

Review Article

Volume 14 Issue 06

June 2025

## A CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF TRIGUNA AND TRIDOSHA CORRELATION: PHILOSOPHICAL INSIGHTS AND CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

**\*Dr. Amrita Choudhary<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Preeti Sharma<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Amrita Chauhan<sup>3</sup>, Dr. Anshul Sharma<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>P.G. Scholar, Department of Samhita Siddhanta evam Sanskrit, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendera Ayurved Medical College, and Research Center (Shobhit university) Gangoh Saharanpur UP, 247341

<sup>2</sup>Associate professor, Department of Samhit Siddhanta evam Sanskrit, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendera Ayurved Medical College, and Research Centre (Shobhit University), Gangoh Saharanpur

<sup>3</sup>Assistant professor, Department of Samhita Siddhanta evam Sanskrit, Kunwar Shekhar Vijendera Ayurved Medical College and Research Centre (Shobhit University), Gangoh Saharanpur

<sup>4</sup>P.G. Scholar, Department of Rachana Sharir, Himalayiya Ayurvedic (PG) Medical College and Hospital Fatehpur Tanda, Jeevanwala, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India.

\*Corresponding Author's Email ID: chaudharydramrita@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The foundations of *Ayurvedic* philosophy are rooted in the interrelationship between *Triguna* (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas) and *Tridosha* (Vata, Pitta, Kapha), which respectively govern the psyche and the body. Ancient *Sankhya* and *Ayurvedic* texts articulate this dual framework to explain both the metaphysical and physiological dimensions of health and disease. A unified understanding of these concepts may offer deeper clinical insight into psycho-somatic disorders and individualized treatment planning. **Aim and Objectives Aim:** To explore the philosophical correlation between *Triguna* and *Tridosha* and analyze its clinical significance in Ayurvedic practice. **Objectives:** To study the conceptual foundations

of *Triguna* and *Tridosha* from classical texts. To examine the interrelationship between mental *Gunas* and bodily *Doshas*. To understand the impact of *Triguna–Tridosha* correlation in *Prakriti* assessment. To evaluate the clinical implications in psychosomatic disorders and personalized Ayurvedic treatment. **Materials and Methods:** A literary review of classical *Ayurvedic* texts such as *Charaka Samhitā*, *Suśruta Samhitā*, and *Sankhya Kārikā* was conducted, along with modern scholarly interpretations. A qualitative analytical method was used to compare and interpret conceptual frameworks. Supporting insights were drawn from clinical psychology and personality theories to understand the psycho-physiological implications. **Results:** The study reveals that *Sattva* aligns with *Vata–Pitta*, *Rajas* with *Pitta–Vata*, and *Tamas* with *Kapha*, showing a layered psycho-somatic interface. Individual *prakriti* and mental tendencies can be better understood through this integrated lens. This correlation has practical utility in designing personalized regimens for mental health, lifestyle disorders, and chronic conditions. **Conclusion:** The *Triguna–Tridosha* correlation provides a comprehensive understanding of human constitution and pathology by linking mental qualities with somatic humors. This philosophical integration enhances the scope of *Ayurvedic* clinical applications, particularly in psychosomatic conditions and *prakriti*-based preventive healthcare strategies.

**Keywords:** *Triguna, Tridosha, Ayurveda, Sankhya Darshana, Psycho-somatic correlation, Prakriti*

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, provides a holistic view of life, health, and disease. It is deeply rooted in the philosophical foundations of Indian Darshanas, particularly *Sankhya Darshana*.<sup>1</sup> In this system, the conceptual frameworks of *Triguna*—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*—and *Tridosha*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—are central to understanding the body and mind. While *Tridosha* governs the physical and physiological functions of the body, *Triguna* governs the psychological and spiritual dimensions of existence.<sup>2</sup>

The concept of *Triguna* originates from *Sankhya Darshana*, which explains creation as the result of interaction between *Purusha* (consciousness) and *Prakriti* (primordial nature).<sup>3</sup> *Prakriti* is composed of three fundamental qualities—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. These qualities are responsible for all types of mental and emotional behaviors. In *Ayurveda*,

*Triguna* is used to evaluate *Manasa Prakriti* (mental constitution), and its imbalance can lead to *Manasika Vyadhis* (mental disorders).<sup>4</sup>

*Tridosha*, comprising *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*, represents the biological forces formed from the *Panchamahabhutas*.<sup>5</sup> These *Doshas* regulate all physiological and pathological processes in the body. Each *Dosha* exhibits distinct qualities and functions—*Vata* is responsible for movement, *Pitta* for transformation, and *Kapha* for structure and stability. The *Tridosha* theory provides the basis for understanding health, disease, diagnosis, and treatment in *Ayurveda*.<sup>6</sup>

The philosophical relationship between *Triguna* and *Tridosha* suggests that psychological tendencies influence physiological states and vice versa. For instance, an individual dominated by *Sattva Guna* may display a balanced *Dosha* constitution, whereas predominance of *Rajas* or *Tamas* may be associated with *Vata Pitta* or *Kapha* imbalances respectively. This connection is crucial for understanding psychosomatic conditions, where both mind and body are involved.<sup>7</sup>

Modern scientific studies increasingly acknowledge the psychosomatic model of health, aligning with the *Ayurvedic* understanding of the mind-body connection. By evaluating an individual's *Triguna* and *Tridosha*, a physician can tailor interventions more accurately. Personality assessment, lifestyle modification, dietary regulation, and mental health management can all benefit from this integrative model.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, the study of *Triguna Tridosha* correlation is not only academically significant but also clinically relevant. It enhances personalized medicine in *Ayurveda* by addressing both physical and mental dimensions of health. Through this study, an effort is made to interpret classical doctrines in a contemporary context, offering a deeper and more unified understanding of human constitution and disease.<sup>9</sup>

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

### Aim:

To explore the philosophical correlation between *Triguna* and *Tridosha* and analyze its clinical significance in *Ayurvedic* practice.

### Objectives:

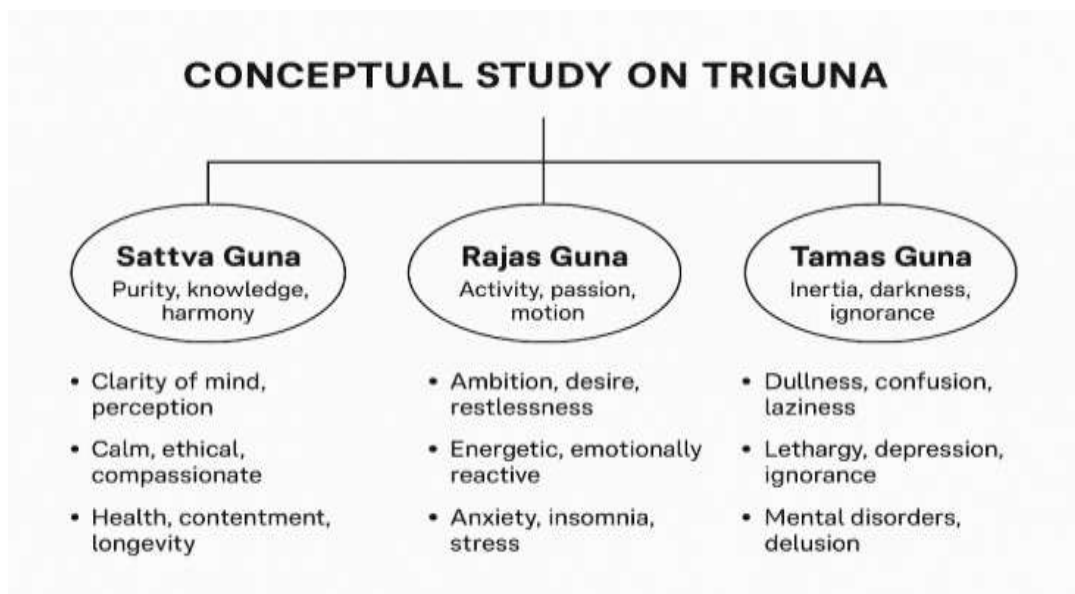
1. To study the conceptual foundations of *Triguna* and *Tridosha* from classical texts.
2. To examine the interrelationship between mental *Gunas* and bodily *Doshas*.

3. To understand the impact of *Triguna–Tridosha* correlation in *Prakriti* assessment.
4. To evaluate the clinical implications in psychosomatic disorders and personalized Ayurvedic treatment.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This conceptual study was conducted through an extensive literary review of classical *Ayurvedic* texts, including *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, and philosophical treatises such as *Sankhya Karika* and *Yoga Darshana*, to trace the foundational concepts of *Triguna* and *Tridosha*. Commentaries by renowned *Acharyas* were examined to understand traditional interpretations. Contemporary literature, including peer-reviewed journals and clinical studies on *Manasa Prakriti* and *Sharirika Prakriti*, was also analyzed to establish clinical relevance. The study adopted a qualitative analytical approach to explore the philosophical correlations and practical implications of the *Triguna Tridosha* framework. The synthesis of classical knowledge with modern perspectives facilitated an integrative understanding of psycho-somatic health models within the *Ayurvedic* paradigm.

## CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON TRIGUNA



The theory of *Triguna* is a foundational philosophical doctrine in *Sankhya Darshana* and forms the core of mental and spiritual health in *Ayurveda*. The term *Guna* signifies a quality or attribute, and the three *Gunas*—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*—are considered the primary constituents of *Prakriti* (primordial nature). These three *Gunas* exist in all matter and

consciousness in varying proportions, and their interaction determines the nature of an individual's mind (*Manas*), behavior, cognition, and disposition.<sup>10</sup>

1. **Sattva Guna**- *Sattva* is the *Guna* of purity, knowledge, harmony, and balance. It is responsible for clarity of mind, perception, understanding, and spiritual elevation. Individuals dominated by *Sattva Guna* tend to be calm, alert, ethical, compassionate, and spiritually inclined. In *Ayurveda*, *Sattvika Manasa Prakriti* is considered ideal and leads to health, contentment, and longevity.<sup>11</sup>
2. **Rajas Guna**- *Rajas* represents activity, passion, motion, and stimulation. It is responsible for ambition, desire, restlessness, and emotional turbulence. It drives actions but can also lead to imbalance if dominant. A *Rajasika* individual is energetic, driven, and emotionally reactive. In excess, *Rajas* leads to disorders such as anxiety, insomnia, and stress-related diseases.<sup>12</sup>
3. **Tamas Guna**- *Tamas* is the *Guna* of inertia, darkness, ignorance, and delusion. It causes dullness, confusion, laziness, and attachment. A *Tamasika* individual often exhibits lethargy, depression, ignorance, and resistance to change. Dominance of *Tamas* leads to mental disorders like depression, hallucination, and delusional states.<sup>13</sup>

According to *Sankhya Darshana*, the equilibrium of these *Gunas* is disturbed during creation. The imbalance leads to the manifestation of various elements and experiences. In human psychology, the mind (*Manas*) is considered a product of *Triguna*, and mental constitution (*Manasa Prakriti*) is defined by the predominant *Guna*.<sup>14</sup>

In *Ayurveda*, *Triguna* is used for understanding the mental disposition and is integral to the assessment of *Prakriti*, *Vikruti*, and disease diagnosis. Classical texts like *Charaka Samhita* classify individuals based on *Sattvika*, *Rajasika*, and *Tamasika Prakriti*, which influence not only mental traits but also responses to therapies.<sup>15</sup>

Modern psychology aligns partially with *Triguna* theory, equating *Sattva* with positive emotional states, *Rajas* with emotional instability, and *Tamas* with depression and apathy. Integrating *Triguna* into clinical practice aids in holistic patient evaluation, lifestyle counseling, and personalized mental health management.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, the *Triguna* theory offers a sophisticated framework to understand and guide the mind, promoting mental balance, ethical living, and spiritual growth, which are essential for complete health as envisioned in *Ayurveda*.<sup>17</sup>

## CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON *TRIDOSHA*

The concept of *Tridosha* is one of the most fundamental and unique principles of *Ayurveda*, re-presenting the physiological, pathological, and therapeutic basis of the human body. The term *Dosha* means "that which vitiates" or "that which causes imbalance." The three *Doshas*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—are dynamic regulatory energies derived from the *Panchamahabhuta* (five great elements). They govern all biological functions in the body and mind, and their equilibrium signifies health, while imbalance leads to disease.<sup>18</sup>

1. **Vata Dosha**- *Vata* is formed by the combination of *Akasha* (ether) and *Vayu* (air). It is responsible for all movements in the body including respiration, circulation, excretion, locomotion, and transmission of nerve impulses. Its qualities are dry, light, cold, mobile, and rough. *Vata* governs the principle of communication and sensation. When aggravated, it leads to disorders like insomnia, anxiety, dryness, constipation, and degenerative diseases.<sup>19</sup>
2. **Pitta Dosha**- *Pitta* is composed of *Agni* (fire) and *Jala* (water). It governs all forms of transformation, including digestion, metabolism, thermoregulation, vision, and hormonal secretions. Its qualities are hot, sharp, oily, liquid, and intense. *Pitta* is associated with intelligence and digestion, both at the physical and mental levels. Its vitiation can result in hyperacidity, inflammation, anger, and skin diseases.<sup>20</sup>
3. **Kapha Dosha** - *Kapha* is a combination of *Prithvi* (earth) and *Jala* (water). It provides structure, stability, cohesion, and lubrication to the body. Its qualities are heavy, slow, cold, soft, oily, and static. *Kapha* promotes strength, immunity, and endurance. An aggravated *Kapha* causes lethargy, obesity, excessive sleep, congestion, and metabolic stagnation.<sup>21</sup>

The *Tridoshas* operate collectively and in balance to maintain homeostasis and harmony within the body. Every individual is born with a unique constitution (*Prakriti*), which is a specific combination of the *Doshas* inherited genetically and influenced by maternal health and environmental factors at conception. This *Prakriti* determines one's physical structure, metabolic tendencies, psychological behavior, and susceptibility to diseases.<sup>22</sup>

The dynamic nature of *Doshas* means they fluctuate with time, seasons, diet, lifestyle, and emotions. This state of fluctuation is referred to as *Vikruti* (imbalance) which is the basis of disease manifestation. Hence, the evaluation of *Dosha Prakriti* and *Vikruti* forms the cornerstone of *Ayurvedic* diagnosis and treatment.<sup>23</sup>

From a therapeutic point of view, all *Ayurvedic* interventions—whether *Aushadha* (medicine), *Ahara* (diet), or *Vihara* (lifestyle)—are aimed at restoring the balance of the *Tridoshas*. Personalized treatment protocols are formulated based on an individual's *Dosha* dominance, their *Agni* (digestive fire), and *Dhatu* (tissue) status.<sup>24</sup>

Therefore, the *Tridosha* theory is not merely a physiological construct but a diagnostic and therapeutic tool that enables a deep, personalized understanding of health and disease. Its integration with the *Triguna* concept provides a comprehensive psycho-somatic approach that is unique to *Ayurvedic* medicine.<sup>25</sup>

#### TABULAR REPRESENTATION OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN *TRIGUNA* AND *TRIDOSHA*

Aspect	Triguna	Correlated Tridosha
1. Purity / Clarity	<i>Sattva Guna</i>	<i>Vata Pitta</i> (in equilibrium)
2. Activity / Stimulation	<i>Rajas Guna</i>	<i>Vata Pitta</i> (when vitiated)
3. Inertia / Dullness	<i>Tamas Guna</i>	<i>Kapha</i> (when excessive)
4. Balanced State	Predominance of <i>Sattva</i>	Balanced <i>Tridosha</i>
5. Hyper-reactivity	Dominance of <i>Rajas</i>	<i>Vata</i> or <i>Pitta</i> vitiation
6. Inactivity / Heaviness	Dominance of <i>Tamas</i>	<i>Kapha</i> vitiation
7. Prakriti Influence	Mixed <i>Guna</i> combinations	Individual <i>Dosha Prakriti</i>

#### RESULTS AND FINDINGS:

1. A clear philosophical and functional relationship exists between *Triguna* and *Tridosha*, integrating mental and physical health in a unified framework.
2. *Sattva Guna* is positively correlated with balanced *Vata* and *Pitta*, promoting clarity, intellect, and physiological harmony.
3. *Rajas Guna* tends to aggravate *Vata* and *Pitta*, leading to hyperactivity, emotional instability, and inflammatory conditions.

4. *Tamas Guna* is closely associated with increased *Kapha*, resulting in lethargy, depression, and metabolic sluggishness.
5. Mental constitution (*Manasa Prakriti*) and physical constitution (*Sharirika Prakriti*) are interdependent through the *Triguna–Tridosha* interface.
6. The integration of *Triguna* assessment in *Ayurvedic* clinical practice enhances precision in diagnosis, prognosis, and personalized treatment.
7. Modern psychosomatic models show strong alignment with the classical *Triguna–Tridosha* theory, supporting its relevance in contemporary healthcare.

## DISCUSSION

The correlation between *Triguna* and *Tridosha* offers a profound psycho-physiological framework that reflects the holistic approach of *Ayurveda*. While *Triguna*—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*—describe the subtle mental qualities governing consciousness, behavior, and emotions, the *Tridosha*—*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*—control the gross physiological functions of the body. The ancient sages emphasized that these two systems are not separate but interactively shape the overall *Prakriti* (constitution) of an individual. This integration helps understand the mind-body connection and forms the foundation for personalized health assessment and treatment.<sup>26</sup>

Classical *Ayurvedic* texts like *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* clearly indicate that mental tendencies influence bodily functions and vice versa. For instance, predominance of *Sattva Guna* is typically seen in individuals with balanced *Tridosha*, while excess *Rajas* tends to provoke *Vata* and *Pitta*, leading to disorders like irritability, hyperacidity, and anxiety. Similarly, *Tamas* is strongly associated with increased *Kapha*, manifesting as depression, laziness, and metabolic disorders. These correlations offer a basis to identify psychosomatic patterns in disease manifestation, which are especially relevant in lifestyle and stress-related disorders.<sup>27</sup>

In clinical settings, understanding the interplay between *Triguna* and *Tridosha* enhances diagnostic precision and therapeutic outcomes. It enables practitioners to evaluate not only the *Sharirika Prakriti* (bodily constitution) but also the *Manasa Prakriti* (mental constitution) of a patient. This becomes especially important in diseases where mental and physical symptoms are interlinked. Treatments can then be directed to correct both *Dosha* imbalances



and mental distortions through combined use of *Aushadha* (medicines), *Ahara* (diet), *Vihara* (lifestyle), and *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* (psychotherapy).<sup>28</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The intricate correlation between *Triguna* and *Tridosha* exemplifies the holistic and integrative vision of *Ayurveda*, where the mind and body are considered inseparable entities influencing each other continuously. This conceptual linkage provides a deeper understanding of human constitution, personality, and disease susceptibility. The predominance of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, or *Tamas* not only determines mental tendencies but also reflects in the balance or vitiation of *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. Recognizing this interdependence enhances the precision of *Ayurvedic* diagnosis and individualized therapeutic planning, especially in psycho-somatic and lifestyle disorders. Integrating this ancient insight with modern clinical approaches affirms the timeless relevance of *Ayurvedic* wisdom in promoting mental well-being, physiological harmony, and preventive health care.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST –NIL

## SOURCE OF SUPPORT –NONE

## REFERENCES

1. Sharma RK, Dash B. *Caraka Samhita of Agnivesha*, Vol. 1–3. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series Office; 2013.
2. Tripathi B. *Caraka Samhita with Charaka Chandrika Hindi Commentary*, Vol. 1–4. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan; 2014.
3. Yadavji Trikamji A. *Sushruta Samhita of Sushruta with Nibandhasangraha Commentary*, Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surbharati Prakashan; 2014.
4. Murthy KRS. *Ashtanga Hridaya of Vagbhata*, Vol. 1–3. Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi; 2005.
5. Dattaray Shastri. *Sankhya Karika of Ishwar Krishna with Vachaspati Mishra's Tattva Kaumudi*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Vidyabhavan; 2010.
6. Radhakrishnan S, Moore CA. *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; 1957.
7. Dwivedi LN. *Manas Prakriti Vigyana*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Bhavan; 2003.
8. Sharma PV. *Dravyaguna Vijnana*, Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; 2005.
9. Shukla V, Tripathi R. *Charaka Samhita (Sharira Sthana)*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2006.

10. Mishra LC. *Scientific Basis for Ayurvedic Therapies*. Boca Raton: CRC Press; 2004.
11. Rao RV. *Fundamentals of Ayurveda*. Delhi: Kalpaz Publications; 2008.
12. Gupta AK, Tandon N. *Reviews on Indian Medicinal Plants*, Vol. 1–3. New Delhi: ICMR; 2004.
13. Kulkarni R. *Psychology in Ayurveda*. Pune: Tilak Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya; 2006.
14. Srikanthamurthy KR. *Bhavaprakasha of Bhavamishra*, Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2000.
15. Dwivedi RK. *Ayurveda and Mind: Mental Health through Natural Healing*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass; 2012.
16. Patwardhan B, Warude D, Pushpangadan P, Bhatt N. Ayurveda and traditional Chinese medicine: a comparative overview. *Evid Based Complement Alternat Med*. 2005;2(4):465–73.
17. Singh RH. Exploring issues in the development of Ayurvedic research methodology. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2010;1(2):91–95.
18. Bhagwan Dash. *Fundamentals of Ayurveda*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company; 1980.
19. Lad V. *Ayurveda: The Science of Self-Healing*. New Mexico: Lotus Press; 1984.
20. Sharma PV. *Tridosha Theory in Ayurveda*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2005.
21. Acharya JT. *Ayurveda Dipika Commentary on Charaka Samhita*, Vol. 1. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2013.
22. Puri HS. *Rasayana: Ayurvedic Herbs for Longevity and Rejuvenation*. London: Taylor & Francis; 2003.
23. Meulenbeld GJ. *A History of Indian Medical Literature*, Vol. 1. Groningen: Egbert Forsten; 1999.
24. Kessler CS, Michalsen A, Cramer H, Dobos G. Ayurveda: Between Religion, Spirituality, and Medicine. *J Altern Complement Med*. 2013;19(5):371–379.
25. Patil AV. *Principles of Ayurveda*. Pune: International Academy of Ayurveda; 2011.
26. Singh RH. *Concept of Mind in Ayurveda: A Review*. *Anc Sci Life*. 1986;6(1):33–40.
27. Tiwari PV. *Ayurveda and Modern Psychiatry*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Viswabharati; 2007.
28. Kumar A, Arora A, Singh R. Psychosomatic disorders and their management in Ayurveda. *Ayu*. 2012;33(3):331–336.