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Impact of Biopsychosocial Stressor on Extreme *Prakriti* Types - A Review Article

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ABSTRACT

Being the science of life *Ayurveda* is associated with all the aspects of human life. The desire to live healthy has been common to all living creatures ever since the first unicellular organism has evolved on the planet earth. The desire itself is the cause vital which leads to a successful evolutionary progress into more structurally and functionally developed multicellular organism. The importance of individual variations in health and disease is a unique principle described hundreds of years ago as every individual is different from another and hence should be considered as a different entity, as many variations are there in the universe, all sorts of variations are seen in the human being. The concept of *Prakriti* in *Ayurveda* also believes in distinctiveness of individuals. Stress can be defined as 'difficulty that creates anxiety or emotional tension. It is a state of emotional or mental strain or suspense, such as anxiety, tension, jitters, or nervousness. Stress can result from any thinking or scenario that makes you upset, nervous, or furious. What one individual finds stressful may not be the same for another. If someone is anxious, and that stress is not managed, it might have serious consequences.

Key words: Stress, *Daihik Prakriti*, Temperament, Body constitution

INTRODUCTION

Being the science of life, *Ayurveda* is associated with all the aspects of human life. The desire to live healthy has been common to all living creatures ever since the first unicellular organism has evolved on the planet earth. The desire itself is the cause vital which leads to a successful evolutionary progress into more structurally and functionally developed multicellular organism. The importance of individual variations in health and disease is a unique principle described

hundreds of years ago as "every individual is different from another and hence should be considered as a different entity, as many variations are there in the universe, all sorts of variations are seen in the human being". The concept of *Prakriti* in *Ayurveda* also believes in distinctiveness of individuals.

The constant improvement in the life expectancy with technological advancement, urbanization, economic growth and increasing competition in every field of life has led to stressful society. Such stressors imbalance the *Manasika Bhava* like lust (*Kama*), anger (*Krodha*), greed (*Lobha*), delusion (*Moha*), jealousy (*Irsya*), grief (*Shoka*), anxiety (*Chinta*), fear (*Bhaya*). This disturbance may interrupt the normal homeostasis of both body and mind by vitiating *Manasadosh* & *Sharirikadosha* as well and are described in *Ayurveda* as the root cause of many psychosomatic diseases.

According to latest health reports, stress is said to be one of the largest killers of mankind today, being crucially related to our all aspects of health like physical, mental & spiritual health. Continuous increase in the cases of suicidal attempts, divorces,

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breakup in families and higher crime rate are pointing out towards the need to work on the mental health and stressors causing psychosomatic disorders like stress. *Ayurveda* believes in the holistic approach of health so it is the need of hour that extensive research studies must be carried out for the same.

Though many research works have been carried out on this topic earlier but the relation of stress disorders with *Prakriti* still requires to be explored, as the National Human Rights Report 2000 had said that up to 30 million people appear to need some sort of mental health care. The figure is around 1/4th of India's current population of around 1.2 billion.

Ayurveda defines the ideal state of health and harmony as an individual's *Prakriti* influencing its physical characteristics, temperament, preferences and susceptibilities to health conditions.

By recognizing and understanding *Prakriti*, we can strive to align our lifestyle choices and behaviours with our inherent constitution, thereby promoting health and preventing disease. *Ayurvedic* preventive practices of healthcare such as dietary adjustments, daily and seasonal regimen, herbal remedies, yoga, and meditation are often employed to help individuals maintain or restore balance according to their unique *Prakriti*. Moreover, one's *Prakriti* also influences to a great extent the development of highest order of human qualities like love, compassion, pure consciousness etc. From the perspective of the *Ayurvedic* physician, precise determination of the *Prakriti* is absolutely mandatory as the first step in formulating a course of action for each patient. Thus, Knowledge of an individual's *Prakriti* helps the physician many ways e.g.

- It is one of the most effective mean of preventive healthcare by maintaining a healthy lifestyle, dietary habits and daily regimen etc.
- Helps in Prognosis of diseases.
- Helps to select the appropriate therapeutic measure.
- Helps to assess the restorative capacity of an individual
- The most beneficial rejuvenative therapy.

Characteristics of Sharira Prakriti (Acharya Charaka)

Vataja Prakriti

Ruksha Sharira (ununctuous body), *Apachita Sharira* (emaciate body) & *Alpa Sharira* (dwarf body), *Pratata Swara* (longdrawn voice) *Ruksha Swara* (dry voice), *Sama Swara* (low voice), *Sanna Swara* (broken voice), *Sakta Swara* (obstructed voice) & *Jarjara Swara* (hoarse voice), *Jagruka* (awake), *Laghu* & *Chapala Cheshta* (light & inconsistent action), *Laghu* & *Chapala Gati* (light & inconsistent gait), *Laghu* & *Chapala Ahara* (light & inconsistent in intake of food), *Laghu* & *Chapala Vyahara* (light & inconsistent movement), *Anavasthita Sandhi* (unstable joints), *Anavasthita Aksha* (unstable eyes), *Anavasthita Bhru* (unstable eyebrows), *Anavasthita Hanu* (unstable jaw), *Anavasthita Austha* (unstable lips), *Anavasthita Jihva* (unstable tongue), *Anavasthita Sira* (unstable head), *Anavasthita Skandha* (unstable shoulder) *Anavasthita Pani* (unstable hand) & *Anavasthita Pada* (unstable legs), *Bahu Pralapa* (talkativeness), *Bahu Kandara* & *Shirapratana* (abundance of tendons & veins), *Shighra Samarambha* (quick in initiating actions), *Shighra Kshobha* (quick in getting irritated), *Shighra Vikara* (quick in onset of morbid manifestation), *Shighra Trasa* (quick in affliction with fear), *Shighra Viraga* (quick in likes) & *Shighra Raga* (quick in dislikes) *Shrutagrahi* (quick in understanding), *Alpasmriti* (quick in forgetting), *Sheeta Asahishnu* (intolerance for cold things), *Parusha Kesha* (roughness in hair of the head), *Parusha Roma* (roughness in hair of face), *Parusha Smashru* (roughness in hair of beard), *Parusha Nakha* (roughness of nails), *Parusha Dashana* (roughness in teeth), *Parusha Vadana* (roughness in face), *Parusha Pani* (roughness in hands) & *Parusha Pada* (roughness in feet), *Sphutita Anga Avayava* (cracking of limb and organs), *Satata Sandhi Shabdagami* (production of cracking sound in joints when they move), *Alpa Bala* (less strength), *Alpa Ayu* (less span of life), *Alpa Apatya* (less procreation), *Alpa Dhana* (less accessories of life), *Alpa Sadhana* (less wealth) etc.

Pitta Prakriti

Ushna Asaha (intolerance for hot things), *Ushna Mukha* (hot face), *Avadata Gatra* (clear body), *Sukumara Gatra* (tender body), *Prabhuta Vyanga*

(excess portwine mark), *Prabhuta Pippalu* (excess freckles), *Prabhuta Tila* & *Prabhuta Pidaka* (excess black moles), *Kshudhavana* (excessive hunger), *Pipasavana* (excessive thirst), *Kshipra Vali* (quick advent of wrinkles), *Kshipra Palita* (quick advent of greying of hair) & *Kshipra Khalitya* (quick advent of baldness), *Mridu, Alpa* & *Kapila Kesha* (presence of soft and brown hair on head), *Mridu, Alpa* & *Kapila Smashru* (presence of soft and brown hair of beard), *Mridu, Alpa* & *Kapila Loma* (presence of soft and brown hair on other parts of body), *Tikshna Parakrama* (sharp physical strength), *Tikshna Agni* (strong digestive power), *Prabhuta Asana Pana* (intake of food and drink in large quantity), *Klesha Asahishnu* (inability to face difficult situation), *Dandashuka* (glutton habits), *Shithila* & *Mridu Mansa* (looseness and softness of muscles), *Shithila* & *Mridu Sandhi* (looseness and softness of joints), *Prabhuta* & *Srishta Sweda* (voiding of sweat in large quantity), *Prabhuta* & *Srishta Mutra* (voiding of urine in large quantity), *Prabhuta* & *Srishta Purisha* (voiding of faeces in large quantity), *Prabhuta* & *Puti Kaksha Gandha* (putrid smell of axilla), *Prabhuta* & *Puti Asya Gandha* (putrid smell of mouth), *Prabhuta* & *Puti Sharira Gandha* (putrid smell of body), *Alpa Sukra* (insufficiency of semen), *Alpa Aptya* (insufficiency of procreation) & *Alpa Vyavaya* (insufficiency of sexual desire), *Madhya Bala* (moderate strength), *Madhya Ayu* (moderate span of life), *Madhya Gnana* (moderate spiritual knowledge), *Madhya Vignana* (moderate materialistic knowledge), *Madhya Vita* (moderate wealth) & *Madhya Upakaranavan* (moderate accessories of life) etc.

Kapha Prakriti

Snigdha Anga (unctuousness of organs) & *Slakshna Anga* (smoothness of body), *Dristisukha* (pleasing appearance), *Sukumara Gatra* (tenderness of complexion) & *Avadata Gatra* (clarity of complexion), *Prabhuta Sukra* (large quantity of semen), *Prabhuta Vyavaya* (large quantity of sexual desire) & *Prabhuta Apatya* (large quantity of procreation), *Sara Sharira* (firm body), *Samahata Sharira* (compact body), *Sthira Sharira* (stable body), *Sampurna Sharira* (plumpness of all organs) & *Upachita Sharira* (roundedness of all organs), *Manda Chesta* (slow in action), *Manda Ahara*

(slow in intake of food) & *Manda Vyahara* (slow in movement), *Asigra Arambha* (slowness in initiating actions), *Asigra Kshobha* (slowness in getting irritated) & *Asigra Vikara* (slowness in morbid manifestation), *Sara, Adhithita* & *Avasthita Gati* (non slippery and stable gait with the entire sole of the feet pressing against the earth), *Alpa Kshuta* (lack of intensity of hunger), *Alpa Trishna* (lack of intensity of thirst), *Alpa Santapa* (lack of intensity of heat) & *Alpa Sweda Dosh* (lack of intensity of perspiration), *Suslishta-Sara Sandhi Bandhana* (firmness and compactness in joints), *Prasanna Swara* (happiness of voice) & *Snigdha Swara* (softness of voice), *Prasanna Varna* (happiness of complexion) & *Snigdha Varna* (softness of complexion), *Prasanna Darshana* (happiness in look) & *Prasanna Anana* (happiness on face), *Balavan* (excellence of strength), *Vasuman* (excellence of wealth), *Vidyavan* (excellence of knowledge), *Ojasvi* (excellence of energy), *Santa* (peace), *Ayushman* (longevity of life) etc.

In modern medical science the closest term for *Prakriti* is temperament, and some of the scholars have made significant contributions to this subject too e.g., The famous Russian physiologist and psychologist Mr. Pavlov has given his opinion as under - There are two types of stimulus influencing the functioning of nervous system, one exhibiting inhibitory effect is called inhibitory stimulus, and the other which stimulates is excitatory stimulus.

As an example, the secretion of digestive juices is a natural phenomenon at the time of eating, but if there is an unbearable noise in the surrounding, these juices are not secreted. I.e. in this case unbearable noise is serving as the inhibitory stimulus. Furthermore, during his experiment on conditioned reflex on dogs he explored the Greek concept of body types that on the basis of brain activity personality might be described of four types.

Weak: inhibited, anxious, easily upset (similar to melancholic), Strong unbalanced: excitable, hyperactive, irritable (similar to choleric), Strong balanced slow: calm, consistent, not easily aroused (similar to phlegmatic), Strong balanced mobile: lively, fast, eager (similar to sanguine).

Modern science also suggests that a person's temperament is regulated by the means of Hormones too, responsible not only for the growth of numerous physical parts, diseases, and health, but also for the development of the mental profile. Tall or dwarf, slender or fat, weakness or strength, color differences, hair differences, different types of voices, involvement or aloofness, genius or idiot, sharp memory or forgetfulness, kindness or cruelty, endurance or intolerance, and other bodily or mental factors are all influenced by hormone secretions.

The '*Prakriti*' has been referred to as 'constitution' and has been explained into two types:

Genotype, refers to an organism's genetic makeup. Variations in this occur as a result of chromosome segregation and recombination of the genetic material in altered linear connections caused by crossing over during meiosis. According to concept of genetics, it is now established that the best indication of linkage in humans concerns the sex chromosomes. In addition to the genetic components required for sex determination, these chromosomes (particularly 'X') contain genes related to various non-sexual characteristics. The X-linked genes, which define characteristics that are commonly referred to as sex-linked, are associated with haemophilia, one of the most frequent kinds of color blindness, a particular blood group antigen and a number of uncommon disorders of the skin, eyes, and neurological system. Chromosomal and gene mutations are rapid alterations in the genetic material that have an effect on the cell. Mutations are structural changes to DNA caused by a range of environmental causes, including ionizing radiation and some chemical agents.

The expressed constitution of the organism is its phenotype, this result not only from the totality of its genetic constitution, but also from interaction between this and the environment. Nature interacts nurture, and defects in the later may impede full expression of the genotype. The phenotype may be the same even where the genotype is not as exemplified by the operation of a dominant allele in homozygotes and heterozygotes. Conversely, in individuals with the same genotype (with respect to a given locus in

chromosomes) their phenotypes may be different. This may be partly due to interactions between genes, partly to environmental effects. The influence of the latter can best be observed in comparisons of uniovular twins. Some agents, such as teratogenic drugs, may bring about changes in an organism leading to the production of abnormalities known to be dependent upon genetic influence in other instances. Such abnormalities usually determined genetically, but artificially induced as a replica in an organism lacking the associated genetic mechanism, is termed a phenocopy, thus it is very important to know the personal constitution.

Stress can be defined as 'difficulty that creates anxiety or emotional tension. It is a state of emotional or mental strain or suspense, such as anxiety, tension, jitters, or nervousness. Stress can result from any thinking or scenario that makes you upset, nervous, or furious. What one individual finds stressful may not be the same for another. If someone is anxious, and that stress is not managed, it might have serious consequences.

The human body is designed to experience and respond to stress which might be positive (eustress), such as receiving a job promotion or being assigned more tasks, by keeping us attentive and prepared to avert danger or negative ("distress") when a person experiences continual challenges with no periodical relief or relaxation. As a result, the individual becomes overworked furthermore stress-related tension increases, which can lead to some physical symptoms including headaches, upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain, and disturb sleeping. Researchers suggest that stress also can bring on or worsen certain symptoms or diseases and might be more dangerous when people try to ease it with consumption of alcohol, smoke, or drugs. Unfortunately, instead of reducing stress and restoring the body to a relaxed state, these substances tend to keep the body anxious, causing more issues.

DISCUSSION

Prakriti exhibits psychosomatic approach, linked with body and mind. *Prakriti* differs from everyone else in

the world. In simply we can define it as our DNA blueprint. Although we inherit our ancestor's genes, but our *Prakriti* does not have to be the same as theirs.

Prakriti is determined by the *Dosha* constitution and dosha are constituted of 5 fundamental elements *Panchmahabhutas* (*Aakash, Vayu, Agni, Jala & Prithvi*) exhibiting predominance of *Doshas* and possess their unique qualities respectively e.g., *Vayu* (air) is powerful, light weighted, and has an unpredicted direction of flow, uncontrollable and uncontainable. Accordingly, *Vata Prakriti* individuals is like air, free-spirited & enjoy every second of their lives, actively searching out new experiences and urging individuals to do activities that are most appealing. They also have a thin, lightweight body that cannot remain inactive. Under stress condition dominant *prakriti* individuals shows following characteristics-

Table 1: Characteristics of Vata dominant individuals under stress condition

Behavioural characteristics	Physical characteristics	Psychological characteristics
No-eye contact, sudden emotional outburst, finding faults to others, destroying relationships, refusing to be flexible, uncertainties, not eating for a long time	Anxiety attacks, palpitations during mornings, farting, foul breath, excessive dry, chapped skin, frequent prolonged headaches, sudden joint pain, neck pain, and back pain, insomnia	Doubting everything, having preconceived mindset, erratic thoughts, fantasizing and day dreaming, doubting everything, having preconceived mindset, erratic thoughts, fantasizing and daydreaming

Table 2: Characteristics of Pitta dominant individuals under stress condition

Behavioural characteristics	Physical characteristics	Psychological Symptoms
Micromanagement, overly critical, sudden anger sometimes without	Inflamed skin with redness, prone to fungal, bacterial & other infections on the skin, acidity and burning	Self -justifications, focussing generally on self-gains, no compassion for

reasons, extremely egoistic	sensations, frequent burps, stomach pains	others, looking for external validation
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Table 3: Characteristics of Kapha dominant individuals under stress condition

Behavioural characteristics	Physical characteristics	Psychological Symptoms
Laziness, Lack of passion, Bullying behaviour, harassing and validating the bullying behaviour, focus or self-driving force to move things in life, Insecurities about self-talents	Panting or breathing troubles, mucus and nasal congestion, oily skin with sweating and greasiness, sleeping for long hours	No clarity in thoughts, not in connection with intuition, highly dreamy thinking, emotionally manipulative.

CONCLUSION

Stress is coming across like a most common cause for many mental disorders as well as bodily diseases. Though it is not defined by this name in *Ayurvedic* classical literature; however, might be linked it with the symptoms, explained & treated according to its symptoms, and treated accordingly. *Prakriti* is the primary foundation of the human body in terms of physical and mental state and has a significant influence in physiology and illness susceptibility thus also influences a person's ability to handle stress. So it might be concluded that *Vata Prakriti* having the attributes like *Sheeghra Kshobhavikara, Sheeghratrasaragaviraga, Prajagaruka, Krodhee, Anavasthitatma, Alpanidra, Chalamanas* might be suffered from stress more certainly & frequently. *Kapha Prakriti* having *Lakshana* like *Alpakshobhavikara, Kleshashamo, Parinishchita-vakyapada* etc. so might be less vulnerable to stress in comparison to others. *Pitta Pradhan Prakriti* when associated with *Vata Dosha* can cause stress in a person but when associated with *Kapha* there is low stress level.

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