

PROPAGATION OF HUMAN VALUES IN BASVESHWARA'S POETRY

¹Chaitali Nandkumar Mane Deshmukh, ²Dr. H.K. Awatade

¹Research Student,

Department of English and Linguistics, Shankarrao Mohite Mahavidyalaya Akulj.

² Head, Department of English and Linguistics, Shankarrao Mohite Mahavidyalaya Akulj.

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: 20th February 2026 Accepted: 01st March 2026 Published: 07th March 2026 Keywords: <i>Human Values, truth, honesty, loyalty, sincerity, peace, love etc.</i>	A key component of the Bhakti literary tradition, Basaveshwara's poetry provides deep insights into human morality and spirituality. This essay investigates how Basaveshwara's vachanas spread human values like compassion, love, truth, honesty, and sincerity. His poetry emphasizes love, empathy, and personal integrity as the cornerstones of a moral existence, going beyond ritualistic religion. The study shows that in addition to reflecting the sociocultural milieu of Maharashtra in the 17th century, Basaveshwara's poetry still motivates readers today by acting as a medium for moral instruction and the development of universal human ideals. The study comes to the conclusion that Tukaram's writings are a prime example of the timeless ability of poetry to influence moral awareness and promote a values-based society.

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Biography of Basveshwara: One of India's greatest spiritual teachers, Basaveshwara, also known as Basavanna, was a saint, poet, and fervent social reformer from Karnataka. Around the year A.D. 1131, Basavanna was born into a prominent Brahmin family in Ingaleswara-Bagevadi, which is now in the Bijapur District of Karnataka. His father, Madiraja or Madarasa, was known as Gramanimani and was the chief of Bagevadi agrahara. Madalambe, also known as Madambe, was his devout wife and a devoted follower of Nandiswara, the main Bagevadi deity.

Human Values: Propagation of Human Values is the main purpose of literature. In this context, Peter Barry states that, "... the purpose of literature is essentially the enhancement of life and the propagation of human values; but not in a programmatic way: if literature and criticism become overtly and directly political, they necessary tend towards propaganda" (Barry, 18). Basavanna's poetry offers an intense exploration of human values which leads to the enhancement of life. Truth, honesty, sincerity, loyalty, love, compassion, kindness, peace are the basic human values.

Human values are the fundamental principles that shape our personalities and guide our behavior. These principles are crucial because they define who we are and serve as our compass in life. The decisions we make on a daily basis, how we live our lives, and who we want to be are all influenced by our values. Without these principles, our lives would be in disarray and nothing we say or do would have any purpose. All people should make an effort to live up to these ideals in their daily lives. Additionally, it is critical that society as a whole acknowledge these ideals and make them clear in social structures. In order for people to constantly know what they stand for, it is also critical that society as a whole acknowledge these values and make them clear in institutions, organizations, and social systems.

Human Values in Basveshwara's Poetry: Basaveshwara's poetry highly remarked with human values. Following examples from Basaveshwara's poetry will strengthen the statement. Truth is one of the crucial human values. It leads to maintaining human relations. Basveshwara himself is the proponent of truth.

Speech without truth is a flower without fragrance
Worship without devotion bears no fruit
O kudal sangam Deva.

In this vachana, Basavanna presents truth as the essential quality that gives value and meaning to both speech and worship. He implies that truth is the fundamental core that gives words beauty and value; without it, speech is meaningless and lifeless. He compares speech without truth to a flower without scent. His concept of truth stresses sincerity, integrity, and harmony between thought, word, and deed rather than just factual accuracy. In a similar vein, Jesus establishes a connection between truth and true spiritual feeling when he states that worship without devotion bears no fruit, demonstrating the pointlessness of rituals carried out without genuine sincerity. As a result, truth is portrayed in the poem as both a moral and a spiritual ideal, the cornerstone of genuine existence and the way that one approaches the Divine. He further says,

The mind is a marketplace,
Thought is a trade.
Truth alone is the profit". (Ramanujan)

Here, The poem places a strong emphasis on discernment, encouraging the mind to pursue honesty and clarity rather than being sidetracked by lies or flimsy notions. Truth becomes the significant result of

careful contemplation and intellectual discussion rather than only an abstract idea. He adds,

Knowledge without Truth is a lamp in darkness
 Knowledge without devotion is dry wood
 O kudal sangam Deva (Ramanujan)

The basis for knowledge's direction and significance is truth. Without truth, persuasion turns into manipulation, information into noise, and intelligence into something that is harmful rather than enlightening. Truth disciplines the mind to pursue what is rather than what is practical, well-liked, or profitable; it grounds thought in reality. It fosters social stability, moral integrity, and interpersonal trust. Truth serves as a guide for scientific research, a safeguard for equity in the legal system, and a source of clarity and tranquility in one's personal life. Pursuing truth is a sign of respect for reality itself, and as a result, knowledge becomes illumination rather than just collection. Basaveshwara's poetry also exposes human values such as sincerity and honesty.

Without doing one's own work
 One prays to God for results.
 Without labor there is reward
 O Kudal sangam Deva.

By revealing the reality that one cannot expect success without effort, the poem above emphasizes the idea of honesty and sincerity. Acknowledging that prayer cannot take the place of personal accountability is morally courageous. Instead of praising God in vain, Basaveshwara discusses human frailty in a straightforward, almost critical manner. Honesty is reflected in this directness itself. Realizing that genuine devotion is about integrity in deeds rather than words or rituals is a sign of sincerity. Sincere effort becomes the most authentic prayer, and honest labor becomes the purest form of worship. Basaveshwara's poetry emphasizes on the theme of 'peace'.

Outer splendor is useless,
 Inner peace is essential,
 Without peace, what is wealth?
 O kudal sangam Deva.

It highlights that genuine prosperity and contentment come from within rather than from material belongings or acknowledgment. It draws attention to the difference between fleeting, temporal grandeur and enduring, spiritual pleasure. A meaningful existence is said to be built on inner serenity; without it, even prosperity becomes meaningless and unfulfilling. The poet implies that true happiness requires both mental and spiritual equilibrium, and that material success is only worthwhile when it coexists with inner peace. In the end, the theme teaches that developing spiritual equilibrium, self-awareness, and detachment is far more important than pursuing material achievement. To maintain peace in society Basaveshwara started moral teaching.

Do not steal, do not kill
 Do not tell lies, do not be angry
 Do not praise yourself,
 Do not belittle others
 This is purity within, this is purity without.

This poem connects social behavior, emotional control, and moral behavior to provide a succinct manual for attaining real purity. While the prohibition of lying and wrath highlights honesty and control over negative emotions, the prohibition of theft and murder indicates that purity starts with moral behavior. This ethic is extended to humility and respect in interpersonal relationships by the prohibitions against self-praise and disparaging others, demonstrating how internal attitudes influence external interactions. The poem conveys the idea that living a pure life involves developing an integrated moral character—one in which the head, heart, and deeds are all in harmony with virtue—rather than merely abiding by regulations on the outside. Love theme is also presented in the poems of Basaveshwara.

Worship without love is empty.

Love itself is the highest dharma,

O kudal sangam Deva

Here, love is characterized by dedication, compassion, and a complete connection to the divine and life itself rather than romance or sentimentality. The poet demonstrates that without this inner warmth, rituals, prayers, or external displays of worship are pointless; even holy actions turn into useless formalities in the absence of love. The poem implies that moral behavior, dedication, and even self-realization are based on true caring, empathy, and surrender by establishing love as the highest dharma. Knowledge, prosperity, and worship are meaningless without love, which is the lens through which all actions acquire significance. The poet teaches Kudalasangama Deva that the true, live presence of love in one's heart is the way to experience the divine rather than following laws.

CONCLUSION:

Basaveshwara's poetry, which combines spiritual understanding with pragmatic ethics, is a timeless vehicle for the spread of human values. He highlights qualities like honesty, humility, compassion, self-control, and respect for all living things in his straightforward yet profound poetry, demonstrating that moral purity is found in thought, word, and action rather than just rituals. Basaveshwara's poetry serves as a beacon for moral life since it encourages people to develop comprehensive goodness by addressing both inner attitudes and external actions. His ideas are still relevant today, serving as a constant reminder to people that genuine progress is determined by the application of universal human ideals and the nobility of character rather than by wealth or power.

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