

The Indian Systems of Medicine: Revival Efforts and Current Status

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Abstract: The Indian Systems of Medicine (ISM) has always provided interesting contours to explore in the field of academia. The most interesting subjects in this regard are the historical developments, its contribution to medical pluralism and policy for its role in the health care of Indian masses. The article aims to mainstream and document various facets of ISM popular in social science and academic practices. It presents a brief history and the challenges faced by system and its practitioners over time. It is also noted that various factors have led to the downfall and popularity of the ISM at different periods of time. Its recent popularity in urban areas of India is traced to globalization, consumerism, current day approaches to health care by health care institutions and experimental marketing strategies adopted by ISM practitioners and others. The article also explores the factors leading to consistency, roadblocks, opportunities and strategies adopted by masses and government to encourage the usage of AYUSH (*Ayurvedic, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy*) across regions. It is seen that the extent of utilization varies across regions, classes and other socio-cultural variables. Hegemony of bio-medicine and marginalization of AYUSH sector are also explored in the background of changing natures of governmental policies. It is further argued that various health policies encourage assimilation over integration causing differential development and selective adaptation by the range of medical systems.

Key words : ISM, AYUSH, medical pluralism, utilization, globalization