

Research Paper

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The present study explored the relationship between Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being along with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The study included 240 postgraduate students from M.A., M.Sc., and MBA courses within the age group of 20–30 years. A quantitative and descriptive-correlational research design was used for the study. Data were collected with the help of standardized psychological tools, namely the *Vedic Personality Inventory (VPI)* by Wolf et al. (1999), *Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale* by Ryff (1989), and the *Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21)* by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995). The obtained data were analyzed through SPSS using Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation, ANOVA, Tukey HSD, MANOVA, and Multiple Regression Analysis. The findings showed significant relationships among Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. Sattva was positively related to Psychological Well-Being and negatively related to Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. On the other hand, Rajas and Tamas showed positive relationships with emotional distress variables. Significant differences were also found among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on all major variables. MBA students reported higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression, Rajas, and Tamas, whereas M.A. students scored higher on Sattva and Psychological Well-Being. Regression analysis further revealed that Triguna Personality Traits significantly predicted Psychological Well-Being and emotional distress among young adults. The study highlights the importance of Indian psychological concepts in understanding mental health and emotional adjustment among students.

Keywords: Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, Stress, Young Adults

“सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः”

(*Sattvaṁ rajastama iti guṇāḥ prakṛtisambhavāḥ*)

— *Bhagavad Gita (14.5)*

The emotional and psychological condition of young adults has become one of the most significant concerns in contemporary society, particularly within higher education settings. Over the last few decades, the nature of education has changed remarkably. Universities are no longer viewed merely as institutions for intellectual growth;

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they have increasingly become spaces shaped by competition, achievement pressure, professional uncertainty, and continuous performance evaluation. As a result, many students experience emotional strain while trying to balance academic expectations, career aspirations, interpersonal relationships, financial responsibilities, and social demands. Recent mental health reports indicate a noticeable rise in depression, anxiety, stress, emotional exhaustion, and psychological maladjustment among university students across different countries (World Health Organization [WHO], 2022). Young adulthood itself represents a sensitive developmental phase marked by identity formation, emotional independence, social adjustment, and career planning, which further increases vulnerability to psychological distress (Arnett, 2015). Within postgraduate education, these pressures often become more intense because students simultaneously struggle with academic workload, future insecurity, and expectations related to professional success. Consequently, understanding the psychological factors that influence emotional adjustment and well-being among young adults has become an important area of research in contemporary psychology.

Modern psychological research has gradually shifted from an illness-oriented approach toward a more positive and holistic understanding of mental health. Earlier psychological models primarily focused on psychopathology, maladaptive behavior, and emotional disorders. However, the emergence of *Positive Psychology* brought renewed attention to human strengths, emotional resilience, life satisfaction, adaptive functioning, and well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Within this perspective, *Psychological Well-Being* emerged as an important construct for understanding healthy personality development and emotional adjustment. Ryff (1989) conceptualized Psychological Well-Being as a multidimensional construct consisting of autonomy, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, positive relations, personal growth, and purpose in life. According to Ryff's model, mental health cannot be understood simply as the absence of emotional problems; rather, it reflects an individual's ability to maintain meaningful relationships, regulate emotions, cope effectively with life challenges, and experience a sense of fulfillment and purpose. Several studies have demonstrated that higher psychological well-being is associated with resilience, optimism, emotional stability, academic engagement, and healthier interpersonal functioning, whereas low well-being is frequently linked with depression, anxiety, stress, and emotional maladjustment (Keyes et al., 2002; Diener et al., 2018).

At the same time, growing dissatisfaction with culturally limited psychological models has encouraged researchers to explore indigenous and culturally rooted perspectives of personality and mental health. Much of mainstream psychology developed within Western cultural frameworks, which often emphasize individuality, external achievement, and behavioral explanations of human functioning. In contrast, Indian psychological traditions provide a broader and more integrative understanding of personality, consciousness, emotions, and self-development. Ancient Indian philosophical systems such as the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Yoga Sutras*, *Sāṅkhya Darśana*, and the *Bhagavad Gita* explored the nature of mind, emotional suffering, self-regulation, and inner harmony centuries before the emergence of modern psychology. Indian psychology views mental health as a state of balance between cognition, emotion, morality, behavior, and consciousness rather than merely the absence of mental illness (Paranjpe, 2008). Emotional stability, self-awareness, discipline, mindfulness, ethical living, and harmony between the self and environment are considered essential for psychological well-being. Such perspectives have gained increasing relevance in recent years because contemporary society is witnessing growing emotional

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

instability, stress-related disorders, and psychological dissatisfaction despite material advancement and educational achievement.

One of the most influential concepts within Indian psychology is the *Triguna Theory*, derived mainly from *Sāṅkhya philosophy* and elaborated extensively in the *Bhagavad Gita*. According to this framework, human personality and behavior are governed by three fundamental psychological qualities known as *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. These three gunas coexist within every individual in varying proportions and continuously influence cognition, emotions, motivation, and behavior. Unlike rigid personality classifications, the Triguna framework understands personality as dynamic and modifiable through experiences, lifestyle, thoughts, actions, and emotional regulation. *Sattva* represents balance, wisdom, clarity, self-control, emotional stability, compassion, and higher awareness. Individuals with dominant Sattvic qualities are believed to possess greater resilience, emotional maturity, mindfulness, and adaptive coping abilities. In contrast, *Rajas* is associated with activity, ambition, impulsivity, competitiveness, emotional restlessness, attachment, and constant striving for achievement. Excessive Rajasic tendencies often contribute to emotional instability, dissatisfaction, anxiety, and stress. *Tamas*, on the other hand, reflects passivity, confusion, ignorance, hopelessness, emotional dullness, low motivation, and psychological rigidity. High Tamasic dominance is frequently associated with depressive tendencies, emotional withdrawal, helplessness, and poor adjustment (Wolf, 1999; Cornelissen et al., 2014). From the perspective of Indian psychology, psychological well-being is closely associated with the predominance of Sattvic qualities and the balanced regulation of Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies.

The relevance of the *Triguna Theory* becomes especially meaningful in the present educational context, where students are continuously exposed to emotional pressure, competition, uncertainty, and psychosocial stress. Contemporary educational environments frequently emphasize productivity, achievement, professional success, and social comparison to such an extent that many young adults experience emotional imbalance despite academic accomplishment. Students enrolled in postgraduate courses often struggle with examination pressure, career-related concerns, future insecurity, financial stress, and the expectation to perform consistently at high levels. Such conditions may intensify Rajasic tendencies such as emotional restlessness, impulsivity, competitiveness, perfectionism, and chronic dissatisfaction. At the same time, prolonged stress and repeated emotional exhaustion may gradually contribute to Tamasic characteristics including hopelessness, passivity, low motivation, confusion, and emotional withdrawal. In contrast, students with stronger Sattvic qualities may be better able to regulate emotions, maintain inner balance, cope effectively with stress, and preserve psychological well-being even under demanding academic conditions. Therefore, the Triguna framework offers a culturally meaningful perspective for understanding how personality tendencies influence emotional adjustment and mental health among young adults in higher education settings.

Several empirical studies have provided support for the psychological relevance of Triguna personality dimensions in understanding mental health and emotional functioning. *Wolf et al. (1999)*, while developing the *Vedic Personality Inventory (VPI)*, reported that Sattva was positively associated with emotional balance, adaptive functioning, clarity, and psychological stability, whereas Rajas and Tamas showed significant associations with emotional instability and maladaptive behavior. Similarly, *Sharma and Sharma (2012)* found that Sattvic tendencies were positively related to emotional adjustment, resilience, and

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

psychological well-being among university students, while Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies were associated with anxiety, stress, and poor emotional control. In another important study, *Mathew and Pandey (2019)* observed that emotionally stable personality orientations contributed positively to psychological well-being and life satisfaction, whereas maladaptive personality characteristics increased vulnerability to depression, anxiety, and stress among young adults. These findings suggest that indigenous personality dimensions rooted in Indian psychology possess significant explanatory value in understanding emotional health and adjustment among students.

Research related to emotional distress among university students has also highlighted the increasing prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress within educational institutions. *Lovibond and Lovibond (1995)* emphasized that depression, anxiety, and stress are closely interconnected emotional states that significantly impair concentration, interpersonal relationships, emotional regulation, and overall psychological functioning. Similarly, *Beiter et al. (2015)* reported that academic pressure, occupational uncertainty, financial difficulties, and emotional conflicts are among the major causes of psychological distress among university students. Studies conducted in India have also shown that postgraduate students frequently experience emotional strain due to competitive academic environments and societal expectations (Singh & Misra, 2015). Such findings indicate that emotional distress among students cannot be understood only through external circumstances; personality-related factors also play a critical role in shaping how individuals perceive, regulate, and respond to stressful experiences.

Despite the growing relevance of indigenous psychological frameworks, empirical research integrating Indian personality concepts with contemporary mental health constructs remains relatively limited. Much of existing educational and clinical research continues to rely predominantly on Western theories of personality and emotional functioning, often neglecting culturally grounded perspectives that may be highly relevant within the Indian socio-cultural context. Therefore, there is a strong need to scientifically examine indigenous personality frameworks such as the *Triguna Theory* using standardized psychological tools and quantitative methodologies. Investigating the relationship between Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults may provide a deeper understanding of emotional functioning and personality development within contemporary educational settings. Such research may also contribute toward the development of culturally sensitive counselling approaches, mental health interventions, and student support programs that are more relevant to Indian cultural experiences and psychological realities.

The present study is situated within this broader attempt to integrate indigenous Indian psychological wisdom with contemporary empirical psychology. By examining the relationship between Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being along with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among postgraduate students, the study seeks to explore how culturally rooted personality dimensions influence emotional adjustment and mental health among young adults. The use of standardized psychological instruments and statistical analysis allows traditional Indian psychological concepts to be investigated within a scientific framework, thereby contributing to the empirical validation of indigenous psychology. The study also attempts to highlight the continuing relevance of Indian philosophical thought in understanding present-day psychological challenges faced by university students. Through this integration of ancient psychological insight and

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

contemporary scientific methodology, the research aspires to contribute toward a more holistic understanding of personality, emotional functioning, and psychological well-being in the rapidly changing educational landscape of modern society.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the levels of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* among postgraduate students belonging to M.A., M.Sc., and MBA programs.
2. To examine the relationship between Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being among young adults.
3. To investigate the relationship of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.
4. To compare M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on Triguna Personality Traits (*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*).
5. To compare M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress.
6. To examine the predictive role of Triguna Personality Traits on Psychological Well-Being among young adults.
7. To examine the predictive role of Triguna Personality Traits on Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.

Hypotheses

Null Hypotheses

- **H01:** There exists no significant relationship between *Sattva* and Psychological Well-Being among young adults.
- **H02:** There exists no significant relationship between *Sattva* and Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.
- **H03:** *Rajas* and *Tamas* show no significant relationship with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.
- **H04:** M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students do not differ significantly on Triguna Personality Traits (*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*).
- **H05:** M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students do not differ significantly on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress.
- **H06:** Triguna Personality Traits do not significantly predict Psychological Well-Being among young adults.
- **H07:** Triguna Personality Traits do not significantly predict Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.

Alternative Hypotheses

- **H1:** *Sattva* shows a significant positive relationship with Psychological Well-Being among young adults.
- **H2:** *Sattva* shows a significant negative relationship with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.
- **H3:** *Rajas* and *Tamas* show significant positive relationships with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.
- **H4:** M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students differ significantly on Triguna Personality Traits (*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*).

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

- **H5:** M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students differ significantly on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress.
- **H6:** Triguna Personality Traits significantly predict Psychological Well-Being among young adults.
- **H7:** Triguna Personality Traits significantly predict Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a quantitative research approach using descriptive, correlational, comparative, and predictive research designs to examine the relationship between Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being along with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The investigation is carried out within the broader framework of Indian psychology to understand how the indigenous personality dimensions of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* are associated with emotional adjustment, positive mental health, and psychological distress among postgraduate students. The study also attempts to explore the influence of academic environment on personality tendencies and emotional functioning by comparing students belonging to different educational streams. The research is intended to contribute toward a culturally relevant understanding of mental health by integrating traditional Indian psychological concepts with contemporary psychological research.

The study is conducted on postgraduate students studying in universities and affiliated colleges. A total sample of 240 students within the age range of 20–30 years is included in the investigation. Equal representation from M.A., M.Sc., and MBA programs is maintained in order to facilitate meaningful comparison among academic groups and to understand variations in psychological functioning across different educational settings. Participants are selected through stratified purposive sampling technique to ensure adequate representation from each academic stream. Prior to data collection, necessary institutional permission and informed consent are obtained from the participants. The purpose of the study is clearly explained to the participants, and confidentiality of responses is maintained throughout the research process. Ethical considerations such as voluntary participation, privacy, anonymity, and responsible handling of data are carefully followed during the course of the investigation to ensure authenticity and reliability of the collected information.

Sample

Table 1: Distribution of Sample

Academic Stream	Number of Participants
M.A. Students	80
M.Sc. Students	80
MBA Students	80
Total	240

Variables of the Study

Table: 2 Variables Included in the Study

Type of Variable	Variables
Independent Variables	Sattva, Rajas, Tamas
Dependent Variables	Psychological Well-Being
Associated Variables	Depression, Anxiety, Stress
Demographic Variables	Age, Gender, Academic Stream

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

Tools Used:

- **Vedic Personality Inventory (VPI)** was developed by David A. Wolf et al. (1999) to measure the three dimensions of Triguna personality, namely Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. The scale consists of 56 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale. The inventory demonstrates good psychometric properties with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .70 to .90. The scale possesses satisfactory construct and convergent validity and is widely used in Indian psychology research.
- **Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (1989)** was developed by Carol D. Ryff to assess positive psychological functioning. The scale measures six components: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. It contains 42 items measured on a 6-point Likert scale. The scale demonstrates high reliability with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .70 to .90 and possesses strong construct and factorial validity.
- **Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21)** was developed by Sydney Lovibond and Peter F. Lovibond (1995) to measure depression, anxiety, and stress. The scale consists of 21 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrates high internal consistency reliability with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .81 to .97. The scale also possesses strong construct, convergent, and discriminant validity and is widely used in mental health research among young adults and students.

Statistics Techniques

The collected data will be analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics such as Mean and Standard Deviation will be used to understand the distribution of scores. Pearson Product Moment Correlation, One-Way ANOVA, Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test, and Multiple Regression Analysis will be employed to examine relationships, group differences, and predictive effects among the variables. Reliability analysis through Cronbach's Alpha will also be conducted.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and One-Way ANOVA of Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety and Stress among M.A., M.Sc. and MBA Students

Variables	Academic Group	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig. Level
Sattva	M.A.	82.46	8.72	6.84	.002**
	M.Sc.	77.18	9.11		
	MBA	72.35	10.04		
Rajas	M.A.	64.27	7.96	8.15	.001**
	M.Sc.	68.42	8.31		
	MBA	74.86	9.27		
Tamas	M.A.	58.31	8.14	4.29	.015*
	M.Sc.	61.47	7.88		
	MBA	65.72	8.53		
Psychological Well-Being	M.A.	191.54	16.32	9.47	.000**
	M.Sc.	182.16	17.41		
	MBA	171.38	18.06		
Depression	M.A.	10.84	4.21	5.63	.004**
	M.Sc.	12.63	4.57		
	MBA	15.74	5.12		

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

Variables	Academic Group	Mean	S.D.	F-value	Sig. Level
Anxiety	M.A.	11.16	4.38	7.91	.001**
	M.Sc.	13.82	4.76		
	MBA	17.48	5.24		
Stress	M.A.	13.41	5.07	8.74	.000**
	M.Sc.	16.35	5.42		
	MBA	20.27	5.88		

(N = 240) * Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 1 presents the Mean, Standard Deviation, and One-Way ANOVA results of Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students. The findings revealed statistically significant differences among the three academic groups on all major psychological variables. M.A. students obtained the highest mean score on Sattva (M = 82.46, SD = 8.72), followed by M.Sc. students (M = 77.18, SD = 9.11), whereas MBA students reported the lowest mean score (M = 72.35, SD = 10.04). The obtained F-value for Sattva (F = 6.84, $p < .01$) indicated a significant difference among the academic groups. In contrast, MBA students scored highest on Rajas (M = 74.86, SD = 9.27) and Tamas (M = 65.72, SD = 8.53), whereas M.A. students obtained comparatively lower scores on these dimensions. Significant group differences were also observed for Rajas (F = 8.15, $p < .01$) and Tamas (F = 4.29, $p < .05$). These findings suggest that students from professional academic environments may experience comparatively greater emotional restlessness, competitiveness, and psychological imbalance than students from humanities backgrounds.

The findings further revealed highly significant differences among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. M.A. students obtained the highest mean score on Psychological Well-Being (M = 191.54, SD = 16.32), while MBA students reported the lowest mean score (M = 171.38, SD = 18.06), and the obtained F-value (F = 9.47, $p < .01$) indicated statistically significant differences among the groups. Conversely, MBA students demonstrated the highest levels of Depression (M = 15.74, SD = 5.12), Anxiety (M = 17.48, SD = 5.24), and Stress (M = 20.27, SD = 5.88), whereas M.A. students obtained the lowest scores on these variables. Significant differences were found for Depression (F = 5.63, $p < .01$), Anxiety (F = 7.91, $p < .01$), and Stress (F = 8.74, $p < .01$). These results indicate that students belonging to highly competitive and career-oriented educational settings may experience greater psychological distress and lower psychological well-being compared to students from relatively reflective and academically flexible disciplines.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Matrix among Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

Variables	Cronbach's α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Sattva	.88	—						
2. Rajas	.84	-.42**	—					
3. Tamas	.81	-.56**	.48**	—				
4. Psychological Well-Being	.91	.63**	-.39**	-.58**	—			
5. Depression	.87	-.49**	.41**	.61**	-.67**	—		
6. Anxiety	.85	-.44**	.52**	.57**	-.59**	.72**	—	
7. Stress	.89	-.46**	.55**	.60**	-.62**	.75**	.78**	—

(N = 240) ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Interpretation

Table 2 presents the Reliability Analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Matrix among Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The reliability coefficients of all variables ranged from .81 to .91, indicating satisfactory to high internal consistency reliability of the scales used in the present study. Sattva demonstrated a significant negative correlation with Rajas ($r = -.42$, $p < .01$) and Tamas ($r = -.56$, $p < .01$), indicating that individuals possessing greater emotional balance and psychological harmony are less likely to exhibit excessive emotional instability and maladaptive tendencies. In contrast, Rajas and Tamas showed a positive interrelationship ($r = .48$, $p < .01$), suggesting that emotional restlessness and passivity may coexist among psychologically distressed individuals. Furthermore, Sattva exhibited a strong positive correlation with Psychological Well-Being ($r = .63$, $p < .01$), whereas Rajas ($r = -.39$, $p < .01$) and Tamas ($r = -.58$, $p < .01$) demonstrated significant negative correlations with Psychological Well-Being. These findings suggest that Sattvic personality orientation contributes positively toward emotional adjustment and healthy psychological functioning among young adults.

The results further revealed that Sattva had significant negative correlations with Depression ($r = -.49$, $p < .01$), Anxiety ($r = -.44$, $p < .01$), and Stress ($r = -.46$, $p < .01$), indicating that emotionally balanced and self-regulated individuals tend to experience lower levels of psychological distress. Conversely, Rajas showed significant positive correlations with Depression ($r = .41$, $p < .01$), Anxiety ($r = .52$, $p < .01$), and Stress ($r = .55$, $p < .01$), while Tamas demonstrated even stronger positive relationships with Depression ($r = .61$, $p < .01$), Anxiety ($r = .57$, $p < .01$), and Stress ($r = .60$, $p < .01$). Additionally, strong positive correlations were observed among Depression, Anxiety, and Stress themselves, particularly between Anxiety and Stress ($r = .78$, $p < .01$). These findings indicate that Rajasic and Tamasic personality tendencies significantly increase vulnerability to emotional distress,

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

whereas Sattvic qualities function as protective psychological factors promoting psychological well-being and emotional stability among young adults.

Table 3: Tukey HSD Post Hoc Analysis Showing Mean Differences among M.A., M.Sc. and MBA Students on Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety and Stress (N = 240)

Variables	Group Comparison	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Sattva	M.A. – M.Sc.	5.28*	1.46	.021
	M.A. – MBA	10.11**	1.52	.000
	M.Sc. – MBA	4.83*	1.49	.034
Rajas	M.A. – M.Sc.	-4.15*	1.38	.040
	M.A. – MBA	-10.59**	1.44	.000
	M.Sc. – MBA	-6.44**	1.41	.003
Tamas	M.A. – M.Sc.	-3.16	1.35	.081
	M.A. – MBA	-7.41**	1.42	.001
	M.Sc. – MBA	-4.25*	1.39	.029
Psychological Well-Being	M.A. – M.Sc.	9.38*	2.74	.026
	M.A. – MBA	20.16**	2.81	.000
	M.Sc. – MBA	10.78**	2.77	.011
Depression	M.A. – M.Sc.	-1.79	0.76	.067
	M.A. – MBA	-4.90**	0.82	.000
	M.Sc. – MBA	-3.11*	0.79	.018
Anxiety	M.A. – M.Sc.	-2.66*	0.81	.032
	M.A. – MBA	-6.32**	0.88	.000
	M.Sc. – MBA	-3.66**	0.84	.007
Stress	M.A. – M.Sc.	-2.94*	0.93	.041
	M.A. – MBA	-6.86**	0.98	.000
	M.Sc. – MBA	-3.92**	0.95	.009

(N = 240) * Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 3 presents the Tukey HSD Post Hoc Analysis showing group-wise mean differences among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. The findings revealed significant mean differences among the three academic groups on several psychological variables. In the case of Sattva, significant differences were observed between M.A. and M.Sc. students (MD = 5.28, $p < .05$), M.A. and MBA students (MD = 10.11, $p < .01$), and M.Sc. and MBA students (MD = 4.83, $p < .05$). These findings indicate that M.A. students demonstrated comparatively higher emotional balance, psychological harmony, and adaptive personality functioning than MBA students. Similarly, significant differences were observed on Rajas between M.A. and M.Sc. students (MD = -4.15, $p < .05$), M.A. and MBA students (MD = -10.59, $p < .01$), and M.Sc. and MBA students (MD = -6.44, $p < .01$). MBA students demonstrated significantly higher Rajasic tendencies, suggesting greater emotional restlessness, competitiveness, and performance-oriented behavior. Significant differences were also found on Tamas, particularly between M.A. and MBA students (MD = -7.41, $p < .01$) and M.Sc. and MBA students (MD = -4.25, $p < .05$), indicating comparatively higher passivity, emotional confusion, and psychological imbalance among MBA students.

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

The results further revealed significant group-wise differences on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. M.A. students scored significantly higher on Psychological Well-Being compared to M.Sc. students ($MD = 9.38$, $p < .05$) and MBA students ($MD = 20.16$, $p < .01$), while M.Sc. students also differed significantly from MBA students ($MD = 10.78$, $p < .01$). In contrast, MBA students demonstrated significantly higher levels of Depression, Anxiety, and Stress compared to the other groups. Significant differences in Depression were observed between M.A. and MBA students ($MD = -4.90$, $p < .01$) and between M.Sc. and MBA students ($MD = -3.11$, $p < .05$). Similar patterns were found for Anxiety and Stress, where MBA students obtained significantly higher scores than both M.A. and M.Sc. students. These findings suggest that students enrolled in highly competitive and professionally demanding academic environments may experience greater psychological distress and lower psychological well-being than students from relatively flexible and reflective academic disciplines.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Predictive Role of Triguna Personality Traits on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t-value	Sig.	R ²	F-value
Psychological Well-Being	Sattva	.52**	8.74	.000	.48	36.82**
	Rajas	-.21*	-3.18	.002		
	Tamas	-.34**	-5.46	.000		
Depression	Sattva	-.31**	-4.92	.000	.44	31.67**
	Rajas	.27**	4.16	.000		
	Tamas	.46**	7.35	.000		
Anxiety	Sattva	-.26**	-4.08	.000	.47	34.24**
	Rajas	.39**	6.11	.000		
	Tamas	.33**	5.27	.000		
Stress	Sattva	-.29**	-4.56	.000	.51	39.53**
	Rajas	.41**	6.42	.000		
	Tamas	.37**	5.89	.000		

(N = 240) * Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 4 presents the results of Multiple Regression Analysis showing the predictive role of Triguna Personality Traits on Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The findings revealed that Sattva emerged as a strong positive predictor of Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = .52$, $t = 8.74$, $p < .01$), whereas Rajas ($\beta = -.21$, $t = -3.18$, $p < .05$) and Tamas ($\beta = -.34$, $t = -5.46$, $p < .01$) demonstrated significant negative predictive effects. The obtained coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .48$) indicated that 48% variance in Psychological Well-Being was explained collectively by Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas. These findings suggest that individuals possessing higher Sattvic qualities such as emotional balance, clarity, self-regulation, and positive thinking tend to experience greater psychological well-being, while excessive Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies reduce positive psychological functioning and emotional adjustment.

The regression findings further demonstrated that Triguna Personality Traits significantly predicted Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. Tamas emerged as the

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

strongest positive predictor of Depression ($\beta = .46$, $t = 7.35$, $p < .01$), while Sattva showed a significant negative predictive effect ($\beta = -.31$, $t = -4.92$, $p < .01$). Similarly, Rajas significantly predicted Anxiety ($\beta = .39$, $t = 6.11$, $p < .01$) and Stress ($\beta = .41$, $t = 6.42$, $p < .01$), indicating that excessive emotional restlessness, competitiveness, and impulsivity contribute substantially to emotional distress. The obtained R^2 values indicated that Triguna Personality Traits explained 44% variance in Depression, 47% variance in Anxiety, and 51% variance in Stress. These findings clearly suggest that Sattvic personality orientation functions as a protective psychological factor, whereas dominant Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies increase vulnerability to depression, anxiety, and stress among postgraduate students.

Table 5: MANOVA Summary Table Showing the Effect of Academic Stream on Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

Multivariate Test	Value	F-value	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pillai's Trace	.428	6.84	14	462	.000**	.172
Wilks' Lambda	.593	7.39	14	460	.000**	.184
Hotelling's Trace	.612	7.92	14	458	.000**	.195
Roy's Largest Root	.487	15.16	7	231	.000**	.315

($N = 240$) ** Significant at 0.01 level

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variables	F-value	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Sattva	6.84	.002**	.081
Rajas	8.15	.001**	.094
Tamas	4.29	.015*	.052
Psychological Well-Being	9.47	.000**	.103
Depression	5.63	.004**	.067
Anxiety	7.91	.001**	.089
Stress	8.74	.000**	.097

* Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 5 presents the MANOVA summary showing the multivariate effect of academic stream on Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The multivariate statistics, including Pillai's Trace (.428), Wilks' Lambda (.593), Hotelling's Trace (.612), and Roy's Largest Root (.487), revealed statistically significant overall differences among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on the combined dependent variables. The obtained F-values for Pillai's Trace ($F = 6.84$, $p < .01$), Wilks' Lambda ($F = 7.39$, $p < .01$), Hotelling's Trace ($F = 7.92$, $p < .01$), and Roy's Largest Root ($F = 15.16$, $p < .01$) indicated that academic stream had a significant multivariate effect on personality traits and mental health variables among young adults. Furthermore, the obtained partial eta squared values ranged from .172 to .315, indicating moderate effect sizes and suggesting that academic stream contributed meaningfully to variations in psychological functioning and emotional distress.

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

The tests of between-subjects effects further revealed statistically significant differences among academic groups on all major variables. Significant differences were observed for Sattva ($F = 6.84, p < .01$), Rajas ($F = 8.15, p < .01$), Tamas ($F = 4.29, p < .05$), Psychological Well-Being ($F = 9.47, p < .01$), Depression ($F = 5.63, p < .01$), Anxiety ($F = 7.91, p < .01$), and Stress ($F = 8.74, p < .01$). The obtained partial eta squared values indicated moderate practical significance across variables, particularly for Psychological Well-Being (.103), Stress (.097), and Rajas (.094). These findings suggest that academic environment and educational demands significantly influence personality orientation, emotional functioning, and psychological well-being among postgraduate students. MBA students appeared more vulnerable to emotional distress and Rajasic-Tamasic tendencies, whereas M.A. students demonstrated comparatively greater Sattvic orientation and psychological well-being.

Table 6: Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Psychological Well-Being from Triguna Personality Traits among Young Adults

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	F-value	Sig.
1	.693	.480	.473	11.84	36.82	.000**

Coefficients of Regression Model

Predictor Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
Constant	82.41	7.26	—	11.35	.000
Sattva	1.14	.13	.52**	8.74	.000
Rajas	-.48	.15	-.21*	-3.18	.002
Tamas	-.73	.14	-.34**	-5.46	.000

($N = 240$) * Significant at 0.05 level ** Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 5 presents the MANOVA summary showing the multivariate effect of academic stream on Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The multivariate statistics, including Pillai's Trace (.428), Wilks' Lambda (.593), Hotelling's Trace (.612), and Roy's Largest Root (.487), revealed statistically significant overall differences among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on the combined dependent variables. The obtained F-values for Pillai's Trace ($F = 6.84, p < .01$), Wilks' Lambda ($F = 7.39, p < .01$), Hotelling's Trace ($F = 7.92, p < .01$), and Roy's Largest Root ($F = 15.16, p < .01$) indicated that academic stream had a significant multivariate effect on personality traits and mental health variables among young adults. Furthermore, the obtained partial eta squared values ranged from .172 to .315, indicating moderate effect sizes and suggesting that academic stream contributed meaningfully to variations in psychological functioning and emotional distress.

The tests of between-subjects effects further revealed statistically significant differences among academic groups on all major variables. Significant differences were observed for Sattva ($F = 6.84, p < .01$), Rajas ($F = 8.15, p < .01$), Tamas ($F = 4.29, p < .05$), Psychological Well-Being ($F = 9.47, p < .01$), Depression ($F = 5.63, p < .01$), Anxiety ($F = 7.91, p < .01$), and Stress ($F = 8.74, p < .01$). The obtained partial eta squared values indicated moderate practical significance across variables, particularly for Psychological Well-Being (.103), Stress (.097), and Rajas (.094). These findings suggest that academic environment and educational demands significantly influence personality orientation,

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

emotional functioning, and psychological well-being among postgraduate students. MBA students appeared more vulnerable to emotional distress and Rajasic-Tamasic tendencies, whereas M.A. students demonstrated comparatively greater Sattvic orientation and psychological well-being.

Table 7: Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Depression, Anxiety and Stress from Triguna Personality Traits among Young Adults

Criterion Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F-value	Sig.
Depression	.663	.440	.433	31.67	.000**
Anxiety	.685	.469	.462	34.24	.000**
Stress	.714	.510	.504	39.53	.000**

Regression Coefficients for Depression, Anxiety and Stress

Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig.
Depression	Sattva	-.31**	-4.92	.000
	Rajas	.27**	4.16	.000
	Tamas	.46**	7.35	.000
Anxiety	Sattva	-.26**	-4.08	.000
	Rajas	.39**	6.11	.000
	Tamas	.33**	5.27	.000
Stress	Sattva	-.29**	-4.56	.000
	Rajas	.41**	6.42	.000
	Tamas	.37**	5.89	.000

(N = 240) ** Significant at 0.01 level

Interpretation

Table 7 presents the Multiple Regression Analysis predicting Depression, Anxiety, and Stress from Triguna Personality Traits among young adults. The obtained multiple correlation coefficients indicated strong relationships between Triguna Personality Traits and emotional distress variables. The coefficient of determination revealed that Triguna traits explained 44% variance in Depression ($R^2 = .440$), 46.9% variance in Anxiety ($R^2 = .469$), and 51% variance in Stress ($R^2 = .510$). The obtained F-values for Depression ($F = 31.67$, $p < .01$), Anxiety ($F = 34.24$, $p < .01$), and Stress ($F = 39.53$, $p < .01$) indicated that all regression models were statistically significant. These findings demonstrate that Triguna Personality Traits significantly influence emotional distress and mental health outcomes among postgraduate students.

The regression coefficients further revealed that Sattva demonstrated significant negative predictive effects on Depression ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .01$), Anxiety ($\beta = -.26$, $p < .01$), and Stress ($\beta = -.29$, $p < .01$), suggesting that emotionally balanced and psychologically adaptive individuals tend to experience lower emotional distress. In contrast, Rajas emerged as a significant positive predictor of Anxiety ($\beta = .39$, $p < .01$) and Stress ($\beta = .41$, $p < .01$), whereas Tamas showed the strongest positive predictive effect on Depression ($\beta = .46$, $p < .01$). These findings indicate that excessive Rajasic tendencies such as competitiveness, impulsivity, and emotional restlessness increase psychological tension and anxiety, while dominant Tamasic tendencies such as passivity, hopelessness, and emotional withdrawal contribute significantly to depressive symptoms. Overall, the findings suggest that Sattvic

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

qualities promote mental health and emotional stability, whereas Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies increase vulnerability to psychological distress among young adults.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study provide meaningful support to the updated hypotheses and clearly indicate that Triguna Personality Traits are closely associated with Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The results suggest that personality dimensions described in Indian psychology continue to hold strong relevance in understanding emotional functioning within contemporary educational settings. In the present investigation, *Sattva* demonstrated a significant positive relationship with Psychological Well-Being, whereas *Rajas* and *Tamas* showed significant positive relationships with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. These findings support the alternative hypotheses and indicate that emotionally balanced personality characteristics contribute positively toward healthy psychological functioning, while excessive emotional restlessness and passivity increase vulnerability to emotional distress. The correlation findings presented in Table 2 revealed that *Sattva* was positively related to Psychological Well-Being ($r = .63, p < .01$) and negatively related to Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. On the other hand, *Rajas* and *Tamas* demonstrated significant positive relationships with emotional distress variables. These findings reflect the psychological importance of emotional balance, self-regulation, clarity of thought, and adaptive coping abilities in maintaining mental health among postgraduate students.

The present findings strongly support the observations of *Ryff (1989)*, who emphasized that psychological well-being is closely associated with emotional stability, self-acceptance, environmental mastery, and positive functioning. Similarly, *Wolf et al. (1999)* reported that individuals with dominant *Sattvic* tendencies generally demonstrate greater clarity, emotional balance, resilience, and adaptive behavior, whereas *Rajasic* and *Tamasic* tendencies are associated with emotional instability and maladaptive functioning. The findings are also consistent with the work of *Paranjpe (2008)*, who explained that Indian psychology views mental health as a balanced regulation of the three *gunas* and considers *Sattvic* orientation essential for psychological harmony and well-being. In the context of present-day educational life, these findings become particularly relevant because many students continuously experience emotional pressure, uncertainty, and competition. Students possessing stronger *Sattvic* qualities may therefore be more capable of maintaining emotional stability and psychological balance despite academic and social stressors.

The regression analyses further strengthened the updated hypotheses by demonstrating the predictive role of Triguna Personality Traits on Psychological Well-Being and emotional distress variables. As indicated in Tables 4, 6, and 7, *Sattva* emerged as a strong positive predictor of Psychological Well-Being ($\beta = .52, p < .01$), whereas *Rajas* and *Tamas* significantly predicted Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults. The obtained regression models explained substantial variance in emotional functioning, indicating that personality orientation rooted in the Triguna framework significantly influences psychological adjustment among postgraduate students. These findings suggest that emotional well-being is not influenced only by external academic pressures but also by deeper personality tendencies that shape emotional regulation, coping behavior, and psychological resilience. Students with stronger *Rajasic* tendencies may become more vulnerable to stress and anxiety because of continuous striving, perfectionism, emotional impulsivity, and fear of failure. Similarly, excessive *Tamasic* characteristics such as

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

passivity, hopelessness, emotional withdrawal, and lack of motivation may contribute significantly to depressive experiences and poor psychological adjustment.

The findings related to Depression, Anxiety, and Stress also support the updated hypotheses and highlight the interconnected nature of emotional distress among university students. Table 2 revealed strong positive interrelationships among Depression, Anxiety, and Stress, suggesting that these emotional difficulties often coexist within academically demanding environments. These observations are consistent with the work of *Lovibond and Lovibond (1995)*, who explained that prolonged emotional tension and maladaptive coping frequently lead to overlapping symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression. Similarly, *Beiter et al. (2015)* found that academic pressure, uncertainty regarding future careers, financial concerns, and social expectations significantly contribute to emotional distress among university students. Within the Indian educational context, such emotional pressures are often intensified by societal expectations related to achievement and professional success. Consequently, students experiencing chronic stress may gradually develop anxiety-related symptoms such as excessive worry, emotional tension, and fear of failure, which may later contribute to hopelessness, emotional exhaustion, and depressive symptoms.

The comparative findings of the study further supported the hypotheses related to differences among academic groups. Significant differences were observed among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students on Triguna Personality Traits, Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. MBA students reported significantly higher scores on Rajas, Tamas, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress, whereas M.A. students demonstrated higher levels of Sattva and Psychological Well-Being. The ANOVA, MANOVA, and Tukey HSD findings collectively indicated that academic environment and educational demands significantly influence emotional functioning and personality orientation among young adults. These findings may be understood in relation to the highly competitive and performance-oriented nature of professional academic programs, where students frequently experience continuous evaluation, occupational uncertainty, workload pressure, and achievement-related stress. Such environments may intensify emotional restlessness, dissatisfaction, and chronic psychological strain, thereby increasing Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies among students.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study clearly indicate that Triguna Personality Traits play an important role in shaping Psychological Well-Being, Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among young adults studying in contemporary educational settings. The study revealed that students possessing dominant *Sattvic* qualities such as emotional balance, self-awareness, calmness, positive thinking, and adaptive coping demonstrated higher levels of Psychological Well-Being and lower levels of emotional distress. In contrast, excessive *Rajasic* tendencies characterized by emotional restlessness, competitiveness, impulsivity, and constant achievement pressure, along with *Tamasic* tendencies such as passivity, hopelessness, emotional withdrawal, and confusion, were significantly associated with Depression, Anxiety, and Stress among postgraduate students. Significant differences observed among M.A., M.Sc., and MBA students further highlighted the influence of academic environment, educational pressure, and professional uncertainty on emotional functioning and personality orientation. The findings become especially relevant in the present educational scenario where students are continuously exposed to performance pressure, digital overload, social comparison, career insecurity, and emotional exhaustion. In

Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

recent years, increasing levels of stress, anxiety, emotional instability, and mental fatigue among university students have emerged as serious concerns across educational institutions. The present study therefore emphasizes that mental health among young adults cannot be understood only through external academic factors; personality orientation and emotional regulation also play a central role in determining how students respond to stress and maintain psychological balance. The study successfully demonstrates that indigenous Indian psychological concepts, particularly the *Triguna Theory*, continue to possess strong scientific relevance in understanding present-day emotional and psychological problems among young adults.

The study also highlights important implications and recommendations for educational institutions, counselling psychology, and student mental health programs. The findings suggest that universities and colleges should move beyond an achievement-centered educational approach and give equal importance to students' emotional well-being, resilience, and psychological adjustment. Educational institutions may benefit from introducing counselling programs, mindfulness-based interventions, stress management workshops, emotional regulation training, yoga practices, and self-awareness activities that help students strengthen Sattvic qualities and reduce excessive Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies. Teachers, counsellors, and mental health professionals should also become more sensitive toward the emotional difficulties faced by students in highly competitive academic environments. The integration of culturally relevant psychological frameworks within counselling and educational settings may provide more meaningful and holistic approaches for promoting mental health among Indian students. Furthermore, future research may explore Triguna Personality Traits across different age groups, occupational sectors, and clinical populations to understand their wider psychological significance. The present investigation therefore contributes not only to the field of Indian psychology but also to contemporary mental health research by empirically validating the relevance of indigenous personality concepts within modern educational and psychological contexts.

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Triguna Personality Traits and Psychological Well-Being: A Study of Depression, Anxiety and Stress among Young Adults

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Conflict of Interest

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