



Review Article

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN *SHARIRIKA PRAKRITI* AND *MEDHA*: AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON INTELLIGENCE

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ABSTRACT

*Ekavimshatika Guggulu* is mentioned in *Bhavaprakasha Madhyamakhanda Kushta Adhyaya* and *Bala Taila* mentioned in *Bhela Samhita Vata Vyadhi Adhyaya*. Most of the drugs in Ayurveda, a holistic medical science, emphasizes the importance of *Prakriti*, a unique concept that determines an individual's physical, mental, and socio-behavioral health. *Prakriti* is determined at the time of fertilization by the dominance of *Dosha* in *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum) and remains unchanged throughout life. *Medha*, or intellect, is another crucial concept in Ayurveda that encompasses both grasping power (*Grahanshakti*) and understanding (*Dharanshakti*). This study aimed to explore the relationship between *Sharirika Prakriti* and *Medha* by analysing classical Ayurvedic literature, dictionaries, and research publications, as well as comparing the concept of *Medha* with the modern psychological concept of intelligence quotient (IQ). The analysis reveals that *Vata Prakriti* individuals have good short-term memory but poor long-term memory, while *Pitta Prakriti* individuals are intelligent and dominate conversations. *Kapha Prakriti* individuals exhibit self-control, strong faith in *Sastras*, and exceptional memory, although they take longer to grasp the subjects. The seat of the *Medha* is inferred to be the *Hridaya* (heart), as it is the location of *Sadhaka Pitta*, which is responsible for the manifestation of *Medha*. This study highlights the potential of integrating traditional Ayurvedic wisdom with contemporary psychological assessments to develop a more comprehensive understanding of human intelligence and cognitive functioning.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is not merely a medical science but a comprehensive approach that encompasses a holistic perspective; it establishes a robust social framework by maintaining an individual's physical, mental, and socio-behavioral well-being. It encompasses distinctive concepts that are not only beneficial for prevention and treatment but also provide guidance for life.

*Prakriti* is a unique concept that is helpful for prevention, providing direction for personalized medicine, and directing the selection of carrier options. *Prakriti* is a fundamental concept of Ayurveda, which has been decided since birth and does not change

throughout life and is framed by the fusion of *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum). The dominance of *Dosha* in *Shukra* and *Shonita* determines the *Prakriti* of an individual. *Prakriti* refers to one's own constitution and attitude. It is an expression of the functions of the human body in the form of physiology, external characteristics, and the behavior of an individual. Like *Pitta Prakriti* individuals are said to be "*Medhavi*" while *Vata* and *Kapha* are successively said to be "*Adhruti*" (less grasping power) and "*Dridhsmritishchirgrahi*" (delayed grasping, longer retention). *Prakriti*, or the constitution of the human being evolved at the time of fertilization, remains unchanged throughout life<sup>[1]</sup>. *Shukra-Sonita*, *Matu Ahara-Vihara*, *Kala Garbhasaya*, and *Panchamahabhuta Vikara* are important factors contributing to information on *Prakriti*. *Shukra* and *Sonita* are the principal factors.

*Medha* denotes intellect. *Medha* can be considered *Grahanshakti* (grasping power) and *Dharanshakti* (understanding any subject). Intelligent

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quotient (IQ) is a score derived from one of several standardized tests designed to assess intelligence. In the present era, IQ can be considered as a symbol of intelligence or memory power.

### Methodology

Ayurveda classical literature, dictionaries, research publications regarding *Prakriti* and *Medha*, and modern literature on intelligence were collected, classified, and analyzed. The concepts of *Medha* in Ayurveda and IQ in modern psychology represent different approaches to understanding and measuring cognitive ability. While *Medha* encompasses both grasping and understanding, IQ tests focus primarily on specific cognitive skills. This comparison highlights the potential of integrating traditional Ayurvedic wisdom with contemporary psychological assessments to develop a more holistic understanding of human intelligence and cognitive functioning.

### Concept of Prakriti

It is necessary to grasp the etymology of a word to properly understand it based on grammar and corpus. The word "*Prakriti*" in "*Shabdkalpdrum*" means "first" and "*Kriti*" means "creation," which is called "*Prakriti*" in the universe. *Prakriti* is the one who does the task, etc.<sup>[2]</sup>

### According to Charaka Samhita

*Prakriti* is the attributes of the *Swabhav*, who live by *Prakriti* in food items and medicinal substances, such as *Urad Guru*, *Moong Laghu*, Pig's flesh is *Guru*, and Enn's meat is *Laghu*, as described by *Acharya Charak*. *Daihika Prakriti* is defined by the presence of the *Vata-Pitta-Kapha-dominant Dosha* in their bodies since birth. Body health is referred to by *Chakrapani* as "*Daihika Prakriti*<sup>[3]</sup>" *Daihika Prakriti*. *Dhatu's* equilibrium condition is known as the *Prakriti*<sup>[4]</sup>.

Health is supposed to be *Prakriti*, and there is a predisposition to seek health through medicine<sup>[5]</sup>. *Acharya Charak* has told to test the *Ashrit bhava* in the body of a sick person through *Prakriti* and *Vikriti*<sup>[6]</sup>. *Acharya* reported *Sukhsadhya* disease when an individual had a bad disease, contrary to the *Prakriti* of man<sup>[7]</sup>. According to *Prakriti*, the length of age has been told, a person of *Vatal Prakriti* has a short life, a person of *Pittal Prakriti* has medium life and a person of *Kapha Prakriti* has a long life<sup>[8]</sup>.

### According to Sushruta Samhita

This book contains a full discussion of the philosophical *Daihika* and *Manshika Prakriti*. *Ashta Prakriti* is the name given to the *Avyakt*, the great, the *Ahankar*, and the five *Tanmatras* by *Acharya Sushruta*<sup>[9]</sup>.

The *Karan Bhoot* is known as *Prakriti* by *Acharya Dalhan*<sup>[10]</sup>. According to *Acharya*, the original *Prakriti* is the cause of the origin of all beings and is itself without cause, the one who is the reason for the

origin of the entire world with the traits of *Sattva-Raja-Tama*<sup>[11]</sup>. According to *Doshadhikya*, when *Shukra* and *Shonita* are joined in the uterus, the intensity of *Dosha* becomes the *Prakriti* of that person<sup>[12]</sup>.

### According to Ashtang Sangrah

The condition of pregnancies generated by the mother's diet of one or more *Dosha* during *Shukratava's* stay in the uterus is known as *Prakriti*<sup>[13]</sup>. *Prakriti* cannot be changed once it is made<sup>[14]</sup>. After creating seven divisions, the symptoms of *Daihika Prakriti* have been explained in depth together with the symptoms of *Manshika Prakriti*<sup>[15]</sup>.

### According to Ashtang Hridaya

*Prakriti* is generated according to the degree of *Doshadhikya* at the beginning of life as a result of the combination of *Shukra* and *Shonita*<sup>[16]</sup>. *Shukra-Artva*, menstruation, a pregnant mother's food, the uterus, and the season all contribute to the formation of seven varieties of *Prakriti*<sup>[17]</sup>. The three sorts of *Prakriti* are described as inferior, medium, and perfect, with *Kaphaj Prakriti* being the best, *Pittaja Prakriti* being the middle, and *Vataj Prakriti* being the worst<sup>[18]</sup>.

### Concept of Medha

The Sanskrit root "*Medhri Sangame*" is the origin of the word "*Medha*," which denotes the act of coming together, uniting, or aligning. *Shabdkalpdrum* defines it as "*Medhyate Sangachhate Sarvam Iti*<sup>[19]</sup> suggesting a proper connection and comprehension of the knowledge of existing things. Without *Medha*, it is impossible to fully grasp knowledge.

*Acharya Arunadutt*<sup>[20]</sup> identifies *Medha* and *Medha* as specialized faculties of *Buddhi*.

*Dalhana*<sup>[21]</sup> describes *Medha* as "unobstructed, subtle, and profoundly deep knowledge received by all the senses."

According to *Chakrapani*<sup>[22]</sup> and "*Dharanvati Dhee Medha*," it is a type of *Dhee* with the power to retain knowledge.

### Site of Medha

While no direct evidence pinpoints the exact location of *Medha*, we can draw inferences from indirect references. The heart (*Hridaya*) is believed to be the site of *Sadhaka Pitta*, which is responsible for *Medha's* manifestation. Consequently, it is reasonable to conclude that the heart was also considered the seat of *Medha*.

*Acharya Bhela* and *Charaka* posited that the *Hridaya* serves as the locus for *Buddhi* and *Chitta* (Mind). Given that *Medha* is a component of *Buddhi*, it follows that the locus of *Buddhi* can be regarded as the locus of *Medha* as well.

**Relation between Sharirika Prakriti and Medha****Vata Prakriti**

*Acharya Charaka* asserts that *Vata Prakriti* people comprehend knowledge quickly but take longer to recall it. This suggests that the *Vata Prakriti* people have good short-term memory but poor long-term memory because of the *Sighra Guna* of *Vata*. They lack discrimination skills and forbearance, according to *Sushruta*<sup>[23]</sup>.

**Pitta Prakriti**

According to *Sushruta*<sup>[24]</sup>, a *Pitta Prakriti* person is intelligent, devious, and enjoys dominating conversations.

**Kapha Prakriti**

*Kapha Prakriti* is characterized by self-control and strong faith in the *sastras*. He is intelligent; he takes longer to master any subject, but once he does, he has exceptional memory<sup>[25]</sup>.

**CONCLUSION**

This study explored the relationship between *Sharirika Prakriti* (individual constitution) and *Medha* (intellect) from an Ayurvedic perspective. *Prakriti* is determined at the time of fertilization by the dominance of *Dosha* in *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum) and remains unchanged throughout life. *Medha* encompasses both grasping power (*Grahanshakti*) and understanding power (*Dharanshakti*). The analysis revealed that *Vata Prakriti* individuals have good short-term memory but poor long-term memory, *Pitta Prakriti* individuals are intelligent and dominate in conversations, and *Kapha Prakriti* individuals exhibit self-control, strong faith in *Sastras*, and exceptional memory, although they take longer to grasp the subjects. The seat of the *Medha* is inferred to be the *Hridaya* (heart), as it is the location of *Sadhaka Pitta*, which is responsible for the manifestation of *Medha*.

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