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104

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Social Responsibility of Religious Institutions: A Case Study of Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan, Koradi

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Abstract

Religious institutions in India play a significant role in socio-cultural development. Many of them extend beyond spiritual guidance and actively contribute to social welfare, education, healthcare, and cultural preservation. These institutions often serve as centres for promoting ethical values, fostering social cohesion, and addressing the needs of underprivileged communities. Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan, Koradi, stands as an important example of such holistic involvement. This study aims to examine the Sansthan's role in promoting social responsibility through various programs and initiatives, including educational support, healthcare services, and cultural activities. Using both qualitative and quantitative data collected from 15 participants, the paper analyses the effectiveness, reach, and challenges of the Sansthan's social services. The findings underscore the growing significance of religious institutions in community development and highlight the potential for enhancing their social impact through strategic planning and improved outreach efforts.

Keywords: Case Study, Community Development, Koradi, Shri Mahalaxmi Sansthan, Social Responsibility, Religious Institutions, Temple Trust, Social Welfare

INTRODUCTION

India, being a land of spirituality, houses numerous religious institutions that command immense Public trust. These organisations often serve as centres for education, health care, disaster relief, and community development (Bidarakoppa, 2010). In this context, examining their social role becomes essential.

Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan in Koradi, near Nagpur, is not only a renowned pilgrimage site but also actively participates in local development. This study evaluates the Sansthan's social Initiatives, their implementation, and broader societal implications.

Although several studies have examined the social role of religious institutions in India, there is limited research focusing on smaller regional temples like Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan, Koradi. Most existing research concentrates on major urban temples or CSR initiatives of large temple trusts. The impact of such regional institutions on local communities, their outreach efficiency, and financial transparency remains largely unexplored. This study fills this gap by evaluating the Sansthan's social initiatives, assessing community perceptions, and identifying challenges in resource utilisation, thereby providing insights for similar institutions.

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan, located in Koradi village of Nagpur district, holds deep Religious significance in Maharashtra. The temple, dedicated to Goddess Jagdamba—an Incarnation of Goddess Mahalaxmi—attracts thousands of devotees during Navratri and other Festivals. Over the years, the Sansthan has expanded its role from religious rituals to community welfare activities, including education support, medical camps, infrastructural work, and cultural Preservation (Millathara, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

i. Social Work, Historical Background, and Role of Religious Institutions

Ranjan (2023) highlights how religious institutions strengthen spirituality and also support social Integration through various community activities. Similarly, Millathara (2020) studied the Socio-cultural impact of monasteries during the Wodeyar rule, emphasising their role in cultural Preservation.

According to Bidarakoppa (2010), religious institutions in Dharwad district have significantly contributed to education, healthcare, and food distribution, demonstrating strong social Responsibility.

ii Management Practices and Contemporary Social Approaches

Daptardar (2021) examined the management systems of Gajanan Maharaj Sansthan, Shegaon, and Shri Siddhivinayak Temple, Mumbai. His findings reveal the importance of transparent financial Planning and structured social service programs.

Jena (2020) focused on CSR and environmental sustainability, explaining how modern CSR Concepts influence the social outreach activities of institutions, including temple trusts.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the scope and type of social responsibility initiatives of Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan.
- To assess the impact of these initiatives on the local community.
- To understand stakeholder perceptions regarding the Sansthan's social contributions.
- To recommend strategies for improving the effectiveness of these programs.

Hypothesis

H1: Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan significantly contributes to social responsibilities in the Koradi region.

H0: Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan does not significantly contribute to social responsibilities in the Koradi region.

Research Questions

- What social services are provided by the Sansthan?
- How do beneficiaries perceive these services?
- What challenges does the Sansthan face?
- What improvements can enhance the impact of its social services?

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed-method approach involving both qualitative and quantitative data.

Research Design

A case study design focusing on a single institution—Shri Mahalaxmi Jagdamba Sansthan, Koradi—allows for detailed examination.

Sample Size

A total of 15 participants:

- 5 beneficiaries
- 5 Sansthan management members
- 5 community leaders/residents

Purposive sampling was adopted to ensure that the participants selected had direct experience with the Sansthan's social initiatives, thereby providing relevant and reliable insights.

DATA COLLECTION

Primary Data: Structured questionnaires and interviews.

Secondary Data: Reports, websites, articles, and previous research studies.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analysed using thematic coding. Quantitative responses were summarised. Using descriptive statistics.

Sample Findings

80% beneficiaries are satisfied with the programs.
70% suggested more outreach.
60% felt funds should be better utilised.

Limitations

Small sample size
Limited access to financial records
Respondent bias

Source: Field Interview Data – Conducted by the researcher, 2025, July.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Sansthan actively engages in education, healthcare, and cultural initiatives, and beneficiaries generally acknowledge the positive impact of these activities on the community. Around 80% of the beneficiaries reported being satisfied with the Sansthan's social programs. However, nearly 70% suggested that outreach should be expanded, especially in remote areas where awareness about available services is limited, and 60% felt that financial resources could be better utilised, highlighting the need for improved planning and transparency.

These findings indicate that while the Sansthan's initiatives are positively received, there is significant scope for expanding outreach and enhancing resource management. Addressing concerns regarding transparency and long-term sustainability can strengthen community trust and ensure more effective utilisation of resources. Strategic planning and regular assessment of social programs can help the institution maximise its contribution to local development.

These results align with Bidarakoppa (2010), who emphasised that structured social programs and transparency enhance community trust in religious institutions. Similarly, Daptardar (2021) highlighted that clear management and well-planned initiatives increase the social impact of temple trusts. The study reinforces the importance of stakeholder engagement, efficient resource allocation, and continuous evaluation to improve the effectiveness of religious institutions' social responsibility initiatives.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sansthan is an example of how religious institutions can drive social change. Future research can expand the sample size and include multiple regional temples to generalise findings. The study also suggests that effective planning, regular needs assessment, and collaboration with NGOs can enhance the social impact of religious institutions.

Recommendations

Form a social service committee
Transparent reporting
Collaborate with NGOs
Annual needs assessment
Expand vocational programs

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