PERSONALITY SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON STRESS: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY USING GUNA THEORY

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Abstract: *In the current scenario, there is an age of swift change in every aspect of life which has tremendously demanded for workforce to be complex and challenging. But this necessitates the need to learn to adapt to these changes for a productive and satisfied life. When individuals fail to adapt, then they turn to become more vulnerable to psychological distress. The purpose of this study is to understand the personality-types based on Guna theory, using the Vedic-Personality Inventory (VPI). Besides this, the impact of such personality on personal stress is studied; for which, a survey was conducted among two-hundred respondents from various backgrounds using Questionnaire.*

Keywords: *Workforce, Trigunas, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas, Vedic Personality Inventory, Personality, Psycholgical distress.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The term 'personality' includes widespread individual differences among people based on various behavioural patterns, both cognitively and emotionally. Various patterns endure personal traits revealed at different situations. Vedic Personality Inventory (VPI) was developed by Wolf (1999) in order to measure the sattva, rajas and tamas gunas (trigunas), based on fifty-seven items. It's a seven-point scale ranging from "very strongly disagree" to "very strongly agree".

Predominance of a particular guna determines any individual's personality traits. The *Bhagwad Gita* describes the '*sattvic'* personality as fearlessness, purity of heart, control of senses, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness and compassion towards others.

Those who are *'rajasic'* in nature, are described as sensuous, thirsty, little interest in spirituality, hatred, jealous, imitative, passionate, anxious and industrious. '*Tamasics'* are described as destructive, drowsy, angry, fearful , slothful, ignorant and lethargic. In reality, nobody can avoid any of these gunas as *rajas* and *tamas* predominate at optimal levels to the *sattva* guna.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the personality-types and its predominance based on the Guna theory.
- To identify the impact of various traits on the levels of stress among the respondents.
- To suggest various measures to manage stress with changing levels of Trigunas.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

No person remains always happy or always sad or depressed. the relative dominance and relevance of the gunas in people can be studied and classified accordingly to ensure a better understanding of human behaviour. The Guna theory has been empirically tested and accepted (Murthy & Kumar, 2007). There were seven classifications made, depending on the dominance of the gunas in the body (Charaka & Sushrutha). Besides this, the study on chanting the *Hare Krishna Maha Mantra* revealed its impact to increase *Sattva* and decrease *Rajas* and *Tamas* (Wolf, 2000; Wolf & Abell, 2003) and the effects of *Yoga, pranayama* and thermal bio-feedback techniques were proved satisfactory to manage stress and high blood pressure (Latha,& Kaliappan, 1991).

IV.   METHODOLOGY

The study included a respondents of two-hundred from different occupational backgrounds, where a survey was conducted using a questionnaire. The calculations of sattva, raja and tamas scores were made based on prescribed steps in the VPI test; and analysed separately among the respondents.

V.   DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table showing the Sattva Guna Profile among the Respondents

TYPE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	SATTVA SCORE (in % based on whichever is the highest)	RESULT
Students • **Below 30 years**	20	19.45	Lowest
Teachers • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	20 09	22.10 26.09	Lower Lower
Industrialists • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	31 10	20.41 23.34	Lower Lower
IT workmen • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	24 11	19.53 21.88	Lower Lower
Government Servants • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	11 15	23.44 24	Lower Lower
Retired Staff • **61- 80 yrs (including VRS)** • **Above 81 years**	38 11	32.31 34.42	Lower (comparatively higher) Lower (comparatively the highest)
TOTAL	200		

Interpretation:

All students aged below 30 years showed the lowest Sattva score compared to others. On the contrary, the retired staffs were showing an improvement in the scores.

Table showing the Rajas Guna Profile among the Respondents

TYPE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	RAJAS SCORE (in % based on whichever is the highest)	RESULT
Students • **Below 30 years**	20	31.02	Highest
Teachers • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	20 09	22.17 24.41	Higher Higher
Industrialists • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	31 10	21.22 23.05	Higher Higher
IT workmen • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	24 11	20 22.31	Higher Higher
Government Servants • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	11 15	26 23.98	Higher Higher
Retired Staff • **61- 80 yrs (including VRS)** • **Above 81 years**	38 11	19.44 18.67	Lower Lowest
TOTAL	**200**		

Interpretation:

All students aged below 30 years showed the highest rajas score compared to others. The retired staffs were showing the lowest scores comparatively, which was considered satisfactory.

Table showing the Tamas Guna Profile among the Respondents

TYPE OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	TAMAS SCORE (in % based on whichever is the highest)	RESULT
Students • **Below 30 years**	20	26.20	Highest
Teachers • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	20 09	23 24.19	Higher Higher
Industrialists • **21- 40 yrs** • **41- 60 yrs**	31 10	20.45 22.85	Higher Higher

IT workmen			
• **21- 40 yrs**	24	20.31	Higher
• **41- 60 yrs**	11	23.01	Higher
Government Servants			
• **21- 40 yrs**	11	24.11	Higher
• **41- 60 yrs**	15	24	Higher
Retired Staff			
• **61- 80 yrs (including VRS)**	38	20.06	Lower
• **Above 81 years**	11	19.38	Lowest
TOTAL	**200**		

Interpretation:

All students aged below 30 years showed the highest tamas score compared to others. The retired staffs aged below 80 years showed a lower score and; those aged above 81 years proved to lowest score which was considered to be the best.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Students aged below 30 years showed having highest rajasic and tamasic scores, but lowest sattvic scores. This means that they wish to stay active and aggressive sometimes (rajasic); lazy and procastinating (tamasic). Despite any wishes for food, they demand for entertainment, fun and try to make life more memorable sharing and caring for their family and friends. They like to stay independent with nobody interfering into their personal affairs. They tend to feel more stressed and worried about future.

This has been proved to be dangerous in majority cases (90%) and the remaining is protective in rare cases.

- There were slight variations referred in case of teachers, industrialists, IT workmen and Government servants (in case of all age groups). These personnel also feel stressed due to poor work and life balance maintained. If they tend to be more rajasic, then they feel highly stressed or is they are more tamasic, then again they turn stressed as they tend to push all present jobs to future later feeling procrastinated.

- But, the retired staffs proved to show having lowest tamas and rajas scores; and relatively highest sattvic scores. This shows that they too are health and self-

conscious. They have more patience and highly spiritual findings ways to remain calm and moderated. They feel self-surrendered and find better ways of improving oneselves. This doesn't mean that they are not stressed, but they manage stress by self-motivation techniques.

VII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

No man can ever remain only sattvic or only rajasic or only tamasic. Despite this, all they need to do is to balance these trigunas in them. It's impossible for oneself to ignore any one of these gunas. For any best performance in job, any personnel need to acquire skills to maintain a balance in sattvic, rajasic and tamasic scores. As per the study, the retired staff showed more scores in sattva and lowest in the latter. But this not stereotyped for such situations. Instead efforts can be made to identify our life positions and transform the proportions of rajas, tamas into sattva.

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