BPD are deeply connected. Blanche's comment finally captures her existential misery and the deep sense of loneliness and instability that define her existence.

“STELLL-AHHHH! My baby doll’s left me!” “You can’t beat on a woman and then call her back! She won’t come! And her going to have a baby! ... Stanley doesn’t give me a regular night off. This is my place and I don’t want to be talked to like that.” (William,2009,P56)

The extreme emotional outburst and actions of Stanley Kowalski during the poker night scene in this passage illustrate important facets of his existential crisis and how they lead to characteristics linked to borderline personality disorder (BPD). Stanley’s frantic exclamation, “STELLL-AHHHH! “My baby doll left me!” is said following a physical fight in which he strikes Stella. An essential component of BPD is a deep fear of abandonment, which is shown by this outburst. His desperate attempt to regain control over his personal space and relationships after Stella left him is a clear indication of his existential crisis. Stanley’s façade of power crumbles the instant Stella leaves, exposing his underlying insecurity and need. This is where Stanley’s existential battle centers on the fear of abandonment and losing control. His impulsive and violent actions, such as punching Stella and then pleading for her to come back, are indicative of his BPD-related incapacity to control his emotions. His erratic emotional condition, which oscillates between aggressiveness and desperation, is evident. His incessant demand for assurance and prompt resolution of the perceived threat of abandonment serves as an additional indication of this instability.

“Dependence on others is a fragile thing... I’m afraid to stop pleading with him [Mitch]... because once he stops loving me, I’ll be nothing... Don’t you know, don’t you know, that I’m relying on his love to keep me alive?” (William,2009,P68)

Blanche’s existential angst is apparent in this passage as she fears losing Mitch’s approval and affection. Her self-worth is not stable inside; rather, it is dependent on outside circumstances. People with borderline personality disorder (BPD), who may experience severe emotional dysregulation and an overwhelming fear of abandonment, frequently exhibit an excessive dependence on others for emotional support. Blanche’s conviction that she will “be nothing” without Mitch’s love emphasizes her existential predicament even more. This implies a classic existential concern: a deep-seated fear of nonexistence. The text demonstrates how Blanche’s possible BPD symptoms are entwined with her existential issues, creating an emotional distress.

“I pulled you down off them columns and how you loved it, having them colored lights going!” “Don’t ever talk that way to me! ‘Pig—Polack—disgusting—vulgar—greasy!’—them kind of words have been on your tongue and your sister’s too much around here! What do you two think you are? A pair of queens?” (William,2009,P118)

This scene from Scene 8 portrays Stanley Kowalski’s existential crisis in a powerful way by showing how he feels the desire to control and dominate Stella and Blanche. Stella’s prior, more affluent lifestyle is referenced in his assertion, “I pulled you down off them columns and how you loved it, having those colored lights going!” He believes that he freed her from it. This statement highlights his ambition to use control and power to define who he is, revealing a deep existential drive to establish his value and authority in his home. Stanley’s feeling of self-worth and social anxieties are closely linked to his existential struggle. He reacts with extreme rage and defensiveness to Stella and Blanche’s actions, believing them to be degrading and a danger to his identity. They say things like, “Pig—Polack—disgusting—vulgar—greasy!” This defensiveness, which shows itself as angry and impulsive conduct, is a result of an existential fear of rejection and inadequacy. In this incident, Stanley’s response reflects characteristics linked to Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). His erratic behavior, which veers between remembering intimate

moments with Stella and angrily striking out at imagined slights, is indicative of his emotional instability. One of the main features of BPD is this intense, unstable affective state, where people frequently have extreme mood swings and struggle to control their emotions.

“I, I, I took the blows in my face and my body! All of those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard! Father, mother! Margaret, that dreadful way! So big with it, it couldn’t be put in a coffin! But had to be burned like rubbish! You just came home in time for funerals, Stella. And funerals are pretty compared to deaths. Funerals are quiet, but deaths – not always.” (Williams, 2009, 141)

The above paragraph depicts existential sadness has severely impacted Blanche’s mental state as she tells Stella about the horrific experiences from her life. The detailed account of the deaths Blanche saw, “I took the strikes on my face and my body! “All of those deaths!” illustrates the profound emotional wounds these encounters have left behind. Her psychological instability has been greatly exacerbated by a pervasive sense of loss and the transience of life, which is the root of her existential dilemma. Blanche’s emphasis on the psychological and bodily effects of these losses demonstrates her inability to deal with stress and sadness. The gory descriptions of her loved ones’ deaths and the “long parade to the graveyard” highlight the unrelenting severity of her sorrow and the deep psychological effects it has had. This existential struggle with loss and mortality is consistent with the emergence of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), a condition in which traumatic events lead to emotional dysregulation and an enduring feeling of emptiness. In contrast to the customarily solemnity of funerals, her remark, “Funerals are quiet, but deaths – not always,” highlights the chaotic and painful character of her experiences. Her internal emotional state, which is marked by instability and an exaggerated reaction to stress, is reflected in this chaos. The two main characteristics of BPD that Blanche experiences – her fear of abandonment and her unstable sense of self – are intensified by her existential worry about death and loss. Blanche telling Stella about these horrors. Her evocative story highlights her existential vulnerability and the ensuing psychological pain, acting as a cry for compassion and understanding. Her profound emotional suffering and instability in this paragraph highlight the ways in which her existential crises influence the actions and emotional patterns that are typical of borderline personality disorder.

“I shall die of eating an unwashed grape one day out on the ocean. I will die – with my hand in the hand of some nice-looking ship’s doctor, a very young one with a small blond mustache and a big silver watch. ‘Poor lady,’ they’ll say, ‘the quinine did her no good. That unwashed grape has transported her soul to heaven.’” (William, 2009, P156)

Blanche’s dreamlike speech in this scene from Scene 10 illustrates her severe existential detachment from reality. She describes her idealized death as “eating an unwashed grape one day out on the ocean,” which is a far cry from the horrible conditions she faces in real life. Her existential escapism highlights her incapacity to deal with reality and reflects a fundamental feature of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), in which sufferers frequently turn to imagination as a coping mechanism for their intense emotions and instability. Blanche’s vivid description of passing away with “my hand in the hand of some nice-looking ship’s doctor” who tenderly takes her soul to paradise highlights her desperate attempt to create a reassuring delusion. This fantasy is a desperate attempt to recapture the dignity and control she believes she is losing as a result of the traumas and rejections she has experienced in her life. Her escape into this romanticized scene, which exposes her shaky hold of reality and her omnipresent sentiments of worthlessness and powerlessness, is blatant evidence of her existential crisis. In addition, Blanche’s

monologue reveals her existential fear of being abandoned and alone, which prompts her to conjure up a detailed fantasy in which she is mourned and cared for. Her psychological instability is a result of her fear of abandonment and desire for affirmation, which fuels the erratic and unstable conduct that is characteristic of BPD. Tennessee Williams skillfully illustrates in this chapter how Blanche's existential conflicts with truth and fiction fuel her emotional and psychological suffering, emphasizing the complex relationship between her existential fears and the characteristics linked to BPD.

"What you are talking about is brutal desire—just—Desire! —the name of that rattle-trap streetcar that bangs through the Quarter, up one old narrow street and down another. ... It brought me here. Where I'm not wanted and where I'm ashamed to be." (William, 2009, P145)

Blanche's monologue to Stella in this scene from Scene 4 illustrates her existential crisis, which is based on the idea of desire and the negative effects it has on her life. The streetcar with the name "Desire" represents the irrational and frequently destructive urges that have guided Blanche's choices and deeds, ultimately bringing her to a position of shame and unwelcomes. The development of features linked to Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is significantly influenced by her existential struggle with her impulses and the consequences they bring. Blanche's admission that desire is "brutal" highlights her existential suffering and internal conflict about her previous choices and the directions they have taken her. "It brought me here," she said. Her profound sense of regret and self-loathing, which are essential components of her existential misery, are revealed in "Where I'm not wanted and where I'm ashamed to be." BPD patients have fluctuating self-images and persistent sensations of emptiness, which are traits of their severe self-criticism and the emotional suffering it produces. The streetcar "banging through the Quarter" metaphor highlights the unrelenting and uncontrollable nature of her passions, which have resulted in a string of impulsive and harmful actions on her part. The impulsivity and difficulty controlling emotions that characterize BPD are reflected in these behaviors. Blanche's emotional instability and unstable relationships are a result of her existential struggle with her desires and the shame and guilt they bring. Blanche's sense of being "not wanted" and "ashamed" is a sign of her intense fear of being abandoned and rejected, which is another fundamental aspect of BPD.

"You're simple, straightforward, and honest, a little bit on the primitive side, I should think. To interest you, a man would have to" (William, 2009, P118)

This paragraph depicts shows Blanche's conversation with Stanley, which highlights her existential struggle with how she sees herself and her attempts to use charm and deception to get through relationships. A major feature of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is Blanche's deep-seated insecurity and fear of rejection, which are shown in her attempt to manipulate Stanley by complimenting him. It is clear from Blanche's description of Stanley as "simple, straightforward, and honest, a little bit on the primitive side" that she must always project control and superiority over other people. She uses deception and manipulation to shield herself from perceived threats to her identity and self-worth because of her existential need for affirmation and control. She makes an attempt to "interest" Stanley by implying that a man would have to fulfill specific requirements, which illustrates her dependence on outside validation and approval—a trait common to BPD—in order to feel safe.

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perceived threats to her identity and self-worth because of her existential need for affirmation and control. She makes an attempt to “interest” Stanley by implying that a man would have to fulfill specific requirements, which illustrates her dependence on outside validation and approval—a trait common to BPD—in order to feel safe.

## **Findings**

This study’s main finding contributes a sophisticated perspective to the historical presentation of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) which was earlier assumed to be caused by childhood trauma, genetic make-up and neglect. It proves that intensive existentialism can help in the manifestation or worsening of BPD. In this study, I demonstrate that passion for existential issues including decision making, consequences of freedom and the search for meaning may worsen identity issues, abandonment issues and personality fluctuations. This is revealed through the two main characters of Stanley Kowalski and Blanche DuBois as they struggle through existentialism thus portraying features of BPD.

It can be deduced that Blanche experience the feeling of existential despair which casts her into a looming need for the constant validation, inability to sever dependence on fantasy, and perhaps the most severe, an acute fear of rejection, characteristic of BPD. Blanches fears are as a result of her failure to make meaning out of life or else catch a hold of herself. Thus, in view of the existential themes that can be assigned to the film, it is possible to claim that Stanley demonstrates violent and impulsive behaviors in the framework of the conflict between freedom and control. Other symptoms of borderline personality disorder are his attempts to dominate others and fluctuating moods. The psychological dysfunction and the appearance of the BPD prognosis depends on their existential issues. Existential concepts such as emptiness, liberty and decision-making play an important function in the behaviour of the characters. For example, the behavior of the protagonist Blanche is a manipulation and desperation in her loneliness, the deprivation of her purpose to live or the loss of which she is afraid. The aforementioned influencers demonstrate how existential bothers can cause behavior and worsen or precipitate BPD. This expands on the knowledge of the disorder making one realise that there is so much more that ought to be considered other than the conventional factors like childhood trauma, genetic disorder, and neglect. It also empowers better and holistic e approaches to BPD diagnosis and management.

## **Conclusion**

The play ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’ by Tennessee Williams does a wonderful job of portraying how the basic existential concerns of Blanche DuBois and Stanley Kowalski lead to Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). Cognitive-existential distress, meaning such notions as the pursuance of life’s purpose, burden of choice, and the like are exacerbating for BPD, and may increase patient emotional instability, fear of solitude, and identity crisis. Blanche can also be diagnosed with BPD through wanting people’s approval, having dreams of escaping reality and fear of abandonment. Stanley’s decision of violent acts and his need for power stems from his existential crises and thus he becomes impulsive and emotionally unstable. Existential notions impact their conduct and interactions: Thus, Blanche despairs and lies due to her desire of order while being unable to find it and, on the other hand, Stanley’s brutality is rooted in the despair of having too much freedom and having too much power. From Williams’ characters it becomes evident how heightened existential concerns can worsen the BPD symptoms indicating the crucial role of existential stressors in worsening their psychological state and behaviour. To answer the research questions in this analysis, the following is outlined: Explaining how

extreme existentialism contributes to the worsening of BPD, Establishing BPD traits which are evident in Blanche and Stanley prior to examining how their existential experiences have manifested in their actions and relationships in the play, and Mapping out how meaninglessness, freedom, and choice of the characters' actions and relationships in the play.

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