Critical appraisal to evidence basis on Prakriti and its scientific correlation

Shraddha Shelke¹, Babita Sharma²

¹Post Graduate Scholar, PG Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Pt. Khushilal Sharma Govt. Ayurveda Institute, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India.
²Associate Professor, PG Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Pt. Khushilal Sharma Govt. Ayurveda Institute, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India.

ABSTRACT

Every person has a distinct psychosomatic temperament a combination of physical, psychological, and behavioral traits. Knowledge about Prakriti is a prerequisite for assessment of Vikriti (pathology) hence it is important for diagnosis and therapeutics that’s why Prakriti assessment is included in Dashavidha Parikshaa and is considered in totality with an understanding of the other nine aspects. Methodology: This is conceptual type of study. All sorts of references has been collected and relevant material is compiled from various available Ayurvedic classics texts and available commentaries on it. Research articles are also searched from various websites. All compiled matter is reorganized and critically analyzed for the discussion and attempt has been made to draw some fruitful conclusions. Result: Understanding Prakriti is needed for evaluating Vikriti, which is one of the oldest conceptions of predictive, preventative, and personalized or genetic medicine as it predicts an individual’s response to environmental factors, medication, and susceptibility to diseases. It is advised in our compendia that before planning therapy, the physician must assess Manas Prakriti too which shows the strength of the mind and regulates the body because of its association with the soul. Here we made an effort to elaborate and connect the point from Samhitas to comprehend the role of Prakriti in the selection and establishment of every factor for which a person is going to interact from conception till death.

Key words: Tridosha, Triguna, Prakriti, Body image, Human Behaviour, Personality, Genetics.

INTRODUCTION

To be healthy in the changing environment is a basic need rather than a cure for the disease. Since each person has a distinct psychosomatic temperament a combination of physical, psychological, and behavioral traits. When Shukra and Shonita come together at birth, the cluster of typescript known as Prakriti is characterized as non-afflicting, just as a toxic creature produced out of Prakriti is non-afflicting. One of Ayurveda’s key concepts is Prakriti or body-mind type. It is crucial in helping people maintain their health through lifestyle design. An individual’s physical and psychological traits are formed at the genetic level from the moment of conception, and these traits continue to develop and mature into the unique features of a mature human being. These days, the idea of Prakriti is being applied and useful in many facets of a person’s personal, social, and professional life. Any disruption to Dhatu’s equilibrium is referred to as disease, while a condition of equilibrium is described as health or Prakriti. Prakriti, the first source of creation, is nothing more than the equilibrium of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Vikara, or disease, results from any excess or lack of the proper amount of Dhatu, and the balance of all these is health (Prakriti). A person’s constitution is reflected in all of their experiences, ages, and facets of life. Knowing their constitution helps some people balance it and maintain good health and fitness. Prakriti is mainly divided into two types: 1. Doshaja 2. Gunaja. These two types of Prakriti are mainly contingent on the dominancy of Sharira Dosha (Vata,
Pitta, and Kapha) and Triguna (Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas). There are seven types of Sharira Prakriti, formed from the Doshas; three from each of them separately, three in combination of two and one from their normalcy (all the three together).\[^2\] Gunaja Prakriti is grouped primarily into three heads 1. Sattvaja, 2. Rajasa and 3. Tamas Among these three, Rajasa and Tamas are considered as Manasa Dosha\[^3\] because they spoil the Manas while Sattva is virtuous it is not regarded as Raja and Tama. There are two components to every human being: the physical and the non-physical. The physical aspect pertains to the body's proportions, senses, and physical aspects. The emotional, mental, and spiritual bodies make up the non-physical portion. According to Ayurveda, a person’s constitution encompasses more than just their physical form. Since mind symptoms are highly valued in Ayurveda, emotional and mental bodies are inextricably linked to the constitution. Every person has two constitutions. While the other is learned, the first is inherited. While the acquired constitution is always changing, the genetic constitution is more or less permanent. Everything in the cosmos, including food, heat, water, air, light, star movement, colors, and everything else, has an impact on it. Even the subtle energies that surround the people we encounter in life have an impact on us, either more or less, directly or indirectly, emotionally or mentally. The entirety of every observable emotion and physical action connected to both people and the human species at large is referred to as human behavior. The specialist academic fields of psychiatry, psychology, social work, sociology, economics, and anthropology all study human behavior. “Personality” is a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, emotions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations. The study of personality has a broad and varied history in psychology with an abundance of theoretical traditions. Personality has to do with individual differences among people in behavior patterns, cognition, and emotion.\[^4\] A person’s body image encompasses how they perceive their bodies, both visually and mentally. When a person does not treat their body well, it can have negative effects on their mental and physical health. Genetic constitution is identical and unique for every person, the same as Prakriti, and performs a specific function. So prakriti can be correlated with genetics to see whether there is any particular genetic pattern for the particular Prakriti.

**AIM**

In the present study, an attempt is made to understand the concept of Prakriti and its scientific correlation.

**Methodology**

This is a conceptual type of study. All sorts of references have been collected and relevant material is compiled from various available Ayurvedic classics texts and available commentaries on it. Research articles are also searched from various websites. All compiled matter is reorganized and critically analyzed for the discussion and an attempt has been made to draw some fruitful conclusions.

**Deha Prakriti**

Different Dosha proportions apply to the general populace. Accordingly, their bodily composition is mentioned. Individuals who possess an equal proportion of all three Doshas, meaning that their Vata, Pitta, and Kapha ratios are equal, are known as Sama Pittanila Kapha. These persons continue to be typically healthy individuals. Very few of them exhibit a dominant Dosa. Pittala and Vatala, respectively, are those who exhibit a predominance of Vata or Pitta, and those who exhibit a Shleshmala predominance of Kapha. These folks get sick a lot. A fetus's physical constitution is rigid according to the Dosa predominance. A person’s Prakriti displays characteristics based on their anatomy, physiology, behavior, and relationship to the environment. Therefore, the preponderance of Doshas from birth is the cause of various Doshaj Prakritis. We refer to this as Deha Prakriti. A few people have an equal ratio of the three Doshas at conception; this condition is known as Sama-Prakriti. The solitary Doshaj-dominated Prakriti class is another. If the Vata Dosa is prominent, it is Vatala; if the Pitta Dosa is dominant, it is Pittala; and if the Kapha Dosa is dominant, it is Sleshmala.
Sama Prakriti folks continue to be well. Mixed and single Dosha-dominated categories typically show signs of a moderate or significant illness. They must regularly observe a routine for each day and each season. If this isn't done, dominating Dosha buildup starts.

Manas Prakriti
The Ayurvedic concept of mind is both broad and illuminating. It includes not only mental activity but also a consciousness that is housed in the heart, ‘the heart is indispensable for normal mental and physical activities as the entire waking consciousness rests there’. Buddhi is intellect and is really like a mirror reflecting universal consciousness as it cognizes and clarifies. Sadhaka Pitta corresponds to Buddhi. Manas is that which conceptualizes, analyses and interacts between our inner subconsciousness and our experience of the outer world. It includes memory and the ability to recall (Smrti) events. Tarpaka Kapha relates to memory. Ahamkara is our ‘I’ maker and identity former that personalizes every experience. There is also Chitta which is considered to be consciousness and awareness. Prana connects these different aspects into something that is known as Antahkarana, the inner active. peculiarity is that in contrast to the nature of the physical constitution, the mental nature can be altered through action. The qualities of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas are predominant in the mind and can be altered according to lifestyle, diet, and mental attitudes. Rajas and Tamas, passion, and lethargy, are considered to be the causes of mental disease. Manas Prakriti refers to a person’s mental constitution, made up of a unique ratio of three Maha Gunas in the mind. Though there are countless variants, there are three types of Satva (psyche), which are described with a loose taxonomy. The pure psyche is divided into seven subtypes based on the Satva of Brahma, Mahendra, Arsha, Yamya, Varuna, Kaubera, and Gandharva being similar to each other; the Rajasa subtype is divided into six subtypes based on the same basis as that of Asura, Paishacha, Rakshasa, Sarpa, Preta, and Shakuni; the Tamasa subtype is divided into three subtypes based on the similarity with the psyches of Pashava, Matsya, and Vanaspatya. Facilitating the treatment of problems based on the psyche is the aim of the psyche description. Three types of minds exist: Shudha, Rajas, and Tamas. Of these, Rajas is associated with anger, Tamas with irrationality, and Shudha with blessings.

Prakriti in Current Sciences
The Ayurvedic term of Prakriti may be associated with some terms from contemporary science like Human behaviour, Personality, and Body images, etc.

Human behaviour - Perception is the first aspect of behavior
Influencing factors for Human Behaviour
Understanding people’s talents and limitations is a prerequisite for addressing human aspects in occupational safety contexts. The environments in which humans have evolved to function are significantly different from those of the modern workplace. The following human traits may make it difficult for them to interact with their workplace.

Attention: The amount of information that might overload a person's attention in the modern workplace is significantly greater than what they would encounter in the natural environment. Although the process by which we acquire knowledge can lessen the number of demands on our attention, it can also occasionally lead to new issues.

Perception: We must accurately understand the world and the threats it presents if we are to engage with it safely. Human perception systems are frequently tested in work contexts, and information might be misconstrued.

Memory: We frequently put undue strain on ourselves due to our memory capacity and the ways we force ourselves to obtain information. We can remember more information about a topic or procedure when we have a deeper understanding of it.

Logical reasoning: Reasoning and decision-making errors can have serious effects on intricate systems, like chemical plants, as well as on routine operations like planning and maintenance.
Environmental, organizational, and job factors, in brief, influence the behaviour at work in a way that can affect health and safety. A simple way to view human factors is to think about three aspects: the individual, the job, and the organization and their impact on people's health and safety-related behaviour.[5]

**Personality**

A person's personality is the result of their experiences and genetics, and both their personal and professional lives have an impact. According to Gordon Allport, personality is the dynamic organization of a person's psycho-physical systems that determines how they individually adapt to their surroundings. More precisely, personality is defined as "how a person affects others, how he understands and views himself, and his pattern of inner and outer measurable traits." This definition makes it clear that people are impacted by the way they behave and look. Knowing oneself entails realizing that each person has a distinct set of attitudes, values, and self-concept. Lastly, a collection of attributes that the individual demonstrates is referred to as the pattern of measurable traits.

**Determinants of Personality**

- Heredity
- Environment
- Situation

**Personality Traits**

Personality traits are distinguishing qualities or characteristics that are the embodiment of an individual. They are habitual patterns of behavior, temperament, and emotion.

The most widely accepted of these traits are the big five.[6]

- Openness
- Conscientiousness
- Extraversion/introversion
- Agreeableness
- Neuroticism

**Body Images**

Body image refers to how one thinks and feels about one’s body. According to the National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA), it can be defined as our thoughts, perceptions, and attitudes about one’s physical appearance. This perception can be positive, negative, or neutral, and need not be factually correct. A positive BI relates to satisfaction with one’s body, whereas a negative BI indicates dissatisfaction. A negative BI usually correlates with concerns relating to weight, body shape, hair, skin, or even a specific body part. This dissatisfaction can sometimes translate to serious mental health concerns influencing overall quality of life. When a person does not treat their body well, it can have negative effects on their mental and physical health and create a whole host of problems such as Body Dysmorphic Disorder, Anxiety, and Depression.

**DISCUSSION**

The word personality is not used in Ayurvedic classics but a concept with wider knowledge i.e., Prakriti is described here which has both social and psychological aspects. Along with the physical aspect Personality also represents human behaviour and human constitution. It includes anatomical, physiological, psychological and some other aspects such as health wealth, destiny, etc. Both types of personalities morphological (Sharira) and temperamental (Manasa) are mentioned in the text. The main difference between the concept of Prakriti and personality can be said that Prakriti does not change throughout life while personality changes with illness and environmental conditions etc. In Charaka Samhita, while describing four types of Ayu i.e., Sukhayu, Hitayu, etc. special characteristics such as physical and mental health are mentioned - youthfulness, power, vigor, intelligence, truthfulness, controlled mental function, etc. including both physical and mental aspects of personality, sociality and individuality.[7]

**Prakriti and Genetics**

It is substantiated that a person's temperament is primarily influenced by genetics. Prakriti is the earliest evidence of the description of a genetic role in the
formation of diseases and *Doshas* form determinants. Imbalances of *Doshas* in a given constitution will genetically put the person in a susceptible position to hire diseases caused by vitiated *Doshas*. The same *Doshas* making up one’s constitution can cause diseases when they get vitiated. Other *Doshas* can also cause diseases, and so does relative imbalance amongst all three *Doshas*. Similarly, the predominance of *Raja Guna* or *Tamo Guna* marks the mental constitution of an individual. Another quality of mind i.e., *Sattva* is not a *Dosha*, i.e. it is not a mind contaminant like *Raja* and *Tama*. Being *Satvik* is being serene and divine. The *Prakriti* of an individual from its birth does not change and is known as *Janma Prakriti*. Whereas the psychophysiological constitution of an individual changes and is dynamic, and this is known as *Deha Prakriti*. The *Janma Prakriti* corresponds to the genotype and *Deha Prakriti* corresponds to the phenotype of an individual. During the process of DNA/gene expression, the genetic information present in the template strand is replicated in the form of messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA) & is utilized during the process of translation by transfer RNA (tRNA), which lines up the designated amino acid to synthesize protein/enzyme. It might be explained that mRNA, tRNA, and protein have features and properties that are similar to *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* at the cellular level. Thus, messenger RNA corresponds to *Vata* i.e., for transmission of information; tRNA corresponds to *Pitta* i.e., to bring in transformation; and protein corresponds to *Kapha* i.e., to give structure to the body.

The combination of *Ayurveda* and the conventional stream of science like molecular genetics can lead to better integration of sciences to maintain optimal health. The research on the effect of external and internal environments on generic frameworks in *Ayurveda* increases the correlation and understanding between the conventional medical system and *Ayurveda*. That being said, early external environmental factors can impact a person’s temperament. Thus, an entire understanding of genetics leads to an increase in knowing the process of healing and maintenance of the health of an individual.

### Prakriti and disease proneness

Numerous factors determine an individual’s susceptibility to disease since disease is the outcome of intricate interactions between causative agents, environmental factors, and host characteristics. Therefore, additional factors such as causative causes, immunity, etc., should be taken into account while speculating on disease proneness; yet, certain generalizations can be made. *Sama Prakriti* is generally immune to illness and possesses strong resilience. Certain types are classified as *Aatura* because they exhibit dominance of one or more *Doshas* and require ongoing precautions. One *Dosha Prakriti* outperforms two *Dosha Prakriti* in terms of resistance among the remaining six categories. In decreasing order of disease susceptibility are *Pitta*, *Vata*, and *Kapha Prakriti*. In *Prakriti* and *Samprapti*, similar *Doshas* result in serious illness. Individuals who are *Prakriti Vata*, *Pitta*, or *Kapha* may have serious diseases associated with their respective *Doshas*. These presumptions are predicated on the existence of strong and comparable causal variables.

### Predictive, preventive, personalized, and participatory aspects of Prakriti

Understanding one’s normal *Prakriti* is crucial for identifying abnormalities, underscoring its significance in the fields of diagnosis, preventive medicine, and therapeutic interventions. Although *Prakriti* assessment should ideally take place at birth, its influence extends far into an individual’s life. Preventive Medicine or individualized medicine is a rapidly advancing therapeutic approach owing to its potential to transform and strengthen the healthcare system. The basic principle of Preventive Medicine is to tailor the treatment strategies based on each individual’s clinical, genomic, epigenomic, proteomic, and environmental profile. The concept of PM or predictive medicine has its roots dating back to 1500 BCE in age-old traditional Indian medicine, *Ayurveda*, which has a stratified approach as its basic doctrine for personalizing the treatment under *Purusham Purusham Vikshya* (an individualized approach) principle. Even though many factors go into treatment
planning, Prakriti plays a part in choosing the medication, dosage, Anupana, and Samskara. Certain medications or medical procedures are recommended or contraindicated for Pitta Prakriti in light of Prakriti. An individual’s Prakriti depicts many physiological processes because each Prakriti has its own Agni, Koshtha, Bala, and life span. A methodical, objective clinical assessment is necessary to comprehend Prakriti. To fully comprehend a diseased or healthy individual, Prakriti evaluation in conjunction with other Dashavidha Pariksha aspects should be taken into consideration.

**Influence of Tridoshas on Manas Prakriti**

Evaluation of Manasika both for the prescription of medications and for the upkeep of health, Prakriti is crucial. According to the World Health Organization, brain health is the state of brain functioning across cognitive, sensory, social-emotional, behavioural, and motor domains, allowing a person to realize their full potential over their life course. In the realm of Ayurveda, substances and energies move throughout the body via distinct channels both physical and energetic known as Strotamsi. Remarkably, one of the primary channels named in the Ayurvedic tradition is the channel of the mind, known in Sanskrit as Manovaha Srotas. Evaluation of Manasika person’s Prakriti is crucial for illness prevention and treatment. Because of the prevalence of Sattva, which is thought to be perpetually pure and unlikely to vitiate or become vitiated, the Sattvika form of Prakriti is the greatest of all. In Ayurveda, Rajas and Tamas are regarded as Manasika Doshas. Therefore, compared to Sattvika Prakriti, Rajasika and Tamasika Prakriti individuals are more susceptible to a variety of ailments and more challenging to treat. As a result, prognosis is based on the kind of Manas Prakriti a person belongs to. Because of its connection to the soul, it demonstrates the power of intellect, which controls the body. In contrast to Sattvika Prakriti, Rajasika and Tamasika Prakriti individuals are not expected to maintain timeliness and obedience, and they are less able to tolerate harsh conditions. Likewise Daihik Prakriti, Manas Prakriti’s resolve is therefore necessary to follow a diet and exercise routine and to develop appropriate treatment plans. The individual’s mental personality affects the treatment plan. The relationship between the three becomes an individual baseline for what Ayurveda calls Manas Prakriti the mental constitution. Vata, Pitta, and Kapha each have a particular flavor of influence on the mind, emotions, and overall consciousness, and each of them can either support or undermine our overall health it all depends on whether or not they are in balance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doshas</th>
<th>Vata Dosha</th>
<th>Pitta Dosha</th>
<th>Kapha Dosha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Panchamahabhutas on Doshas</td>
<td>Vata Dosha, which governs the nervous system and the mind, is primarily made up of the Vayu and Akash Mahabhutas</td>
<td>Pitta Dosha, which governs insight and intellect, is primarily made up of Agni and Jal Mahabhutas</td>
<td>Kapha Dosha, which governs structure and lubrication in the body, is primarily made up of Jal and Pruthvi Mahabhutas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of Doshas on Manas</td>
<td>Not coincidentally, the mind is also primarily composed of the Vayu and Akash Mahabhutas making it especially susceptible to Vata imbalances</td>
<td>Pitta is closely associated with the gray matter of the brain and has a very important connection with the mind as a whole</td>
<td>Kapha is closely associated with the white matter of the brain and is strongly connected to our capacity for memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence when in balanced state</td>
<td>When in balance, Vata is generally associated with creativity, intuition, clairvoyance, the capacity to connect with the subtle realms, profound</td>
<td>Healthy Pitta is generally associated with courage, confidence, willpower, intelligence, leadership, a sense of vision, acceptance, contentment</td>
<td>Healthy Kapha is generally associated with love, compassion, patience, groundedness, loyalty, steadiness, endurance, and an overarching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An individual's Prakriti study can provide information about behavioral traits, psychological makeup, and physical makeup. Knowing each person's constitution allows us to determine the right diet, amount of exercise, and other factors to keep them healthy. Understanding Prakriti is necessary for evaluating Vikriti, which makes it crucial for diagnosis and treatment. Understanding Samprapti, the degree and Vikalpa of vitiated Dosha, and the state of host variables are all based on Prakriti. Prediction of proneness and severity of the disease can be speculated as helping in prognosis judgment. Treating a condition is challenging if Vikaara Prakriti and Prakriti are similar. It is simple to control when Prakriti and the illness have different causes. The conventional medical system and Ayurveda will have a better knowledge of each other if additional research is conducted on the impact of internal and exterior factors on generic frameworks in Ayurveda. Understanding brain health and its connection to mental well-being is why we can’t talk about mental health without looking at brain health. [8]

**REFERENCES**


5. www.borupp.org... Factors Influencing Human Behaviour


**How to cite this article:** Shraddha Shelke, Babita Sharma. Critical appraisal to evidence basis on Prakriti and its scientific correlation. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2024;5:216-222. http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.5.36

**Source of Support:** Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.