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**Sumana Pothugunta**

Research Scholar, Yoga and  
Consciousness, Andhra  
University, Andhra Pradesh,  
India

## Integrated naturopathy and yogic approach on trigunas and well-being

**Sumana Pothugunta**

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### Abstract

Indian perspective of human nature and personality are often viewed through a trigunas perspective-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The Trigunas are composed of the Pancha Mahabhutas, but one or the other Guna is dominant singularly or in combination. There can never be a state when one or the other Pancha Mahabhutas and consequently the Trigunas are absent totally hopefully, we may look forward to some major landmarks of evidences for the triguna construct, over the coming period of time. "The Gunas... successively dominate, support, activate, and interact with each other. Sattva is buoyant and shining. Rajas is stimulating and moving. Tamas is heavy and enveloping". The triadic nature of Guna psychology is important because it is simply truer to human nature.

**Keywords:** Human nature, trigunas, naturopathy, yoga, well-being

### Introduction

#### Origin and attributes of Trigunas

The human body is a unique permutation of five basic elements-Ākāśa, Vāyu, Agni, Jala and Pṛthvī<sup>[1]</sup>. Susruta clearly depicted the five mahābhūta are being created by the Trigunas<sup>[2]</sup>. Indian Psychology is a unique subject which differently prevised in view of philosophical, theoretical, spiritual, scientific and logical in nature<sup>[3]</sup>. The triguna hypothesis is multi-dimensional grouping of human nature originates from Indian psychology. The sign of the Gunas and their effect on the human mind, psychological and social behavior has observed by psychologists and researchers world-wide<sup>[4]</sup>. In Indian point of view the character consists of both the physical and psychological framework. This framework fuses the physical, mental, and social parts of character<sup>[5]</sup>. The Bhagavad gita and Samkhya karika reveals that not only universe, the human beings characterized by trigunas like sattva, Rajas, Tamas. Further they also emphasized that sattva is characterized by knowledge, illumination, serenity, compassion, etc., Rajas is characterized by passion, arrogance, jealousy, etc., Tamas is characterised by drowsy, sleepy, lazy, etc.<sup>[6]</sup>. As per one of the shad darshana the Samkhya School is one of the Indian way of thinking, which expresses that the whole physical universe or "prakriti" is comprised of three constituents-Sattva, Rajas and Tamas<sup>[7]</sup>. These Gunasin various combinations and traits with physical human nature and expressed as characteristic and behavioral qualities. Chakraborty symbolized the sattva as "enlightenment", Rajas as "development", and "destruction" by Tamas in nature. Depending on the permutations and combinations in trigunas give rise to the different characteristic qualities in their individual prakriti. There will be a unique change in the individual vitality depend on prakriti, that was been adopted by trigunas<sup>[6]</sup>. The sattva, rajas and tamas of the sankhya philosophy was explained in the chandogyaupanishad and were clearly mentioned in the Katha Upanishad<sup>[3,10, 11, 8]</sup>. Gunas are the one who manifested the world and it's built indirectly, because according to bhagavathgeethamaya was the one who built this universe where as gunas are the basic building blocks for maya to create the world<sup>[9]</sup>. Gunas can't be seen, they can only be deduced from their manifestations<sup>[6]</sup>. To evaluate the individual gunas Questionnaires are one of the prime focus tool<sup>[10]</sup>. The three Gunas proportionally include each other and form a unity in trinity. They are associated to such an extent that they can never be isolated from each other. These three exist together as well as adhere.

**Corresponding Author:**

**Sumana Pothugunta**

Research Scholar, Yoga and  
Consciousness, Andhra  
University, Andhra Pradesh,  
India

In various situations one might be prevailing and the other two passive. There is no human quality which is certifiably not a complex of these three Gunas<sup>[11]</sup>. The three gunas represent the contrasts among individuals and their conduct also. No individual remains constantly cheerful or constantly tragic or discouraged. The relative strength and importance of the gunas in individuals can be studied and classified accordingly to ensure a better understanding of human behavior<sup>[12]</sup>. Moreover, the trigunas hypothesis takes the epistemic position that character isn't fixed, it is conceivable to change the attributes of individuals. Ultimately, trigunas comprehension of character considers a more extensive cluster of variables that impact the conduct of individuals. The three gunas are present not only within human beings but also determine the characteristics of all physical matter for example food can be classified as sattvic, rajasic and tamasic<sup>[13]</sup>. In spite of the fact the three gunas work in every human always one prevails over the other two passive and the one that prevails decides group or caste which he belongs<sup>[14]</sup>. Based on the classical Guna theory 16 types of personalities were recognized by both Charaka and Sushruta. There are seven types of Sattva, six of Rajas, and three of Tamas, totaling 16 types of personalities under which all people can be grouped<sup>[15]</sup>. Triguna provokes spiritual components of personality, physical, mental and connection among gunas and well-being indicators of personality, stress and life<sup>[16]</sup>. Triguna hypothesis is one of the ancient hypothesis which discusses about Sattva, Rajas and Tamas Gunas, in addition to that they discuss individual and intra singular contrasts and it covers every significant idea, mental procedures of recognition, inspiration and feeling which clarifies obviously the distinctions in Sattva, Rajas and Tamas prevailing character and its types<sup>[17]</sup>. Mental wellbeing which is characterized by World Health Organization (2004, p.12) as "psychological well-being is a condition of prosperity in which each individual understands their own latent capacity, can adapt to the ordinary sufferings of life, can work fruitfully and productively and can make a commitment to his or her community". Positive meaning of psychological well-being comprise of prosperity, which is a significant part<sup>[13]</sup>.

### Integration of Naturopathy and yoga

Naturopathy is a healing system using the power of nature and it is considered an art, science and philosophy. The foundation of naturopathic medicine is based on the philosophy of "vis medicatrix naturae, the healing power of nature"<sup>[18, 20]</sup>. The concept of holistic health or treating the body as a whole (using tools like water, earth, fire, air and weather) is given prime importance various drugless complementary medical sciences such as hydrotherapy, massage therapy, mud therapy, fasting therapy, nutrition and dietetics, chromo therapy, magneto therapy, yoga therapy, acupressure, acupuncture, chiropractics, osteopathy, aromatherapy, psychotherapy, physiotherapy, exercise therapy, Reiki and pranic healing are used<sup>[19]</sup>. The whole practice of nature cure is based on the following three principles.

1. Accumulation of morbid matter.
2. Abnormal composition of blood & lymph.
3. Lowered vitality (Underwood, 1971; Stofen, 1974).

Naturopathy believes that all the diseases arise due to accumulation of morbid matter in the body and if scope is given for its removal, it provides cure or relief. It also believes that the human body possesses inherent self-

constructing and self-healing powers<sup>[20]</sup>. Naturopathy is a distinct type of primary care medicine that blends age-old healing tradition with scientific progress. Naturopathic medication became out of the common recuperating development of the eighteenth and nineteenth hundreds of years<sup>[21]</sup>. Naturopathic medicine is a unique, whole medical system emphasizing disease prevention and patient empowerment<sup>[22]</sup>. Naturopathic medicine can be utilized related to customary clinical treatments to help the body's recuperating forms-a methodology alluded to as "integrative medication"<sup>[23]</sup>. Naturecure treatment includes with natural diet, calorie limitation (fasting), massages, yoga, physical exercise, hot bath, etc.<sup>[30]</sup> Yoga is a science as well as an art of healthy living. It is no way constrained by race, age, sex, religion, caste, creed and any other boundaries and can be practiced by those who seek an education on better living and those who want to have a more meaningful life. Yoga is the surest way of complete health<sup>[24, 27]</sup>. Yoga is the science of life and the art of living. It is India's oldest scientific, perfect spiritual discipline. Yoga is a method of training the mind and body for discovering spiritual truths<sup>[25]</sup>. Yoga is science of life, it offers us simple, easy remedies, techniques and methods of health and hygiene to assure physical and mental fitness with a minimum of time, effort and expense. Yoga is neither a sect nor an ideology but a practical training of mind and body. Yoga is also a technique for achieving purest form of self-awareness, devoid of all thoughts<sup>[23, 28]</sup>. Yoga has four significant tools which are all around coincided into each other:

- i) Postures (Asanas) for physical exercise.
- ii) Meditation for mind work out.
- iii) Breathing (Pranayam) for directing vitality accurately.
- iv) Deep relaxation (26, 28).

Yoga practice is also proved to affect mental balance of an individual allaying apprehension, stress and bringing about hormonal balance and feelings of well-being. This sense of well-being is attributed to its ability to increase endogenous melatonin secretion<sup>[31]</sup>. Practice of regular Hatha yoga and Omkar meditation can bring significant improvement in the autonomic equilization, respiratory performance and well-being<sup>[32]</sup>. To change the patient conduct requires an extreme way of life mediation in an organized and empowering condition utilizing a coordinated methodology of both pharmacological and non-pharmacological methodologies<sup>[28]</sup>. Suppliers of elective frameworks of medication like 'Naturopathy and Yoga' might be very much situated to offer organized way of life intercessions because of low innovative information required, moderate expenses and better patient worthiness to customary frameworks of medication<sup>[29]</sup>.

### Hypotheses

Is inpatient naturopathy and yoga therapies integratively, may have a significant impact on trigunas and wellbeing in people suffering with various ailments.

### Aims and Objectives of the Study

#### Primary objective

To evaluate the effects IANY (Integrated Approach of Naturopathy and Yoga) on trigunas from various diseased persons admitted at Mantena Satyanarayana Raju Arogyalayam (MSRA).

#### Secondary objective

To study the effect of inpatient naturopathy and yoga

therapies on well-being of patients admitted at MSRA.

## Materials and Methods

### Participants

We will select and recruit as many as possible (convenient sampling) those who are suffering with various ailments, age between 18 to 80, who will be willing to undergo 12 days of naturopathy and yogic treatments at MSRA (Manthana Satyanarayana Raju Arogyalayam) after obtaining written informed consent.

### Sample size

We are going to opt the convenient method of sampling (we will collect the data as many as possible in one month span from those who are coming to MSRA for admissions). The selection of patients will be based on following eligibility criteria.

### Setting

MSRA is a 600-bedded naturopathy institute located on the banks of river Krishna in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, a large south Indian state with a population of 84 million (2011 census). Started in November 2010, this is the largest naturopathy institute in India spread across an area of 18 acres in a natural, pollution-free location with full of greenery. The institution is very popular with nearly all 600 beds occupied at any given point of time. Patients with a variety of chronic diseases including DM, Hypertension, Cardiovascular diseases, Asthma, chronic back ache, Arthritis, chronic skin diseases etc. seek care at the institution and come from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Orissa. Even people without any disease seek care for weight reduction and as a measure of general health promotion. There are 19 departments for treatment managed by around 400 dedicated trained staff, 16 naturopathy doctors, 120 paramedical workers trained in administering naturopathy treatments and other support staff working in security, transport, gardening and kitchen departments. The institute is well equipped in order to cater for the needs of patients which includes a dedicated yoga hall, kitchen, dining facility, walking tracks, boating facility, swimming facility, laboratory, emergency medical services, physiotherapy unit and many naturopathy treatments (like Naturopathy massage, enema, colon therapy, mud-bath, steam-bath, sand-bath and neem-bath). All these services are paid-for and available at a nominal cost. All the participants will be instructed to follow a institutional daily routine (annexure I).

The hospital has an intensive care unit (staffed by qualified and experienced physicians) to deal with minor emergencies (like hypo/hyperglycaemia, electrolyte disturbances, any gastrointestinal disturbances, dyspnea etc.) and well-linked referral facilities to tertiary care hospitals like Ramesh Super-specialty Cardiac Centre or Helpline Hospital, which is situated about 5-10 kms from the institute to deal with any other complications. Although, it is very rare, patients are transported, if required to these referral super-specialty hospitals using institutional ambulance. The additional costs of these emergencies are to be borne by the patient.

### Inclusion criteria

- i) Subjects of both sexes, ages between 18 to 80 years.
- ii) Who are willing to participate in the study by giving written informed consent form.

### Exclusion criteria

- i) Any type of debilitating diseases (physically cannot

perform yoga or naturopathy treatments).

- ii) Persons who are using anti-psychotics/ medications
- iii) Severe anemia Hb% < 7 grams.
- iv) Participants who are not having previous naturopathy and yoga exposure in the past 6 months.

### Design

The study would be signal arm observational trail with assessment at the beginning and at the end of 12th day. Participants who are willing to participate in Naturopathy and yogic practices on the advice of qualified naturopathy & yoga physician will be taken into study and the assessment data will be collected from the patients on the first day followed by 12 days of naturopathy and yogic procedure will be given to the patient according to necessity of his/her medical condition under the guidance of qualified naturopathy & yoga physician, after 12 days the post data will be collected at the end of the study.

### Observational protocol

After familiarizing the subjects with the study and obtained the written informed consent form and study protocol. The parameters, described below will be recorded at the beginning and at the end of study period. The period of study will be 12 days.

### Assessments

Vedic personality inventory (VPI): The Vedic Personality Inventory, developed by Dr. David Wolf, is the most extensively researched and validated psychological assessment tool based on the three gunas. Understanding your guna profile can be a powerful tool towards self-realization, and can provide insight to what types of vocation will be most satisfying for you. Also, the results from the VPI can serve as a foundation for systematic, scientific elevation of your spiritual consciousness.

The short form of the Mental Health Continuum (MHC-SF): is derived from the long form (MHC-LF), which consisted of seven items measuring emotional well-being, six 3-item scales (or 18 items total) that measured the six dimensions of Ryff's (1989) model of psychological well-being, and five 3-item scales (or 15 items total) that measure the five dimensions of Keyes' (1998) model of social well-being.

	Day 1	Day 12
Vedic personality inventory	XXX	XXX
Mental health Continuum SF	XXX	XXX

### Data entry and analysis

Data will be double entered from the structured proforma into an electronic database created using EpiData software (version 3.1, Epi Data association, Odense, Denmark) and validated.

### Ethics Issues

**Ethics Issues:** Ethics approval will be sought from Institutional Ethics Committee of MSRA. A patient information sheet (Annexure II) will be provided to the patients and a written informed consent (Annexure III) will be obtained. Patients will be explained that participation in the study is entirely voluntary and all the expenses related to the treatment, stay, diet and laboratory investigations performed will be borne by the institution. However, to ensure commitment of the study participants, Patients will be free to withdraw at any stage of the study. All treatment is routinely

provided to all the patients admitted in the institute and there will be no difference in the care provided to research participants and non-participants during their stay in the hospital, this will be explained to the patients.

**Data confidentiality:** Data will be entered in a designed format based on the information obtained by patient interviews, their laboratory reports and details recorded in the registers. Names will be used to follow-up patients, but confidentiality will be maintained by keeping data collection forms securely in a lockable cabinet and the electronic data file will be kept in a password protected computer. Both data sets will be maintained securely for ten years after completion of study. We will enter into a confidentiality disclosure agreement with all those involved in data collection and representative of laboratory. For the purpose of dissemination, we will use only the aggregate data of the patients with no reference to individual names.

### Conclusion

Vedic perspective of the personality gives an in-depth understanding of the human behavior. Trigunas impacts the perception at large. It explains the cognitive appraisal very extensively, as we know that cognition is all about how an individual perceives an object or a situation. In its turn copying style may be set by the individual. The overview of the perception is being given here, which was concluded from this observational study. Never any human being only sattvic or only rajasic or only tamasic. Despite this, all they need to do is to balance these trigunas in them. It's impossible for oneself to ignore any one of these gunas. For any best performance in job, any personnel need to acquire skills to maintain a balance in sattvic, rajasic and tamasic scores. As per the study, the retired staff showed more scores in sattva and lowest in the latter. But this not stereotyped for such situations. Instead efforts can be made to identify our life positions and transform the proportions of rajas, tamas into sattva.

### Annexure I: Daily routine at the institute

Time	Activity
4:30-5:00	Wake up music, drinking 1 litre of water, attending to nature call
5:00-6:30	Yoga (30 minutes-general exercises like head, neck, shoulder, hip, knee, ankle rotation and front and back exercises and set of sun salutations)
	(30 minutes-breathing exercises like breathing through left nostril (Chendrabedha), right nostril (suryabedha), both nostrils (nadisudhi), chest breathing (kapalabedhi), Fast breathing (basthrika)
	(30minutes-yogic postures like Trikonasana, Katichakrasana, Vakrasana, Bhujangasana, Ardhamatsyendrasana, Vajrasana, Pavanamuktasana, Setubandhasana, Shalabasana, Uttana Padasana, Naukasana)
7:00-8:00	<b>Breakfast:</b> Germinating seeds (Sprouts) which includes Green gram, beans, red gram, horse gram, wheat, jowar and fresh fruit salads
8:00-9:00	Thought for the day lecture (topics like relationships in life, stress management, personality development)
9:00-12:00 and 14:00-17:00	Treatments will be given to the patients according to the treatment schedule
12:00-13:00	<b>Lunch:</b> Oil-free breads prepared out of whole-wheat flour, boiled vegetable curry prepared without added oil, salt or spices.
13:00-14:00	Educative health lectures delivered by eminent naturopathic doctors on various health issues.
16:00- 17:00	Obesity Yoga
17:00-18:00	Recreation, boat riding, walking etc.
18:00-19:00	<b>Dinner:</b> Oil-free breads prepared out of whole-wheat flour, boiled vegetable curry prepared without added oil, salt or spices.; Fresh fruit salads
19:00-20.30	Naturopathic health educative sessions on self-care and healthy eating practices, hygiene and motivation on lifestyle modification
21:00	Bed-time (Early to rise and early to bed practice emphasized in naturopathy)

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