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Abstract: Social work and human history go together. So Social Work was always in human society although it beings to be a defined pursuit and profession in the 19th Century. Professional social workers work with individuals, groups, families, organization and communities. While working with the social workers should concern with their social problems, their causes and solutions. At the same time they should concern about the culture of the community, their customs, traditions and religious beliefs, values and ethics. Because each religion and culture have their own techniques or sources to solve their problems. India has had a glorious tradition of spirituality and religion. As each religion teaches us the philosophy of humanity as Daya, Karuna, Ahimsa, Equality, human rights and social justice, dignity of individual. In the 12 th century there was no dignity to man and manual work in Karnataka. Basweshwara of Veershaiva spiritual religion finds out some solutions. To abolish social evils which has created injustice in the society. Intervention sources of Veershaiva religion to solve the social problems were very effective. Bashweshwara not only preached these to people but actually practiced them to attain social justice. His main aim was to up bring the common man in society. So Bashweshwara was called as the man of masses.

Keywords: Bashweshwara, Veershaiva, Daya Karuna, Ahimsa

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Religion and Social Work: Contribution of Veershaiva in Constructing a Theory of Social Work

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Social work and human history go together. So Social Work was always in human society although it beings to be a defined pursuit and profession in the 19th Century. Professional social workers work with individuals, groups, families, organization and communities. While working with the social workers should concern with their social problems, their causes and solutions. At the same time they should concern about the culture of the community, their customs, traditions and religious beliefs, values and ethics. Because each religion and culture have their own techniques or sources to solve their problems. India has had a glorious tradition of spirituality and religion. As each religion teaches us the philosophy of humanity as Daya, Karuna, Ahimsa, Equality, human rights and social justice, dignity of individual. In the 12th century there was no dignity to man and manual work in Karnataka. Basweshwara of Veershaiva spiritual religion finds out some solutions. To abolish social evils which has created injustice in the society. Intervention sources of Veershaiva religion to solve the social problems were very effective. Bashweshwara not only preached these to people but actually practiced them to attain social justice. His main aim was to up bring the common man in society. So Bashweshwara was called as the man of masses.

In this paper researcher intended to press the similarities between Veershaiva religion and social work, values which are helpful in social work theory building to solve the problems of the people and social issues focused by Veershaiva and the intervention sources available in the Veershaiva religion practiced by Bashweshwara a great social reformer, a philosopher and spiritual leader of Veershaiva religion. he was not a founder of a Veershaiva religion but he and his coworkers reconstructed the religion by contributing the ideas like 'Kayaka' (Dignity to Man & Manual Work) 'Anubhavamantapa' (A Spiritual Parliament) 'Isthalinga' (Universal Symbol of God), 'Vachanas' (Rational & Progressive thoughts in the form of Poem) which has created literary revolution. As Veershaiva religion developed its own culture which implies harmonious relationship between an individual and his society.

This religion have spiritual base which is based on the doctoring of 'Kayakve Kailasa' means work is haven and by this it was tried to attain dignity of man and manual work. And thus attain principal of 'Dignity of Man' which is also a principal of social work.

Important principals used by Veershaiva Sharna's (Devotee) in society to up bring the downtrodden, to eradicate the social evils in the society, which were exploited the common man and thereby became obstacles in the path of equal and just society.

Bashweshwara was born in Bagewadi in Bijapur district in Karnataka. In the 12th century (1134 A. D.). He left Bagewadi and spent 12 years studding Sangameshwara the Shaivite school of learning Kudala Sangama. There he conversed with scholars and developed his spiritual and religious views in association with his social understanding. At that time Baswa observed that there were numerous superstitious beliefs in the society. People were discriminate on the bases of their casts, sex, women were having secondary positions they were not treated equally and kept far away from all their rights as human beings. There is no dignity to man as their occupations were based on cast, and that occupations

were having no status in society. They were considered the work of low dignity. The position of untouchable was pitiable. The society needed social justice, human rights, dignity to man and manual work, equality. The need was to reconstruct the society which was based on all above mentioned humanitarian values.

From this background Bashwara and other Sharna's (devotee) had reconstructed the Veershaiva religion having spiritual base and humanitarian values.

1. Veershaiva Religion

'Vira generally means a hero. Veershaiva insisted its follower should develop single minded devotion, one god shiva. This did not, however, mean that they should show this respect to other gods. To them Shiva is Supreme. The term 'Vira' also suggested the zeal with which the new movement was propagated. The term lingayat are lingavanta is also used to describe this religion. lingayats are those who wear linga on their body. They are forbidden to go to the temple and Worship the shivlinga there.

Condemning other religions and upholding one's own was a commonly accepted a practice at that time. Bhasawa has severely condemned the evil aspects of other religions in his Vachanas. Veershaivasim declares that anybody could become Veershaiva irrespective of his class, community, Creed or occupation. Once one becomes a Veershaiva, one would be treated as an equal. Veershaivaism asked two things of an individual, firstly, he should sever his connections with his former religion by wearing Ishtalinga on his body, secondly he should have complete faith in god Shiva.

2. The Main Principals of Veershaivaism

- Veershiva should apply Bhasma or holy ashes on the forehead.
- One should give up meat eating and wine drinking.

- One should become perfect vegetarian.
- He should always speak truth and avoid stealing and killing.
- One should be not be greedy
- One should not be lazy.
- The person should take a profession and work hard for his living.
- One should avoid go to temple because the body itself is the temple where Shiva lives.
- If a person lacks time or resources to perform worship, that should not worry him, for what is of real importance is the faith he has in god.

All this appealed to the masses, especially to the poor and downtrodden. They felt that a redeemer had appeared for their upliftment. Thousands of people came and embraced the religion. Among these agriculturists, weavers, shoe-makers, fishermen, hunters, basket makers, merchants and then Brahmins.

New Ideas contributed by Basवेश्वरा and his Co-workers to eradicate social evils in the society. May be summed up in terms of the following:

a. Anubhav Mantap

It was a spiritual parliament established by Basva & his coworkers. It was not a building having four walls & pillars, neither it was neither a temple nor a place of worship, Puja or Prarthana. But it was a place where people belonging to all cast, sex, occupation & class were participating in not only spiritual discrimination. The main characteristics of 'Anubhav Mantapa' was to share the experiences of the society, classification, purification and thus make them values and principle not only to preach but to practice. Sharna's (devotee) started for implement the values and principles which were discussed in Anubhav Mantapa by themselves and then people in the society started to

practice them. The values and principles were practiced by involving all the common people in discussions. The discussions held in Anubhav Mantapa were in the form of Vachanas progressing thoughts written by various sharna's the people participated in the discussions were from king & queen of Kashmir to Kaktiaya, channya and Sankavva (Prostitute women). There was no any discrimination on the basis of caste, relation, sex and class and accepted everyone as equal.

Jedar Dasimayya was by profession a weaver, Shankar Dasimayya a tailor, Madival Machayya a washerman, Myadar Ketayya a basket-maker, Kinnari Bommayya a gold smith, Vakkalmnddayya, a farmer, Hadapada Appanna a barber, Jedar Madanna a soldier, Ganda Kannappa an oilman, Dohar Kakkyya a farmer, Mudar Channa a cobbler and Ambigar chandeyya a ferryman. There were women followers such as Satyakka, Rammavve, Sommayve, Sole Sannkka, Lakkammes, Muktyyakka, Akkamahadevi, with their respective vacations.

One curious thing was that all these and many more have sung the Vachana's (saying) regarding their vacations in a very suggestive imaginary.

In this Anubhav Mantapa Sharna's realized the importance of peaceful life as some people in the society were leading were pitiable life due to discrimination, injustice, inequality, exploitation. All such people were invited in this Anubhav Mantapa to share their Anubhava's, experiences and to find out solutions to their problems with common discussions. Common people felt very happy by getting humanitarian treat meant in that place and realized the importance of Ishtalinga, Kayaka & lead a happy life.

This was the revolutionary step taken by the Veershaiva Sharna's in 12th century that Anubhav Mantapa was not only a platform for people belonging to all casts, class, occupation but it was a unique example in the world at that time (up to my knowledge) which give equal status to women of all caste, class and occupations (like prostitution) and allowed them to participate in spiritual, social and economic discussion. This was revolutionary

idea given by Veershaiva's which is relevant in present day for social workers to create all healthy society without any discrimination. This was a unique example of women empowerment, weapon for discrimination, equality, human rights and social justice.

b. Vachanas

They are progressive revolutionary thoughts of 12th century Sharna's. a literacy revolution was created through Vachanas. Sharna's spread social awareness through their poetry known as Vachana's. these are rational and progressive social thoughts.

Basva, Akkamahadal, Allamprabhu, Channabasveshwara, Sidharma all these & other Sharnas did not preach people the intricate aspects of spirituality, but they taught people how to live happily in a rational social order. Later come to be known as Sharna movement in which Vachanas were used effectively to stop the social evils existed during that time.

Vachanas (revolutionary thoughts) had their roots deep in the accumulated popular discontentment regarding the existing social and religious conditions. It is no wonder that the mafonity of people who accepted and acted upon these teaching come from the poorer sections of the society. Later number of people throughout the country joined him who belongs to different cast, sex and religion, occupations.

Vachanas were the reflections of the society and they created awareness among the people on the issues like, inter-caste marriage, untouchability, equality, equal status of women, social justice, value of life importance, self purification.

Bashweshwara Vachanas were simple and appealing his Vachanas preaches the principles in simple way. He says religion is a way of life.

One of his Vachanas

Thou shall not steal,nor kill,
Nor speak a lie,
Be angry with no one,
Nor scorn another man,
Nor glory in thyself,
Nor others hold to blame.
This is your inward purity,
This is your outward purity,
This is the way to win our Lord.
Kudala Sangama (Basavanna-page 46)
What sort of religion can it be
Without compassion.
Compassion needs must be
Towards all living things,
Compassion is the root
Of all religious faith,
Lord Kundala Sangama does not care
For what is not like this. (Basavanna-page 40)

Bashveshwara declared that religion is a way of life. Its essence consisted in livings a life of goodness and sincerity. He defined the term 'goodlife' in his Vachanas and said that good life was share way to god. The poor must have been really thrilled to hear that they too could belong to a religion as others did (Basavanna-page 47).

Sharnas in their Vachanas denounced meaningless rituals and taught instead simple and sensible 'Acharas' or practices conductive to clean and good life. Channabasava had listed such Acharas, these include taking regular baths, brushing teeths, abstaining from violence, speaking truth, being faithful (to ones husband or wife), etc. Veershaivaism laid self on inner purity; it did not deny the importance of external purity as well.

Devar Dasimayya another Sharna has compared man and women to two stick one placed above the other, both are necessary for making fine. He searched a girl of his liking and married her.

He had said that Shiva loves the devotion of a couple, who lead a life of harmony and understanding (which is relevant in these days in couple counseling).

Basva & others learnt from Dalimayya and made the emancipation of women one of the mottoes of their movement. Women were encouraged to pursue various occupations and earn for their families. They were also encouraged to take up spiritual practices as men did and they were also encouraged themselves through song and poetry. As a result, we find among the mystic saints of century, at least thirty two women who composed Vachana's among them. Basvana's two wives, Basavana's elder sister, Ammavve a common woman who spun yarn, pittavve a seller of pancakes, Sommovve a thrasher also composed Vachanas. There were other women who took up different occupations like visiting each house before dawn and taken up the Kayaka of reciting the Vachanas in public. So many women at that time took to religious practices along with their husbands. They sometime advised their husbands on religious matters. Many of them were well read and participated in religious discussion that took place at Anubhav Mantap or some time at 'Mahamane' (Basavas house). An atmosphere was created for women to realize their potentialities and participate in social activities. It was a revolutionary change, it is doubtful that some number of women writers was there in any other Indian language. Women enjoyed equality & liberty at that time which led them to live a life as human beings. (Which really needs today on the part of so many women who exploited, abused, burned, faced domestic violence etc)

In this way the Vachana's brought in new ideas and the common man was made aware of my own rights. The man aim was when the masses became conscious of the injustice done to them; the men in power, political and religious get perturbed.

c. Dasoha

Dasoha was another important contribution of Veershaivism. Dasoha means the more earning from Kayaka (hard work) which

will be distributed among the needy in the societies. More earning means (more than the need of a person) Dasoha oppose the savings, due to this it was helpful in preventing unemployment. Everybody was engaged in their Kayaka for earning and giving excess to the needy. By supporting 'Dasoha'- social welfare was achieved by preventing, unemployment in the society and all getting their basic needs.

d. Kayaka

Kayaka ve Kailasa was another contribution of Bashveshwara a social reformer of Veershaiva religion. Kayaka literally means anything connected with the body (Kaya)..It is physical extension or any occupation which an individual takes up. According to Basva and others, every individual should take up some job of his choice and perform it with all sincerity. No individual should be a burden to society. Nuliya Chandayya said that exploitation of any kind was wholly unacceptable to god. Hence Kayaka implied hard work, physical or mental. Basava served as a treasurer under king Bijjala and that was by Kayaka.

Allamma said "we should realize god through the work we do" the person who took up a particular job should do it with sincerity and should share a part of his earnings for the needy and Jangamas (guru). Kayaka also implies that no occupation is inferior or superior to another. All were of equal status and people who did their jobs well were entitled to respect. Basveshwara said that Kayaka (Sharna) (is Naivedya (good) and work is heaven. Hard work is god performing Kayaka with devotion is acting of heaven. Due to this concept Bashveshwara was called as Kayaka Bhanderi, Kayak Purush, Kayak Gogi.

He proclaimed that all members of the state are labourers, some may be intellectual labourers and others may be manual labourers. He placed practice before precept and his own life was of rigid rectitude. Basva brought home to his countrymen. The lesson of self-purification. He tried to raise the moral levels of the public life in the country and he insisted that the same rules of conduct

applied to the administrators as to the individual members of the society. He also taught the dignity of manual labour by insisting on work as worship. Every kind of manual labour, which was looked down upon by people of high cast, showed be looked upon with love and reverence, he argued. Thus arts and crafts flourished and a new foundation was laid down in the history of the economics of the land.

Many of the Sharna and Sharnis gave more importance to Kayaka as Ayadakki lakmma says in her Vachana:

He who involving in Kayaka, he has no need of Guru Sanidhya
Neither he needs Lingpuja, nor any other thought except
Kayaka. Because Kayakave Kailasa (There is no heaven except
Kayaka).

Somadevi, another Sharnis, says:

There is no food without Kayaka
The house neighbor without Kayaka is like hell

e. Isthalinga

Basvanna used Isthalinga to eradicate untouchability, establish equality among all human beings and a means to attain spiritual enlistment. Isthalinga is very much different from stharlinga and charlinga Ishtalinga is a universal symbol of God.

To Basva, the temple represented institutionalism of the rich and the bigoted. He and his colleagues categorically stated that no Veershaiva should build a temple, nor should he enter a temple and offer worship god, in the form of an Isthaling, was on one's own body, and he resided in one's heart in his true form. Basva knew that such a move, though impracticable, was necessary for the orthodox people were not prepared to admit the untouchables in to the temples. Basva had neither the resources nor the desire to build temples. (Basavanna page 51-52).

This was an important concept used by Sharnas to eradicate untouchability in the society.

3. Application to Social Work

As social work grew out of humanitarian and democratic ideas and its values are based on receipt for the equality and dignity of all people. It focuses on meeting human needs and developing human potentials, human rights and social justice. In concern with this all these values and principles were focused in Veershaiva religion. While working with the people Basveshwara and his coworkers used the sources of intervention of Veershaiva religion.

Sharna's (Devotees) movement was for the common man and not for the scholars and the sophisticated. Vachanas are the important sources for social awareness used by the Sharnas. In present days it can also be used as the efficient technique for aware her of the people to get their rights as human beings, not discriminative on any ground social workers while working with people must know the meaning of the Vachanas. These will be used in proper situation in a proper way. Thus will be effective in solving the problems. The same time he should know the meaning of Kayaka.

It is not only needed to know the ideas like Kayaka but implement them in proper way is the need of the day. Its implementation helps the society to realize the importance of 'Kayak Dasoha' which tells us that the person who took up a particular job should do it with sincerity and should share a part of his earnings with the Jangamas and the needy. Today's people are waiting for welfare schemes by the Government and most of them sit idle by not doing work. Thus unemployment increases, people want more money with in short time by short cut, but implementation of Kayaka will prevent all these will make the people do work sincerely and help them to understand that work is worship and by this help to self and society's welfare.

Anubhav Mantapa is needed today to abolish discrimination on all grounds. Anubhav Mantapa of 12th century was unique feature of the movement which has contributed lot for upbringing the downtrodden and to create a just equal society. Today social

workers can practice model of Anubhav can pay in the communities which will be based on the doctrine of equality. Really it will be very effective source to bring equality in the community. Today's community halls can be used for this purpose.

Basveshwara was a man of masses. He was loved by the people not only for his preaching but he practiced the preaching himself first and then told the people. He was a man of action according to his saying (nudidante nadedare ide Janme Kade) i. e. One who acts according to his words reaches salvation. the main aim of Veershaivism was to eliminate the barriers of caste and to move untouchability. Raising the untouchability to equal the highborn. As Basveshwara says man should not be considered by his birth, but by his conduct. The acquired sanctity of family religions and the improvement in the status of womanhood. He tried to reduce the importance of rites and rituals, fasts and pilgrimages in present days. Number of women becomes anemic due to frequent fasts. So the above mentioned values of Veershaivism are helpful to the social workers to prevent such problems in the society.

By implementing values and principles propagated by Veershaivas will be helpful to raise the relation generally to higher level capacity both in thought and achieve.

Professional social workers must know two important Vachana of Basveshwara:

Don't ask who is he, who is he
Who is he, but say he is our's
He is our's he is our's

Again Basva says man can't become high caste by his birth but by his conduct and to support this he says-

How can I call siriyala as a Shetty,
How can I call Channaya as Madar,
How can I call Kayakayya as Dohar,
If I myself am called Brahmin
How can Kundala Sangama
Like me?

Conclusion

This religion believes in principle of equality, social justice, and improving status of women and thus to create happy society of common man. Some are also the principles of professional social work.

So the social worker can justify the principles by practicing them in the communities to solve the problems of common man.

Many thinkers and politicians of today in India have appreciated the work of Basveshwara as revolutionary social worker and they are in favour of applying these principles in today's situations to create an ideal society.

Mahatma Gandhi spoke thus at the Belgaum session of the Indian National Congress in 1924. "It has not been possible for me to practice all the precepts of Basveshwara which he taught 800 years ago and which he also practiced eradication of untouchability and promotion of dignity of labour where among his core precepts. One does not find even shades of casteism in him. Had he lived during our times he would have been a saint worthy of worship."

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