

IMPORTANCE OF TRIGUNA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH: A REVIEW STUDY FROM INDIAN PERSPECTIVE¹*Dr. Madhuri Hooda and ²Parul¹Associate Professor, Department of Education, MD University, Rohtak.²Junior Research Fellow, Department of Education, MD University, Rohtak.***Corresponding Author: Dr. Madhuri Hooda**

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a traditional system of medicine that originated in India over 5,000 years ago. It is based on the belief that the mind, body, and spirit are interconnected and that a balance between these three elements is necessary for good health. Ayurveda seeks to promote health and prevent illness by addressing the underlying causes of disease rather than simply treating its symptoms. It uses a combination of herbal remedies, dietary guidelines, massage, meditation, and other natural techniques to restore balance and promote well-being. Ayurveda is widely practiced in India and other parts of the world and is recognized as a complementary and alternative medicine by the World Health Organization. Mental health is not just the absence of mental illness or disorders, but also includes the presence of positive mental states, such as happiness, contentment, and inner peace. Ahara, which means "food" in Sanskrit, is an essential part of Ayurveda. According to Ayurveda, the right diet is crucial for maintaining the balance of the doshas and promoting good health. In Ayurveda, food is classified into three categories; Satvik, Rajasik and Tamsik. Each ahara is associated with different properties and has a specific effect on the doshas. This paper explains the effect of Triguna on mental health and classics is reviewed.

KEYWORDS: *Mental health, Ayurveda, Triguna, Satvik Ahara, Rajasic Ahara, Tamasic Ahara.***INTRODUCTION**

Triguna is a Sanskrit term that refers to the three fundamental qualities or tendencies of nature, which are Sattva (purity, harmony, and balance), Rajas (activity, passion, and restlessness), and Tamas (inertia, darkness, and ignorance). According to the ancient Indian philosophy of Ayurveda, these three qualities or gunas exist in varying proportions in everything in the universe, including human beings. The balance of these three gunas is believed to be crucial for maintaining physical, mental, and emotional health. In terms of mental health, the dominance of one or more gunas can influence a person's behavior, emotions, and thinking patterns. Sattva is considered the most desirable guna as it represents clarity, purity, and harmony. When Sattva is dominant, a person is likely to experience mental clarity, emotional balance, and a sense of inner peace. This state of mind is conducive to spiritual growth, meditation, and self-reflection. Rajas are associated with activity, passion, and restlessness. When Rajas is dominant, a person is likely to experience anxiety, stress, and agitation. This state of mind is characterized by an overactive mind, a tendency to overthink, and a lack of inner calm. Tamas is associated with inertia, darkness,

and ignorance. When Tamas is dominant, a person is likely to experience lethargy, depression, and a lack of motivation. This state of mind is characterized by a lack of energy, a feeling of heaviness, and a lack of enthusiasm for life. Ayurvedic practitioners believe that a balanced state of mind can be achieved by promoting Sattva and reducing Rajas and Tamas. This can be achieved through various practices, including meditation, yoga, a healthy diet, and lifestyle changes. The role of Triguna on mental health is significant, and understanding the balance of Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas can help individuals take proactive steps towards achieving optimal mental and emotional health.

Relationship Of Triguna, Tridosha And Panchamahabhuta

Tridosha, triguna, and panchmahabhuta are three fundamental concepts in Ayurveda. These three concepts are interconnected and interdependent, and their relationship is crucial to understanding Ayurveda's holistic approach to health and well-being. Tridosha refers to the three doshas or biological humors, which are Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. According to Ayurveda, these three doshas are responsible for regulating various physiological and psychological functions in the body,

and any imbalance or disturbance in these doshas can lead to disease and illness. Triguna refers to the three gunas or fundamental qualities of nature, which are Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. These gunas are present in everything, including food, thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Sattva represents purity, harmony, and balance; Rajas represents activity, passion, and restlessness; and Tamas represents inertia, darkness, and lethargy. Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of cultivating sattva and avoiding rajas and tamas to maintain physical, mental, and spiritual health. Panchmahabhuta refers to the five elements or mahabhutas that constitute the material world, which are space (akasha), air (vayu), fire (agni), water (jala), and earth (prithvi). These elements combine in various proportions to form everything, including the human body. Ayurveda believes that each dosha is associated with a particular combination of the five elements. Vata is composed of space and air, Pitta is composed of fire and water, and Kapha is composed of water and earth.

Name of the <i>dosha</i>	Composition of <i>Panchamahabhuta</i>
<i>Vata</i>	<i>Akasa + Vayu</i>
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Agni + Jala</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Prithvi + Jala</i>

INFLUENCE OF AHARA ON MENTAL HEALTH

Ahara, which is a Sanskrit word that means "food" or "nourishment," plays an important role in our physical and mental health. Our food choices can have a profound impact on our mental wellbeing, affecting our mood, cognitive function, and even our risk of developing mental health disorders.

Here are some ways in which ahara can influence mental health

Nutrient deficiencies: A poor diet that lacks essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and amino acids can lead to mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline. For example, deficiencies in vitamin B12 and omega-3 fatty acids have been linked to an increased risk of depression.

Gut-brain connection: The gut-brain axis is a complex communication network between the gut and the brain. Research has shown that the health of the gut microbiome, which is influenced by our diet, can affect mental health by modulating neurotransmitters, hormones, and immune system activity.

Blood sugar balance: The foods we eat can have a significant impact on our blood sugar levels, which can affect our mood and energy levels. A diet high in refined carbohydrates and sugars can lead to blood sugar imbalances, which can cause mood swings, irritability, and fatigue.

Inflammation: Chronic inflammation in the body has been linked to a range of mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, and cognitive decline.

The relationship between tridosha, triguna, and panchmahabhuta can be understood as follows: The three doshas are influenced by the three gunas and are composed of the five elements. Each dosha is associated with a particular combination of the five elements, which determines its qualities and functions. The gunas influence the doshas through food, behavior, and environment, and an imbalance in the gunas can lead to an imbalance in the doshas. Similarly, an imbalance in the doshas can affect the gunas and disrupt the balance of the five elements in the body. Ayurveda seeks to restore balance and harmony in the body and mind by addressing imbalances in the doshas, gunas, and elements through various holistic therapies, such as diet, herbs, lifestyle, and meditation. By understanding the interrelationship between tridosha, triguna, and panchmahabhuta, Ayurveda provides a comprehensive framework for promoting health, preventing disease, and achieving overall well-being.

Certain foods, such as those high in sugar and trans fats, can promote inflammation in the body. Some people may have sensitivities or intolerances to certain foods, which can cause a range of physical and mental symptoms, including headaches, fatigue, brain fog, and mood swings.

The quality of the food we eat can have a significant impact on our mental health. Choosing a diet rich in whole, nutrient-dense foods and avoiding processed and inflammatory foods can help support mental wellbeing. Additionally, it's important to pay attention to how different food sensitivities or intolerances may be affecting our mental health.

Sattva Guna

Sattva Guna represents a state of balance, clarity, and purity. It is associated with qualities such as peace, compassion, wisdom, and harmony. When a person's mind is dominated by Sattva Guna, they are said to be in a state of spiritual purity, and they experience a sense of calm and clarity. Practices such as meditation, yoga, and selfless service are believed to cultivate Sattva Guna, while negative qualities such as greed, anger, and ignorance are thought to arise from an imbalance of the Gunas, with Rajas and Tamas dominating over Sattva.

Rajas Guna

In Hindu philosophy, Rajas is one of the three gunas, or qualities of nature, that are said to compose all of creation. Rajas is associated with the quality of activity, passion, and energy. When a person is dominated by the Rajas Guna, they tend to be driven by their desires and passions, and they may be motivated by a need for

achievement or recognition. They may be restless and always seeking new experiences or stimulation. However, if their Rajas is out of balance, they may become excessively aggressive or competitive. In spiritual practice, the goal is to achieve a balance between the three gunas: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. The aim is to cultivate the qualities of Sattva (purity, clarity, and harmony) and reduce the influence of Tamas (inertia, dullness, and ignorance) and Rajas (activity, passion, and energy). By doing so, one can attain a state of balance and equanimity, which is said to be conducive to spiritual growth and liberation.

- **Tamas Guna**

In Hinduism, Tamas Guna is one of the three qualities of nature or Gunas that govern the universe. Tamas Guna represents the quality of darkness, inertia, ignorance, and laziness. It is associated with lethargy, procrastination, and negativity. When this quality is dominant in a person, it can lead to a lack of motivation, apathy, and a tendency to give up easily. Tamas Guna is also linked to physical sensations such as heaviness, dullness, and sluggishness. It is the opposite of the Rajas Guna, which represents passion, action, and energy, and the Sattva Guna, which represents purity, goodness, and harmony.

Relationship between *tridosha* and *Triguna*.

Dosha	Predominant guna
Vata	Rajas
Pitta	Satva
Kapha	Tamas

- **Satvik Ahara (food)**

The word "Satvik" comes from the Sanskrit language and means "pure." Satvik Ahara is believed to promote mental and physical health, as well as spiritual well-being. According to Ayurveda, the food we eat can have a significant impact on our physical, mental, and emotional health. Satvik Ahara is a term used in Ayurveda, a traditional system of medicine that originated in India. Satvik Ahara refers to a diet that is pure, simple, and healthy. It is a plant-based diet that includes fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. In Satvik Ahara, the emphasis is on eating fresh, natural, and whole foods that are prepared in a simple manner. The food is cooked with minimal spices and oil, and no artificial flavors or preservatives are added. This type of diet is said to be easy to digest and helps to purify the body.

- **Rajasic Ahara (food)**

Rajasic ahara" is a term from Indian philosophy that refers to food that is considered to be of a "rajas" nature. "Rajas" is one of the three gunas or qualities of nature, the other two being "sattva" (purity) and "tamas" (inertia). Rajasic ahara refers to foods that are considered to be stimulating or passionate in nature. These foods are believed to increase the energy of the body and mind, but can also lead to restlessness and agitation if consumed in excess.

Examples of rajasic ahara include spicy and pungent foods, such as garlic, onions, ginger, chilies, and mustard seeds. Foods that are deep-fried, heavily seasoned, or contain a lot of oil or sugar are also considered to be rajasic. Animal products like meat, fish, and eggs are also classified as rajasic. It is recommended to consume rajasic ahara in moderation and balance it with sattvic and tamasic foods to maintain a healthy and balanced diet.

- **Tamsik Ahara (foods)**

Tamsik Ahara is a term from Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine, which refers to food that is considered to have a dull or heavy quality. Tamsik Ahara is believed to be detrimental to both the physical and mental well-being of an individual. Examples of Tamsik Ahara include meat, alcohol, tobacco, garlic, onion, and heavily processed or fried foods. These foods are believed to increase the body's impurities and cause imbalances in the three doshas - Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. A balanced diet should include mainly Sattvik Ahara (pure and light foods), with a smaller amount of Rajasic Ahara (spicy and stimulating foods), and only a small amount of Tamsik Ahara. A balanced diet is believed to support physical health, mental clarity, and spiritual growth.

Effect of *rajasik* and *tamsik ahara* on mental health

Rajasic and tamsik are terms used in Ayurveda to describe different types of food and their impact on the body and mind. Rajasic ahara refers to food that is energetic, stimulating, and passion-inducing, while tamsik ahara refers to food that is dull, heavy, and can cause lethargy.

The impact of rajasic and tamsik ahara on mental health can vary depending on various factors such as the individual's constitution, their current mental state, and the quantity and quality of food consumed. In general, consuming a diet high in rajasic ahara can lead to increased energy levels, passion, and excitement, which can be beneficial for individuals who are feeling low or depressed. However, an excessive intake of rajasic ahara can lead to overstimulation, agitation, and restlessness, which can be harmful to individuals who are prone to anxiety or hyperactivity.

On the other hand, consuming a diet high in tamsik ahara can lead to feelings of lethargy, sluggishness, and dullness, which can be detrimental to mental health, particularly for individuals who are struggling with depression or low mood. Additionally, consuming a diet high in tamsik ahara can lead to physical health problems, such as weight gain and cardiovascular disease, which can further impact mental health.

In summary, while rajasic ahara can have a beneficial impact on mental health when consumed in moderation, excessive consumption can lead to negative outcomes. Similarly, consuming a diet high in tamsik ahara can be harmful to mental health and should be avoided. A

balanced and varied diet recommended for optimal physical and mental health.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Research has shown that there is a strong link between dietary habits and mental health. In general, a healthy diet consisting of a variety of nutrient-rich foods can have a positive impact on mental well-being. Here are some specific ways in which dietary habits can affect mental health: There is some research suggesting that imbalances in the triguna can affect mental health. For example, a predominance of Tamas is associated with depression, while excessive Rajas is linked to anxiety and stress. On the other hand, a balance of Sattva is associated with improved emotional well-being. However, it's important to note that the concept of triguna is rooted in a specific cultural and philosophical context, and may not be applicable or relevant to all individuals and cultures. Additionally, mental health is a complex and multifaceted issue that cannot be fully explained or addressed by any single concept or framework.

Therefore, while the concept of triguna may provide some insights into mental health, it should be approached with caution and used in conjunction with other evidence-based approaches to mental health care.

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