



Relevance of Ayurvedic *prakṛti* in literary studies with special reference to major characters of Kālidāsa's dramas

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Abstract

Ayurveda narrates the concept of *prakṛti* as a framework to understand human behaviour. *Prakṛti* determines an individual's physical, physiological, and mental disposition. The three *doṣas*, *vāta*, *pitta*, and *kapha*, form the basis of the body and mind. The dominance of one or two of these influences the physical and mental makeup of the individual. The lead characters of Kālidāsa's dramas are studied and analyzed to understand the relevance of *prakṛti* in literary studies. The concept of *prakṛti* is helpful for writers to build their characters and in literary criticism. Hence, it should be taught to students of academic studies.

Keywords Character building · *Mālavikāgnimitram* · Personality assessment · Storytelling

1 Introduction

The wisdom of cultures has been transmitted through poetry and healing traditions from generation to generation. Apart from being a work of aesthetic joy, poetic literature also reflects the cumulative wisdom of the civilization. Drama, a visual form of poetic creation, reflects society; the poet is a versatile scholar.

Kālidāsa is considered to be the most distinguished classical Sanskrit poet and dramatist. His wisdom has influenced the phenomenological thought of poets in many regional languages of India. The artistic genius of Kālidāsa is not merely due to the finish and supremacy of the poetic art, but also his learning and observation skills are equally responsible (Gopal, 1984, p. 42). He is both a philosopher and a poet of love. Known for his amorous poetry, Kālidāsa has built his human and divine characters through keen observance of nature. His practical characterization innovations seem to be based on the personality assessment tools of ancient India, enshrined in the classical treatises of Ayurveda.

The concept of *prakṛti* is one of the fundamental tenets in the study of Ayurveda. *Prakṛti* determines an individual's

physical, physiological, and mental disposition (Manyam & Kumar, 2013). This study examines the *prakṛti* of major characters from the dramas of Kālidāsa based on their physical descriptions. It ascertains whether the mental framework of these characters is in sync with what has been told in Ayurvedic classics. The paper tries to understand the *prakṛti* of major characters of Kālidāsa's dramas through physical and psychological description, and compare the results. It also discusses the relevance of Ayurvedic *prakṛti* in literary studies.

2 Review of literature: *prakṛti* and their characteristics

The Indic healing system considers the three *doṣas*, *vāta*, *pitta*, and *kapha*, as the fundamental principles of the human body (Jayasundar, 2010). Combination of these *doṣas* in varying degrees leads to one's constitution, known as *prakṛti* (Mukerji & Prasher, 2011). The *prakṛti* is determined at birth and cannot be changed permanently. Each *doṣa* is associated with specific physical, physiological, and psychological characteristics. In medical science, *prakṛti* is used to check for disease vulnerability, frame personalized diet plans, and decide treatment modalities (Rotti et al., 2014). There is also another aspect of *prakṛti*, viz., personality assessment. Persons with certain physical characteristics exhibit a specific mental framework (Svabodha, 1996, p. 32). It is shown that specific genes control both physical aspects and emotions

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(Bevilacqua & Goldman, 2011). *Prakṛti* is assessed based on the characteristic features attributed to each *doṣa*. The combination of these features indicates *prakṛtis*. The phenomenon of *samapṛakṛti*, which is extremely rare, is marked by the equivalence of all three *doṣas*.

2.1 *Vāta prakṛti*

The people of *vāta prakṛti* have dominance of wind and ether *pañcamahābhūtas*. The words used to describe the characteristics of *vāta prakṛti* are *rūkṣa*, *laghu*, *cala*, *bahu*, *śīghra*, *śīta*, *paruṣa* and *vaiśadya* (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277).

2.1.1 Physical characteristics of *vāta* predominance (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277)

Rūkṣa (dryness): Thin, lanky, and slender built with thin muscles, hoarse voice, insomniac, low weight; cracked hands and feet; dry, brittle, and frizzy hair; *Cala* (mobile): Joints, eyes, eyebrows, jaws, lips, tongue, head, shoulder, hands and legs are shaking and unstable; *Śīta* (cold): Insensitive to cold, and body parts are cold to touch; *Paruṣa* (roughness): Hair, beard, mustache, body hairs, nails, skin, and teeth are rough and dry; *Vaiśadya* (clear or empty): Cracking sounds from the joints often.

2.1.2 Psychological characteristics of *vāta* predominance (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277)

Laghu (lightness): Flickering and quick activities like quick movements, rapid actions, quick eating, etc.; *Bahu* (excessive): Excessive speech and prominent veins and tendons; *Śīghra* (steadfast): Quick in taking initiations, quick in getting irritated, quick in likes and dislikes, Quick in grasping but forgets soon.

Due to all these, *vāta* dominant people have less strength, less lifespan, a smaller number of offspring, and low spiritual and materialistic wealth (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277). *Suśruta Samhitā* adds that they are filled with anger, not-so-good-looking, dishonest, jealous, indulged in music and other arts, sadist, coward, ungrateful, fickle-minded, and indecisive with few friends. The people of *vāta* dominance resemble the characteristics of animals like goats, jackals, rabbits, rats, camels, dogs, vultures, crows, and donkeys (Suśruta, 2019, p. 361).

2.2 *Pitta prakṛti*

Pitta prakṛti is the dominant fire element. The words denoting *pitta prakṛti* are *uṣṇa*, *tīkṣṇa*, *drava*, *visra*, *amla*, and *kaṭu* (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277).

2.2.1 Physical characteristics of *pitta* predominance (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277)

Uṣṇa (hot): Due to increased metabolism, the people with dominant *pitta* are sensitive to external heat and possess a hot face, a slightly raised body temperature, a slender body, and a warm complexion. The face will have an excess of freckles and black moles. They are extremely hungry and thirsty. They are more prone to early greying of hair and alopecia. Hairs of scalp, beard, and mustache are thin, soft, and tawny.

Drava (liquidity): Looseness and softness of muscles and joints, excessive urine, sweat, and feces; *Visra*: Bad odor in armpits, bad breath, and body odor; *Kaṭu* and *amla* (sour and bitter): Have less reproductive tissue and hence less sexual desire and few progeny.

Pitta dominant people are moderate in strength and longevity.

2.2.2 Psychological characteristics of *pitta* predominance (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277)

Tīkṣṇa (sharp): Courageous with sharp physical and mental strength; *Kleśāsahiṣṇu*: Inability to face difficult situations, intolerant, sharp temper.

Mediocre in spiritual and materialistic knowledge, get angry quickly and forgive easily, extremely intelligent, skilful, great debater, voracious eater, and lustrous (Suśruta, 2019, p. 361). People of *pitta prakṛti* resembles snake, owl, *gandharva*, *yakṣa*, cat, monkey, tiger, bear, and mongoose (Suśruta, 2019, p. 361).

2.3 *Kapha prakṛti*

People with dominant water and earth *pañcamahābhūtas* have *kapha prakṛti*. The words used to describe *kapha prakṛti* are *snigdha*, *ślakṣṇa*, *mṛdu*, *madhura*, *sāra*, *sāndra*, *manda*, *stimita*, *guru*, *śīta*, *vijjala* and *accha* (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277).

2.3.1 Physical characteristics of *kapha* predominance (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277)

Snigdha (unctuous): body parts are unctuous, slimy and moist; *Ślakṣṇa*: Smoothness of body parts; *Mṛdu* (softness): soft, delicate, and tenderness of body, clarity of complexion, pleasing appearance; *Madhura* (sweetness): Due to good quality and quantity of reproductive tissue, more desire for sex and more progeny; *Sāra*: Firm, Compact, and stiff body; *Sāndra* (density): Well-nourished and well-built organs; *Manda*: Slow in activities like partaking in food, movement, and speech; *Guru*: Majestic and authoritative



gait; *Śīta*: low perspiration, less sensitivity to heat, poor hunger and thirst; *Vijjala*: Firm and compact joints; *Accha*: Pleasing voice and complexion.

They have fair complexion and love to eat sweet food. The corneal part of the eye is extremely white, well-built body and unctuous skin

2.3.2 Psychological characteristics of *kapha* predominance (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 277)

Stimita: Slow in initiating actions and slow in getting irritated; *Accha*: Clarity in thoughts and actions.

The people of *kapha* dominance are generally bestowed with strength, wealth, knowledge, immunity, peace, and long life. They are grateful, consistent, tolerant, temperate, strong, have long retained power, and unforgiving. They have dominance of *sva*, can tolerate pain, and are obedient towards elders. They are well-learned, have many friends, and speak well-articulated words. The similes for *kapha* dominant people are *Brahma*, *Rudra*, *Indra*, *Varuṇa*, lion, horse, elephants, cow, bull, and swan (Suśruta, 2019, p. 361).

3 Materials and methods

The hero and heroine of three dramas of Kālidāsa, *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*, *Mālavikāgnimitram*, and *Vikramorvaśīyam* were selected for the study. Their physical description assessed the *prakṛti* of these characters and then by their behavioral description as told in the classical works of Ayurveda. The two were then compared, and results were discussed regarding the relevance of the Ayurvedic concept of *prakṛti* in writing fiction. Although many scales are available on *tridoṣa*, they are not utilized since this is a retrospective study and all characteristics mentioned are not available in the drama. *Prakṛti* is assessed using the Sanskrit terms used in classical works of Ayurveda and Kālidāsa.

4 *Mālavikāgnimitram*

It is the only drama of Kālidāsa where the hero's name is also included in its title. The title suggests that Mālavika and Agnimitra had equal importance in the drama. Mālavika, a girl in her teens, is referred to as *Bāla* and *Dārika* in the play, and Agnimitra, the King, is the lead character (Sane et al., 1950, p. 27). The play's characters, Agnimitra,

Puṣyamitra, and Vasumitra, are believed to be inspired by actual characters.

4.1 *Prakṛti* of Mālavika as per physical characteristics

When Mālavika enters to dance, her bewitching beauty captures the king, and he describes Mālavika as having long eyes, a face as lustrous as the autumn moon, a compact bosom, a thin waist, and expansive hips (Sane et al., 1950, p. 27). Long eyes and wide hips are due to *kapha*, and lustrous skin is due to *pitta*. Compact bosom and thin waist are due to *vāta*. King describes her as having pinkish (*pāṇḍu*) cheeks, characteristic of *pitta prakṛti*. This indicates that Mālavika is of *pitta-vāta* *prakṛti*.

4.2 *Prakṛti* of Mālavika as per mental characteristics

Mālavika is a clever girl, described as *paramanipuṇi* (highly skilled) and *medhāvini* (intelligent) by her dance professor. *Medhā* and *naipuṇya* are due to *pitta*. Parivrājikā appreciates Mālavikā's dance, saying, "the limbs look like incarnate words. The steps declare the beat of the song. There is no dance; there is only feeling. The hands move flowingly with the gestures; expression chases fleeting steps while the essential mood remains the same" (Balakrishna, 1970, p. 9). She performs the most challenging form of dance, called *cālita*. The keen interest in fine arts, a characteristic of *gandharva*, is a simile told under *pitta prakṛti*. She is timid and always scared of Dhāriṇi. Timidity and fear indicate *vāta prakṛti*. Her weak nature is seen when she sits down to lament at the end of the soliloquy at the beginning of the third act. *Alpasattva* (weak mind) is characteristic of *vāta*. She patiently waits for one year for her love. Patience is the virtue seen in people with the dominance of *kapha*.

Based on mental characteristics, she must be of *pitta-vāta* *prakṛti*.

4.3 *Prakṛti* of Agnimitra as per physical characteristics

At the beginning of the third act, the king looks at himself and laments at the loss of weight (Sane et al., 1950, p. 47). The quick loss of weight is generally seen in *vāta prakṛti*. The king's limbs are described as thin and pale by Bakulavālīka in the third act, again indicating *vāta prakṛti*. The king had many wives in his harem, and desiring



Mālavika means higher sexual desire, a feature of *kapha prakṛti*.

4.4 *Prakṛti* of Agnimitra as per mental characteristics

The least likable of Kālidāsa's heroes is Agnimitra (Bhat, 1982, pp. 107–18). When the king's son is battling in the war, the king runs behind Mālavika in the palace garden. His cowardice indicates *vāta prakṛti*. At the very outset, the king is shown deliberating with his minister to order reprisals against the king of Vidarbha. He is a king of quick decisions (Sane et al., 1950, p. 29). Quickness is the virtue of *vāta* dominance. He is a great appreciator of fine arts who maintains two learned professors of dancing and acting at his court and encourages his younger queen, Iravati, to learn dancing. This again indicates he had *vāta prakṛti*.

He notices Mālavikā in the portrait of Dhāriṇi. This sharpness is due to the dominance of *pitta*. His intelligence is exhibited when he hatches a plan to release Mālavikā from imprisonment by stealing the ring of Dhāriṇi. Intelligence is the virtue of *pitta*. Agnimitra is of *vāta-pitta* dominance.

5 *Vikramorvaśiyam*

Although the title mentions Vikrama, the hero of the drama is Purūravas. The heroine of the story is a celestial nymph. However, it's the artistic merit of Kālidāsa to transform the splendor of angel into the simplistic divinity in Ūrvaśī. The character of Ūrvaśī is also assessed for *prakṛti*, although *prakṛti* is told only for humans in Ayurveda.

5.1 *Prakṛti* of Purūravas as per physical description

He is compared to the mountain in motion, which indicates the king's majestic gait and well-built body; both show *kapha prakṛti* (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 77). Higher perspiration is indicated when he fears that the birch paper of Ūrvaśī's love may not get soiled due to his sweat (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 53). Excessive perspiration is characteristic of *pitta*. So Purūravas must be of *kapha-pitta prakṛti*.

5.2 *Prakṛti* of Purūravas as per mental characteristics

Purūravas is a king and a hero, a man of high social and princely values (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 43). But the fundamental Purūravas is not a king and hero but a poet and lover (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 44). He is a great emperor, well-loved by his people, an unconquered hero, and a valued ally

of Gods, successful in empire, war, and love (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 46).

Purūravas first appears on screen as a man of prompt courage and action, playing a part he assumed, like a royal robe of purple (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 50). He is introduced to the reader at the very beginning in a scene of extraordinary swiftness, decision, and tumultuous excitement like an eagle cleaving the winds in his rushing swoop on his prey (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 50). Keeping calm in the swiftness and tumultuous excitement is due to the dominance of *kapha*. He laments at the missing wife and asks nature, the creepers, the birds, and the air to find his love (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 175). The high attachment is due to the sticky nature of *kapha*. He regularly observes religious rites like worshipping the Sun (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 16). High spiritual interest is a virtue seen in people with *kapha* dominance.

He was of *kapha* dominance as per mental makeup.

5.3 *Prakṛti* of Ūrvaśī as per physical characteristics

Cakṣurāyatam, *madirekṣana*, and *dhūrgāpāṅga* are the words used to describe her eyes (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, pp. 8, 53, 116). Large, intoxicating, and long eyes are characteristics of *kapha prakṛti* (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 8). Her buttocks are heavy and round like chariot wheels (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, pp. 14, 117). Round and heavy buttocks indicate the dominance of *kapha*. She has beautiful eyebrows (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 16). Her hands are as soft as lotus (*karāmbuja*) (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 100). Softness is also characteristic of *kapha*. Breasts with little space between them and well-filled joints indicate *kapha prakṛti* (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 125). The poet describes Ūrvaśī as created out of the moon, cupid, or vernal season (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, pp. 21–22). *Soma* (moon) and vernal season are also associated with *kapha*. She has a prominent neck and slender waist (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948 pp. 117, 163). Both of which indicate *vāta prakṛti*.

It can be easily concluded that Ūrvaśī was of *kapha – vātaja prakṛti*.

5.4 *Prakṛti* of Ūrvaśī as per mental characteristics

Her terror and collapse in the first episode show *alpasattva*, a characteristic seen in *vāta prakṛti* (Athalye & Bhavé, 1948, p. 8). Her forgetfulness, a quality of *vāta* dominance, was known when she forgot her dialogue in the drama and inflicted the curse of Bharata. She is more frank and playful in love than any other Kālidāsa's heroines (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 68). Her half-playful (*vāta*), half-serious (*kapha*) self-justification in embracing her lover and her immediate abashed silence at his retort portray the mixture of frank



impulsiveness and shy timidity proper to her character admirably. Her manner of speech is always simple and ordinary, but affections are natural and quick. When she sees Ayus fondled by Pururavas, "who is this youth", she asks with little jealousy and then sees Satyavati and understands. There is no joyous outburst of maternal joy and passion. Jealousy is innate in *vāta* dominant people, and the calm and composed state of mind is generally seen in *kapha prakṛti* (Sri Aurobindo, 1964, p. 69).

She must be, undoubtedly, of *kapha-vāta* dominance.

6 *Abhijnāna Śākuntalam*

It is considered the masterpiece of Kālidāsa. The drama is based on the incident mentioned in *Padmapurāṇa* and *Mahābhārata* (Yadava, 1974, p. 62). The characters of Duṣyanta and Śakuntala, the hero and heroine of the drama, were assessed.

6.1 *Prakṛti* of Duṣyanta as per physical characteristics-

The description of shoulders with the scar of the bow indicates prolonged carrying of the heavy bow (Kale, 1980, p. 19). The strength required to carry weights is seen in *kapha prakṛti*. The young hermit, Gauthama's description of the king as having long arms indicates the well-built nature of Duṣyanta (Kale, 1980, p. 78). This also shows he must be of *kapha prakṛti*. The king's decreased perspiration and muscular body compared to a majestic elephant also indicate the dominance of *kapha* (Kale, 1980, p. 65).

6.2 *Prakṛti* of Duṣyanta as per mental characteristics-

Duṣyanta is introduced as the king who was forcibly carried away by the fleet of antelope. Again, at the beginning of the fifth act, he gets carried away by the music (Kale, 1980, p. 150). Generally, *vāta prakṛti* people get carried away due to the mobile quality of the wind.

Duṣyanta enters the stage with a bow and arrow, indicating his interest in hunting (Kale, 1980, p. 13). The foremost simile to describe Duṣyanta is *Pināki*, for following the antelope (Kale, 1980, p. 16). Here, following the antelope indicates focused vision, a quality seen in *kapha prakṛti*. As per Kātyavema, *Pināki*, i.e., Lord Śiva is known for the destruction of *Yajña* (Shastri, 1947, p. 6). Rudra is, again, a simile for *kapha prakṛti* (Agnivesha, 2011, p. 97).

Duṣyanta's obedience when he took back his arrow to oblige the Vaikhānasa indicates *kapha* dominance (Kale,

1980, p. 19). He expects Śakuntala to convey his respectfulness to Kulapathi (Kale, 1980, p. 21). He wishes to sanctify himself by a visit to the sacred hermitage (Kale, 1980, p. 23). He removes his jewelry to dress humble in the hermitage (Kale, 1980, p. 23). He attends to his royal duties as described in the fifth act even though he is in wearied mind (Kale, 1980, p. 181). All these are features of *kapha prakṛti*. Anasūya wonders who the intelligent gentleman with a dignified appearance and sweet and pleasant talk is. These are a few more characteristics to ascertain *kapha prakṛti* (Kale, 1980, p. 37).

6.3 *Prakṛti* of Śakuntala as per physical characteristics

The words *manohara*, *madhura*, and *manojña* describe the pleasing appearance of Śakuntala, indicating *kapha prakṛti* (Kale, 1980, pp. 24–26). Tightening the robes of Śakuntala means quickly gaining weight, another characteristic of *kapha* dominance (Kale, 1980, p. 27). Like the tender twigs, delicate arms describe *kapha prakṛti* (Kale, 1980, p. 28). Her eyes are unctuous, her gait is slow, and her buttocks are heavy (Kale, 1980, p. 58). All these indicate *kapha* dominance. Long eyelashes are characteristic of *kapha* (Kale, 1980, p. 117).

Tanvi is used for *vāta* and *pitta prakṛti* people (Kale, 1980, p. 24). Red lips are characteristics of *pitta prakṛti* (Kale, 1980, p. 28). Śakuntala gets sick from sun exposure (Kale, 1980, p. 92). People who have dominance of *pitta* have less tolerance for heat. Śakuntala must be of *kapha-pittaja prakṛti*.

6.4 *Prakṛti* of Śakuntala as per mental characteristics

Śakuntala has concern for all beings, including the trees and climbers (Kale, 1980, p. 25). Her friend with fawn, trees, creepers, and *cakravāka* birds proves her to be a *kapha prakṛti* (Kale, 1980, p. 139). She is shy and does not talk to Duṣyanta directly (Kale, 1980, p. 50). Shyness is again a feature of *kapha*. Her vision is wavering, and she shivers seeing bees, characteristics of *vāta* dominance (Kale, 1980, p. 30). The love of Śakuntala is quick and hasty, indicating *vāta*. She was of *kapha-vātaja prakṛti*. The characters and their *prakṛti* are mentioned in Table 1.

As seen from the above table, there is a perfect match of *prakṛti* in Mālavikā, Ūrvaśi, and Duṣyanta and a partial match in other characters.



Table 1 *Prakṛti* as per physical and mental characteristics

Sl. no.	Literary work	Name of the character	<i>Prakṛti</i> as per physical characteristics	<i>Prakṛti</i> as per mental make-up
1.	<i>Mālavikāgnimitram</i>	Mālavika	<i>pitta-vāta</i>	<i>pitta-vāta</i>
2.		Agnimitra	<i>vāta-kapha</i>	<i>vāta-pitta</i>
3.	<i>Vikramorvaśīyam</i>	Purūravas	<i>kapha-pitta</i>	<i>kapha</i>
4.		Ūrvaśī	<i>kapha-vāta</i>	<i>kapha-vāta</i>
5.	<i>Abhijñānaśākuntalam</i>	Śakuntala	<i>kapha-pitta</i>	<i>kapha-vāta</i>
6.		Duśyanta	<i>kapha</i>	<i>kapha</i>

7 Discussion and conclusion

Kālidāsa has always expressed himself against the backdrop of *prakṛti*. The word *prakṛti* has a dual meaning of nature and the *doṣic* composition of the body; both are apt for Kālidāsa. In ancient India, a holistic method of education was followed. The *Gurukulas*, which acted as centers of knowledge dispersal, practiced a systematic approach wherein each student would be taught all the branches of study without any distinction between science and art. The knowledge of poets in various sciences is often examined. Kālidāsa's works are analyzed and interpreted for their inspirational wisdom and relevance to ethical behavior in contemporary global business management (Sarswat, 2010). Śūdraka's knowledge of polity and economy to compose *Mṛcchakatika* is well proven (Nagendra, 2017). Thus, the scholars of poetics and drama-turgy were also taught *Āyurveda*.

Training the poets has always been a topic of debate among Sanskrit scholars. Different writers on poetics have prescribed other guidelines for a successful poet. These guidelines collectively form *kaviśikṣa*. Bhāmaha mentions that knowledge regarding duty, practical life, desires, and salvation is needed for the poet; no special training is required (Keith, 1953, p. 338). According to Daṇḍi, to produce the highest form of poetry, there must be *pratibhā* (genius), *vyutpatti* (culture) and *abhyāsa* (practice). Vāmana gives quite a clear list of what a poet must know, viz. worldly knowledge, grammar, *chandās*, arts including singing, dancing and painting, *kāmaśāstra*, and politics. He also adds acquaintance of existing poetry, the practice of writing poetry, etc. To this list, one can also add *prakṛti*.

Another possibility is the keen observance of the world by the poet. The description of the deer's run in the first act of *Śakuntalam* is an example of Kālidāsa's chaste observation skills. Keen observation of human behaviour has led Kālidāsa to devise the characters that fit into the framework of *prakṛti*. The knowledge of the concept of Ayurvedic *prakṛti* is now employed beyond diagnosis and treatment. It is used in occupational training, checking individual satisfaction and organizational performance, nutritional sciences, and more (Chaya et al., 2013; Bell et al., 2017). *Prakṛti* can also be employed in designing the characters in fiction and

dramas. When checked for their physical and psychological characteristics, Kalidasa's characters correlate well with Ayurvedic *prakṛti*. The concept of *prakṛti* is helpful to create the characters and tell a compelling story. *Prakṛti* should be taught to students of literature too.

Data availability Not applicable.

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