

# ECONOMIC PHILOSOPHY OF JAINACHARYA 108 SHRI VIDYASAGAR JI: “STEPS TOWARDS SELF-RELIANT INDIA” FROM MEDICAL POINT OF VIEW

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**Abstract** – This paper explores the economic philosophy of Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar Ji in the context of moving towards a self-reliant India, with a particular focus on the healthcare sector. Shri Vidyasagar ji emphasized on the principles of self-reliance, social justice and holistic development. By analyzing their economic principles through the lens of health care, this paper aims to highlight the importance of indigenous medicine, sustainable health care practices and equitable access to health services in achieving the goal of a self-reliant India.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Jainacharya 108 Sri Vidyasagar Ji, an eminent figure of Jainism, expressed a profound economic philosophy based on the principles of compassion, self-reliance and social justice. His teachings provide invaluable insights into promoting holistic development and sustainable progress, especially in the context of India's journey towards self-reliance. In line with Shri Vidyasagar's vision, this paper sheds light on the healthcare sector, examining how his economic philosophy can inform strategies to advance a self-reliant India from a medical perspective.

In recent years the concept of self-reliance has gained renewed prominence, driven by the need to reduce dependencies and strengthen national resilience. However, achieving self-reliance involves more than just economic autonomy. This requires holistic development in all sectors including health care. The teachings of Shri Vidyasagar Ji provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the multifaceted challenges facing India's healthcare system, emphasizing indigenous knowledge, community empowerment and preventive health care practices.

By analyzing the economic philosophy of Shri Vidyasagar ji through the lens of healthcare, this paper aims to shed light on possible pathways to realizing a self-reliant India in the medical sector. Through a synthesis of his theories with contemporary health care paradigms, this paper attempts to articulate actionable strategies that can contribute to the resilience, inclusivity and sustainability of India's health care ecosystem.

## 2 INDIGENOUS MEDICINE AND TRADITIONAL HEALING METHODS

The economic philosophy of Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar ji is the promotion and preservation of indigenous medical systems and traditional medical practices. Shri Vidyasagar ji recognized the rich heritage of Indian medical traditions including Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy and Siddha and advocated their revival and integration into mainstream health care. These indigenous systems offer a holistic approach to health and wellness, emphasizing the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit.

Ayurveda, considered one of the world's oldest healing systems, emphasizes natural remedies, dietary adjustments, and lifestyle modifications to restore balance and harmony within the body. Yoga, another ancient discipline, involves physical postures, breathing techniques and meditation to promote overall health and vitality. Naturopathy focuses on the body's innate ability to heal itself through natural therapies such as hydrotherapy, herbal medicine and dietary counseling. Siddha medicine, rooted in Tamil Nadu, uses herbs, minerals and spiritual practices to treat various diseases.

By adopting indigenous medicine and traditional healing practices, India can use its rich biodiversity and cultural heritage to address contemporary health care challenges. These systems provide cost-effective, sustainable, and culturally relevant alternatives to traditional medical interventions. Furthermore, by integrating traditional knowledge with modern health care approaches, India can promote a more comprehensive and patient-centered health care system that meets the diverse needs of its population.

Furthermore, promoting indigenous medicine and traditional medical practices is in line with Shri Vidyasagar ji's vision of self-reliance and community empowerment. By reviving these ancient traditions, India can reduce its dependence on imported pharmaceuticals and foreign medical technologies, thereby increasing its sovereignty and resilience in the healthcare sector. Additionally, empowering local healers and traditional medicine practitioners not only preserves cultural heritage but also strengthens health service delivery at the grassroots level, especially in deprived rural areas.

Jainacharya 108 The economic philosophy of Shri Vidyasagar ji underlines the importance of indigenous medicine and traditional medical systems in moving towards a self-reliant India. By adopting these ancient wisdom traditions, India can develop a more holistic, sustainable and inclusive health care system that respects its diverse cultural heritage and supports the well-being of all its citizens.

## 3 COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE

Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar Ji's economic philosophy emphasizes empowering communities to take responsibility for their health care needs, thereby promoting self-reliance and resilience within the society. Community empowerment in the context of health care includes decentralizing health services, strengthening primary health care infrastructure, and promoting community participation in health promotion and disease prevention initiatives.

One of the key principles of Shri Vidyasagar's economic philosophy is the notion of Sarvodaya, or welfare of all. He believed in a society where every person has access to basic amenities, including health care, regardless of their socio-economic status. In line with this approach, community empowerment becomes essential as it enables local communities to

identify their health care priorities, mobilize resources and actively participate in decision-making processes related to health care delivery.

Decentralization of health services involves shifting the focus from centralized hospital-based care to community-based health care models. By setting up primary health centers (PHCs) and sub-health centers in rural and deprived areas, India can ensure that essential health services are easily accessible to all sections of the society. These centers can provide preventive, promotive and curative health services including vaccination, maternal and child health services and basic diagnostic facilities.

Strengthening the primary health care infrastructure also includes training and deploying community health workers such as Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), who act as frontline health care providers in many communities. Work as. These community health workers play an important role in raising awareness about health issues, promoting healthy behavior and facilitating timely access to health services. By investing in their training and capacity building, India can increase the effectiveness of its primary health care system and improve health outcomes at the grassroots level.

Furthermore, community empowerment involves involving local communities in health promotion and disease prevention activities. This can be achieved through the formation of community health committees, self-help groups and other participatory mechanisms where community members collaborate with health professionals to address local health challenges. These initiatives can range from organizing health camps and awareness campaigns to implementing sanitation and hygiene interventions that contribute to better health outcomes and overall well-being.

By decentralizing health services, strengthening primary health care infrastructure and promoting community participation in health care decision making, India can empower its citizens to lead healthy lives and contribute to the collective welfare of the society.

#### **4 PROMOTING PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE AND WELLNESS**

In the economic philosophy of Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar ji, preventive health care and promotion of welfare occupies a central place. Shri Vidyasagar ji recognized the importance of proactively addressing health concerns by emphasizing preventive measures and promoting overall well-being. This proactive approach is in line with the principles of self-reliance and holistic development, as it not only reduces the burden of disease but also promotes individual and community resilience.

Preventive health care includes a variety of interventions aimed at preventing the onset of diseases and reducing health risks before they progress to serious conditions. This includes initiatives like health check-up, vaccination, health education and lifestyle modification. By focusing on preventive measures, India can significantly reduce health care costs, improve productivity and enhance the quality of life for its citizens.

Shri Vidyasagar ji advocated the integration of traditional wellness practices with modern health care interventions to create a comprehensive health care ecosystem. Traditional systems such as Ayurveda, yoga, and naturopathy provide valuable insights into preventive health care strategies, emphasizing the importance of maintaining balance and

harmony within the body. By incorporating these holistic approaches into mainstream health care, India can promote well-being at both the individual and community levels.

Furthermore, promoting preventive health care requires a multi-sectoral approach that addresses social determinants of health such as education, nutrition, sanitation and access to clean water. Investing in public health infrastructure, promoting healthy lifestyles, and fostering community participation are essential components of a comprehensive preventive health care strategy.

Shri Vidyasagar's economic philosophy emphasizes the role of individuals and communities in taking ownership of their health and well-being. By empowering individuals with the knowledge and resources to make healthy choices, India can create a culture of well-being that extends beyond healthcare facilities. Community-based wellness programs, health education campaigns, and partnerships with local stakeholders can empower communities to prioritize preventive health care and adopt healthy lifestyles.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The economic philosophy of Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar Ji provides profound insights to move towards a self-reliant India, especially in the field of healthcare. Rooted in the principles of compassion, self-reliance and social justice, the teachings of Shri Vidyasagar Ji provide a comprehensive framework for addressing the multifaceted challenges facing India's healthcare sector.

Through indigenous medicine and traditional healing practices, Shri Vidyasagar ji emphasizes the importance of preserving cultural heritage and using traditional knowledge to promote overall health and well-being. By reviving and integrating these ancient healing traditions into mainstream health care, India can develop a more sustainable and culturally sensitive health care system that meets the diverse needs of its population.

Furthermore, Shri Vidyasagar ji's economic philosophy underlines the importance of community empowerment and development of healthcare infrastructure. By decentralizing health services, strengthening primary health facilities and promoting community-based health initiatives, India can increase health care access and equity, especially in rural and marginal areas.

Shri Vidyasagar's emphasis on preventive health care and wellness reflects a proactive approach to health management that aligns with the principles of self-reliance and resilience. By investing in preventive measures, promoting healthy lifestyles and addressing social determinants of health, India can reduce the burden of disease, improve health outcomes and enhance overall well-being.

In short, the economic philosophy of Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar Ji provides a compelling vision to move towards a self-reliant India in the healthcare sector. By embracing indigenous knowledge, empowering communities and prioritizing preventive healthcare, India can build a strong healthcare system that not only meets the immediate needs of its citizens but also fosters sustainable development and inclusion for future generations. Also promotes prosperity.

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11. Academic articles and research papers published in *Jain Arthashastra*, *Jain Philosophy* and academic journals and conference proceedings can also provide valuable insights into the economic philosophy of Jainacharya 108 Shri Vidyasagar Ji and its implications for contemporary economic thought and practice.