

An Analysis of Personality Traits in the Triguna System Ambica Kumari* and Ravinder Kour**

Abstract

The human experience is made up of many different threads. A major component of this complex fabric is our personalities, those distinct combinations of ideas, feelings, and actions. The Triguna system provides an intriguing viewpoint on comprehending these particular people in India's age-old wisdom traditions. Triguna literally translates to "three qualities," alluding to the three guiding principles of our inner world: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Sattva is the embodiment of tranquilly, clarity, and purity. Rajas is a symbol for zeal, activity, and aspiration. In contrast, tamas is linked to gloom, immobility, and lethargy. These Gunas are interconnected forces rather than separate entities, and one of them frequently predominates in defining our personality features. These gunas are dynamic and fluid, meaning they alter according to one's environment, circumstances, and mental state. The balance of these gunas greatly influences a person's personality and overall health (Gaur, 2024).

Keywords: Triguna, Personality, Health and Health

The human experience is a tapestry made up of various personality threads. Comprehending these strands, the core of our identity, has been a continuous search across fields and civilisations. Through the idea of Triguna, a system that reveals individuality through three essential qualities—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—the ancient Samkhya philosophy in India provides a distinctive viewpoint. (Chinmayananda, 2020)

A Sattvic person is renowned for being perceptive and well-balanced. They have a strong moral compass, a natural tendency towards self-discipline, and a peaceful state of mind. They are probably drawn to wisdom and information and are looking for enlightenment and the truth. Sattvic-influenced leaders motivate others with their honesty and kindness. Action and dynamism are traits of the Rajasic personality. Motivated by aspiration and a desire to succeed, they are natural achievers. They are excellent at starting and overseeing initiatives, and their enthusiasm is contagious. Unchecked Rajas, however, might show itself as agitation, impatience, and even violence. The Tamasic personality type is characterised by a propensity for pessimism and lethargy. They could struggle to take initiative and lack motivation. But Tamas also connotes a very contemplative and restful condition. When in balance, it permits times for introspection and renewal. (Sushruta, 2017). Gaining insight into these Gunas and how they interact within us might help us become more self-aware. We can learn a great deal about our motives, shortcomings, and talents by determining our dominant Guna. For example, to establish balance and prevent burnout, a person with a strong Rajasic influence may find it helpful to cultivate Sattva through meditation or spending time in nature.

The Triguna system is a dynamic framework rather than a strict classification. Our experiences and decisions cause the Gunas inside of us to change all the time. We can aim for a dynamic and balanced personality by deliberately developing Sattvic traits like self-awareness and discipline.

Our personalities are the complex fusion of our ideas,

emotions, and actions that define who we are. It's the distinctive fabric made from our innate inclinations, experiences, and social relationships. Personality traits, the essential components that shape our way of navigating the world, are at its heart. To comprehend these characteristics, psychologists have put up a number of frameworks. Five fundamental dimensions are identified by one well-known model, the Five-Factor Model (FFM): OCEAN stands for Openness to Experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism. A curious mind and a need for novelty are reflected in openness. Organisation, self-control, and a strong work ethic are all characteristics of conscientiousness. Agreeableness denotes a cooperative and sympathetic attitude, whereas extraversion indicates an outgoing and gregarious personality. Conversely, neuroticism describes a propensity for unpleasant feelings like worry and anxiety. (Samhita, 2017) There is a wide range of personalities due to existence of these features on a spectrum. A person may be very organised and diligent, yet they may also be introverted and like to be alone themselves. A different person might be full of empathy, openness, and a desire for adventure. The vitality and sociability that one contributes to interactions is encapsulated by extraversion. A propensity for empathy and collaboration is shown in agreeableness. Conversely, neuroticism denotes a propensity for anxiety and negative feelings. But there is a spectrum of these characteristics. While someone with a lower openness score can find solace in regularity, someone with a higher openness score might be an adventurous traveler. While someone on the other end of the spectrum could welcome spontaneity, a highly diligent person might flourish on meticulous plans. The way these characteristics interact is what produces a distinct personality (Yadavaji, 2019).

A remarkable variety of personalities, each as fascinating as the next, are created by the interaction of these characteristics. Comprehending personality qualities is not solely a scholarly endeavour. It significantly affects both our personal and

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professional lives. We can build on our strengths and improve our inadequacies by acknowledging our own dominating features. An introverted person by nature, for example, can use their calm focus to their advantage when conducting research or analysis.

Additionally, valuing the many characteristics of those around us promotes improved teamwork and communication. A group leader who recognises that certain team members do best with explicit instructions, while others need more freedom, and may modify their leadership approach accordingly. Personality, however, is a dynamic concept. Life events can mould and improve certain features, even though they show relative stability over time. While overcoming obstacles might foster resilience, having good experiences can foster optimism. As we develop and discover new things, our personalities are always changing.

Triguna's Philosophical and Historical Background

The Triguna theory is offered by the Samkhya school of Hindu philosophy, one of the six traditional schools of Indian philosophy. The philosopher Kapila created the dualistic Samkhya philosophy, which views the universe as an interaction of Purusha (unadulterated awareness) and Prakriti (stuff or nature). composed of the three gunas (Rajpurohit & Satpathy, 2018): Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva. The concept of Triguna, which holds that three qualities are essential to the moral and spiritual development of the soul, is also found in holy Hindu texts like the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads (Singh, 2008). According to Shilpa and Murthy (2014), the Bhagavad Gita specifically discusses how these gunas keep the soul in the material world and offers ways to transcend them through spiritual practices like yoga and meditation.

Personality traits are the essential components that make us who we are. Knowing these characteristics in both ourselves and other people allows us to handle the challenges of life with more empathy and self-awareness. The dynamic and complex character of the human experience is demonstrated by the constantly changing fabric of personality.

(Chinmayananda, 2020) An intellectual curiosity and a desire for novel experiences are reflected in openness. Conscientiousness is characterised by discipline, organisation, and goal-oriented conduct. People that get their energy from social engagement are described as extraverted, whereas introverted people prefer to be alone and think inwardly.

A propensity for cooperation and a desire to keep relationships harmonious are reflected in agreeableness. Conversely, neuroticism describes a propensity for negative feelings like worry and anxiety.

Examining Personality Features in the Context of the Triguna System

Personality qualities are the basic foundation for components of our own identities. We can set out on a lifetime path of self-discovery and move through the

world with more self-awareness and purpose if we comprehend these characteristics and how they interact. A richer tapestry of human experience is created when we grow more sensitive to the lovely melodies of people around us and learn to enjoy the symphony of our own personalities.

The idea of personality has been the focus of much research in both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. The Triguna theory, which is based on Samkhya philosophy, provides an alternative perspective within Hindu philosophy that allows one to observe the personalities and actions of people. Three fundamental attributes—Sattva (purity), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (inertia)—are said to control the universe and human psyche (Suneetha and Srikrishna, 2009). These characteristics, sometimes referred to as gunas, are present in every individual and influence their feelings, ideas, and actions.

In contemporary psychology, culturally grounded personality theories have gained more traction, and Triguna provides a comprehensive framework intimately linked to psychological health and psychopathology (Shilpa & Murthy, 2014). By incorporating Triguna into psychological treatment programs, holistic therapies may be able to address personality disorders including narcissistic personality disorder (NPD) and borderline personality disorder (BPD) (Rajpurohit & Satpathy, 2018).

An Overview of Psychological Research on Triguna

Over the past few decades, there has been a growing interest in incorporating Triguna theory into the field of contemporary psychology. Research has examined how the The Big Five personality traits and psychodynamic theory are two examples of current personality models that can be mapped onto gunas. For example, Sattva is extremely compatible with the traits of conscientiousness and openness, while Rajas is associated with extraversion and neuroticism (Swaroop & Salagame, 2017). On the other hand, Tamas is associated with neuroticism and low conscientiousness. According to psychological research on the use of Triguna, people with a higher proportion of Rajas and Tamas are more likely to suffer from personality disorders including narcissistic personality disorder (NPD) and borderline personality disorder (BPD) (Maurya, Singh, & Gowda, n.d.). The importance of Ayurvedic techniques like yoga, meditation, and food in balancing the gunas to enhance mental health and well-being has been demonstrated by empirical study (Shilpa & Murthy, 2014)

Development of Personality through Triguna Analysis

Recognising our dominant Guna can be a very effective self-awareness tool. Understanding our innate tendencies allows us to capitalise on their advantages and lessen their flaws. While a Tamasic person might develop discipline to combat lethargy, a Rajasic person can direct their energy towards

constructive endeavours.

The Triguna system is a dynamic framework rather than a strict classification. We can affect our own Gunas balance by exercising self-control and making a conscientious effort. We develop inner serenity and improve our character by pursuing sattva. When we use Rajas in a positive way, we work passionately and purposefully towards our objectives. Additionally, by accepting Tamas, we give ourselves permission to take breaks and think.. A comprehensive viewpoint on personality is provided by the Triguna system. We set out on a path of self-discovery when we comprehend how Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas interact within ourselves. This age-old knowledge gives us the ability to negotiate the complexity of human connection and comprehend ourselves, leading to a more contented and peaceful existence. But the Triguna system is more than just a personality classification scheme. It recognises how these attributes interact dynamically. A Rajas-dominated person may go through times of reflection and serenity, whereas a Sattvic person may have moments of Rajasic intensity. The secret is to recognise our dominant Guna and make a conscious effort to develop the others. McLeod (2017). For example, a Rajasic person may discover more balance and inner peace through Sattva-promoting activities like meditation or time spent in nature. In a similar vein, a Tamasic person may discover that establishing attainable objectives or engaging in physical activity to cultivate Rajas can help them overcome inertia and lead an active life.

Our personalities are shaped by a complicated interplay between nature and nurture. Our innate temperament is influenced by our genetic makeup. But our experiences, surroundings, and upbringing can make a lasting impression. A naturally gregarious youngster raised in a constrained atmosphere may become more introverted, whereas a shy child reared in a supportive environment may grow up to be a self-assured adult. Gaining insight into personality features is quite beneficial. It makes us more self-aware and enables us to recognise our advantages and disadvantages. This information enables us to successfully negotiate both personal and professional contexts. Greater cooperation and communication are fostered by understanding others' personality types. Understanding a coworker's introversion, for example, might create a more encouraging and effective work atmosphere. The foundation of our individual identities are our personality qualities. We can learn more about ourselves and other people by investigating them. This understanding enables us to successfully negotiate the challenges of life, form deep relationships, and, in the end, accept the exquisite mosaic that each person symbolises

Conclusion

The Triguna system offers a framework for self-awareness and development rather than a strict personality test. By acknowledging the impact of these attributes We can better understand our own motives, responses, and patterns by looking within. This knowledge enables us to develop virtues, make thoughtful decisions, and ultimately lead more satisfying lives. The Triguna approach provides a useful viewpoint for comprehending personality characteristics. We set out on a path of self-discovery by accepting the interaction of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas inside ourselves. This opens the door to a more harmonious, meaningful, and ultimately, genuine version of ourselves.

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