



## *Perspective about Mystical Spirituality of Contemporary Sufis in Pakistan*

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### ABSTRACT

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*Man and spirituality happen to have a strong bond with one another. The purpose of study was to explore the views and experiences of contemporary Sufis about mystical spirituality that is also known as Sufism. For this investigation a qualitative approach was employed. On the basis of pilot study a semi-structured interview format was developed. The purposive sampling strategy was used to collect data from eight Sufis. The information obtained from participants was audio recorded and transcribed. Data were analysed through the technique of content analysis. The researcher concluded the main concern of Sufism, mystical spirituality is focusing the energies towards understanding the divine. This study is pioneer attempt and its theoretical implication rests in its Eastern contribution to the important area of psychology named Sufi psychology.*

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## Introduction

In the present modern times, where rationalism has occupied the whole world, man has an inherent desire and need to experience and absorb the metaphysical world. Human wishes to bridge the distance between the existing and the metaphysical world. More specifically, human wishes to end the distance between his existing being and the actual being. It is simply because of the fact that the outcome product will be satisfied soul i.e. “The *Nafs-e-Mutmaena*”. Humans have been practicing *Sufism* (Mystical Spirituality) for a long time.<sup>1</sup> Since the inception of this universe, man has been in the pursuit of something that goes beyond his self. *Sufism* is the process in which *Sufi* (Man of God) tries hard to actualize the existence of divine ethics in form or the other. *Sufism* encapsulates a being which is more or less enlightened with something metaphysical or spiritual in nature. At the same time, the actual being is the one which lags behind in having the knowledge of the divine. It can be said that *Sufism* offers a pathway, an enlightened road to the real world of knowledge and existence. *Sufis* are of the view that to transcend oneself towards knowing the existence of God, one needs to be aware of the route that will lead us to the divine. It is not a path on which every human being can walk on.<sup>2</sup>

*Sufism* is more than just a spiritual phenomenon. It has its roots embedded in the religious structures of Muslim society. Even in the present times, the element of spirituality in people lives cannot be undermined. For most people, this element serves as a means for introducing some balance in life. *Sufism* has been used in South East Asia as a means for curing the mental illnesses of individuals. Although there is not a great deal of objective evidence available in this regard, but still spiritual forms of psychotherapy have been successful. *Sufi* psychotherapy also embodies the same principles of mental cure through connection with the divine.<sup>3</sup> *Sufis* assert that most of the ills in the society exist in the society as the people have lost their connection with God. The only possible way left to bridge the gap between religion and man is to re-establish the connection between man the divine. Islam, which has supported *Sufism* since the very start, asserts that the mind of human beings can be best cured through submission to the divine. These are some of the reasons for which *Sufism* and Psychology happen to have a close bond.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.1 What is Sufism?

*Muhammad Al Jariri* and *Ali Ibn Abd Al Rahim Al Qannad*, in terms of the definition of *Sufism*, said that *Sufism* deals with an extension of one’s spiritual dimensions and stations to move towards a stage of totality with the absolute reality.<sup>5</sup> It is for sure that *Sufism* has always been considered an esoteric facet of Islam due to which it has been practised for a long time. *Sufism* is still visible in the world in different forms but seems to have lost the special touch of elegance that was visible in the *Sufis* of the ancient times. The 13<sup>th</sup> century was indeed a time of blossom and boom for the *Sufis*. It was also during the same times that Islam had started to spread beyond leaps and bounds.

There were many famous congregations and orders during those times. The most famous of them were linked to the Turkish era of enlightenment.<sup>6</sup>

### **1.2 The Origin of Sufis**

Most of the *Sufi* orders, more often referred to as "*turuq*" prefer to trace their origins to *Ali Ibn Abi Talib*, the cousin of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. However, there is one *Sunni Naqshbandi* (*Sufi* order) that prefers to link its origins to the 1<sup>st</sup> Caliph of Islam, *Hazrat Abu Bakr RA*. The *Shia* (Muslims) are of the view that all *Sufi* orders have their origins in the knowledge and expertise of the 12 Imams.<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that the *Naqshbandi* order also links its origins to the Sixth *Imam* (leader) of *Shias*, *Jafar Al Sadiq*. In *Shia* Islam, these 12 *Imams* are believed to have descended from the direct blood line of *Ali Ibn abi Talib* and *Sayeda Fatima*. However, there is a common agreement among all sects that *Ali Ibn Abi Talib* is the founder of all forms of *Sufism* in Islam. A number of prominent *Sunni* and *Shia* scholars and religious experts have agreed that *Hazrat Ali RA* was the founder of *Sufism* and that all orders trace their roots to the practices and knowledge furthered by *Ali RA*.<sup>7</sup>

### **1.3 Teachings in Sufism**

A student of *Sufism* enters the spiritual relation with the *Sufi*. In *Sufism*, the relation of the seeker and the teacher is of extreme importance. There is always a need of having a spiritual bond in order to attain the level of mystical experience. The importance of succession (*silsilah*) is also important in *Sufism*. In other words, the knowledge should always pass one from the teacher to the seeker and so onwards for the *silsila* to continue. It should also be noted here that some of the teachings of *Sufism* are in direct conflict with *Shia* Islam, as the latter gives preferences to the 12 Imams for spiritual guidance. Different orders and their followers are bound to engage in certain practices of doing-good for humanity while denying one's own needs. Helping the poor members of the society and caring for them is one such practice.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.4 Practices in Sufism**

The practices of *Sufis*, more often referred to as, devotional practices, do vary a lot amongst the different *Sufis* and their orders. It is because the authorized leader and master of the path is termed a physician and curer of the heart. The intention of the master of the order along with all of his followers should always be to serve Allah. Most of the *Sufis* are of the view that the seeker of *Sufi* knowledge does not have the ability to self-diagnose. For these seekers, the process of engaging in different practices can be really harmful and misleading. It is in the presence of a teacher that a student *Sufi* will realize what to pay attention to. In other words, there is always a need of a formal authorization in order to engage in such practices. One of the main prerequisites to such practices is a strict and unbiased adhere to the teachings and norms of Islam including five times prayer, reading the Holy Quran, fasting in Ramadan, Hajj and so on. Moreover, the seeker should also follow and entirely accept the teachings and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The only path that can save

a person from the harms and sins of this world is the path of the Sufi. It should be noted here that most Sufis had argued that access to Allah is not something that can be achieved through a psychological state induced through breathing slowly. It is something that is much more difficult and subjective. There are a number of preliminary requirements which are always to be fulfilled by a person who wishes to walk on the divine path in order to become one with Allah.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.5 Doctrines in Sufism

The two primary doctrines of *Sufism* are more often referred to as *Wahdat al Wajud* and *Wahdat al Shahud*.<sup>10</sup>

#### 1.5.1 *Wahdat Al Wajud*

*Wahdat Al Wajud* refers to the light of Allah or God. More specifically it refers to the Existence of the One Light of Allah. It was from the same light that the *Wajood e Muhammad* (existence of last Prophet) SAWW originated from. There is also another interrelated concept which is referred to as the *Insan e Kamal* (perfect man). It is vital to note that *Insan e Kamal* and *Wahdut al Wajuud* happen to be two major and fundamental doctrines in the domains and teachings of Islam. The transcend unity of God Almighty is expressed through the union of these two components. In relevance to these concepts, the concept of *Insan e Kamil* is related to the supremacy of Prophet Muhammad PBUH, as the latest and Greatest Messenger of Allah Almighty in light of the teachings of the Holy Quran. This doctrine offers an assertion that everything that is existent in the world is only because of the existence of the Divine Truth or the Absolute Reality i.e. Allah Almighty. With Him Almighty, nothing would have existed. He is Cause of all causes and effects but himself has no cause.<sup>11</sup>

*Sufism* focuses on the advancement of one's spiritual through the use of one's inner abilities and competencies. However, access to the divine is not within the reach of every human being, especially the ones who are too preoccupied with the worldly desires and attitudes. *Sufis* refers to themselves as the seekers of the Absolute Truth.<sup>12</sup> The teachings of *Sufism* have been designed to aid the seeker to gain knowledge of the divine. It is for sure that the Ultimate Knowledge of Everything in the Universe is only held by Allah Almighty. However, *Sufis* do try to attain a mere segment, a very minor component of this knowledge in order to know more about the Absolute Reality, Allah Almighty. The divine knowledge or pursuit of knowledge in which *Sufis* engage in is referred to as having the *Marafat* of Allah. There are a number of stages in which each *Sufis* transits through in order to attain some knowledge of the divine. These stages include: *ahwal* (purpose), *al-tariqat* (road to God) and the final stage, *Fanah Fil Haqiqat* (submission to divine reality). It can be said that all these stages are merely components of what needs to be done to gain some knowledge of the existence of the Ultimate Reality, the Undeniable Truth i.e. Allah Almighty.<sup>13</sup>

#### 1.5.2 Verses of Quran and *Wahdat al Wajud*

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For the purpose of elaborating their teachings and doctrine, *Sufis* used many verses of the Holy Quran on a regular basis. One such verse is “God is closer to him (Man) than the vein of his Neck”.<sup>14</sup> (Surah 50:15). Another verse is “Everything will perish except His own face”. These verses are merely a few among the plethora of passages that were used and are still used by *Sufis*.<sup>15</sup>

#### **1.5.3 *Wahdat ash Shuhud***

This concept has been translated and amalgamated in English language as apparentism. In terms of Arabic, it stands for the unity of witness. It is also referred to as unity of perception or to the oneness in terms of manifestation. There were also those who were strictly against this doctrine. However, there were some components of this doctrine to which all had agreed upon. This school of thought had been created by a renowned *Sufi*, *Ala Ad Dawlah Simnani*. He was of the view that any form of experience between the *Allah* (God) and this world is always subjective. In other words, it is something that occurs in the mind of the believer. For this reason, there is no objective part of this experience that is existent in the real world.<sup>16</sup>

#### **1.5.4 The Tawhid Doctrine**

The two prime concepts, *Wahdat al Wajud* and *Insan e Kamal*, are associated and closely linked with the doctrine of *Tawhid* (Oneness of God). In terms of Sufi Islam, *Tawhid* stands for the belief in the Unity of *Allah* (God), for Him being one and only. The second facet focuses on the internal as well as external life leading towards the light of the faith in *Allah*. The third facet tries to point out the union or oneness with the existence of Allah Almighty. The fourth component focuses on the conception and understanding of the absolute reality in close relation with mystical existence and experience. The first two facets are wholly accepted by all Muslims. However, the remaining two components are dominantly accepted in Sufism.<sup>17</sup>

#### **2.1 Rationale**

The proposed study intends to explore the perspective of contemporary *Sufis* about mystical spirituality in Pakistan. In contemporary Sufism *Sufis* found new and modern ways to promote teaching and practices of Sufism globally. Contemporary Sufism unlike traditional way of Sufism come out of *dargha* (shrine) system and participated in different segments of society like politics and business. Moreover most of the previous theatrical researches regarding *Sufism* have been conducted mostly in south Asian cultural contexts which cannot actually represent the perspective of spirituality of Pakistani *Sufis*.<sup>18</sup> As Pakistan has a completely different culture and society. So it is intended to qualitatively find the perspective about mystical Spirituality of *Sufis* in Pakistani cultural context.

#### **2.2 Objectives**

1. The objective of this study is to explore the perspective of contemporary *Sufis* about mystical spirituality (*Sufism*) in Pakistan.

2. The objective of this study is to explore the spiritual experiences of *Sufis* in Pakistani cultural context.

### 2.3 Research Question

- i. What is the perspective of Pakistani *Sufis* about mystical spirituality?
- ii. How do contemporary *Sufis* experience their spirituality in Pakistani cultural context?

### 3 Methodology

The researcher desired to explore the perspective and spiritual experiences of contemporaries *Sufis* about mystical spirituality in Pakistan. For this researcher needed an in depth analysis of their views and experiences. So qualitative research design was used in this study, in which researcher shapes a holistic picture which is based upon the reports of information.<sup>18</sup>

#### 3.1 Sampling technique

Purposive sampling technique was used in research study, in which primarily participants were selected on the basis of convention criteria, their availability and willingness to participate in research.

#### 3.2 Sample

Data was collected from eight *Sufis* which belongs to different *silsala* (order) of *Sufism*.

#### 3.3 Inclusion criteria

1. Practicing *Sufi* = A pious Muslim person who claim that he is *Sufi*.
2. Who claimed he has followers in thousands number.
3. Who is doing spiritual practices

**Table 1: Demographic information of participants (N=8)**

Sufi	Age	Marital status	Living area	Social class	Followe r social class	Source of incom e	Silsalla-e- tassawuf	Come into Sufism	Spiritual level of Sufi
1	53	Married	Chamiran	Middle	All	Translation & book writing	Warsiya	By chance	Murshad knows
2	30	Unmarried	Narowal	Upper middle	Lower middle	Business	Naqshbandiya mujajdiya qadriya	By choice	Murshad knows
3	29	Married	Muzafargarh	Middle	All	Agriculture	Chieshtiya	By choice	student
4	86	Married	Okarah	Middle	All	Education	Chieshti Qadrie Naqshbandi	By choice	No level
5	67	Married	Lahore	Middle	All	Proof reading	Naqshbandiya mujajdiya nawabiya masomiya	By choice	Murshad knows
6	37	Married	Dipalpur	Middle	All	Agriculture	Chiestie qadire	By choice	Murshad's servant

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7	45	Married	Jalalpur jatan	Middle	middle	Dum: Sacred breath	Chieshti qadrie	By choice	student
8	45	Married	lahore	Middle	All	imam	Chieshtie Qadrie	By choice	No level

*Note.* All participants were Muslims, belonging to Sufism. Spiritual background of participant's shows whether they have frequent spiritual experiences or frequently visit spiritual people or not before joining Sufism.

#### **3.4 Research Tool**

Data was collected from the *Sufis* on the bases of semi structured qualitative interviews. Eight interviews were very rich in information consist of experiences and perspective or views and as well as content which were supporting for content analysis.

#### **3.5 Procedure**

After getting the formal permission from all concerned forums, the supervisor along with the researcher discussed the interview agenda after which a number of questions related to the life, experiences and perspective of the Sufis were formulated. The purpose of these questions was to generate information from the Sufis in relevance to their spiritual perspective and experiences. It should also be noted here that the questions were created and the interview agenda was designed keeping in view the research question.

In addition, the list of questions and headings were given to six experts from the domain of Sufism and psychology. They were asked for their opinion on the interview agenda and the questions that were to be asked in both, semi structured interviews and focus group discussions. After having analysed the suitability and appropriateness of the questions, the experts offered their comments which were implemented. Some of the comments offered by the experts was the repetition of some questions and inquiries. In addition, they also pointed out some of the questions that should be added in order to generate more reliable and developed information. It was also advised from the side of the experts that some questions require some rephrasing. There were also some closed ended questions which were changed, on the recommendation of the experts, to open ended questions. The questions were later onwards reduced to a smaller number of questions keeping in view the opinion of the experts. After having implemented the feedback offered by the experts, the final questionnaire was yet again forwarded to the experts in order to record their opinion. For research purposes, a pilot study was conducted with two participants who were asked to offer their accounts in response to the questions being asked. The semi structured interviews conducted with these two participants did yield some rich information. However, it should be noted that the two participants (*Sufis*) interviewed were not a part of the original research sample. When the pilot study had been completed, the researcher and supervisor thoroughly analysed the information that

was gathered. On the basis of the pilot study, some questions were removed and rephrased. Finally, for the semi structured interviews, a set of questions was developed. It is important to note that the questionnaire was first of all made in English Language. It was later onwards translated into Urdu Language keeping in view the convenience of the participants.

For this study, 12 participants who happened to be compatible with the inclusion criteria were contacted. However, only 8 out of these 12 showed willingness to participant for interview.

### 3.6 Strategy for Data Analysis

The results of the data collection phase were interpreted using these methods, namely, Content Analysis (CA).

#### 3.6.1 Content Analysis

For this research, content analysis had been employed for the purpose of making inferences from the gathered data. Berelson (1952) asserts that content is what happens to be contained in the data and content analysis is used for the analysis of what is contained inside the messages.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that the content analysis of any text material happens to be systematic as well as squeezable in order to structure and shrink the data into various small categories and meanings through the use of accurate coding measures.

Researchers have defined this technique as based on the process of making inferences from the data through the identification specific patterns and characteristics. They have also emphasized on the importance of archival data that can also be subject to content analysis.<sup>20</sup>

## 4. Analysis and Discussion

**Table 2:** Content Analysis of Interviews data (N=8)

Content Themes	Categories	Frequency (%)	Keywords	English Translation
Childhood Spiritual experience	Yes	4 (50)	۱. بچپن میں روحانیت کا تجربہ ہوا۔ ۲. کان پر ن کے دم سے علاج کرانے کا تجربہ۔ ۳. یہ باتیں بتانے والی نہیں بس چکھنے والی ہیں لیکن ایسا ہوا اور ہوتا رہے گا۔ ۴. میں بچپن میں اللہ ک نیک بندے کی کرامات دیکھیں۔	Experienced spirituality in childhood. The experience of getting treatment from the tail of the ear. 1. These things are not telling, they are just tasting, but it happened and will continue to happen. 3. I saw the miracles of a good servant of Allah in my childhood.
	No	3(38)	۱. انہیں مجھے بچپن میں کوئی روحانی تجربہ نہیں ہوا۔ ۲. انہیں میرا بچپن بہت ہی نارمل تھا۔ ۳. انہیں بچپن میں کوئی روحانی تجربہ نہیں ہوا۔	1. No, I did not have any spiritual experience in my childhood. 3. No, my childhood was very normal. No, there was no spiritual experience in childhood.

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	No comment	1(38)	یہ بتانے کی باتیں نہیں۔	That's not to say
<b>The journey of Sufism</b>	By birth	I(13)	مبارک ہو اللہ کا ولی پیدا ہوا ہے۔	Congratulations, spiritual soul has been born
	Childhood	1(13)	تصوف کی رغبت بچپن سے ہی تھی اور تب سے ہی رہی ہوں۔	Sufism has been my passion since childhood and I have been doing it ever since
	Adolescence(12-18)	4(50)	میں جب کالج میں ایڈمیشن لیا تب روحانی طبیعت محسوس کی اور روحانیت کا آغاز ہوا۔ ۲۔ میں بلوغت کی عمر سے ہی روحانیت کی طرف رغبت ہوئی اور ساتھ ہی روحانی مشقیں شروع کر دیں۔ ۳۔ میں درس نظامی میں اپنے مرشد کی بیعت کی اور تب سے ہی میرا یہ سفر شروع ہو گیا۔ ۴۔ جوانی میں قدم رکھا تو تصوف شروع کر دیا۔	When I took admission in college, I felt spiritual nature and spirituality started. 2. I was attracted towards spirituality from the age of puberty and at the same time I started spiritual exercises. 3. I pledged allegiance to my mentor in Nizami teaching. And that's when my journey began. 4. When he stepped into youth, he started Sufism.
	Maturity(30-60)	3(38)	۱۔ بیس سال کی عمر میں میں نے اپنے روحانی سفر کا آغاز کیا۔ ۲۔ میں تیس سال کا تھا جب میرا روحانی سفر شروع ہوا۔	1. I started my spiritual journey at the age of 32. I was 30 years old when my spiritual journey started.
<b>Reason to Come into Sufism</b>	By chance	1(13)	میں والد صاحب کی وفات کے بعد ان کی جگہ پر آیا پھر چلے کیے داڑھی بھی رکھی انکی وفات کے بعد ان کی جگہ بیٹھنا پڑا۔	I came to his place after my father's death and then I grew a beard and had to sit in his place after his death.
	By choice	7(90)	۱۔ اپنے شوق اور لگن سے ۲۔ میں چاہتا تھا میری کسی درویش سے نسبت ہو جائے۔ ۳۔ اکسفورڈ یونیورسٹی میں ایک روحانی تجربے سے یہ راستے پر چلا۔ ۴۔ نہیں میں اپنی مرضی سے آیا ہوں۔ ۵۔ میں زمانے کی جدت کو تجربہ کر کے بھی دیکھا ہے اور اب روحانیت میں ہی سکون ہے۔ ۵۔ اپنی مرضی بھی تھی اور والدین کی خواہش بھی تھی۔ ۶۔ لگن تھی کہ عاشق رسول بن جاؤں۔ ۷۔ روحانیت کے بغیر کہیں سکون نہیں پایا۔	1. Come from my passion and devotion. 2. I wanted to be related to one of my dervishes. 3. I went on this path with a spiritual experience at Oxford University. 3. No, I came of my own free will. 4. I have also seen the innovation of the times and now there is peace in spirituality. 5. There was also their own will and also the desire of the parents. 6. I was determined to become a lover of the Prophet.
<b>Importance of Baieat in Sufism</b>	On murshad	5(63)	۱۔ میرے سلسلے بیعت حضرت جان محمد صاحب سے ہے۔ ۲۔ الحاج خواجہ محمد معصوم۔ ۳۔ الحاج حضرت خواجہ میاں ترین	1. My allegiance is to Hazrat Jan Muhammad Sahib. Alhaj Khawaja Muhammad Masoom 2.

			بخش مہاروی ۴۔ الشیخ خواجہ کمال الدین سیالوی۔ ۵۔ حضرت مولانا سلطان احمد صاحب۔ ۶۔ حضرت خواجہ میاں علی خان بصری شریف ہندوستانی۔	Alhaj Hazrat Khawaja Mian Tareen Bakhsh Maharoo 2. Sheikh Khawaja Kamaluddin Sialvi 3. Hazrat Maulana Sultan Ahmed Sahib. 3. Hazrat Khawaja Mian Ali Khan Basri Sharif Indian
	Before Sufism practicing	1(13)	میں بچپن میں بیعت ہوا مگر پختگی کی عمر میں میں نے روحانی مشقیں کیں۔	I pledged allegiance as a child, but in my adulthood I practiced spirituality
	At simultaneously	6(75)	۱۔ بیعت کرتے ہی ذکر وظائف شروع کر دیئے۔ ۲۔ بیعت کے ساتھ ہی سبق شروع کر دیا۔ ۳۔ پہلا سبق ساتھ ہی پائے لگا۔ ۴۔ بیعت کرتے ہی مرشد کا سبق پڑھنے لگا۔ ۵۔ ابتدا میں ہی سبق باقاعدگی سے پڑھتا ہوں۔ ۶۔ بیعت کرتے ہی نظر کرم ہوا اور سبق پڑھنے لگا۔	1. As soon as he pledged allegiance, he started dhikr waqif. 2. He started the lesson with the pledge of allegiance. 3. He started getting the first lesson at the same time. 4. He started teaching the lesson of the murshid as soon as he pledged allegiance. 5. In the beginning I read the lesson regularly. As soon as he pledged allegiance, he looked kindly and began to learn a lesson.
Feeling of superiority being Sufi	Yes	3(38)	۱۔ کائنات میں جو فقیر ہے وہ فقیر سب سے اونچا ہوتا ہے۔ ۲۔ اللہ نے ہمیں عوام کا امام بنا کر پائی کلاس میں رکھتا ہے۔ ۳۔ جو ولی بن جاتا ہے اس مقام پر پہنچ جاتا ہے تو اس کا مرتبہ بلند ہوتا ہے۔	1. The saint who is in the universe is the highest saint. 2. Allah has made us the master of the people and puts us in high class. -
	No	5(63)	۱۔ اللہ شیطان سے بچائے ۲۔ مرشد کے کرم سے بچے ہوئے ہیں۔ ۳۔ ہم تو نچلے درجے کے ہیں بس یہی مقصد ہے کہ اس کی رضا مل جائے۔ ۴۔ ہم صرف یہ چاہتے ہیں کہ اللہ ہم پر راضی ہو جائے۔ یہ سمجھ لیں کہ ہم نچلے درجے کے ہیں۔ ۵۔ جو غم غافل سو دم کافر گرتے ہی رہتے ہیں اُس سے۔	1. May Allah protect us from the devil. 2. We have escaped from the grace of the Master. 3. We are humbled. 3. We only want Allah to be pleased with us.
Spiritual level of Sufism	Student	3(38)	۱۔ ابھی طالب علم ہوں۔ ۲۔ خود کو ناچیز طالب علم سمجھتا ہوں۔ ۳۔ کوئی تصوف کے بڑے درجے پر بھی ہو تو خود کو طالب علم ہی کہتا ہے ہم بھی طالب علم ہیں۔	1. I am a student now. 2. I consider myself an insignificant student. 2. Even if one is at a high level of Sufism, he calls himself a student. We are also students

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	Undefined stage	I(13)	تصوف میں جہاں ہم آکر رکے ہیں وہاں صرف احساسات ہیں ہمیں بھی نہیں پتہ چل رہا ہم ہیں کہاں پر۔	In Sufism, where we have come, there are only feelings. We do not even know where we are
	Murshad's knows	2(25)	یہ تو مرشد ہی بتا سکتے ہیں ایس ایچ او سے ڈی ایس پی کر دیا۔ ہم ان کو ڈی کوڈ نہیں کر سکتے۔ یہ تو ہمارے مرشد ہی بتا سکتے ہیں کوئی خود نہیں بتا سکتا۔	Only Master can tell this .We cannot decode them. Only our mentors can tell this, no one can tell it himself.
	On No stage	2(25)	درویش کی کوئی منزل نہیں ہوئی درویش اپنے آپ کو کسی بھی مرتبے میں نہیں سمجھتا البتہ ان پر اللہ کی نوازشیں ہوتی رہتی ہیں۔۲۔ ہم تصوف کے کسی درجے پر فائز نہیں۔	Saints have no destination. Saints do not consider themselves in any position, but they are always favoured by Allah. We do not have any level of Sufism.
<b>Purpose in Sufism</b>	Nisbat (association)	1(13)	میرا مقصد یہی ہے کہ میں اللہ کے کسی نیک بندے سے مخلص ہو جاؤں اللہ ان پر جو رحمت فرماتا ہے مجھے بھی اس سے کچھ حاصل ہو جائے۔	My intention is that I should be sincere to a good servant of Allah, so that I may gain something from what Allah has shown mercy to them.
	Serve to humanity	1(13)	میں مخلوق خدا کی خدمت کرنا چاہتا ہوں۔	I want to serve God's creatures
	Connection with Allah	3(38)	۱۔ لوگوں کا رابطہ اللہ کے ساتھ بحال کرونگا ایک مقصد بھی تھا میرا کیونکہ ہم اپنے رب کو بھلانے بیٹھے ہیں۔۲۔ ہم مخلوق خدا کو قرآن و سنت کی باتیں بتاتے ہیں۔۳۔ لوگوں کو اسلام بتاتے ہیں۔	I will restore the connection of people with Allah. I also had a purpose because we have forgotten our Lord. 1. We tell God's creatures the words of Qur'an and Sunnah. - Tell people about Islam
	To Understanding states of soul	1(13)	اللہ والے بندے کی کہیاں کو سمجھتے ہیں کہ یہ بندہ یا اس کی روح کس کفایت میں ہے۔	The people of Allah understand the state of the servant to what extent this servant or his soul is sufficient.
	Peoples problem solution	2(25)	ہم لوگوں کو ورد بتاتے ہیں جس سے ان کے مسئلوں کے حل نکل آتے ہیں فیض کے وسیلے سے۔۲۔ ورد بتاتے ہیں لوگوں کو۔	We tell people the word from which the solution to their problems comes out through grace. Word tells people.
	Tolerance	1(13)	تصوف میں ہم نے بھی صبر سیکھا اور اب دوسروں کو بھی سکھا رہے ہیں۔ صبر کی تقلید۔	We also learned patience in Sufism and are now teaching others as well. Imitation of patience
<b>People's problem solving</b>	Enlightened heart & Prayer to Allah	8(100)	۱۔ غفیر دعا کرتے ہیں اللہ رحم کرتا ہے۔۲۔ دعا کرتا ہوں ان کے لئے۔۳۔ اپنے مریدین کے لئے دعا کرتے ہیں۔۴۔ اپنے عقیدت مندوں کے لئے دعا کرتے ہیں۔	The Saint pray Allah has mercy. I pray for them. 1. Pray for his followers. 3. Pray for his devotees. 2. We bring the problems

			۵. ہم لوگوں کے مسائل میلاد شریف اور ختم دلواتے ہیں اور نبی پاک کی بارگاہ تک لے جاتے ہیں آگے وہ جائیں اور حل ہو جاتے ہیں۔ ۶. دعا کرتے ہیں رب سے رحم فرما دیتا ہے اللہ۔ ۷. اللہ کے آگے دعا کرتے ہیں وہ فقیر کو ضرور سنتا ہے۔ ۸. اللہ کی بارگاہ میں التجا کرتے ہیں۔	of the people to Milad-e-Sharif and end them and take them to the court of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Pray to Allah for mercy. 2. We pray to Allah, He surely hears the poor. 2. They supplicate to Allah
<b>Prerequisites of Sufis</b>	Muslim Follower of Islamic sharia & Love for Allah	8(100)	۱. مسلمان ہو، صوفی کر مسلم کافی۔ ۲. ختم نبوت لازم ہے۔ ۳. مومن ہو۔ ۴. صوفی صرف مسلمان ہوتا ہے۔ ۵. کلمہ گو شرط ہے۔ ۶. ارکان اسلام لازم ہیں۔ ۸. عاشق رسول ہو صوفی کے دل میں اللہ و رسول کی محبت کی تڑپ ہوتی ہے صوفی صرف وہ ہے جو اسلامی شریعت کا پابند ہو۔	1. Be a Muslim, be a Sufi and be a Muslim. 2. End of Prophethood is necessary. 1. Be a believer. 2. A Sufi is only a Muslim. 3. Speaking is a condition. 2. The members of Islam are obligatory. Be a lover of the Prophet. The heart of a Sufi longs for the love of Allah and the Prophet.
<b>Appointment of Sufis</b>	Gadi-nasheen	2(25)	میں گدی نشین ہوں حضرت پیر سید بخاری، پیر بھائی حضرت معین الدین چشتی امیر شریف۔	Hazrat Pir Syed Bukhari, Pir Bhai Hazrat Moinuddin Chishti Ajmer Sharif
	Khaleefa (Association with Murshed)	6(75)	۱. میں نے مختلف استاؤں ، گدیوں اور سلسلوں سے خلافتیں لی ہیں ۲. کاتب کے طور پر پیر صاحب کے پاس ڈیوٹی دیتا ہوں۔ ۳. خادم ہوں۔ ۴. غلام ہوں۔ ۵. خلیفہ ہوں۔ ۶. خدمت گزار ہوں۔	I have taken caliphates from different Astanas, Gadis and Salsals. 2. I give duty to Pir Sahib as a scribe. - I am a servant. I am a slave. Be the caliph 3. Be a servant
<b>Change in life</b>	Improvement	3(38)	تصوف سے زندگی میں، سوچ میں بہتری آئی ہے۔ مومن تو پہلے بھی شاید تھا لیکن کامل اب ہوا۔ اچھا مسلمان تھا لیکن اب مرشد کا نظر کرم ہو گیا۔	Sufism has improved thinking in life. The believer may have been there before, but he is perfect now. He was a good Muslim but now the Murshid's gaze was kind
	Revolutionary	5(68)	۱. میری زندگی تو بالکل بدل گئی۔ ۲. میں بے معنی زندگی سے بامعنی زندگی کی طرف آ گیا۔ ۳. میری زندگی بالکل بدل گئی۔ ۴. اصل راستے پر آ گیا۔ ۵. روحانیت مل گئی زندگی کا رخ بدل گیا۔	2. My life has changed completely. I moved from a meaningless life to a meaningful life. 2. My life changed completely. 1. Came to the original path. - Got spirituality, changed the course of life.
<b>Spirituality(Walaie) is</b>	Inherit	3(38)	۱. میرا مذہبی گھرانے سے تعلق ہے۔ ۲. فیض ملا مجھے اپنے بزرگوں سے۔ ۳. نانا ولی تھے انہوں نے بشارت دی تھی۔	I belong to a religious family. I got blessings from my elders. 2. Nana was a saint, he gave good news.

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	Free-for-all	5(68)	ولائیت میں کوئی وراثت نہیں اس میں مشکلات ہیں۔ ولائیت وراثتی ہوتی تو ولی کا بچہ ولی ہوتا ایسا نہیں۔ میرے والد بھی ولی اللہ تھے لیکن میں خود اس میں مشکلات کی میرے والد کے ولی ہونے سے مجھے فیض ملا لیکن اس کو آگے بڑھانا میری محنت پر ہے۔	There is no inheritance in the province, there are difficulties in it. If the guardianship was inherited, then the child of the guardian would not be the guardian.
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### 4.1 Childhood Spiritual Experience

In table 2 with relevance to this emerged theme, 50 % of the *Sufis* responded that they did experience it.

۱. بچپن میں روحانیت کا تجربہ ہوا۔ ۲. کان پر ن کے دم سے علاج کرانے کا تجربہ۔ ۳. یہ باتیں بتانے والی نہیں بس چکھنے والی ہیں لیکن ایسا ہوا اور ہوتا رہے گا۔ ۴. میں بچپن میں اللہ ک نیک بندے کی کرامات دیکھیں۔

Nearly 38 % of them replied in the negative while 1 % did not prefer to comment.

نہیں مجھے بچپن میں کوئی روحانی تجربہ نہیں ہوا۔ ۲. نہیں میرا بچپن بہت ہی نارمل تھا۔ ۳. نہیں بچپن میں کوئی روحانی تجربہ نہیں ہوا۔

It should be noted that these results are in accordance to what has been reported in the previous researches. Studies have shown that experience of spirituality during childhood is not necessary. However, there is also some evidence that suggests that this experience does form a part of the spiritual part of the life of *Sufis*. Some of the *Sufis* even assert that the message about the gift of spirituality and *Sufism* is delivered to them indirectly by the superior Being.<sup>21</sup>

#### 4.1.1 The Journey of Sufism

In relevance to this theme, 13 % of the *Sufis* replied that they were informed about the journey of *Sufism* and spirituality at the time they were born. They were conveyed about this information from their parents. More specifically, this information was conveyed as soon as they were born. In terms of childhood, 13 % of them said they were attracted towards the love of *Tasawuf* during their childhood. 50 % of them reported that they became aware of their inclination towards *Sufism* and spirituality during the span of their adolescence. About 38 % of them said that they became aware about their inclination towards spirituality and *tasawuf* during their adulthood that span 30 to 60 years.

تصوف کی رغبت بچپن سے ہی تھی اور تب سے ہی ربی ہوں مبارک ہو اللہ کا ولی پیدا ہوا ہے۔ میں جب کالج میں ایڈمیشن لیا تب روحانی طبیعت محسوس کی اور روحانیت کا آغاز ہوا۔ ۲. میں بلوغت کی عمر سے ہی روحانیت کی طرف رغبت ہوئی اور ساتھ ہی روحانی مشقیں شروع کر دیں۔ ۳. میں درس نظامی میں اپنے مرشد کی بیعت کی اور تب سے ہی میرا یہ سفر شروع ہو گیا۔ ۴. جوانی میں قدم رکھا تو تصوف شروع کر دیا۔

The literature available in this regard asserts that most *Sufis* claim that the message of *Sufism* is revealed on them during varying spans of their age. Some of them report childhood while others focus on adulthood stage of development.<sup>22</sup>

#### 4.1.2 Coming to Sufism

13 % of them responded that they had identified their interest in *Sufism* by chance.

یوں والد صاحب کی وفات کے بعد اُن کی جگہ پر آیا پھر چلے کیے داڑھی بھی رکھی انکی وفات کے بعد ان کی جگہ بیٹھنا پڑا

While 90 % of them responded that they opted for this path of life by chance.

- اپنے شوق اور لگن سے آئے۔ ۲۔ میں چاہتا تھا میری کسی درویش سے نسبت ہو جائے۔ ۳۔ آکسفورڈ یونیورسٹی میں ایک روحانی تجربے سے یہ راستے پر چلا۔ ۴۔ نہیں میں اپنی مرضی سے آیا ہوں۔ ۵۔ میں زمانے کی جدت کو تجربہ کر کے بھی دیکھا ہے اور اب روحانیت میں ہی سکون ہے۔ ۵۔ اپنی مرضی بھی تھی اور والدین کی خواہش بھی تھی۔ ۶۔ لگن تھی کہ عاشق رسول بن جاؤں۔ ۷۔ روحانیت کے بغیر کہیں سکون نہیں پایا

In response to this theme, it is evident that *Sufism* is something that these individuals take up by chance. They prefer to leave all the facilities and affinities of life and choose this path which is pretty much demanding and tough. It is also clear that this way of life is not for everyone to walk. Only a few enlightened and informed individuals take up this way of life. The same has been reported in the studies and researches that are conducted in this regard. However, there are some studies that suggest a contrasting viewpoint in this regard.<sup>23</sup>

#### 4.1.3 Bayait

63 % of the *Sufis* (participants) suggested that their direct connections with one order or the other. It should be noted that most of them their order and lineage of spirituality to be superior. Each of them had reported a different order to which they belonged.

- میرے سلسلے بیعت حضرت جان محمد صاحب سے ہے۔ ۲۔ الحاج خواجہ محمد معصوم۔ ۳۔ الحاج حضرت خواجہ میاں ترین بخش مہاروی۔ ۴۔ الشیخ خواجہ کمال الدین سیالوی۔ ۵۔ حضرت مولانا سلطان احمد صاحب۔ ۶۔ حضرت خواجہ میاں علی خان بصری شریف ہندوستانی

Only 1 (13 % of the total participants) said that he had belonged to a *Sufi* order since childhood but it was quite later that he formally joined it. The remaining percentage reported this act of *Bayait* (Spiritual oath) but to some others names. It should be noted here that this act of belonging to some *Sufi* order is quite common and important for all *Sufis*. One reason is that they believe that by informing others about the orders to which belong is a confirmation of their superior lineage, purity and knowledge.<sup>24</sup>

#### 4.1.4 Superiority Feeling

38 % of them asserted that they do feel different and superior while the remaining 63 % reported no such feeling. It should be noted that the literature in this regard offers a different view in which it is said that there is no space of superiority in the minds of *Sufis*.

کائنات میں جو فقیر ہے وہ فقیر سب سے اونچا ہوتا ہے۔ ۲۔ اللہ نے ہمیں عوام کا امام بنا کر ہائی کلاس میں رکھتا ہے۔ ۳۔ جو ولی بن جاتا ہے اس مقام پر پہنچ جاتا ہے تو اس کا مرتبہ بلند ہوتا ہے۔

In fact, the act of *Sufism* demands that one should be humble and down to earth when it comes to his inclination.<sup>25</sup>

#### 4.1.5 Spiritual Level

38 % of them called themselves merely students of spiritualism. 62 % of them said that they did not their stage and it is best if the researcher asked a *murshid* about it.

۱۔ ابھی طالب علم ہوں۔ ۲۔ خود کو ناچیز طالب علم سمجھتا ہوں۔ ۳۔ کوئی تصوف کے بڑے درجے پر بھی ہو تو خود کو طالب علم ہی کہتا ہے ہم بھی طالب علم ہیں

This theme shows that most of them are humble in terms of their knowledge. Although their knowledge of the divine is much more than most other people, but still the element of humility is evident in their personality.<sup>26</sup>

#### **4.1.6 Purpose of Sufism**

لوگوں کا رابطہ اللہ کے ساتھ بحال کرونگا ایک مقصد بھی تھا میرا کیونکہ ہم اپنے رب کو بھلائے بیٹھے ہیں۔ ۲۔ ہم مخلوق خدا کو قرآن و سنت کی باتیں بتاتے ہیں۔ ۳۔ لوگوں کو اسلام بتاتے ہیں

26 % of them reported that their primary objective in life was serving humanity. 38 % of said they having a connection with the Almighty is all they live for. 36 % of them said that solving the problems of others and some tolerance is what they live for. The same has been reported by the studies conducted on this topic.<sup>27</sup>

#### **4.1.7 People's Problem Solving**

1 participant had said that they prefer to bring all others towards the light of Allah. The remaining 87 % participants said that they pray to Allah to solve the problems for all those in distress or heal them through the use of some psychological tactics and measures. In addition, we also advice our followers and visitors to engage in the *Zikir* of Allah as it is only path that can free from these problems, apprehensions and anxieties.

فقیر دعا کرتے ہیں اللہ رحم کرتا ہے ۲۔ دعا کرتا ہوں ان کے لئے ۳۔ اپنے مریدین کے لئے دعا کرتے ہیں۔ ۴۔ اپنے عقیدت مندوں کے لئے دعا کرتے ہیں۔ ۵۔ ہم لوگوں کے مسائل میلاد شریف اور ختم دلواتے ہیں اور نبی پاکؐ کی بارگاہ تک لے جاتے ہیں آگے وہ جانیں اور حل ہو جاتے ہیں۔ ۶۔ دعا کرتے ہیں رب سے رحم فرما دیتا ہے اللہ۔ ۷۔ اللہ کے آگے دعا کرتے ہیں وہ فقیر کو ضرور سنتا ہے۔ ۸۔ اللہ کی بارگاہ میں التجا کرتے ہیں

#### **4.1.8 Pre-requisites of Sufis**

All of the participants responded that being a staunch Muslim and closeness to Allah is what that is imperative for becoming a *Sufi*.

۱۔ مسلمان ہو، صوفی گر مسلم کافی۔ ۲۔ ختم نبوت لازم ہے۔ ۳۔ مومن ہو۔ ۴۔ صوفی صرف مسلمان ہوتا ہے۔ ۵۔ کلمہ گو شرط ہے۔ ۶۔ ارکان اسلام لازم ہیں۔ ۸۔ عاشق رسول ہو۔

The same has been suggested in most of the studies conducted on Sufism. However, there are also some studies that have offered contrasting results suggesting that there are a large number of peers and Sufis who do not engage in following the obligations of being a Muslim.<sup>28</sup>

#### **4.1.9 Change in Life**

میری زندگی تو بالکل بدل گئی۔ ۲۔ میں بے معنی زندگی سے بامعنی زندگی کی طرف آگیا۔ ۳۔ میری زندگی بالکل بدل گئی۔ ۴۔ اصل راستے پر آگیا۔ ۵۔ روحانیت مل گئی زندگی کا رخ بدل گیا۔

100 % of the participants reported that they have experience a great change in life. Most of them had said that they did experience a revolutionary change in their lives due to which they are more satisfied than ever now. Studies do suggest that Sufis are the ones who experience great changes in their lives.<sup>29</sup>

#### **4.1.10 Waliyat**

ولایت میں کوئی وراثت نہیں اس میں مشکلات ہیں۔ ولایت وراثتی ہوتی تو ولی کا بچہ ولی ہوتا ایسا نہیں۔ میرے والد بھی ولی اللہ تھے لیکن میں خود اس میں مشکلات کی میرے والد کے ولی ہونے سے مجھے فیض ملا لیکن اس کو آگے بڑھانا میری محنت پر ہے۔

38 % of them had said that *Waliyat* is something that is genetic and is inherited while the remaining 68 % of them reported that they there is no role of *waliyat* in becoming a *Sufi*. These assertions also offer contrasting views about how a *Sufi* is selected and about *Waliyat*.<sup>30</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

The content analysis of this study has revealed that most of the data offered by *Sufis* is somewhat questionable and is in direct opposition of the beliefs of the people about the *Sufis*. Most of the literature available on the lives of *Sufis* suggested that they are totally free and un-interested from the worldly passions and desires. However, some of the participants of this study did offer some surprising views about their spirituality, their lives, their social circles, their income and their origins.

### 5.1 Implications

This study will help in exploring the perspective and spiritual experiences which *Sufis* report more often. It is important to note that this study has asserted that each the path to *Sufism* is different for each *Sufi*. *Sufism* has remained an integral part of Islam. However, little attempts have been made to explore *Sufism* in an in depth manner. The same is the reason for which there are a number of misconceptions that revolve around the concept of *Sufism*. It can be said that there is a need for exploring *Sufism* in an in depth manner. It is for sure that there are a number of misconceptions that are related to this topic. This study has tried to answer many questions asked in relevance to *Sufism*. However, there is still some need for exploring this topic in detail. The literature available in this regard has portrayed *Sufism* in a mixed manner. It is also important to note that *Sufism* has remained controversial during the span of its evolution. This study will prove to be of much help for those who wish to explore *Sufism* and the ones who practice it. It will also be useful in understanding the stages involved in *Sufism*, its origins, how it is practiced, what are the stages through which *Sufis* have to go through and a lot more.



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