Research Article

Role of 'Triguna' personality in the psychological well-being of women

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Abstract

The present research studied the relationship between Triguna personality and psychological well-being. Psychological well-being helps in all domains of an individual. A sample of one hundred thirty women participants with ages ranging from 18 years to 64 years wasdrawn to fill the Vedic Personality Inventory and Psychological Well-Being Scale. Measures of psychological well-being are characterized in terms of environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relations, and purpose in life, personal growth, and self-acceptance. Indian Vedic philosophy suggests about Triguna personality which consists of Sattvic, Rajsic, and Tamasic qualities. Coefficients of correlation revealeda significant positive association of Sattvic and negative of Rajsic and Tamsic with all measures of psychological well-being. It depicted that an individual characterized as high on Sattva guna tends to be high on psychological well-being whereas persons high on Rajas and Tamas will be low on psychological well-being. Factor analysis suggested the extraction of two factors using by the criterion of eigenvalue greater than 1.00. Extracted factors supported the results of the correlational analysis. Stepwise multiple regression analysis depicted that overall psychological well-being (composite score) was significantly predicted by Tamsic ($R2$=.432; β=-0.658), Sattvic ($R2$=.524; β=0.567) and Rajsic ($R2$=.541; β=-0.189). In conclusion, Triguna personality influences the Psychological Well-Being of an individual.

Introduction

Personality provides consistency in a person's thinking, feelings, and actions, and helps to understand his or her overall adjustment. It contributes in various applied areas of our lives. Literature suggests that personality is studied and tried to understand through various perspectives. Major perspectives are biological and genetics, psychodynamic, behaviouristic, cognitive, and humanistic. The biological and genetic approach provides an understanding of personality in terms

of the overall functioning of the neural system and hereditary makeup. Darwin elaborately explained how individual differences are based on natural selection. Since the natural resources are limited in nature the organisms have to change over some time through adaption and selection. Natural selection causes the population to develop new traits and certain genes, aiding the organism's survival and reproduction. This is generally called the "Struggle for existence and survival of the fittest". Modern advanced techniques facilitate researchers' research on personality through biological and genetic perspectives.

Psychodynamic perspective explains psychological events in terms of the thinking pattern of the unconscious and childhood experiences. These psychological events determine the personality in all phases of life. This perspective mainly assumes that the ideographic approach helps to understand the whole personality. Theorists (mainly Freud) provided the techniques to understand maladaptive behaviours and their treatments. Cognitive psychologists study personality through psychological thought processes such as how an individual perceives, interprets, and thinks. Behaviouristic view argues about environmental determinants and the learning process that shapes the personality. Psychologists understand the behaviours through context of an individual and the conditioning process. Humanistic paradigm favours the overall opinion about the future rather than the past. The deterministic factors of personality according to them are free will and self-determination.

Trait theorists prefer methodological and scientific views to explain the structure of personality. Gordon Allport [1] is a pioneer amongst the list of trait psychologists. Later, R. B. Cattell and other psychologists provided the taxonomies of personality based on factor analysis. Taxonomies have been used by various researchers to understand the personality of an individual and his/her adjustment in various domains.

Personality in Indian philosophy is defined by three main spheres which are Panchkosa, Tridosa, and Triguna. The Panchkosa sphere comprehends the individual from the viewpoint of the five sheaths namely, Annamaya Kosa, Manomaya Kosa, Pranamaya Kosa, Vigyanamaya Kosa, and Aandamaya Kosa which has been revealed about it

for the first time in the Taittiriya Upanishad. This is reflected in the initial study of human personality from the Indian psych philosophical approach. The Tridosa sphere understands personality from within the framework of the Ayurvedic system of medicine which indicates that a living entity is constituted by Panchmahabuta, at the physical level it forms Vatta, Pitta, and Kapha. The third sphere includes the Triguna personality which is Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. The Guna constitutes a fundamental theoretical concept within the Samkhya system of Indian philosophy. Ancient Indian scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita, Upanishads, Yogasutras, Puranas, Mahabharata, and Samkhya Karika concurred that the Gunas are responsible for human actions.

By literature review, it is observed that various researchers have conceptualized and defined Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas in diverse ways[2] Sattva, as goodness, purity, intelligence, and humility, Rajas is theorized as an impurity, negativity, activity, lack of emotional control, passion, anxiety, desires, and greed, and Tamas is characterized as a state of neutrality, indifference, stupidity, doubt, dullness, uncertainty, negligence, cynicism, delusions, inaction, misunderstanding, undisciplined behavior, fear, and sorrow.[3] Sattva as knowledge and peace; Rajas as activity and pain; and Tamas as inertia, darkness, and delusion.[4] Sattva as stability, self-awareness, sensitivity, control, and freedom; Rajas as activation, restlessness, over activity, uncontrolled energy, high drive, inability to remain silent or alone, extraverted instability; and Tamas described as inertia, introverted instability, lethargy, fear, inhibition, anxiety, low self-confidence, low self-respect.[5] Sattva in terms of essence, purity, and harmony; Rajas as motion, passion, and activity; and Tamas as inertia, inactivity, sloth, and foolishness.[6] Sattva as cleanliness, truth, discipline, mental equilibrium, determination, and detachment; and Rajas as desire for a sense of gratification, dissatisfaction, envy, materialistic mentality; and Tamas as mental imbalance, anger, procrastination, arrogance, depression, and feelings of helplessness.[7]

Psychological well-being, as conceptualized by Carol D. Ryff, is a multidimensional frame work that surrounds six core dimensions. These dimensions collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of an individual's psychological health and fulfilment. The six dimensions of

psychological well-being according to Ryff are autonomy entails regulating individual behaviour through an internal locus of control, and personal growth involves the capacity to develop and enhance oneself, achieve self-actualization, and accomplish goals. Environmental mastery is the act of selecting and controlling both the physical and mental surroundings, and purpose in life is cantered on recognizing the significance of one's existence and setting and achieving meaningful goals that contribute to a fulfilling life.[8] Establishing positive relations with others is crucial for building trusting and enduring connections within a network of communication and support. Self-acceptance stands out as a recurring and fundamental aspect of psychological well-being, representing a cornerstone of mental health and optimal functioning.[8,9] Similarly, another scholar asserted that well-being comprises three essential components: pleasure, engagement, and meaning.[10,11] According to the PERMA model, well-being includes five elements: positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. These elements are considered fundamental for individuals to attain enduring happiness.[10]

Triguna personality influences an individual's psychological well-being and mental health. The World Health Organization[12]defines mental health as "a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community". The Sattva Guna demonstrates a positive connection with seven aspects of well-being, specifically positive relationships with others, life satisfaction, purpose in life, autonomy, self-development, environmental mastery, and self-acceptance.[13] People who possessed a predominant Sattva Guna generally achieved higher scores in self-compassion and human flourishing, as well as related elements, in contrast to individuals with a dominant Tamas guna.[14] Tamas is associated with feelings of sorrow, fear, and low spirits.[15] while Sattvic individuals are

characterized by self-control and a disposition towards humanity.[16]

Furthermore, in a study, it was documented thatthere is a strong correlation between a high level of psychological well-being and a low level of neuroticism. There are strong correlations between psychological well-being and high levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, and extraversion.[17] Hicks and Mehta[18] found a positive relationship of openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness with psychological well-being, whereas negative of neuroticism. Khanna and his neuroticism,[19] studied that Sattvic positively correlated with extra version, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness, and negatively with neuroticism; Rajas and Tamas positively correlated with neuroticism and negatively with agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness. Sattva Guna has a significant impact on psychological well-being.[20]

Rationale of the Study

On the basis of the literature review, it may be concluded that personality factors are determinants of overall psychological well-being. Present research may be considered as confirmatory for the findings of previous studies. However, there are very few studies available in the literature regarding women participants, therefore, it would provide additional information. Hence, the present research is proposed to see the impact of Triguna personality on the psychological well-being of women participants.

Method

Participants

A total sample of 130 women from Haryana who consented to participate was selected. The participant' sages ranged from 18 years to 64 years, with a mean age of 28 years and a Standard Deviation of 8.82 years. The sample included 46 married,78 unmarried, and 6 divorced women. The sample was also diverse in terms of age, marital status, socioeconomic status, locality, employability, and another factor.

Table 1: Sociodemographic characteristics of female participant at baseline

Baseline characteristics	Marital Status			Residence			Types of family		Birth order		
	Unmarried	Married	Divorced	Rural	Urban	Semi-urban	Nuclear	Joint	First born	Middle born	Later born
N	74	50	6	35	68	27	66	64	60	26	44
%	57	38	5	27	52	21	51	49	46	20	34

Measures

The Vedic Personality Inventory (Wolf,1998) [7]

Inventory assesses the three Gunas of personality which are based on the Indian Vedic system. Three Gunas are explained in terms of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. The inventory includes a total of 56 items. Alpha coefficients are reported as 0.93,0.94, and 0.94 for Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas scales respectively. Item total correlation was found above 0.50 for each of the scales. Satisfactory convergent and discriminant validities are also ascertained.

Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff,2007) [8]

Psychological Well-being Scale was developed by Carol D. Ryff in 2007(adopted from Ryff,1989) which includes total six dimensions (Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Purpose in Life, and Self-acceptance). A total of 42 items are based on the Likert scale. The Internal consistency coefficients are within acceptable ranges (Self-acceptance-.93, Positive Relations-.91, Autonomy-.86, Environmental Mastery-.90, Purpose in Life- .90, and Personal Growth-.87). The construct validity of the tool was found to be approximately .83.

Administration and Procedure

Regarding administration, each participant was motivated, encouraged, and adequately convinced to participate in the research. A warm rapport was established. First of all, participants were assured that the information collected here, or the responses would be utilized or used only for academic and research purposes and would not be disclosed to anybody. They were told that confidentiality would be maintained, so try to respond genuinely to each question. Participation in this study was voluntary. The respondents were free to withdraw their participation from the study at any time. The investigator strictly followed confidentiality guidelines, and informed consent was obtained. Before proceeding with administration and procedure, the participant was instructed to read the instructions silently and carefully that were given to overleaf the measures. After the completion of the tests, participants were greeted with warm thanks. The scoring of the participants' responses was completed according to the set procedure for all measures.

Results

Data matrices are analysed by applying appropriate statistical techniques with the help of SPSS. Obtained results are reported and discussed in the following headings:

Correlational analysis: Firstly, Descriptive statistics, in terms of Mean, SD, Skewness, and kurtosis were obtained and depicted the more or less normalcy of data distribution. Then, inter correlations were calculated between measures of Triguna personality and psychological well-being which are shown in Table-2.

Table 2 : Correlations matrix

Psychological Well-being	Triguna Personality		
	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
A	0.44	-0.37	-0.49
EM	0.39	-0.31	-0.40
PG	0.34	-0.38	-0.50
PR	0.36	-0.42	-0.50
PL	0.26	-0.21	-0.41
SA	0.52	-0.48	-0.56
PW	0.53	-0.50	-0.66

"Note: A-Autonomy, EM-Environmental Mastery, PG- Personal Growth, PR- Positive Relations, PL-Purpose in Life, SA- Self-Acceptance, PW-Psychological Well-being"

Table-2 revealed that Sattva guna has marked significant positive association with A $(r=0.44 p<.01)$, EM $(r=0.39 p<.01)$, PG $(r=0.34 p<.01)$, PR $(=0.363 p<.01)$, PL $(r=0.26 p<.01)$, SA $(r=0.52 p<.01)$, and composite score of PW $(r=.53 p<.01)$. Conversely, Rajas

exhibited significant negative relationship with A (r=-0.37 p<.01), EM (r=-0.31 p<.01), PG (r=-0.38 p<.01), PR (r=-0.42 p<.01), PL (r=-0.21 p<.05), SA (r=-0.48p<.01), and composite score of PW (r=-.50 p<.01). Tamas yielded significant negative relation with A (r=-0.49 p<.01), EM (r=-0.40 p<.01), PG (r=-0.50 p<.01), PR (r=-0.50 p<.01), PL (r=-0.41 p<.01), and SA (r=-0.56 p<.01), and overall PW (r=-.66p<.01). All three gun as have found significantly associated with overall well-being. It suggests that persons having high levels of Sattva will also be high on well-being, whereas individuals high on Rajas and Tamas will be low on well-being.

Principal components factor analysis: Pearson correlation is bivariate technique. It provides the relationship between only two variables. It does not provide the overlapped structural relationship between many variables simultaneously. Whereas factor analysis is multivariate technique and it provides the genuine relationship among group of variables. Therefore, to acquire the genuine relationship between both domains, factor analysis was applied, and two factors were extracted. Un rotated factor matrix shows the initial extraction of factors whereas rotated factor matrix provides the simple structure of extracted factors. First factor positively loaded on Sattva and all dimensions of well-being and negatively on Tamas Guna.It depicted that Sattvic personality is strongly positively related to overall well-being. Tamas also reduces well-being. Second factor is composed of significant negative loadings of Rajas and Tamas, and positive loadings of Positive Relation, Self-acceptance, Personal growth, and Autonomy measures of well-being. It revealed that persons high on Rajas and Tamas tend to be low on Positive Relations, Self-acceptance, Personal growth, and Autonomy domains of well-being.

Table 3: Factor analysis

Variables	Un-rotated		Rotated		h^2
	1	2	1	2	
Sattva	.598	0.559	**0.816**	**-0.061**	0.670
Rajas	-0.642	0.692	-0.068	**-0.94**	0.891
Tamas	-0.802	0.347	**-0.408**	**-0.772**	0.763
Autonomy	0.694	0.104	**0.606**	**0.353**	0.492
Environmental Mastery	0.624	0.175	**0.597**	0.254	0.421
Personal Growth	0.742	0.090	**0.635**	**0.394**	0.559
Positive relation	0.734	-0.022	**0.558**	**0.476**	0.539
Purpose in life	0.596	0.210	**0.596**	0.209	0.399
Self-acceptance	0.804	0.038	**0.651**	**0.474**	0.649
% of variance	48.61	11.18	33.98	25.84	---------
Eigenvalues	4.37	1.006	3.056	2.32	---------

Significant loadings are in boldface.

Regression analysis: Data were analyzed by using stepwise multiple regression. The three predictors which are Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas explaineda significant percentage of variance in predicting (criterion)overall psychological well-being. Findings are reported in Table-4.

Table 4 : Regression (N=130)

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R	t	B	Std.B
1 (Tamsic)	.658[a]	.432	.428	-9.836	-.709	-.658
2 (Satvic)	.724[b]	.524	.516	-7.904	-.570	-.528
				4.916	.329	.567
3 (Rajsic)	.735[c]	.541	.530	-4.059	-.413	-.383
				5.373	.632	.366
				⁻2.164	⁻.276	⁻.189

Stepwise multiple regression analysis depicted that overall psychological well-being (composite score) was significantly predicted by Tamsic (R^2=.432; β=-0.658), Sattvic (R^2=.524; β=0.567) and Rajsic (R^2=.541; β=-0.189). It may be concluded that Sattvic influences positively psychological well-being, whereas Tamsic and Rajsic negatively influence it.

Discussion

The Indian perspective on personality, rooted in the Triguna theory encompassing Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, holds significant predominant over human actions and behaviour. The primary objective of this study was to examine the correlation between dimensions of Triguna Personality and Psychological Well-Being. After analysis, it was observed that Tamas exhibited a negative correlation, while Sattva showed a positive correlation with all seven constructs of Psychological Well-Being.[13] Dominance of sattva linked to higher well-being in both genders.[21] In this study, Factor Analysis revealed that Sattva, and dimensions of Well-Being i.e. Personal growth, Positive relation, Autonomy, Purpose in life, Environmental mastery, and Self-acceptance were loaded positively whereas Tamas loaded negatively on the first factor. On the second factor, Tamas and a few dimensions of Well-Being i.e., Autonomy, Personal Growth, Positive relation, and Self-acceptance loaded positively whereas Rajas loaded negatively. Previous studies also support the positive association of Sattva with Psychological Well-Being, and the negative association of Tamas with Psychological Well-Being.[19,20] Rajas was also found to be negatively correlated with Psychological Well-Being[22] and tamas also exhibited tendencies toward experiencing lower life satisfaction. [8]

Another objective of the research was to investigate the predictors of Psychological Well-Being with the independent variable of the Triguna Personality model. Sattvik Personality also prefer Self-growth. Sattva also predicted Psychological Well-Being as a study depicted by Sharma et.al.[22]

Trigunas maintain mental and physical health equilibrium.[23] The research shows that men without alcohol dependence score higher on sattva, extra version, conscientiousness, positive affect, and life satisfaction, while men with alcohol dependence score higher on Tamas, neuroticism, and negative affect.[24] Male scored higher on rajas, no gender difference in well-being.[25]

Conclusion

The Tri-guna concept suggests that three internal energies - sattva, rajas, and tamas - significantly influence well-being. A high level of rajas and tamas is understood to contribute to illness and psychological disturbances. Conversely, a strong presence of sattva is associated with a state of well-being. When sattva is dominant, individuals exhibit calmness, relaxation, and a high tolerance for stress. In contrast, those with an overabundance of rajas manifest low-stress tolerance, a propensity for worry, and a restless pursuit driven by desires for prestige and wealth. Finally, individuals with an excessive amount of tamas tend to focus predominantly on life's negative aspects and demonstrate a lack of effort in addressing their problems. These individuals are more likely to neglect personal health and experience a general sense of dissatisfaction with life.

Recommendations

Future research in this area could include more empirical studies to explore how the dominance of particular guna impacts psychological well-being. Present findings may be helpful in the development of interventions and strategies to improve mental health and overall quality of life.

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Conflict of interest: None

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