

CONCLUSION

Both the works *Karukku* and *Sangati* present the struggle for livelihood, caste discrimination and gender discrimination. Caste and gender are so complexly linked that it is difficult to understand whether the narrator is oppressed more due to her caste or due to being a female. As Bama's suffering and struggle is representation of her community's alienation from the mainstream society, it can be observed that she herself is unjustly treated for being a Dalit. Her identity as a Christian Dalit increases the notion of social oppression.

Karukku, in short, is an autobiography in which Bama forms her personal sphere according to her own design. She searches the voice that will articulate the sufferings of her people. She regains the assurance of the confident, liberated revolt which would expose the hypocrisy and duplicity in the religious institutions like church and convent. Bama feels it is a sin to tolerate injustice silently. She takes the weapon of words to express her sorrows. She lives a hard life like other Dalits but she doesn't want to be a mute spectator. She wants economic, social and political reforms. Bama is committed to awaking the conscience of her downtrodden and marginalized people. So, it can be said that her individual voice becomes the social and communal voice.

Bama's works are written in the form of autobiography, and struggle for survival is the main theme of Dalit autobiographies. Dalit autobiographies are not only a search for true self, but these also describe the struggle faced by Dalits. There are many events which threaten the stability of the self of Dalit community. Writers question the dominance of the upper caste and depict the evolution of an individual self as well as the collective sufferings of the community.

Dalit women autobiographies react to the privileged dominance of males, focusing on socio-psychological conditions of Dalit females. Bama too is a Dalit woman and she too protests against male dominance within and outside her community. Childhood days are presented in such a way that there is not much distinction between private, public and social life. But the depiction of later years is full of caste discrimination and oppression. Above all, Dalit women make their writings a tool for reclaiming their brutalized selves and affirming their identities. These autobiographies generally describe Ambedkarite Dalit movement, participation of Dalit women in the movement, their struggle for survival, the man-woman relationship, humiliation and degradation of Dalit women.

Bama has enriched Dalit women's writings through her autobiographical narratives. Her novels give a close view of female experiences. Her novels are, therefore, a presentation about real patriarchal society and her own struggle for survival and livelihood as a woman. Bama's novels present a live picture of patriarchal hegemony within and outside Dalit community. Moreover, her works mirror the miserable conditions and subjugation of Dalit women. The violence inflicted on them by upper caste people on one side, and by Dalit men, their husbands and other relatives on the other hand, is obviously depicted in Bama's works.

Bama's autobiographies portray the conditions that brutally tear Dalit women's lives to pieces. The narrator hopes for a new society where equality and justice will prevail for all. *Karukku* and *Sangati* reflect the plights of the Dalit community and Dalit women respectively. Bama's novels are historical narratives which awake readers' mind about Dalit woman's struggle. Both of the works are powerful Dalit woman stories which

present the untold miseries of Dalit women struggle for livelihood and their courage to resist oppression. In spite of their subjugation and humiliation by their own men and upper caste people, these women possess a rare spirit and zest for life. *Karukku* is concerned with the caste discrimination within Catholic Church and its institutions, and presents the reality of church as to how in the name of religion poor people are exploited while *Sangati* is the story of struggle of whole community.

Bama's novels argue that education is the only means for Dalit empowerment. They can rise above their abject poverty and indignity only by acquiring good education. Bama is inspired by her brother Annan to get education and to raise high in life. She wants to make Dalit community aware of their rights and about the need of an organized demand for social justice. The primary motive of Bama's novels is the upliftment of Dalits and the oppressed.

She uses her writings to implore Dalits to adopt education as a certain strategy for self-empowerment and self-esteem in society. Bama's entry into academy, her presence at literary meetings, and her continuous contribution in the sphere of education as a school teacher, are various aspects of her empowerment as a woman.

Bama's novels have won critical popularity over the years. Her use of Dalit vocabulary and unconventional use of language is criticized by mainstream writers. But after thorough study of her works it can be said that her works indicate a conscious choice in terms of form, language, mode of narration, and content. Mainstream writers and critics call her language vulgar and obscene but Bama defends it by calling it the language of Dalits.

The most dominant characteristic of Bama's narratives is her hope for a bright future. At the end of every chapter in both of the books, Bama tries to make Dalit people aware to revolt against their oppressors. She makes them realize their real existence in upper class dominated society. She presents a live picture of her experiences that are heart-wrenching. She uses such sharp words that will surely knock at the door of their minds. They will realize their existence and become ready to revolt against those who humiliate Dalit community in the name of caste and religion. They make temple but they are not allowed to enter the temple. If all are equal in the eyes of God, then where is God? Where is justice? Where is equality? If Dalit people enter the temple, enter the upper caste houses they will pollute everything. If they are not human beings, wherever they go, they are treated like animals. They have no land, no better sources of income. They are compelled to do the menial jobs. They have no equal opportunities of progress in the field of education. They are always denied their basic human rights. These are some questions Bama raises in her writings.

Indeed, Bama tries her best to make Dalit community aware. She is a role model of such a woman who despite all her miseries, and caste and gender oppression proved herself and became able to strengthen her identity as a woman. Her life is a true representation of every Dalit life. She wants to make them realize that they must crush all the institutions that put Dalits down. All human beings are equal. No one is high or low. Those who have found their happiness by oppressing Dalits are not going to let them go easily. It is Dalits who have to place them where they belong and bring about a changed and fair society where all are equal.

At the end it seems justified to conclude that Bama uses her writings to console her marginalized self, and it is writing alone that helps her in living a smooth life. It is also true that the writings give her enough strength to live a life full of confidence. Although it is true that Dalits are not given adequate opportunities by the upper castes, they can resolve and address the question of livelihood and survival through education and awareness of their rights.