



Research Article

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EXPLORATORY STUDY ON CORRELATION BETWEEN DOMINANT 'ELEMENT OF MIND' (TRIGUNA) AND CORRESPONDING SOCIAL SUPPORT: A SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

Man is a social animal and his living flourishes with support he is getting from his social circle. This support depends on how he behaves with and within his social circumstances. His behavior depends on his personality so ultimately personality is responsible for social-support. There are so many factors which are responsible for development of personality of an individual such as method of upbringing, school life, friends, family profession, job satisfaction, financial status, marital life and so on. But it is also observed that two persons developing and living in almost same circumstances does behave differently in same situation. This suggests possibility of some other factors responsible for personality development and consequently for social-support. Ayurved theory of mental constitution helps here which is based on ratio of Trigunas namely Satva, Rajas and Tamas. This survey study is aimed to find out correlation between dominant Guna from Trigunas (which are Elements of Mind) and corresponding Social-Support. For this survey study, two types of questionnaires were prepared: One questionnaire to assess dominance of Satva-Rajas-Tamas and Second Questionnaire for Social-Support. 100 young-adult, unmarried, individuals of both sexes were interviewed. Data were analysed using common measure of Correlation - PPMC. Results showed that There is moderate positive correlation between Satva element and Social- Support. There is moderate positive correlation between Rajas element and Social-Support but it is below as compared to Satva element. Negative correlation is observed between Tamas element and Social Support.

Key words – Element of mind, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, social-support

INTRODUCTION

'Personality' has elaborative description in current psychology. There are so many factors which are responsible for development of personality of an individual s. a. method of upbringing, school life- school-friends and teachers' influence, social circle, family background, professional status and job satisfaction, financial status, marital life and so on'. But it is also observed by all that the two persons developing and living in almost same circumstances does behave differently in same situation. This suggests possibility of some other factors responsible for personality development.

At this point, Ayurvedic thought-line of 'Mind- configuration and functioning' proves to be directive. It is based and advanced in the direction of Triguna namely- Satva, Rajas and Tamas. (Triguna – the three ever-pervading, core-creative existences where Satva refers mainly to goodness, constructive, harmonious features, Rajas to passion and activeness and Tamas to ignorance, confusion and chaotic features).

Trigunas are basic fabric of creation². All the universal stuff has inherited Triguna in *n* number of formations. Individual's mind is a specific blend of Trigunas. Thus, Trigunas are basic 'elements of mind [EM]'. Structural and functional pattern of mind of each person depends on them³. These exhibits as a set of certain traits which makes every individual a 'Unique Persona'. A person's social life, his capacities of resilience & to deal with environment, to adopt with changes and stay calm, stable and un-stressed – all depend on his mental constitution and mental strength which in turn are dependent on Triguna – the Elements of Mind. Epigrammatically, Satva is generous, Rajas is tempestuous and Tamas is unexpressive.

These features are foundation of behavior. All these approaches get expressed in inter-personal relationships which are supposed to lead to good or bad social support.

Social Support

Gottlieb⁴ defines Social Support as a process of interaction in relationship which improves coping, esteem, belonging and competence through actual or perceived exchanges of physical or psychological resources.

Types of Social Support⁵

Emotional Social Support - expressions of care and concern.

Esteem Social Support – encouragement to take needed actions by increasing confidence.

Informative Social Support – provision of useful and /or needed information

Tangible Social Support - any physical assistance

This survey study was carried to find out correlation between dominant 'Triguna = Element of Mind' (EM) and corresponding Social Support which is an innovative approach.

The **statement of 'hypothesis' (H₁)** is - there is correlation between certain element of Mind (Triguna) and corresponding social support.

The **statement of 'null hypothesis' (H₀)** is – there is no correlation between certain element of Mind (Triguna) and corresponding social support.

MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

SSQ (Social support questionnaire) (Revised version),

MPAP (Maanas-Prakriti [mental constitution] Analysis Proforma) (Revised version), Individuals for survey study.

Methodology

Step 1 Preparation of Questionnaires: For this survey study two types of questionnaires were prepared– 1. Questionnaire to assess (Maanas Prakriti-) dominance of Satva-Rajas-Tamas in mind 2. Questionnaire for Social Support.

Step 1.1. Questionnaire for Maanas Prakriti:

Based on the Ayurved-Textual description and previous questionnaire from work on Maanas Prakriti survey ⁶ a new questionnaire for EM was prepared containing 18 questions. It is in 4 point scale ranging from ‘Definitely True’ to ‘Definitely false.’ In these 18 questions, 6 questions belong to each type of element and 3 of these 6 questions were having reverse score.

Step 1.2 Questionnaire for Assessment of Social Support:

A 24 item measure of perception of Social Support was designed. This measure is a shortened version of original ISEL ⁷. ‘24 item’ measure was prepared retaining all 4 types of social support, 6 questions for each type and in each group of 6; 3 questions were having reverse score. The four types of supports are – Informative Support (SS1), Tangible Support (SS2), Self Esteem Support (SS3) and Emotional Support (SS4).

Step 2. Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

Inclusion Criteria- Young adults between the age of 21 to 30 years,

- i) of both sexes
- ii) who are unmarried
- iii) who are ready to participate willingly and to give written consent.

Exclusion criteria - Young adults exceeding desired age group, and who -

- i) are under psychiatric treatment

- ii) are married
- iii) do not give written consent

Written consent of all participants was taken before enrolling in the study.

Step 3. Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out on 10 individuals to assess-- 1. Time required for answering the questions total 42 (24+18). 2. To judge the simplicity of language of both the measures. The individuals were asked to rate each item’s statement on how true or false they believe it is for themselves. The average time taken was observed as 23 minutes. So the time of 30 minutes was finalized for the 2 questionnaires collectively. No problem was raised by any individual so there was no need to modify questions for language problem.

Step 4. Survey Study: Survey study of 100 Young adults was carried out who fulfilled the Inclusion criteria.

Step 5. Data Analysis

Analysis of EM: Each of the three mind-elements, namely 1.Satva 2.Rajas and 3.Taamas were allotted 6 questions each. Separate score of each of these elements was calculated. Higher score indicates dominance of specific element. Sum of Satva-Rajas –Tamas collectively for each individual was also calculated.

Social Support Analysis: Separate score of each type of supports and total score of all four types, both were calculated.

Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient Test was applied for statistical analysis.

RESULTS

‘r’ is calculated between each type of Social Support and EM. Further ‘r’ is also calculated between total SS score and each entity of Triguna [**a) Satva & SS total, b) Rajas & SS total c) Tamas & SS total.**]

Table 1: Values of ‘r’ for Triguna and Social support

EM	SS1	SS2	SS3	SS4	SS total
Satva	0.2934387	0.1068315	0.396755	0.393312	0.347874
Rajas	0.0334469	0.1075829	0.282366	0.170201	0.212652
Tamas	-0.356453	-0.109439	-0.36857	-0.40924	-0.37953

Where: Satva element has stronger correlation to Self Esteem Support and Belonging Support whereas Tamas has weaker correlation to the same two kinds of Support. Rajas do not show remarkable strong or weak correlation for any particular type of support. Tamas element shows negative correlation with each type of support.

DISCUSSION ON TRIGUNA AND SURVEY STUDY

Ayurved texts depict that among the 3 EM, dominance of Satva element leads one to positive, rational behavior and to a matured personality. There is almost no chance to change this positivity and maturity to reverse or opposite side. On the contrary, a person with Satva dominance always wishes to improve himself in positive direction.

Personality traits of a Satvik person are ⁸ -- Helping nature, calm, forgiver, satisfied, intelligent, has interest in gaining knowledge, shares things with others, believes in God or supernatural power, gives knowledge to others, self controlled, wealthy but not too much interested in materialistic things, has good social circle, has respect and honor in the society.

Dominance of Rajas and Tamas have two types of manifestations –positive and negative. A person with dominance or Rajas in positive manner shows following traits ⁹ -- active, enthusiastic, passionate, adventurous, good orator, has sharp reflexes and gives instant reactions, brave, responds sharply, wealthy, interested more in money - food and entertainment, loves to travel, takes initiative in doing various jobs, active, has artistic attitude.

In negative dominance of Rajas, person becomes egoistic, self-centred, and unstable at mental level, anxious, annoyed and cruel, flirts or may have unnatural sexual approaches. He always tries to establish himself as ‘superior one’, most of the time he keeps himself ‘praising’, may not share his things with others very easily, possessive, greedy, may get irritated within short span of time, angry, helps them who always accept his supremacy, keeps revengeful attitude against those who hurt him. He may deceive others by his misleading behavior. He is likely to keep long term revengeful attitude. Such kind of negativity may lead to unlawful, immoral, criminal activities. Tamas element is essential for natural resting status of mind and senses for specific time period, there are hardly any positive features other than this. Tamas dominant person has following

personality traits¹⁰ - Timid and passive, prefers to remain inactive, never likes to think about the present situation and find out the solution, avoids to activate brain or mind to handle the situation and make decision, lower awareness so may understand the situation in wrong way or with very limited aspects, remains engaged in food, sleep, sex and laziness, also greedy about food, remains in grief for too long period, coward, not confident about himself. Many times, he remains un-aware about himself – his own needs, his own desires. He is unable to understand clarity in his own thoughts. As a result, such person cannot express his views with others. He fails to get acquainted with communication skills thus, feels as he is getting insulted by others and prefers to remain on back foot. Most of the time he remains very much sluggish at mental as well as physical level.

Ayurved suggests certain means to overcome such negativities. Righteous activity (Sadvritha) is one of them. Sadvritha controls mind and sense faculties from unwholesome exposures at social and personal level¹¹.

The comparison between Social Support and Satva element Measures, indicates that higher the Satva element score, so the higher is Social Support. Dominance of Satva makes one Confidant, positive, open to accept challenges and form a good inter-personal relationship in the changed social circle.

The comparison between Social Support and Rajas element Measures, gives somewhat same results with that of Satva element. The presence of certain negative features of Rajas element is responsible for a lower score relationship with Social support as compare to Satva element.

The comparison between Social Support and Tamas element Measures, indicates that the negative features of Tamas are responsible for the very lower score of Social support. Dominance of Tamas makes one ignorant, unconfident, critical with others and avoiding people, thus keeping self away from the society.

All these inferences are proved by the statistical analysis.

Moderate Positive correlation is observed between Satva Element and Social Support. Moderate Positive correlation is observed between Rajas Element and Social Support. Negative correlation is observed between Tamas Element and Social Support. Correlation with Self esteem and Emotional Support are positive in Satva. Correlation with Self esteem and Emotional Support are positive in Rajas but lower as compared to Satva. Correlation with Self esteem and Emotional Support are very lower in Tamas.

As the sample size is less, most of the values are at borderline indicating moderate positivity. But this being the first ever studies of such kind, the same values are important and noteworthy.

Thus, the Correlation between Triguna and Social Support is established; therefore H_0 (null hypothesis) is rejected and H_1 is proved and accepted.

CONCLUSION

Moderate positive correlation is observed between Satva element and Social Support. Moderate positive correlation is observed between Rajas element and Social Support but it is below as compared to Satva element. Negative correlation is observed between Tamas element and Social Support. These results match with the 'characteristics of Trigunas at psychological level' as mentioned in Ayurved.

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