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**A STUDY OF CULTURAL IMPACT OF DIFFERENT MOVEMENTS OF
CASTE SYSTEM IN KARNATAKA**

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ABSTRACT

The cultural impact of different movements challenging the caste system in Karnataka has been profound, shaping the state's social and religious landscape over centuries. One of the most significant movements was the Lingayat movement in the 12th century, led by the philosopher-saint Basava. This movement rejected the rigid Brahminical hierarchy and emphasized equality, personal devotion, and the worship of a formless God. The Lingayat philosophy promoted social reform, rejecting caste distinctions, idol worship, and rituals. This movement empowered lower castes, providing them with a spiritual and social identity distinct from the dominant Brahminical order. Another impactful movement was led by Kanaka Dasa, a 16th-century poet-saint from the Kuruba caste. His devotional poetry in Kannada highlighted the struggles of lower castes and critiqued social hierarchies, contributing to the Bhakti movement's inclusive message. His works continue to inspire movements towards equality. During the colonial period, British policies and the rise of social reformers like Sri Narayana Guru encouraged the questioning of caste-based discrimination. The Dalit movement in Karnataka, led by figures like B. R. Ambedkar, further fueled resistance to untouchability and caste oppression, encouraging Dalits to assert their rights and reclaim dignity. These movements significantly influenced Karnataka's culture, fostering a sense of social justice, equality, and inclusivity. They reshaped religious practices, art, and literature, creating a more pluralistic society.