ABSTRACT

The research entitled, *Indian Society and Existential Strategies of Dalits in the Fiction of Bama* analyses the portrayal of the Dalits’ socio-economic-political exploitations and developments through Bama’s fiction. As a creative literary force, Bama’s writings chronicle the lives of the untouchables who have been deprived of identity, and equality. The main objective of the present thesis is to discover, identify and document the extent to which Dalit ideology has influenced the contemporary writers. Intrinsically this research study is indented to address the perennially existing crucial question concerning the relationship between Dalits and the rest of the society in the light of caste based social hierarchization and stratification. In this process the researcher explores and experiments the psychological pains and pangs of Dalits in Indian society and as portrayed in the fiction of Bama. The researcher unflinchingly attempts how far casteist superstructure has influenced and dehumanized the base, the existence of Dalits. The thesis also intends to analyze the varied cultural patterns of Dalits. The study includes Dalit theories, feminist theories, new historic theories and Dalit consciousness in the caste stratified society. The thesis is found to have incorporated the overview of the works of one of the universally acclaimed writers, Bama who has penned her soul-numbing survival stories which make the genre, Dalit literature in parallel to the Black literature. She documents sufferings “as it is experienced.” The casteism is depicted as an “archetype” in her fictions. Dalits, the caste victims, emerge out of social and legal exploitations, yet they are still undervalued and denied of socialisations. Their existential strategies hitherto undertaken by them do not lead them towards liberation from the age old
traditional practices and consequently, they have to modify their existential strategies. As every research need have contemporary relevance the researcher justifies the events depicted in Bama’s fiction with contemporary events in the society.