



## Classification of Manas Prakriti in Ayurveda Texts: A Critical Review

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda categorizes humans based on the Deha-Manas prakriti. It has placed equal emphasis on an individual's psychological and physical health. A person's unique physical and mental configuration is known as their constitution, or configuration. It is also significant for knowing the prognosis, etiopathogenesis, and management of a variety of illnesses. It is claimed that differences in each group's and individual's cognitive capacities are largely caused by nature. The goal of explaining manas-prakriti is to become acquainted with a person's psychological traits and qualities that can be very useful in all facets of life. Three types of psyches, with their numerous subtypes are described to be born from virtue, anger, and delusion. Notably, there remains a considerable amount of variation in the classification and nomenclature of the subtypes across various tenets of Ayurveda. In this present article, the authors try to critically review the various classifications of Manas Prakriti, mentioned hereby, from all major available Ayurveda texts. This will provide a framework in future to analyze, compare and interpret the rationale behind such sub- categorizations. Nevertheless, the blueprint of developing assessment methods to categorize individuals on such basis will also be formed.

Keywords: Manas Prakriti, Psyche, Classifications

### 1. Introduction

The word Prakriti is derived from Pra + Kri (to create or to act). Prakriti means constitution, disposition, or fundamental form (Williams M, 2002). Basic entity responsible for creation of Universe is called as Prakriti. Samkhya Darshan and Sushruta describe it as Avyakta Prakriti or Moola Prakriti the state of equilibrium of Triguna (Su.Sa.1/9-10). While the Sarira dosa namely Vata, Pitta, Kapha define the Deha Prakriti, Sattva, Rajas and Tama (Triguna) determine the Manas Prakriti. These are mainly psychological attributes, which also affect physical characteristics. Satva is related to consciousness, intelligence, perception and memory, Rajas is responsible for kinetic energy and impetus; Tamas is mass, inertia and responsible for stability (Dwarkanath C, 1998).

Prakriti is formed at fertilization and Dosha status of male and female gamete play important role. There are other factors, which influence Prakriti determination. Foetus has inherited characters from father (Pitrija), mother (Maatrija), Soul (Aatmaja), mind (Satvaja), diet (Rasaja) and homologation (Saatmyaja). Characters of individuals are resultant of these factors (Ca. Sa 3/15). Manas Prakriti also has seven types as Dehaprakriti. It is also known as Gunaparakriti, Mahaparakriti or Chittaparakriti and mainly deals with attributes of mind. Charaka and Sushruta further subdivide Manas Prakriti into 16 categories (Ca.Sa. 4/31-57, Su Sa.4/81-99)

### 2. Materials and Methods

This study has been done based on critical review of classical Ayurveda Samhita, published research works, modern literature and research works conducted at various institutes. The possible correlation has been made between collected information and has been presented in systematic way.

### 3. Results

Manas Prakriti is classified based on dominance of one or the other Gunas, their combination and equilibrium of all the three Gunas. Vagbhata divides Manas Prakriti into 7 types such as Satvika, Rajasika, Tamasika, Satvaraja, Rajatama, Satvatama and Samagunaparakriti (A.S.Sa.8/20).

### 3.1 Three Major Manas Prakriti

The three types viz. shuddha (sattva dominant), rajas dominant, and tamas dominant have respective determining factors (bhaga or ansha). (Ca.Sa 4/36). The three factors are welfare tendency or auspiciousness (kalyanansha), anger or passion tendency (roshansha), and perplexity or bewilderment (mohansha). This makes the constitution dynamic. The following table (Table 1) shows the characteristics of these three personalities. (Su.Sa.1/98)

**Table 1 - Three Major Manas Prakriti**

S.No.	Type of Mental constitution	Qualities
1	Sattvika	Kindness (anrushasyam) Forgiveness (titiksha) Truthfulness (satya) Religiousness (dharma) Believing in God or veda (astikyam) or optimism Knowledgeable (gyana) Logical intelligence ( <a href="#">buddhi</a> ) Good memory( <a href="#">smriti</a> ) Wisdom (medha) Good retention power of the mind (dhriti) Non attachment or overindulgence (anabhishtanga)
2	Rajasika	Excessive miseries in life (dukkha) Excessive wandering (atanshilata) Less retention or impatience (adhriti) Ego (ahankar) Untruthfulness (anrutikatvam) Unkindness (akarunyam) Hypocrisy or fraud (dambha) Haughtiness or arrogance (mana) Pleasure or exhilaration (harsh) Lust or excessive indulgence (kama) Anger (krodha)
3	Tamasika	Sadness (vishada) Not believing in God and veda (nastikyam) or pessimism Not follow the religion or righteousness (adharmashilata)

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Perverted intelligence (buddhenirodho)

Dumbness (ajnana)

Foolishness (durmedhastvam)

Lethargy or inactivity (akarmashilta)

Sleepiness (nidralu)

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### 3.2 Sixteen Subtypes of Manas Prakriti

Based on developmental perfections or milestones from a state of ignorance, sixteen varieties or stages are described by Caraka and Susruta. Kasyapa added 2 more to make it eighteen. Lastly the fully developed animals and man emerged and is grouped as mammalia.

The eighteen steps of Manasa (Prakrti) Kaya i.e. Matsya to Brahma appear to be like the above said stages of developments (Table 2):

**Table 2 – Sixteen Sub Types of Manas Prakriti**

Serial No.	Caraka	Sushruta	Kasyapa
<b>Satvika Kaya:</b>			
1.	Brahma	Brahma	Brahma
2.	-	-	Prajapati
3.	Arsa	Arsa	Arsa
4.	Aindra	Aindra	Aindra
5.	Yamya	Yamya	Yamya
6.	Varuna	Varuna	Varuna
7.	Kauberā	Kauberā	Kauberā
8.	Gandharva	Gandharva	Gandharva
<b>Rajasika Kaya:</b>			
9.	Asura	Asura	Asura
10.	Raksasa	Raksasa	Raksasa
11.	Paisaca	Paisaca	Paisaca
12.	Sarpa	Sarpa	Sarpa
13.	-	-	Yaksa
14.	Preta	Preta	Bhuta
15.	Sakuna	Sakuna	Sakuna
<b>Tamasika Kaya:</b>			
16.	Pasu	Pasu	Pasu
17.	Matsya	Matsya	Matsya
18.	Vanaspatya	Vanaspatya	Vanaspatya

These dispositions are differentiated based on the characteristic features of an individual, which often resemble the characters of the specific organism mentioned. Brahma Kaya person is superior most who has highly developed perfection with least Rajas and Tamas and is the best.

### 3.3 Bhela Classification

The Bhela Samhita classification of Manas Prakriti differs from the generalized approach of Ayurvedic classification. Bhela divided kaya (prakriti) into two categories: human (manushi) and divine (divya). (Bh.Sa. 5/15) Each of them is further subdivided into seven different types. The divya kaya classification is based on mental faculties (brahma, daiva, varuna, gandharva, paishacha, asura, and maharaja). The Bhela classification of divya kaya is a blend of sattvika and rajasika personality types stated in various Ayurvedic texts. For manushi kaya, Bhela highlighted seven differentiating factors. Vision (pratyatmadarshan), hearing (sharvana), touch (sparshana), taste (rasna), smell (gandha), happiness (sukha) and sorrow (dukha). There are an endless number of constitutions based on permutation and combination of all of these.

### 3.4 Variations

As per the permutation and combination of various factors (liking, conduct, purity, enmity, memory, attachment, detachment, jealousy, valor, fear, anger, drowsiness, enthusiasm, sharpness, softness, seriousness, and instability, etc.). (Ca.Sa. 3/13) They are all present in the individual, but they cannot all manifest at the same time. As a result, the mind reveals an infinite number of prakriti variations. Although infinite classification is feasible but it becomes too complex to understand and comprehend. Therefore, a limited number of classifications based on preponderance have been identified (16 in numbers). (Chakrapanidutta on Ca. Sa.4/38)

In Puranas ten different incarnations of Lord Visnu such as Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parasurama, Rama, Krishna, Buddha, and Kalki are mentioned based on the physical as well as mental development. These incarnations also show the series of organic development, which again resembles some of the above said 18 steps of development described in Ayurveda.

### 3.5 Ever Evolving Nature of Manas Prakriti

The qualities (guna) can be influenced by the factors mentioned above, leading to changes in psychological constitution due to surrounding influences and experiences. This can result in a shift from dominance of tamas to dominance of rajas or sattva, and vice versa. One attribute is always more active than the others, influencing and shaping an individual's personality. The mind of a person may appear different in various situations due to variations in perception and associations with purity (sattva), passion (rajas), and ignorance (tamas) (Chakrapani on Ca.Sa. 3/13) (Chakrapani on Ca. Su. 8/5). Ultimately, the mental disposition is determined by the frequency of predominance. (Ca.Su 8/6)

Mental personality is the result of an individual's continuous and inherent development in terms of how they adopt with the situation. A variety of mental characteristics are observed in the behavior pattern that are influenced by the social environment.

## 4. Discussion and Analysis

Ayurveda has used Prakriti to denote personality (Dwivedi, 2002). It means nature or natural form or built and constitution of the human body. Therefore, it means 'the initial creation' or alternatively this interesting word can also mean "to come forth into creation". It represents how one initially comes into life form and further deviations take place (Singh, 2001). The Prakriti remains unchanged during the course of one's life time and is genetically determined.

Three main phases can be distinguished in the history of personality research and personality concepts: (1) a general literary and observational stage that spanned antiquity to modern times, also known as a philosophical or prescientific phase; (2) a clinical observational phase that saw more systematic and disciplined observations than the first phase and had goals that were primarily scientific rather than purely aesthetic. This phase can be said to have emerged from general medicine in the 18th century and reached its pinnacle in the writings of authors like as Freud, Jung, and Adler; (3) the experimental phase, which started in the first quarter of the 20th century.

Personality psychology concentrated on the similarities and differences between people, while experimental psychology looked for general rules that applied to all individuals. Collaborations with a wide range of academic fields, including German characterology, psychoanalysis and other depth psychologies, mental testing, and abnormal psychology, were also encouraged by personality psychology. This historical narrative upholds personality psychology's identity as a field with three distinctive characteristics: (1) the emphasis on the individual; (2) motivation and dynamics; and (3) the whole person. To leverage the three characteristics, Cattell has been a leading proponent of the experimental research of personality.

According to Cattell, the comprehensive work of characterising personality must wait for a complete elucidation of the notions the theorist intends to use in his behaviour analysis. For this reason, he purposefully only offers a very broad description, saying that "personality is that which permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation." Establishing rules on what various people will do in various social and general environmental situations is the aim of personality psychology study. According to Cattell (1950), personality refers to an individual's entire range of behaviour, both overt and hidden. According to Cattell, personality can be defined as a formula.  $R=f(S,P)$  illustrates how a person's behavioural response (R) depends (f) on the situation they are faced with (S) and their personality (P). Despite this, most trait theorists have highlighted how situational factors influence conduct. Cattell (1979, 1980) has broadened his theoretical explanation by incorporating the ways that events and personality traits interact to shape conduct. He proposed the Economic model, a classification scheme for the conditions and an evaluation of each one's effect on the individual, in order to take situational factors into consideration.

Cattell views personality as a complex of traits of various categories. The trait, is an inferred mental structure that accounts for the consistency of observed behaviour, comes in several varieties and accounts for both structural and dynamic aspects of personality. According to Cattell, traits being relatively permanent and broad reaction tendencies, serve as the building blocks of personality. Some traits may be common to all people, others unique to an individual some determined by heredity, others by environment, some relate to motives (dynamic traits), and others to ability and to temperament.

Traits may also be classified in terms of the modality through which they are expressed. If they are concerned with setting the individual into action toward some goal they are dynamic traits; if they are concerned with the effectiveness with which the individual reaches the goal they are ability traits. Or they may be concerned largely with constitutional aspects of response such as speed, energy, or emotional reactivity, they are referred to as temperament traits. (Hall et.al., 1998).

This same consideration and basis of identifying behavioral pattern has been followed while classifying the Sub-categories in Ayurveda. Looking at the classification of Manas Prakriti, it can be well inferred that this classification is a trait-based type of classification. Here, the various characteristics of individuals having resemblance to certain animals, celestial bodies or even plants have. The use of analogy to define certain phenomenon is a classical style commonly seen in Ayurveda texts. The color of blood as per Ayurveda has been described by comparing it to Gunja. These were some common fruits that were known to people of those times. Similarly, the behavior of human beings was observed and then after documented as per their resemblance to certain heavenly or earthly bodies or animals or birds. From such an analysis, it is pretty evident that characterization of human behaviors was done purely based on predominancy in behaviors and traits. At the same time, they were aware of the underlying 3 main Guna, which played the main role in determining the type and degree of such behavior. Ayurveda acharyas were of the notion that the expression of any behavior is almost always the outcome of the overpowering of one of these three Guna over the other two Guna. Description of Manas Prakriti in this manner describes nicely the dynamic nature and the presence of innumerable underlying environmental and other circumstantially influential factors. Acharyas also highlighted the possibility of the presence of many such other subcategories of Manas Prakriti which are not yet mentioned in the texts. The minimal differences noted in the classifications and nomenclature, among Acharya Charak, Acharya Sushrut and Acharya Kashyap can be attributed to their individual difference in observations and varying contemporary findings among individuals. The vivid description of the behaviors of each subcategory like Brahma, Yamy, available in the Ayurveda texts, describes nicely and elaborately the personal and social life of those people.

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## 5. Conclusion

By classifying individuals according to the Triguna, which reveal an individual's innate psychological makeup, behavioral patterns, and conduct, people can better understand themselves and make better adjustments in their personal and professional lives. This would have the knock-on effect of selecting the most qualified individuals for a certain field of study or employment, resulting in people being content in their chosen careers and a more peaceful society. To put it mildly, there is a clear benefit to creating testing protocols that follow the principles of nature since they would be universally applicable and free of prejudice or cultural connotations. There are countless applications for this activity, and they greatly exceed the challenges that would arise. Similarly, from the aspect of treating the individual's illness, knowledge of Manas Prakriti will help in figuring out the Samprapti (pathogenesis) of the underlying condition. This will make the Samprapti vighata or Cikitsa (treatment) of the same more efficient (Chaudhary et al., 2023).

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### *Abbreviations*

Ca. Sa.: Caraka Samhita Sharirasthana; Ca. Su. Caraka Samhita Sutrasthana; Su.Su.: Sushruta Samhita Sutrasthana; Su.Sa: Sushruta Samhita Sarirasthana; Bh.Sa.: Bhela Samhita Sarirasthana; Ah. Sa: Astanga Hridaya Sarirasthana.

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