



Study The Relationship Between Triguna Personality Types, Grief And Anger

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Abstract: Background: Triguna, rooted in Samkhya philosophy, categorizes the human mind into three elements: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Sattva embodies peace and well-being, Rajas signifies passion and restlessness, while Tamas represents inertia and ignorance. Grief arises from loss and affects mental, physical, and emotional health, often accompanied by feelings of sadness, guilt, and sorrow. Anger, another potent emotion, is linked to frustration and irritation. Objective: To study the correlation between Triguna Personality, Grief and Anger. Methodology: A study to examine the personality types and anger among grieving individuals in the Indian population. Result: This study explored the relationship between Triguna Personality types, grief, and anger, revealing a significant correlation among these variables.

Index Terms - Rajas, Tamas, Sattva, Anger and Grief.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Tri-Guna concept is central to Hindu philosophy, especially Sankhya philosophy. It refers to the three basic qualities or modes of nature present in everything: Sattva (purity, knowledge, and harmony), Rajas (passion, activity, and unrest), and Tamas (darkness, ignorance, and laziness).

- Sattva represents purity, knowledge, and peace. People with higher Sattva are usually calm, focused, and clear-minded. They seek balance and understanding in life.

- Rajas embodies activity, desire, and a sense of restlessness. Those with a dominant Rajasic nature are often energetic, ambitious, and motivated by their desires and passions. They frequently experience inner restlessness and a flurry of thoughts.

- Tamas is associated with inertia, obscurity, and lack of awareness. People with a dominant Tamasic nature tend to be sluggish, disoriented and lack drive or clear thinking. They resist change and prefer stability and routine.

According to the Sankhya philosophy, every individual possesses all three Gunas, but the dominance of one over the others determines their nature, behaviour, and worldview. These Gunas are not static and can change over time through experiences, actions, and practices. The interplay of these Gunas shapes our thoughts, emotions, and actions, including our experiences of grief and anger. For instance, an excess of Rajas can lead to intense anger, while an excess of Tamas can lead to deep grief or depression.

In Sankhya philosophy, each person holds all three Gunas, but one usually dominates, shaping their character, conduct, and perspective. These Gunas are dynamic and can shift with time, influenced by life events, deeds, and habits. Their interaction influences our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, including how we handle sorrow and rage. For instance, too much Rajas can lead to intense anger, while excessive Tamas could promote deep grief and depression.

The relationship between Tri Guna, anger, and grief reveals deep connections. Tri Guna, comprising Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, delineates diverse facets of human nature and conduct. Anger often stems from increased Rajas, marked by activity, desire, and restlessness. Conversely, grief may arise from an excess of Tamas, typified by inertia, darkness, and ignorance. Thus, an individual's encounters with anger and grief can be shaped by the

prevailing dominance of specific Gunas within them. Moreover, navigating these emotions can represent a pathway toward attaining a more Sattvic state, defined by purity, knowledge, and tranquillity.

Grief is generally a reaction to loss, particularly when someone or something very close has passed away. It's a natural aspect of human existence. However, grieving involves a complex array of emotions such as sadness, anger, guilt, and deep sorrow, impacting one's mental, physical, and emotional state. The grieving process can fluctuate between intense emotional upheaval and periods of adaptation and acceptance. Consequently, it can alter one's outlook on life, values, and self-perception. Grief is deeply personal, influenced by individual traits, the nature of the loss, and cultural background.

Anger manifests as a potent emotional reaction marked by irritation, discontentment, or outright hostility. It's a natural and widespread human sentiment experienced to varying extents and triggered by diverse circumstances. External factors, like particular people, events, or circumstances perceived as unjust or aggravating, can provoke anger. Conversely, internal struggles, such as personal concerns or dwelling on past incidents, can also fuel anger.

Anger's impact on human existence is extensive and varied. Despite its often negative connotation, anger can have constructive aspects. It can serve as a catalyst, spurring individuals to tackle obstacles, confront injustices, and make assertive decisions. Anger may also prompt self-defence or protection of loved ones in perilous situations. Furthermore, expressing anger can communicate one's needs or boundaries, fostering social harmony and mutual understanding.

However, when anger isn't handled effectively, it can massively affect multiple areas of one's life. Unchecked or heightened anger may culminate in enduring stress, relational strife, and health issues. It can obscure rationality, hinder decision-making prowess, and prompt regrettable impulsive behaviours. Moreover, it can fuel animosity and aggression, fostering social detachment and interpersonal challenges.

Moreover, chronic anger can deeply affect mental well-being. It may lead to psychological ailments like depression and anxiety, worsen preexisting mental health issues, and heighten susceptibility to substance abuse. It can instigate a spiral of pessimism, wherein anger fosters adverse thought patterns, further fuelling the cycle of anger.

Hence, it's imperative to cultivate methods to regulate and mitigate anger to promote equilibrium and well-being. This could entail acquiring tailored anger management tactics, accessing professional support as needed, and prioritizing holistic emotional wellness through mindfulness, physical activity, and fostering positive social connections.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Literature Review

Pannaga K. Murthy and S.K. Kiran Kumar explored the significance of Triguna in Modern Psychology as a concept of Personality. It has been explored that this concept has been a part of Atharva Veda and Samkhya Philosophy. Three Gunas, which are Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are part of every individual as well as constitute almost everything in the universe. Their composition serves an individual's personality type which then is categorized into Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. According to the relevant texts, three gunas can be affiliated with many human emotions. Sattvic people exhibit clear perceptions and introverted tendencies and are very much inclined towards Self-Growth. On the other hand, Rajasic qualities lean towards extraversion and have higher levels of anger and aggression which leads to lower life satisfaction. Meanwhile, Tamasic personalities are observed to be psychotic and have poor cognition. It comes out of ignorance and relates more to ignorance and illusion.

Pulkit Khanna (2013) and other fellow researchers found that there can be a fair correlation between Life Satisfaction and The Vedic Theory. The study has focused on closing the gap by examining human temperament and various emotions from a Vedic Perspective. Sattva was found to be positively related to well-being indicators as opposed to Tamas and Rajas, which were inversely related to all of them. The age

criteria also reflected a few observations such as older people tend to score relatively higher on Sattva and exhibit personality traits such as impulse control and positivity. This research also found evidence of the underlying impact of gender personality traits. Such as males scoring higher on Rajas compared to Females.

Mr Rithvik S Kashyap, Dr Basavarajappa, Dr SK Kiran Kumar and Dr Sahithya B.R studied Triguna and Coping Strategies. Their work was to find a relation between Triguna and how it affects the way individuals create their coping strategies. Sattva relates to healthy coping strategies. Generally, this would include adaptive strategies such as active coping and planning. Rajasic personality relates to avoidance and denial of situations and facts. Tamasic traits were found to be very unhealthy and least likely to be active coping strategies.

S Suneetha and Ch. Sri Krishna, Researchers explored various research to understand the relationship between other personality theories and Triguna. These include exploring the

temperament of people related to Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Describing how each of the Gunas can also be represented as Extroversion, Introversion and Psychoticism. These gunas were also found to be an influential aspect of an individual's cognitive abilities. Sattvic personalities tend to be aware of their feelings, Rajasic look out for facts as well as clear knowledge and Tamasic personalities lack attention and clarity.

Dr Arvind Pathak, Dr Yashashree Vasant Joshi and Dr Umesh Ghate (2025). Researchers explored Anger, one of many human emotions and its understanding from the lens of Ayurveda. Anger has been explored and acknowledged for thousands of years in Ancient Vedic Texts. Anger can take a lot of forms and could lead to various other conditions. Anger heavily influences the state of an individual and could lead to various physiological changes as well. According to the research, Anger originates from the excess of Rajas Guna which represents a state full of irritation, restlessness and heat. An increase in anger not only affects the present state but could also lead to the accumulation of various other factors leading to diseases.

Lakhwinder Singh (2008). The research was about studying the relationship between Personality Factors defined by Raymond Cattell. Using various variables and intercorrelation of 16PF and Vedic Inventory, a lot of observations could be made. Each personality factor was correlated with Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. All three gunas were also found to have a relationship with each other. These findings were very similar to the previous texts such as Srimad Bhagavata Geeta.

Elizabeth Goetter, Eric Bui, Arielle Horenstein, Amanda W. Baker, Susanne Hoepfner, Meredith Charney & Naomi M. Simon (2018) The study discovered that people with Complicated Grief (CG) tend to have higher neuroticism levels compared to those who are grieving but not experiencing complications, even after considering other factors. While there wasn't clear evidence for lower extraversion in CG individuals, neuroticism was strongly linked to lower levels of extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. These findings suggest that neuroticism could be a key factor in causing or maintaining CG. Moreover, experiencing loss might make some people more neurotic, showing that personality traits can change based on life events. Further research is needed to explore this idea over time. In clinical settings, evaluating neuroticism could help identify patients who might struggle with CG or have trouble coping with grief.

Isaac Rahimian Boogar and Siavash Talepasand (2015). This study looked at how defence mechanisms, personality traits, and other factors affect complicated grief in families after a cancer-related death. It found that certain defence mechanisms, like neurotic ones, make grief worse, while mature ones can help. The younger age of the deceased person is linked to more severe grief. Traits like cooperativeness and self-transcendence, which include empathy and spirituality, can lessen grief. Surprisingly, gender and other factors didn't seem to affect grief as expected. This might be due to cultural differences and how the study was done. More research is needed to understand this better.

Lilli Deutsch (2023). This research looked at how the Big Five personality traits connect to complicated grief (CG) symptoms. It found that while neuroticism is linked to CG symptoms, it doesn't seem to keep causing them over time. So, focusing on reducing neuroticism might not help with CG. However, understanding of how other personality traits influence CG symptoms remains limited.

Thomas M. Meuser and Samuel J. Marwit. This study looks at how coping theory applies to grief. It shows that coping methods strongly affect grief levels, unlike ego psychology, which focuses on personality traits. Emotion-based coping leads to higher grief, while task-based coping lowers it. However, since the study only shows connections and doesn't prove causes, and the group studied is specific, the results might not apply broadly. While task-focused coping can help with grief by dealing with practical issues, finding the right mix of coping methods is important. This balance could reduce the risk of long-lasting grief. But the study couldn't thoroughly look into how different coping methods are balanced.

2.2 Rationale

This research aimed to examine the direct influence of Triguna Personality on grief and anger. The hypothesis posited a direct impact of Rajas and Tamas on both grief and anger, while predicting an inverse relationship between Sattva and both anger and grief.

This research is needed to better understand the relationship between Triguna Personality types, grief, and anger. Studying these together can help us understand how personality affects the way individuals react to grief and anger. This knowledge can guide interventions and support for those dealing with these emotions, helping them find better coping strategies.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aim

To study the relationship between TRIGUNA, ANGER and GRIEF.

3.2 Objectives

- To study the relationship between Sattva and Grief
- To study the relationship between Rajas and Grief
- To study the relationship between Tamas and Grief
- To study the relationship between Sattva and Anger
- To study the relationship between Rajas and Anger
- To study the relationship between Tamas and Anger

3.3 Hypothesis

- There will be an inverse relationship between Sattva and Anger.
- There will be an inverse relationship between Sattva and Grief.
- There will be a direct relationship between Rajas and Anger, as well as between Rajas and Grief.
- There will be a direct relationship between Tamas and Anger, as well as between Tamas and Grief.

3.4 Variables

- Triguna - A concept of classifying personality according to Eastern Samkhya Philosophy.
- Anger - It is one of the emotions generally related to frustration and irritation.
- Grief - Feeling of distress caused by the loss of someone.

3.5 Sample

A total of 112 Indian Adults, consistent of 67 Males and 57 Females, aged between 17-55 years, were selected as the sample.

3.6 Description of Tools Employed

- The Vedic Personality Inventory comprises 56 items rated on a 7-point scale, designed to assess three distinct personality types: Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. Upon completion and scoring, the inventory unveils the individual's predominant personality type.

- The Anger Sub-Scale of the Buss Perry Aggression Questionnaire consists of seven items, each rated on a 5-point scale. A higher score on this sub-scale reflects a greater level of anger in an individual.

- The Brief Grief Questionnaire features five items, each rated on a 3-point scale. A score of 4 or higher indicates a likelihood that the individual may be experiencing complicated grief.

3.7 Statistical Analysis

The obtained data underwent scoring, and descriptive statistics were employed to compute the mean and standard deviation scores. We also calculated individual correlation coefficients for each group to assess the association between Triguna personality, Grief and Anger.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 1

VARIABLES	N	MEAN	SD
Sattva	112	39.20%	6.827%
Tamas	112	28.63%	4.969%
Rajas	112	32.17%	3.424%
Grief	112	4.12	2.404
Anger	112	20.27	4.734

The data shown in Table 1 displays the mean and standard deviation values of Sattva (M = 39.20%, SD = 6.827%), Tamas (M = 28.63%, SD = 4.969%), Rajas (M = 32.17%, SD = 3.424%), Grief (M = 4.12, SD = 2.404) and Anger (M = 20.27 SD = 4.734) among a sample of 112 participants.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 2

VARIABLE	N	1	2	3
1. Sattva	112	1		
2. Anger	112	-.410**	1	
3. Grief	112	-.172	.210*	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the correlations observed among Sattva personality types, Anger, and Grief. Notably, Sattva demonstrates negative correlations with both Anger and Grief, indicating an inverse relationship. It is particularly noteworthy that Sattva shows a significant and negative association with Anger (-.410**), suggesting a pronounced tendency for individuals with higher levels of Sattva to experience lower levels of anger.

Table 3

VARIABLE	N	1	2	3
1. Rajas	112	1		
2. Anger	112	.230*	1	
3. Grief	112	.008	.210*	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 presents the relationship between Rajas, Anger, and Grief. Rajas shows a significant positive correlation with Anger ($r = 0.230^*$), indicating a direct association between the two variables. Additionally, Rajas exhibits a positive relationship with Grief ($r = 0.008$), although this association is not statistically significant.

Table 4

VARIABLE	N	1	2	3
1. Tamas	112	1		
2. Anger	112	.405**	1	
3. Grief	112	.231*	.210*	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 illustrates the correlation between Tamas, Anger, and Grief. Tamas demonstrates a statistically significant positive correlation with Anger ($r = 0.405$, $p < 0.01$), indicating a strong and direct relationship between the two variables. Furthermore, Tamas exhibits a positive correlation with Grief ($r = 0.231$), although this association does not reach statistical significance.

V. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the relationship between Triguna, Grief, and Anger. In addition, it sought to understand the relationship among the three personality types, namely Sattva, Rajas, and Anger.

This would offer a thorough comprehension of how the three Triguna personality types - Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas - impact our reactions to anger and grief. Additionally, it seeks to highlight the crucial role personality plays in navigating these intense emotions. This understanding could be really helpful in making personalized ways to deal with tough feelings, making us emotionally stronger, and helping us understand better how our natural traits affect our emotions.

Our first and second hypotheses posited that there would be an inverse relationship between Sattva, one of the Triguna personality types representing qualities of purity and balance, and Anger as well as Grief. This hypothesis stemmed from the notion that individuals with higher levels of Sattva are more inclined towards inner peace and emotional equilibrium, thus exhibiting lower levels of anger. The results of our analysis indeed supported this hypothesis, revealing a significant negative correlation between Sattva and Anger ($r = -0.410^{**}$). This suggests that as Sattva scores increase, indicating a stronger tendency towards balance and harmony, Anger and Grief scores tend to decrease. This finding resonates with the conceptualization of Sattva as promoting a state of calmness and equanimity, wherein individuals strive to lead balanced and harmonious lives. Consequently, those with a dominant Sattva personality are more likely to approach life's challenges with serenity and composure, resulting in a decreased propensity for experiencing anger and Grief. These results are consistent with prior research indicating that individuals with higher Sattva scores tend to report lower levels of anger and aggression in their daily lives. (Marutham, et al., 1998).

In a study conducted by Mathew (1995), researchers found a significant association between Sattva and heightened self-awareness as well as flexibility. Sattva, one of the Triguna personality types in Hindu philosophy, is characterized by balance, and harmony. Individuals with higher levels of Sattva tend to exhibit a greater capacity for introspection and self-reflection, enabling them to develop a deeper understanding of their emotions, including anger. Moreover, Sattva-inclined individuals demonstrate flexibility in their thinking and behaviour, allowing them to adapt more effectively to challenging situations and emotional experiences.

This flexibility allows them to think about anger and grief openly and curiously, instead of being defensive or rigid. By accepting and not judging their emotions, people with higher Sattva levels can understand why they feel angry and find better ways to deal with it.

Overall, Sattva is important for making people more aware of themselves and flexible. This helps them understand anger and grief better and find better ways to deal with it. By practising mindfulness, accepting their feelings, and being adaptable, people with higher Sattva levels can handle these emotions better and feel emotionally healthier.

The third hypothesis suggests a direct relationship between Rajas and both Anger and Grief. The study revealed a correlation of 0.230^{*} between Rajas and Anger and 0.008 between Rajas and Grief.

Rajas can influence Anger and Grief in different ways. The study backs this up by showing that Rajas can lead to feelings of anger and grief. Rajas is one of the Triguna personality types, signifying high activity, restlessness, and intense passion.

Individuals with high levels of Rajas are often characterized by their active and impulsive nature. They tend to be energetic and often prefer action over contemplation. When confronted with challenges or situations that provoke frustration, individuals with high Rajas may react swiftly and forcefully, displaying heightened levels of anger. This impulsivity can lead to impulsive outbursts or aggressive behaviour, as they may struggle to control their emotional responses in the heat of the moment.

Moreover, their relentless pursuit of goals and ambitions can contribute to feelings of frustration and irritability when faced with obstacles or setbacks. Individuals with high Rajas may be highly driven and ambitious, setting ambitious goals for themselves and striving relentlessly to achieve them (Relationship between Triguna theory and well-being indicators, Khanna, Pulkit; Singh, Kamlesh; Singla, Surbhi; Verma, Vivek, 2013). However, when confronted with barriers or delays in their progress, they may become impatient and easily frustrated, exacerbating their experience of anger.

Individuals with higher levels of Rajas may face challenges when dealing with grief and loss due to their restless and active nature. Their natural inclination towards constant activity and stimulation may make it difficult for them to sit with feelings of sadness and loss.

Instead of allowing themselves to fully experience and process these emotions, they may instinctively seek out distractions or avoid confronting their grief altogether.

When people with high Rajas feel sad about losing something, they might try to avoid facing their sadness. They might keep themselves busy with work or activities, use drugs or other things to not feel sad, or stay away from places or people that remind them of what they lost. While these ways of coping might make them feel better for a short time, they can make it harder for them to heal from their Grief in the long run.

Avoiding grief like this means they might not get the chance to feel better and healthily work through their feelings. Ignoring sad feelings can cause unresolved grief, which might come back later or cause other problems like having trouble with other relationships.

Overall, the influence of Rajas can make people feel more upset and impulsive, and they might avoid dealing with tough feelings. People with a lot of Rajas might find it helpful to learn how to control their emotions better, accept their feelings, and find peace inside themselves.

The fourth hypothesis proposes a direct connection between Tamas and both Anger and Grief. The results indicate a significant direct relationship between Tamas and Anger (0.405**), along with a positive but not statistically significant relationship between Tamas and Grief (0.231).

Tamas is linked with fear, sorrow and negligence (Uma, 1969) due to its tendency to promote feeling lazy and unmotivated.

When it comes to grief, people with higher levels of Tamas might struggle to understand and show their emotions because they tend to feel unmotivated and sluggish. They might find it hard to talk about their feelings or ask for help from others, preferring to be alone. This can make them feel emotionally numb or disconnected, making it tough for them to deal with feelings of sadness and loss.

This tendency towards withdrawal and isolation can further increase their sense of emotional numbness and detachment, creating a gap between themselves and their emotions. They may struggle to articulate their feelings or to connect with the support and understanding offered by friends and loved ones. This isolation can intensify feelings of loneliness and despair, compounding the challenges of navigating the grieving process.

When it comes to anger, people with a lot of Tamas may not show it directly. Instead, they might hold it in or show it indirectly. They might not speak up about what's bothering them and might use subtle ways to express their anger. This can make them feel frustrated, resentful, and powerless because they find it hard to speak up or deal with their anger directly.

Avoiding or hiding anger can cause problems in relationships. People with a lot of Tamas might find it hard to tell others what they want or set limits, which can lead to misunderstandings and hard feelings. Also, their way of showing anger indirectly can make relationships tense, as others try to figure out what they mean. They need to learn to express themselves clearly and honestly to avoid these issues in their relationships.

Overall, how Tamas affects anger shows why it's important to learn good communication skills to handle conflicts and express feelings. People with many Tamas might find it helpful to work on understanding themselves better, being more assertive, and talking openly and honestly in their relationships.

These findings shed light on how the Trigunas, the three fundamental qualities, impact individuals' emotional responses, offering valuable insights into the intricate relationship between personality traits, experiences of grief, and expressions of anger.

Implications

The current research and its findings showcase the relationship between personality traits, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and the experiences of Grief and Anger. Understanding Triguna can enhance psychotherapy outcomes by tailoring interventions, empowering individuals to manage emotions better and improving communication in relationships.

Finally, incorporating insights from the Trigunas into psychological research and practice contributes to greater cultural sensitivity and inclusivity. By recognizing the significance of Eastern philosophies in understanding human behaviour and emotional experiences, professionals can adopt more holistic and culturally responsive approaches to assessment and intervention. This makes mental health care equitable and more inclusive, so everyone, no matter their background, gets the support they need.

Limitations

As a limitation of this study, it was not feasible to control for the timing of loss when examining grief. Having the ability to determine the duration of intense grief would have allowed for more precise statistical analysis.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has given us important insights into how Triguna Personality types affect Grief and Anger. By looking at how Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas impact emotions, we've learned more about what influences people's experiences of these intense emotions.

The findings support the hypothesis that higher levels of Sattva are associated with lower levels of anger and grief, highlighting the importance of balance and harmony in managing emotional reactions. Additionally, the study revealed that individuals with higher levels of Rajas tend to experience more intense feelings of anger and grief, while those with higher levels of Tamas may struggle to process and express their emotions effectively.

These findings carry significant implications for psychotherapy, interpersonal dynamics, and cultural comprehension. Therapists can employ Triguna to customize interventions, thereby empowering clients to navigate their emotions and cultivate enhanced well-being. Similarly, recognizing how personality traits affect emotions can improve communication and understanding in relationships, leading to smoother interactions.

Furthermore, integrating perspectives from Eastern philosophies into psychological inquiry fosters cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, thereby guaranteeing that mental health services are equitable and empowering for individuals of varied cultural backgrounds.

Overall, this study contributes to our understanding of how personality traits shape emotional experiences and underscores the importance of considering individual differences in psychological research and practice.

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