

Reclaiming Individual Needs of The Aboriginals in Kim Scott's: *True Country* Using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

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Abstract

Human beings possess a set of fundamental needs to sustain existence. These needs enable a unique dimension to our identities through the motivational factors leading to self-actualization. Developing an identity is a combination of a social and individual entity evolved from the individual's interpersonal needs. The paper examines the impact of lost identity and a weakened sense of belonging within the Australian Aboriginal community, and its consequential effects on their ability to meet fundamental necessities. These Aboriginals have advocated reclaiming their basic needs through oral narratives that were consequently transcribed into various written forms. This research is based on a quantitative approach, attempting to depict the individual Aboriginal needs in Kim Scott's *True Country* using Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs Theory'. Further investigates the interpersonal developmental identities of the Aborigines using the above-mentioned theory. The finding exhibits the positive impact in achieving the individual needs to redefine themselves.

Keywords: Australian Aboriginals, reclaim, oral narratives, the hierarchy of needs, self-actualization

1. Introduction

The concept of individuality is an essential requirement for every living being. It serves as an expression of the unique characteristics possessed by an individual. The concept of individual identity is subjective and it can differ among the individuals regardless of their social or cultural context. It originates from both individual and societal practices. The ability to establish one's identity contributes to self-education, unity, and cognitive coherence, enabling individuals to develop a transparent understanding of themselves.

With reference to the context of Australian Aboriginal literature, it is evident that the Aboriginal people have experienced a loss in their cultural identity, which consequently poses a significant threat to the long-term sustainability of the Aboriginal society. The Indigenous population depicts individuals' communal hardships, leading to the transmission of ancestral histories. This transformation occurred as a result of oral narratives, which were subsequently transcribed into various written forms. These narratives delineate the challenges and complexities connecting the loss of Aboriginal identity.

The primary objective of the Aboriginal writing was intended to reclaim the lost identity as these Aboriginals were completely displaced from their roots. The colonists forcefully removed and assimilated the Aboriginals and the mixed-race (children born to an Aboriginal and a White) to their own culture. The Aboriginal children, who were taken away from their families as a result of assimilation policies are referred to as the Stolen Generation. The children from the Stolen Generation promoted the demand for Aboriginal life histories. It then leads to the history of creating and expounding the writings of the Aboriginals which, were later claimed as a part of Australian Aboriginal literature. The research focuses on the Stolen Generation of the Australian Aboriginal literature, which demands the reclamation of the basic necessities for the Aboriginals who were seeking change through personal growth which was lost during colonisation. With this background, the researcher proposes to study the Australian Aboriginals' search for identity using Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs Theory' argued by Abraham H. Maslow to reclaim the basic necessities.

1.1 Historical Background

Australian Aboriginals are the natives of the lands who lived on the continent for more than 40,000 to 65,000 years and numbered around 3,00,000 (Rickard, 2017, p.4). These people followed the Aboriginal way of life according to their ancestral traditional methods. They followed the oldest Aboriginal heritage in the most ancient art forms of the continent. These Aboriginals believed that they came from the land on which they live and have occupied that land since the beginning of The Dreamtime. To elucidate, The Dreamtime is the period in which the Aboriginal life was created according to their Aboriginal culture. The term Dreaming is used to explain the origin of Aboriginal life, which includes the stories and ideas encompassing the idea of creation. This further resulted in shaping the environment which created a relationship between humans and other living beings (Stockton, n.d.). It is regarded as a past age during which creative activities

originated from which all forms of life emerged. Aboriginals considered the land as a sacred place to perform their Aboriginal customs. They had a strong connection to the land because they believed that they came from the land to which they belong (Dudgeon et al., 1970, p.26). They lived in close harmony with nature before the European colonisation of Australia. For thousands of years, the Aboriginals occupied the continent undisturbed and undiscovered (Edward, 2007). Only after European colonisation, Australians began to experience disruption in their homeland. Because both the Australian Aboriginals and the Europeans demanded the possession of the land. Aboriginals had no visible social structure in their culture and there was no necessity to obtain permission to possess the land which was favourable to the Europeans to exploit the land.

Upon exploiting the land, the European colonizers caused significant destruction to the Aboriginal generation. These colonizers introduced the policy of assimilation to the native Aboriginal people through which the full black population was regarded as unimproved people who were expected to simply die out. The government officials believed that introducing part-Aboriginals into the white society would “breed out” the Aboriginal generation. It was devised in the early part of the twentieth century when eugenic theories were being widely touted (Edward, 2007). To illustrate the same, the researcher states, “The Stolen Generation” of the Australian Aboriginal people.

2. Review of Literature

Ali Baram Mohammed and in his paper “The stolen generation and its effects upon the Identity of the aboriginal people in Sally Morgan’s My Place” (2022) illustrates the individual’s expression of Aboriginality which can be shared with the Aboriginals and other people around the world. These stories depict the stories of The Stolen Generation by inventing the reconciliation of Aboriginal identity. The depiction of the stolen generation significantly influences non-indigenous Australians to have a more accurate understanding of the country’s history and culture. Karen Menzies in his paper “Understanding the Australian Aboriginal experience of collective, historical and intergenerational trauma” (2019) examines the historical and intergenerational trauma experienced by the Australian Aboriginals. Also, the article provides an understanding of the traumas experienced by the Aboriginal people by addressing the legacy of the traumas faced by the Stolen Generation people.

One of the profound consequences of the European colonisation in Australia was “The Stolen Generation” i.e., the policy of assimilation. It is the policy of removing Aboriginal and mixed-race children as part of the assimilation process. This policy demanded the immigrants to embrace the language, habits, and values of the colonials and discard their own culture. The Aboriginals who were taken away from their families were educated and trained to serve as domestic servants to white society (Dudgeon et al., 1970, p.32). These Aboriginals were forbidden to communicate with their family, follow their cultural practices, and speak their native languages (Paulson, 2022). The Aboriginals, who were taken away faced various crises like cultural, racial, religious, language, and traditional which led to the destruction of the Aboriginal identity. Many people believed that they were living in a haunted house because they had no awareness of the colonists with whom they were obliged to coexist.

The pain of being taken away from their families is expressed in the poem ‘The Search Begins’ by Pauline McLeod:

They had taken away my family!/ The child within me cried The stolen life, the agony Of many a year gone by./ .../ The stole me from a lifetime, My heritage. My home./ My family. My identity./.../ To find my heritage; my family./ My home and identity./ To find the person who was lost to me. Me... the Aborigine! (Kendall et al., 1995)

The above lines represent the pain of an Aborigine whose identity has been stolen in the name of colonisation. This was the result of an assimilation policy in which the Aboriginals were forced to adopt the culture of the white. Removing Indigenous Australian children as a part of colonial expansion is an ongoing phenomenon because the struggle to identify the Aboriginal identity continues to date (Haebich, 2000). “The Stolen Generation survivors will be aged 50 years and above by 2023” (Healing Foundation, n.d.). The stolen aborigines were in depression because of separation, and it leads to bad faith.

2.1 Methodology

The research is based on a qualitative approach, and it helps to analyse the current study of the novel *True Country* by Kim Scott. The paper examines the interpersonal needs of the Aboriginals using Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs Theory”. This theory pursues attaining different levels of human needs resulting in the self-actualization of an individual. The research demands the Aboriginal necessities which were explained using the Aboriginal voices. This includes elderly persons like Fatima, Gabriella, Milton, and Sebastian, for the study. This study analyses the oral accounts within the chosen literary work to illustrate the process of reclamation of the Aboriginal needs.

2.2 Knowledge Gap

A lot of scholarly research has been carried out on the literary work entitled *True Country*, exploring various themes relating to the sufferings experienced by native Australians. These studies have been conducted by various researchers and academicians. The literary exploration focuses on the individual needs of the Aborigines in Australia which reminds of the unexplored path of the primary source. This paper focuses on the challenges encountered by Aboriginal people in reclaiming their individual needs that have been lost during European colonisation. The novel has been analysed based on Maslow’s ‘Hierarchy of Needs Theory’ in the select work of Kim Scott’s *True Country*.

2.3 Theoretical Background

To illustrate the theory, the researcher first explains various human needs. From a theoretical perspective, human needs are a collection of

long-term physiological and psychological goals. It often refers to the motives behind the thought process which further leads to the transformation in human behaviour. Needs can also be used as a medium to attain certain goals or social standards that allow individuals to succeed or possess well-being. The motive is to understand how human actions are determined by the desire to meet the demands of the individual. Needs in the context of societal standards are the essential factors that individuals must possess to avoid significant damage and get involved in society. Individuals consider the factors that contribute to attaining an appropriate standard of living (such as employment, funds healthcare, and identity) as necessary requirements or conditions required to achieve the goal (Guillen-Royo, 2014).

Driven by the innate needs of humans, Maslow constructed a pyramid entailing a hierarchy of needs that comprises a five-level model of human needs. Abraham H. Maslow (1908–1970) was one of the most prominent psychologists and was recognized as the fourteenth most commonly discussed psychologist in introductory psychology books. Based on several factors, some academicians labeled Maslow as the 10th most prominent psychologist of the 20th century (Bogenhold, 2009). He proposed the Hierarchy theory in 1943 and the theory was identified as one of the most prevalent in the fields of psychology. To elaborate on the pyramid of Maslow, psychological needs are positioned at the bottom level of the pyramid. This level holds the basic needs of humans such as food, water, air, sleep, warmth, and shelter. Safety needs are positioned at the second level of the pyramid which incorporates protection, safety, law, order, and freedom. The third level of Maslow's pyramid signifies the belonging needs representing human desire like friendship, love, family, and love. The fourth level of the pyramid represents esteem needs which include the need for self-respect such as confidence, independence, freedom, glory, recognition, attention, dignity, and reputation. The top layer of Maslow's pyramid is "Self-actualization" which refers to the continuous desire to develop the individual's potential (Celestine, 2023).

The five-stage pyramid exemplifies the hierarchical structure of human needs within a society, emphasising the importance of fulfilling basic individual needs. Once the fundamental needs have been met, the individual attains the epitome of the hierarchy, known as Self-actualization. Every individual possesses an innate ability and a constant desire to progress within the system of hierarchy toward achieving self-actualization. Unfortunately, the inability to fulfil essential requirements often hinders an individual's progress. Similarly reorganising among hierarchical structures has the potential to cause major shifts in the lives of the individuals. The position of an individual in the hierarchy may shift as a result of life events such as divorce and unemployment.

Based on the observations of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs self-actualization can be achieved by less number of people in society. The theory emphasises motivation based on the appreciation of self-actualization since our society supports the driving factors based on appreciation, affection, and other societal requirements. This will further highlight the necessity of an individual and their social identities. With reference to the context, the researcher expounds on Australian aboriginal literature to correlate with the above-mentioned theory in the following arguments. Before delving into the topic, the researcher illustrates a short note on the novel through which the reclamation of lost aboriginality is enhanced.

3. Discussion

3.1 True Country

The novel *True Country* is a combination of autobiographical fact and fiction, where the protagonist Billy is the voice of the author Kim Scott. The novel explores the journey of a writer who is also a teacher and delves into the process of tracing his Aboriginal identity, roots, and cultural heritage. Slowly the voices of other Aboriginals take over the narrative voice in tracing the lost Aboriginality of the protagonist and the community. Through the novel, the author realizes the quest for the Aboriginal identity of the people in the Karnama region who are equally obscured and powerless in reclaiming their Aboriginality.

3.2 Applying Maslow's Theory in True Country

As mentioned in the above paragraph, it is well-known that the Australian Aboriginals were considered the natives of the land, who were later recognized as the victims of European colonisation. These marginalised aborigines were known as the Stolen Generation. The displacement of the natives resulted in the pain of separation and deprivation due to the impact of colonisation. The Aboriginals have expressed their struggles in the form of oral narrative which emphasized the importance of self-actualization.

Every individual must practice the basic needs in the hierarchy, starting from the physiological needs, safety needs, belonging needs and esteem needs to achieve the self-actualization needs that posit at the top layer of the hierarchy pyramid. Within the context of Australian literature, the natives weren't provided with the fundamental requirements for survival, which belonged to the basic level of the hierarchy pyramid. Upon recognising a necessity, the Aboriginal population began articulating their requirements through oral narratives and subsequently documenting them in written form.

To substantiate the Aboriginal needs, the above-mentioned novel *True Country* by Kim Scott brings out the transformation in the Aboriginals in attaining the self-actualization of the Stolen Generation. The research paper focuses on reclaiming the lost Aboriginality of the Stolen Generation by analysing the folktales of the Australian Aboriginals, using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.

3.3 Physiological Needs

In the introductory part of the novel, the protagonist Billy is getting ready to record the Aboriginal stories for the upcoming native generation. The Aboriginal stories were passed on through traditional oral methods by the Aboriginal elders who were prior subjects of the assimilation policy. These stories have generated the attributes of determination, compassion, and empathy in acknowledging the history of Aboriginal Australians. Over time, these elders began to recount traditional Aboriginal narratives from the past which was

recorded by Billy as a part of reclaiming the Aboriginality. Fatima, an elderly member of a community claiming to be part of the Stolen Generation, recounts the historical narrative of the Aboriginal people. "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..." (Scott, 1993, p. 34). Fatima elucidates the historical account of the stolen generation, a group of individuals who were subjected to cultural and essential deprivation, including restrictions on their diet, sleeping, and outfits. Additionally, Fatima highlights the coercive imposition of regulations by the white government upon these Aboriginal individuals.

Fatima disseminated a briefing regarding the policy of dominant white determinants, wherein she highlights the hardships of Aboriginal children who were exclusively educated in the English language within the confines of the mission. "We didn't know how to speak the language. We forget about our language. We talk in English. I forgot all about our language" (p. 38). The declining popularity of the language adheres to the fading of cultural heritage among Aboriginal individuals who were raised within the confines of a mission. Language plays a crucial role in the construction and expression of individual identity within a given community. Felson's (1985) study has demonstrated that barriers in communication can result in a misinterpretation of the goals and intentions of other individuals. Aboriginal individuals residing in the mission were subjected to restrictions on the use of their native languages, as well as limitations on their customary attire.

"I grew up in mission. They didn't tell us nothing, they hide the clothing. They don't like me to stay with them. Not like here now they live with their parents" (p. 35-38). Fatima discloses how she was exposed to attitudes during her term as an individual of Aboriginal descent in the mission. Moreover, she unveils the prohibition imposed on the Aboriginal people, which prevented them from establishing familial bonds, communicating in their native language, and sharing living spaces. "She followed them to where they stopped to have something to eat and drink. They gave her some meat and bread which she took but wouldn't eat" (p. 45). Aboriginals residing in the mission experienced a state of isolation concerning all facets associated with their Aboriginal cultural heritage. Psychologist Lichtenstein (1963) defines identity as a principle that should be held and nurtured at all costs by any individual. For several years following the European colonisation Australians aboriginals were prohibited from consuming traditional Aboriginal eating and drinking. Instead, they were supplied with non-indigenous sustenance such as meat and bread, which appeared to conflict with their standard dietary habits.

The differences in food choices vary between tribes, regions, and communities within the same village; yet, the stories behind these limits are similar amongst regional groups that share common clans. But the choices between the two different groups are contradictory. According to Smith (2016), the fundamental human requirements are food, shelter, health, and procreation are essential for life. The factors mentioned above which were forcefully taken from the Aboriginals, were regarded as essential elements of the physiological needs of individuals. Physiological requirements are individual fundamental demands that are essential for human survival in any culture across mankind. Without human fundamental needs in civilization, the human species or human civilisation would ultimately become extinct. Indeed, fundamental needs are essential for the survival of human life in society.

3.4 Safety and Protection

The second category of the pyramid is related to the protection and sustenance of the individual, as outlined in the fundamental requisites. The elements of the pyramid concentrate on chaotic events, interpersonal encounters, societal struggles, and threats in the human world. Other examples such as stressful conditions, emotional difficulties, social disruption, disputes, revolts, disagreements, economic chaos, riots, violence, abductions, and murders. These factors contribute to a lack of harmony, which has an adverse effect on the harmonious existence of individuals from various cultures in the current human environment.

To illustrate the same in Australian Aboriginal literature, the researcher has quoted from the novel, which depicts physical abuse suffered by both male and female members associated with the Stolen Generation Aboriginal community. "And this man cut that rope! This white bloke told him, told the husband, this Aborigine man, 'Climb up there and take rope to tie it with.' The aborigine man climbed up to the top of the sails on the rope. And this man cut the rope. This white bloke cut the rope". (Scott, 1993, p. 167). The Indigenous population experienced a lack of basic security, as they were subjected to acts of plunder, looting, and violence at the discretion of the colonial narrative.

"In 1965 an indigenous principal write at length, under a single globe in a hot insect-ridden night, of an eight-year-old girl sexually involved with several old men in the old people's camp on the other side of the river." (Scott, 1993, p.94). These statements indicate that indigenous women and children were subjected to acts of physical aggression against their own will. These White landholders engaged in acts of severe torture against the Aboriginal population, while simultaneously imposing strict restrictions on their movement across state boundaries. Santrock (2011) claims that the primary goal of safety should be to protect people's well-being by assuring that they are safe from violence and other inappropriate behaviour. The presence of various uncertainties can indicate stressful circumstances, interpersonal problems, sociocultural disruptions, and physical and psychological threats, all of which have an impact on harmonious living within various societal groups.

"Those camps are places of disease, filth, and full of uncivilized people. It is obvious to me that for the good of the children's education, they must not associate with the old people" (p. 94). Individuals assign high value to their lives when they experience complete observations of living conditions (Diener, Suh, & Oishi, 1997). The Aboriginals were experiencing waves of frontier violence and disease decimating the Aboriginal population. The welfare authorities who took Aboriginal children from their families induced disease which was widely spread among the colonized Aboriginals. The Australian Aboriginal individuals who were relocated to the colonial settlement

not only experienced a loss of their Aboriginal cultural identity but also encountered significant challenges to their personal safety and overall welfare. The concept of human identity was notably absent within Aboriginal communities.

The primary objective of the assimilation policy was to promote the gradual incorporation of the Aboriginal population into the white community through a deliberate process of enforced eradication. The Indigenous population lacked access to the fundamental resources required to sustain their own livelihoods, resulting in a state of deprivation and vulnerability. The deliberate elimination of individual needs was interpreted as a strategy designed to weaken the resilience of the indigenous culture. With regard to the context of Aboriginal literature, Hope and Timmel (1995) observe that needs and desires are more fundamental and significant than others under Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. In every community of a society, it is, therefore, permissible to prioritise the most fundamental and essential human needs before addressing other needs.

3.5 Social Needs

Followed by the fundamental physiological needs, the hierarchy of needs model proceeds to address social needs, which pertain to an individual's desire to belong to a specific group and expect receptivity from other people in the group. The third need highlights the importance of the love and belonging need, which relates to the innate human desire for psychological well-being and connection within various social contexts, such as familial relationships, work groups, and other forms of social interaction. This requirement is fulfilled once an individual's preceding needs have been met.

In the Australian context, it can be observed that the Aboriginal population did not receive adequate levels of hospitality, love, and affection. Aboriginal communities and families are often identified as dismantled families. This issue has an adverse effect on the sexual health of Indigenous children and adolescents, maintaining a cycle of abuse. Sexual abuses among Aboriginals are widespread and are commonly endured by individuals of their respective communities. One distressing part of Aboriginal health is related to sexual health and abuse, concerning a particular focus on the vulnerability of children. According to Mulwa (2008), individuals who experience a sense of security are more likely to participate in social groups where they receive love and appreciation. Individual experiences a sense of safety and security when they possess a sense of belonging within their respective social category. Furthermore, the assessment of an individual's subjective well-being can be measured by evaluating the quality of life in the context of their social categorization. The author exemplifies the aboriginal's quality of livelihood and the impact of hegemony.

In terms of the Australian context and its reference to the mentioned novel, the character Franny in the novel was exposed to the charging of Whites' dominant conduct. "Franny is about to fall onto the soft seat of the car.....Oh, he was black! Aborigine! They hit him, kicked him, punched him. He was like a bag, he didn't fight back." (Scott, 1993, p. 238). Franny experienced severe physical violence at the holdings of Whites after being recognised as an individual of Aboriginal descent. This led to an increased feeling of vulnerability towards the cultural practises and norms of the white population. The basic needs of the Aboriginals had been forcefully grabbed by the means of racial politics of the whites and were expecting to get served only as whites. The white population imposed restrictions on Aboriginal concepts like love, familial attachment, and group affiliations. The Aboriginal emotional standards were neglected signifying that the Aboriginal habitation was unfit for the colonial environment. According to the Whites, the authority and integrity of an individual and their recognition in society were historically determined by their complexion.

According to Rancati (2008) labelling one's mixed feelings of disruptions, uncertainty, distress, and depression may cause people to feel insecure. Indeed, it is significant to state that certain impressions (natives' subjective fear of criminal activity) might be even more prominent in huge housing communities, in which a significant number of residents explicitly identify their environment as dangerous. Relationships between partners, friends, and family members are often controlled by alien emotional states and cognitive choice biases which makes social attachments different from familial attachments. They are linked to each other which triggers the emotional reactions associated with distinguishing the hierarchy of motives (Kenrick, et al., 2010). Motives are established on the basis of an individual's needs, which can be fulfilled across various levels. In this literary work, Billy endeavours to enhance the fundamentals of Aboriginal culture. He incorporates diverse Aboriginal perspectives with the intention of promoting the well-being and development of the Aboriginal community. The author employs various narrative techniques that enhance the overall coherence and integrity of the novel. The novel incorporates multiple perspectives that unify the central theme of colonialism and presents diverse viewpoints that contribute to the story which enriches the narrative. This approach effectively underscores the authenticity and reliability of the depicted colonial experience. The subsequent character in the novel Gabriella, is an Indigenous woman who was raised in the mission and received formal schooling. Currently, is actively involved in assisting her community in the Karnama region, working alongside Billy.

"Gabriella has been looking at him. Her face is very serious and gentle, and Billy feels grateful, even before she speaks. Are you writing up the old people stories yet? You're the man for that all right. Billy, you're the man for that" (Scott, 1993, p. 194). An individual like Gabriella demonstrates a willingness to meet requests for assistance and exhibits a desire to assist those who possess acquired skills. She detached the self from social positions, yet they possess distinct skills and competence. According to Henrich and Gil-White (2001), the physiological variation in the social position of humans may develop from both physical power and threat. Gabriella's endurance is the knowledge that she acquired in her life and the greatest threat was the days spent on the mission. She looks at Billy and feels grateful for the skilled personality who initiated in bringing out the lost Aboriginality. Billy one such person believed that these stories would help in carrying the histories of the past which makes him feel both emotional and pride in reclaiming the stories through the procured Aboriginal knowledge. According to Šakan, Žuljević, and Rokvi (2020), attaining one's uttermost level of well-being may depend on how well one

meets or fails to satisfy their fundamental psychological needs.

3.6 *Esteem Needs*

The next layer, referred to as the upper second layer, refers to the esteem needs of an individual, which exhibit a dualistic nature. The initial category is linked to self-esteem needs, encompassing aspects such as self-assurance, self-possession, competence, and related attributes. The second set of demands pertains to the importance placed on one's position, reputation, and recognition. This phenomenon represents a distinct form of self-indulgence that demands acknowledgment. According to Maslow's hierarchy, esteem needs are categorised as the fourth level includes: self-esteem, mastery, and independence, along with status domination, prestige, and managerial responsibilities. In the third and fourth sections, Maslow presents a conceptual framework for understanding individuals who exist within a collective environment and are interconnected within a societal structure characterised by various socio-psychological elements. Socio-psychological aspects connect to an individual's significant job that relies on their optimistic outlook on life. Billy presumed the role of a teacher in the Karnama region despite possessing no prior familiarity with the community or its state of being. He started collecting the histories of the aboriginal land, its people, and the colonial consequences from the aboriginals through traditional oral narratives. He succeeds in educating the people of Karnama about their history. And he helps the natives to connect themselves with the people and external world based on social and psychological factors.

“But then there’s not just Aboriginal people in there....’ ‘Yeah. I know, but I mean, maybe its been kept alive more...’ But. But maybe we gotta be the same so’s we can make people remember that we belong here. And we got something to tell. For a long time. This whole big Australia land bind us. And we fragments of a great..... A Dream time” (Scott, 1993, p. 193).

Anyanwu et.al (1985) claims that the attainment of recognition and dignity needs frequently occurs when an individual experiences a sense of ease and belongingness within a social collective. However, the Aboriginal population did not experience a sense of ease or belonging within the confines of the Aboriginal settlement mission. Upon recognising their defeat, the Indigenous people began expressing their emotions through their traditional oral narratives. The indigenous individuals collectively recalled their personal experiences and proceeded to participate in intergroup discussions related to their familial customs, which were also subject to extensive discourse within the community. Through this Aboriginal story, Scott also rediscovers the superiority of oral tradition over the written form through the character named Gabriella.

She liked writing poems. She wrote a lot of poems about Karnama and She said they gave her Aboriginal Literature to read. Her voice inserted quotation marks. She said it was dreaming stories, and they weren’t so good to read, not like being told them... or it was history stuff. Or sometimes just like any old story, but with black people. Or off-white people. (p. 91)

From the above-mentioned lines, the author delineates Gabriella as an individual who has authored numerous poems centered on Karnama region, with the intention of enhancing the well-being of people. The lines signify the protagonist's diligent endeavour to collect the Aboriginal narrative from an elderly individual who is a member of the Stolen Generation. The traditional tale is transmitted orally among various Aboriginal individuals scattered across the world. The transmission of historical knowledge is achieved through the medium of oral narration, which subsequently evolves into written documentation, reflecting the desire for self-affirmation. According to Onah (2015), when people meet their social needs, they focus on things like prestige, appreciation, self-esteem and recognition, self-respect, and social status, among other things about one’s growth in the future.

Various factors play a significant role in encouraging individuals' confidence, thereby facilitating the enhancement of their quality of life in their respective societies. The importance of recognition, esteem, admiration, and appreciation within a community or society can be displayed in the form of self-esteem and the pursuit of prestige within communities. Individuals are motivated to contribute effectively towards collective growth in human civilization through the desire to seek respect, recognition, status, and esteem. Similarly, the Australian Aboriginals demanded recognition and respect which started to evolve with the emergence of Aboriginal literature. This literary tradition is closely linked to the concept of individual self-actualization, thereby emphasising an enhanced feeling of personal responsibility.

3.7 *Self-Actualization*

In Maslow's hierarchical theory of needs, self-actualization is positioned at the top of the pyramid. In order to achieve growth, it is necessary to meet basic requirements at a lower level. Upon successful fulfilment of these requirements, individuals may potentially attain the highest point of personal development commonly referred to as self-actualization. The desire to achieve one's complete abilities is the underlying motivation. The attainment of self-actualization was observed in the protagonist Billy, as he experienced the process of Aboriginal reclamation in the novel. Throughout this transformative journey, the individual gains an in-depth knowledge of the geographical terrain, inhabitants, and historical background of the region. Consequently, the protagonist achieves a sense of personal value and significance by completely embracing the cultural, ethnic, and moral principles inherent in the Aboriginal heritage. “Why are you here? She asked me. ‘Because I wanted to. I think I wanted, I’m of... my grandmother.... My great grandmother must have been Aboriginal, like you, dark. My grandmother is part .. my father told me, but no one...’ ‘So, maybe that’s a part.’” (Scott, 1993, p.95)

These lines depict the thoughts expressed by the central character, Billy, who identifies as part-Aboriginal, as he endeavours to assist his community by reclaiming his own sense of identity as an Aborigine. The concept of self-actualization involves to the cultivation and realisation of the inherent capabilities of individuals within a structured and organised community. The primary goal is to enhance

performance, proficiency, and accuracy in order to enhance the quality of life for individuals within the community. Mulwa (2008) posits that development, in its comprehensive scope, focuses on the liberated power of human potential in society. The primary emphasis in this situation is to develop human abilities and aptitudes in order to preserve the human desire for self-empowerment, thereby enhancing the quality of life for individuals.

Little by little aborigines going down. Drinking and dying. Making circles, littler and more little. We don't like looking, and seeing it that way. We want to fly up again. They can't forget about our roots, they can't leave behind and go to the white man roots. That no good".....That's all we say. That's what we ask. That's what Billy should write down and show those kids (Scott, 1993, p. 144)

The Indigenous views of the past were translated based on natives' demands from the Aboriginal people's personal histories. During the Middle Ages of the twentieth century, the Aboriginals began to articulate their historical narrative, showcasing advancements in theoretical and methodological approaches within the disciplines of anthropology and history. The narratives pertaining to Aboriginal peoples were filled with anecdotal accounts that have played a pivotal role in the development of Australian Aboriginal literature. The state of self-actualization was achieved by the Aboriginal population upon their initiation of efforts to safeguard the authenticity and integrity of Aboriginal historical narratives.

See? Now it is done. Now you know. True country. Because just living, just living is going downward lost drifting nowhere, no matter if you be skitter-scatter dancing anykind like mad. We gotta be moving, remembering, singing our place little bit new, little bit special, all the time. We are serious. We are grinning. Welcome to you (p. 299)

Towards the end of the novel, Billy the protagonist feels a kind of re-birth. Initially, the desired solution remains undisclosed to the individual but in the end, the cloud lifts and reveals to him the "True country" (p. 299). This exemplifies the process of self-actualization, wherein the individual experiences a sense of pride upon achieving a strong connection to their Aboriginal identity. Self-actualization, according to Onah (2015), is the desire to achieve a person's full potential so that he or she may become the greatest in enabling the capability suitable for society. Self-actualization, alternatively referred to as "self-realization," occurs when an individual makes a deliberate choice to realise and employ their concealed abilities, strengths, and potentials within the context of society.

4. Findings and Solution

The findings from this study exemplify that the self-actualization of an individual is important in defining their needs as it invokes significant improvement in attaining self-identity. Developing a sense of belonging demands satisfying long-term physiological and psychological requirements. Both of these needs can be obtained when an individual observes their desires in a way that assists to satisfy the fundamental needs. This approach was feasible for the Australian Aboriginals using multiple Aboriginal narratives to recover their individual needs which were later transcribed into various written forms. These Aboriginals have started to exploit their needs with the people around them, using oral narratives to avoid further exploitation of Aboriginality. Through these narratives, the Aboriginals have facilitated their individual needs by attaining self-actualization.

5. Conclusion

The researcher portrays the struggles of aboriginal reclamation to recognize the significance of self-actualization using Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs Theory'. This theory serves as a theoretical construct aiming at comprehending and evaluating human needs. Maslow's theory claims that human behaviour is driven by a hierarchy of needs to advance from basic to intricate.

Individuals develop a sense of belonging to the social class within which they belong to. Also, a person's identity is formed by society and its environment. The purpose of this hierarchy is to demonstrate the fundamental physiological needs so that the individuals can progress to higher levels of requirements. As each level is achieved, individuals are motivated to achieve the subsequent level. It is essential to emphasize, that not all individuals will attempt to achieve self-actualization because it is subjective to an individual in achieving the goal. Understanding and employing this hierarchy can assist people and groups in addressing the various needs of individuals and establishing environments appropriate to personal development and well-being. Both Individuals and society can work towards satisfying a peaceful environment by recognizing and addressing such needs.

In addition to the Australian context, the Aboriginals have necessitated the need for identity by expressing their memoirs to the world. This interpretation illustrates the recognition of the struggles faced by the natives in achieving their basic psychological needs to inherit their self-identity in the novel *True Country* by Kim Scott.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest

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

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