CHAPTER-5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings and Conclusions drawn on the basis of the previous four chapters are given below: -

5.1) Introduction: -

These women writers realized that education is the key to social transformation. In case of Afro-American women, spirituality and the wisdom to acquire education that helped them to gain identity and equality being the main key factors. The paradigm shift in their individual life which started at subhuman miserable level but at the end achieving identity and respectful status was astonishing and incredible in the sense it was for the first time and out of the world achievement, like never before in the history of these human beings who were denied the status of human and treated like worse than the animals. It is like a great landmark in the history similar to, Neil Armstrong landing on the moon or Columbus discovering America.

Thus the life stories of these women at every stage starting from childhood have many inspiring mile stones and landmarks, incidents and facts which carry a definite message which will continue to inspire the generations to come for thousands of years. The highlights of this odysseys and the message that it gives are recorded in the fifth chapter in the form of observations and conclusion. After discussing each observation analytically, the related conclusions were drawn and recorded simultaneously and sequentially. The strong comprehensive and emphatic message given by this study in the light of these selected autobiographies is given at the end.
These autobiographies are nothing but the written communication, documentation of the painful life-stories of Dalit and Afro-American women writers and truly by default it carries a universal message. Initially they were in a very miserable pedagogical situation. They initially struggled for long and later aspired, desired for a better life while suffering in the miserable state and conditions. After they came across the right ideology and strongly influenced by Dr. Babasaheb, Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr.), and Jackson and introduced to spirituality and philosophy of Lord Jesus and Buddha respectively. By following the unique path guided by these personalities, they got direction, relief and redemption from their agonizing plight. They empowered themselves by educating themselves and acquiring knowledge and wisdom.

Their achievement was a liberating process for themselves, a surprising incident for the entire society in general and very inspiring for their own community at large, which was still hibernating, in the degrading and sub-human conditions. The wide gap due to the voids, valleys and barriers of various discriminating factors like class, caste and gender, which had fragmented and weaken the society and the cost, and burden was invariably paid by the lowermost wrung of this society itself. Since they belong to the lower most class and experienced and realized the stark differences of their lives as compared with the upper class, they struggled to change their inhuman conditions.

The sensibility and the drive to change their insulting, inhuman agonizing plight of their kith and kin, gave them the chance to live dignified life like any other human beings from upper class. They got the solution through realization and liberating themselves by adopting the right path. The discovery of the human being to live dignified life just as any human being ought to live; this transformation gave equal status and rights to the slaves and the outcaste i.e. normal human beings.
Considering the inhuman treatment, the exploitation and discrimination, the Dalit and Afro-Americans had to undergo and bear in this two distinct parts of the world situated at the opposite side of the world. This transformation was not casual, simple; it was not just like achieving freedom, it was not like a change when the poor becomes the rich or a weak becomes strong but it was like a metamorphosis where different species of animal is transformed into a developed species. But unfortunately for this metamorphosis they struggled and waited for thousands of years. Only after this realization brought about by the strong influence and teachings of Lord Buddha, Lord Jesus, Dr. King (Jr.), Mahatma Phule and Dr. Ambedkar it was possible.

This kind of oppression, exploitation is unseen and beyond imagination in any living species in the world where as a matter of fact Mankind is just another kind of species. This is a paradox, irony of their lives that the fully so called developed species of the human beings with fully developed brains and minds exploited their own species and treated them like animals that is simply unbelievable which is not possible in any other species. The religion, which does not allow you to grow, does not allow the touch, which was allowed even to their animals but not to these so called according to them, inferior sub-animals, the out cast the dalits. There was no dignity as a human being, they were not given water to drink or allowed them to enter the temples or their towns, forbidden some classes to receive education and to accumulate wealth and arms (Keer, 1997, 275) In Delhi on Buddha - Jayanti in his speech stated the importance of Buddhism that is based on Moral principles. Lord Buddha regarded himself only as a guide to give a new meaning to religion.

In May 1956 Dr. Ambedkar delivered a speech on BBC London, he explained the principles for accepting Buddhism- it teaches Prajana (understanding the difference between superstition and supernaturalism), Karuna (love) and Samata
(equality) this is what man wants for good and happy life. In the speech delivered in Mumbai on 24th May 1956 interpreted why he embraced Buddhism because there is no God and soul unlike any other religion but emphasizes morality and not even Chaturvarnas and degrading caste-system either. Babasaheb embraced Buddhism as a religion that deplores inequality, untouchability and teaches equality. He linked religion with social well being of the people. “Man can not live by bread alone (Bible). He has a mind which needs food for thoughts.” (Keer, 1997, 462) The 1956 mass conversion into Buddhism was historical, cultural metamorphosis to achieve the identity for a strong, fearless society where voiceless, helpless people became aware of their basic human rights and dignified life. “Tell the slave that he is a slave and he will revolt against his slavery” They had accepted Buddhism as a way of salvation and gave them Dalits the new identity.

5.2) Similarities and Dissimilarities: --

Although the basis of discrimination was different like caste, colour and race, the basic human feelings with respect to discrimination, marginalization and inequality, the nature of their struggle was similar. Hence there are more similarities than the dissimilarities observed among these writers in their lives.

5.2.1) Dissimilarities: -

i) The Dalits had to bare inhuman, subhuman untouchability, which was so horrifying that it gave them the place even below the animals, cattle. On the other hand African- American did not suffer the untouchability. So the sufferings of Dalits are more tormenting, as they were outcaste, isolated and discriminated in their own motherland. Unlike the African – American they are not the ‘hyphenated’ (Dr. Janardan Waghmare, 2001, Preface) citizens of the country.
ii) The Dalit women writers and the African - American women writers both suffered triple exploitations namely caste, class and gender; and racial and gender respectively.

iii) The Dalit women writers were helped by Buddhist philosophy for realizing universal brotherhood, equality, identity and empowerment. It was a gift by Dr. Ambedkar to the Dalits. On the other hand the African - American women were helped by the spiritual awakening and the Methodist Church to support their ideas of brotherhood, equality and identity. The Christian Philosophy helped them to acquire equality. They lived faithful, obedient and sanctified lives.

iv) Blacks of America and Dalits of India are the people living thousands of miles away from each other. The lives of Black in USA are very much similar to that of Dalits in Maharashtra. They could overcome those dark days due to dedicated leadership, continuous struggle, love for education and sports. Dalit people are still struggling with several deficiencies. They have taken up a humble fight against all powerful multiple forces of caste, class and patriarchy. Their writings, being the depiction of ugly realities of life, do not create pleasant impression on the upper caste readers and hence are criticized as lacking any aesthetics and seemingly monotonous.

v) The untouchables of India constitute the worst part of Apartheid. The Afro-Americans are employed as household servants in Whites' houses so they are not untouchables. But in India untouchables are kept outside, segregated in all areas. Their mere touch, look, sight even thought leads to pollution. You can make out a black person from the color of the skin but not so the untouchables. Nobody can identify an untouchable by the mere skin of color. Therefore the Indian untouchability like the black problem is not a problem arising out color prejudices. It is a mental problem systematically created by the caste system to protect their selfish motives. (Rajshekher, 1987)
The problem of double exploitation caused by the systems of class, caste and gender in India almost the same as the race and gender oppression in America. The experience of slavery in the U.S. has some relevance to the system of bonded labor in India. They are tolerating miseries and sufferings to an extreme degree of poverty without complaining. It is the question of their existence and self-respect so they felt the need to struggle as established hierarchical system by denying them basic human rights and ultimately their own identity.

Dalit and Afro-American women have not born and grown up in the privileged families, learning alphabet was a struggle and being allowed going to the village school was a major triumph. All these women have a common dream of the society of justice and equality for all. They expect peace, comfort and dignified life.

Afro-American women were chosen by God but alienated, separated from and by the society. They were extremely spiritual and obedient to God. They used their Christianity to inform, instruct and educate people. Their lives and experiences help us to understand the role of religion in 19th century. These women traveled all over America and even England teaching and prophesizing the word of God. They fought the resistance and acceptance to preach and share God's word with people. They sometimes even neglected their own family. Their autobiographies are nothing but the written sermons to assert their right to preach the Gospel in a Western society that was prohibited for them. All are similar in the respect that their faith in God seemed to be the focus of their fight for equal rights as well as the ultimate source in the liberation of African-Americans. Religion provided them satisfaction and peace of mind. Pains, sufferings and indomitable hopes are the elements of their writing.
With the intensive and in-depth study of each of the six primary texts and other literature survey, the researcher has observed more similarities too mentioned in this chapter.

5.2.2) Similarities: -

i) Birth: --
The study finds some alarming facts regarding the birth of Dalit and Afro-American women writers. In case of Dalit women writers their birth was least expected because the birth of a girl-child came as a calamity. Shantabai Kamble’s father out of frustration almost decided to bury her own daughter alive. Shantabai Dani’s father was so perturbed that his entire family lost their peace of mind completely therefore he named her as Shanta, (shanti - peace) (Dani, 1980, 1). Babytai Kamble, as a child her sickness aggravated to the point of death. Her father had almost prepared for her burial/funeral. All these women writers were born when all the families were expecting boy-child so their lives started on a negative, agonizing note.

Afro-American women writers were also born in the poor families. Their parents had no time to look after them because they had to toil whole day for their living on the Whites’ plantation and farms. Anne Moody and Marian Anderson lost their father early. Jerena, Elaw and Foote were born in big families where many children were already born. (Andrews, 1956, 156) Due to poverty they were unable to take care of the children.

Conclusion – These women writers birth i. e. the begging of the life also started on a negative and agonizing note. These women writers were born in poverty stricken, superstitious, ignorant and enslaved families. The gender discrimination is evident from the above-mentioned findings. Birth of a girl child was a calamity and constant liability beyond the capacity of a father. The woman was considered
inferior, unequal and was given the lowest dignity in the caste and gender biased society. This also explains the difficulties faced by Dalit women acquiring education in the poor, caste-ridden, gender-biased society.

ii) Childhood-

Dalit women writers experienced very traumatic childhood. The school-going Shantabai Kamble and Shantabai Dani looked at with contempt and hatred and faced very strong opposition in the childhood itself when they touched the drinking water vessel or went very close to an upper caste woman walking on the road. In the school both were made to sit at the corner. Shantabai Dani experienced the same thing. She made to sit in the cowshed along with her father to eat. She had to live on a rocky barren area called Khadkali. They had to remain hungry due to the lack of food. The agonizing pain of hunger and lack of basic things like clothes and shelter made their childhood very difficult. Shantabai Kamble had to work on the other's farm and collect stale food for their living. Babytai Kamble has experienced the caste and gender bias. She described the incidents when they tried to enter the temple with her friends and people from the community they were driven out. She described the prevailing social structure in which temple entry of Dalits was considered very impure and inauspicious. The Dalits were beaten and the Brahmin priests offered pooja to purify the Deities.

Conclusion - The dalit women writers in their childhood faced the agonizing caste and gender bias. The lack of basic things added to their agonies and each day was like a battle to survival. Their parents had to work hard and toil sweat and blood just to fill their hungry bellies. Such families, which are plagued by poverty, superstition and multiple discriminations could not even think and imagine about educating their children. The entire social, Economical educational scenario was strongly unfavorable for acquiring education and identity by Dalit women.
African-American families had to toil whole day only for their living and could barely earn enough to feed the family members. Being the elder child of the family Anne Moody, Marian Anderson, Jerena Lee, Zilpa Elaw and Foote had to work in the white families doing all sorts of odd jobs. They all experienced racial and sexual exploitation since they were living in poverty hence they were forced to work hard for supporting the families and earning enough for their education. The extra efforts for the same were beyond the capacity of any ordinary human beings. Therefore the conditions for acquiring education were most unfavourable, they realized the potential and capacity for getting education, e.g. school-going Anne Moody could teach Maths to white children to score excellent grades. Marian’s voice was highly appreciated in the Church. Three women preachers in their childhood stayed in the whites’ families as live-in maids so they were introduced to spiritual awakening. There they realized that they could acquire equality and identity.

Conclusion – The African-American women after getting the association of the White families due to their role as maid-servants, they could learn to read Bible and realized their capacity to acquire education and preaching talent which give them confidence to acquire identity and achieve their set goals.

iii) Hunger –

Marian Anderson’s father died due to head injury when she was just twelve years old and could not afford her school education. So she left school after her grade eight. She could complete her education at the age of twenty-four. She earned her living through singing but experienced racism when she tried to get admission in the local music school. (38) Her mother could not continue her teaching career in Philadelphia due to racial discriminations. All these factors added to her childhood agonies. As Anne Moody was born to poor parents Fred
and Elnair, Anne worked on Mr. Carter's farm. They stayed in only one room of wooden house. (5) Her father ditched her mother and left home for another woman, gambling and alcohol. Her mother stayed with a white soldier and had seven children without marriage. In order to help her mother, she did all odd jobs in white families but got excellent grades in the school. She overcame the obstacles of hunger and discrimination throughout her life. She saw discrimination and atrocities and started hating the whites as well as Negroes for not fighting back. (136 & 203)

The hunger was inseparable part of their lives. Shantabai Dani and Kamble used to go hungry for whole day and would wait for their mothers to return from the day’s toil and labour to bring something to eat by spending the entire amount they earned after working for the whole day. Once Shantabai Dani’s mother lost her two annas she earned after collecting and selling the cattle grass. She came home and her heart ached to see her starving daughter waiting for her and for the food grains she would bring. After knowing that her helpless mother had returned without any food she cried and cried for food. Her mother too cried. The other writer Kamle too had to sleep only after drinking a glassful of water for dinners often. Such was the agony of their life and childhood. Can anyone think sending the child to school and educate them if the basic needs like food and shelter are forcing them to slavery and hard work? It indicates that the writers have overcome the very steep hurdles of poverty and isolations due to discriminations. When their achievements are seen in the light of these facts the greatness of their work is understood. Their achievement is an inspiration for the others in similar predicament.

iv) Education –

During 18th and 19th centuries African-Americans were used as a cheap source of labour on cane fields and plantations, they were denied the basic rights of human
beings. The Churches could not give education to the slaves because it was against the law. So educating African-Americans was the remote possibility. The Methodist Episcopal Church at USA started imparting education to the slaves for preaching them the Holy books. The renounced Theologian Jonathan Edward took the initiative for the awakening. The Blacks had separate church but the women were kept away from the Church. The society considered home as the perfect territory for women. Although it was strongly opposed by the Bishops, later part of the 19th century was a water-shade time for women to emerge as preachers.

Conclusion- it was very difficult time for African-American women to acquire equality in acquiring education, preaching status, because the society was plagued due to color and gender bias.

v) These women — writers did not have a privilege or any history of literary canon. They are the pioneers of this kind of writing.

vi) Both are searching for their self-identity and curious about their position, ‘who am I?’ status in the society. They struggled to achieve self-respect and identity.

vii) Their experiences are based on discriminatory social structure. (Shantabai Kamble, 1986,15, 23, 25, 39, 55, 59, 60, 125, 132, 135, 138, 139, 140, 143 and 188; Babytai Kamble, 1986, p. 2, 10,14,19, 20,25, 29, 31, 48,51, 55, 58, 73, 75, 80 and 110; Dani, 1980 p. 21, 22, 26,30,31, 34, 77 and 78)

viii) Their writings are socially oriented and have the sense of oneness with the community. Marian says,

“They are the songs of my people. I shall sing them whenever and wherever I please” (Anderson, 1956, 32)

Shantabai Dani when she was imprisoned at Yerawada Jail says,
“Dr. Ambedkar’s articles, speeches and his ideology gave us dalit people the awareness and tremendous confidence. He is the only savior of our community. It is our moral duty to support him with our active participation.” (Dani, 1980,60)

So the community spirit and oneness is reflected through their writings.

ix) From both the writings the new cultural values, ideology and philosophy are emerging. They are honest with their experiences hence it reflects personal as well as social conditions. Marian says, “I made it a rule not to perform where there was segregation.” (Anderson, 1956, 249)

x) Their initial plight was full of poverty, acute hunger, (Shantabai Kamble, 1986, 10, 11, 13, 17,28, 29,35, 40, 63, 65 and 108; Babytai Kamble, 1986,17, 19, 66 and 67) and discrimination, humiliating ostracized and outcaste living. In all their writings the ignorance, superstitions, cultural backwardness, undesirable traditions and patriarchal family life is depicted.

xi) The childhood of all writers is equally agonizing. All the writers have suffered multiple discriminations by virtue of their caste (Dani, 1980, 21, 22, 26, 30,31, 34, 77, 78) colour and gender, (Shantabai Kamble, 1986,9, 48,49, 68, 106, and 108) hence suffered the worst and lowest kind of living during their childhood. But all these women writers got the right support at the right time from the right people like the teachers, social workers, social activists and well- wishers.

xii) It is observed in the case of both Dalit and African – American women writers that they had the privilege of getting their mothers’ care and constant unconditional love and support. A good childhood in a poor family with conducive and loving environment has helped them to grow into a balance,
mature, wise and responsible human beings as the tendency given in “Shamchi Aai (Sayam’s Mother) By Sane Guruji and, I am O. K., You Are O. K. (Thomas Harris 1993)” The protagonist Xuela from The Autobiography of my Mother (Jamaica Kincaid), temporary cruelty was induced in Xuela in her childhood because of her cruel step – mother and negligent father, which influenced her to kill the turtles.

Thus in spite of all the odds and unfavorable conditions, the loving mothers provided the right elements for their growth into wise, compassionate and tolerant human beings. The loving and caring value based upbringing helped the molding of their life.

xiii) All these women overcame the fear factor when they realized that they also have the right of equal status as human beings and have the potential and right to live as normal human beings with self – respect, Anne Moody says, “I had known the fear of hunger, hell and devil. But now there was a new fear of being killed just because I was black. This was the worst of my fears. (Moody, 1968,125)

xiv) The great leaders of their respective communities influenced them. The associations with the leaders like Babasasheb in case of Dalit women writers and Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr.) from the African – American women writers; his speech ‘I have a dream’ (Moody, 1968,387) that gave them the tremendous confidence to do the right that is to educate themselves in order to empower themselves. Anne Moody worked as waitress to meet her financial requirements, for her educational purpose. Shantabai Kamble had to work on the upper caste people’s farm. Marian had to scrub the steps of Whites. Mrs. Lee, Foote and Elaw stayed as live –in maids where in those families they got spiritual knowledge.

xv) They all struggled in their initial period for achieving excellence or expertise or skill in their respective academics, careers and the other skills like singing...
They all suffered the rejection and resentment either from the upper caste and Whites even after they had achieved identity in the form of education or professional skills initially. Marian was denied the admission in the school with the words, ‘we don't take colored’. (Anderson, 1956,38) Anne Moody was also denied the admission and scholarship in the segregated school. Shantabai was not encouraged to complete her 7th std. Exam just because she was the only girl student in the class. She did not get a room easily at the village where she was transferred. Shantabai Dani was refused even the drinking water and she was given a strict-strong warning when she entered the temple inadvertently while serving as a teacher. Elaw, Foote and Lee were not accepted as preachers initially.

They all pursued their good works with strong character, determination and peaceful manner. They all did extra-ordinarily well to be a shining example not only for the backward or colored people but also for the entire society. This led to the recognition and appreciation and finally acceptance from the society. Shantabai Dani remained spinster for the sake of the community. She was nominated for the prestigious ‘Dalitmitra Puraskar’, award in 1986 by Social welfare Department of Maharashtra but she rejected by saying that,

“I was born Dalit. I have gone through the pains and sufferings of Dalithood. I myself am the part and parcel of Dalithood. Then how can I be a mere ‘Dalitmitra’ (p.115).

She because of her oneness and consciousness felt much closer to the community.

She considers herself closer than a friend just like the kith and kins, a sister to dalit community. This shows oneness with the community. In 1987 she was honored with the coveted ‘Savitribai Phule Puraskar’. Marian got an
opportunity to perform at the Lincoln’s Memorial against the policy ‘for only Whites’ Shantabai Kamble stayed away from her husband for long twelve years. Anne Moody received scholarship in Natchez College.

xviii) They all had the positive attitude and proactive nature in order to reach out to grass roots to help the needy who are in the similar agonizing condition like them. Shantabai Dani in her formative years struggled to get education later on she herself in accordance with Babasaheb’s motto of ‘education’, opened a school for those who were deprived of it. Babytai Kamble is also running a school that indicates that they struggled to acquire communal identity. It is because all the problems were originated from the fact that they belonged to the lowest caste that was the social stigma.

xix) They all had the deep faith in the teachings, ideology, philosophy or the spirituality and the spiritual awakening and enlightenment due to the knowledge and wisdom that gave them the strength to continue their struggle peacefully to go beyond themselves and to grow larger than life.

xx) They all pass on the knowledge and wisdom by practicing the ideology, philosophy or spiritual teachings they had received.

xxi) They all lived like ambassadors of peace, progress and they followed Buddhist and Christian philosophy and spirituality. Shantabai Dani writes, “Dr. Ambedkar is my inspiration and Dadasaheb is my guiding light.” (Dani, 1980,70)

xxii) All of them overcame the walls of discrimination and valleys of divide and empowered themselves to acquire status and dignity to preach others the same on merit and with authority.

xxiii) Although the stories of these women-writers has the similar histories and social background with the social discrimination but as stated by Tolstoy and the writer of All Quiet on the Western Front ‘That even if the cause like war may be similar but the nature of the sorrows of life is quite different. (Pu La in his letter to Prof. Arun Kamble)
xxiv) Their stories are the stories of deep wounds inflicted due to different discrimination but do not propagate hatred and violence. Babytai While explaining the purpose of writing her autobiography she states that for thousands of years, people of this Mahar community were enslaved and bound by the chains of slavery. These inhuman conditions of living were enforced on them by a particular society. Bhima alone saved our community from this perennial hell.

xxv) The language is very lucid and with the first person narration it has become more intimate, picturesque, conversational and conducive. It reflects the social, cultural and historical conditions prevailing during their life-time. They all were deeply touched and influenced by the impact of Babasaheb as Babytai in her interview said ‘my arteries and veins became fully Ambedkarized.’ Mrs. Foote also said ‘I cried alone, when no one heard but Jesus’ this indicates spiritual influence and awakening.

xxvi) The teachings of Buddhism and Christianity that came through Dr. Babasaheb and Dr. King and The Methodist Church Prayer meetings enlightened the women writers with the wisdom ‘to be your own light’ i.e. ‘Atta Deep Bhav’ and ‘Know Thyself ’ Babytai Kamble has dedicated her memoir to Babasaheb who during his time of 40-50 years, by his fearless and energetic speech, by his light as bright as the sun, by his power to snap the chains, taught us how to live and break the seal of ‘Dhamma.’” She says,

“Chokhoba (14th century Mahar poet) has prepared pure nectar for us in the court of Indra. But it is my Bhima (Babasaheb) who brought it to the earth and distributed it among our huts and hamlets. It is thanks to his nectar that I am undertaking this writing. I am a wild flower budding in the wasteland. I offer this flower in homage in the form of a book with all my love at the feet of Bhima. We are grateful to you. I bow down and place my
forehead on the lotus of your feet. We shall never be able to give you back what we owe you.”(P.3)

xxvii) They realized their latent talent, potential and struggled to achieve identity and status and went beyond self proactively to help the next generation, in turn to help them to achieve the self-development.

xxviii) They give the message or mantra of 'self-realization theory/knowledge empowerment theory' which has the capacity to change the self and society through non-violent and peaceful means.

xxix) This life-stories have the capacity to mould the society into the knowledge society in the true sense.

xxx) These women are writing for achieving identity, for betterment in life, social status, achieving new cultural values with revolutionary cultural language.

xxxi) In both the writings their emotions, feelings are similar irrespective of different languages and cultural backgrounds. They viewed the literature as a means of liberation, struggled to achieve better human values.

xxxii) All these women even after achieving identity and self-empowerment they did not engaged in any revolt to take the revenge but instead worked for the upliftment of the future generation. This is due to the multiple discrimination they themselves suffered and developed the sensitivity to help other women in the same condition without expressing any bitterness or violence.

xxxiii) All these women writers at the end overcame the discriminatory barriers and worked with and for the entire society with an open mind and in turn they were all accepted by the society giving them the identity and acceptance, which was due to them.

xxxiv) It was not simple or ordinary achievement because it was in both the cases won by non-violent and peaceful means e.g. Poet Laurel Shirwadkar accepted the felicitation at the hands of Shantabai Dani and even Marian Anderson got the honour to perform at the Lincoln Hall in front of the august gathering of 75,000 people.
xxxv) The common findings among these women writers are they were not professional writers. Writing was neither their hobby nor their purpose to gain name or fame. Merely writing for achieving name or to earn money was not their motive at all. In fact they were the first members from their families and communities to achieve education or skill against all odds. As a matter of fact, they felt like writing only after achieving and fulfilling their goals and dreams. The writer, i.e. Babytai Kamble was reluctant to show her writing. Shantabai Dani was forced, coaxed and helped by the great Poet Laurel honourable Shirwadkar to write her autobiography with her close friend, Mrs. Bhargave. After completing the world tour and acquired the name, fame and status as a world famous singer Marian Anderson wrote about herself. Mrs. Lee, Mrs. Elaw and Mrs. Foote established themselves as the well known accepted preachers when they wrote their autobiographies.

This only proves their true motives of inspiring the next generation. Their writing is a manifestation of the oneness and the unity they feel with their respective communities. Therefore the message that they give through their writings must be taken very seriously. The researcher had to study and described their life stories minutely and tried to point out the message.

xxxvi) They proved their excellence and achieved fulfillment. They had such a strong ardent desire to share their life experiences so that the others from their community could follow suite. This happened due to the strong feeling of oneness with their respective community. That desire has motivated them to write their autobiography. According to P. L. Deshpande while expressing his opinion on Shantabai Kamble’s autobiography she has said, “the constant struggle with the right attitude is going to inspire and charge the future generation and it also reflect the cultural and social history of their time.” (Shantabai Kamble, 1986, 146-147)
xxxvii) The main object of their writings was to germinate social awakening among the downtrodden. These autobiographies is a vivid portrayal of the stark realities of the evils of untouchability, agonies of acute poverty, hunger, illiteracy, superstition, oppression, injustice, insults and humiliation resulted through it. They articulated their experiences of discrimination and violence in and out of the society. Their past was full of the experiences of pains and humiliation. They suffered due to economic disparity, demoralizing social discrimination and cruel denial of equal rights. These women writers along with their mothers and grandmothers showed lot of patience and perseverance and they never lose hope even in the most challenging circumstances. In spite of many obstacles and hurdles they never put off the zeal to fight back the difficulties. A suffering in common is a greater bond of union than joy. Education played the most crucial role in their lives. The motto ‘educate, organize and agitate’ was followed by them and education brought them enlightenment from the ignorance and prejudices and helped them to come out from the bondage of oppression.

xxxviii) Significance of the titles –

The researcher has observed that Babytai’s Our Existence (1986) is a product of a very keen observations of the miserable life of Dalit women so she could described their odysseys and predicament in the society, She was disturbed and shocked to see the discrimination and inhuman treatment given to these women in their own families and society as well. She is truly observed and witnessed the life of ‘Dalit of Dalits.’ An intelligent lady, with no formal education, She educated her children to the best of her ability. Fortunately her children fulfilled her aspiration and risen to the higher position in their chosen field. Her efforts are in order to show the future generations how they have lived in the hell for centuries. How will the future generations know without telling them that how the children of the same country lived and suffered in the society? Babytai has described vividly the memories of the contemporary Dalit society and the life of
Dalit women as well. It just like Bama says in Karukka, “I could not build a monument, I could not build a sculpture, I wrote a book.”

Shantabai Dani’s Ratran-din-Amha (Day and Night Battle Situation for Us——, 1980) is a famous line from Saint Tukaram’s Abhangas. It signifies the constant struggle and battle for day and night to overcome the discriminatory barriers to survive. It indicates the never ending, unceasing battle against the negative forces. This battle is selflessly fought with the weapons of non-violence and peace hence the title words are very much appropriate. It shows the intensity, magnitude and the extent of the battle.

The people in the society started appreciating her personality as women called her ‘our Indira Gandhi.’ She was the only woman activist on the stage so dalit women used to come to see her. She was appointed as M.L.A. and deputed to attend the conferences to the foreign countries. Her school and her administration attracted the educational officers and became the honor for the society. Documentary film was made on the life of Shantabai Dani.

Shantabai Kamble’s The Picturesque Story of My Life (1986) indicates the true, factual, honest and vivid description of her life. Although it does not carry the aesthetic nature in the conventional so called standard ways, but the message is very important since it inspires the future generations. She uses very short, lucid sentences, with the blend of crude, impure, dialectical language to create a mental picture.

The African – American women writers also have selected significant titles for their books. Anne Moody from the title ‘Coming of Age in Mississippi’ (1968) depicts the hardships and struggle to survival. How difficult it was to be black, female and poor. She had a tough time when her parents separated and her mother got another man from whom she had many kids. So Anne had to work
like an adult to help feed the family. Anne worked with many organizations when she felt that something should be done for the upliftment her own people. With the hope, 'We Shall Overcome' she became an activist of Civil Right Movement. She was the only member of her family who joined the Movement. Through this story she explains the psychological hardships of growing up poor and black and shows how Movement turned them into strength.

Marian Anderson through the title 'My Lord! What a Morning' (1956) signifies a new awakening, new birth, new life and new realization acquiring a sort of metamorphological identity. A black, fatherless maid-servant acquiring world wide fame and identity, crossing all the racial and gender barriers achieving status, acceptance and popularity is indeed a historical achievements for the marginalized people. It has a spiritual touch and attitude of gratitude hidden in it. Because these are the famous lines uttered spontaneously by Mary Magdalene after meeting the risen and resurrected Jesus Christ from the tomb.

'Sisters of the Spirit' (1986) also signifies new spiritual awakening and realizing the oneness, brotherhood and equality with the world. The black women came from the abandoned, forbidden part of the society. They got educated, were introduced to the Christianity and charged spiritually that helped them to get the power and right to preach due to the indomitable drive and spirit. They became well-known, accepted preacher all over the world enlightening many souls. This fact is very enlightening for the black women for getting inspiration and confidence. So all the titles signifies the importance of realization, enlightenment of these women writers, which will inspire the generations to come.

xxxix) The success stories and the achievements of these Dalit women writers may be of measurable magnitude for themselves but for their fellow-beings and for the entire community, it is a far greater achievement since it induces the
tremendous confidence among the people that it is possible to change their agonizing plight for the first time in thousand years. It is like a bird learning to fly for the first time, it is like a bird out of cage flying and living freely. It is like conquering the moon; it is like flying in the sky like Wright Brothers. It is like the achievements of Edison, Marconi, Logie Baire and Alexander Bell who invented electrical bulb, radio, television or telephones. Their achievements not only made the life better but also gave new confidence to mankind to achieve excellence and make life beautiful.

Dr. Ambedkar’s social work and achievement and his core followers is not less significant compared to the scientists mentioned above. It is like ‘Eureka’ effect. Because it makes the life better at the same time it induces tremendous confidence in the minds of lower caste people to realize they are equal and deserve equal human rights to make their life better and beautiful after thousands of agonizing and traumatic years. It helps to change the mindset of the world to seek commonality to dissolve the differences to unite the world in harmony.

All these women - writers develop themselves with communication and presentation skills from the point of illiteracy up to the highest point of achieving the skills of ‘Rhetorics’ with respect to the major components as inventio, disposia, elocutio, memoria and pronuntiatio. They discovered the self as inventio, they narrated their own life stories in the form of autobiographies, and then they developed their organizational and leadership skills with their unique style of communication. They intentionally developed the element of discourse of ‘elocutio’ to play a leading role and changed the mindset of the people.

These women writers were motivated to jump in the political movements of their times after they achieved education and identity. Shantabai Dani decided to devote herself to the social revolution that has the capacity to change the social structure and bring the backward class out of darkness of superstition, poverty
and inhuman treatment of castism. She joined the struggle to achieve equality and human status and rights, e.g. Kalam Temple entry, movement for landless peasants and mass conversion, Anne Moody became the active member of NAACP, CORE and SNCC the organization that was convincing people to register for voting rights. Through her firing speeches and recruitment efforts she participated in the movement.

5.3.) The Final Message of these Autobiographies: --

The women selected for this study are special in the sense they have encountered in their lives the ‘triple exploitation in the form of class, caste and gender. In Babasaheb’s language “Dalit women means Dalit of Dalits.” These women autobiographies are a living, shining examples of successful life-stories, which begins with all the miseries and oppressions and emerging as successful women with identities and fulfilling, enriching life which is full of gratitude and a desire to give back to the society. Their lives are like guiding light for not only for the backward women of their own native origin but also for all the women on Mother Earth.

American President George Washington said that ‘the success of a person does not merely depend on what he has achieved but depends on how many hurdles he has overcome to achieve that.’ It is very much applicable to the achievements of these women writers. Because their achievements is examined in comparison with the upper caste women, it may not appear a great achievement but only if the innumerable hurdles like gender, caste, class, race, poverty and colour taken in to account, their achievement is not less than the freedom achieved by a big nation which was bound for thousand of years in captivity and slavery.. It is inspiring to the society to awaken to the universal principle of freedom that if you are born free without any chains of slavery, it is our right to live free and work to make this world beautiful.
Dalit women like Shantabai Dani, realized the fact as per Buddhist philosophy and ideology under the leadership of Dr. Babasaheb was the same realization of the self, which indicates that the ultimate goal of a person is to educate, acquire knowledge and apply it for the betterment of the society. Each one of them has a role to play in her own capacity to make the world better place. The lives of these women are a fine example and the success story for the other people of the community to follow. The Autobiographies ‘Ratran – Deen Amha’ (Day And Night The Battle Situation For Us, 1980) are like the seeds of this realization, sown in to the hearts and mind so that the future generations, the dalit women still in agony can taste and avail the fruits in future.

These women had lived the agony of being dalits and the liberation of achieving education, status and identity in society. It is a sense of duty towards the coming generations. These Dalit and Afro-American have recorded their life stories because they believed that these life stories would be a key for the success of other women. They know that it is going to be like planting a seed of self – realization in their hearts and minds of the millions living in the poverty and social discrimination. One day this seed will grow and manifest itself into big trees of liberation bringing about the social change envisaged and dreamt by the leaders like Mahatma Phule and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

So these autobiographies are an instrument for planting the seed of self – realization and liberation to bring about social awakening and transformation of the Dalit of Dalits that is the Dalit women. The wisdom to realize, “I can and must come out of the agonizing situations to overcome miseries, is self-realization”. To think and to struggle to overcome the obstacles to attain a better position or goals set is liberation. When the iron or gold is refined in fire or pressures of the hammer its value improves. These women writers were subjected to lot of struggles and hardships, which led to realization and liberation. The
agonizing stories of these women and the discrimination and castism helped them to be strong and the philosophy of Dr. Babasaheb moulded them in the right cast to liberate and bring about the Social Change. The process of educating, uniting and struggling to achieve the goals in the light of Babasaheb’s philosophy has resulted in Realization and Liberation. If each and every follower of Babasaheb follows this path, to bring about the much-needed social transformation through non-violent means could be achieved in the real sense since it was not possible to Science and Technology alone.

This study will definitely help, guide and inspire the future women writers and from the oppressed, suppressed and depressed classes to realize their strength and empower themselves to achieve the identity and help the others to follow the same path. It is the duty of every citizen in general but the women writers in particular by virtue of their sensitivity, creativity and knowledge to mould and build the nation through peaceful means by overcoming and dissolving the walls of discrimination by emulating these women writers.

We should use the knowledge acquired from the history for knowledge empowerment for creating the knowledge-based society. The other women writers should write and rise above the differences to achieve their goals and in turn they should reach out to the grass root from their communities to give them the helping hand to come out the agonizing status. Women writers should not write for commercial and aesthetics purpose only but they must strive to give message of ‘unity in diversity’ of peace and harmony.

‘Think globally and act locally must be the theme of future women writers and the other members of the society. They should work to bring common understanding and overcoming the cultural and social differences. The seed of realization will empower the self and in turn it will induce the empowerment of self and society through knowledge empowerment to achieve the empowerment
of the self and society through non-violent and peaceful means similar to knowledge management creating Knowledge society. In order to maintain the balance between spiritual material and technological writing and other educated members must realize and pass on the same message to the society through their writings. Thus the women writers and the leading members of the society have a role to play as the ambassadors of peace, harmony, spirituality and social awakening. All men and women are born equal hence it is their birthright to live the life of equality, brotherhood and harmony.

Their lives hold the key to achieve freedom and life of dignity. It is the message not only to the millions of women going through the same ordeal and agonies but also to the people of the world. Because every life is unique in this universe and every human being is born free and equal hence has the right to live life at the fullest fairly freely and with dignity. If there is only one world, and if there is only one life, which is limited having very uncertain beginning and end, we must follow the unique principle of love and brotherhood and equality. The same principles were preached and practiced by the saints from every religion and community, but understood and lived by a few such as these women. Therefore the world exists and continues to serve the humanity as the cradle of the civilization hoping for the better tomorrow and making today meaningful and inspiring for generations to come.

The African - American women belonged to the particular society where women were not permitted nor were they considered to have the intellect and authority to preach the Gospel. They were not allowed to enter the religious world as preacher. In such situation these women preachers fought vigorously for their own principles. They wanted the Holy book; Bible should be analyzed and judged by reason and natural laws with the foundation of gender equality. They had a strong desire that the world should hear their opinions and views on the Holy book, which was interpreted by men only. Their experiences about their call to
preach, how they relate themselves to God and people around them and the
ministries they joined all was very exciting and inspiring. Their move into the
religious and public spheres and actual preaching gave tremendous confidence to
the other female preachers and other women world over.

Their lives add hopes and aspirations in the lives of all. It has the component of
innocence of the child and determination of a mother to carry on the conflict for
survival not only for the self but to forget self and to see beyond it, to mold the
child into self confident next sensitive generation with the element of past-present
and the future. Whatever goodness is found on this earth is personified by their
lives of continuous struggle which has the missionary zeal and selfless attitude,
the heartfelt sensitivity to understand and empathizes the most neglected
component and give them a helping hand will change the life and will be carried
to generations from generation achieving the ‘giving hands’ dreamt by the Poet
Laurel V. D. Karandikar who says ‘the giver should give, the receiver should
accept until the day when the receiving hands transformed into the giving
hands.’ This dream will be seen by the world only after following the path shown
by these women, which is beyond and above all the mental, hypothetical barriers
due to ignorance in the world.

Now African-Americans and Dalit women writers have become more and more
accepted within literary canon, tradition and university courses Dalits and Afro-
Americans women no more remain the victims of deprivation, discrimination and
injustice are becoming more respectable with guaranteed educational and job
opportunities. Today they are appreciated, admired and revered. Through their
writings these women found their own place in the mainstream. By following Dr.
Ambedkar’s teachings and Buddhist principles of life, they could liberate
themselves academically, economically, socially and culturally. These
autobiographies are accepted as classics and have been translated into many
regional and foreign languages. The translations have created a socio-cultural
space for intercultural dialogues among other people. A documentary has been prepared on Shantabai Dani. A television serial entitled ‘Najuka’ on Shantabai Kamble’s life was acclaimed widely and earned recognition and acceptance as a popular serial in India. Shobha Ranade had prepared French animation also on her life. Some chapters from the autobiographies of these writers have been included in the curriculum of school and colleges, which continue to inspire the younger generation for achieving their goals. These writings are also translated into Hindi, Punjabi, German, French and Spanish earning worldwide recognition. This signifies the acceptance, appreciation by the society and the role of inspiration it plays all over the world.

Even Today there are millions of girls of the marginalized communities like Shantabai Dani, Babytai Kamble, Shantabai Kamble, Marian Anderson, Anne Moody Lee, Elaw and Foote live below the poverty line and they are still living in perpetual hunger and poverty. In order to make this world a better place all the communities and societies must address the burning problems of discrimination and class, caste, color – bias. The knowledge and wisdom of these women will not only enlighten the women from the backward classes, not only the women from all over the world but the entire mankind including all the creed and classes. Because in the light of this knowledge and wisdom will take every individual from every class, community, country and the whole world to the greater height of perception. As a result indelible deep-rooted imaginary walls of discrimination will vanish and the world will see new light of brotherhood and equality if the same path of nonviolence and peace is followed. Self-realization is the beginning and working together to achieve peace, harmony and joy, which is the ultimate Goal of every one of us.

This study will also help the better understanding of different cultures, which is mandatory in view of globalization, liberalization that has brought people closer across the world. So better understanding among the people will help strengthen
the social, economical and cultural ties for building the joint venture helping the overall growth of the country which is knocking at the door today and the times to come. Thus the study touches different areas like social, historical, economical, psychological and cultural importance. The future scope of this study can be extended into each of these above-mentioned domains signifying the magnitude and indispensability of the research of this kind.

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The agonizing conditions of these women and the discrimination and castism helped them to be strong and the philosophy of Dr.Babasaheb moulded them in the right cast to liberate and bring about the social change. The process of educating, uniting and struggling to achieve the goals in the light of Buddhist philosophy taught by Dr.Babasaheb has resulted in Realization and Liberation. If each and every follower of Babasaheb follows this path, to bring about the much-needed social transformation through non-violent means could be achieved in the real sense since it was not possible to Science and Technology alone. The art, culture, social science, literature and science and technology are all-complementary.

Man has conquered higher and higher orbits in the space by means of science and technology but he is still struggling to bridge the gaps between the inner, mental, psychological and social circles of human nature and understanding. There is an urgent need to keep a fine blend and balance between science, technology art and culture. The study of the autobiographies of these women writers holds the key for realizing the dream and bringing the required social transformation to make the society strong, healthy and happy in the true sense. These women writers achieved knowledge -empowerment on the basis of Buddhists philosophy under the multidimensional leadership of Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar and they have sowed the seeds of this knowledge in the form of their Autobiographies. If these seeds germinate in the hearts of the women world over we will see the fruits in abundance. This is the key to real, rapid and true social
transformation brought through non-violent and peaceful means, since love is the most powerful thing in this world. This study is a humble initial step towards that direction and goal which is the common dream to be achieved to make the world a better place for all of us, called Kingdom of Love. It is possible to every women writer and other women too to follow their example. The other women can also recognize the self, self-realization is knowing thyself. Once they know their strengths they too can strive and struggle to achieve their set goals that is liberation and overcoming the fear. Even if there is a resistance they must carry on until they are self-satisfied. The people will accept one day if they prove their merit and positive attitude of giving back to the society. Others can emulate their example too. The autobiographies of such women will serve as the seed of realization; liberation and they too can attain their set goals. This chain will continued and the dream of social transformation will be achieved in the true sense. That is the purpose of writing the autobiographies and that is the Message given by their noble lives.

The collective commitment and consciousness in the light of wisdom of Buddhist philosophy, under the enlightening Leadership of Babasaheb, Mahatma Phule and other spiritual saints, leaders like Jesus Christ and Martin Luther King (Jr.) we can achieve the strength and skills to open the doors of heaven on earth. Man has the key, he has to realize, and it can open both the doors of heaven and of hell as well. The only thing is to know the difference and to use it rightly, we have to study the lives of the women writers to realize and achieve identity and plant more seeds of this noble process to bring heaven on Earth.

The autobiographical study is the footpath leading to the Highway to this kingdom we must dream and strive for, because even a journey of a thousand miles begins with a small single step. We hope and pray to overcome the hurdles to achieve the Dream we dreamt. That is to follow one of the shortest and surest paths in the light of the wisdom we gain by studying the life stories of the
Autobiographies of Dalit and Afro-American women writers who are the daughters of change and empowerment of our planet.