

ABSTRACT

Institutionalisation of indigenous medicine in Kerala. Problems and prospects

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The institutionalisation of health care and the relatively high level of investment in western medicine, made by the state as well as by individuals and social groups has been an important factor, among other things, in the identification of the state of Kerala as a progressive one. Large number of western medical institutions in the village and urban centres were established leading to the engagement by the people of the state with western medicine and its basic epistemic paradigms and methods for the last one and a half century. The indigenous medicine which hitherto catered to the need of the indigenous society over the period of time made a slow exit from the mainstream society and the state.

The study seeks to understand as to how did the indigenous medical tradition of this south western coast of the Indian sub-continent negotiate with the political authority of the state as well as with the proponents of western medicine either through the integration or negation of the ideas of western medicine and science in its attempt towards framing an institutional pattern with or without state aid. This is also an attempt to explore the possibilities of providing universal health care to the people with the engagement of the indigenous medicine in an institutionalised manner.