

HOLISTIC MODEL OF PERSONALITY BASED ON THE SIX SCHOOLS (DARSHANAS) OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY AND WESTERN PERSONALITY CONCEPT.

N. Suresh¹, Dr. M.K. Sridhar², Dr. H.R. Nagendra³, Dr. K.M. Nagendra⁴ ¹ Research Scholar at S-VYASA and Corresponding Author, ²Dean, Division of Yoga –Spirituality, S-VYASA, ³Chancellor, S-VYASA, ⁴ Professor, BIMS

Abstract

Personality—it's who we are. Our personalities determine how we act and react, as well as how we interact with and respond to the world. Despite much research, the origins of personality are still a mystery, though there are many theories that attempt to explain them. Some researchers propose that children learn personality from their parents; others believe personality is fixed from birth. Some theories address how environment, genetics, and culture influence the development of personality. Our saints and sages did the study on personality with out categorizing it as, personality but concept of *swabhava* referred to in scriptures, covering all aspects of personality. In recent years academicians and recruiters have expressed concern about the issues in personality development. While most of them agree that these issues need attention but concerns around as to how to develop and measure is yet to be arrived. This paper examines a new approach towards modelling the personality and tries to validate the model through a pilot study.

Key Words: Nyaya, Purva Mimamsa, Sad-Darsanas, Sankhya, Triguna, Vaisheshika, Vedanta, Yoga.

1.0 Introduction:

Indian Philosophy:

India has a rich and diverse philosophical tradition dating back to the composition of the Upanishads in the later Vedic period. According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the oldest of these constitute "the earliest philosophical compositions of the world." Indian philosophy, the systems of thought and reflection were developed by the civilizations of the Indian subcontinent. They include both orthodox (*astika*) systems, namely, the Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Purva-Mimamsa (or Mimamsa), and Uttata Mimamsa or Vedanta schools of philosophy, and unorthodox (*nastika*) systems, such as Buddhism, Charvaka and Jainism.

Indian thought has been concerned with various philosophical problems, significant among which are the nature of the world (cosmology), the nature of reality (metaphysics), logic, the nature of knowledge (epistemology), ethics, and the philosophy of religion. Since the late medieval age (1000-1500BCE) various schools (*darshanas*) of Indian philosophy are identified as orthodox (*astika*) or non-orthodox (*nastika*) depending on whether they regard the Veda as an infallible source of knowledge. There are six schools of orthodox Hindu philosophy and three heterodox schools. The orthodox are Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Purva mimamsa and Uttata Mimamsa or Vedanta. The Heterodox are Jain, Buddhist and materialist (*Carvaka*).

The main schools of Indian philosophy were formalised chiefly between 1000 BCE to the early centuries CE. Subsequent centuries produced commentaries and reformulations continuing up to as late as the 20th century by Aurobindo and Prabhupada among others. Competition and integration between the various schools was intense during their formative years, especially between 800 BCE to 200 CE. Some of them like the Jain, Buddhist, Shaiva and Advaita schools survived, while others like Sankhya and Ajivika did not, either being assimilated or going extinct. The Sanskrit term for "philosopher" is *darsanika*, one who is familiar with the systems of philosophy, or *darsanas*.

Western philosophy is the philosophical thought and work of the Western world. Historically, the term refers to the philosophical thinking of Western culture, beginning with Greek philosophy of the Pre-Socratics such as Thales (624–546 BCE) and Pythagoras (570–495 BCE), and eventually covering a large area of the globe (Kenny, Anthony, 2010). The word *philosophy* itself originated from the ancient Greek word: *philosophia*, literally meaning, *love of wisdom* (*philo* -loving, *sophia* -wisdom).

Greek philosophy started as a kind of naturalism as the distinction between mind and matter was not clearly recognized that time, now called Materialism by some philosophers with a scientific basis. Western philosophy is generally divided into three periods, Greek, Christian and modern. In between the first two is a period called Hellenistic, during which the Jew thought got developed.

Western philosophers have often been divided into some major branches, or schools, based either on the questions typically addressed by people working in different parts of the field, or notions of ideological undercurrents. In the ancient world, the most influential division of the subject was the Stoics' division of philosophy into logic, ethics, and physics (conceived as the study of the nature of the world, and including both natural science and metaphysics). In contemporary philosophy, specialties within the field are more commonly divided into metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics (the latter two of which together comprises of axiology, or value theory). Logic is sometimes included as a main branch of philosophy, sometimes as a separate science philosophy happen to work on, and sometimes just as a characteristically philosophical method applying to all branches of philosophy.

The main aim of contemporary Western philosophy is to liberate the outward from the inwardness of man, to treat the outward as having its own life, nature, growth and to discover methods for understanding them and to apply the same methods to inward also. But, is it possible to separate the Outward from the Inward and treat them as separate objects? In the Indian context, it is like saying that the body and soul are two separate objects that can exist, live independently of each other. Man's inwardness is to be as real as his outwardness, and has to be studied carefully. But when human reason freed itself from the servitude to faith after the Renaissance; it was then unable to develop a rational, naturalistic philosophy of the Spirit, because Spirit remained an object of faith or religion.

Hence philosophies of religion, which human reason began to build up, could think of God only as a concept, rationally outward but not inward to man. Those who looked inward were called Mystics. Buoyed by the Renaissance, Reason was unable to find freedom within the inwardness, so turned completely outward towards matter that it could control, divide, and combine in as many ways as it was capable. Slowly, it tended to ignore the mind and then deny its reality. It ceased to recognize inwardness without which the life of a man becomes shallow.

2.0 Comparison between Eastern and Western Philosophies:

I. Sankhya Philosophy verses Evolutionary Theory:

Sankhya Philosophy: Its profounder was sage Kapila, who authored *Samkhya Sutra*. *Sankhya* System considers reality to be constituted by two principles: *Purusha*(male) and *Prakriti* (female). *Prakriti* and *Purusha* are supposed to be completely independent and absolute. *Purusha* is mere consciousness and cannot be changed or modified. *Prakriti* has three attributes- Thought, movement and change/transformation. *Sankhya* philosophy establishes relationship between *Purusha* and *Prakriti* to explain creation of the Universe and explains phenomenon of evolution.

Evolutionary theory: Its profounder is Charles Erasmus Darwin who authored theory of the 'Origin of New Species by Natural Selection'. The evolutionary approach to personality psychology is based on this theory. This theory examines how individual personality differences are based on natural selection. That is 'struggle for existence and survival of the fittest'. Natural selection organisms change over time through adaptation and selection. Traits are developed and certain genes come into expression based on an organism's environment and how these traits aid in an organism's survival and reproduction.

II. Nyaya Philosophy verses Trait Theory.

Nyaya Philosophy: It is described in *Nyaya Sutras* authored by Gautama. It is a technique of logical thinking. It considered valid knowledge as real knowledge that is the knowledge of an object as it exists. They identified four sources of knowledge. They are perception, inference, comparison and testimony.

Trait Theory: The ancient Greeks thought that four types of humors corresponded to personality types. Traits are characteristic thoughts of a person. Personality traits are consistent and long lasting (valid), while states are temporary (unreal). Raymond Cattell used factor analysis to cluster traits into sixteen groups.

III) Yoga Philosophy verses Behavioural Theory

Yoga Philosophy:

Yoga means the union of two principal entities. This system was described in *Yogasutra* written by Patanjali around 200 BCE. It works towards systematic release of *Purusha* from *Prakriti* by purifying and controlling changes in mental mechanism. The technique of Yoga is controlling of mind, body and sense organs. Hence, it is considered a means to attain liberation (*mukti*). It says that freedom can be attained by practicing *yama* (self-control), *niyama* (observation of rules), *asana* (fixed postures), *pranayama* (breath control), *pratyahara* (withdrawal of sense organs), *dharna* (fixing the mind), *dhyana* (concentration), *Samadhi* (complete dissolution of self by merging mind and object).

Behaviourist Theories:

The school of behaviorism emerged in the 1910s, led by John B. Watson who is often considered as the “father” of behaviorism. Skinner, Bandura, and Walter Mischel all proposed important behaviorist theory. According to this school of thought, behavior can be studied in a systematic and observable manner regardless of internal mental states. Behaviorists study only observable behavior. Their explanations of personality focus on learning. Psychologists agree that personality is formed through a two-way interaction between personal characteristics and the environment. This interaction is called reciprocal determinism. B.F. Skinner believed that people’s personalities arise from response tendencies and that consequences shape the responses. Strict behaviorists believed that any person can potentially be trained to perform any task, regardless of genetic background, personality traits, and internal thoughts within the limits of their physical capabilities.

IV Mimamsa Philosophy versus Humanistic Theory

Mimamsa School of Indian Philosophy

Sabar Swami and **Kumarila Bhatta** are associated with *Mimamsa* School. It is based on analysis of interpretation, application and use of the text of the *Samhita* and *Brahmana* portions of the *Veda*. The main text of *Mimamsa* is *Jaimini Sutras of Gaimini*, written around 3rd century BCE. *Jaimini* defines “*dharma*” as a command or injunction which compels people to action. It considers the philosophy of *Vedas* to be eternal and processes all knowledge, and religion means fulfilment of duties prescribed by the *Vedas*. It emphasizes the concept of valid knowledge. The essence of the system is *Dharma*, considered to be a dispenser of fruits.

Humanistic Theory.

Two psychologists, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, became well known for their humanistic theories. Humanistic theories emphasize subjective viewpoints when studying personality. They have an optimistic view which focuses on humans’ rationality, consciousness, and freedom. Abraham Maslow studied the healthy personality and described the characteristics of the self-actualizing personality. Carl Rogers’ person-centred theory suggests that the self-concept is the most important feature of personality. Children’s self-concepts match reality if their parents give them unconditional love. Rogers said that people experience anxiety when reality threatens their self-concepts.

V Vaisheshika Philosophy versus Psycho-Analytic Theory.

Vaisheshika School of Indian Philosophy:

The proponent of this system of philosophy was Kanada. A significant work on *Vaisheshika* is “*Prashastapada Bhashya*“. It is a realistic and objective philosophy of the universe. *Vaisheshika* considers that the creation and destruction of universe is a cyclic process and it occurs according to the wishes of God. It explains the phenomenon of the universe by the atomic theory, where the combination of atoms and molecules into matter. It explains the mechanical process of formation of universe. It considers the reality to have many bases or categories, which are attributing; action, substance, genus, distinct quality and inference. *Vaisheshika* believes that objects of universe are composed of five elements: earth, water, air, fire and ether. It considers that living beings are rewarded or punished according to law of karma.

Psycho-Analytic Theory:

Psychoanalytic theories explain human behaviour in terms of the interaction of various components of personality. Sigmund Freud was the founder of this school of thought. Freud divides human personality into three significant components: the *id*, *ego*, and *super-ego*. The *id* acts according to the pleasure principle, demanding immediate gratification of its needs regardless of external environment; the *ego* then must emerge in order to realistically meet the wishes and demands of the *id* in accordance with the outside world, adhering to the *reality principle*. Finally, the *superego* (conscience) inculcates moral judgment and societal rules upon the *ego*, thus forcing the demands of the *id* to be met not only realistically but morally. The *superego* is the last function of the personality to develop, and is the embodiment of parental/social ideals established during childhood. According to Freud, personality is based on the dynamic interactions of these three components.

Vedanta Philosophy versus Social Cognition Theory.

Vedanta School of Indian Philosophy:

It refers to the philosophy of the *Upanishads* (concluding part of *Vedas*). The proponent of Vedanta is Shankaracharya, who wrote commentaries on *Upanishads*, *Brahma Sutras* and *Bhagavad Gita*. His philosophical views are known as *Advaita Vedanta*. *Advaita* means non-dualism (belief in one reality). *Vedanta* denies the existence of apparent ego; this makes *Vedanta* unique in all the philosophies in World. Its core message is that every action has to be governed by intellect. The mistakes are made by the mind but

the intellect tells that action is in our interest or not. *Vedanta* allows practitioner to access the realm of spirit through the means of intellect.

Social Cognition Theory (SCT)

Social cognitive theory (SCT), used in psychology, education, and communication, holds that portions of an individual's knowledge acquisition can be directly related to observing others within the context of social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences.*The theory states that when people observe a model performing a behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour, they remember the sequence of events and use this information to guide subsequent behaviours. Observing a model can also prompt the viewer to engage in behaviours they already learned. Depending on whether people are rewarded or punished for their behaviours and the outcome of the behaviour, the observer may choose to replicate behaviour model.

3.0 Research Methodology

Objectives of this study:

- 1) The primary objective of this study of this paper is to compare and contrast the Indian Oriental personality concept with Modern Western concept of personality and to develop an integrated holistic Model system.
- 2) To find out whether there is significant difference in *Rajoguna* after the intervention of yoga and to those who were not given yoga intervention.

Hypotheses

H₀: There is no significant difference in *rajoguna* of Apprentice who were given yoga intervention and those who were not given yoga intervention.

H₁: There is significant difference in *rajoguna* of Apprentice who were given yoga intervention and those who were not given yoga intervention.

4.0 Development of Model:

The entire human personality can be explained with the foundation of *Sankhya* philosophy. *Sankhya* is dualistic realism. It advocates two ultimate realities: *Prakriti*, matter and *Purusha*, self (spirit). When *Purusha* comes in contact with *prakriti*, it gives rise the intellect (*Buddhi*). *Buddhi* comprises of three characteristics (*trigunas*), that is; *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. All the three *gunas* are there in all of us. The Entire personality of all human beings is due to the combinations of the above in different proportions. No individual's conduct, character, aspirations, values and drives are same as another person's. Why is it so? It is purely because the ratio in which these three qualities are built in the psyche of each person is different. *Sattva* is a time when the mind and intellect are peaceful. *Rajas* make the mind agitated and the *tamas* decreases the intellect, making the intellect to lose the power of discrimination. *Sattva* does a balancing act between *Rajas*, *Tamas* and hence it is taken at the centre (fulcrum). *Sankhya* is taken as the base of the proposed model. The other two sides of the triangle are *Nyaya* and *Yoga* which is considered as pillars of personality. This is so because valid real knowledge and control of mind and body are the two essential pillars of personality. The *Vaisheshika* acts as the beam (between *Nyaya* and *Yoga*) that connects valid knowledge of person's body and mind into a unique personality, through the manifestation of *trigunas*. On this beam, the canopy of person sits as exhibited deeds and social cognition i.e. imbue of *Mimamsa* and *Vedanta*. Canopy is a way to spiritual enlightenment of a personality. As *Sankhya* is dualistic philosophy and divine nature (selfless), measuring both is practically not possible as the unit of measurement is yet to be determined either in Indian or western philosophy. Hence the only possibility of estimating the personality is by measurement of *triguna* through psychometric analysis.

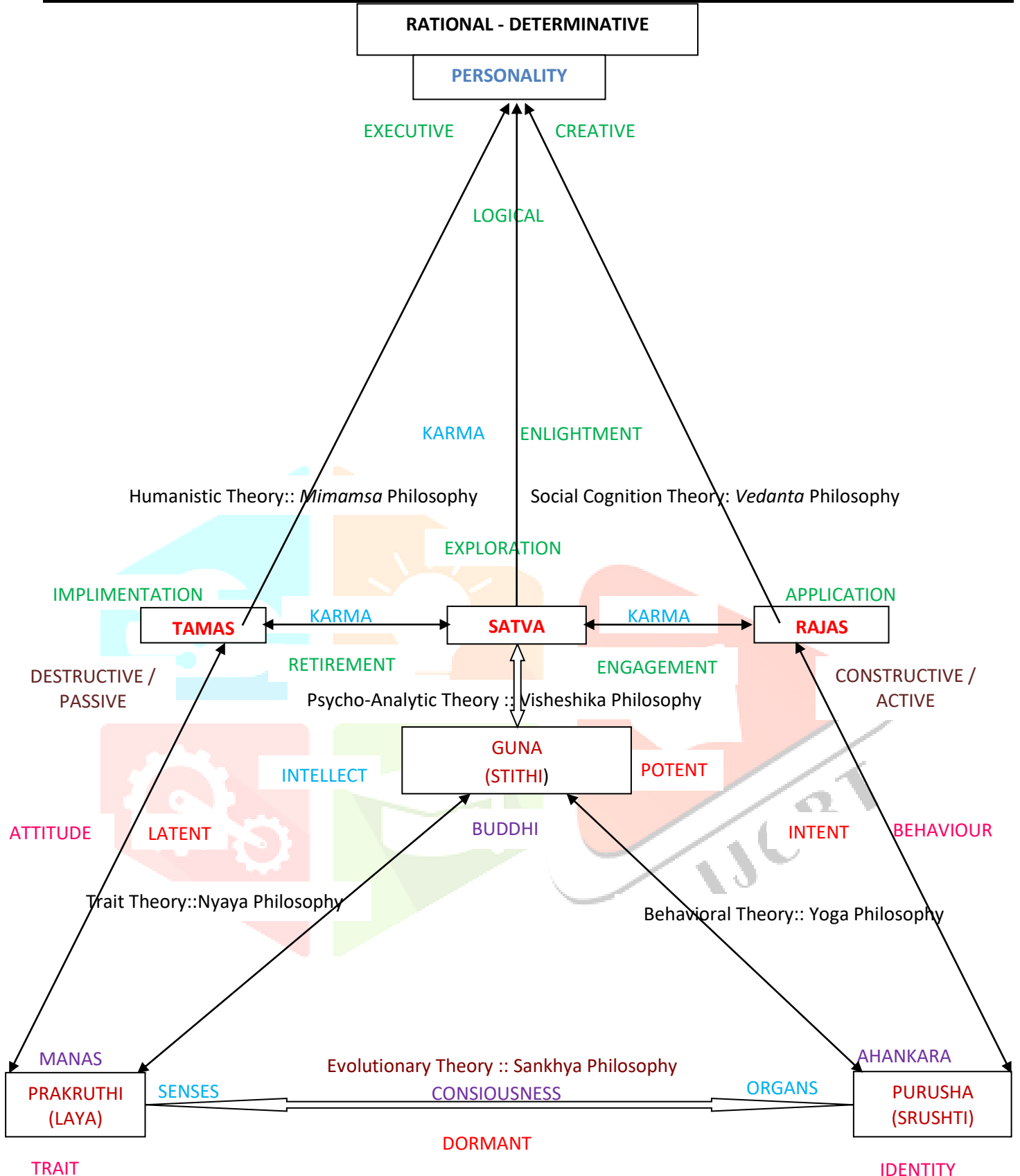


Fig. : Personality Model based on Sankhya Philosophy

5.0 Model Validation

A structured questionnaire was developed in correlation with objectives of research. Thus data using structured questionnaire was collected from apprentice who were undergoing training at Vocational Training Institute and those who were not undergoing training.

Research Area Bangalore

Testing of Hypotheses:

t- Test was used to find the significance of difference in *rajoguna* of Apprentice who were given yoga intervention and those who were not given yoga intervention.

Test Result:

Table 1: Summary of 2-tail t-test

Description	Apprentice	Untrained
Mean	72.986	50.672
Variance	34.226	39.690
Observations	60	61
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	119	
t Stat	20.192	
P(T<=t) two-tail	3.000	
t Critical two-tail	±1.9800	

Interpretation:

The t-test indicates that the trained student's score of *rajoguna* was significantly higher than the untrained sample. Hence H_0 is rejected.

Conclusion:

This Pilot study using the newly developed personality model and SRT Instrument was reasonably successful in capturing the personality changes in the targeted group.

6.0 References

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