

Tri-Gunas: A Comparative Study

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Personality expressed as the total quality of behaviour is generally revealed through an individual's thought, action, attitude and interest. The philosophy of yoga postulates that human personality is a dynamic interaction of the three gunas (qualities), namely: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas. The present research is an attempt to investigate the difference of Trigunas between students of Yogic and Modern Education System. The sample of two hundred twenty respondents was randomly selected from both education systems (110 yogic & 110 modern) of Uttar-Pradesh and Utrakhhand states. Sample was matched on the basis of age, gender, education and socio-economic status. For measuring Gunas 'Gita Inventory of Personality' by Das was used. The data was analyzed by employing Chi-square Test. The findings of present results show that the $\chi^2 [\chi^2_{YEM^*MES} (2) = 36.026, p < 0.01]$ is significant at 0.01 level, while Gender is not significant and the $\chi^2 [\chi^2_{Ym^*Mm} (2) = 30.069$ and $\chi^2 [\chi^2_{Yf^*Mf} (2) = 9.007 p < 0.01]$ is both significant at 0.01. It suggests that there is significant difference of Tri-gunas between the students of Yogic and Modern Education System.

Keywords: Yogic, Modern education system, Tri-Gunas

Education is the process of all round development of an individual. It develops the innate potentialities of an individual in a harmonious manner. The primary focus of an Education system is to develop substantially the physical, mental and spiritual powers of an individual. Education actually enhances the Social, Psychological and Educational development of an individual, thereby enabling the person to face more efficiently and effectually the growing challenges in life. There by enabling the person to face more efficiently and effectually the growing challenges in life.

Education system which was evolved first in ancient India is known as the Vedic system of education as it emerged from the Vedas. They are supposed to be the source of Indian philosophy in life. In the present, scenario

the two systems of education are mainly Yogic and Modern Education System.

Yogic Education System is based on Ashtanga Yoga i.e Yama (abstentions), Niyama (observance of purity, tolerance) Asanas (physical postures) Pranayama (regulation of breath) Pratyahara (pre-withdrawal of senses) Dharana (concentration) Dhayana (meditation) and Samadhi (spiritual absorption in the sublime). These five are the preparatory steps for meditation and the last three pratyahar, dharana and dhyana are "Yoga Chitavritti Nirodhah" (Taimni, 1961). Yoga practice has influence on physical and psychological outcomes that enhance muscular strength and body flexibility, promotes and improves respiratory and cardiovascular function, promotes recovery from and treatment of addiction, reduces stress, anxiety,

depression and chronic pain, improves sleep patterns and enhances the overall well-being and quality of life and spread of culture, infusion of piety and religiousness and development of best type of personality not in today's education policies but also as an aim of Vedic education. For many, yoga is viewed as a physical, mental and spiritual discipline that confers a sound body and a sound mind (Mohan, 2002). This system of education is fully capable as regards the growth and development of physical, intellectual and spiritual faculties of an individual. Improvement of the physical and mental health and promotion of well-being by six months of yoga practice in adults has been proved in the study by Uma et al. (1989).

Modern education system is based on pragmatic education as active, experimental and utilizes scientific and technical knowledge that developed in industrialized countries. But this system does not judge a student's abilities, skills, emotional intelligence and aptitude. This defeats the purpose of education to improve the mental and spiritual wellbeing of an individual. Educating a child means drawing out what is ingrained in the child. In modern times, science based technological education is successful in giving momentum to the process of economic development. It enables a child to solve multitudinous problems and bear responsibilities as a healthy and cultured citizen.

Humanistic and the Indian approach to personality are usually based on gunas. Gunas can help us to understand not only human nature, but also man's relation with cosmos, since they underline both material and mental manifestations. The ancient seers and sages were able to assertively avoid the mind-matter dualism, using triguna as the fundamental concept to explain all phenomena in the universe. The concept triguna is mentioned in Atharva veda.

However, it is in the Samkhya system that this concept has gained prominence as a major explanatory construct. Samkhya is a dualistic philosophy, which postulates two interdependent, simultaneously existing realities purusha (consciousness) and prakriti (Nature or matter). Apart from the purusha, which forms the inner core of the personality, everything, in the universe, physical and psychological, including the mind, are regarded as originated from prakriti, which is constituted of three gunas viz. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. In Samkhya philosophy, there are three major gunas that serve as the fundamental operating principles or 'tendencies' of prakriti (universal nature) which are called: There are many observable manifestations of sattva, rajas and tamas in the physical and psychological aspects of a person." (Sitamma, 2005). According to modern understanding and research in integral yoga one can improve one's health and develop one's personality and potential by practicing yoga regularly whether it is Yogasanas or Pranayamas or meditation or cleansing kriyas, or devotional practices, or moving consciously from tamas to rajas to sattva (selfless services) or acquiring discrimination and wisdom through self-enquiry. One can adopt one or more practices according to one's nature or tendencies and can progress on the path of Yoga as proclaimed by Swami Vivekananda also.

A study done by Bhal and Debnath (2006) suggested that there was significant correlation between spirituality and *Gunas* (measured under the following dimensions: cognitive orientation, experiential dimension, essential well-being, paranormal beliefs and religiousness). *Sattva guna* showed a positive relationship with cognitive orientation towards spirituality and religiousness dimensions, while *Tamas* has a negative correlation with essential well-being. *Rajas* did not show any relationship with any

dimension of spirituality. Sebastian and Mathew (2002) found a significant degree of positive correlation between parapsychological investigation and *Sattva* in females.

One aspect of Sattvic food is pure vegetarian nourishment and includes fresh fruit and vegetable juices, whole meal bread, pulses, grains and sprouts, nuts, seeds, honey, herbs, milk and dairy products which are free of animal rennet. These foods will raise our consciousness, inspire us to positive action, deeper meditation and unleash our hidden potential and creativity. Sattvic food is cooked with love and eaten with full awareness and gratitude. Sattva translates as "being", "consciousness", and "existence". It is the most desirable state over Tamas and Rajas. It reveals our true nature but is not full awakening. Sattva dominance creates peace of mind, happiness and balance. Yoga, meditation and a pure, clean diet support sattva gunas. The three gunas are part of Yogic philosophy, which says if you eat sattvic food, you will become a sattvic being. If you eat rajastic food you become rajastic (ambitious, temperamental, egoistic, etc.) and if you are naturally tamasic, you will become tamasic person with unhealthy and an animalistic lazy nature. *Food not only nourishes the body, it affects the mind and consciousness as well. As our physical constitution is characterized by different proportions of Vata, Pitta, and Kapha, we also have a mental constitution determined by the sattva, rajas and tamas (Larisa, 2011).* A study by Chochalingam and Kaleeswaran (2018) supported that the yogic practices with sattvic food group had shown significant improvement on vital capacity than the yogic practices without sattvic food and control group.

Gender is also an important variable and it has been reported that females show less lateral brain specialization than do males, but

the difference in degree of brain lateralization is largely responsible for the differences in cognitive processing. The male qualities are thought to be physical mastery, mental discipline and the drive for knowledge. The female qualities are thought to be intuition, receptivity and compassion. It is said that we *all* have male and female qualities but they are not always in the same proportion in both the genders. In gender research based on the study by VPI (Wolf, 1998) was also found that gender was not completely neutral in relation to the gunas, with higher sattva scores for females and higher tamas scores for males. Mohan and Sandhu (1988) found that no gender differences were observed in Triguna on males and females college students.

Yoga has education system to help calm the mind, maintain resistance, harness physical and mental energies and to develop integrated personality. It's a way of balancing the personality, emotions and establishing the harmony between the mind and body. Yoga helps in increasing the sharpness of an individual's brain and the concentration power. Mental balance together with the development of purity and peace develop an individual's mind towards Sattvic nature. Sattva is actually responsible for all true health and healing. Health is maintained by Sattvic living, which is living in harmony with nature and our inner self, cultivating purity, clarity and peace. Trigunas according to Ayurveda is a basic part of our body and mind. Yogic education system provides physical, emotional, mental, intellectual and spiritual well-being, while modern lifestyle has lost the harmony in mind and body relationship which most often makes the people battle with severe diseases like hypertension, cardiac problems, cancer, etc.

Objective

To study the difference in Tri-gunas between students of Yogic and Modern Education System among males and females.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas between the students of Yogic and Modern Education System.
2. There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas between male and female students of both education systems.
3. There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas between male students of Yogic and Modern Education System.
4. There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas between female students of Yogic and Modern Education System.

Method

Sample

In the present research 220 undergraduate residential students, from both Yogic (55 boys and 55 girls) and Modern (55 boys and 55 girls) Education System had been randomly selected. Their age range was between 18 to 23 years. The sample was matched on the basis of age, education and socio-economic status. The Sample was selected from Uttar- Pradesh and Utrakhand state.

Tools

Gita Inventory of Personality is based on the concept of Gunas (personality) from the BhagavadGita, a traditional text of yoga. This inventory was developed by Das in 1991 and measures three Gunas containing ten questions that have three response choices. This test has a test-retest reliability of 0.60 with a confidence level of 99% and has been validated. This test is a valid tool for identifying the type of personality. The score value of weightage of an item indicating Sattva is 3, for an item indicating Rajas is 2, and for an item indicating Tamas is 1. It classifies people as being predominantly of Sattva, Rajas, Tamas type, depending on their total score on the test. Scoring has been

done according the manual related to the test.

Results

Table 1. Frequency (Percentage) of Education System (Yogic and Modern) on Gunas

Gunas Education System	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas	Total	df = (r-1)(c-1)	Chi-square Value (χ^2)
Yogic	19 (17.27%)	68 (61.82%)	23 (20.91%)	110	2	36.026**
Modern	6 (5.45%)	38 (34.55%)	66 (60%)	110		
Total	25	106	69	220		

** $p < 0.01$

The first hypothesis concerning sattva, rajas and tamas gunas of students in yogic and modern education system was examined by means of χ^2 test (hypothesis of independence). The χ^2 [$(\chi^2_{YEM*MES}(2) = 36.026, p < 0.01)$] was found significant at 0.01 level of confidence, directing the rejection of Null Hypothesis formed and formulated for the purpose. Thus the hypothesis "There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas between the students of Yogic and Modern Education System," stands rejected. This in turn suggested that difference between observed frequencies is real and reliable and not due to chance only.

The Sattva (fe = 19, 17.27%) and Rajas (fe = 68, 61.82%) Gunas of students of Yogic Education System are superior as compared to Sattva (fe = 6, 05.45%) and Rajas (fe = 38, 34.55%) Gunas of students of Modern Education System. Tamas (fe = 23, 20.91%) Gunas of students in Yogic Education System is considerably low as compared to Tamas (fe = 66.60%) Gunas in Modern System Education.

Table 2. Frequency (Percentage) of Gender (male and female students) on Gunas

Gunasa Gender System	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas	Total	df = (r-1) (c-1)	Chi-square Value (χ^2)
Female	13 (11.82%)	54 (49.09%)	43 (39.09%)	110	2	0.179
Male	12 (10.91%)	52 (47.27%)	46 (41.82%)	110		
Total	25	106	89	220		

The examination of second hypothesis pertaining to the three gunas sattva, rajasa and tamasa with respect to the gender (Female and Male) of the students studying in both the Education Systems was done by employing χ^2 test (hypothesis of independence). The insignificant χ^2 [$(\chi^2_{YM^*YmM} = 2) = 0.179, p > 0.05$] suggested the non-rejection of null hypothesis. Thus the hypothesis "There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajasa and Tamasa Gunasa between male and female students of both education systems," stands accepted. This in turn suggested that the apparent difference between observed frequencies is not real and reliable and is due to chance only.

Based on the row percentage, Sattva Gunasa of female students (fe = 13, 11.82%) and Rajasa (fe = 54, 49.09) are better than Sattva Gunasa of male students (fe = 12, 10.91%), and Rajasa (fe = 52, 47.27) while Tamasa (fe = 43, 39.09%) Gunasa of female students is difference as compared to Tamasa (fe = 46, 41.82%) Gunasa of male students.

The third hypothesis concerning sattva, rajasa and tamasa gunasa of students in yogic and modern education system was examined by means of χ^2 test (hypothesis of independence). The χ^2 [$(\chi^2_{Ym^*Mm} (2) = 30.069, p < 0.01$)] was found significant at 0.01 level of significance, directing the rejection of Null Hypothesis formed and formulated for the purpose. Thus the hypothesis "There is no

significant difference of Sattva, Rajasa and Tamasa Gunasa between males of Yogic and Modern Education System," stands rejected. This in turn suggested that difference between observed frequencies is real and reliable and not due to chance.

Table 3. Frequency (Percentage) of Yogic and Modern Education System (male students) on Gunasa

Gunasa Education System	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas	Total	df = (r-1) (c-1)	Chi-square Value (χ^2)
Male (Yogic)	10 (18.18%)	36 (65.46%)	09 (16.36%)	55	2	30.069**
Male (Modern)	02 (3.64%)	16 (29.09%)	37 (67.27%)			
Total	12	52	46			

** $p < 0.01$

The Sattva (fe = 10, 18.18%) and Rajasa (fe = 36, 65.46%) Gunasa of male students of Yogic Education System are superior as compared to Sattva (fe = 02, 03.64%) and Rajasa (fe = 16, 29.09%) Gunasa of male students of Modern Education System. Tamasa (fe = 09, 16.36%) Gunasa of male students of Yogic Education System is inferior to Tamasa (fe = 37, 67.27%) Gunasa of students of Modern Education System.

Table 4. Frequency (Percentage) of Yogic and Modern Education System (female students) on Gunasa

Gunasa Education System	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas	Total	df = (r-1) (c-1)	Chi-square Value (χ^2)
Female (Yogic)	9 (16.36%)	32 (58.18%)	14 (25.45%)	55	2	9.007**
Female (Modern)	04 (7.27%)	22 (40%)	29 (52.73%)			
Total	13	54	43			

** $p < 0.01$

The fourth hypotheses concerning sattva, rajas and tamas gunas of students in yogic and modern education system was examined by means of χ^2 test (hypothesis of independence). The χ^2 [$\chi^2_{Yf * Mf}$ (2) = 9.007, $p < 0.01$] was found significant at 0.01 level of significance, directing the rejection of Null Hypothesis formed and formulated for the purpose. Thus the hypothesis "There is no significant difference of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas between females of Yogic and Modern Education System," stands rejected. This in turn suggested that difference between observed frequencies is real and reliable and not due to chance.

Based on the row percentage, Sattva (fe = 09, 16.36%) and Rajas (fe = 32, 58.18%) Gunas of students of Yogic Education System are superior as compared to Sattva (fe = 04, 7.27%) and Rajas (fe = 22, 40%) Gunas of students of Modern Education System. Tamas (fe = 14, 25.45%) Gunas of students of Education System is inferior to (fe = 55, 52.73%) Gunas of students of Modern Education System.

Discussion

The results show that the students under Yogic Education System (both males and females) possess superior personality (Gunas) as compared to the students under Modern Education System. Further, female students possess superior personality (Gunas) over their male counterparts. Tikhe et al. (2012) found that students undergoing 'Yoga Instructor's Course' decreased significantly their Tamas Guna (11.33%) and increased Sattva Guna (10.34%), while insignificant decrement was recorded in Rajas Guna (0.68%). Similarly, Maheswari et al. (2019) in his study found 56.06% decrement ($p < 0.01$) in Tamas Guna, 31.35% decrement ($p < 0.01$) in Rajas Guna and 30.81% increment ($p < 0.01$) in Sattva Guna scores. Patil and Nagendra (2014) also showed that percentage of increment in

Sattva Guna (12%), Rajas Guna (7%) and decrement in Tamas Guna (11%) was found respectively in yoga group. Thus the findings of additional analysis posit the superiority of Yogic Education System in reference to Sattva and Rajas gunas which may facilitate the qualities of 'Supermen'.

Previous study suggests that Yoga enhances the cultivation of Sattva Guna and also balances all the three Gunas. Practicing yoga and leading a yogic lifestyle strongly cultivates Sattva (Prielozna, 2018). Most of the qualities of Sattva which are manifestation of a calm state of mind are achievable by different yogic techniques (Asanas, Pranayama & Meditation) meant for mastery over the mind and body complex, Deshpande (2008). As described Vedas suggested that chanting the 'Hare Krishna' Maha Mantra may transform rajasic and tamasic qualities into sattvic qualities. However, the Vedas also indicate that chanting the Maha mantra will transform tamasic qualities into rajasic qualities. Therefore, while some rajasic qualities are replaced by sattvic qualities, some tamasic qualities are transformed into rajasic attributes, and therefore the overall level of rajas is maintained, and by continued chanting of the Hare Krishna Maha Mantra, by Srimad-Bhagavatam (Prabhupada, 1976) all rajas and tamas will be replaced by sattva. An experiment study by Wolf (1999) supported that the Maha mantra group decreased tamas scores significantly more than the control group. Rangan (2009) emphasized through his research that "Gurukul pattern of education was responsible in creating a more balanced personality of the student as compared to modern pattern of education".

Conclusion

Therefore, it can be concluded that Yogic education system always helps *all round development of personality, with simple living and high thinking, ethical elevation, academic*

excellence, self-reliant and disciplined life. i.e. towards 'Sattva guna', as compared to Modern education system. Yogic education system mainly strives to maintain the balance between Body, Mind and Spirit of an individual. Ashtanga Yoga essentially foresees on the holistic development of an individual's behaviors, leading to improvement in quality of life. To sum up, it would be safer say that Yogic education system is an inner discipline for the transformation of consciousness through self-knowledge, self-discipline and independent activity.

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