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ROLE OF TRIGUNAS IN FRAMING OF PERSONALITY

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Abstract :-

Therefore, the main objective of this study was to investigate whether the trigunas have any role in framing of variant personality pattern. In order to study the problem scientifically, the theoretical data were collected from various Indian canonical scriptures like Upanishadas, Gita, Samkhya philosophy, Carak Samhita, Patanjali Yogasutra by adopting a **Survey method**. After analysis of the theoretical data, under stated results were extracted. Predominance of a particular guna offers specific type of behavioural pattern within the individual and thereby develops an individual's personality characteristics. When Sattva guna becomes predominant, one's intellect works steadily and he attains the characteristics of fearlessness, purity of heart, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, compassion towards other beings. Individuals with the predominance of Rajas guna acts with great efforts to satisfy his desires. He is found to be more passionate, more anxious, more industrious, more sensuous, more jealous and not interested in any spiritual persuasion. Tamas guna when becomes predominant in an individual's psyche, his personality displays the characteristics of ignorance, torpid and delusive. They are destructive, drowsy, aggressive, fearful and sloth by nature. Thus, the study concluded that the Trigunas e.g. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas play an important role in framing of an individual's personality.

Key Words:- Behaviour, Canonical Scripture, Personality, Trigunas

INTRODUCTION

Personality is a well known term in psychology which is an active organization of many psychological and physical traits and qualities of an individual and plays an important role in successful adjustment to his environment. Its structure is mostly internal and guides and directs one's behaviour as a whole. As every people differ from one another in respect of their way of thinking, feeling, performing activities etc., so the distinctive behaviour pattern of individuals leads to find out the actual causes behind these differences. Besides, the role of well-integrated personality in life cannot be neglected. Tranquillity, peace, good will, brotherly feelings and sense of values are of paramount importance for personal as well as social development. In a society, each person's need is satisfied by virtue of good interpersonal accommodation. In this respect, an individual's personality must be integrated and developed so that the very norms of an ideal society become effective at their maximum saturation. But if the act of

personality development is not proper, the problems of restlessness, misbehaviour, aggressiveness and maladjustment become one's behavioural characteristic. Ultimately, one becomes the victim of various disorders and shows great many identity crisis. Viewing this important role of personality in personal as well as social life, there have been many efforts and approaches to study the causative factors of personality structure. The western exponents opined that personality is the outcome of a dynamic and complex amalgamation of psycho-physiological traits and is greatly shaped by biological, social and environmental factors. Indian experts, on the other hand expressed their views that personality is the reflection of **Vasanas** (desires) and **samskaras** (accumulated imprints) of various incarnations of individuals which collectively determine the degree and the proportion of trigunas (i.e., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) in their psyche (citta) and thus frame the basic nature of personality. Trigunas are the three basic qualities of human psyche (Citta) which give form to one's life in its cycle of birth and shape one's behavioural characteristics according to his past actions and experiences (Iyenger, 2000, P. 121). Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the three gunas of nature (Prakriti) and Prakriti is the primal motive force. It is the essential constituent of manifested creation and all actions and all happenings in creation arise out of the three gunas and their permutations and combinations (Gita-III/ 27).

Objective of study

The western concept of personality formation is well-known among the intellectuals and academicians of modern times but only a few people are well-acquainted or interested about the Indian concept of personality structure which is more intrinsic and more profound in analysis as compared the western concept. 'Triguna' is a most comprehensive concept of individual differences in Indian psychological view point. Hence, the main objective of this theoretical research study was to find out whether the 'trigunas' (three qualities) have any role in framing of variant personality pattern.

Materials and Method

In order to study the problem scientifically, theoretical data was collected from various Indian canonical scriptures like Upanisads, Gita, Samkhya Philosophy, Carak Samhita, Patanjali Yoga Sutra and a **survey method** was adopted

Western concept of personality formation

Starting with the instinctive approach of McDaugall's classical and neo-classical or contemporary psychoanalytical theories of personality, Jung's analytical theory, social psychological theories of Adler and Sullivan; Roger's person-centred theory, existential theory, Lewin's field theory, Allport's psychology of the individual theory, Cattell's factor theory, stimulus-response theory and skinner's operant reinforcement theory are the most popular and influential theories that deals with the variant personality pattern and causes of individual difference. (Betal,2006,p.70). Allport (1937) viewed personality structure as the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment. McConnel (1980) clarified that personality is constitutes by traits values, motive, genetic blueprint, attitudes, emotional reactivity, abilities, self-image, intelligence as well as one's visible relatively stable behaviour patterns. According to Freud, personality of human being is shaped by the interaction between biological and intra-psychic forces. Jung viewed personality structure as a purely intra-psychic by nature. Adler stated that personality is framed by environmental events and Cattle and Eber (1962) mentioned that human personality is the outcome of a balance development of many components like biological, social and environmental factors.

Thus,the above stated analysis about the causative factors of personality formation is purely based on genetic environmental factors. All their studies are concerned with physical aspects i.e., the brain and the role of mind in relationship to it. This is why, western concept is far from the understanding the 'real self' which is entirely impersonal and from the individuality to universality. They are concentrated to unravel the mystery of 'persona' means a mask or a covering but not the 'real self'.

Consequently, the western psychological system is still struggling to find its place in India as there has been an increased skepticism regarding the applicability of western approaches in developing countries (Gergen, Gulerce, Lock and Mishra, 1996). Besides, the psychological concept emanated from western countries is often found irrelevant to the condition of India. This has gradually been inspired the modern Indian scholars to look back into their own vast and rich cultural perspective which is the store house of knowledge to study human personality with more perfectly and accurately, though the Indian psychology is as old as the human civilization.

Indian Concept of Personality Formation

Indian scriptures have amply stated about the personality and the mechanics of personality formation. The Upnishads, Gita, Yoga Sutra, Carak Samhita and Indian Philosophy are the most important sources of studying personality and causes of variant personality pattern. The Bhagavat Gita mentioned an ideal type of personality i.e. 'Sthita Prajna' or steady intellect (II/55) which remains unaffected and untouched by grief, fear and craving like impulses. The Taittiriya Upnishada (II/8 and III/ 10, 5) mentioned that the cheerful temperament (Anandamaya Kosha) is the best measure of personality. According to Yoga Philosophy, the culmination of the process of personality development occur in 'Samprajnata Samadhi' because mind becomes devoid of any temptation and illumination marks mind (Vyas, 1984). Indian psychology defined ideal personality as which attains a peace of mind not disturbed by worldly desires and thereby the light of inner self is experienced (Vyas, 1984). Personality, unlike the western concept is not only an ideal state of psychophysical functions or genetic environmental derivative but also the attainment of higher level of spiritual consciousness. It is that state of psyche (citta) when one's mind becomes free from impure thought waves of worldly affairs and thus achieves an elevated level of consciousness. As a result of this an individual becomes able to establish a good relation or adjustment between inner (microcosm) and outer (macrocosm) environment (Betal, 2006, p.138). This is the highest and ideal state of personality which has been conceived in Indian psychology. Thus, the Indian view regarding the framing of personality is treated as an intrinsic one and can neither be treated as superficial nor as an artefact, due to its unique basis which is drawn from the deep rooted principles of spirituality.

Regarding the classification of personality, Indian scholars are also not lag behind. They have displayed their far-sightedness by considering the intrinsic characteristics of psyche as well as genetic environmental perspectives of an individual. On the cross-sectional plane they have mentioned personality type of (1) Tamasic, Rajasic and Sattvic personality, (2) Fivefold Affecto-Typal pattern like Erotic pattern (Kama), Aggressive pattern (Krodha), Egoistic pattern (Mada), Acquisitive pattern (Lobha) and Infatuated pattern (Moha), (3) Five stages of conscious states of personality Growth like Confounded stage of consciousness (Moodha), Scattered, restless state of consciousness (Kshipta), Agitated state of consciousness (Vikshipta), Concentrated or one pointed conscious state (Ekagra) and Restrained state of consciousness (Niruddha), (4) Five-sheath levels of personality Growth like Gross organic level of existence (Annamaya kosha), Bio-energy level of existence (Pranamaya kosha), Psycho-energy level of existence (Manomaya kosha), Level of insightful existence (Vijnanmaya kosha) and Level of Delightful existence (Anandamaya kosha) (Lal, 1983, pp.88-94). But of them, the concept of Trigunas (three qualities) is the most appropriate, intrinsic and justified method to study the causes of personality variation and personality formation.

Trigunas and Variant Personality Pattern

The Indian scriptures postulate that human personality is a dynamic amalgamation and interaction of the Trigunas (three qualities) i.e., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These Gunas are not seen or perceived directly but are inferred from their effect. Predominance of a particular guna makes an individual's personality characteristics. These trigunas are not equally distributed in an individual's citta and only one guna dominates in a larger degree. They are dynamic and hence fluctuate to some extent but only for short term variant. Therefore, on the basis of this Tri-dimensional theory, framing mechanism of personality can be ascertained and classified.

The Nature (Prakriti) itself consists of cosmic intelligence (Mahat) which has Trigunas i.e., three qualities of luminosity (Sattva), action and motion (Rajas) and inertia (Tamas). The Nature (Prakriti), according to Samkhyakarika (verse no.-21) when united with the soul or consciousness, it transmits trigunas to an individual's citta (psyche) and they evolve mind, senses of perception and organs of action to serve the Seer (Soul) for enjoyment or emancipation-"PRAKASA KRIYASTHITISILAM BHUTENDRIYATMAKAM BHOGAPAVARGARTHAM DRSYAM" (P.Y.S.-II/18). Similar statement also made by Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita (XIV/ 5) that Sattva, Rajas and Tamas gunas are derivative of the Nature (Prakriti) and it is the triguna which lead Jivatma (Soul) in the state of captivity. According to the theory of Karma, the results of every action whether it is good or bad are carried forward to the next life, resulting the person possessing the trigunas in varying proportions. Maharishi Patanjali in Yoga Sutra stated that 'As long as the root of actions exists, it will give rise to class of birth, span of life and experiences'- "SATIMULE TADVIPAHA JATI AYUH BHOGA" (P.Y.S.-II/ 13). This fruit of actions committed in all previous lives is called Vasanas (the present consciousness of past perceptions) which produce pain or pleasure. The changing influence of these gunas (qualities) gives form to human life in its cycle of births and shapes their behavioural characteristics according to the nature of past actions and experiences (Vasanas and Samskaras). The gunas generate their characteristic divisions and energies in the Seer-"VISESA AVISESA LINGAMATRA ALINGANI GUNAPARVANI" (P.Y.S.-II/ 19). **Samkhyakarika** (verse no. 11,12,13) also states that all the gunas are present in every objects and person in varying proportions throughout the whole life but one guna predominates

in an individual which makes him Sattvika, Rajasika or Tamasic by in born nature which reflects one's general behaviour pattern. **Caraka Samhita** (Sarira Sthana-IV/37) states that in every one's life the Trigunas of mind play an important role in making behaviour pattern. A person with Sattvic guna held the characteristics of kind hearted, bounteous, straight forward, religious, truthful, intelligent and faithful to God (Carak Samhita, Sarira Sthana- IV/38, 45). Rajasic person attains the qualities of restlessness, conceited, liar, egoistic, aggressive, lustful, concern and sorrowful (Carak Samhita, Sarira Sthana- IV/ 46, 53).

In the life of an individual, the gunas enter into an enormous variety of combinations at different times, all of them irregular and one or other guna predominating at any one point of time, depending on the particular type of situation one is facing and the behavioural characteristics are also changed accordingly(Krishnamurthy, 1999, p.28). But such changes are transient or momentary and not produced any permanent change in personality.. As the three gunas are the innovator of a wide range of behavioural characteristics, they are also responsible for framing variant personality pattern. Sattva causes moments of inspiration, disinterested affection, quiet joy and meditative calm. When Sattva is predominant the intellect works steadily. One attains the characteristics of fearlessness, purity of heart, control over senses, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, compassion towards other beings and absence of fickleness (Gita-XIV/6). Individuals with Sattva guna always remain in peaceful state. Rajas guna brings forth the characteristics of rage and fierce desires. It makes an individual restless, discontented but he acts with great efforts to satisfy his desires. Rajas guna provides the qualities of constructive, physical courage and enthusiasm. According to Bhagavad Gita, such people are sensuous, thirsty, little interested in spiritual pursuit, hatred, jealous, imitative, passionate, anxious, industrious and over ambitious (Gita-XIV/7). Tamasa is the state of mental bogness in which one exhibits one's worst qualities i.e. sloth, stupidity, obstinacy and helpless despair (Krishnamurthy, 1999,p.28). Bhagavad Gita mentioned that an individual with predominance of tamas guna is found to be ignorant, lethargic and delusional. They are destructive , drowsy, angry, fearful by nature (Gita-XIV/8).

Discussion

After the analysis of the theoretical data, it has been conspicuous that (1) the whole creation is the play of Trigunas and as the human beings are evolved owing to the union of prakriti(Nature) and Purusha (Soul) they are not beyond the influence of gunas. It is the trigunas which is at the basis of all activities of human beings. In this sense, it can undoubtedly be stated that the entire human life and personality is framed and structured by Trigunas. (2) The degree and proportion of Gunas are relative rather than absolute. Their degree and proportion fluctuate in human psyche (citta) depending upon the environmental situation one face in his day-to- day life. (3) Personality pattern is assessed depending upon the degree of predominating Guna. (4) The available scriptural information reflects that the trigunas offer a wide range of behavioural characteristics and psychological attitudes in a person. An individual who attains Sattva guna in a larger degree shows a emotionally stable personality with a steady intellect and he is designated as Sattvic personality. A person with highest degree of Rajas guna holds the personality characteristics of courage, constructive but dominating nature with psychological restlessness and he is categorised as Rajasic personality. Tamasic personality, on the other hand absorbed Tamas guna in a larger degree and they are indifferent by nature. In this way, trigunas are very important in making behavioural characteristics and thereby shaping of variant personality pattern.

In addition to the Ancient texts described the effect of trigunas in framing variant personality pattern, the results of modern scientific studies also support and confirm the findings of present study. Mohan and Sandhu (1988) reported a positive correlation between tamas and psychoticism and negative correlation between Sattva and psychoticism and neuroticism. Sharma(1990) worked on tri-dimensional approach of personality and constructed a personality test which measures triguna based personality. Krishnamurthy (1999) deal with the nature of trigunas and stated that individuals should try to make a balance among the proportion of trigunas through spiritual practice which may enhance the quality of life. Deshpande (2012) studied trigunas and concluded that gunas are relative rather than absolute and make the variant personality pattern. Gopal, Mondal and Pramila (2012, p.30) conducted an experimental study and found positive role of trigunas in making integrated personality. Therefore, the results of present study are supported by both scriptural postulations and the findings of modern scientific researches.

CONCLUSION

Hence, on the basis of the present theoretical study it can be concluded that Trigunas (the three qualities) have profound role in the determining the behavioural characteristics of a person and thus they are most effective in framing of personality and in making of variant personality pattern With a view to develop the personality, or to bring forth a balance state among the 'Trigunas' an individual should practice various Yogic processes like pranayama, meditation etc., so that the dominated degree of Sattvic guna can be attained in his psyche (citta).

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