Relation Between Prakriti and Stress Handling Capacity: An Observational Study

Deepali Girí¹, Sonali Wairagade², Priti Desai³, Abhilasha Agrawal⁴, Roshan Kumar Jha⁵

'Professor, Department of Rachana Sharir, Datta Meghe Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital & Research Center, Wanadongri, Nagpur, India; ¹Associate Professor, Department of Kayachikitsa, Datta Meghe Ayurvedic Medical College, Wanadongri, Nagpur, India; ²Professor, Department of Rachana Sharir, Mahatma Gandhi Ayurvedic College & Hospital, Salod, Wardha, India; ³Associate Professor, Department of Kriya Sharir, R. D. Memorial PG Ayurved College and Hospital, Bhopal, India; ⁴Tutor Department of Biochemistry Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College, Datta Meghe Institute of Medical Sciences, Wardha, India.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Stress is the major cause of many diseases. The list of diseases ranges from hypertension, diabetes to alcoholism. Ayurveda divides the population according to the Prakriti of an individual. There are seven types of Prakriti. Each Prakriti has a typical psychosomatic constitution. Prakriti of an individual can be assessed with the help of the characteristics that are described in ancient Ayurvedic texts. Assessment of Prakriti can be helpful in determining the stress handling capacity of a person and ultimately helping him to keep stress-induced diseases away.

Material and method: Online survey forms of Prakriti and stress handling capacity were distributed to 200 students. Out of 200 students 138 responses were received. Prakriti and stress handling capacity was assessed from the responses received. The data was compared to look for the relationship in them, if any.

Conclusion: Kapha and Pitta found to be the most important factors in the psychosomatic composition of a person. People with the dominance of Vata are more prone to stress induced diseases. The occurrence of stress induced diseases can be reduced with proper stress management.

Key Words: Prakriti, Stress, Stress handling, Psychosomatic constitution, Stress-induced diseases

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the system of Indian medicine, uses the assessment tool for individual examination of a person. This tool is known as Prakriti.¹ According to Ayurveda, the definition of perfect health is as follows; when all the Dosha - vital elements including hormones and biochemical secretions in the human body, Dhatu - all the tissues in the human body, Agni² - capacity of a person to make the ingested food available for all the tissues and mala - waste products in the human body in a person are in equilibrium along with a cheerful soul and mind, he is said to be in the condition of perfect health.³ Cheerful mind is equally important for a healthy state of a person.⁴ Mind, soul and body are the three pillars of a person. Tridosha and Triguna are the basic concepts of Ayurveda. Vata, Pitta, and Kapha are the Doshas and they are the physical factors responsible for the healthy status of a person whereas Triguna i.e. Sattva, Raja and Tama are responsible for mental health.⁵ Tridosha is also responsible for the physical constitution of a person. Seven types of constitutions are formed with different combinations of Doshas. These combinations are known as Prakriti. These constitutions are further classified into seven types according to the dominance of the Doshas namely Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Kaphavataja, Kaphapitta-ja, Vatapittaja and Sama Prakriti.⁶ Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja Prakriti, and Sama Prakriti occur in less population whereas Kaphavatjaja, Kaphapittaja, and Vatapittaja are more common.

Physical and mental characters of each Prakriti are described in Ayurveda. Characteristic features of physical Prakriti include physical qualities as well as psychological qualities.⁷ The capacity to manage stress is different in each individual. Stress handling capacity (SHC) can vary along with the types of Prakriti. This study is initiated to verify if there is any relation in Prakriti and SHC of a person.
Objectives of the Study
Stress is the main etiological factor for many diseases. If we could be able to guess the SHC of a person, we would be able to prevent stress-induced diseases. The objectives of the study are to assess the Prakriti of the volunteers and to assess their SHC.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Population
For the present study (Ethical no-DMIMS (DU)/IEC/2020/8852) the students of either gender aged between 18–25 years and registered during the years 2018 and 2019 under the Bachelor of Ayurveda Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) were considered.

Assessment of Prakriti
We have used the “Self-assessment questionnaire” originally prepared by Kishor Patwardhan and Rashmi Sharma, modified by Piyush Kumar Tripathi, Kishor Patwardhan, and Girish Singh, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. The questionnaire has been already validated by the authors so it was used as it was available.

The questionnaire for SHC was prepared and used for the study. SHC was graded as excellent, good, average, and poor according to the scores. It was sent to a total of 200 volunteers. Out of them, 138 responses were received. Prakriti and SHC were assessed using the received data. Seven types of Prakriti were sorted and separated. SHC of each individual was compared with their Prakriti.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS
Data were collected in an excel sheet and analysed by using SPSS software (23.0 Version)

Observations:
Total 138 volunteers participated in the study. Numbers of Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakriti people were 5, 5, and 6, respectively. Duel Prakriti people i.e. Kaphapitta Prakriti, Kaphavata Prakriti, Vatapitta Prakriti were 31, 43, and 34. People with some Prakriti were 14.

Table 1: Type of Prakriti and Number of volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. no.</th>
<th>Prakriti</th>
<th>No. of volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kaphapitta</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kaphavata</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Vatapitta</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Sama</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: (Continued)

Table 2: Prakriti Wise Distribution of Volunteers with Excellent SHC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prakriti</th>
<th>Total number of volunteers with excellent SHC</th>
<th>Percentage of volunteers with excellent SHC (within the group)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphapitta</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>36.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphavata</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatapitta</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sama</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Percentage of types of SHC in the population.
44 (31.88%) volunteers had excellent stress handling capacity (SHC), 67 (48.55%) volunteers had good SHC, and 27 (19.57%) volunteers had average SHC. No volunteer had poor SHC.
The above table no 2 shows the Prakriti Wise Distribution of Volunteers with Excellent SHC

**Figure 2A:** Prakriti Wise Distribution of Volunteers with Excellent SHC.

In table no 2 and fig. no 1 showed Out of 138 participants, 44 participants had excellent SHC. Only one participant each with Kapha and Pitta Prakriti had excellent SHC. No person with Vata Prakriti had excellent SHC. The highest number of participants with excellent SHC was from the group of Kaphapitta Prakriti. The number of Kaphavata and Vatapitta prakriti with excellent SHC was 11 and 10, respectively. 5 participants with Sama Prakriti had excellent SHC.

**Figure 2B:** Percentage of volunteers with excellent SHC (within the group).

Diag. no 2 showed Duel Prakriti comprise 84 % of the population of the group. Kaphapitta Prakriti people are 36.36% of the group, Kaphavata Prakriti people are 25% and Vatapitta Prakriti people are 22.27% in the group. 11.36% people with excellent SHC had Sama Prakriti.

**Prakriti Wise Distribution of Volunteers with Good SHC:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prakriti</th>
<th>Total number of volunteers with good SHC</th>
<th>Percentage of volunteers with good SHC (within the group)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphapitta</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphavata</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatapitta</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sama</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3A:** Total number of volunteers with good SHC.

Table no 3 showed out of 138 participants, 67 participants had good SHC. 3, 4, and 5 participants with Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakriti had good SHC. The highest number of participants with good SHC was from the group of Kaphapitta Prakriti with 21 in number. The number of Kaphapitta Prakriti and Vatapitta Prakriti with good SHC was 14 and 13, respectively. 7 participants with Sama Prakriti had good SHC.

**Figure 3B:** Percentage of volunteers with good SHC (within the group).
Diag. no 3 showed Duel Prakriti comprise 71.64% of the population of the group. Kaphapitta Prakriti people are 20.90% of the group, Kaphavata Prakriti people are 31.34% and Vatapitta Prakriti people are 19.40% in the group. 10.45% people with good SHC had Sama Prakriti.

**Prakriti Wise Distribution of Volunteers with Average SHC:**

Table 4: Prakriti Wise Distribution of Volunteers with Average SHC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment of Prakriti</th>
<th>Total number of volunteers with average SHC</th>
<th>Percentage of volunteers with average SHC within group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vata</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapha</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitta</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphapitta</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaphavata</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vatapitta</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sama</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4A:** Total number of volunteers with average SHC.

Table no 4 and Diag. no 4 showed out of 138 participants, 27 participants had average SHC. 2 participants with Vata Prakriti had average SHC. 12 participants with average SHC had Kaphavata Prakriti. 11 participants with Vatapitta Prakriti had average SHC. 2 participants with Sama Prakriti had average SHC.

**Figure 4B:** Percentage of volunteers with average SHC within group.

Diag. no 4 b showed Duel Prakriti comprise 85.19% of the population of the group. No participant with Kaphapitta Prakriti said to have average SHC. Kaphavata Prakriti people are 44.44% and Vatapitta Prakriti people are 40.74% in the group. 7.41% people with average SHC had Sama Prakriti. No participant with Kapha Prakriti and Pitta Prakriti had average SHC.

**DISCUSSION**

Stress is an inevitable factor of life. One must know the management of it. When the mind is disturbed homeostasis of hormones and other vital components of the body (Dosha) is also disturbed. Diseases like hypertension, heart disease, diabetes are stress-induced. The psychosomatic constitution of a person describes his typical physical and psychological characteristics.

The psychological characters of Kapha prakriti people are that they never get angry or very depressed. They are tolerant to hardships, patient, and hardworking. They can easily forgive people. They are matured, polite, and decent people. They have good sleeping habits.9-11

The psychological characters of Pitta prakriti people are that they are brave, mighty, and radiant people. They are not defeated easily. They are fearless, short-tempered, unsparing to the bad people whereas soft-hearted towards good people. These people have very high intellect.12-14

Vata Prakriti people are mentally unstable, jealous, hot-headed, and violent. The people of Vata Prakriti experience emotions like anger, fear, and irritability quicker. They tend to sleep less and the sleep pattern is not very good.15-17

It is very rare that a person has one Dosha Prakriti. People generally have dual Dosha Prakriti. So they have psychosomatic characters of both the Dosha. One Dosha remains dominant in duel Dosha Prakriti. The dominant Dosha has more influence on the physical and psychological qualities of a person. People with Sama Prakriti have mixed type of characteristics.
People with the dominance of *Kapha* are mentally strong. Their patient, tolerant, and hardworking nature makes them confident to handle difficult situations. When people have *Kapha Dosha* dominant in their constitution, they can handle stress very well. Good sleeping patterns also help them to maintain their hormone levels so that they remain calm and less stressed.\(^{18}\)

*Pitta Dosha* dominant people are fearless, brave, and intelligent. Their intelligence and bravery give them the confidence to get through the challenges.\(^{19}\) *Vata Dosha* dominant people are mentally unstable, irritable, and coward. Due to these psychological factors, people with *Vata* dominant *Prakriti* find stress handling difficult. But if the person has *Pitta* dominant *Vatapitta Prakriti*, the person gets the benefits of *Pitta* in *SHC*.

The volunteers for the present study are from the BAMS I\(^{\text{st}}\) and II\(^{\text{nd}}\) year students. Being students of a professional course, nobody assessed themselves extremely bad at stress handling. Hence, nobody came under the category of poor stress handlers. People with single *Dosha Prakriti* were very less in number in the sample as single *Dosha prakritis* is found very rarely.

61.36 % people with excellent stress handling had either *Kapha Vata* or *Kapha Pitta Prakriti*. People with *Kapha* dominant *Prakriti* had excellent *SHC*. *Vatapitta Prakriti* people were 22.73%. Out of which 15.90% had *Pitta* dominant *Prakriti*. No person with *Vata Prakriti* had excellent *SHC*.

52.24% people in good *SHC* group had *Kapha Vata* or *Kapha Pitta Prakriti*. *Kapha Vata Prakriti* people were maximum in number in good *SHC*. The group of *Kapha Pitta prakriti* people was on the second number in this group also. People of the *Vata Pitta Prakriti* were least in the *dual Prakriti* group with good *SHC*. The number of *Kapha prakriti* people moved to the second position in the good *SHC* group. The *Kapha Pitta Prakriti* people assessed themselves as excellent in *SHC*; hence the number in this was reduced.

Interestingly, there was not a single person of *Kapha, Pitta*, or *Kapha Pitta Prakriti* who assessed themselves as average in *SHC*. The average *SHC* group had a dominant presence of *Kapha Vata, Pitta Prakriti, Vata* and *Sama Prakriti*. The *dual Prakriti* was *Vata* dominant. The psychosomatic characteristics of *Vata Dosha* manifest in the form of bad *SHC*. Certain systemic conditions need careful attention like diabetes \(^{20-25}\), hypertension \(^{26-34}\), respiratory and renal disorders \(^{35-41}\). Many other related articles are available \(^{42-53}\).

### CONCLUSION

Aptitude test, IQ test is very common assessment tools in our society for many years. If we assess the *Prakriti* of the people at early age, we can get a clue about their *SHC*. Stress management is very important in this modern world. The young generation is under tremendous stress due to their education, carrier, and jobs. With the help of correct *Prakriti* assessment, we can avoid stress-induced diseases.

### Scope for further study

Bigger sample size can be taken for more accuracy.

### Acknowledgement

Authors acknowledge the immense help received from Datta Meghe Ayurvedic Medical College Hospital & Research Center, Wanadongri, Nagpur for conducting this study.

### Conflict of interest

None

### REFERENCES


3. Sushruta, Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana, Doshadhatumala-vigyanayan Adhyayaam,15/44, commentator Dr. Laxmidhar Dwivedi, Chaukhamba Sanskrit series office, Varanasi, 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) edition 2007;131


10. Sushrut, Sushrutsamhita, Sharirshthan, Garbha vyakaranar Sharir, 4/71-75, commentator Dr. Bhaskar Govind Ghanekar, Meharchand Lachhmandas Publications, New Delhi, reprint 2017;141.


