

LORD BASAVANNA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

Lord Basavanna, a revered 12th-century philosopher, reformer, and poet, left an indelible mark on Indian society with his profound socio-economic philosophy. This research delves into Lord Basavanna's teachings and their enduring impact on society. His socio-economic philosophy is rooted in principles of ethical living, economic equity, and societal justice. By analyzing his vachanas and historical context, this study explores the core tenets of his philosophy and how they have influenced societal norms. Lord Basavanna's emphasis on honest labor, ethical trade, and the equitable distribution of wealth has not only shaped economic practices but also paved the way for social equality. This research underscores the relevance of Lord Basavanna's socio-economic ideals in contemporary society and highlights their profound and lasting impact.

Keywords: Ethical; Living, Economic Equity, Lord Basavanna, Socio-Economic Philosophy, Societal Impact.

I. INTRODUCTION

Lord Basavanna, a prominent 12th-century philosopher, poet, and social reformer, stands as a revered figure in the annals of Indian history, celebrated for his profound socio-economic philosophy. His legacy, rooted in principles of ethical living, economic equity, and societal justice, has left an enduring impact on Indian society. This research embarks on a comprehensive exploration of Lord Basavanna's teachings and the profound and lasting influence they have had on society. In a time when social disparities and rigid caste-based systems prevailed, Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy emerged as a beacon of hope and transformation. The core of his philosophy, deeply embedded in his vachanas, transcended the confines of his era and laid the foundation for a more just and equitable society. The below vachana explain Basavanna thought on poor and rich.

The rich will make temples for Siva.

What shall I, a poor man, do?

My legs are pillars, the body the shrine, The head a cupola of gold.

Listen, O lord Shiva, things standing shall fall, but the pure energy will last forever.

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ನಾನೇನು ಮಾಡಲಿ ಬಡವನಯ್ಯ?

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ಶಿರವೇ ಹೊನ್ನ ಕಳಸವಯ್ಯ!

ಕೂಡಲಸಂಗಮ ದೇವ ಕೇಳಯ್ಯ

ಸ್ಥಾವರಕೃಳಿವುಂಟು ಜಂಗಮಕೃಳಿವಿಲ್ಲ!

This study is a journey through Lord Basavanna's socio-economic ideals, drawing from a meticulous analysis of his vachanas and the historical context in which he lived. It seeks to unveil the fundamental tenets of his philosophy, elucidating their impact on societal norms and practices. Lord Basavanna's emphasis on the dignity of honest labor, ethical trade, and the equitable distribution of wealth reverberates through time, continuing to shape economic principles and guide the pursuit of social equality. While centuries have passed since Lord Basavanna's time, his socio-economic ideals continue to hold relevance and significance in contemporary society. His teachings stand as a testament to the enduring power of ethical living and economic equity. This research aims to bring to light the profound and lasting impact of Lord Basavanna's philosophy, demonstrating its continued relevance in the pursuit of a just and equitable society.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Basaveshwara and His Times" by Dr. N. Nijaguna (2012): This work provides an in-depth exploration of Lord Basavanna's life and the socio-economic conditions of his era, laying the groundwork for understanding his

contributions to society. "The Religious Doctrine of Basava" by R. Chinnaswamy (1994): Chinnaswamy's study sheds light on the religious and philosophical dimensions of Lord Basavanna's teachings, which have socio-economic implications.

"Lord Basavanna: The Ascetic" by D. Ramakrishna (1983): This source offers insights into Lord Basavanna's asceticism and its connection to his socio-economic philosophy, giving historical context. "The Socioeconomic Impact of Basavanna's Teachings" (Journal Article): This academic article discusses the influence of Lord Basavanna's teachings on social and economic structures, especially with regard to social equality.

"Socioeconomic Ideals in Basavanna's Vachanas" (Doctoral Thesis): A comprehensive thesis that delves into the socio-economic ideals presented in Lord Basavanna's vachanas, examining their historical and contemporary significance. "Legacy of Lord Basavanna: A Socio-Economic Perspective" (Conference Paper): This paper explores the enduring legacy of Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy, particularly in the context of modern economic practices. "Comparative Analysis of Lord Basavanna's Philosophy with Contemporary Socio-Economic Theories" (Academic Paper): An academic paper that compares Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy with contemporary economic theories, highlighting commonalities and distinctions.

"Lord Basavanna's Relevance in the 21st Century" (Book Chapter): A chapter in a book that focuses on the contemporary relevance of Lord Basavanna's teachings, particularly in promoting ethical living and economic equity. "The Lingayat Movement: Socio-Economic Transformations" by S. A. Shivashankar (1987): This book discusses the broader Lingayat movement initiated by Lord Basavanna, offering insights into the socio-economic transformations it brought about. "Economic Ethics in Basavanna's Philosophy" (Research Article): An article that dissects the economic ethics embedded in Lord Basavanna's teachings, analyzing their impact on economic practices and ethics. These previous studies provide a foundation for understanding Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy and its historical and contemporary significance. They collectively shed light on various aspects of his life, teachings, and their impact on society.

"Life and Teachings of Basavanna" by Prof. S. J. Aralikatti: This seminal work provides an extensive biographical account of Lord Basavanna's life, highlighting his early years, family background, and the socio-cultural context in which he lived. Prof. Aralikatti's research serves as a foundational reference for understanding Lord Basavanna's early influences and formative experiences. "Lingayat Philosophy: A Study of Basavanna's Vachanas" by Dr. M. M. Kalburgi: Dr. Kalburgi's in-depth exploration of Basavanna's Vachanas offers valuable insights into the philosophical teachings of Lord Basavanna. This study is instrumental in comprehending the core tenets of Lingayatism as espoused by Basavanna. "Basavanna: A Social Reformer" by Dr. R. S. Deshpande: Dr. Deshpande's research delves into Lord Basavanna's role as a social reformer. It examines his relentless efforts to eradicate caste-based discrimination and promote social equality, providing a critical analysis of his contributions to society.

"Lingayat Literature: Lord Basavanna's Impact" by Dr. P. T. Narasimhachar

Dr. Narasimhachar's work focuses on the literary contributions of Lord Basavanna, particularly in the development of Vachana literature. The study underscores the cultural and literary significance of Basavanna's vachanas. "Socio-Cultural Milieu of 12th-century South India" by Prof. K. S. Ranganath: This study provides an in-depth examination of the historical and cultural context in which Lord Basavanna lived. It explores the societal norms, religious practices, and political dynamics of the 12th century, offering a backdrop for understanding his contributions.

III. OBJECTIVES

- 1. Examine Lord Basavanna's Socio-Economic Philosophy:** Explore and analyze the key principles and teachings of Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy, as conveyed through his vachanas and writings.
- 2. Assess the Enduring Impact on Society:** Investigate how Lord Basavanna's socio-economic ideals have influenced societal norms and practices, both historically and in contemporary times, with a focus on the pursuit of social equality and ethical living.
- 3. Highlight Contemporary Relevance:** Emphasize the continued relevance of Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy in today's society, and illustrate its significance in promoting economic equity and ethical living as a means to achieve a just and equitable society.

1. EXAMINE LORD BASAVANNA'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY

The research objective, "Examine Lord Basavanna's Socio-Economic Philosophy," focuses on conducting a comprehensive analysis of the fundamental principles and teachings within Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy, primarily as conveyed through his vachanas and writings. To understand this objective in detail, let's break it down. Here are some key aspects of his socio-economic philosophy:

Don't make (me) think, "Whose is this man ? Whose is this man ? Whose is this man ?"

Make (me) think, "This is our man. This is our man. This is our man."

Oh the Deity of kUDala saMgama, make (me) think that "I am a son of Your house."

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ಕೂಡಲ ಸಂಗಮದೇವಾ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮನೆಯ ಮಗನೆಂದು ಎನಿಸಯ್ಯ.

1. Equality and Social Justice: Basavanna's core message revolved around the idea of universal equality, irrespective of one's caste, creed, or social background. He vehemently opposed the caste system and discrimination based on birth. His philosophy emphasized that every individual is equal in the eyes of the divine, and social distinctions should not determine one's worth or access to opportunities.
2. Dasoha (Sharing): A fundamental aspect of Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy was "Dasoha," which means the act of giving and sharing. He encouraged the practice of sharing one's resources, wealth, and knowledge with those in need. The idea was to create a more equitable society by reducing disparities in access to resources and ensuring that everyone's basic needs are met.
3. Work and Dignity: Basavanna believed in the dignity of labor. He stressed that all forms of work are equally valuable, and people should engage in productive activities that contribute to society. This idea promoted economic self-sufficiency and self-reliance, ensuring that people didn't have to depend on others for their livelihood.
4. Religious Pluralism: Basavanna promoted the idea of religious pluralism, encouraging people to follow their own faith while practicing social and economic equity. This was a significant departure from the religious orthodoxy of his time, which often perpetuated social hierarchies.
5. Women's Empowerment: Basavanna was a strong advocate for women's rights and their active participation in socio-economic activities. He emphasized that women should have equal opportunities in all spheres of life and should not be treated as inferior to men.
6. Decentralization and Local Self-Governance: Basavanna's philosophy encouraged decentralization of power and governance. He believed in the importance of local self-governance where communities themselves could make decisions about their affairs. This concept contributed to the empowerment of local communities and the equitable distribution of resources.
7. Eradication of Untouchability: Basavanna was a staunch opponent of untouchability and worked towards its eradication. He encouraged the inclusion of all individuals in society, regardless of their social or economic status.
8. The Anubhava Mantapa: Basavanna's teachings were disseminated and discussed at the Anubhava Mantapa, a spiritual and philosophical gathering of like-minded individuals. It served as a platform for intellectual and social discourse, promoting his ideas of social justice and equality.
9. Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy had a profound impact on the development of the Lingayat sect and continues to influence social reform movements in India. His emphasis on equality, sharing, and human dignity remains relevant in the contemporary world, as it provides a strong foundation for addressing socio-economic disparities and fostering a just and equitable society.

2. ASSESS THE ENDURING IMPACT ON SOCIETY

During that era, societal divisions among various communities, including Brahmins and Kshatriyas, led to unequal treatment. Basavanna vehemently denounced this injustice, advocating for the equal worth of all individuals irrespective of their social backgrounds. He ardently proclaimed the fundamental equality inherent

in every human being, regardless of their community affiliation. Collaborating closely with the ruling authority, Basavanna tirelessly worked to rectify these disparities, emphasizing the importance of fairness and compassion in society. He championed the principle of meritocracy, insisting that positions in governance should be based on merit rather than communal identity. Additionally, Basavanna actively engaged in initiatives aimed at uplifting the marginalized, facilitating their access to resources such as land for sustenance. His visionary leadership extended to the establishment of Kalyana, a self-governed city where people from diverse backgrounds could gather freely to discuss and address social issues, fostering an environment of inclusivity and dialogue.

The enduring impact of Lord Basavanna on society is substantial and multifaceted. His teachings and socio-economic philosophy have left a lasting legacy that continues to influence various aspects of Indian society, particularly in the state of Karnataka and among the Lingayat community. Here, we'll assess the enduring impact of Lord Basavanna in detail:

1. **Social Equality and Caste Eradication:** Lord Basavanna's strong opposition to the caste system and his emphasis on social equality has had a profound and enduring impact on Indian society. His teachings challenged the rigid caste-based hierarchy and promoted a more inclusive and egalitarian society. Although caste discrimination still exists in many parts of India, Basavanna's philosophy has been a source of inspiration for social reformers and activists working towards its eradication.
2. **Lingayat Sect:** Lord Basavanna is considered the founding saint of the Lingayat sect, a significant religious and social movement in Karnataka. The Lingayat community has grown over the centuries and continues to follow his teachings, which emphasize personal devotion, equality, and selfless service. The sect's influence is not limited to Karnataka, as it has followers in various parts of India and around the world.
3. **Social Justice Movements:** Basavanna's philosophy has served as a source of inspiration for various social justice movements in India. His emphasis on human dignity, equality, and social reform has provided a moral and philosophical foundation for movements advocating for the rights of marginalized groups, including Dalits (formerly known as "Untouchables") and women.
4. **Dasoha Tradition:** The concept of "Dasoha" (sharing) promoted by Basavanna remains a significant part of the Lingayat tradition. This tradition of sharing resources, food, and knowledge continues to be practiced within Lingayat communities and serves as a charitable practice that benefits the less fortunate. The enduring practice of Dasoha has contributed to social welfare and poverty alleviation.
5. **Women's Empowerment:** Basavanna's advocacy for women's rights and their active participation in socio-economic activities has influenced the status and role of women in Lingayat communities. His teachings have contributed to greater gender equality and the promotion of women's education and leadership roles.
6. **Spiritual Philosophy:** Basavanna's spiritual philosophy, which emphasizes devotion to the divine through internal introspection and self-realization, has inspired countless individuals to seek spiritual enlightenment and pursue a life of ethical and moral conduct. His teachings continue to guide people on their spiritual journeys.
7. **Influence on Literature and Poetry:** Basavanna was not just a philosopher and social reformer but also a renowned poet. His Vachana Sahitya, a form of rhythmic and philosophical poetry, has had a lasting influence on Kannada literature. His works continue to be studied and revered, contributing to the cultural heritage of Karnataka.
8. **Cultural and Historical Significance:** Lord Basavanna's life and teachings are an integral part of Karnataka's cultural and historical identity. His legacy is celebrated through various cultural festivals, literature, and monuments, ensuring that his impact on society remains visible and celebrated.
9. **Lord Basavanna's enduring impact on society** can be seen in his profound influence on social reform, the Lingayat sect, women's empowerment, and the broader cultural and philosophical landscape. His teachings continue to inspire individuals and movements working towards a more just, equitable, and inclusive society, making him a revered figure in Indian history and beyond.

3. HIGHLIGHT CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE:

The socio-economic aspects of Lord Basavanna's teachings remain highly relevant in contemporary society. While he lived in the 12th century, his principles of social justice, equality, and economic self-sufficiency continue to offer valuable insights and guidance in addressing many of the challenges we face today. Here, we'll highlight the contemporary relevance of Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy in detail:

1. **Caste and Social Equality:** India still grapples with caste-based discrimination and inequalities. Basavanna's steadfast opposition to the caste system and his call for social equality provide a blueprint for addressing these challenges in contemporary society. His teachings can inspire efforts to eradicate caste-based discrimination, promote inter-caste marriages, and ensure equal opportunities for all.
2. **Wealth Disparity:** Economic inequality remains a global concern, and India is no exception. Basavanna's principle of "Dasoha" (sharing) is highly relevant in today's world, where the rich-poor divide is widening. His emphasis on wealth redistribution and helping those in need can inform policies and practices aimed at reducing income inequality and poverty.
3. **Dignity of Labor:** The idea of the dignity of labor is enduring. In the contemporary context, where various forms of work are often undervalued, Basavanna's teachings provide a moral basis for recognizing and respecting all kinds of work. This can lead to better working conditions, fair wages, and improved labor rights.
4. **Empowerment of Women:** Gender inequality persists in many societies, including India. Basavanna's advocacy for women's rights and their active participation in socio-economic activities serves as a powerful reminder of the need for gender equality. His teachings can inspire initiatives for women's empowerment, education, and leadership roles in contemporary society.
5. **Local Governance and Decentralization:** Decentralization and local self-governance are crucial in addressing the challenges of governance, especially in large and diverse countries like India. Basavanna's emphasis on these principles can influence efforts to strengthen local governance, increase citizen participation, and promote effective and accountable administration.
6. **Spiritual and Ethical Values:** Basavanna's spiritual philosophy, centered on inner reflection and moral conduct, remains relevant in a world grappling with issues of materialism and ethical dilemmas. His teachings encourage individuals to pursue a life based on ethical principles and moral values, which can guide their actions and decisions in contemporary society.
7. **Environmental Sustainability:** As the world faces environmental challenges, including climate change, Basavanna's emphasis on responsible and sustainable living is pertinent. His teachings promote a harmonious relationship between humanity and nature, which can inform contemporary efforts to address environmental issues and promote sustainable development.
8. **Social Welfare and Philanthropy:** In an era of corporate social responsibility and philanthropy, Basavanna's teachings on charitable practices, such as "Dasoha," offer a valuable framework for individuals and organizations to contribute to social welfare, poverty alleviation, and community development.
9. **Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy continues to hold contemporary relevance in addressing pressing issues such as caste discrimination, wealth inequality, gender inequality, labor rights, governance, environmental sustainability, and the pursuit of ethical values. His teachings provide a moral and philosophical foundation for creating a more just, equitable, and compassionate society, both in India and globally.**

IV. FINDINGS

1. Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy is deeply rooted in ethical living, equitable economic principles, and societal justice, as evident in his vachanas and writings.
2. His teachings emphasize the importance of honest labor, ethical trade, and the equitable distribution of wealth as fundamental principles of economic ethics.
3. Lord Basavanna's philosophy is characterized by its universal and timeless appeal, transcending the constraints of his era.

4. His socio-economic principles form an integral part of his broader philosophy, interwoven with spiritual and social dimensions.
5. The historical and cultural context of Lord Basavanna's time played a significant role in shaping the foundations of his socio-economic philosophy.
6. Lord Basavanna's teachings contributed to a significant reduction in caste-based discrimination during his lifetime, marking a transformative societal change.
7. The enduring impact of his socio-economic ideals is evident in the continued emphasis on social equality and ethical living in Lingayat communities.
8. His teachings have influenced societal norms, resulting in more equitable economic practices and the promotion of social justice.
9. The principles of Lord Basavanna's philosophy have been documented as instrumental in challenging discrimination and social disparities.
10. His philosophy played a role in shaping the broader Lingayat movement, which continues to advocate for social justice and ethical living.
11. Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy remains highly relevant in the modern world, offering solutions to contemporary challenges of income inequality and wealth distribution.
12. His teachings on ethical living provide guidance for individuals and communities in navigating complex moral and ethical dilemmas in the 21st century.
13. The emphasis on social justice and inclusivity in his philosophy aligns with the aspirations of modern societies striving for greater equality.
14. His teachings are still actively practiced in various Lingayat communities, underscoring their continued relevance.
15. Awareness and communication of Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy are essential for promoting its contemporary adoption and impact.

V. SUGGESTION

1. Educational Initiatives: Develop educational programs that incorporate Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy into curricula, ensuring that students are exposed to his teachings and their relevance in today's world.
2. Community Awareness Campaigns: Launch awareness campaigns within Lingayat communities and beyond to promote the enduring relevance of Lord Basavanna's teachings, particularly in the context of ethical living and equitable economic practices.
3. Economic Equity Advocacy: Advocate for the adoption of principles rooted in Lord Basavanna's teachings within economic and business sectors, promoting ethical trade, wealth distribution, and social responsibility.
4. Interfaith Dialogues: Organize interfaith dialogues and discussions that explore the intersections between Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy and other ethical and philosophical systems, fostering a broader understanding of shared principles.
5. Social Justice Movements: Collaborate with social justice movements and organizations to integrate Lord Basavanna's teachings into their advocacy efforts, emphasizing the importance of social equality and inclusivity.
6. Modern Ethical Business Practices: Encourage businesses to incorporate ethical principles derived from Lord Basavanna's teachings, such as fair wages and responsible wealth distribution, as part of their corporate social responsibility initiatives.
7. Scholarly Research: Support further scholarly research on Lord Basavanna's socio-economic philosophy and its applications in contemporary society, fostering a deeper understanding of its relevance.

8. Policy Recommendations: Develop policy recommendations based on Lord Basavanna's principles for governments and organizations, with a focus on promoting social justice, ethical living, and equitable economic practices.

VI. CONCLUSION

The profound socio-economic philosophy of Lord Basavanna, deeply rooted in ethical living and equitable economic principles, remains as relevant today as it was in his time. His teachings, characterized by their universal and timeless appeal, continue to offer solutions to contemporary challenges of income inequality, wealth distribution, and ethical living. The enduring impact of his socio-economic ideals is evident in the continued emphasis on social equality and ethical practices in Lingayat communities. To promote this philosophy's contemporary adoption and impact, educational initiatives, awareness campaigns, advocacy for economic equity, interfaith dialogues, collaboration with social justice movements, modern ethical business practices, scholarly research, and policy recommendations are essential. By embracing these suggestions, we can further advance Lord Basavanna's vision of a just and equitable society in the modern world.

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