

Reclaiming Aboriginal Identity in the Select Novels of Kim Scott's: *True Country* Using Identity Theory

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Abstract

Australian Aboriginal stories were presented from the traditional Aboriginal oral narratives. These narratives present the stories of Aboriginals with prior to the colonial dispute which resulted in the destruction of Aboriginal identity. These Aboriginals have necessitated the urge to reclaim their Aboriginality using oral narratives which was later transcribed into various written forms. The reclamation using traditional oral narratives has emphasized on the significance of Aboriginal identity and their cultural belonging. The current paper examines the impact of European colonization and reveals the lost Aboriginal identity of the Australian Aboriginals using the novel *True Country* by Kim Scott. The objective of this paper is to emphasize on the challenges evolved in reclaiming the lost Aboriginal identity, through various Aboriginal voices in the novel. The study focuses on reclaiming the lost self and cultural Aboriginal identities examined through oral narratives using the identity theory.

Keywords: Australian Aboriginals, reclamation, Aboriginality, oral narratives, identity

1. Introduction

In recent years scholars working in Australian Aboriginal literature have worked in the areas of traumatic studies to understand the emotional straits of the Aboriginals. This literature comprises the histories of both emotional and physical trauma caused by the European colonization. The literature reveals the history of "The Stolen Generation", the policy of removing Aboriginal and mixed-race children as part of the assimilation process. This policy necessitates the immigrants to embrace the language, habits, and values of the national majority and discard their own culture. Assimilation policies attempt to homogenize and decrease the cultural diversity. This policy is implemented in order to integrate Aboriginals into mainstream Australian society. The sense of pity and pain of the Aboriginal Stolen Generation is evident in the following lines from Archie Roach's famous song *They Took the Children Away*: "And they took us from our family" Took us away/ They took us away/ Snatched from our mother's breast/ Took us away (Roach).

Upon implementing the assimilation policy, the Europeans gradually succeeded in abolishing the Aboriginal community and their cultural identity. This led to the forced adoption of European customs which led to the lost Aboriginal identity. Between 1788 and 1900, "90% of Australia's native people were killed and the rest were scattered to different places" (SAHO). In order to transfer the history to the scattered Aboriginals and to the world, the native Aboriginals took an initiative in transferring the Aboriginal history. The Aboriginal historians have recollected their own experiences and shared them in their family tradition and community discussions. These people have orally transmitted their histories addressing Aboriginal suffering, trauma and emotional distress.

2. Review of Literature

Malcolm G. Ian in his paper, "The Representation of Interaction in Aboriginal Oral Narrative" (2009) illustrates that the Aboriginal storytelling is a portion of speech created by the Aboriginals, and served as the depiction of how Aboriginal socio-culture tradition have worked historically to create the least level of psychological impact.

Oral narrative tradition has disclosed the challenges in identifying Aboriginality from an Aboriginal perspective and have attempted to speak for them with their own stories and experience. They believed that the oral narratives were the only source to rediscover their Aboriginal identity since their histories were erased by the Europeans. It is in the recent years that the histories have been recorded on tapes and transcribed into books in written form. The process of transforming talk into writing presented a number of problems both practically and politically. On the other hand, it was necessary to preserve the integrity of the Aboriginal people and is thus highly challenging to have a textual space. The curiosity about Aboriginal past has promoted the demand for Aboriginal life histories. This has led to the history of creating and exploiting the writings through which Aboriginal writing started to flourish.

The Aboriginal writing emerged in 1960's and 1970's demanding justice for the Aboriginal people challenging the European colonialism.

The literature began as a voice for the self and belonging of the lost Aboriginal identity. The phase of Aboriginal writing began in 1964 with the publication of Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker's) first poetry collection, "We Are Going" focusing on the struggles of the Aboriginal people by breaking the Aboriginal silence. Aboriginal history made the large audience feel emotive and emphasized on how migratory experiences had contributed to Aboriginal self-improvement. The Aboriginal writing ended a period of white deafness in Australia by bringing a forceful Aboriginal voice to the attention of a large audience. The Aboriginal writing may be classified as life-writing and are instructively vast, comprising combined genres such as traditional and innovative, autobiography, oral history, personal narrative, memoir, biography, essays, and auto-ethnography. Among which the autobiographies are the most dynamic areas of contemporary "Australian writing which attracted 81% of the Aboriginal mainstream writing until the mid-1980s" (Edwards).

All the auto biographers write with the assurance that Australian life has become dense enough to make an account of growing up worth telling for its own sake, as well as for its quality. Australian lives are now rich enough in themselves and in social connections to make autobiographies both possible and worthwhile. The rise of autobiography during the 1950's and 1960's is the most recent formal creative imagination identifiable to Australian literary historians. Aboriginal autobiographies narrates the histories of both black and white Australians based on oral and storytelling networks. A sense of oppression, loneliness, alienation and fear is often symbolized and the quest for the past is associated with the Aboriginal writing. They often narrate the painful histories of friends and families representing Aboriginal past life thereby transferring the stories in clear and simple language. Hence the objective of Aboriginal literature is to promote and make others acknowledge the development in Aboriginal literature.

Here in this paper, the researcher concentrates on the semi-autobiographical novel *True Country* by Kim Scott written while teaching at a remote Aboriginal community in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The novel brings out the objective of the paper, where Billy the protagonist recalls the Aboriginal histories using Aboriginal narratives to reclaim the lost Aboriginal identity. The protagonist uses these voices in finding out both the self-identity and social identity of the Aboriginal community. The novel starts with the narration of the elderly person Fatima, who begins to share the Aboriginal stories of their people's tradition, culture and their Aboriginal Stolen Generation. "You like stories? You want I tell you stories, about old people, long time?" (Scott, p. 33). The line from the novel depicts the introductory part in bringing out the Aboriginal stories. With the help of the Aboriginal oral narratives in the novel the paper articulates on the rediscovery of lost self and cultural Aboriginal identity using Identity theory. My research is a contribution to the existing research.

2.1 Methodology

The present study was conducted using qualitative research methodology and descriptive survey techniques. Various writers and translators have transcribed, edited, translated, and narrated the Aboriginal histories and related stories several times over the course of several centuries. However, the initial Aboriginal histories were penned through Autobiographies. The researchers selected Kim Scott's novel *True Country* in order to interpret this research. The topic of Aboriginal identity as self and culture is studied, analyzed, and understood through the selected text. Aboriginal elders like Fatima, Gabriella and few others like Milton and Sebastian were chosen from the selected text for the present research on lost Aboriginal self and cultural identity. This however examines the oral narratives in the selected novel in order to demonstrate how the Aboriginal identities were reclaimed.

2.2 Knowledge Gap

A number of research work has been conducted on the novel, *True Country* in the themes of trauma, pain, suppression and depression corresponding to the Australian Aboriginal people's lost identity by various researchers and academicians. The themes on self-identity and cultural identity are yet to be studied in the concern novel. There isn't much research found on the relation between Aboriginal people's self and cultural identity so the select text is yet to be explored in this area. Researchers also think a lot about the lost identity yet most of researches are done on Aboriginal colonial loss and survival, suppression and oppression. Retelling Aboriginal stories have reflected in the stolen generations of the Australian Aboriginals focusing on the trauma, suppression and oppression. On the theme of Aboriginal identity, few versions of Aboriginal democracy, migration, national identity and mate ship. The select novel and its characters are yet to be investigated upon the themes of self and cultural identity. Thus, the researcher explores the concept of self and cultural identity and explains how it is executed by discarding the former part in this study.

2.3 Theoretical Background

Identity is used to define the distinctiveness of someone or something by expressing their characteristics, beliefs, personality traits, looks, or expression. It is a developed process which can be found by understanding the self and the environment in which he/she belongs to. It is established from the views and classification of the self, formed under two factors: personal (internal) and societal (external). The personal identity of an individual comprises various factors like thoughts, emotions, attitudes, behavioral patterns and speaking style whereas societal factors are based on societal norms, culture, social groups etc. which belongs to social category in which a self is recognized as an individual. The self is structured according to the demands of the society, which is also identified depending upon the individual's depiction to the society. For example, let us illustrate on the individual who is identified as a teacher. To identify the teacher based on a societal factor, a teacher must exhibit the credential of a school or institution in order to be represented as a teacher amongst the existing social group. However, when an individual chooses to remain pleasant throughout the class, the same is labelled under the representation of personal identity. Any individual who knows how to differentiate and represent the self, depending upon the classification is called self-categorization. The self of an individual is categorized depending upon the position in which he/she plays his/her role.

To explain this, let me give a brief description on both the role and position. A role is a part that you play in the society; a position refers to the way in which someone or something is situated or organized. To illustrate on this, a woman's role depends on the position in which she projects her own self. She can project herself as a mother, a wife, a daughter, and a teacher. It is her individuality to perform a role in conveying her identity. Each position has its own set of meaning and expectations in terms of performance and connectivity to the role. She will be identified depending on the role that she chooses to perform. This representation is termed as "role-identity" (Burke) of an individual. In a role-based identity, interactions and negotiations are often involved when an individual performs his/her role i.e. a person may suffer role conflict when two or more of their responsibilities are incompatible. For example, let us consider a mother whose priority lies in choosing between challenging deadline in the office and picking up a sick child from the school. This statement witnesses that a role has a significant impact on decision making which helps in determining the individual identity. Also, the role identity influences the behavioural pattern of an individual i.e., the position which is determined through the role, impacts on the behaviour of an individual and is referred to as behavioural identity.

Followed by the basic definition on identity, its classification and categorization a brief note on identity theory will be illustrated.

2.4 Identity Theory

To begin with, different theories have been proposed to categorize identity depending on the individual's role in society. There are various theorists who proposed on the concept of identity theory. Theorist Erik Homburger Erikson who coined the term "identity crisis" (Patel), centres on the theory of psychosocial development of an individual's personality which was influenced by Sigmund Freud. He developed a theory in 1909 under the concept of id, ego, and super ego focusing on the conscious and sub conscious mind centering the analysis of psychosexual theory. Erikson's psychosocial theory was different from Freud's psychosexual theory as it looked at the effects of social experience on a person's whole life. It unfolds the personality of an individual in predetermined stages. Both Freud and Erikson are well known for their works in psychoanalysis but had varied approaches towards the theory. Using the base of Freud and Erikson's theory, Sheldon Stryker the pointer of identity theory (1968), explains that the identity of the self, exists in the hierarchy of salience where the identities that are at the top of the list are most likely to be used when different parts of the self are involved. Identity of an individual is made up of one's distinct views formed through the process of reflexive activity of the self. Also, it is considered that the fundamental strengths of these ideas originate from the concept of self. On the other hand, theorists Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets from the socio-cultural perspective aim to understand identity, emphasize the self-dynamics that impact behaviour. After presenting identity theory, the paper illustrates the representation of identity in terms of the self which reflects on the social identity of an individual.

Burke's Identity theory also known as Identity control theory (ICT) examines how people's identity affect their behaviour in the context of their society. Stryker's Social identity theory labelled as structural-symbolic interactionism started to work on how people put themselves into a group known as social categorization. These theories stress that perceptual and structural approaches for identities are important in understanding the self. The reflexive self was the focus of both theories sharing various overlapping concepts like a person's self-efficacy, self-image, self-concept, and self-esteem all contribute to the development of self. However, over time, both theories have developed its own focus, objectives, and traditions of work. To substantiate this statement, it is stated that both the theories revolve around the role and position but are depicted in terms of distinct meanings. In identity theory, meanings are associated in performing a role depending upon the position whereas in social identity theory meaning are associated with being a member of a social group. Regardless of the fact that both the theories are associated to the self, identity theory focuses on behavioural outcome whereas social identity theory focuses on cognitive outcome.

Both identity theory and social identity theory are distinct examples of a unified identity theory. These theories are examined on the basis of their underlying concepts and assumptions which reveal their similarities and dissimilarities. To demonstrate the case of the unification, the basic idea of both the theories are examined using self- categorization and self- concept. Self-categorization according to identity theory depends upon the classified and labelled society, whereas in social identity theory, the same is categorized when the cognitive classification of the self matches the environs. This is further classified into two groups where the like ones matches the environment, it appropriately belong to the in-group and the distinct ones belong to out-group. This explicitly says that every individual has various identities which are comprised as self-categorization and these identities form the self-concept of an individual. A social-concept in social identity theory is established when an individual belonging to various social groups possesses multiple identities to which the self belongs. According to identity theory, these are the different roles that people play in the society. The identity of an individual varies depending upon the structure in which a self is categorised.

With this brief introduction on identity, its theory and categorization, the paper will analyse the novel with the help of Aboriginal voices to transfer the history. The history narrates the lost Aboriginal identity both in terms of self and social identity. The primary objective of the paper is to reclaim the lost Aboriginal identity using Aboriginal narratives as a medium, to transfer the oral history to the native Aboriginals and to the people around the world.

3. Discussion

The colonization around the world have led to the growth of migrant settlers who once belonged to their native land. These natives have faced various crisis after colonization which include cultural, racial, religious, language, and traditional witnessing the transformation in their lives. This transformation has altered their lives irreparably leading to the basic identity crisis when compelled to choose between two cultural traditions. The desire for self-identity itself is an emotion since it attempts to represent the self in the place of distinctiveness.

The establishment of the self strives to depict the fundamental urge for all individuals and entities in order to separate themselves from others and also to become distinguishable. This has prompted them to seek their own identity by examining, Who am I?. The quest for identity is explicated through the protagonist and other Aboriginal narratives in the novel.

True Country by Kim Scott is an autobiographical novel portrayed through Scott's prime narrator Billy. The story depicts the journey of the writer involved in tracing his Aboriginal identity. The question of identity is the most controversial issue in *True Country* and can be regarded as a significant issue in the Aboriginal context. Identity exploration in this context refers to an individual's active engagement in searching for and investigating meaningful alternatives in important life areas. The issue on identity crisis was liberated by the colonizers who imposed the demanding conditions on the Aboriginals which lead to the identity formation of the same. The author realizes the quest for identity of the Australian Aboriginals who were helpless in retrieving their lost identity. Through this novel, the author decides to retrieve the lost Aboriginality by analysing the history of both the natives and the colonizers. Similarly, Christensen et al. has stated that values and beliefs have an impact on decision-making and behavior. Scott's decision in retrieving the lost Aboriginal identity has impacted in bringing out the deracinated Aboriginal community. In addition to this, Burke and Franzoi found that individual's perceptions and behaviors are influenced by how they describe a situation. The writer involves his own self in tracing his identity, root, and his culture. The tracing involves the Aboriginal condition in missions and reserves in which the Aboriginals were displaced by surviving on the grounds of government handouts resulting in identity crisis. From the observations of Mullen, Brown and Smith's to Sumner's the most detailed evaluations are widespread that members of the in-group people are prone to think that they are superior to other groups and are more likely to discriminate. Through the novel, it is clear that the widespread occurrence of colonial based behavior and judgments were never questioned but the author took an initiative in bringing out the lost identity. Scott realizes and accepts responsibility for his own problems, but puts his personal battle amid broader contemporary political causes. In this novel, Scott investigates the actual process in researching and writing about socio-cultural identity of the community and the self-identity as an aborigine. Scott's attempt to strike a reunion between Aboriginal cultural and non-Aboriginal culture brings out the ethics of storytelling.

Through this novel, Scott presents the Aboriginal characters to demonstrate the qualities of resilience, courage, and generosity to confront the Aboriginal history of injustice and betrayal. Scott introduces the character 'Billy' the protagonist of the novel. He enters into Karnama region to rediscover his lost cultural identity for both his people and his own self. Mr. Bill the protagonist seeks help from the elderly person Fatima from the Karnama community to learn about his past. Fatima agrees to help Billy by revealing the past history, and the old stories to Billy. "With a small tape recorder between us. I'll listen to the tape and write it out for the kids to read, or me to read to them..." (p. 34). Billy rediscovers the superiority of the oral tradition during the history exchange. During this process, Billy discloses the relationship between language and identity to uncover the Aboriginal history of Aboriginal people in the written texts. For centuries, language theorists have already been captivated by the connection between identity and language. Many philologists in the early 1800s proposed that the language signifies the common identity of a community. Emile Benveniste (2021), stressed the concept of subjectivity which emphasized the importance of identity in language. To him, the speaker's presence as a subject has the potential to transform language as an abstract representation into discourse through the act of communication.

With reference to this, Scott in this novel highlights the distinct identity of Aboriginal languages and storytelling techniques which uses Aboriginal language to blend the colonial language. As the novel progresses, it becomes evident that the colonial language begins to fade particularly in written form, while the communal Aboriginal voice becomes more dominant. "We didn't know how to speak the language. We forgot about our language. We talk in English. I forgot all about our language" (Scott, p. 38). Theorist Stuart Hall argues that social differences, language, and identity are strongly connected to the culture. He also states that the culture is presented in its language and considers language as the media for expressing feelings and thoughts. The language has the power to shape humans and communication helps in representing their culture and identity to others thereby enhancing the communication process. Here in this novel, Billy communicates with the elder Aboriginal woman Fatima to rediscover the Aboriginal identity, language, and culture. She was the "first one born on the mission" (p. 28). It is the self-introductory followed by the detailed life of the Aboriginals in the mission.

Fatima briefs about the white's education system in the institution which were imposed on the innocent Aboriginals by suppressing their lives. Fatima describes on how the Aboriginal community got shattered by the dominant whites, who were determined to abolish the Aboriginal practices and isolate them. During this story exchange, both Fatima and Billy were enjoying the process of identification by recreating the Aboriginal story. At times they burst out into laughter. "I think we were enjoying the re-creation of the story". (p. 45). According to researchers like Ashforth et al identification at the personal level is stronger and more evident than at a collective higher level. Personal level identification is more salient and may result in an expected positive outcome than the collective higher-level identification order. The collection of Aboriginal history is a space for reflection and recovery of the Aboriginal identity. The past is the recollection of the Stolen Generation who were once removed from the Aboriginal family by the Australian government officers. This forcible removal was intended as an attempt to disrupt Aboriginal culture.

A culture is said to be strong when there is widespread agreement among the members of the group which is typically measured under standard individual responses. The culture of the Aboriginals was shattered by the colonial suppression who disrupted the Aboriginal culture. The whites desired to abolish the Aboriginals which initiated with the separation of children from their families. The children who were forcibly snatched from their families were taken to the mission. They gradually started facing homesickness, longing and separation and were forced to forget their family, language, culture and the Aboriginal identity as part of colonial oppression. Loss of identity was initiated with the loss of language. The Aboriginal children who were taken to the mission were taught to read and write in English and

were influenced by the Whites. These children gradually started to forget their own language which is expressed in these lines. "We didn't know how to speak the language. We forgot about our language. We talk in English. I forgot all about our language" (Scott, p. 38). The spread of education is an important factor that took place during colonization. The children were taught to read and write in English and were influenced by the whites. Felson's research demonstrated that communication barriers tend to make challenging assessments on other's motivations. Similarly, Benjamin Baez illustrates that abandoning his native tongue meant losing his identity. Bakhtin states that a person is identified by the language that he speaks. Bakhtin claims that Language arises from man's need to express himself, to objectify himself. And if language also serves as a means of communication, this is the secondary function that has nothing to do with its essence. Each person may approach differently, demand differently, or use distinct speech tone, and these variations express their individuality. Language is the basis of identity formation. It acts as a medium which defines the part of communal identity. An individual's communal identity can be emphasized on the combination of similar verbal and nonverbal communicative practices and the social identity is determined by the language in which he communicates.

3.1 *Indigenizing the Stolen Indignity*

The inheritance of loss has investigated contemporary issues such as regional strife and injustice. The characters in the novel are intended to have different identities of the Aboriginal practices. For example, Scott introduces the other characters, Milton and his father Sebastian who shared all the important stories about Aboriginal power – magic. The Aboriginal people could do wonders out of magic which is conveyed "Early days they make magic. They can sing lightning too. Anything. (Scott, p. 56). Old day's people could make magic. That's true. That's no story, its true story" (p. 79). The Aboriginals had lots of magic in them. They fly in the air, sing a magic song, kill someone, and could make the self-invisible. In the article written by Yousef, he explains that identity has been broadly defined as "the distinct personality of an individual. It is also the individual characteristics by which a person is known or by which an individual sees himself/herself as a discrete, separate entity".

Psychologist Lichtenstein defined identity as a principle that should be held and nurtured at all costs by any individual. Identities of the Aboriginal people and the cultural practices of the Karnama community are taught by Billy. He wanted his people and children to be aware of the Aboriginal literature in order to incorporate the lost identity which usually takes time unless the history is transferred properly. It takes time to create and integrate it into one's lost culture. It may be challenging to discover oneself in a new culture, place, or community, which can lead to identity crisis concerns. Billy along with the members of the Karnama region reinvents the history of Karnama with the help of coloured white mission journals and from elderly people Fatima and Gabriella who shared the tales of the old Aboriginals. "You know, one day I might paint me a little island, a little place for me to live in there. Fly down into it....and stay there...' She said they gave her Aboriginal literature to read...Or it was history stuff. Or sometimes just like any old story, but with black people. Or off-white people" (p. 90). Gabriella shares the aboriginal tales from the Stolen Generation had volunteered in serving the mission by indicating the old Aboriginal tales to the Aboriginal students at the mission.

3.2 *Recovering the Generation "Stolen":*

Gabriella's story reveals the sufferings of the Stolen Generation. Her return to the community is to work for the betterment of the Aboriginals. It is the tale of homesickness, longing, and separation. Scott also identifies the superiority of oral tradition over the written form. Erikson refers to a psychological conflict that entails social confusion, a sense of detachment, and a loss of oneself. Identity crisis theory has been developed to explore further into self bounds and advance beyond the sociocultural factors through which the individual investigates and examines the identity.

Upon examining the Aboriginal identity, Billy's feelings towards the Aboriginal identity kept haunting him. Consequently, he grew up without fulfilling the sense of being an aborigine. "So, maybe that's the past. But I don't feel Aboriginal, I can't say that I don't understand. Does it mean you feel lost, displaced? But doesn't everyone?" (p. 95). The search is not only for his root but also for his people. He initiated in transferring the lost history to his Aboriginal people to reclaim the lost Aboriginal root. "And I just wanted to come to a place like this, when some things that happened a long time ago, where I come from, that I have only heard of read of, are still happening here, maybe" (p. 95). It is a spiritual journey, as the journey into the land of historical oppression also leads to social identity. V. Abushenko also claims that we are witnessing the annihilation of sameness that at all time belongs with or appeals to the past. It results from the fact that the identity is open to the future and manifests essential incompleteness of a human being. To Billy, the journey to Karnama was to rediscover the lost Aboriginal cultural identity both personally and socially.

Tajfal defines "Social identity" as an individual's understanding of belonging to various social groupings, as well as the feelings and values it conveys to him or her. Social identity theory is used to convey a "sense of place" which is used to identify the place which symbolizes the meaning of a building and its environment. When people are more connected to the place, they consider less about the negative consequences of the place (Bonaiuto et al., p. 631–653). Billy, the protagonist of the novel aimed at enhancing the Aboriginal land for the benefit of the land and the Aboriginal people without considering other consequences. He aimed at enlightening for the benefit of the aboriginals. "Ha! Ah well. What else can I do? I like that sort of thing. And I'm Aboriginal, of Aboriginal decent. So I'm interested that must be part of the reason I asked to come here. Most chalkies only come here if they've got no choice" (p. 117). The objective of Billy was to go back to his community and educate people for their betterment. In the process of educating the Aboriginals, Billy was able to tarbush his white identity and get identified as an aborigine, and educate people about Aboriginality. The protagonist Billy as an individual is occupied to a role belonging to a group which shows that the role (personal identity) and social identities are linked

to each other.

Deaux attempts to link personal identities to social identities. She argues that some components of social identities are based on standard norms whereas others are based on personal sentiments and values. Thus, personal identities are combined with sociocultural identity traits. Upon activating identity theory, the above-described process is constant which links the individual to the situation which is a part of self-verification. It is argued that identities relating to the roles or groups are self-motivated, self-regulation, self-esteem, etc. "They can't forget about our roots, they can't leave behind and go to the whiteman roots. That no good. Our time, we never see all these things. When early people was alive, in their own land, we never see such things" (Scott, p. 144).

Scott discovers that the Aboriginal practices and Aboriginal ways of life are replaced by western influence due to the lack of Aboriginal faith and trust. Aboriginal people who have their own culture, traditions, and identities, and they cannot lose their roots and follow alien ways of life. The Aboriginality started fading away in the hands of Whites. In relation to this, E. Erikson extends the concept of identification and argues it is a mechanism of an individual assimilating with a relevant other. It is the self-esteem of an individual from the perspective of how others perceive him in relation to themselves within the typology, which is significant to them. Identification is an intrinsically socio-cultural entity that emerges from social activity of a person and a community. Hall notes that cultural identity is about becoming and not just about being. Aboriginal people were gradually forced to imbibe the white culture which slowly resulted in the loss of Aboriginal identity. Upon eroding, these Aboriginals were neither considered as a white nor as an aborigine. Aboriginals were left with nothing but the widespread destruction. "Tell us, we learned anything from white man yet? Nowadays people make a mistake. Maybe tired. Little by little Aborigine going down. We don't like looking, and seeing it that way. We want to fly up again" (Scott, p. 144). The above mentioned line portrays the emotional longing of an aborigine where the author senses the loss of glorious past in the Aboriginal identity. As the process of identification is formed by establishing personal and social identities through an individual's socialization and cultural transmission, based on incorporation and similarity. Closely connecting to this connotation, theorist Z. Golenkova defines identity as "the process and the result of the individual's association with a group" (Rayevska et al., p. 50). Recent research in social identity theory and identity theory appears to be developing in the same direction where systematic collections are encouraged to act in accordance, which depicts the group or role of an individual.

4. Findings and Solution

The findings from this study exemplifies that identity of an individual is important in defining a self as it invokes the sense of belonging to build one's own value. The sense of belonging is built through the societal status of an individual in which they belong to. Both the belonging and society together forms the identity of an individual. In addition to the Australian Aboriginal context, the Aboriginals have lost their identity post colonization have started to necessitate their own roots to which they originally belong to. In order to avoid further exploitation of Aboriginal identity, these Aboriginals started to exploit their identities to the people around the world using oral narratives. These narratives have facilitated in self-declaration of the Aboriginal identity both as an individual and as the society.

5. Conclusion

Through this paper the researcher portrays different Aboriginal narratives with the help of the protagonist, Billy who tries to bring out the lost Australian Aboriginal identity through the novel *True Country*. The author highlights the challenges of recovering one's lost identity as a result of colonialism. His writing expresses the significance of identity and the cultural belonging of Aboriginals. With the portrayal of the protagonist, the author brings out the struggle of an aborigine using historical evidences to express the hidden stories, socio-cultural experiences and memories of the people. The author also reveals and celebrates the indigenous history and cultural identity with dignity. Through his writing it is assumed that the identity changes occur gradually among the people and is an ongoing gradual process ranging from months to years which conflicts the actual meaning.

To substantiate the significance of identity, the concept of traditional identity has established the footsteps of identity, the concept of self. Every individual gets identified by categorizing their communal norms through which identity of an individual or a group is formed. It is always believed that the identity is the result of recognition and emotional analysis, and communal characterization of an individual or a community. This can be expressed with reference to the role and position in terms of individual identity and categorisation of group in terms communal identity. The change in sociocultural reality of the contemporary society defines the importance of the identity crisis. Because the identity of an individual is defined as a method for constructing personal and social identity through the process of cultural transmission based on assimilation.

Thus, Aboriginal writing is both an act of protest against an offensive colonial discourse and a place for indigenous recovery and identity reclamation. A struggle of an aborigine is portrayed in the novel *True Country* where the author reveals and celebrates the indigenous history and cultural identity with dignity. He uses the historical evidences to express the hidden stories, socio-cultural experiences and memories of the indigenous people. Through this writing the author emphasizes the significance of Aboriginal identity and the cultural belonging which was made possible with the oral narratives. Hence, the paper emphasizes the importance of storytelling in reclaiming the lost Aboriginal identity through the novel *True Country* by Kim Scott.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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