

Sufferings of the Dalit women in Bama's Sangati

Roobini K
II – M A English,
Don Bosco College,
Yelagiri Hills,
roobiniswift1997@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper discuss about the sufferings of the Dalit women in Dalit literature Sangati written by Bama. Dalit Literature is a literature of the Dalit's it has written to bring about common variation and the experience is expressed in an individual system. Sangati is full of anger because of the troubles of marginalized life that cannot be expressed in the poem lines. These marginalized people who suffered from many incapacities such as Dalit suffering from untouchability, shame, domination, public suffering from poverty and hunger. Native people suffering from loss of nationality, the people suffering from lack, disorder and loss of identity. The situation of women in Dalit society is much crueller as they are ill-treated badly by the men of their community as well as by the men of the other communities. "Sufferings of the Marginalized Dalit women in Bama's Sangati attempts to show how Dalit women are marginalized and oppressed by other caste men.

Keywords: Marginalized, oppressed, dislocation, sufferings of women.

Introduction:

Bama was born in the year of 1958 and she also known as Bama Faustina Soosairaj, she is a Dalit feminist, committed teacher and novelist. Her novels are based on autobiographical novel like Karukku in 1992. In sangati bama speaks about suffering of the women and their culture. This paper examines about how the Dalit women were dominated in their culture and society. Women need to follow their rules and regulation in their society and they were marginalized in the society. The Dalit caste system is an established factor which is a shame for Indian culture its affects the socio economic and social culture system of Indian society. The Dalit's were occupy the lowest position in Indian society. Dalit literature is literature about the Dalit's and they are oppressed class under Indian caste system forms an important and different part of Indian literature. Dalit Literature emerged into importance and as a collective voice after 1960. It was starting with Marathi and soon appeared in Hindi, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil languages. Through self-narratives poems, short stories and most importantly autobiographies known for their practicality and for its contribution to Dalit politics. It is primarily a literature of demonstration and a demand of the oppressed for social equality. It focuses on fundamental human rights and

human values. Dalit writers are desirous to remove the social exploitation and caste inequalities. They wish to change the world. Through their writings, they are re-examining and redefining their place in Indian society.

This paper presents a sufferings of women and gender discrimination described by Bama in her Sangati with the special reference to the Dalit caste in India. In sangati Bama discuss about the women character of paraiyar community. Their life story has been described by her life stories. The novel starts with quote of,

“If the third is a girl to, behold, your courtyard will fill with god”

These lines describe about the author’s grandmother shows the theme of gender Here the narrator is a little girl Bama herself. She says that in her family there is no difference between the boys and the girls at the time of their birth. But when they grow up family members given more important for boys than girls. She talks about that her family members believe in the fact that it is a lucky thing for a girl to belong to the odd number and for a boy to belong to the even number. She says that her grandmother is used go all the work of confinement and she never took anything for this work, though the upper class people never called by upper caste as she belonged to a Dalit community.

“In my village it was my grandmother who attended every child birth. Only the upper caste never sent for her because she was a paraiychi”.

She says that her grandmother was very beautiful and she never fell ill but she never bore ornaments because her husband had gone. Because “she told herself she had become a corpse without a husband, and struggled single-handedly to care for two children”. Girls are not allowed to play boys game if they do so then the people abuse them if they are playing too girls must not play boys games. The boys won’t allow the girls to join with them to play, girls can play just cooking or getting married they were dominating in their caste.

Bama describe about gender discrimination by her writing;

“If a boy baby cries, he is instantly picked up and give milk. It is not so with the girl. Even with breast-feeding, it is the same story; a boy is breast fed longer, with the girl, they bear them quietly, making them forget the breast”

Bama says that even breast feeding they have given more important to boy baby for long time but the girl bear them short time and they made them to forget the breast. Girls do not have the right of education like boys. They have to suffer not only at the work field but also at home mentally and physically. When Bama asks her grandmother about the violence she says in angrily: You ask me why? Because the man was crazy with lust. Because he wanted her every single day.

How could she agree to his frenzy after she worked all hours of the day and night, inside the house and out? He is an animal, that fellow. When she refused, he practically broke her in half. Women do not speak among the men and they dare not to speak about right or wrong. They cannot eat before their husband the husband beat her up so much even though she was carrying a child- and all this torture just because she caught some crabs from the wet field and made a curry and ate it before he came for his meal”. There is no justice for them.

Mariamamma is a motherless daughter and suffered lot in her life, she has not only shamed but charged also. She tries to tell the truth in common but nobody believes her. They have believed the upper caste man in common. They have to tolerate their insult without making complaint. Here Bama give the example of Mariamma whom an upper caste fellow tries to abuse her and when she escapes from his hand she told everything to her friends they said to her;

“It is best if you shut up about this. If you who will get the blame; it is you who will be called a whore”

They are humiliated “at church they must lick the priest’s shoes and we are like his slave while he threatens them with tales of God, Heaven, and Hell. They dare not to complaint. They used to humiliate by upper caste fellows and say nothing to anybody; Arokkyam said, ‘look how unfair the fines are. Even last week when my granddaughter Paralokam went to pull up grass for the cow the owner of the field said he would help her lift the bundle on to her head. That was his excuse for holding her breasts the barbarian. He is supposed to be the mudalaali’s son. He is supposed to be an educated fellow. The poor child came and told me and wept. But say we dared to tell anyone else about it.

In *Sangati* Bama portrays the real picture of Dalit women. She describes all aspects of paraiyar women from their birth to their death. Having so many troubles they lead their life happily. Bama says that Dalit women are not only oppressed by their men but by upper castes also. Bama here makes a comparison between upper caste women and the women of her community. So she writes it is not the same for women of other castes and communities. Our women cannot bear the torment of upper caste masters in the field and at home they cannot bear the violence of their husbands. She says that in her community women are not depending on their husbands like other castes women fully depend on their husband. Paraiyar women are economically self-dependent because they earn their own money by doing work in the field. These women have some freedom, which upper caste women do not have.

Conclusion:

Bama discussed Dalit women as everywhere you look, you see disappointments and beatings, and the women were not allowed to get educate like boys. When they shame us we do get furious and frustrated, dominating by upper caste because we did not get educate or learnt anything they are living like slave all our life from the day they are born till the day they die. After describing all troubles and difficulties she suggests something for the benefit of women. They should bring up girls like showing no difference between them boys. We should make the girls to get freedom like we give our boys.

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