

A Study on Gender and Dalit identity in the novel Sangati by Bama

Sowmya. P, II M.A English, Dwaraka Doss Goverdan Doss Vaishnav College, affiliated to Madras University

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This research paper focuses on lives of those who are marginalized as well as secluded from mainstream society. And when it comes in the Indian context, it is the Dalit community who become the utmost victims of the traumas of marginalization. As a part of the literature of the marginalized, Dalit literature enabled the articulation of the growing aspirations of Dalits in a new language. This paper is an attempt to analyze the rigid caste barriers existing in the Indian society and also examines how literature has emerged as an iconic tool in sharing the hopes and

aspirations of Dalits, previously branded as 'the untouchables'. This paper also examines how Tamil Dalit Feminist writer Bama's novel *Sangati* becomes an epitome of Dalit feminist narrative. Bama is identified as the prominent Dalit feminist writer. Her narrating stories of Dalit women uncover struggles, encountering risks in life and rebellious characters. Bama's *Sangati* narrates the real stories of Dalit women in the rural region of Tamil Nadu. The art form of narration comprises the author's memories, conversation between women folk, gestures, culture and colloquial language. Bama depicts the folklore, proverbs, songs and dances to globalize the culture of Dalits. The present paper focuses on the journey of Bama as a writer to share the voices of Dalitwomen. Through her writings, she engages to document the abilities of these Dalit women to stand against all dominating authorities and lead their life with awareness. Bama's narratives represent the identity of her community and especially women's stigmatized positions and woes. She feels a sense of pride in her articulation of Dalit's women's courage, joys, taste, self and culture in the rural region of Tamil Nadu. Accepting the writing as a powerful weapon, she displays the authentic experiences of untouchability and creates assertiveness in the minds of Dalits. She collects every minute experience of Dalit community which subsides them as marginalized.

Keywords: gender violence, Indian norms, discrimination, marginalization.