

Combination of *Trigunas* in Different Groups of People

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Trigunas are composed of the *Pancha Mahabhuta*. One or the other *Gunas* is dominant singularly or in combination in man. There can never be a state when one or the other *Pancha Mahabhutas* and consequently the *Trigunas* are absent totally. All are essential to sustain life. Though *Triguna* is studied, understood and applied in *Ayurveda*, the present authors have studied how the *Trigunas* are present in different variations in different professional groups in the present study. The way in which the combination of the *Trigunas* are different and characteristic for each profession is analyzed which gives rise to new ways of understanding people and their behaviour *vis-à-vis* their professions.

Keywords: Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, Tridoshas, Mahabhutas, Prakriti

One of the basic tenets of all systems of Indian philosophy is that man is a microcosm of the macrocosmic world that he inhabits. This implies explicitly that whatever man is made up of, the world too is made up of those same things or elements, but with different combinations and degrees. Here, by elements is meant the five *mahabhutas*—that is *Akasa*, *Vayu*, *Tejas*, *Ap* and *Prithvi*. (Ether, air, fire, water and earth proto-elements respectively). The universe and man are made up of these five elements. In fact *Ayurveda* postulates that all living beings on the earth including the non-living too are made up of these same five elements in varying degrees, specific to each form, matter and species, and according to a predetermined ratio that cannot be changed. These five elements combine with each other to form the three humors of *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, (also called the *Tridoshas* in unison) which is the corner stone of *Ayurvedic* philosophy. (Sharma, 1981; Sharma, 2004; and Murthy, 2007).

The *Tridoshas* are composed of all the *Pancha Mahabhutas*, but one or the other is predominant, with the other four in lesser dominance. There can never be a state when one or the other *Pancha Mahabhuta* is absent

totally. All five are essential to sustain life. The *Tridoshas* constitute the physical—physiological components and are designed to understand the physiology and pathology of living organisms including human beings. (Shilpa & Murthy, 2011a).

Prakriti is composed of three *gunas*, *Sattva* (white, knowledge, happiness, *pra*), *Rajas* (red, activity, pain, *kr*) and *Tamas* (dark, resistance or inertia, confusion, *ti*). Thus it is endowed with all the necessary and sufficient powers of production, preservation and dissolution of the phenomenal world. Mainly, it is the material cause of multiplicity (Rao, 1987, p. 161).

Susruta clearly describes the five *Mahabhutas* as being constituted by the *Trigunas*. According to Sushruta, (Sharma, 2004), chapter III. 1.20. *Akasa* is predominant with *Sattva*, *Vayu* with *Rajas*, *Agni* with *Sattva-Rajas*, *Ap* (*Jala*-water) with *Sattva-Tamas*, and *Prithvi* with *Tamas*. Inferentially, since both *Charaka* and *Susruta* clearly state that *Vata Dosh*a is a combination of *Akasa* and *Vayu*, *Pitta Dosh*a of *Agni* and *Ap* and *Kapha Dosh*a of *Ap* and *Prithvi*, we can deduce the *Gunas* that are predominant in each of them. Hence, *Vata Dosh*a is a combination of *Sattva* and *Rajas Gunas* but is referred to as being

predominantly *Rajasic*—as *Rajas guna* overtakes or is stronger than the *Sattva guna*. *Pitta Dosha* is said to be more *Sattvic* in nature, though it has an element of *Rajas* and *Tamas* in it. *Kapha Dosha* is said to be more *Tamasic* in nature though it has an element of *Sattva* in it (but no *Rajas*). Hence we understand the *Doshas* in respect of the *Gunas* exhibited by them due to the relative dominance of one or the other *Pancha Mahabhutas* that they are made up of. “This, *trigunatmaka* description of the constitution of *Panchabhutas*, is the most applied aspect of philosophical concept of *gunas* in the field of science and medicine.” (Gupta., 2000). This is invaluable to us in deducing the behaviour exhibited by individuals depending on the dominance of one or the other *dosha* or *guna* that is constitutionally present in the person from conception—which is referred to as the particular *Prakriti-guna* combination that a person exhibits. This *Prakriti-guna* combination is unique to every individual and is not changeable during the course of their lifetime. (Gupta, 2000, p. 299).

The three *gunas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* also promote different kinds of temperament based on the dominance of one or the other *gunas*. The temperament of a person can be discerned based on the “mode of worship, the type of food consumed and other activities of everyday life” (Krishnan, 2002). The *Trigunas* constitute the psychological components and govern all animate and inanimate existence. They also influence forces of living which are conceptualized as *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. The behavior of human physiology, psychophysiology and patho-physiology reflect the *Vata-Pitta-Kapha (Tridosha)* dynamics, and this understanding helps in devising various assessments, treatments and management strategies.

Besides the basic seven types of *Prakriti* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* and their blends) *Ayurveda* recognizes 16 types of personalities based on the

classical *guna* theory. Both *Charaka* and *Susruta Samhitas* have a description of these types. According to them there are seven types of *Sattva*, six of *Rajas* and three of *Tamas*, totaling sixteen types of personalities under which all people can be grouped. (Sharma, 1981; Sharma, 2004; and Murthy, 2007).

Each *guna* gives certain characteristic qualities to the person, based on which an individual can be classified as belonging to that particular *guna* type. *Charaka* and *Susruta* recognize seven types or categories into which people can be classified, depending on the dominance of the *gunas* in their body. (Shilpa & Murthy, 2011a).

Besides the basic seven types of *Prakriti* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*, *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* and their blends) *Ayurveda* recognizes 16 types of personalities based on the classical *guna* theory. Both *Charaka* and *Susruta Samhitas* have a description of these types. According to them there are seven types of *Sattva*, six of *Rajas* and three of *Tamas*, totaling sixteen types of personalities under which all people can be grouped. (Sharma, 1981; Sharma, 2004; and Murthy, 2007).

The present authors have attempted to study the relationship between the *Tridosha* and *Triguna*. They have developed and standardized scales to assess psychological aspects of *Tridosha* and *Triguna*. This paper is one in the series of papers that were written based on empirical results obtained from the study conducted wherein the ancient scriptures of Indian origin and tradition were consulted in devising Scales to understand and assess personality—both physical-physiological (*Tridoshas*) and psychological (*Trigunas*).

In this paper it is studied if the three professional groups like Teachers, Police personnel, IT Professionals apart from General Adult group (those who belong to professional groups other than these three

groups) differ significantly from each other on *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

The Mysore Tridosha Scale (Shilpa & Murthy, 2011b) to assess VPK and the *Mysore Triguna Scale* (Shilpa & Murthy, 2012a) to assess SRT was administered to 1548 people from three different professions like Teachers, IT Professionals and Police Personnel apart from General Adult group.

Equal number of people in all the four groups was taken to test the hypothesis and hence the final number of people in each group was 345 leading to a total number of 1380 people for analyses.

Hypothesis: *Teachers, Police IT professionals and General adult group differ significantly on Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.*

Results and Discussion

To test the above hypothesis, different professional groups i.e., Teachers, Police and IT professionals apart from General Adult group were studied for any differences on their scores of SRT. The scores of three professional groups were compared for statistically significant differences, which yielded the following.

The mean scores of all the three professional groups apart from the General adults group are tabulated.

An analysis of Table 1 shows that relatively, the entire group is dominated by *Sattva* followed by *Rajas* and *Tamas*. This trend is true of other groups such as Teachers, Police, IT and General adults too. In order to study whether these groups differ significantly, on *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*,

Table 1. Mean scores of different groups on *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*

Means	Statistics			
	N	<i>Sattva</i>	<i>Rajas</i>	<i>Tamas</i>
Teachers	345	74.05	28.59	11.15
Police	345	72.44	29.49	10.86
IT Professionals	345	65.52	32.56	15.53
Gen. Adult	345	71.92	40.41	16.23
Entire Group	1380	70.98	32.76	13.44

their scores were subjected to one way ANOVA.

An analysis of the ANOVA table indicates that the different groups differ significantly on all the components i.e., *Rajas* and *Tamas* at the 0.01 level, while for *Sattva*, they differ significantly at the 0.05 level. It means different professional groups differ on *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* components.

In order to study how different groups have differed significantly, post hoc comparisons are made, which yielded the following.

In order to make the understanding of the results of the post hoc comparisons in Table 2 better, the outcomes are further simplified and presented as in Table 3. This can support interpretation easier.

An analysis of Table 3 indicates that for *Sattva*, the Teachers have a significantly higher mean compared to the IT group. The other groups do not differ significantly. The Teachers are thus more *Sattvic* than IT. The qualities of *Sattva* are intelligence, fortitude, gentleness, truthful, benevolence and virtuousness.

As regards *Rajas*, General adult group is significantly more *Rajasik* than Teachers, Police and IT groups. Further, the IT group is significantly higher on *Rajas* than Teachers. The other groups do not differ significantly on *Rajas*. This means the Gen. Adult group is relatively more *Rajasik* by nature in comparison to other groups. The characteristics for *Rajas* are energy, harsh, angry, excessive activity, strong emotions, inclining towards violence and aggression.

As regards *Tamas*, also General Adult group is significantly higher from Teachers and Police. The IT professionals are significantly higher than Teachers and Police on *Tamas*. Other groups do not differ significantly. It means, Teachers are least on *Tamas*, followed by Police, IT and General Adults. The characteristics of *Tamas guna*

Table 2. Post Hoc comparisons of *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* with respect to different groups

Multiple Comparisons								
Dependent Variable		(I) Profession	(J) Profession	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<i>Sattva</i>	Tukey HSD	Teacher	Police	1.614	3.001	.950	-6.10	9.33
			IT Prof.	8.536*	3.001	.023	.82	16.25
			Gen. Adult	2.128	3.001	.894	-5.59	9.85
		Police	Teacher	-1.614	3.001	.950	-9.33	6.10
			IT Prof.	6.922	3.001	.097	-.80	14.64
			Gen. Adult	.513	3.001	.998	-7.21	8.23
		IT Prof.	Teacher	-8.536*	3.001	.023	-16.25	-.82
			Police	-6.922	3.001	.097	-14.64	.80
			Gen. Adult	-6.409	3.001	.142	-14.13	1.31
		Gen. Adult	Teacher	-2.128	3.001	.894	-9.85	5.59
			Police	-.513	3.001	.998	-8.23	7.21
			IT Prof.	6.409	3.001	.142	-1.31	14.13
<i>Rajas</i>	Tukey HSD	Teacher	Police	-.899	1.530	.936	-4.83	3.04
			IT Prof.	-3.971*	1.530	.047	-7.91	-.04
			Gen. Adult	-11.817*	1.530	.000	-15.75	-7.88
		Police	Teacher	.899	1.530	.936	-3.04	4.83
			IT Prof.	-3.072	1.530	.185	-7.01	.86
			Gen. Adult	-10.919*	1.530	.000	-14.85	-6.98
		IT Prof.	Teacher	3.971*	1.530	.047	.04	7.91
			Police	3.072	1.530	.185	-.86	7.01
			Gen. Adult	-7.846*	1.530	.000	-11.78	-3.91
		Gen. Adult	Teacher	11.817*	1.530	.000	7.88	15.75
			Police	10.919*	1.530	.000	6.98	14.85
			IT Prof.	7.846*	1.530	.000	3.91	11.78
<i>Tamas</i>	Tukey HSD	Teacher	Police	.290	.968	.991	-2.20	2.78
			IT Prof.	-4.374*	.968	.000	-6.86	-1.88
			Gen. Adult	-5.078*	.968	.000	-7.57	-2.59
		Police	Teacher	-.290	.968	.991	-2.78	2.20
			IT Prof.	-4.664*	.968	.000	-7.15	-2.17
			Gen. Adult	-5.368*	.968	.000	-7.86	-2.88
		IT Prof.	Teacher	4.374*	.968	.000	1.88	6.86
			Police	4.664*	.968	.000	2.17	7.15
			Gen. Adult	-.704	.968	.886	-3.19	1.79
		Gen. Adult	Teacher	5.078*	.968	.000	2.59	7.57
			Police	5.368*	.968	.000	2.88	7.86
			IT Prof.	.704	.968	.886	-1.79	3.19

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

are mass, heavy, obstructing, ignorance or lack of knowledge (confused), inactivity, sleep (more), generally dejected always and indecent.

A composite analysis indicates that different groups differ significantly on *Sattvic*, *Rajasic* and *Tamasic* factors of *Triguna* aspects of personality. Teachers have the highest mean for *Sattva* followed by IT and then the other groups. This also indicates that Teachers are highest on *Sattva* and least on *Rajas* and *Tamas*, in comparison to other groups, while the General Adult group dominates on *Rajas* and *Tamas*. General Adult group has significantly higher *Rajas* followed by IT, Police and then Teacher groups. They also have significantly higher *Tamas* followed by IT, Police and Teachers. General Adult group is highest in *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Other groups oscillate differently on different factors of SRT. This indicates that Teachers are more *Sattvic* than the other groups displaying characteristic behaviour that is intelligent, having fortitude, being gentle, truthful, benevolent and virtuous.

The General Adult group is more *Rajasic-Tamasic*, in combination compared to the other groups. Their behaviour characteristics are dominantly *Rajasic*, like energetic, harsh, angry, having excessive activity, displaying strong emotions and inclining towards violence and aggression. In combination with these they also display characteristics which are *Tamasic* like being heavy, obstructing, ignorance or lack of

knowledge (confused), inactivity, sleep (more), generally dejected, and indecent. (Shilpa & Murthy, 2012a).

According to Shilpa & Murthy (2012b), "*Rajas* is found to be significantly positively related to *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Tamas*, while it is significantly negatively correlated with *Sattva*. It means that as *Rajas* increases *Tamas* also increase. Also, it means that while *Rajas* increases, *Sattva* decreases. According to *Ayurvedic* literature also, *Rajas* can also be correlated to *Tamas* according to *Charaka*, "*Niyatastvanubandho rajastamasou parasparaà na hi arajaskaà tamaù pravartate.*" *Charka Samhita; Vimana Sthana*, 6/9. Hence according to the classics this correlation ... (*Rajas* with *Tamas*) stands empirically validated." Shilpa & Murthy (2012b) also state that "in normal individuals, the *gunas* are auto-regulated. This means that in normalcy, when the activity of *Rajas* (initiator) is increased, *Tamas* (regulator) also increases in order to compensate the activity and bring the *Rajas* to normal level in healthy individuals."

This is also proved in the above hypothesis which found that the General Adult group has higher values for both *Rajas* and *Tamas*, while Teacher group has higher value for *Sattva* and least values for *Rajas* and *Tamas*. This also indicates that where *Sattva* is high, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are low and vice versa, which is according to the scriptures also.

Table 3. Two group differences among different groups on SRT

Sl	Factor	Significantly differed Groups	Higher mean	Lower mean
1	<i>Sattva</i>	Teacher –IT	Teacher	IT
2	<i>Rajas</i>	Teacher –IT	IT	Teacher
		Teacher –Gen. Adult	Gen. Adult	Teacher
		Police –Gen. Adult	Gen. Adult	Police
		IT –Gen. Adult	Gen. Adult	IT
3	<i>Tamas</i>	Teacher –IT	IT	Teacher
		Teacher –Gen. Adult	Gen. Adult	Teacher
		Police –IT	IT	Police
		Police –Gen. Adult	Gen. Adult	Police

This indicates that each professional group has significantly different means as regards *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* and that it is also characteristic for each professional group. Hence by calculating the means for *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* for each individual it can be said which professional group he is likely to succeed in. Hence the above hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusion

Teachers have the highest mean for *Sattva* followed by IT and then the other groups. This also indicates that Teachers are highest on *Sattva* and least on *Rajas* and *Tamas*, in comparison to other groups, while the General Adult group dominates for *Rajas* and *Tamas*. General Adult group has significantly higher *Rajas* followed by IT, Police and then Teacher groups. They also have significantly higher *Tamas* followed by IT, Police and Teachers. General Adult group is highest in *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Other groups oscillate differently on different factors of SRT. This indicates that Teachers are more *Sattvic* than the other groups displaying characteristic behaviour that is intelligent, having fortitude, being gentle, truthful, benevolent and virtuous.

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Adult group differ significantly on *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. It also shows that there are certain characteristic qualities that each of these groups exhibit.

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