



A Study of Trigunatmak Personality Traits and Organizational Citizenship Behavior : A Literature Review

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Abstract

This literature review explores the link between Indian philosophical Trigunatmak personality traits (TPT)—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). It examines how these traits influence workplace behaviours such as civic virtue, conscientiousness, benevolence, and harmony. Findings suggest that individuals with dominant Sattva traits tend to exhibit higher levels of OCB due to their ethical, cooperative, and intrinsically motivated nature. Conversely, Rajas and Tamas are linked to self-serving or disengaged behaviours, which can negatively impact organizational cohesion and effectiveness. By integrating classical texts and recent empirical studies, the review offers a culturally nuanced understanding of personality's role in the workplace. It underscores the importance of considering indigenous personality frameworks in organizational psychology and highlights their potential applications in employee engagement, leadership development, and organizational culture. This review paper calls for more empirical researches to statistically validate the insights and enhance practical outcomes related to Organisational and Personality dimensions.

INTRODUCTION

The study of organisational behaviour (OB) aims to enhance employee well-being and organisational success by examining how individuals and groups interact in the workplace. Western models, such as the Big Five personality traits, have influenced a lot of the field, but these methods frequently ignore cultural notion, particularly in nations like India where traditional beliefs still influence people's thoughts and actions. The idea of Trigunatmak personality traits—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—which have their roots in ancient Indian writings like the Bhagavad Gita and Samkhya philosophy, is one such viewpoint. These three attributes are thought to direct our feelings, ideas, and behaviours, and they logically carry over into how people behave at work. By integrating these indigenous traits into organizational discussions, we gain a deeper and more culturally rooted understanding of why individuals behave the way they do in workplace settings. This is especially relevant when examining Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB), which includes voluntary acts like going above and beyond job requirements, showing initiative, and supporting colleagues.

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This review combines modern research with traditional wisdom to examine how each of the three gunas—Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas—may influence such behaviours. It highlights the importance of blending contemporary organizational psychology with Indian philosophical insights to create workplaces that are not only more ethical and engaged but also culturally sensitive and morally conscious. Ultimately, this approach encourages the development of organizational environments that foster genuine involvement, kindness, and moral integrity rooted in cultural understanding.

RATIONALE OF THE PAPER

There is a clear lack of research on indigenous personality traits, despite the fact that Western personality theories have been thoroughly studied in connection with Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). Given India's distinct cultural heritage, it is crucial to comprehend how these traditional characteristics impact altruistic workplace behaviours like helping other, taking responsibility for one's actions, and paying off to the community. Understanding this relationship can aid in creating management strategies that are more effective and culturally relevant, building a workplace that reflects the values of the community and encourages workers to act in ways that are honest and based on those values.

OBJECTIVE

This review seeks to:

1. To provide a thorough understanding, combine traditional and contemporary research on Trigunatmak personality traits.
2. Explore how these traits relate to and influence Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB).
3. To further our understanding of these connections, point out areas where current research is lacking and suggest avenues for future investigation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a thorough review of the literature to look into the link between the Trigunatmak personality traits, which come from

traditional Indian philosophy, and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB). We used keywords like "Trigunatmak personality," "gunas," "indigenous personality traits," and "OCB" to search through many academic databases, including Google Scholar, PubMed, JSTOR, Sodhganga, e-gyankosh and PsycINFO. We looked at studies from the last thirty years, but we also included older texts to give some historical context. We only included studies that talked about indigenous personality constructs and how they affect behaviour at work. Studies that only looked at Western personality models were not included. We carefully took out important information from each source, including goals, methods, findings, and gaps. Then we put this information together to find common themes and patterns. We carefully looked at how culturally relevant and strong the evidence was, knowing that most research is limited in scope and often specific to a certain situation. This review is honest about how much it depends on existing literature. It shows that we need more empirical studies in the future to learn more about how these traditional traits affect how organisations work. Overall, our approach is to make the topic more human by focussing on the cultural richness and possible practical effects of using indigenous personality insights in the workplace.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour(OCB)

1.1. *Concept of OCB*

An extra role behaviour comes with a job role which has not been discussed and contracted and is known to be organizational citizenship behaviour. *No problem; I am here to fix it.* This is an example of a workplace situation where employees volunteer for extra-role behaviour without expecting any direct return on their efforts. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as it has been named, can be defined as "behaviour contributing to the organisation indirectly by virtue of its contribution to the maintenance of the social system." LePine, J. A., Erez, A., & Johnson, D. E. (2002). The quantity and quality of performance may be impacted drastically at the individual or organizational level outcomes (Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). An outstanding illustration of the scenario at hand is that OCB has an equal impact on in-role performance regarding how firms evaluate ratings (Coyle-Shapiro, 2002).

OCB may lead to an increase in role satisfaction and increased performance. As OCB is discretionary and not legally enforceable, it reflects an individual's motivation within a group or organizational setting.

1.2 Dimensions of OCB

The basal elements of OCB advocated by Organ(1988) comprise Altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, civic virtues, and sportsmanship. OCB has been explored in different areas and industries, which helps to expand its deeper understanding. OCB is crucial in the hospitality sector, which means service provider organizations require higher OCB. Also, correlates of OCB vary across culture and organizational context. Extended dimensions of OCB were discussed by Farh, Zhong, and Organ (2004) and further represented through the concentrated model of OCB, which is shown in Figure 1.1.

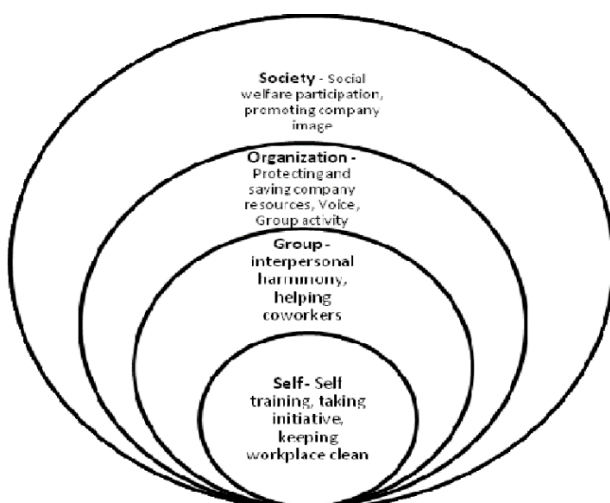


Fig1.1: The concentric model of OCB source
<https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1030.0051>

Contributions made solely of one's free will are included in the innermost circle, self-domain. The term "group domain" describes contributions that necessitate peer relationships and teamwork rather than being completed separately. Activities that involve specific organizationally relevant characteristics, including corporate resources, governance, workflow, etc., fall under the organisation domain. The term "society dimension" refers to contributions made regarding the external environment and all stakeholders going beyond the confines of the organisation.

1.3. OCB among Employees

OCB could be seen among employees in a different direction, firstly, towards customers (OCB-C), secondly, Organization (OCB-O) and thirdly, coworkers (OCB-I). Factors of employee empowerment, such as job competency and employee impact, can enhance OCB-C, resulting in greater learning from mistakes and good emotions, hence boosting organizational citizenship behaviour Wang, Y., Xu, S., E., & Xu, F. (2024). Through effective leadership, upholding a positive corporate culture, and improving the standard of management and employee safety in healthcare, managers can have an impact on OCB O'Grady, S. (2018). The positive relationship between employee and employer beyond the defined work role is because of OCB Pickford, H., & Joy, G. (2016). An organisation values OCB as it contributes to performance and competitive advantage Nemeth and Staw (1989). Employees working at the operational level where customer satisfaction is primary must show higher OCB-C.

2. Trigunatmak Personality Traits (TPT)

2.1. About personality

- S1:** You know Maya behaves like this because of her pre-dispositional trait.
S2: No, I think it's because of circumstances.
S3: Don't you all think that Maya's family also behave in the same manner.

In statement 1,2 and 3 people are trying to give reason for the behaviour to understand personality. S1, indicates internal locus of control as personality trait further, S2, indicates situational trait and S3, tries to give genetic basis of personality trait. There are so many ways to understand personality. An integrative state process model suggests that personality development involves goals, actions, and evaluations, which are interconnected and subject to change. Lexical studies suggest six major dimensions of personality: Surgency, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Intellect/Imagination, and Honesty. Temperament, often considered the raw material of personality, involves percept-based habits and skills regulated by brain systems like the limbic system. In contrast, character involves concept-based goals and values encoded by the hippocampus and neocortex. This distinction helps clarify the clinical

understanding of personality components and their developmental and genetic underpinnings.

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti guṇāḥ prakṛiti-sambhavāḥ
nibadhnanti mahā-bāho dehe dehinam avyayam*

Bhagwat Gita's Sloke no five (5) of chapter fourteen (14) referred Vedic personality classification which were originally mentioned in Sankhya school of Indian philosophy. Based on ancient Indian philosophy, Vedic personality theory divides personality into three basic qualities called the "Triguna": Tamas, Rajas, and Sattva. These characteristics provide a distinct viewpoint on personality development and assessment since they are thought to affect human behaviour and mental states.

2.2.1 Sattva

Sattva is linked to attributes like harmony, knowledge, and purity. A propensity for unselfish service and mental balance is indicated by its negative correlation with felt stress and positive correlation with life satisfaction. According to the PERMA model of well-being, people who possess a dominant Sattva trait typically score higher on measures of accomplishment, significance, relationships, and good emotions. Balance, serenity, equanimity, and virtues such as neatness, honesty, industry, detachment, discipline, contentment, and unshakeable resolve are sattvic attributes. Being "free from attachment and vanity and absolutely unruffled in success and failure" is one way to characterize sattvic qualities.

2.2.2 Rajas

Ambition, energy, and restlessness are traits of Rajas. It is associated with discontent and a materialistic mindset, frequently showing a negative correlation with life satisfaction and a positive correlation with perceived stress. This quality has a negative correlation with a number of aspects of wellbeing, including relationships and happy feelings. According to Prabhupada, Rajas has been characterized as a mediator between Tamas and Sattva. It is characterized by agitation, worry, and anxiousness and is intense, active, and passionate. Rajas are very active, materialistic in nature, and less interested in making spiritual advancement; rather, they are sense craving and jealous of others.

2.2.3 Tamas

Tamas is a symbol for mental instability, ignorance, and sluggishness. It has a negative correlation with every element of the PERMA model and is linked to negative personality traits. People who exhibit more Tamas traits tend to be more stressed and have less life satisfaction.

2.3 TPT among employees

A greater presence of sattva is advantageous for improving organizational civic behavior and performance, according to research on Trigunatmak personality in organizational contexts. On the other hand, although rajas can motivate aspiration and activity, moderation is crucial given its negative association with desired results. Tamas does not improve organizational outcomes because it is linked to inactivity. By emphasizing the significance of striking a balance between various gunas to maximize employee performance and happiness, an understanding of these elements can offer insightful advice for cross-cultural management, especially in organizations with a varied workforce.

3.1 Sattva and OCB

The Sattva guna, which comes from Indian psychology, is linked to traits like wisdom, harmony, clarity, and self-control. People think that these attributes are very important for mental health and doing good things for others. People with high levels of Sattva are more inclined to do organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), which are voluntary behaviours that help the social and mental environment of the workplace. Studies have found that people who are healthy have much more Sattva qualities than people who have mental diseases. This suggests that there is a strong correlation between Sattva and good mental health. This suggests that developing Sattva may improve emotional stability, harmony with others, and moral behavior—all of which are quite similar to the core of OCB. Interestingly, studies have also discovered a link between Sattva qualities and obsessive-compulsive symptoms. This suggests that people with OCD may have higher levels of Sattva than people with other mental illnesses. This discovery goes against the simple idea that Sattva is always

good for everyone and implies that it has a more complex impact in mental health. People with OCD may show signs of heightened Sattva in the form of being overly orderly, morally inflexible, or perfectionistic. These attributes are okay in moderation, but they can become harmful when they are too extreme. These observations show that Sattva has two sides: it usually encourages psychological resilience and prosocial behaviour, but in some clinical groups, its expression may need to be carefully interpreted. Sattva is still a strong predictor of good behaviours in organisations, such as working together, making ethical decisions, and giving to the success of the team without being asked. Knowing how Sattva affects both mental health and the workplace can help you plan ways to improve employee well-being and the effectiveness of your organisation. Mindfulness, ethical training, and value-based leadership are some practices that can assist employees develop Sattvic traits, which would make the workplace more peaceful and productive.

3.2 OCB and Rajas

The Triguna framework of Indian psychology says that the Rajas guna is linked to traits like restlessness, ambition, and a lot of activity. These attributes may appear like they would help with productivity, however research shows that Rajas is adversely connected with Das & Gopal (2009). Rajas seems to make people less likely to do things like be extraverted, conscientious, and agreeable, which are all attributes that are linked to OCB. This could be because it naturally encourages selfish ambition and competition, which can make it harder for people to work together and help others. From a psychological point of view, Rajas has a big effect on how people feel and act. It has been linked to symptoms like anxiety, trouble focussing, and invasive behaviours, which suggests that too much Rajas may cause mental stress and make the workplace less peaceful (Das & Gopal, 2009). These results imply that a lot of Rajas can hurt both mental health and how well an organisation works. Also, the effect of Rajas is not the same in all cultures. Studies that look at people from different cultures have found that Rajas has a very different effect on well-being in India, the United States, and the Czech Republic. This shows that the Triguna dynamic is quite distinct to each culture. This shows how

important it is to think about personality features in the context of cultural frameworks when planning interventions for mental health and workplace outcomes. So, knowing how Rajas works can help with interventions that are meant to improve mental health and the effectiveness of organisations. It may be very helpful for both individuals and organisations to find a balance between Rajas and Sattva, which is linked to clarity, harmony, and selflessness.

3.3 Tamas and OCB

The Indian psychological idea of Triguna, which includes Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas, gives us a more in-depth look at personality and how it affects behaviour at work. Tamas, which is marked by laziness, ignorance, and inactivity, has been shown to have no substantial predictive value for good workplace outcomes including job happiness, job performance, or organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB). This means that people with a strong tamasic personality are less likely to undertake things that help the organisation, including being proactive or helpful (Banerjee, Pathak, & Mathur, 2020). On the other hand, Sattva, which stands for things like clarity, harmony, and wisdom, has been strongly linked to both job performance and OCB. People with a lot of sattva are more likely to do things that aren't part of their job description, which makes the workplace a better place to be. It's interesting that Rajas, which is linked to passion, ambition, and restlessness, had a detrimental effect on these outcomes when it was too high, but moderate levels may still enhance goal-oriented behaviour (Modh, 2021). Tamas has effects that go beyond the workplace and into the area of mental health. Researchers have shown that high levels of tamas are associated to psychotic symptoms that are bad for you, such not caring and not wanting to do anything. These symptoms are typical in people with schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder. These people tend to have low amounts of sattva and high levels of both tamas and rajas, which shows that they are confused and don't want to do anything. People with anxiety disorders and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), on the other hand, tend to have a lot of sattva and rajas but not much tamas. This profile reflects a more active, yet worried, personality structure. The drive and clarity that come with sattva and rajas may make

people more alert and lead to obsessive behaviours (Nedungottil, Agrawal, Sharma, and Murthy, 2021). These results show how important it is to develop sattvic traits in both the workplace and in clinical settings. They also show how tamas can hurt both performance and mental health.

DISCUSSION

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is very important for improving both individual and organisational performance because it encourages people to do things that are not part of their job duties (Organ, 1988). Altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship are all examples of behaviours that help organisations run more smoothly and create a good work environment. There are different types of OCB, such as OCB-I for coworkers, OCB-O for the organisation, and OCB-C for customers. Leadership style, organisational culture, employee empowerment, and workplace safety can all affect OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2000). The Trigunatmak Personality Traits (TPT) framework gives a culturally based view of people's personalities by combining ideas from Indian philosophy. According to Sankhya philosophy and traditional texts, this model divides personality into three gunas: Sattva (harmony and wisdom), Rajas (energy and ambition), and Tamas (inertia and ignorance). Research shows that people with more Sattva tend to be more prosocial and engage in OCB because they act ethically, cooperatively, and with a sense of responsibility. On the other hand, Rajas can drive activity and success, but it needs to be kept in check to avoid egoism and stress. Tamas, on the other hand, is usually counterproductive and linked to disengagement and low initiative (Rao & Singh, 2015). Leaders can create good work environments, improve employee well-being, and promote long-term success for their organisations by recognising and balancing these gunas in the workplace.

CONCLUSION

Using the TPT framework to bring the ancient Indian idea of gunas into modern models of organisational behaviour gives us a more detailed picture of what motivates and drives employees. Promoting Sattva, which is defined by clarity, balance, and moral behaviour, seems to be

especially helpful for encouraging OCB and the overall health of the organisation. Rajas can motivate employees and improve performance, but it takes careful management to keep things from going wrong, like causing stress or making people act in ways that are self-centred. Tamas, which is linked to inactivity and disengagement, seems to be bad for organisational goals unless steps are taken to boost engagement and motivation. So, businesses that recognise and encourage these natural personality traits, especially Sattva, can make the workplace a peaceful and productive place to work. This culturally sensitive approach not only improves people's health, but it also helps organisations do their best by encouraging ethical, cooperative, and voluntary actions that are in line with both traditional wisdom and modern management principles (Rao & Singh, 2015). Future research should look at these relationships in real life to come up with specific interventions that combine traditional psychological frameworks with modern business practices.

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