Chapter VI: Summing Up
6.1. Brief summary of conclusion and findings:

The present dissertation entitled, *A Cultural Study Of Dalit Autobiographies In India*, an attempt has been made to examine four Dalit autobiographies in India that include Sharankumar Limbale’s *The Outcaste*, Laxman Mane’s *The Outsider*, Sidhlingaih’s *Ooru Keri* and Ompraksh Valmiki’s *Joothan*.

The present research has been divided into six chapters. The first chapter i.e. Preamble traced the evolution of culture, Indian Culture, Hindu Culture, Dalit culture, history of Dalit movement and literature in India with special reference to Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh, and Dalit autobiography. It deals with the legacy of the Bhakti movement, Social Reformers and contribution of Babasaheb Ambedkar to the formulation of an alternative egalitarian, secular and modern identity for the Dalits. However, it focuses on cultural ideology of Indian Dalit and the genre Dalit autobiography which is considered to be as a narration of pain.

The second chapter, *A Cultural Study Of Sharankumar Limbale’s The Outcaste*, attempted to examine the tear shedding experiences and culture of Mahar and Lingayat
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community. It is interpreted the agony and agitation of Sharankumar Limbale as an Akkarmashi literally means half-caste. The present chapter is discovered how upper class system of exclusivist pedagogy made the Dalits undergo the experience of insult, humiliation, psychological and physical violence and ultimately a sense of alienation from the mainstream society. However, it has been argued in the chapter that the Dalits challenged their exclusion from education, and came out of what may be termed the Dronacharya syndrome. The Dalits used the denial of education to their advantage, and accomplished in the fields of education. The autobiographies of Sharankumar Limbale have been illustrated as to how the protagonists overcame the hurdles so as to excel themselves in education and career.

The third chapter, A Cultural Study Of Laxman Mane’s An Outsider: Upara, throws light upon the existence of Kaikadi boy who has sought education in an unfavorable condition. He came forward and achieved liberty, dignity, name and fame in the ironically called petrarchial society in which he was denied from the basic rights of human being and treated as inhumen. It narrates social injustice with Kaikadi community of Maharashtra. It is the canvas of poverty, humiliation and superstitious life. It clearly shows the sincerity, honesty of the author. He wishes to have a social debate in the problems of the nomadic tribe. It is the search of theauthor in search of justice, respect, and Hindu culture. Thus, it express downtroden class and is a plea for social justice.

The fourth chapter, A Cultural Study Of Siddalingaiah’s Ooru Keri: An Autobiography, is the reflection of Siddalingaiah’s life in village and slum of Bangalore. It reveals the experiences which juxtapose ordinary day-to-day struggles like caste discrimination, injustice, and identity. It is almost evocative of distorting the hunger and humiliations of Dalits of Karnataka. It is not only recount the personal anxiety and turmoil’s involved in the difficult process of transformation from one state into another, but simultaneously cites at the new historical and political processes which made possible this change. This equilibrium between the micro and the macro is one of the features of this autobiography.
However, it focuses on Siddalingaiah’s determination, creativity, and courage helped him to outwit the brutality of the caste system.

The fifth chapter, *A Cultural Study Of Omprakash Valmiki’s Joothan: A Dalits Life*, is discovers the degraded facts of Chuhra- Bhangi community of Uttar Pradesh. It is considered as an epic of the Dalits' sufferings that have been narrated with various existing references. It portrays the struggle between Chuhra (Dalits) and upper caste Tagas of Barla. It explored the injustices of narrator at village, school, and government offices. However, it is sum up the pain, humiliation, and poverty of Dalits.

Having summed up the research, the sixth Chapter presents the conclusions and findings as follows:

- Influenced by Shahu, Phule and Ambedka Dalit authors deals with the aspect of asserting the self identity, which in turn is aimed at the liberation of the Dalits.
- The Dalit autobiographies in general are the narratives of the pain, which is focus on Dalit culture.
- Though the Dalit autobiographies are full of pain and pangs, they are aimed at awakening the Dalits and raising their consciousness.
- The Dalit autobiographies are not merely the writings of vengeance to spread hatred against the caste Hindus but also to promote the heritage of the Dalits.
- The Dalit autobiographies are aimed at rebuilding society to promote honour, dignity, justice and equality.
- The Dalit autobiographies by re-defining and re-constructing the self identity demand for the authentic space in culture and literature.
- Quest for identity is an important aspect of the Dalit autobiographies, which represent the struggles of the Dalits for social equality and justice.
Dalit autobiographies are the storehouse of pain and pathos as a means of cultural assertion and Dalit’s humiliation and injustice.

The select Dalit authors penned their soul-numbing survival stories equivalent to American slave narratives.

Thus, the conclusion of this research is to reject Hindu culture and to accept Buddhist culture which is based on classless society and equality. Dalit autobiographies, in India and abroad, focus on the pathetic and challenging past and their community, which is struggling for present and hopeful future.

R. S. Gavai said:

At the first time the suffering of Dalit and tribial people tormented by the great soul of Lord Gautam Buddha. He introduced the concept of equality to the society. This was the first opportunity imparted to these people to prosper and live in dignity. His ‘sainted’ path was later adopted by the world saints like Kabir, Eknath, Tukaram and so on. They actively participated to eradicate untouchability which was a blot on humanity. In the 19th century the social reformers especially Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar started many movements to impart them human rights.’ [Gavai: 2008: II]

However, the post decades of the twentieth century witnessed both in Europe and in several countries of the Third World including India, a diminishing away of the old, established value systems because they were accused of catering to the needs of the privileged few. The new concepts like, ‘subversion’, ‘deconstruction’, ‘post-modernism’, swept away the old literary theories. Consequently, Dalit literature, created a new wave in their respective country.

The emergence of Dalit literature was an inevitable phenomenon in Third World Literature. It portrays the life of Dalits in India, which is a perennial story of drudgery
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and struggle. One of the best representatives of this new wave of Dalit liberation and literary movement was Dalit panther in Maharashtra, which revived the term and expanded its reference to includes scheduled tribes, poor peasants, woman and all those being exploited politically, economically, and on the name of region. The primary motive of Dalit literature is the liberation of Dalits in India, which is based on presentation of reality. Therefore, the authenticity and liveliness is the essential feature of Dalit literature.

Revolutionary movements of Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj, Mahatma Phule and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar paved the way for Indian Dalits. Only because of them, education reached at the door of Dalits, Adivasis and nomadic tribes living in remote areas. Dalits sought education and came forward and tried to express their past, which means darkness of deprivation, oppression, suppression, marginalization, degradation, humiliation and maltreatment. Besides, Dalits understand their identity by reading the works of Mahatma Phule and Babasaheb Ambedkar in religion and education. However, Dalit society actively participated in Ambedkar’s ideology.

In the 1960s the flow of Dalit literary writings increased in the form of poetry, short-stories, drama and autobiography. As a result, autobiography became favorite genre to express Dalit experiences before the world. Numbers of Dalit writers were going to publish in India in regional languages. Through their writing, Dalits were demanding for liberty, honor, security and freedom which were the right of every human being. Sharankumar Limbale’s The Outcast, Laxman Mane’s The Outsider, and Siddalingaiah’s Ooru Keri, and Omprakash Valmiki’s Joothan are the representative of this era to struggle for self identity.

The narrator in each text shows a remarkable ability to shift narration between his own life and the lives of the communities, with the text functioning as a social document with a specific cultural agenda. These autobiographies are reflecting enhanced level of social and cultural awareness among the exploited community. However, Dalit autobiographies
are being appreciated for the social purpose. It portrays the surroundings of Dalits and their social behaviour of Indian society.

Though education goes to each door but Dalit authors like Sharankumar Limbale, Laxman Mane, Siddhlingaih and Omprakash Valmik have seen to beg for education. Sharankumar was first child to admit school in his caste, but then other Dalit children were ready for going to school. Laxman have also same experience of school admission. Siddhlinhaih and Omprakash Valmiki too suffered a lot for getting admission to the school, but still they could not allowed to sit on chair or bench. There was no fair treatment and security for a Dalit student in the government and non-government schools. On such occasion, present Dalit author realized that education was the only way to overcome all the sufferings and so, they went to school regularly and studied hard. Giving education and influenced by Babasaheb Ambedkar they rejected old tradition of Hindu society and opened the door of Buddha religion.

The long history of Indian tradition is witnessed for the subjugation of women, major theme of Dalit autobiography, as marginalized. Women are suppressed, humiliated and considered as a property whether in the hands of parents or in the hands of husband. Dalit autobiographies reflected women as weak, scrawny, pathetic and sad, and not one of them without a serious complication in her life. There are widows, children, women, deserted women, and as the ultimate of all this divine and social injustice. Sharankumar presents his own mother who has been cheated again and again, exploited most blatantly in every relationship, she strikes burdened with a roll call of children and their upbringing. Regarding to this Bama-a well known Kannada Dalit writer- said,

*The position of women is both pitiful and humiliating, really. In the fields, they have to escape from upper caste men’s molestation.’*

[Bama: 1992: 299]

Therefore, The Outcaste points out that the Dalits are given inhuman treatment by caste Hindus. Moreover, if any Dalit lady is good looking and happens to be ignorant, and
powerless, she is bound to get sexually harassed and victimized by them. Masamai is one such victim who has to suffer at each and every step in her life. Some farmers even harassed them sexually, pulled them into the crop, and raped them.

Sharankumar asserts that Dalits are branded as inferior human beings in the names of gods, goddesses, religious scriptures, and such metaphysical phenomena. It can be said that the root cause of the pathetic condition of the Dalit women lies in the unfair structure and nature of the caste system. Regarding to this, Subhash Chandra, a researcher, remarks in relation to the dependence of Dalits that,

The Dalit class is completely dependent on the non-Dalits to fill their stomachs. They are helpless to eat the discarded food of the non-Dalits to satiate the hunger of the stomach.

[www.ambedkar.org]

Thus, it is truth that Dalit society was dependent on the non-Dalits to fill their stomachs. That’s why they have dared to exploit them.

Laxman Mane’s The Outsider narrates the traditions of Sati-Pratha, Bal-Vivah. These are witnessed for placing the women not only as marginalized but also makes them puppets in the hands of patriarchal society. A number of caste-Hindu men often try to have illegal sexual relationship with Dalit women and badly insulted. They were beaten as if they were slaves. Regarding to this, Raj Kumar said,

...a majority of Dalit women live in rural areas amidst poverty and backwardness. Majority of Dalit women are daily wage labourers, agricultural workers, servants and unskilled workers.

[http://cantorion.org.archive.org/]

Bama, Tamil Dalit author said that ‘women identity as a mirror of society’. [Opp. Cite. Bama: 155] Like Indian woman, in Joothan, the position of women is also secondary and treats them as inferior or others. Though she may be wage earner, she has to consult her father, husband, son or an elder person from her family. Whatever she earns she spends in
the house. The life of *Bhangi* women is governed by certain rules and taboos as prescribed by Manu. Therefore, she has used busy in untrained work like to clean unwanted things, grind corn, gather fuel, tend to the fields, bathe younger siblings, and prepare meals.

Religion forms an important role in the life of Indian *Dalit* society. The most striking point about the religion is that it does not adhere to the traditional brahminical system of worship, nor is it linked to brahminical God and Goddess (*Kul Devtas and Kul Devis*). Deep faith in their *Kul Devi* leads them to believe that a desired boon asked of her will be unfailingly fulfilled. Sometimes fulfillment of boon involves extended rituals to please the God or Goddess granting that boon; the life of *Bhangi* women revolves continuously around the rituals petitioning the Goddess and offering thanks giving for boons that have been granted. *Joothan* is considered as an epic of the women sufferings of Pain, which have been narrated with various experiences. As Anjabai Derhbhrator, who attended the Nagpur conference of the *All India Women's Conference* in 1938, comments:

> The saravna sister's behaviour towards their untouchable sisters was distant, cold, mean and lowly attitude. During the lunch hour, the untouchable women delegates - Jaibai and others - had been asked to sit aside and had felt humiliated,

[http://cantorion.org.archive.org/]

Thus, *Dalit* women’s place in family is secondary if she is earns. She does not take self-determining decisions. She does the menial and dirty work that Manu designed.

Caste council plays an important role in *Dalit* society. In an interview with Alka on IBN News channel on 5th July 2013, Hari Narke explained the term Caste council, ‘*Caste council is a system which solved the problem among its caste only.*’ [Narke: 2013]

He further said it works as a similar court and solved the problem, quarrels of caste people. The purpose of Caste council was to give justice in least time and to save their money. But today it has controlled by the representative of village chief or landlord.
Regarding to this, Laxman Gaikwad, on IBN, newschannel on 5th July, 2013, said: ‘Caste council become the center of exploitation.’ [Gaikwad: 2013] Thus, Dalit autobiographies are not simply the narration of life-stories, but reveals cultural assertion. The portrayal of socio-economic conditions like poor settlement and shelter, living and thinking, food, education, language, custom and tradition, rituals, festival are traced to support the analyses of the research. In schools, employment institutions, public places, travel, and politics, Dalits were discriminated.

The significances of Dalit identity in the caste hegemonic society are brought out in the autobiographers. Thus, Sharankumar Limbale, Laxman Mane, Siddalingaiah and Omprakash valmiki are belong to various states, but their attention of writing was Dalit identity and struggle for equality. They had given optimistic measurements for the youn generation. These all autobiographies are written in different regional languages, which enriched Indian literature. These are tried to to open new world of experience that was never herd and read earlier. These are to expose the brutal past of Indian Dalit and brings to the surface: exploited communites of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh asking for librty, fraternity and equality that was denied to them by the traditional, orthodox Hinduism in India. However, it is said that the Buddhism is only way before suppressed in Indias to get free from the slavery imposed by Manu, desiner of Manusmruti, made set up in India. Hence, the present research concludes with the poem of Prof. Rajpankhe, Marathi Gazal writer in Maharashtra, which shows the way of Buddhism for Equality:

Future will bloom to whom pathos have pained,
Education humanized and honour gained,
Dissonant past was frustration, rebel rebirth…

[Rajpankhe: 2007: 138]
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