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# *Keynote Address: 'Indigenous healing knowledge and practices in Karnataka'*

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Dr. (Fr.) Varghese is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and serves as the Chief Finance Officer at Christ University in Bangalore. He is a religious priest of a Catholic Religious Congregation called the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate. Dr. Varghese authored a book called *The Effectiveness of Counselling on Adolescents in Relation to Psychological Stress, Self Concept, Adjustment and Educational Aspirations*, and presented many papers nationally and internationally.

## **Abstract**

There has hardly been any attempt to document the epistemology of comprehensive indigenous healing knowledge in the past. The present paper focuses on the documented corpus of indigenous knowledge on healing and practices in the state of Karnataka, situated in the southern part of India characterized by diverse cultural customs and traditions and culturally rich in its healing traditions, religious cults and cult forms. The study captures the typical cases of healing practices and aspects related to mental health in Karnataka, based on a descriptive study, by employing a case study approach. The cases are documented as practices, methods employed and beliefs related to such interventions of healing practices of mental health. With the revival of interest in indigenous practices, the paper is an investigation into the origins, contextual influences, other ethnic, cultural and regional factors related to indigenous healing knowledge and practices. The results of the investigations further explores the conceptual structure of the healing practices, efficacy of the healers, the relevance of implications to support the reexamination of traditional healing as an alternative approach to mental health along with Psychotherapy and Counselling.