7.3: Sudin Bag, Workshop Report

ICSSR Sponsored Two-Day National Level Workshop on: *Empirical Research Methods for Unique Healing Practices of Indian Knowledge Systems (Stake-Holders Workshop)*

The Department of Business Administration, Vidyasagar University, in collaboration with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University and Banaras Hindu University, successfully organized a two-day ICSSR-sponsored National Level Workshop on *"Empirical Research Methods for Unique Healing Practices of Indian Knowledge Systems"* on August 1–2, 2025. The primary objective of the workshop was to provide conceptual clarity and methodological insights into conducting longitudinal and empirical research in the context of ethno-healing practices and traditional Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). The workshop aimed to develop a comprehensive understanding of longitudinal research methods and to explore empirical research techniques suitable for studying ethno-healing practices. It also focused on examining the cultural acceptance, effectiveness, and efficiency of traditional healing systems while promoting interdisciplinary dialogue among stakeholders of IKS.

The workshop was structured into three sessions each day. The inaugural session was graced by the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor of Vidyasagar University, who formally inaugurated the workshop by watering a sapling. In his address, he emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary research collaboration and expressed his best wishes for the success of such longitudinal research initiatives. Prof. Susmita Basu Mazumdar from the Department of Ancient Indian History and Culture, University of Calcutta, highlighted the urgent need for proper documentation of Indian healing practices to preserve these traditions for sustainable development. The Project Coordinator, Prof. Bina Sengar, delivered the welcome address, presenting a well-structured introduction that emphasized the relevance of studying Indian healing medicine within the framework of Indian Knowledge Systems.

The first panel, titled *"Understanding the Longitudinal Methods of Studying Ethno-Healing Practices,"* was moderated by Dr. Sudin Bag and featured Prof. Susmita Basu Mazumdar (University of Calcutta) and Prof. Debjani Das (Vidyasagar University). The panel discussed various longitudinal research designs, including panel data analysis, cohort studies, and time-series approaches relevant to traditional healing systems. The second panel, titled *"Understanding the Cultural Acceptance of Healers and Effectiveness of Healing Practices,"* was moderated by Prof. Kishor Patwardhan and included distinguished speakers Prof. Richa Chopra (IIT Kharagpur) and Dr. Manik Kumar (G.B. Pant Social Science Institute, Prayagraj). The speakers provided valuable sociological and anthropological perspectives on evaluating the cultural legitimacy and social acceptance of folk medicine. The third panel, titled *"Empirical Understandings about Folk Medicines and Unique Healing Practices: Healers' Perspectives,"* was particularly engaging, as it included two traditional healers from Sonbhadra. This session focused on primary data collection methods such as interviews, surveys, ethnographic studies, and participatory research techniques.

On the second day, the fourth session was moderated by Dr. Sudin Bag and featured a medical practitioner from the AYUSH Hospital, Midnapore. The session focused on *"Assessing Unique Ethno-Healing Practices: Effectiveness and Efficiency,"* where participants explored measurable indicators such as patient recovery rates, cost-efficiency, and community impact. The fifth session was moderated by Prof. Bina Sengar and included eminent researchers Prof. Vinish Kumar Kathuria (IIT Bombay) and Prof. Pinaki Das (Vidyasagar University). The discussion cantered on identifying appropriate longitudinal methods for studying ethno-healing

practices, including mixed-method research, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, and impact evaluation frameworks. The final session was moderated by Prof. Kishor Patwardhan and featured Prof. Manoj Kumar Singh (Banaras Hindu University). The discussion focused on assessing unique healing medicine practices in India from the perspective of effectiveness and efficacy, while addressing methodological challenges in validating such practices without undermining indigenous epistemologies.

The workshop was limited to 30 participants to ensure intensive interaction and effective knowledge exchange. Participants included researchers, faculty members, doctoral scholars, and practitioners. All sessions were highly interactive, featuring discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and collaborative idea-sharing. The Key Outcomes includes enhancing the understanding of longitudinal research in traditional healing studies. The workshop also helps us to develop methodological frameworks for empirical validation of folk medicines and also increased awareness of integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into mainstream academic research. Participants expressed appreciation for the academic rigor and practical relevance of the workshop.

Thus, the ICSSR-sponsored Two-Day National Workshop on *Empirical Research Methods for Unique Healing Practices of Indian Knowledge Systems* successfully fulfilled its objectives by bridging traditional knowledge and empirical research methodology. It marked an important step toward systematic documentation and scientific validation of indigenous healing practices in India.

Some glimpses of Media coverage of the workshop

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