Personality in Ancient Indian perspective

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Abstract:
Evolution of human beings is a constant change on the earth, the human beings have evolved from a new born baby to a young kid and then an adult, and further may be a very responsible citizen for his/her country. Many minds like Sigmund Freud, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, Erick Erikson, Goldberg etc., have given their contribution's in the field of personality in their own theories and somewhere in a generalized perspective they have said the personalities are fixed, or they have set up fixations for the personalities, which says that if a human being fails to develop himself/herself then they may be termed as abnormal or a belittle. But it is not the case in Indian perspective, in India there are a numerous Yogic and Aadhyatmic methods, where a person can change his or her personality by practicing these methods at any point in time of his/her life. The ‘Trigunas’ Tamas, Rajas and Sattva says about The Material Qualities of Nature, The Pancha ‘Koshas’ Annamaya Kosha, Pranamaya Kosha, Manomaya Kosha, Vijnanamaya Kosha, Anandamaya Kosha with these five sheaths one can understand his/her psychological and spiritual development. In the further sections of this paper we notice that how people have changed their personalities by the understanding of all the Aadhyatmic and Yogic methods.

and on the similar lines we have a Bhagavadgita camp called as Gitamritam, Where the students are enabled with such practical experiences to lead a happy and healthy life, restructuring their personality whenever they require at any point of their life.

Index terms: Maslow’s hierarchy; Bhagavadgita; Ericksonian Model; Pancha Kosha; Gitamritam; Tri-Gunas.

I. Introduction

The human species have contributed tremendously for the changes in the planet earth, and the changes that have happened are the reason of evolution in the personality of the human beings, the westerners have given a lot of theories where they have quoted about the personality traits and were proven true for western population, when the same came to the eastern part, it’s not accepted as the easterners had their own humungous amount of stuff by their ancestors. Especially in Indian Context, we have a lot of scripts and methods that help us to improve/evolve ourselves as a personality at any point in life.

There are chapters and Shlokas in Bhagavad-Gita where the clear conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna says about personality change in the Chapter 14Guna-trayaVibhaga Yoga, here they say about the Tamas Rajas and Sattva Gunas, which directly can be deligned with Maslow’s hierarchy needs, In chapter 13, chapter 17 the conversations between Lord Shri Krishna and Arjuna speaks all about personality.
Indians have been following all the way the western concepts for life and at many points they get stuck and don’t find answers and paths to move ahead, which leads to demotivation, self-curse, and they give up life, or they are fixated at the same level. But in this paper the Indian context is given prominence and said that a person can lead a better life with the ancient Indian methods and the great works done in the early scripture’s written by Rishis and Munis, in vedas and vedantas.

Similarly is the camp of Bhagavad Gita “Gitamritam” camp conducted at Amrita University Coimbatore, for various age group people and they get enabled with all the yogic methods to clear most of their problems of life, like personal, professional, relationships.

This way of imbibing the tri-gunas in one’s life has made tremendous changes, where a person feels happy, he gets to know himself, all his fears and other negative qualities are reduced or vanished, These things have motivated the authors to investigate the impact of this program over the personalities of the participants empirically.

Here the participants will be asked questions based upon the changes in themselves before and after attending the Gitamritam camp.

The self-report will be matched with the external reviewer (Family, friends etc.,) then an in depth interview with individuals, a focused group discussion will be done.

II. Literature Review

Personality in Indian context is understood and studied in two ways according to traditional Indian perspective. One of them being the biological system and the other being the psychological. The biological way is set and understood by the ancient medical scripture’s like Ayurveda, which specifically explains about the health and ill-health and the treatment for the same.

The Chintahranbetal (2015) clearly says that this is a qualitative research where the Tri-Gunas paly a very important role in framing of one’s various personality patterns.

The Bhagavadgita Chapter 12 Verse55 it says about Stithprajna/Steady Intellect who remains Unaffected and untouched by impulses like grief, fear, carving etc.,

The verses from Taitreya Upanishad (Chapter 2 verse 8, chapter 3 verse 10,5) the best way to measure the personality is Anandamaya Kosha (Cheerful temperament).

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 (Mohā), (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.

A Reexamination of Constantinople’s Data, and a Partial Replication 1982: The Eriksonian theory could not clearly mention or prove that both the genders can perform/showcase the psychosocial maturity during their college days. This theory of Eric Erickson has its own limitations and Fixations.

III. Conceptual Model

The authors of this paper have practically experienced and found that the Indian ways of molding a human beings personality for an Indian are suitable than following the western perspectives, for the very reason the authors designed two questionnaires, one for the Participant of Gitamritam and the other to his/her acquaintances, where the Participant had to self-report and send the questionnaire, and the Second questionnaire was for the acquaintances, even they had to answer for the questions like before and after changes by attending Gitamritam camp and brief about the relationship also.

As this is a Qualitative research the responses were coded from both the respondents and then the analyses was done for the questions and following are the results.

Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Change in Personality</th>
<th>No Change in Personality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27/40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13/40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of people who said their personality was changed after attending the camp is 100%. Out of which the male participants are more than female.

Table 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Read Gita Before camp</th>
<th>Read Gita at Camp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9/40</td>
<td>12/40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

45% of the respondents have read Bhagavad-Gita before and the rest of the respondents have not read.
The survey clearly shows that the students who all attended have some or the other personality change in them and they have positively reacted to this by their self-evaluation. As in the second table it is clearly seen that the 55% of the respondents have not read Bhagavad-Gita this clearly says they were following western ways to build and mold their personalities. When asked the crowd about recommendation of reading Bhagavad-Gita 94% of them said yes and 6% of them said no, and the reason for NO was one cannot just read Gita alone and understand, he/she need a guidance from a guru or an expert in this field. 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of Goodness</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sattva (goodness)</td>
<td>Conditions one to happiness, passion conditions him to the fruits of action, and ignorance to madness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajas (passion)</td>
<td>All the three gunas bind the eternal soul to our perishable body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamas (ignorance)</td>
<td>The material energy consists of tri-gunas(modes)—sattva (goodness), rajas (passion), and tamas (ignorance).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Pancha Koshas
- **Annamaya Kosha**: The organic state of the body, performs activities like eat-drink, download or upload movies, weekend parties.
- **Pranamaya Kosha**: The state of Energy body and vitality, this person is health conscious and actively takes part in sports and does yoga to stay fit.
- **Manomaya Kosha**: The body stage is psychic, thoughts and feelings are its nature, the person is a philosopher and social conscious, helps people and participates in social events.
- **Vignanamaya Kosha**: The persons’ body stage is Intellectual body, spiritual discrimination and wisdom, these are the people who seek knowledge and more often are sages and scientists.
- **Anandamaya Kosha**: The Body is a Joy stage and the person is self and god realized, he stays in the state of blissful being and his body is still with blissful-being.

**Findings:**
After analyzing the questionnaire, it was found that the people who have attended the Gitamritam camp have recommended the reading of Bhagavad-Gita to everyone 100% of the respondents have recommended.
When asked about the Help of Gita in work life the crowd again said that they 100% agree and the response of the crowd was 100% recommendation reading of Gita for a better work life. According to the crowd the teachings can be used in personal as well as professional life of a human being.

The teachings of Bhagavad-Gita should be taught in Schools, colleges and other technical institutions and the 100% of the respondents answered yes for the above question.

The survey report from the acquaintances match with the students’ response and can be validated that there was a tremendous change in the participants’ attitude, behavior, personality and other qualities.

The acquaintances also recommend reading of Bhagavad-Gita to lead a happy and prosperous life and have glorious personality.

The respondents have also agreed upon that the relationship between the participant and the acquaintance has improved in many ways.

Conclusions

1. Indian scripture are the guidelines for Indian to live an Happy life and mold their personality.
2. Most of the Gitamritam participants have changed from a Tamsicto a Rajsic stage of Gunas.
3. The Pancha koshas also have helped them to think and learn about the values of the society and to give back what they have taken from the society.
4. The research says that any persons’ personality is not fixed, one can mold himself/herself at any point in time of life.

References:
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