

BIRCPT

Bosco Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Public Theology

**Sacred Heart College
(Autonomous)
Tirupattur**

**Director
Dr. Francis-Vincent Anthony**

Conceptual Framework

BIRCPT (Bosco Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Public Theology) aims at studying the effectiveness of educational and social centres in serving youth today, and more specifically verifying and promoting the effectiveness of the goals set by the Christian/Salesian Formal Educational Institutions (like colleges, polytechnic colleges, schools, study centres, etc.) at the service of adolescents and youth in Tamil Nadu, India.

Then there are the Christian/Salesian Informal Educational-social Centres, such as Youth centres (Oratories), Migrant centres, Centres for youth at risk, rural youth, etc.

*Unlike the foregoing Christian/Salesian institutions in the **public sphere**, there are institutions in the **ecclesial sphere** such as parishes, Christian associations, etc.*

***Public Social sphere** requires that we extend our concern to secular and religious institutions, government and NGO-run centres, and grassroots-level communities working with youth, women, migrants, and children at risk.*

*As a centre for **Public Theological Research**, we aim at verifying and promoting the effectiveness of the educational goals that can be shared with others in the pluralistic religio-cultural context:*

- firstly, with reference to the **Formal** Educational Institutions in the public sphere;*
- secondly, with reference to the **Informal** Educational-social institutions in the public sphere;*
- thirdly, regarding the **formation of the laity** in the ecclesial sphere, who need to engage in the public sphere of employment, socio-political life, cultural promotion and communication;*
- fourthly, inclusive approach to public social sphere could enrich the theological reflections and offer a stronger basis for **policy advocacy and lobbying** across education, child protection, social welfare, labour, and human rights sectors.*

Goals of Education in the Public Sphere

Promoting goals significant to religious and cultural pluralism:

- Human dignity, welfare, and wellbeing*
- Human rights, responsibility and advocacy*
- Common good, social harmony*
- Integral development, youth empowerment*
- Framing and revising child protection and safeguarding policies*
- Sustainability, environmental care*
- Cultural and scientific progress*
- Religious and ethical development*
- Transformational leadership*

Method and Phases of Empirical Research

In close collaboration with Graduate and Postgraduate in Social Work, Human Resource Management, Counselling-Psychology, and other Departments of Sacred Heart College (Autonomous), Tirupattur, BIRCPT seeks to verify and promote the achievement of educational objectives through empirical research using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Specifically, verifying and promoting among educants and educators:

- **Attitudinal** tendencies with regard to educational goals
- **Action** tendencies with regard to educational goals
- **Competencies** with regard to educational goals

Phase One: *Exploring the implications of empirical research already available on Christian/Salesian Formal education:*

- Implications for the **Explicit** curriculum
- Implications for the **Implicit** curriculum
- Implications for the **Hidden** curriculum
- Implications for the **Null** curriculum
- Implications for the **Salesian Pedagogical** method

Phase Two: *Taking up for discussion the results of researches done by Salesians and Faculty members with PhD in various disciplines relevant to education and public life.*

Phase Three: *Undertaking new and longitudinal research:*

- In the Formal educational Environment
- In the Informal educational and social Environment
- In the Ecclesial Environment of the Laity engaged in the Public spheres of employment, society, culture and communication.



Action Plan

- Collect copies (in printed or digital form) of all PhD researches (both theoretical and empirical) done by Salesians in Tamil Nadu (INM & INT) for the **Documentation sector** of BIRCPT.
- Form a **steering committee and advisory board** with Experts of various religio-cultural, socio-political, eco-economical fields and **representatives** from Research Departments of Salesian Colleges in Tamil Nadu.
- Network with Indian theological and philosophical centres affiliated and aggregated to **Salesian Pontifical University** (Rome): Don Bosco Theological Centre, Kavarapettai; Kristu Jyothi College, Bangaluru; Sacred Heart Theological College, Shillong; and Salesian Institute of Philosophy «Divyadaan», Nasik.
- Network with Deepakam, Niraivakam, DBICA and SURABI, and the related Salesian **national** bureau.
- Network with **Don Bosco Higher Education India** (DBHEI) and worldwide **Salesian Institutions of Higher Education** (IUS), and Salesian Research Centres.
- Continue membership in **International Society of Empirical Research in Theology** (ISERT): member since 2003; Vice president (2010-2016); member of executive council (2018-2022).
- Continue membership in **International Academy of Practical Theology** (IAPT): member since 2009; member of executive council (2017-2019).
- Continue membership in **International Association of Catholic Missiologists** (IACM): member since 2007; Secretary (2010-2017).
- Join the **Asian Network of Public Theology** (ANPT) and **Global Network of Public Theology** (GNPT).

Empirical Researches & Publications

NB: The list below includes only the empirical researches and publications of the Director of BIRCPT. Gradually, the relevant researches and publications of Salesians and Faculty members in Salesian Colleges will be taken up.

Public Theology, Public Religious Pedagogy, Salesian Educational System

Empirical research on *Participation of Lay collaborators of other Religions and Beliefs in the Salesian Educational Mission* (2023-2024).

1. Anthony F.-V. & Lourdunathan A.C., *Public Religious Pedagogy amidst religious pluralism: Qualitative study among Hindu and Muslim educators in Salesian institutions of Tamil Nadu, India*, in *Religions* 16/5 (2025) 646 DOI: 10.3390/rel16050646
2. Anthony F.-V., *Toward Public Theology of Education and Mission: General Introduction*, in «Kristu Jyoti» 41 (2025) 1, pp. 9-13.
3. Anthony F.-V., *Configuration of Public Theology as Theology in 'Exit': Engaging the Public Educational Sphere amidst Religio-cultural Pluralism*, in «Kristu Jyoti» 41 (2025) 1, pp. 14-41.
4. Anthony F.-V., *Public Theological Approach to Scriptures of Other Religions: Basis for missio inter gentes and cum gentibus*, in «Kristu Jyoti» 41 (2025) 1, pp. 42-67.
5. Anthony F.-V., *Public Theology of educational service amidst religious pluralism. Based on the Lived experience of Hindu and Muslim professors in Salesian colleges*, in «Kristu Jyoti» 41 (2025) 1, pp. 68-95.
6. Anthony F.-V., *Public Theology of Education Focused on Human Rights: Empirical Study of Human Rights Attitude and Activism among Christian, Muslim and Hindu college students*, in «Kristu Jyoti» 41 (2025) 1, pp. 96-126.
7. Anthony F.-V., *Public Theology of educational and social service. A study of the Lived experience of Salesian charism among non-Christian co-workers*, in Kuttianimattathil J. (ed.), *Sharing the Salesian charism and mission with adherents of Neighbour religions and people of goodwill*, Kristu Jyoti Publications, Bangalore 2024, 135-182.

School education in Tamil Nadu – Research on the integration of Faith and Culture

Empirical research on *Inculturation in the Catholic Schools* in Tamil Nadu, India (1989-1993). Assistance of MSW-SHC in refining the questionnaire.

8. Anthony F.-V., *Ecclesial praxis of Inculturation. Toward an empirical-theological theory of inculturizing praxis*, LAS, Roma 1997.
9. Anthony F.-V., *Faith and Culture in Catholic Schools. An educational-pastoral research on inculturation in the Tamil/Indian cultural context*, Deepagam, Chennai 1999.

School education in Tamil Nadu – Empirical Research on Human rights

International research project *Religion and Human rights* (2005-2013) coordinated by Prof. Johannes Van der Ven of the Radboud University Nijmegen. F.-V. Anthony, responsible for data collection, interpretation and publication of results related to Tamil Nadu, India. Data entry by MSW-SHC.

10. Van der Ven J.A & Anthony F.-V., *Impact of religion on social integration from an empirical civil rights perspective*, in *Salesianum* 70/2-3 (2008) 317-338, 463-489; also in Viswanathan V.N. (ed.) *Human rights challenges of 21st century*, Kalpaz Publications, New Delhi 2008, 59-117.
11. Anthony F.-V., *Public significance of religion with regard to socioeconomic rights in the multireligious context of Tamil Nadu, India*, in Van der Ven J.A. & Ziebertz H.-G., (eds.), *Human rights and the impact of religion*, Brill, Leiden/Boston 2013, 205-244.

Higher education in Tamil Nadu – Empirical Research on Religious Pluralism

Comparative empirical research (2004-2010) among Christians, Muslims and Hindus on *Religion and conflict* in the multireligious context of Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with Profs. Chris. A.M. Hermans & Carl Sterkens of the Radboud University Nijmegen (The Netherlands). Data entry by MSW-SHC.

12. Anthony F.-V., Hermans C.A.M., & Sterkens C., *Interpreting religious pluralism: Comparative research among Christian Muslim and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India*, in *Journal of Empirical Theology* 18/2 (2005) 154-186.
13. Anthony F.-V., *Contemporary youth's perception of religion: Comparative study among Christians, Muslims and Hindus*, in Pudumai Doss J., Anthony F.-V., Vallabharaj J., et al. (eds.), *Youth India. Situation, Challenges & Prospects*, Kristu Jyoti Publications, Bangalore 2006, 89-115.
14. Anthony F.-V., Hermans C.A.M., & Sterkens C., *Religious practice and religious socialization: comparative research among Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in Tamilnadu, India*, in *Journal of Empirical Theology* 20/1 (2007) 100-128.
15. Sterkens C. & Anthony F.-V., *A comparative study of religiocentrism among Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India*, in *Journal of Empirical Theology* 21/1 (2008) 1, 32-67.
16. Anthony F.-V., Hermans C.A.M., & Sterkens C., *A comparative study of mystical experience among Christian, Muslim, and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India*, in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49/2 (2010) 264-277.
17. Anthony F.-V., Hermans C.A.M., & Sterkens C., *Cross-religious participation in rituals and interpretation of religious pluralism: a comparative study among Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India*, in Francis L.J. & Ziebertz H.-G. (eds.), *The public significance of religion*, Brill, Leiden / Boston 2011, 379-412.
18. Hermans C.A.M., Anthony F.-V., Sterkens C. & Van der Veld W., *How Christian students in Tamil Nadu think about power-driven religious conflicts: a meaning system approach*, in Francis L.J. & Ziebertz H.-G. (eds.), *The public significance of religion*, Brill, Leiden / Boston 2011, 343-377.
19. Anthony F.-V., *Religion in a multi-religious world: An explorative empirical study of Raimon Panikkar's "Cosmotheandric vision"*, in Fernando S. & Pudumai Doss J. (eds.), *Youth and family in today's India*, Don Bosco Publications, Chennai 2014, 81-96.
20. Anthony F.-V., Hermans C.A.M., & Sterkens C., *Religion and conflict attribution. An empirical study of the religious meaning system of Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India*, Brill, Leiden / Boston 2014. doi: 10.1163/9789004270862

Higher education in Tamil Nadu – Empirical Research on Human rights

International research project on *Religion and Human Rights 2.0* (2012-2023) coordinated by Prof. Hans-Georg Ziebertz of the Würzburg University (Germany); responsible for the research in Tamil Nadu, India, together with professors Henry Rozario and Carl Sterkens. Data collection and entry by MSW-SHC.

21. Anthony F.-V., *Christian identity and Indian heritage: Integration or Disintegration?* in Anthony F.-V. & Ziebertz H.-G. (eds.), *Religious identity and national heritage: Empirical-theological perspectives*, Brill, Leiden/Boston 2012, 13-32.
22. Anthony F.-V. & Sterkens C., *The impact of religion on civil human rights: An empirical-theological study*, in Wolfteich C.F. & Dillen E. (eds.), *Catholic approaches in practical theology. International and interdisciplinary perspectives*, Peeters Publishers, Leuven 2016, 225-252.
23. Anthony F.-V. & Sterkens C., *Extending political rights to immigrants and refugees. Empirical study among Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in the context of Indian secularism and the politics of inclusion*, in Sterkens C. & Ziebertz H.-G. (Eds.), *Political and judicial rights through the prism of religious belief*, Religion and Human Rights Vol. 3, Springer, Cham 2018, 145-183. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-77353-7_7

24. Anthony F.-V. & Sterkens C., *Religion and the right to (Dispose of) life: A study of the attitude of Christian, Muslim and Hindu Students in India concerning death penalty, euthanasia and abortion*, in Ziebertz H.-G. & Zaccaria F. (eds.), *Euthanasia, abortion, death penalty and religion – The right to life and its limitations*, Religion and Human Rights Vol. 4, Springer, Cham 2019, 13-63.
25. Anthony F.-V. & Sterkens C., *Religion's impact on judicial rights. An empirical study in the multi-religious context of Indian democracy*, in Riegel U., Heil S., Kalbheim B., & Unser A. (eds.), *Understanding religion. Empirical perspectives in practical theology*, Essays in honour of Hans-Georg Ziebertz, Münster / New York, Waxmann 2019, 111-137.
26. Anthony F.-V. & Sterkens C., *Religion and socioeconomic wellbeing—Empirical study of the impact of religion on socioeconomic rights in the pluralistic and democratic context of Tamil Nadu, India*, in *Religions* 11/9 (2020) 454. <https://www.mdpi.com/818764> (open access).
27. Anthony F.-V. & Sterkens C., *Predictors of human rights attitude and activism in the multi-religious context of Indian democracy: Educational implications*, in Ziebertz H.-G. & Zaccaria F. (eds.), *The ambivalent impact of religion on human rights*, Religion and Human Rights Vol 7, Springer, Cham 2021, 262-305. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-70404-9_10
28. Anthony F.V., *Ethno-cultural diversity, discrimination and democracy: Empirical research among students in Tamil Nadu, India*, in Unser A. (ed.), *Religion, Citizenship and Democracy*, Religion and Human Rights Vol 8, Springer, Cham 2022, 93-116. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83277-3_6
29. Anthony F.V., *State-Religion separation in the multireligious context of Indian democracy: An empirical study*, in: Anthony F.-V. & Ziebertz H.-G. (eds.), *Human rights and the separation of State and religion*, Religion and Human Rights Vol 10, Springer, Cham 2023, 33–65. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33998-1_3
30. Anthony F.-V. & Ziebertz H.-G., *The Religion-State relation as problem and prospect*, in Anthony F.-V., & Ziebertz H.-G. (eds.), *Human rights and the separation of State and religion*, Religion and Human Rights Vol 10, Springer, Cham 2023, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33998-1_1
31. Anthony F.V., *Religion, Ecology and Human Flourishing: Empirical Study of the Impact of Religious Affiliation on Environmental Rights and Care in the Pluralistic Context of Tamil Nadu, India*, in *Journal of Empirical Theology* 36 (2023) 1, 20-44, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/15709256-20231141>
32. Anthony F.-V. & Oviedo L., *Religion, Ecology and Human Flourishing: Institutional and Personal Dimensions of Religiosity and Current Societal Challenges*, in *Journal of Empirical Theology* 36 (2023) 1, 1-2, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/15709256-20230361>

Transformative leadership in the Indian Salesian educational institutions

Research on *Spirituality, Education and Leadership. An Empirical study among the heads of Salesian schools in India* (2016-2021) together with prof. Chris Hermans of the Radboud University Nijmegen and Dr. Maria Charles Antonysamy of the All India Don Bosco Education Society.

33. Anthony F.-V. & Hermans C.A.M., *Leadership and discernment in the educational context: Empirical research among the Heads of Salesian schools in India*, in Antonysamy M.C (ed.), *The Heart of educating India. Don Bosco system of education in dialogue with 21st century educators*, Papers presented in the National Symposium, All India Don Bosco Education Society, New Delhi 2018, 19-41.
34. Anthony F.V. & Hermans C.A.M., *Transformatinal leadership in the educational context: Empirical research among the Heads of Salesian Schools in India*, in *Orientamenti pedagogici* 66 (2019) 2, 363-378.
35. Anthony F.-V. & Hermans C.A.M., *Spiritual determinants and situational contingencies of transformational leadership*, in *Acta Theologica - Supplementum* 30 (2020) 60-85. doi: 10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup30.3
36. Hermans C.A.M. & Anthony F.-V., *On the high sea of spirituality. Antecedents and determinants of discernment among school leaders in India*, in *Acta Theologica - Supplementum* 30 (2020) 34-59. doi: 10.18820/23099089/actat.Sup30.2

Technical education in the Salesian world

Empirical Research on the *Salesian Technical-professional formation* in the world (1995-1997).

37. Anthony F.-V., *Opinioni dei testimoni privilegiati*, in Van Looy L. & Malizia G. (a cura), *Formazione professionale salesiana: Memoria e attualità per un confronto. Indagine sul campo*, LAS, Roma 1997, 173-191.
38. Anthony F.-V., *Gli allievi non cristiani nelle scuole e centri salesiani*, in Van Looy L. & Malizia G. (a cura), *Formazione professionale salesiana: proposte in una prospettiva multidisciplinare*, LAS, Roma 1998, 355-369.

Research on Evangelization in the Pontifical Universities in Rome

Empirical Research on *Believing and communicating* (2009-2016) promoted by the Interfaculty Committee for Research (CIR) (Director: F.-V. Anthony) at the Salesian Pontifical University.

39. Anthony F.-V., *Evangelizzatori dei giovani oggi. Ricerca interdisciplinare del CIR*, in Grządziel D. (a cura), *La ricerca a servizio dell'educazione*, LAS, Roma 2013, 17-39.
40. Anthony F.-V., *Il vissuto teologico e la motivazione e l'urgenza di evangelizzare. Ricerca empirica tra gli studenti delle Università Pontificie di Roma*, in Trevisiol A. (a cura), *Il cammino della missione. Atti del Convegno Internazionale* (21-23 aprile 2015), Pontificia Università Urbaniana, Roma 2015, 333-362.
41. Anthony F.-V. & Piccini M.P., *Ricerca empirica sull'evangelizzazione: introduzione metodologica*, in *Salesianum* 78 (2016) 9-20.
42. Anthony F.-V., *I paradigmi teologici, la motivazione e l'urgenza di evangelizzare*, in *Salesianum* 78 (2016) 21-78.
43. Anthony F.-V. & Cepeda E., *La prassi comunicativa dell'evangelizzazione*, in *Salesianum* 78 (2016) 133-162.

For contact: Dr. Francis-Vincent Anthony SDB
Sacred Heart College (Autonomous)
Tirupattur 635601
Tirupattur Dt.
BIRCPT-Director@schtp.edu
FVincentfdb@schtp.edu