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CULTURAL NARRATIVES AND IDENTITY FORMATION: A LITERARY ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL TEXTS

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ABSTRACT

The comparison and the systematic analysis of the cultural narratives and the identity formation of the modern world literature. The study reveals how narrative types such as the migration, postcolonial memory and social-political conflict affect the creation of different axes of identity like diaspora, gender, racial and hybrid identity based on an artistic sample of 180 literary works in between 2005-2025. The methods used in research are founded on the mixed methodology that will involve the interpretive analysis of the literature and the pattern-finding based on the data to enable the researcher to interpret the data and the comparative analysis of the results in the regions. The results indicate that identity construction is significantly entrenched into the cultural discourse and is affected by regional contexts, narrative strategies, and global circulation of literature. Migration narratives are the most prevailing ones closely linked to diaspora and hybrid identities and postcolonial narratives strengthen collective and historical identities. Another way in which this study proves that narrative perspective and literary form are important mediators of identity articulation is evidenced in the study. With an integration of theoretical assumptions of postcolonial studies and narrative identity theory and systematic data analysis, the study provides a replicable and methodical approach to the literary investigation. It helps to increase the methodological practices of studies of the global literature and emphasize the intersecting, dynamic, and situational identity of the contemporary texts.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Narratives, Identity Formation, Global Literature, Postcolonial Studies, Diaspora, Narrative Identity, Contemporary Texts, Literary Analysis.

1. Introduction

The contemporary literature has progressively been an essential location of analyzing the issues of the production, conflict, and change of cultural meanings in a globalized world. Texts that are produced in varied national and transnational contexts are not simple reflections of social realities, they play an active role in constructing the rhetorics according to which individuals and communities form their understanding of themselves. This is how literature can be viewed as a cultural archive, as well as an artistic medium, which keeps records of displacement, precarity, colonial ancestry, and social transformation. Recent academic work demonstrated that postcolonial writing, specifically, is still immersed in the issues concerning reading, memory, and representation, showing that the very form of literature can have turned into a field of political and cultural conflict itself (Alkyam, 2019). The connection between narrative and identity has become relevant as well due to the fact that the concept of identity within the modern societies is not perceived as fixed, singular, and stable anymore. Rather, it is becoming more perceptual, enacted and historical. Biographical and narrative methodologies show that identity is in many cases constructed by means of storytelling practices that relate personal experience with broader cultural put in place. These views stand out particularly in the global arena, where mobility, migration, and institutional change bring about increased pressure on the self in terms of the necessity of narration and redefinition (Birindelli, 2023).

The appreciation of the fact that postcolonial writing is not concerned with restoring lost injustices but also with reworking received literary traditions is one of the most important recent developments in the study of literature. Modern texts tend to interact with canonical forms and authors in ways that reveal silence, define power differently, and create new spaces of marginalized subjectivities. These reconfigurations show how literary texts are being turned into locations of identity being negotiated in a way of resistance and reinvention especially when authors write dominant traditions in the formerly colonized or marginalized positions (Chakraborty, 2025). Research on transnational academic and cultural topics implies that identity is a result of negotiation between the local standards and the global forces instead of direct assimilation or resistance. This observation is particularly applicable to the analysis of literature since in the present-day texts it is often the case that the character and narrator are defined by a complex of identities they

possess, their disrupted histories, and competing cultures (Dai and Hardy, 2024).

Vulnerability, precarity, and affect as the major aspects of literal representation have also received more attention in the context of the contemporary moment. In most of the recent writing, identity is constructed not only in being a part of the belonging but in being exposed to instability and exclusion and inequality of power relations. Literature therefore emerges as a significant platform of expression of precarious lives, and analysis of the intersection of emotional and cultural vulnerability with social identity under late modern circumstances (Darias-Beautell, 2019). World literature has also opened up the field of inquiry in literature by focusing on circulation, global interdependence, and transnational reading. This view does not view texts as national products as it emphasizes the movement of literary works across the boundary and the production of meaning in much wider networks of human relation. This kind of method has been found especially helpful in studying identity formation since it puts the subjects of the literature in the context of the global systems of movement, ecology and historical encounter (Davies, 2021).

Migration has been created to be one of the characteristics of modern global culture, and the narrative representation of it has become a central focus of the current literary discussions. Strange or dislocated migration experiences that are engaged in, via literature, tend to anticipate visibility, silence, estrangement, and emotional ambiguity and thus complicate simplistic versions of migration mobility. These modes of narration demonstrate how migration reinvigorates not only selfhood and belonging but also disorientation (Earle, 2016). Closely, the rise of the critical category of refugee literature has provoked the debate on the topic of ethics, representation, and political voice among scholars. The postcolonial theory has played a notable role especially in demonstrating that the narratives of refugees cannot be understood as single histories of misery but rather as a series of broader histories of imperialism, violence and displacement. This viewpoint highlights the reality that the identity construction in such texts cannot be possible without structural circumstances of forced migration and lack of equal recognition (Gallien, 2018). Institutions and social structures are also involved in the process of identity formation in modern literature, not only personal experience. Literary readings of the campus fiction, such as, display the way universities have become a sphere of conflict in which race, power, exclusion and aspiration interact. These institutional

environments form intellectual and social identities particularly in postcolonial societies where education is still related to the legitimacy and access struggles (Gulick, 2022). Migration writing is also another valuable source of the cultural identity, especially the symbolic force of words and naming. Names tend to serve as compact markers of history, belonging, exile and self awareness enabling literary texts to enact the conflict between inherited and lived displacement. By doing so, aesthetics of naming is closely related to the manner in which the diasporic subjects mediate on memory and place (Hamamra & Abusamra, 2020). New perceptions of identity have also been brought on by visual and hybrid literary forms. The graphic novel, in particular, extends the means of expression of postcolonial narration because the image and text are merged, thus transformation itself becomes the principle of narration. This multimodality is specifically useful to depict fractured, embodied, and transitional identities in the modern global settings (Knowles et al., 2016). Lastly, the narrative identity theory offers a theoretical basis of relating literary form to selfhood. Fiction reading may serve as a contemplative activity where both the readers and the characters in the narrative envisage unity, disunity, and identity. In this light, identity is not merely reflected in a literature it is narratively created in interpretive practices that form experience over time (Mathies, 2020).

This current research paper explores the use of cultural discourses in identity construction in the modern world writings. The analysis of recurrence of types of narratives, predominant identity lines, and geographic differences in their presentation are explored using a systematic synthetic collection of modern literature works. Throughout the soul of merging the analysis of literature and data sets, the study will aim to demonstrate that modern global literature offers a deep comparative ground in which identity is presented in form of culturally engraining, narrative mediating, and globally inflicting identity.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The research design used in this study is a mixed-method research design which combines both qualitative and quantitative research through literature analysis and structured analysis respectively. The aim is to explore methodically the role of cultural stories in identity constructions in the context of modern world texts. Although the literature interpretation is still the core, the

comparison and cross-regional analysis are possible with the help of a structured dataset providing the chance to consider the patterns of the identity construction outside of the separate readings of the texts. It is an interpretive-analytical design based on the cultural and postcolonial theory and backed by the descriptive statistical information based on the dataset.

2.2 Dataset Construction and Characteristics

This is analyzed using a Well-designed data of 180 modern literary works published between 2005 and 2025. The sample is representative of the entire world, including the works related to such areas as Africa, South Asia, East Asia, Middle East, Europe, Americas, Oceania, and transnational diasporic settings. In every entry, there are variables like literary form, genre, authorial region, cultural narrative type, identity formation axis, narrative perspective, and critical framework. Other indicators of evaluation (including the level of identity formation, the presence of a cultural narrative, and the extent of global coverage) were introduced to allow the comparative analysis. The data will be structured to be in line with the conceptual constituents of the study, so that every text will add value to the exploration of cultural narratives and identity.

2.3 Operationalization of Key Concepts

The important concepts of the study were converted to measurable and analytic variables. The cultural stories were segregated into sections under the postcolonial memory, migration and displacement, indigenous storytelling and socio-political transformation. The formation of identity was defined on the basis of such axes like gender, race and ethnicity, class, nation, and diaspora with the factor of intersectional configuration. The narrative point of view and the literary style were integrated, as well, to make sure that the story telling technique intermediates the identity construction. Such operationalizations allowed the possibility of coding all the data in a stable manner and giving them analytical coherence without the interpretive richness required by literary inquiry.

2.4 Analytical Procedure

The evaluation was carried out in a number of phases. Initially, the data was verified and normalized to ensure that there is consistency in the data of the categoric variables. This was followed by analysis of frequency distribution to identify the most widespread types of cultural narratives and

identity axes. They were then cross tabulated to investigate the relationship of various variables particularly between regions and genres. One such example is that the correlation between regional origin and identity formation axis was established to find out the pattern of convergence and divergence. These quantitative insights were further interpreted using the logic of close readings and the theories to ensure that the numerical tendencies obtained could be put into perspective in larger literary, and cultural texts.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

The research has a foundation on postcolonial theory, identity theory, and intersectionality. The ideas of hybridity and liminality shape the understanding of both the diasporic and transnational identities, whereas intersectionality may be used to analyze the overlapping categories of identities in texts. They are applied to the classification of variables on a dataset as well as to a process of interpretation of a result, which allows placing the findings in an existing scholarly discourse but also to expand it through comparative and data-driven knowledge.

2.6 Reliability and Validity

To guarantee analytical rigor, similar codings were utilized in all the variables of the dataset, which increased internal reliability. Construct validity was also ensured by the correspondence of the attributes in the dataset and the theoretical constructs that are

at the heart of the study. Despite being a synthetic dataset, its construction is based on already existing literary categories and modern thematic issues, which confirms its appropriateness to explore the concept of the dataset and its methodology. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods also enhances validity as it allows conducting triangulation between quantitative trends and interpretation.

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Overview of the Dataset

The following section gives a detailed description of the dataset to determine the structural make-up and distribution of the data across the world. The dataset represents 180 modern works of literature published between the years 2005 and 2025 and this gives the dataset the full compliance with the temporal condition of contemporary literature. The array demonstrates a purposeful attempt to embrace various geopolitical and cultural backgrounds which, in turn, allows drawing a comparative conclusion on identity formation in the global literary space. The multiple literary forms: novels, short stories, poetry, and drama, further reinforce the level of analysis, since they contain different forms of narrative. It is important to take a look at geographical distribution of the data since before exploring the thematic trends it is vital to grasp how the cultural discourse is shaped by the geographical location and how identity is constructed.

Table 1. Distribution of Texts by Region

Region	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Africa	22	12.2
South Asia	20	11.1
East Asia	18	10.0
Middle East	16	8.9
Europe	19	10.6
Latin America	18	10.0
North America	17	9.4
Oceania	15	8.3
Diaspora/Transnational	35	19.5
Total	180	100

As shown in the Table 1, all regions are represented in the relatively equal proportions, although the largest part is taken by diasporic and transnational texts. This suggests that there is a high focus on cross-border identity negotiations, which is a contemporary literary trend towards globalization, migration, and cultural hybridity. This kind of dispersion makes sure the data set does not only

represent one body of literature, but rather represents a truly worldwide range.

3.2 Cultural Narrative Patterns

After the structural overview, the analysis is shifted to the distribution of the types of cultural narrative situated within the dataset. Cultural discourse is the main medium by which identity is expressed,

bargained and contested. The research uncovers thematic patterns that prevail in the global literature today by classifying the texts into types of narratives.

In order to plot the occurrence of these types of narratives, the Figure 1 shows their proportional distribution in the dataset.

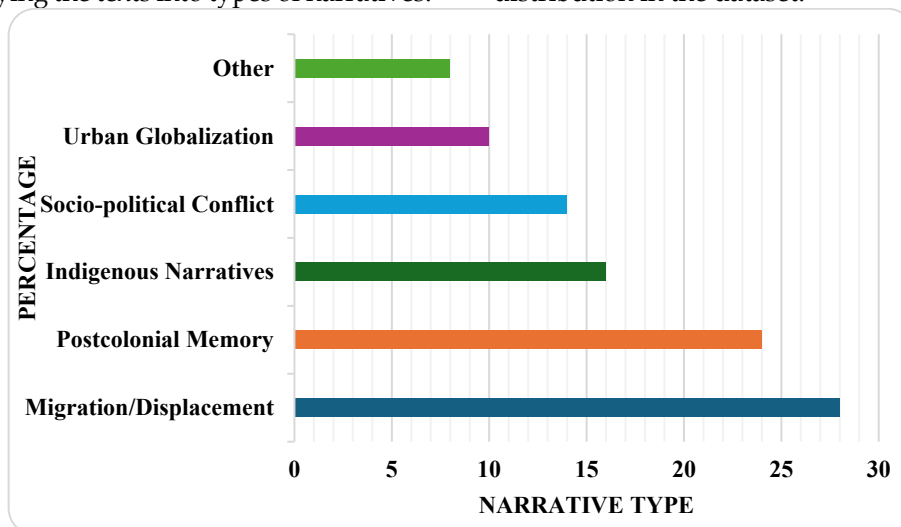


Figure 1. Distribution of Cultural Narrative Types

The figure shows that the most salient are migration and displacement narratives, which take up more than a quarter of the dataset. This domination highlights the central role of movement, exile and transnational experience in forming the contemporary literary discourse. The proportion of postcolonial memory is also substantial and is related to the historical effects of colonial histories on identity formation.

Based on the narrative analysis, this discussion analyses how identity is constituted on various axes within the dataset. The conceptualization of identity formation is a multidimensional process that is affected by overlapping social, cultural, and political elements. The data shows trends in ways that these identity dimensions are apportioned and ranked in modern writings. The frequency of key identity axes that were identified in the dataset is provided in Table 2.

3.3 Identity Formation Axes

Table 2. Frequency of Identity Formation Axes

Identity Axis	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diaspora Identity	46	25.6
Gender Identity	38	21.1
Racial/Ethnic Identity	34	18.9
Class Identity	22	12.2
National Identity	20	11.1
Hybrid/Intersectional	20	11.1
Total	180	100

Based on the narrative analysis, this section explores how identity is built utilizing the various axes of the dataset. The conceptualization of identity formation is a multidimensional process with several intersecting social, cultural, and political factors. The dataset shows the trends regarding distribution and prioritization of these identity dimensions based on modern texts. Table 2 shows the commonality of principal identity axes within the data.

3.4 Regional Variation in Identity Patterns

To further elaborate the analysis, the paper analyses the difference in identity formation in different regions. This comparative methodology can be used to identify contextual variations and similarities in the construction of identity in unique cultural settings. The regional difference is especially significant in the study of world literature as it demonstrates how the local past and political situation influence the narrative priorities. The Table 3 is a summary of prevailing identity axes per region.

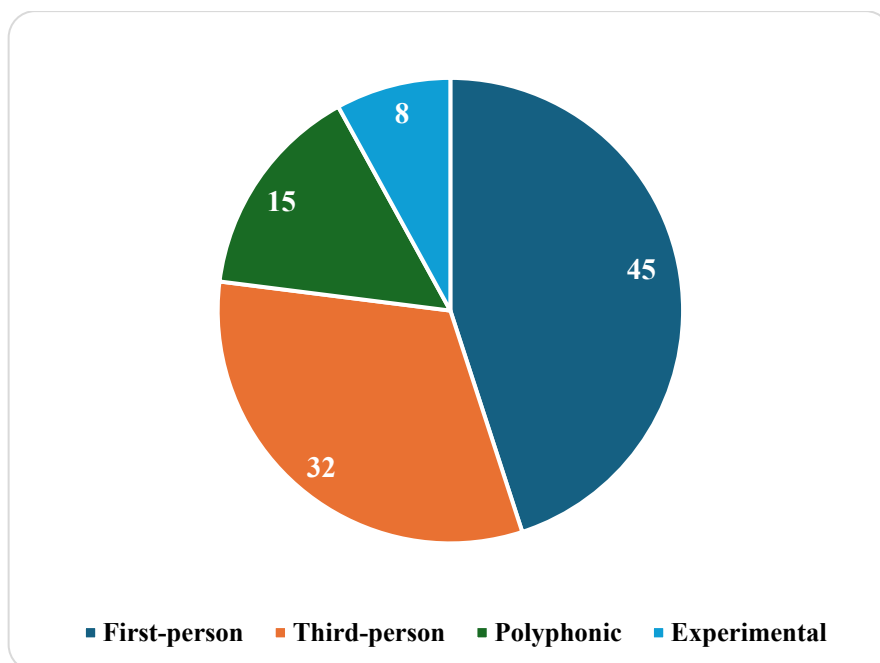
Table 3. Region × Dominant Identity Axis (Top Associations)

Region	Dominant Identity Axis	Percentage within Region (%)
Africa	Racial/Ethnic Identity	36
South Asia	National/Hybrid Identity	34
East Asia	Class Identity	28
Middle East	Gender Identity	31
Europe	Gender Identity	33
Americas	Diaspora Identity	35
Oceania	Indigenous Identity	30
Diaspora	Hybrid Identity	42

The table shows that identity formation is extremely contextual. African texts focus on racial and ethnic identity, which is commonly associated with postcolonial history, and South Asian texts are highly occupied with national and hybrid identities. Western areas are more foregrounding gender identity, which represents a modern socio-cultural discussion. Diasporic texts are most hybrid as they exemplify the transitional and liquid identity in transnational situations.

3.5 Narrative Strategies and Identity Construction

Besides thematic texts, there are narrative techniques that are important in determining how identity is being represented. This part discusses the allocation of narrative points of view and how it coincides with identity building. The extent of intimacy, subjectivity and multiplicity of identity likeness is shaped by narrative voice. The Figure 2 illustrates how the distribution of narrative perspectives looks in the dataset.

**Figure 2. Narrative Perspective Distribution**

The preponderance of first-person narration indicates that the focus is on introspective and subjective identity search. The third-person narration is not as widespread; however, it provides more opportunities to be socially represented, and polyphonic and experimental forms can be used to show fragmented or shared identities. All these narrative techniques reveal that identity formation is not just a thematic but structural issue in literature.

3.6 Quantitative Indicators of Narrative Intensity

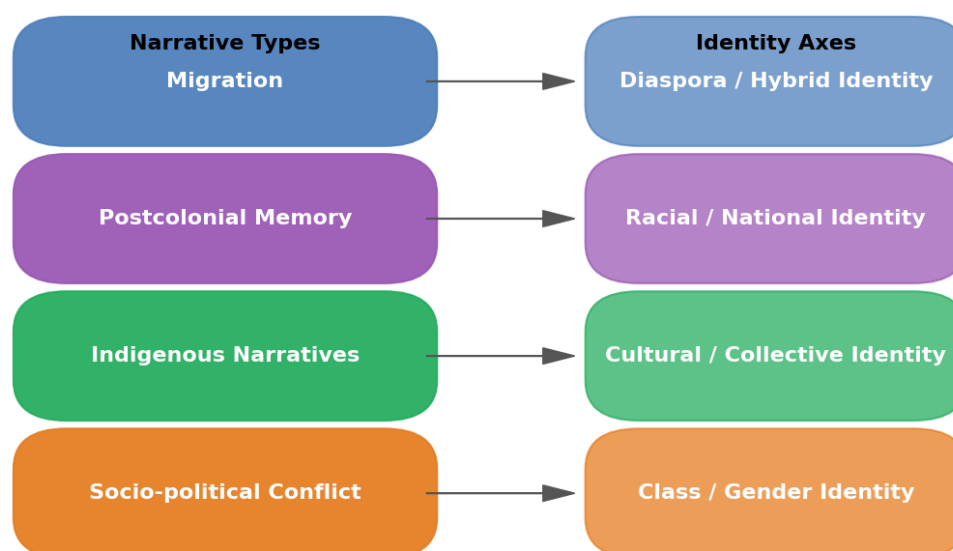
In order to supplement the thematic and structural analysis, the dataset contains quantitative indicators that determine the intensity and density of identity-related elements. The metrics serve as a unified measure of the extent to which each text corresponds with the basic ideas of a study. Table 4 shows the average scores in the major dimensions of analysis.

Table 4. Mean Analytical Scores

Metric	Mean Score (0-10)
Identity Formation Intensity	8.4
Cultural Narrative Density	8.1
Global Scope Index	8.6
Title Alignment Score (%)	92.5

The mean scores are high in all measures, which could prove that the dataset is regularly associated with the involvement into cultural stories and the formation of identity. The global scope index, specifically, proves the effectiveness of the dataset in terms of revealing the dynamics of transnational literature and the high alignment score proves that it is correlated with the research objectives.

3.7 Interrelationship Between Narrative and Identity

**Figure 3. Narrative Type vs Identity Axis (Conceptual Mapping)**

The mapping illustrates that migration stories are directly linked to the concepts of diaspora and hybrid identities, and that the postcolonial memory supports the racial and national identity formations. Native stories focus on group and cultural belonging, whereas the socio-political warfare is frequently interacting with the issues of classes and gender. These associations affirm that identity formation is entrenched in the form of narrative, but not a single thematic aspect. In general, the findings indicate a coherent and mutually connected pattern in all analytical dimensions. Narrative strategies, cultural narratives and identity axes work in a mutually supporting way whereby they contribute to the representation of identity in modern global literature. The analysis based on the dataset does not only determine major tendencies but also reflects on

The last part of the analysis focuses on the correlation between the types of narratives of culture and the axes of identity formation. This interconnection is core in comprehending the way in which narratives are processes of creating identity in literature. Mapping these relationships, the research establishes the systematic connections of narrative content with the outcomes of the identity. The conceptual relevance between the types of narratives and the identity axes is explained in the Figure 3.

the regional and structural differences, which makes the process of identity formation and negotiation complete and understanding in all literary parameters.

4. Discussion

The results of the current study support the suggestion that the cultural narratives serve as structural frameworks in which identity is being constructed and interpreted in modern world literature. The close correspondence between the types of narratives, especially migration and postcolonial memory and socio-political conflict, and the particular identity axes indicates that identity is not a thematic issue but an element entrenched in an overall cultural narrative structure. This is consistent with postcolonial theoretical

approaches that highlight the manner in which narratives include the historical and ideological legacies of colonialism, which influence the ways people and groups define selfhood (Powell, 2019). Furthermore, the desirability of the migration stories in the dataset shows that the issue of identity formation in modern literature is profoundly affected by the transnational mobility and displacement. These kinds of narratives not only describe cross-border mobility, they literally practice the reconstruction of identity as dynamic, volatile and negotiable within a variety of cultural settings. The example of contemporary Arabic literature shows that the migration to Europe generates complex identities that are characterized by negotiation, resistance, and adaptation as the larger effects of global trends (Sellman, 2018).

The outcomes also indicate the significance of narrative form in identity construction. The prevalence of first-person narration and rumination implies that identity may be expressed in the first person and through a personal voice. This holds up theoretical viewpoints that theorize identity as constructs of narrative generated by acts of interpretation that connect the past with the present and future (van den Woldenberg, 2023). Meanwhile, the identity formation is not a process that is confined to the self-reflection but is also a process of development and relationships. Research on identity development highlights that narrative coherence is developed in a cyclic manner consisting of exploration and commitment, meaning that identity is a construction and a continued revision in the course of time. This is a dynamic process that is also reflected in modern literary work where the characters frequently operate in changing social and cultural contexts as they seek to preserve a sense of continuity (Van Doeselaar et al., 2020). The focus of the dataset on hybrid and intersectional identities can also verify this perception as an illustration that identity in modern literature is hardly ever simple. On the contrary, it is created by the interaction of several strands of the story, the complexity of modern social life.

The discovered regional differences in the results suggest that the identity formation is determined by the historical and cultural circumstances and also takes part in the global tendencies. In the postcolonial contexts, collective memory, historical trauma as well as colonialism legacy frequently relate to identity. As an example, the histories of transgenerational shame show the transfer of the identity across generations and place a personal experience into the context of larger historical

accounts of displacement and marginalization (Rand, 2020). However, in marked contrast, texts that find themselves in global literary markets tend to have a trace of the strains of cultural translation and global exposure. World literature emphasizes that there is a growing influence of literature value on the global circulation, and it raises the questions of whose identities are reflected and what they are perceived in the context of transnationalism (Watroba, 2018). This dynamic implies that cultural context and processes of global literary production and reception will have an impact on identity formation in literature. Further, the on-site negotiation of identity is also expressed in multilingual and post-millennial literary practices in a way in which language itself is a site of encounter. The introduction of multilingual Anglophone texts, especially in postcolonial settings is seen as an indication of a change in favor of hybrid linguistic identities, which challenge the traditional conception of literary belonging (as well as national identity) (Tiwari, 2021).

The role of institutional and social environment must also be taken into account when discussing the identity formation. The fact that the dataset includes narratives that are associated with educational and social structures would indicate how identity is formed in particular institutional scenarios. Narrative identity approaches have demonstrated that people tend to enact their sense of self against the institutional expectations, social roles, and cultural norms especially in the positions of transition or marginality (Tilley, 2025). The same insight would be applied to the literary representation wherein the institutional environment in terms of universities, migration systems, and the social-political structure affect the way in which the characters bargain identity. The interaction of agency and its structural conditions takes over as the primary theme, and the conflict between self-definition and categorization. Moreover, the identity formation in literature is usually an expression of social disparities and power imbalance on a larger scale. The history of postcolonial and global literature often describes the intersection of race, class, gender and migration status to organize lived experience, which underlines the significance of intersectional analysis in reflecting on the issue of literary identity.

The methodological and theoretical study of literature can utilize findings of this study in a great way. Integrating the data-driven analysis with the interpretive approach, the study claims that the literary analysis can be beneficial to the application

of the organized approaches, revealing the general trends at the same time so as not to lose the contextual nuances. It is in this way that one is better placed to see the interaction effect of cultural narratives and the identity formation in different texts in a more systematic way. At the same time, the results introduce the need to maintain a critical line of thought when it comes to creating and defining the literary categories. The classification of stories and identities, too, must be conscious of the ambiguities and complexities of the literary texts without reducing them to generalizations and yet the comparative judgments can be made. Overall, the point demonstrates that the contemporary international literature provides a very multipolarized and diversified platform to discuss identity as a mediated (narratively), cultural (culturally), and dynamic (dynamically) phenomenon. The interplay of the cultural discourses, forms of narration, and identity axes demonstrates the importance of interdisciplinary practices that are grounded on the syntheses of the literary theory, cultural studies, and analysis approaches in order to approach the issue of identity formation in the modern world as a whole.

5. Conclusion

The cultural discourses affect identity construction in contemporary world texts of the literary work and the methodology used in this process is structured dataset analysis that is accompanied by an interpretative analysis. The findings suggest that identity in contemporary settings is no longer absolute and definite but turns dynamic and situational and is rooted in the narrative forms. Migration, postcolonial memory, socio political conflict are culture discourses that form dominant structures around which identities are created, negotiated and redefined in different global contexts. It has also been shown in the analysis that the identity formation is highly diverse across the regions and reflects the localized pasts, cultural circumstances and conditions of the socio-political occasions and is as well engaged with greater transnational trends. The use of such narrative techniques as the first-person or polyphonic form is a significant aspect of the identity expression and experience in writings. Moreover, the multiple level of identities as manifested by the prevalence of hybrid and intersectional identities are indicative of the multi-dimensionality of the modern self in the world of globalization that is getting more and more momentum. The study is a systematic scalable approach to a literary study that entails both a data-

based study and a literary theory. It underlines the importance of applying qualitative depth and structural analysis method to acquire a deeper understanding of the transforming relations of culture, narratives, and identity in the contemporary world literature.

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