



## Editorial

# A new frontier in teaching small groups as per body constitution (Prakriti): Beginning to personalise learning

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Ayurveda science documented since 1500 BC. Every individual is different from others, hence it emphasises on personalised medicine. This system offers preventive and curative regimens based on the body constitution known as prakriti, which means phenotypic assessment of the person.<sup>1</sup> Prakriti is an expression of health in perspective of body functions, behaviour, morphology and physiology. The three basic physiological entities vata, pitta and kapha determine the prakriti of a person at the time of fertilization, and as per dominance of these doshas, every individual has different physical and psychological characteristics in different prakriti.<sup>2</sup>

Success of the teacher lies in what he conveys in the classroom. But the student's attention is needed the most for this success. Many students complain about lack of concentration, less perception of the subject, not understanding, and not remembering despite having an intellectual capacity which ultimately hampers student's performance in the examination. Guru-shishya parampara<sup>3</sup> reveals the significant association of prakriti and teaching learning process of quadruple. Acharya described that volunteers of vata prakriti are of the unsteady mind, quick in acquisition but with poor memory. Volunteers having a predominance of pitta prakriti are sharp in knowledge and understanding. They are clever and very intelligent and can easily defeat others in talk while volunteers of kapha prakriti

are steady in mind, full of knowledge, and are very learned. They are slow in comprehension but have a very good memory.<sup>4</sup> Each student have their pattern of learning. Some are auditory, comprehensive learners and some students are kinaesthetic learners.

In the classroom to conduct NLH (non-lecture hours), we used various T-L (teaching – learning) methods for small and large groups,<sup>5</sup> such as PBL (problem based learning), CBL (case based learning), group discussion, seminar, debate, role-play, and TBL (Team-based learning). Students are selected most of the time for small group<sup>6</sup> based on roll calls, gender, age or randomly. Small groups if based on prakriti of students, teaching and learning process would become more effective. The PBL method may be suitable for kapha prakriti as they have deeper knowledge and a steady mind. Group discussion may prove helpful for the combination of vata and pitta prakriti students so that vata prakriti students can get more understanding of the topic discussed by pitta prakriti students. Sometimes, if needed, groups can be formed combination of all three types of prakriti vata, pitta and kapha dominant. For example in collaborative learning, a group of students will involve all three types of prakriti, so that vata prakriti students inspire the others by working, pitta prakriti students can create new ideas and chalked out plans of work and kapha prakriti students will hold on to the project till its ending.

On the basis of prakriti of students, teachers can understand the strength and weaknesses of learning patterns

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of individual students and accordingly plan T-L methods. This may be a new beginning in direction of personalised learning.

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