

**Experiential Religiosity between Pir (Patron) and Murid  
(Client): Access of Patron-Client Relationship to Public  
Organization**



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Islamabad, 2022

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**Rabbia Firdous**

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## **Abstract**

The present research highlights the experiential religiosity between patron-client relationships and how murid's access to the public organization is leverage of such relations. It mainly focuses on how they (both) use experiential religiosity and patron-client relation as a strategy for their benefit. Pir helps their murids with their religiosity to establish physical, social, and psychological contact with them. Reciprocally a Murid respects the Pirs taking them as a spiritual guide. Due to this honor, Pir normally gets the status of power and authority over his Murids. The main objective of the study is to investigate the application of experiential religiosity among patron-client (pir and murid) relationships in the locality of Golrha Sharif Islamabad. For this, a qualitative research methodology will be used in the present study. Data will be collected by using face-to-face interviews and the sample size will be kept between 20 respondents which include 17 murids and 3 pirs. The results of the study indicated that the patron-client relationship is an unchallenging and parent-like relationship for followers of pir sahib. The experiential religiosity of patron-client helps both to make their relationship stronger. The same values and ethics experiential religious beliefs and religious, social practices, the ways of social exchanges, indebtedness benefits, and fictive relations were founded in the results of the present research which matches the old researchers on golra sharif. The researcher found the patriarchal nature in the system of the shrine because female respondents have more practices and experiential religiosity as compared to men, but they can talk for only a few seconds. But this patriarchal nature was only founded in the shrine of pir sahib, not in the house of pir sahib. Moreover, they provide benefits to each other with this social relation like clients (muridain) get different kinds of help and access to public spheres and patrons (pir) they make better management and effective social reputation in the system of the shrine. So, these values and practices of patron-client relationship and the applications of experiential religiosities are unchallenging, but they were reinforced in the system of Golra sharif Islamabad.

**Key words: experiential religiosity, patron-client relationship, pir and murid, power.**

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

The study mainly focuses on how the experiential religiosity and patron-client relationship are used as a strategy for less privileged murid to get access to public organizations with the help of pirs. Pirs have the authority, status, and power as compared to murids who are believers. The strong belief in the pirs because of the experiential religiosity provides services out of respect. It is suggested that the relationship between pir and murid is based on loyalty, respect, trust, and social exchange. Pirs are influencers and murids influence people because pirs have power and murids believe in their every single word (Saxebol 2002). Some murids also have political status and power, and they also help their pirs because pirs make “dua” for them.

Solid work has been done on power and patronage by Stephen M. Lyon (2002) in the context of the patron-client relationship in the household. He shows that the reciprocal duty of patron-client works as rooted principles of labor relations not only with the rural setup but also in urban organization and he explored those patron-client relationships and termed them as kind of interpersonal connections in all societies. Patron-client has presented in many forms in religious, and political. In South Asia politics patronage is very important during elections because when a patron provides benefits to the followers which they are a client and in elections the followers of that political person who is the patron the clients who are the followers in return provide their votes. This is the patron-client relationship between voters and politically elected persons (Hamilton, 2000).

Weingrod, (1968) presented the study on patronage and defined this relation as ‘persons of unequal authority yet lined through some personal gains, friendship, and interests, and can manipulate this relation to satisfy each end. Overall, it is ‘clients’ as the relationship of exchange of two unequal.

Primarily, patronage was a unique yet ancient system of personal relationships between sponsors and servants for mutual benefits. Such relationships were mutual as well as binary

in nature, and both partners invested the commitment and loyalty to each other for the sake of this relationship, and that was the key reason for the unprecedented strength of this relationship. Inequality and reciprocity mark the foundation of patron-client relations. Inequality does not only refer to the existence of two individuals with different power, wealth, and social status but also it implies that these two are brought into a relationship that makes one superior to the other in many ways. Similarly, reciprocity does not just mean it denotes the possession of goods or assets that are required by both parties but also it harbors some sense of volunteerism and personal choice (Powel, 1970).

Dependency theory is thought to be the foundation stone in patron-client relations, and it has implications on international politics. Carney (Carney, 1989) presented a comprehensive account of the existence of a patron-client relationship between the socialization and partnership of lesser developed and well-developed countries, especially the relation of the United States and China with developing countries. The influence of patron-clientage is felt over a much wider area than in its original rural setting. It plays an important role in providing linkages between urban and rural power structures and as an avenue of social advancement. Networks of mutual, personalized obligation are important vehicles of social mobility in Brazil Leeds, (1964).

Patron-client is present in religious institutions in between Pir and their Murid. Religious institutions like a shrine, the darbar of Sufi saints, and places of Majalis are considered the most sacred and effective places for the people who need them. These places especially the famous shrine of Golra Sharif have a huge religious and social network because of experiential religiosities. Religion and its embedment, which are experienced, observed, and followed by different people depending on their circumstances and the settlements they live in, are none other than the system of beliefs and practices adherent to the thought of encountering the divine and supernatural. People see their creator and the divine in a variety of ways; an individual's interaction with his or her god could be radically different from anyone else's; a person's belief in and attitude to the supernatural could be vastly different from the second person encountering the same entity. Therefore, the responses, beliefs, and

prayers toward one religion are called experiential religiosity (Vishkin & Bloom, 2019); (Chen et al., 2020).

Experiential religiosity of both (Pir and murid) play a vital role in strengthening their faith system because pir is considered the spiritual leader who has strong experience of religion and the responsibility to guide the people to the right path. On the other hand, the experiential religiosity of clients (murids) is equally important because mostly they have strong faith and experience of the shrine through their ancestral periods. Most of them are the less privileged and poor people who came to the shrine with an empty mind. However, they make strong belief in shrines just by hearing the experience from other persons who take mannat in the shrine. They both facilitate each other by social, religious, and moral give and take.

This relation is characterized by inconsistent factors of unconditional and un-instrumental, it also improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the patron-client relationship (Nayak et al 1983). Lyon, (2002) studied the patron-client relationship of rural areas of Pakistan. According to him most of the culture of developing countries has built upon the professional relational and familial model and this means pirs who are economically stable and have a relationship with elite class, they have strong social networking in the organization. There is a research gap regarding the knowledge of patron-client relations as a strategy for murid to get access to the organization in Golra sharif Islamabad. Pirs have a broad social network in which some people are businessmen, Zamindar, Lawyers, and many others. Some murids are lower in status and pir helps the poor murids with the help of higher status murids. The Pir or the patron of the shrines and sacred places has duties and responsibilities to carry out so that the relationship of patronage and chain of devotees are sustained and well kept up with the passing time and changing situations (Rajjak, 2017). Furthermore, the spiritual relationship is also present between Pir and murid in the way Pir helps their murids to establish physical, social, and psychological contact with them. Murid gives their Pir honor and respect and speaks to them of their sacred man. Due to this hour, Pir has power and authority (Sadiq, 2010). This is another form of a patron-client relationship. The patron-client relationship is present in the strong connection between

political personalities as they have large landholdings and these factors are evidence of the interplay between religious, land, and political powers (Malik, 2015). Although pirs have strong political powers and sometimes they belong to political families and some of their believers have also political powers and authorities, so they both facilitate each other in many ways. Even poor followers of pirs also facilitate jobs and other opportunities as they provide services to their pirs.

Sufis and shrines have a large political impact on the believers and religious matters in the sense that they have depended on one another and have reciprocal relations. Sometimes, we can observe this relation in the sense that their believers have done extra work for them. Johnson, 2008 stated that to understand the kind of patron-client relation among pir and murids, one can also relate the potential weakness of a group of believers to their pirs and these situations sometimes lead to salvation. He further added that this kind of salvation mostly worked out in Islamic societies. Many studies have seconded the same implications, such as the study conducted by Paracha, who argued that having many followers and obligatory to look after the social security of many sajjada nashins, the saints or pirs, and the khanqah or their sacred places had asserted and exercised power much like that of the ruling elites. The followers as an object to the vested interests of the elites were used to make people gain power and lose it, similarly, the Pirs and Shrines caused the resources for meeting their interests (Paracha, 2020).

The significance of choosing Golhra Sharif as a case study lies in the fact that Pirs there are from generations, are well off, and have murids all over Pakistan. The study conducted there would provide general insight into the details of such relationships. In this research, the focus would remain particularly on the application of experiential religiosity and how murids use the patron-client relation as a strategy to get access to organizations and win the faith of pir and develop a strong bonding based on loyalty.

## **1.1 The problem**

The present study was going to explore the application of experiential religiosity between patrons (pir) – client (murid) relationship. In Pakistan, people have strong faith in shrines and pirs about their religious matters. As we know pirs have a huge circle of their followers which include landlords, politicians, less privileged people, and also their murids who are trained for their specific roles and have a different kind of experiential religiosity. This study explores the ways of their blind faith in each other and how they carry out their tasks to contribute to the reputation of the shrine of their pirs. This study also helps to investigate how pirs cover the social and economic life of their murids and how they both benefited from each other in the context of public organizations. The reason to choose Golra Sharif, Islamabad is that this place has a huge history of pirs. Although the patron-client relationship is well studied in the context of agricultural areas and households, there is an imminent need for a thorough study of the application of experiential religiosity between patron-client (pir and murid) relationships.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The patron-client relationship has already been studied well in rural areas in the context of agriculture patronage. However, industrialization and the rapid shift in human life created upset and worse situations in the societies which push them to seek help from their God and the people who have a strong history of religiosity. For many people, pirs are their spiritual leaders and they have the power to control the mind of their followers. So, the relationship between pir and murids is much like patronage operating the principle of dependency, therefore there is a potential research gap to investigate how they apply their experiential religiosity in a patron-client relationship and how they get access to public organizations. The idea of choosing Golra Sharif is because this area has the potential to cover an overall overview of the development of such relationships in this area of Islamabad, Pakistan.

### 1.3 Conceptualization and operationalization of the variables

Patron –Client relationships are the mutual arrangements between a person who has authority, social status, wealth, or some other personal resource (patron) and another who benefits from their support or influence (client) (Kaufman, 1974). According to Sarasohn (1993), patron-client relationships are the kinds of interpersonal ties in all societies; the elements of social exchange, trust, indebtedness, and moral obligations serve as a kind of societal cement. The experiences, responses, beliefs, and practices of groups and individuals who stood by their religion are known to be the experiential religiosity as well as a belief system (Vishkin & Bloom, 2019; Chen et al., 2020). Experiential religiosity of someone plays a vital role in strengthening the faith system in one religion because mostly the Sufi or religious guider considered the spiritual leader who has strong experience of religion and responsibility to guide the people to the right path. Reciprocity in the patron-client relationship has always been s backbone of any kind of social relations. Eisenstaedt and Roniger (1980) reported that all the activities being carried out to promote the cooperation and mutualism between two people in social relations fall under the categories of material services and exchange. In the present research, it means emotional support, negotiation, and consultation on certain issues and some additional services especially financial and public relation (PR) benefits. They also reported that although patron-client relationships are related to the exchange these are not based on market or power exchange. They are based on strong material services and exchange. Indebtedness refers to the feeling of owing gratitude for a service or favor. This is one of the most vital parts of the patron-client relationship which is developed and maintained through mutual efforts. Both the parties help each other in time of need (Qadeer, 2006). However, it is a common observation expectation of employee’s turns into aspiration for increments. According to Saher and Mayrhofer (2013) about their patrons, clients support certain social expectations, specifically in the time of the disaster, towards their patrons and creating the element of indebtedness among them. However, the patron-client (pir and murid) are two people, an 'influencer' and an 'influence'. An influencer is the pir and influence is murid. The influencer has achieved his superior status through the exercise of person-centered power, accumulated through his past and present role as a benefits provider, protector, educator,



and a value-source. He is superior to those who have an established dependency relationship with him (Saxeboel, 2002).

The present study endeavors to collect evidence of the existence of the patron-client relationship between pir and murid and the experiential religiosity of their murids. Moreover, throughout the thesis work, the researcher follows Lyon (2002) who worked in Punjabi culture in Pakistan and used the terms 'patron' and 'client' in an anthropological context (owner and follower) in a specific social setting.

Patron-client relationship ties two parties of unequal economic standing in the context of an informal place. It includes pir as 'the patron' and 'murid' as the client'. The patron-client relationship based on material services and exchanges i.e., money, cloth, and food, and immaterial services i.e., emotional support, negotiation, and consultation, is the backbone of any societal relation. These kinds of relationships lie in the fact that both (pir and murid) help each other in time of need much like a 'give and take' basis and pir manage their murid through their strong patron-client relationship. Belief is something based on a set of principles that can form the basis of religion because religion is organized around some ethical rules, belief in one or several deities, and incidents of supernatural powers that touch humanity, belief systems can have an impact on our daily lives. There are hundreds of various religions on the planets, all of which are distinct from one another. Religion is the most powerful force in society, as well as the best illustration of a belief system. On the other hand, experiential religiosity is linked with the belief system of something in the religion. It normally means the first-hand experience that explains through normal language. A religious experience came when someone has had the personal and direct experience to feel the God and proves it with feelings of religion. The material exchange and services between the patron-client on a reciprocal basis expedite the two-way relationship and it involves the community. Because the benefits provided by the clients from their patron are trickled down to the former's family members too. This not only infuses the sense of loyalty and trust but also supplements the interest of murid in working with them as they feel themselves at home. Therefore, it can be inferred that patron-client ties not only include the dealing of economic goods and services but also comprise

symbolic exchanges of personal favors, gift giving, and obligations. Certain types of benefits between pirs and their muridain are likely to be exchanged in different ways. For example, the benefit of the less particularistic (money) and the more real (material things) are exchanged in a short-term approach. Both parties (patron-client) in an exchange may also compromise their rules in the hope of attainment of beneficial preparations.

Indebtedness created in patron-client relation with pirs, Muridain port certain social expectations, specifically in the time of the disaster, towards their pir. For example, if someone in the family of murid falls sick or the marriage of his daughter, he expects his employers to support him. Similarly, clients (muridain) give extra time to their patrons (pir) house, so their relationship turns into indebtedness. These symbols of indebtedness between pir and their murid become more prominent when their relations grow close. This happens when highlighting social responsibility rather than contractual duty, this primary affiliation with each other contributes to the validity of the relationship and meliorates the employer's stats and security.

Pirs bring together people from various backgrounds, including qaum, caste, biraderi, economic level, and social status. Successful favor brokers are successful pirs. Landlords and politicians derive their power from very material sources, but pirs derive their power from a more metaphysical source. Both, on the other hand, must participate in patronage methods to strengthen their claims and positions. They have a huge circle of muridain because of a famous reputation as a shrine and their muridain expect some benefits and help because they are dependent on their pirs mostly in religious as well as social matters. Pirs are influencers who can influence the muridain by their words and actions and people can make a blind faith towards their pir.

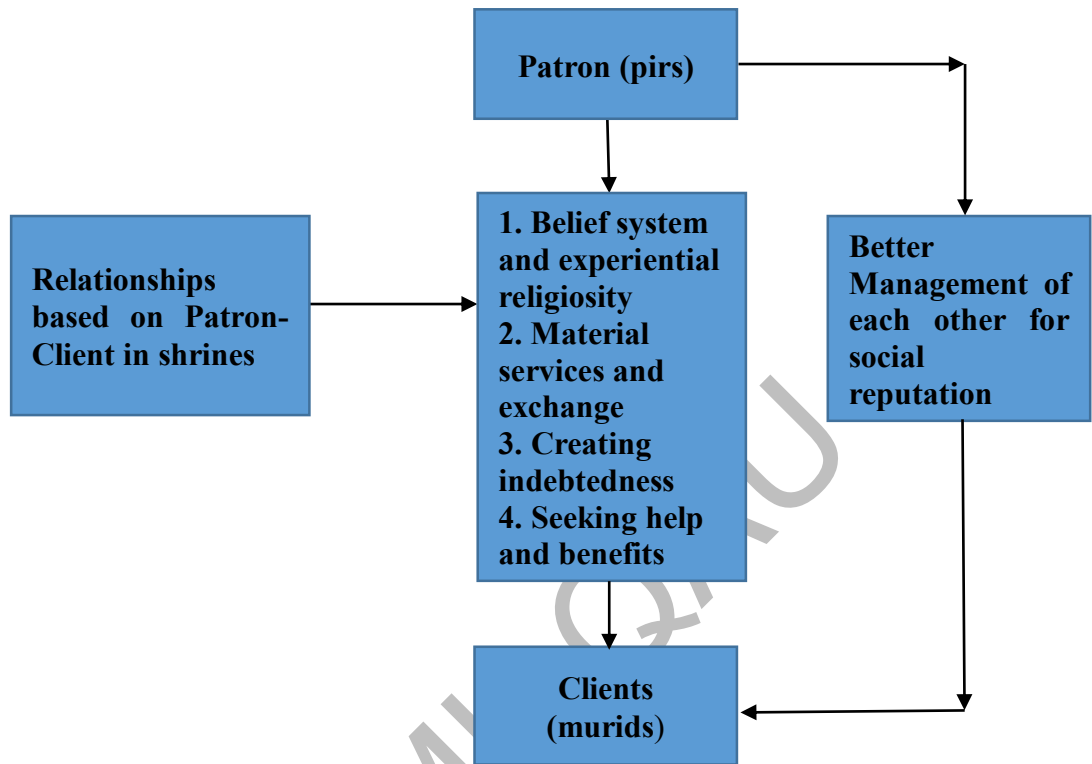


Figure 1. Indicators

### 1.3.1 Indicators

The current study rotates around the experiential religiosity between patron (Pir) client (Murid) relationship and how they both use their relationship to get access to public organization. Pir also retain their muridain through the strong patron-client relationship and the indicators were experiential religiosity, material services and exchange, indebtedness, seeking help and benefits. The previous studies in the literature shows that the patron-client relationship was studied in rural areas in the context of agriculture patronage. The current study revolves around the existence of patron-client relation in the religious setting which was based on the social exchange of things, experiences and beliefs and other social factors which make people the true follower of their Pir. The experiential

religiosity between patron-client helps both to make their relationship stronger. The same beliefs ethics religious and social practices, the ways of social exchanges, indebtedness benefits help both patron (Pir) and client (Murid) to the better management of their system of needs in the religious setting because Pir help their Muridain for more followers and the social reputation of the respective shrine and Muridain seek help for their all kinds of problems like health, business and other social, and religious affairs. For them Pirs are spiritual doctors and with the prayer of Pir they can get access to their better futures.

#### **1.4 Rationale of the study**

The study was based on the qualitative research and the major focus on how the pir- murids used experiential religiosity along with patron-client relationship and gets benefited like poor murids access to the public organization and pirs also benefitted religiously, socially, and financially because they have a huge circle of muridain which make the shrine's reputation stronger. The locale of Golra Sharif, Islamabad was chosen because there living the current pirs (Sajjadah Nasheen) and the shrine of Golra has a huge name in Pakistan. The other reason was it was easy to reach because of some companions living in this area, the weather was also good enough and people of the Golra even the family member of pir sahib seemed to be much more cooperative instead of working with another small system of the shrine in far areas where no chances of familiarity with the people which made it easy for the researcher to conduct the survey and sampling before conducting the interviews. Observation and rapport building is necessary for the researcher to understand the native perspectives about the current study and their daily activities for the respective shrine.

The major reason for choosing the topic is that the study explores the ways of the pir and murid's blind faith in each other or how they carry out their tasks to contribute the reputation of the shrine of their pirs. This study also helps to investigate how pirs cover the social and economic life of their murids and how they both benefitted from each other in the context of public organizations. The reason to choose the Golra Sharif, Islamabad is that this place has a huge history of pirs. Although the patron-client relationship is well studied in the context of agricultural areas and households, there is an imminent need for a

thorough study of the application of experiential religiosity between patron-client (pir and murid) relationships.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The essence, as well as the uniqueness of the study, lies in the fulfillment of the research gap because not many prior pertinent studies exist on the application of experiential religiosity between patron (pir)-client (murid) regarding the nature of the relationship between them and how murid get access to the public organizations. Intellectually, this study will contribute to the body of anthropology literature as a research document entailing first-hand information regarding the nature of the patron-client relationship among pir- murids and their experiential religiosity among them in Golra Sharif Islamabad, Pakistan. Practically this study will spotlight the values exercised by pirs while managing with their murids and play a constructive role in documenting the existence of contours of patron-client relationship in such areas of Islamabad. Also, this study would provide awareness for the readers to grasp the gist of the operationalization of their religious belief system among them and the values of their relationship.

### **1.6 Objectives of the study**

1. To explore the patron-client relationship between pir and murids.
2. To find out the system of beliefs and experiential religiosity and the mechanism murids show loyalty in the services of their pir.
3. To disclose the instrument of creating indebtedness among them.
4. To dig out the ways how pir help their murids.

### **1.7 Research Questions**

The core research questions effort to explore experiential religiosity among piri muridi and later access to public organization through patron-client relation. The Following important perspectives were set for research question.

#### **Objective 1**

1. How do they (pir and murids) use patron-client relationship as a strategy for strengthening their bond?
2. How do clients (murids) use their experiential religiosity for important matters of their life?
3. How is experiential religiosity the main cause of your stronger relation with each other?
4. How do people in the sacred shrine share their experiences with each other to make your belief stronger.

## **Objective 2**

1. How are material services and exchange necessary in a patron-client relationship?
2. How do you see your pir as an influencer?
3. How much do you depend on your pirs for taking important decisions of life?
4. How do material things play a significant role for strengthening your relationship with a pir?
5. How do you believe that pirs are the actual spiritual leaders?

## **Objective 3**

1. How do you make a strong faith towards your patron (pirs)?
2. How do pirs help in the economic situations of their needy clients?
3. How does every person of your family have the same faith and responses towards your pir?
4. How do you see the important duties which make the murid superior to other murids?

## **Objective 4**

1. How does a less privileged murid get benefitted with the reference of a pir?
2. How do you both have more spiritual bonding than social relations?

3. How the reputation of your shrine will help to facilitate the poor murids to get access to public organizations?
4. How pirs play the role of mediator in the time of disputes?
5. How the shrines of pir help people to get close with the religion Islam?

## **1.8 Hypothesis**

The application of experiential religiosity and patron-client social relation like (exchanges, indebtedness, fictive relation, and benefits) are retaining stronger bonds between Pir and Murid.

## **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical background is very significant in the research because the theory is applied to approve or disapprove of any phenomenon. Social exchange theory developed by a sociologist, George Homan, gives a better understanding of social relations and provides the most powerful understanding of workplace behavior. It is based on the mutual obligations of the persons of society. Through different views of social exchange, theorists agree that social exchange involves a series of interactions that make obligations (Emerson, 1967).

According to homans assuming the costs of the relationship are more than the prizes, for instance, if plenty of endeavors, cash, and time were placed into a relationship which not responded to one another, then, at that point, the relationship might be cut off because a friendship needs a two way and complementary relationship. He additionally added that social exchange is the trading of activity and development, substantial or theoretical, found in each general public and inside each connection. After Homans, different scholars proceeded concerning this hypothesis, especially Peter M. Blau and Richard M. Emerson, who are the significant engineers of the exchange viewpoint inside sociology. Lévi-Strauss is likewise perceived for adding to this hypothetical viewpoint from his work on

anthropology. He fundamentally centered on frameworks of far-reaching exchange, similar to the connection frameworks in families and gift exchange.

Homans (1961) defines the concept of interaction as synonymous with the concept of "social behavior". He writes that "when an action emitted by one man is rewarded by the action issued by another man, then, regardless of the type of emitted behavior, we say that these two people interact." Rewards can be either tangible or intangible, and Homans does not restrict in any way this concept (everything can be a reward), distinguishing only a special class among them: sentiments externalized in behavior (sentiments) as signs of some internal psychological states, emotional attitudes towards others. We should add that behavior expressed within the scope of such understood interaction is called Homans elementary social behavior. These initial assumptions are further developed by Homans. According to the social exchange theory by Thibault & Kelly (1959), social behavior involves social exchanges where people are motivated by obtaining something of value (reward) in exchange for forfeiting something else of value (cost). In social exchanges, like economic exchanges, people seek profit and are disturbed when there is no equity in an exchange or where others are rewarded more at the same costs incurred by the individual (Redmond, 2015).

Social exchange theory addresses three questions. Firstly, the question of how people make decisions about how much they are willing to give in exchange for a particular reward. Secondly, what factors influence people to pursue or terminate relationships? And lastly, why and whether people feel resentment when they feel they have put more effort into sustaining a relationship than their partner (Redmond, 2015). Social exchange theory has its roots in Homan's (1958) paper Social Behavior as Exchange. In this work, Homans contrasted the actions and exchanges of individuals to the actions of institutions. He believed that individual behaviors and exchanges could affect the actions of institutions. Blau's (2017). Exchange and Power in Social Life drew on Homan's focus on groups and institutions to lay the theoretical foundation for social exchange theory. Unlike Humans, who emphasized psychology as the foundation of human decision-making, Blau's vision



of social behavior paralleled microeconomics. He labeled this vision with Homan's term, "social exchange theory" by Cook and Emerson, (1978).

Social exchange theory's foundational principles have inspired a large number of alternate theories. These range from applications of social exchange theory in a specific concept to expanding upon the foundational principles of the theory. Cognitive orientations represent the beliefs, values, and relationship orientations that an individual associates with various types of exchange relationships (McDonald 1984). These orientations serve as the standards for interpersonal behavior that an individual brings to his or her relationships. Among the more prominent cognitive orientations discussed in the exchange, literature is the norms of distributed justice, or fairness, norms of reciprocity, and norms of equity (Blau 1964; Homans 1961; Walster, Walster, and Berscheid 1978). Each of these has to do with the expectation that within a close and intimate relationship, the rewards experienced by partners should be more or less proportionately distributed. When these norms are violated, as when housework is unfairly distributed within a marriage, people are apt to complain more about the relationship and pressure their partners to restore a more just and fair pattern of exchange (Berardo, Shehan, and Leslie 1987). Trust refers to the belief on the part of individuals that their partners will not exploit or take unfair advantage of them.

When relationships conform to the norms of reciprocity and when the pattern of exchange is perceived as being fair, individuals are more likely to come to believe that they will not be exploited (Blau 1964; McDonald 1981). Trust is proposed to be important in relationship development because it allows individuals to be less calculative and to see longer-term outcomes (Scanzoni 1979). Put another way, through trust an individual can expect fairness and justice in the long-term and therefore does not have to demand it immediately. Commitment is characterized as central in distinguishing social and intimate exchanges from economic exchanges (Cook and Emerson 1978). Commitment involves the willingness of individuals to work for the continuation of their relationships (Leik and Leik 1977; Scanzoni 1979).

Exchange theorists would expect commitment to developing within a relationship when partners experience high and reciprocal levels of rewards that facilitate the experience of trust (Sabatelli 1999). Commitment builds stability in relationships by increasing partners' dependence on their relationships in part because the emergence of commitment is thought to be accompanied by a reduction of attention to alternative relationships (Cook and Emerson 1978; Leik and Leik 1977, Scanzoni 1979). The exchange framework also provides insight into the dynamics found within intimate relationships. In particular, the exchange framework has been used to explain the patterns of power and decision-making found within relationships.

Fundamental to the exchange of views of power are the assumptions that dependence and power are inversely related, and resources and power are positively and linearly related (Huston 1983; McDonald 1981; Thibaut and Kelley 1959). This is to suggest that exchange theorists address the bases of power by focusing on the constructs of resources and dependence. The partners least interested in their relationships tend to have greater power in large part because they are less dependent on the relationships. The partners with the greater resources, also, tend to be the ones with the greater power here largely because they have relatively greater control over the outcomes available to the partners. In other words, the essential point of the discussion of the patterns of interaction observed within exchange relationships is that the relative levels of involvement, dependence, and resources contribute importantly to the different patterns of interaction observed within relationships.

According to this theory relationship between pirs and murids are same as social exchange. According to this theory, a relationship is developed over many years to benefit pirs and murids in developing relation for their benefits. These may be money, power, material or non-material things some like favors, these favors might be personal or in access to public institutions. Their exchange relationship is like patronage. Pirs want power from their muridi and murids to want material or non-material help or different types of favors. Trust, commitment, exchange, and benefits are the key things to developing this relationship.

## **1.10 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis structure is considered the outline of the present research work. The first chapter is about the history of the patron-client relationship which Lyon (2002) studied in the context of agricultural patronage in the rural areas of Pakistan. However, in the present research these elements of patron-client relation are still relevant in the religious setting of Pakistani society. The concept of experiential religiosity and belief system is the main source of patron-client relations in the religious setting of Golra Sharif Islamabad.

Then the problem and the statement of the problem are shown how the gaps in the present study were identified. Then in the rationale of the study, it is clarified why the present topic and the locale were chosen by the researcher or how the researcher went about it. Then the significance of the study showed the ways that this study contributes to the body of anthropological literature as a research document entailing first-hand information regarding the nature of the patron-client relationship among pir-murids and their experiential religiosity among them. Next, the major concepts and the operationalization of the study were highlighted while keeping in the mind the research questions and objectives of the research. Next, the theoretical framework highlights the work of George Homan, who gives a better understanding of social relations and provides the most powerful understanding of workplace behavior in the theory of social exchange.

In chapter two of the review of Literature, the researcher provides the background of relevant concepts that are about research topic through the relevant articles and reports. Most of the literature was taken from articles about patron-client relationship and religious relations with Sufis.

Next, in chapter on research methodology, the researcher refers to the methods being used for first-hand information of present study. The whole research started with participant observation when researcher enter in the field build a rapport with natives and respondents. It also started with taking the census of the people and ending with taking interviews.

Furthermore, the research site was being explored while keeping the identity of respondents a secret.

Furthermore, the chapter of belief system and experiential religiosity shows how people make their beliefs on their patrons (pir) and shared their experiential religiosities with other people when they visit the respective shrine of Pir Mehr Ali Shah. In this chapter, the researcher observes religious efforts, strong faithful bond of piri-muridi for different kinds of social problems and illnesses. Pirs have experiential religiosities then they use religion as their way of economy and murid visit the shrine because they have their experiential religiosities, strong beliefs towards their pir so they both are dependent on each other for religious and social needs.

Later on, the next chapter of material services and exchanges is based on the circulation of social exchanges in the system of shrines by the patron (pir) and their client (murid). It was observed by researchers that whenever the muridain of pir sahib visited the respective shrine they came with some food items, chadar, money, or other things for their happiness because pir sahib made dua for them. The researcher also observed female respondents when they visit the family of pir; they have huge shopping bags in their hands for pir sahib's family. In the relation of piri muridi in the religious setting of Golra, it was observed that religious relations were also based on giving and taking by both parties.

Next in the chapters on creating indebtedness, seeking help and benefits from the setting of shrine, the researcher observes reciprocal nature of the relationship which was based on strong feeling of indebtedness mostly from the side of clients (murids) because they are dependent on their pirs for religious guiders and other social problems. Pirs have a huge circle of muridain which includes wealthy and powerful as well as poor muridain. It was observed that they all make a social network with help of their respective pirs. Poor murid usually gets benefited through pirs for their financial problems as well just like they get appointed in some organization as a driver, guard or shopkeeper of a canteen through the reference of pir.

Then, in the final chapters of summary and conclusion, the whole lesson was that as the researcher found the links between things in the shrine-like people came to seek help in religious affairs and for special prayers, for this purpose they make a social relation with pirs through some exchanges, fictive relations and became indebted for their pirs. Pir needs a huge circle of muridain for increasing good reputation of the name of the respective shrine so they both make a social network with these efforts. The system of patron-client relations like social exchanges, feeling of indebtedness, and creating fictive relations was also present in the house of pir sahib. The female murdain brings many gifts for the family of pir sahib whenever they must visit the shrine. Moreover, they provide benefits to each other with this social relation like clients (muridain) get different kinds of help and access to public spheres and patrons (pir) they make better management and effective social reputation in the system of shrine. So, these values and practices of patron-client relationship and applications of experiential religiosities are unchallenging, but they were reinforced in the system of Golra sharif Islamabad.

## Chapter 2

### Literature review

In this world people live in a variety of settlements across various times and various places, people consume their lives with orders and principles they get agreed upon. This arranged management of the social aspects in a social order makes up the societies, communities, and groups they adopt and adapt to (Samiei, 2010). As Aruan mentioned, as social beings, the cognition of which people are cognized and the perception they build are stood by the rules, norms, and beliefs, which all together make up the system they are adherent to. Living in a lively and ever-changing world, this system constitutes some belief trajectories and commitment to practices that are utilized to give hopes and explanations for the mysterious events that are encountered, particularly, the supernatural events and entities, which are rooted in the culture or order of the human societies (Aruan, 2020).

This system of beliefs and practices adherent to the notion of encountering the divine and the supernatural is none other the religion and its embedment, which are experienced, observed, and followed by different people, given by the circumstances and the settlements they live in. people observe their creator and the divine in a great variety, an individual having the experience to encounter his/her god might be completely different than any of the others, a person having belief and response to the supernatural can be very different from the second person experiencing the very same entity. Thus, the experiences, responses, beliefs, and practices of groups and individuals who stood by their religion are known to be the experiential religiosity (Vishkin & Bloom, 2019; Chen et al., 2020).

Islam as the second largest monotheistic religion has been growing contagiously across the globe, giving various people various personifications, changing, and shifting its nature across various places, except for the basic tenants that are observed alike across all spaces. In promoting multiculturalism and addressing the needs and quests of the supporters contextually, the involved teachings and preaching have been vernacularized by a variety of people and groups following their practicing cultures, who have embraced it (Sumabl,

2016). Ever since Islam has arrived in the subcontinent, despite the Arab imperialistic preaching of it, the countryside had managed to vernacularize the teachings and essence of Islam through great thinkers, Sufi saints, and spiritual preachers (Roy, 1983). These preachers and devotees of Islam gradually became the icons of the locals who made minds to follow their footsteps and devote themselves to the essence of the knowledge and practices introduced in the region (Manan, 2009).

Sufi deities are the prominent figures in the arena, who established welfare and worship centers, moreover, the places they traveled through gradually caught the obedient concerns of their followers and turned into shrines and sanctuaries, which became the places for divine connections (Renard, 2020). Sufism had been an integral part of the Central and South Asian societies, as argued by Gross, despite many hurdles and difficulties, it never vanished away. Contrasting with the conservative sect of Islam it was challenged on many grounds, yet it had managed to well keep its essence throughout this time. It was through the oral traditions, tales of the holy men, the poetries, and the manuscripts of Sufism, that it managed to keep its cultural, doctrinal, and traditional relevance. These were passed generations over generations, and the landscapes, which the saints or the pir have had crossed or had been buried in were converted into holy places, such as shrines dooms, and ‘dargah’ of the pir, where the devotees come to realize their initiates for loyalty and devotion (Gross, 2020).

The followers or devotees are locally known as the “Murid” who frequently or timely visit these holy places to please themselves with hopes of satisfaction and salvations; building a certain type of relation and connection with the Sufi deity and practically experiencing the ritualistic behaviors they comply with, to establish their religious positions and understandings. Although the times of needs, disputes or offerings, the devotees come with hopes and wishes to be rectified with an offering of variety of tips that are given in these privileged places. These unique offerings with convinced principles constitute the belief system, in the wake of which the followers tend to know the nature and obligations of the offering of the gratuity (Eaton, 2005).

Eaton has argued about the attachment of the devotees to the sacred places and the saints as of great virtue and importance that in many ways determine the ways of the livelihood of the devotees and their response to their subjective crisis. At times people brought up their personal issues, such as the problems of infertility and barrenness, land disputes, unemployment, and marriage problems to these privileged places, in essence the shrines, with offering gratuities and prayers, and with the predetermined hopes of the attainments of their desires they referred to the saint for rectification (Haub & Kaneda, 2013).

The social context of the shrines and the status of the Sufi saints offer them the basis for being in the position of patronage, while the murids or the followers act as the clients, who are rewarded for their beliefs and the ritualistic practices they win through.

Johnson in his study argued that no religion or no theocratic idea exists as an island but there are people who get spoiled in with their own understanding of it, which shapes their realities and perceptions of the relevance and significance of the religion in their life. This tolerance of the people as follower of a certain belief system assembles the vital relation of them with how they perceive and interact with the outer world, closely knitted to the other relationship that is of the patron and client relationship, which is hierarchically organized and improvised over the passing time (Johnson, 2008). He also argued about the nature of the patrons who in many ways acted as the mediator between the clients and the supreme deity with the belief that for the sake of an innocent and sinless believer, the creator of the God might grant the murid with what they had wished for, yet entailed with an exchange relation that is offered with any agreement to refund and payback in the same methods they had to offer for their desires.

Seconding the claims of patronage, a study conducted by Younas and Kamal, gathering samples from across Pakistan confirmed the established relationship and the presence of patron and client or master and disciples or the Pir and murid in Pakistan and argued about their influencing nature, which in many ways had intervened the conducts of societal behavior (Younas & Kamal, 2019). In the late fifties and early sixties, the study of patron-client relations was in a rather marginal position. It dealt with types of social relations (Tanner, 2000). Patron-client relations, although fascinating, were seen as somewhat



marginal in their respective societies. Since then, the study of patronage and patron-client relations has multiplied into central importance.

Many studies have been conducted in the late fifties, first from the extension of the objects of the studies from relatively limited, dyadic, interpersonal, semi-institutionalized relations between a single patron and one or several clients to a broader variety of social relations and organizations (Roniger 1980). Relationship patterns between pir and murids are related in patronage because the pir and murids are two people, an 'influencer' and an 'influence'. One can say that the influencer is the pir and the influence is the murid. The influencer has achieved his superior status through the exercise of person-centered power, accumulated through his past and present role as a provider, protector, educator, and a value-source. He is superior to those who have an established dependency relationship with him (Saxebol 2002). The influence behaves as the influencer tells their problems to him, without any thinking or consideration.

The Pir or the patron of the shrines and sacred places has duties and responsibilities to carry out so that the relationship of patronage and chain of devotees are sustained and well kept up with the passing time and changing situations (Rajjak, 2017). The accounts for responsibilities of the Pir do not only remain to making the murid content with blessings or teaching them the ways to salvation but also, they are the ones who establish the ways to participate in this unique relationship and disclose the lineage to be followed ever after. Studies have revealed that keepers of this unique position have had to be compliant with the ethics of what constitutes a Pir or patron and the wholeheartedness that has been the ever-known symbol of the Pir to sit on the authority legitimately (Pinto, 2009).

The allegiances from the beginning, the phenomenal exchange process, and the reciprocity of the relationship are the known indicators of the Pir murid bonding and relationship. It is known that this relation as a process has resulted from the exchange of 'Daan' and gratuity from the respective Pirs as Patrons and murids as clients (Pinto, 1995). This as a social exchange process entails agented individuals who are actively involved in the phenomena, and gradually their behaviors make it to the confinements of ritual markers that are then

accepted as the proportion for experiencing their religion and determining their religiosity (Huber & Huber 2012; Shtudiner et al., 2018). Pir and murid have mostly reciprocal relationships because no relationship in society can be built without favors. Patron-client is itself is the reciprocity. Reciprocity, the giving of benefits to another in return for benefits received, is one of the defining features of social exchange and, more broadly, of social life (MOLM, 2010).

Reciprocity is a motivation for human behavior and there are good reasons to reciprocate in people's interactions as cooperation generates future cooperation and retaliation may serve to inhibit exploitation (Sobel, 2005). In this study, the pirs and murids have a reciprocal relationship with one who gives their services in return pirs motivate and give their services to their murids. They both have direct and generalized reciprocity that promotes positive feelings and perceptions of relationships that counter the negative effects of power inequality (Levine, 2008).

The methods embedded in this relationship are self-educating in nature and moderating principles and rules for the prevalence of the order with relatable practices over the course of time and providing incentives based on the needs of that certain time (Alimova, 2020). Studies have found that it is multifaceted and multi-staged in the context in which it prevails. It was found that initially, it had to be the populist Sufism for the rural practitioners, illuminated by the belief in spirituality and its offerings, religious rituals, and belief in the possession of power by the masters or the Pirs and their privileged places. Later at the other stage, it is the aesthetic interweaving of their relationship, in essence, the Pir plays the agentic role of the holy man, the leader of the master, where the Murid acts as the disciple or devotee, extending the fidelity to every aspect of this relationship, (Khan, 2015). It was never the abandonment of the practical world, or it never happened to be in isolation from the mainstream religion but rejecting materialistic approaches and enhancing the master and disciple relationship with ethics that are exquisite and aesthetic (Younas & Kamal, 2019).

This relationship has constituted the accepted behaviors of the patronage and the ethics of devotion (Iqbal et al., 2016). Supporting the argument, a study conducted (Malik & Mirza, 2015) found that as multifaceted, the pir murid relationship had harmfully affected the society in many ways, such it had an impact on the literacy and sometimes a direct involvement or influence in the political spheres, making a powerful structure that had set criteria of inclusion into certain concerned organizations. (Bhatti & Kamal, 2019) conducted a qualitative study with modeling thematic analysis of data accumulations and found that the pir murid relation was profoundly rooted and understood as the other sect amidst the mainstream beliefs and practices of the state religion of Pakistan, this relationship had historical roots in the context, and the cultural traditions, the personal representations, and socio-economic strata were found to be perpetuating the process, by making it ever relevant and useful (Pemberton, 2006).

Kalhor and Khan had argued that the shrines were the places and Pirs were the individuals who had profound access to the political spheres and organizational interventions inside Pakistan. Their power was rooted in the masses who had devoted themselves with the recruit to obey the pir as the master and guide for their betterment, and sometimes they considered it sinful to go against the guidance of their pir, who is considerately given the holy status by his/her followers, as they are spiritually obligated to do so (Kalhor & Khan, 2017). According to Malik, 2015 shrines are also driven by strong tehsils in Pakistan where powerful shrine families have directly entered politics.

In Pakistani politics, Shah Mahmud Qureshi also has the background of religious political family powers. Sufism and pirs have a strong influence on their believers because their believers are religiously dependent on them nowadays Sufism has strong roots in Pakistan and many people have strong bonding with their pirs. After the 9/11 attack, the new believers in pirs and Sufis have promoted the sense that, in 2011 President Musharraf also promoted Islam and Sufism, and after this Sufism became an important subject (Rumr, 2015).

Paracha argued that having many followers and obligatory to look after the social security of many sajjada nashins, the saints or pirs, and the khanqah or their sacred places had asserted and exercised power much like that of the ruling elites. The followers as an object to the vested interests of the elites were used to make people gain power and lose it, similarly, the Pirs and Shrines caused the resources for meeting their interests (Paracha, 2020). This is how the power of the Pir Murids and their relationship tends to be; widespread, accepted as an authority, and shifting modes to political, cultural, spiritual, and traditional authority (Eaton, 1984).

The spiritual, political, and traditional influences that the shrines and their legitimate titleholder make them stand in a position where they are made capable of influencing and circulating the foundations of institutions and organizations, like the economy (Malik & Mirza, 2015).

Pirs regardless of any other personal factors have the monopoly over the economy gathered in shrines, own the property as their land, and places that in certain ways have been associated with them (Strothmann, 2016) [46]. These shrines and pirs are directly concerned with the economy of many settlements, especially those in the rural areas, and have a predetermined welcoming gesture from any of the professional entities who are mandatory in services to moderate public affairs (Ibadat, 2016).

Social exchange is the foundation stone of any society (Zafirovski, 2005). People interact with each other depending on their social needs. Although commenced on necessity, with time these relations grew further with the sense of affiliation and attachment. Pakistan being an agrarian economy amasses the major chunk of its population in the countryside. Recently Chaudhry, (2013) presented a comprehensive work on the existence of patronage at the household level in rural areas of Pakistan and claimed that; patronage emerged as the most popular social interaction. Davis, (1977) argued that whenever the men adopt a posture of respect in any polity to the men of more power and honor, they get rewards. He studied the patronage in Mediterranean region and was of the view that this system of patronage is based on the personal reputation of the patron and the personal gains of the

client. He termed this relationship as a type of social exchange of asymmetrical nature but mutually benefiting.

Weingrod, (1968) presented the study on patronage and defined this relation as ‘persons of unequal authority yet lined through some personal gains, friendship, and interests, and can manipulate this relation to satisfy each end. Overall, it is ‘clients’ as the relationship of exchange of two unequal.

Primarily, patronage was a unique yet ancient system of personal relationships between individuals, which were at uneven and different degrees of social status and power, bound together as sponsors and servants for mutual benefits (Hussain, 2012). Such relationships were mutual as well as binary in nature, and both partners invested the commitment and loyalty to each other for the sake of this relationship, and that was the key reason for the unprecedented strength of this relationship. Inequality and reciprocity mark the foundation of patron-client relations. Inequality does not only refer to the existence of two individuals with different power, wealth, and social status but also it implies that these two are brought into a relationship that makes one of the people superior to the other in many ways. Similarly, reciprocity does not just mean it denotes the possession of goods or assets that are required by both parties but also it harbors some sense of volunteerism and personal choice (Powel, 1970).

There was the element of dependence among partners: the client (murid was dependent on the patron (pir) in many walks of life. Typically, the patron-client relationship is thought to be asymmetrical. It is a long-term relationship that takes its roots in a strong element of love, trust, and fictive relations. This relation has its implications in many subject areas in society. The most relevant work in this area in the context of agriculture is done by Lyon, (2002). According to him the relationship between patron-client in rural areas of Pakistan seems to be based on the patron-client relationship. In his competent research, he explored this relationship and termed it as an off shoot of interpersonal ties in all societies and according to him; their relationship is as stronger as kinship.

Many social scientists from around the globe have worked on this social exchange. In Indian Subcontinent owing to its geographical importance has been the most suitable place to study different flares of social exchange (Michie, 1981). He presented a detailed insight into how a multipurpose patron-client system helps to incorporate people from contrasting statuses wealth and power into the sovereign community for the betterment and subsistence of the economy of that locality of India. The essence of this study lies in the fact that it further explains the multidisciplinary self-sustaining nature of patron-client relations. It says that when one form of the patron-client system becomes incompatible with the society it is with time replaced with another form of patron-client relations.

Hicken, (2011) has worked on the conceptual framework of patron-client relationships in the United State in comparison with South Asia. He stated that these relations encompass a sheer level of a contingent or reciprocal exchange of immediate as well as in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, he termed these relations asymmetrical but sustained on 'degree of voluntary compliance on both parties. Lyon, (2002) was of the view that in highly urbanized regions of Pakistan the relationship between the household employee and the employer has the flavor of a patron-client relationship. He stated that despite the incompetency of employees, for instance, the guards of the household fall asleep during duty, the laundrymen burn the clothes while ironing them or the maid breaks a precious ornament while dusting and yet their patrons manage to deal with them and keep them without depriving them of their jobs. Eisenstaedt and Roniger, (1984) and Majid (1994) also stated that patron-client relation falls near the beginnings of personal identity; and it is also evident that personal attachments exist between patron and client, and they turn into trust and also patrons retain their clients through patron-client relationship which is based on loyalty, trust, indebtedness, material exchange, and fictive relation. That is why one can safely assume that the connection between household employees and their employer has the shadow of a patron-client relationship.

Lyon, (2002) explains in his dissertation that patron and their family develop an honored base relationship called fictive relations towards their clients, "The female client (murid) in the house is spoken of as a sister, and indeed addressed as some type of sister, either

same or elder generational sister, or if younger, as a daughter: bhaji, sister of the same generation, massi mother's sister (elder than the speaker), beti, daughter". He further says that their closest contact is with the female members of the household, and they are expected to maintain their modesty in front of the male members of the household. Shehnaz, (1988) observed that the female clients make familial fictive relationships in the household with the male patrons, declaring them their older patron as a father, big brother, patron of similar age as brothers, and junior as a younger brother and son (Mirza 1999). Further, it is also noted that mere skills of patrons in social settings are not crucial, but/her moral values and the personality are more important. Domestic service is not product-oriented; it is a class for no specific skills on the part of the servant and no precise evaluative standards on the part of the patron, It is personalized and defused nature, and capricious expectations fortify and legitimize the dependency and its ascription Nayak et al. (1983, p.72). The relationship between patron-client forms the aspect of communications laden with some meaning which depicts the patron-client relations and partnerships.

The patron-client relationships (Scott, 1983) occur when the patron (pir) as the boss acts as the communicator whose messages are to be implemented, while the clients (murids) as subordinates acting as a communicant must implement the contents of the message (Syamsidah, 2010). He further highlighted that in the context of patron-client, this form of communication can be a potential conflict, which in turn could create a disharmony relationship or a dissociative relationship. Meanwhile, the partnership occurs when a patron as a boss who acts as a persuasive communicator delivered his message and a housemaid as a subordinate consciously accepts the message without coercion.

Sarashone, (1993) discussed that the benefits and obligations of the two participants in the patron-client relationship are left unlimited, which assures an open-ended relationship in which both parties are morally obligated to support each other. Saher (2010) highlighted that social networking motivates patrons to perform efficiently as well as maintain an obligatory relationship with the employer and their employees. She further says that the implicit assumption of patron-client relations in terms of "Social Networking" through this

networking patron-client maintains a relationship of trust, indebtedness, and loyalty. Hence helping each in a time of need keeps the relationship strong and time-tested.

This indebtedness is beneficial for both parties but keeping the client indebted to the patron is how the pir sahib retains their murids because it is reported that the former is more dependent on the latter. The indebtedness ensures loyalty, purity, and a sense of giving favors to each other in a time of need leading to a healthy patron-client relationship.

Through the study of literature, the researcher originated through many things and these things might be included in the research work, while keeping the main objectives and the theoretical framework the literature was selected to be the good choice with the first-hand data. The patron-client relation along with experiential religiosity among pir and murid is the backbone of the current study and the idea that the researcher got from the literature was that the patron-client relation is the main source to maintain a social relation in the religious setting between pir and murid.

The literature helped in understanding and viewing the concepts that were very complex to understand for the researcher because, without literature, a researcher cannot develop his main themes, objectives, and research questions of the study. The review of the literature helped and played a vital role in getting to know how to produce an accurate interview guide as per the relevant topic and for the respondents and a true direction to see the system of piri muridi.



## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

The research methodology is of three types of qualitative method, quantitative method, and mixed methodology which is called the triangulation method. Based on the assumption about the ontology of my research, I will choose a qualitative approach to conduct my research. Research methodology is a kind of systematic way of conducting a study. In research methodology, the researcher explores the research approach, methods, tools, and techniques which have been used in the present study process. Walter (2010) defined research methodology as a lens through which one can analyze and interprets research data. Research methodology is important because through the relevant selection of methods the researcher can examine the whole research more effectively and can make an authentic sense of the research. The basic aim of the study is to get a deep insight into the application of experiential religiosity and patron-client relationship between pir and murid, or how murid gets access to public organizations.

The present study is descriptive as it discusses the strategies exercised by patrons (pir) to retain their relationship with their clients (muridain). According to the nature of the study and the data required, the researcher opted qualitative research approach. The qualitative research approach is used for in-depth understanding of the issue from the respondent's point of view. The purpose and main objective of opting qualitative research approach lie in the fact that this phenomenon has not been studied before and that is the uniqueness of research too. Therefore, to deeply explore and explain the phenomenon, the researcher wanted an in-depth insight that was just possible by looking at qualitative aspects and collecting first hand data from a specified locale. The essence of qualitative research lies in the very concept as it examines social processes and cases in their social context, interpreting the meaning in a specific socio-cultural setting (Neuman 2000).

### **3.1 Participant Observation**

Participant observation is most important in research because researchers must take part in the daily activities of their participants. It is an instrumental part of ethnographic research and a significant method to cross-check the acquired information from the data. This plays a vital role in the field because through participant observation the research can take data naturally becoming part of the community and it helped the researcher to understand their actions and behaviors in a particular situation. This is a method in which the researcher is also part of their field and participates in their rituals and interacts with other aspects of their life routines and their culture (Kawulich, 2005). Through the participation in people's lives during fieldwork, the researchers easily observe them and make stronger relationship with them. It is one of the major techniques for anthropological fieldwork. In this technique, the researcher lived with people under study for a certain period directly observing their general behaviors and culture. Being an anthropologist, the researcher must participate in their activities and ceremonies and sometimes faced many difficulties but by living in the community, the researcher must gain the confidence of people for finding all the required information easily. Though in the start it is not so easy for researcher to participate in the life of people, buy gossip, and develop a good rapport building the researcher can achieve their goals.

Rapport building is an integral part of anthropological research which is based on cooperation, creating a trustworthy relationship with participants involves a relationship of trust between people a feeling of sympathy, and having a mutual understanding (Denese, 2011). Rapport building is very important in qualitative research because in the starting days participants are not comfortable with our questions and they feel hesitant to share their problems, but when rapport was built then they feel comfortable and provide more information. When researcher adopted the technique of rapport building with their respondents by doing little things just like using their language or start wearing their dress codes, then respondents became comfortable with the researcher and then provide them with their personal information which helped researcher for the study. So, at the start of

the fieldwork, the researcher faced some major issues like the area I select for my research which is Golra Sharif is not comfortable especially for female researcher. Sometimes the participants are not available for detailed and longtime discussions and even in starting they are not comfortable sharing their information. The researcher has to build their trust and when they are comfortable, they can provide information regarding the issue. Though, to make the rapport building with these people was quite difficult because they came from far areas and did not listen properly.

Another issue which I face is their language, most people came from different cities for their “mannat” and prayers, and they all have different languages like Hindko, Kashmiri, and potpourri, which was difficult for me because I belong to a Seraiki culture. Language is the main part of human culture, and every culture has a different language. In ethnographic research the native language of native plays a vital part in the field which is also a challenge for the researcher to understand the native language. For the participation in my field, I tried very hard to learn and understand the language of these people and tried to talk with them in Urdu because language is the main thing that can provide an edge to the researcher to be close with their participants so researchers must learn the native language to cope up with field challenges. For example, one researcher who belongs to a Punjabi family and the fieldwork must choose Pashtun culture then he must know the language of Pashtuns for a better understanding of their culture and the level of their mentality.

However, the researcher has planned for time management and availability of my respondents and used participant observation which can make effective results of fieldwork. The plan is that in the present study, the researcher must observe their activities and build a good relationship with participants and make them relaxed. Through rapport building, I make stronger relationships with them and through participant observation, I participate in their daily life routines and their rituals and observe their activities which make a strong bonding between researcher and participants, and then they can easily provide information and share their problems because they can trust those people who can participate with their routines. One difficult thing is the access to the house of pir and

rapport building with the family of pir sahib because females can be talked with pir only for a few seconds otherwise they are not allowed in the room of pir sahib, so I must make a relation with the family of pir sahib and after many visits, they feel comfortable with me.

### **3.2 Key Informants**

Key informants are important source for in-depth data in anthropological research. A key informant is a person who has information about some specific issue about the community. In the current study, the researcher has three key informants which include one male male and two female muridain who have link with the shrine of pir mehr Ali shah. The families who lived there also have better information about the pir and their murids and how they used their experiential religiosity. My key informants are the people who lived in the house and shrine of Pir sahib and served them for many years. They provide me very useful information and my female key informant introduced me to the wives of pir family of Golra sharif.

My female key informant was an old lady who served in the house of pir sahib for 15 years. She was basically from Multan and belongs to my culture which is Saraiki. Though, I have a strong reference because of this lady who is my university fellow. In the start of my research, I met the family of my university fellow, they helped me a lot to know about the rule's rituals and practices of the shrine, the lifestyle of pir family and the whole stories about the Golra Sharif because they also lived in this area. They helped me during my whole field work because as a female researcher I face a lot of troubles to get my data but because of this family as my key informants I am able to do in depth interviews with my respondents and spent some quality time with the family of pir sahib. My second respondent was also the daughter of this lady, and she was also the follower of the respective shrine. They also provide me information about the regular visitors and pilgrims of Golra sharif, their religious powers, economy, social relations, and other personal relations with their both powerful and poor muridains.

### **3.3 Socio-economic Census**

The census form was once formed preferably than getting into the Locale. At the hour of thought arrangement, work was once furthermore accomplished on this structure. When a researcher visits their locality, has exchange and interaction with the area respondents, then certain changes have been brought into it for its improvement. Following settling on key-informants the form had been performed from 30 families. Key-informant has helped more than adequate to finish them up. It gives standard and essential data about the local area individuals, like their Religion, Shrines, Madrassah and verifiable structures, environment, Education, Health, Economy, Food designs, Heterogeneous Communities and different offices, etc.

It helped to capture the arrangement examination that once accumulated the hidden information. The financial registration overview structure furthermore served to cross check the data procured through key-witnesses.

### **3.4 Sampling**

Sampling is important in research because in the big population sampling is accepted for selection of a small group for the purpose of research. The researcher takes samples of people to investigate the specific problem. To meet the objective of the research problem, the purposive sampling technique was practiced because my purpose of sampling was the collection firsthand data from those people who have direct and at least 10 years of experience of the shrine. Purposive sampling is a non- probability sampling method and it occurs when elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher (Black 2010). It is the most effective sampling technique when one needs to study a certain cultural domain with knowledgeable experts within. In nonprobability sampling techniques, samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the individuals equal chances of being selected. Probability approaches are most suitable for in depth qualitative research in which the focus is to understand the complex social phenomenon. Purposive sampling (also known as judgment or selective sampling) is a sampling technique in which a researcher relies on his or her judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in the study. It will be helpful sampling for my research to give the relevant data. The researcher decided to collect data from those pirs and murids of locale where they have at least 10 to

20 years of long period of experience with each other. In the present study, sampling size was 20 which include 3 pir and their 17 murids.

### **3.5 In-depth Interviews**

Interviews are the main part of the research which includes structured, semi structured, and unstructured interviews. The reason for choosing in-depth interviews is that it can provide more detailed and effective data which can only be collected from ethnographies and lived experiences. The in-depth and face to face interviews and open-ended questions can make the research stronger about the data. In the present research I use semi structured and unstructured interviews which can help to investigate the data in informal ways in the shrine and outside the shrine. As the qualitative studies are mostly descriptive in nature, it can be more discussed about the strategies used by the participants for their life and daily activities because qualitative research is used for the in-depth and detailed understanding of the issues from respondent's thoughts and point of views. The most effective and strongest essence of qualitative research is that it can examine the people and their social life according to their social context (Neumann 2000).

The researcher used in depth interview methods along with observation methods, which are mostly used in qualitative research methodology. In present study I used In-depth interviews to obtain detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions, and opinions of my respondents. These are conducted to gain an in-depth and holistic perspective of reality of the issue at hand. It was helpful for the researcher to be aware of the system more deeply and while taking interviews, actions, face expressions, as well as the manner of respondents is observed. This technique helps the researcher to know the qualities of Patron-client relationship with each other in the sacred place of pir sahib. It is also helpful for me during my field work to cross check the answers of respondents. The researcher conducts twenty face to face interviews of pir and their murids in the area of Golra sharif Islamabad.

The researcher asked the question through interview guide because it was very helpful and developed to obtain more focused and relevant data. The researcher makes the interview

guide according to the objectives. For questions the researcher developed different segments of the objectives which became helpful for researcher as well as for the respondents to understand the main points of the study. Most of these interview sessions were conducted off handed because it is observed that the moment the researcher started taking notes the respondents feel reserved and do not want to share their insight. Therefore, I jotted down the information soon after every interview conducted. The interview was conducted in mainly their native languages i.e., Urdu, Punjabi, but later information was translated into English.

### **3.6 Case Study Method**

Case study methods involve the exploration of real issues within a clear context. Basically, they are in-depth investigations of a single person, or a community. In the present study those case studies help to clear the indicators and objectives with real cases. I used a case study method for my data collection because case studies helped me a lot for better understanding of their connection during the field work. I asked many people for their life stories, and they all are helpful for my research because they are true experiences of these people. People tell their stories regarding my research topic, and I put all these case studies in the form of narration. During my field work I asked many questions with different people according to my research objectives. My first case study was about the case of the true belief system and experiential religiosity of my respondents which is based on the evil of black magic. After consulting with pir sahib, the victim feels better and recovers from this evil, so this case makes the follower's belief stronger on the shrine. Other case studies I conducted on the feeling of indebtedness which created in the relation of pir and their murids because murids (clients) are totally dependent on their patrons (pirs). I asked the story from my key informant as well because she lived for 15 years in the house of pir sahib to serve them and still she has the feeling of indebtedness for the pir of Golra Sharif. When I asked the wife of Pir Sahib about their muridain they also narrated the story of one of her female loyal murids who was paralyzed and lived in the house of Pir sahib.

Other case studies about the financial, educational, and other necessities and benefits provided by the patrons (pir) to their (clients) muridain because pir needed more muridain for the reputation of their shrine. These all-case studies became very helpful for the researcher because it is based on the deep investigation of the issue by the experiences of the single person.

### **3.7 Focus Group Discussions**

Focus group discussion is important in qualitative research, and it is useful because it can provide strong data about the issue. In present research the researcher conducted three focus group discussions from the murids, personal murids, and some neighbors who have strong links with pirs. Focus group discussion can provide authentic information with different opinions for one specific issue of the society. I conducted 3 focus group discussions through the family of my key informants. After a long time during my field work, the “Mujawar” (personal murids) basically a young boy and an old man who sit in the durbar of pir Mehr Ali shah, I conducted focus group discussion with these people during my field work which was very helpful to understand their rules, duties, rituals, urs and many other activities in the system of shrine. Another focus group discussion I made with the muridain family who visits the respective shrine every Thursday evening. They made a discussion and express their true faiths, experiences, and benefits of being the murid of the Golra family. They belong to a financially stable family, and they have strong family connections with the family of pir sahib. These discussions clarify the relationship of pir family with their both elites and poor muridain who are the true believers of the shrine.

### **3.8 Field notes and Jotting**

Field notes and jottings are also important in qualitative research because when researcher is in observational process, the researcher must have to create the field notes for their record. Through this field work the researcher can be able to analyze their data. In the present field work I made field notes when I was asked something from the respondents, sometimes I made phone recordings for important case studies. Jottings was also made by the researcher when I must write briefly and quickly because sometimes the respondents



in the shrines are not easily available for a long discussion. Moreover, the field notes play a vital role for the record of my research data.

### **3.9 Data Presentation and Analysis**

It is the strategy for methodically using factual or legitimate techniques to portray and represent, sum up and recap, and consider the realities collected from the respondents. In the current study the researcher uses thematic analysis to interpret and describe the data. During my field work I managed my data in the form of themes and through these themes, research questions and interview guide. I easily handle my work and then put my data into the themes for representation and analysis.

### **3.10 Research Ethics**

In qualitative research, the codes of ethics are vital part of researcher's whole work because Anthropology is a multi-disciplinary field which includes all aspect of humankind. During field work, the researcher was ready for any types of complex involvements, and conflicts because ethics are essential during conducting a field work. For example, when a researcher follows ethics and provide comfort to natives and their personal data then in return natives also provide the researcher more information because they can trust a person who is comfortable for them.

### **3.11 Reflexivity**

The term "reflexivity" refers to circular cause-and-effect interactions, particularly as they are incorporated in human belief frameworks. In a reflexive relationship, both the cause and the effect affect each other in a relationship where neither can be identified as a cause or an effect. Reflexivity is a useful technique for researchers who want to maintain critical self-awareness throughout the study process. In the present study the researcher experiences the different nature of respondents and natives during the field work.

During the research I asked some questions from the respondent (pir) and they did not give me a proper answer about my topic and said that "you can talk only for some seconds" and

we have no time for your questions. After many days with the reference of my companions I was able to meet the wife of pir sahib and through rapport building I participated in the activities of the shrine and made discussions with them. My position in front of the wife of Pir was a Syed girl, and I wanted to know about the whole system of the shrine and then I collected my data after many days of interaction with her.

### 3.12 Research site



Figure 2. Source, Google Maps

The location of my research is Golrha Sharif Islamabad; it is situated near the margalla hills, and it is known as the tomb of Pir Mehr Ali Shah who was a Sufi scholar (Philip, 1985). He is a hanafī scholar and wrote many books and he criticizes the Ahmadya movement. In the present this place is in the custodian which is called (Sajdah nasheeni) to Pir Shah Abdul Haq. I selected this locale because; this place has the potential to fulfil my requirement for study, and I can get more detailed and accurate data on the patron-client relationship among pir and murids. Shrines in Pakistan have their own place because people consider them sacred ones. There are many statues and reputations of shrines of Pakistan. Some shrines are local, and some have international reputations which are famous shrines.

Their followers are in millions because they have experiential religiosity about shrines and respective pirs.

Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, is one of the most attractive and green cities in the country. It is surrounded on one side by the beautiful green Margalla Hills, providing the ideal combination of sightseeing and urban living. It is the most developed and organized city in the country because it is the capital. The roads are well-developed and largely straight and at right angles to one other, making it easy to get around. The city is organized into sectors, which are 4 km<sup>2</sup> square zones. The sectors are organized and numbered in such a way that it's quite easy to tell which way each one is facing. In the middle of each sector is a market or retail area known as markaz. The city of Rawalpindi, sometimes known as "Pindi," is located near Islamabad. Surprisingly, Rawalpindi is home to the Islamabad International Airport. The city's borders, on the other hand, are indistinct. When you enter the city, you'll see the old residences and clogged roadways. Rawalpindi has a fair share of tourist attractions and delicacies. Islamabad the capital city is also famous for the shrines of Sufi saints as the people of Pakistan mostly follow the Sufism and have strong faith on the system of shrines. In the different cities of Pakistan there are many famous shrines like, Bahaudin Zikriya in Multan, Data Ganj Bakhs in Pak Pattan and the shrine of Pir Mehr Ali Shah is in Golra Sharif Islamabad.

Spiritual leader shrines can be found all over Pakistan, particularly in Punjab and Sindh as well as in Islamabad, the country's federal capital. The caretakers of these shrines either run for office on various political party platforms or declare their support for a specific politician or political party. Pirs have a huge number of followers in every city of Pakistan, and they even support their followers financially, socially, and of course religiously.

The shrine of Pir Mehr Ali Shah is also considered one of the big shrines with many followers which are in the E-11 sector of Golra Sharif Islamabad. People have strong faith on them because for them their pirs are influencers. People come for the achievements of their life because they discussed economic, social, and personal life with their pirs and they believe that pirs solve their religious problems and also in social aspect they further refer

them to their wealthy murids for the social help. This shrine also integrates the people for common reasons, and they further ask to each other about pir sahib in respective words. They share their experiential religiosity to each other and give more power to reputation of shrine. The life history of pir mehr Ali shah was the main reason for strong faith on them even people came from abroad for the visit of this sacred place.



Figure 3. Source, Field Work

### **3.13 Shrine of Pir Mehr Ali Shah**

It is obvious by the expedition of knowledge community which had been done that the Pir, Murid, their relationship, and the places where they interact have their own unique ritual markers and practices, which have constituted their overall accepted behavior in the societies they are existing (Strothman, 2016). Also, they have deep effects and impacts on every aspect of the society as functionally interconnected, their practices and belief as experienced and observed by them have made the internments of the religiosity (Kalhoro & Saleem, 2016). The sacred shrine of pir Mehr Ali shah provides the potential knowledge of the experiential religiosity and the nature of patron-client relationship in the locality of Golra Sharif. Many studies have significantly defined majority of the aspects related to the patronage and client in pir murid relationship, yet there is void that calls for concern about the application of the experiential religiosity of pir murid relationship and the access into the organizations, which are granted by the favor of the master (pir) to their disciple (murid). So, the study here in this sacred shrine was investigated the pir murid relationship as a ritualistic social exchange process, with the criteria of inclusion for access into the

public organization. The inside view of shrine of Golra sharif was covered with many muridains who came there for their strong faith and religious activities. The main entrance of the shrine is divided separately for male and female followers. Then on the right side there were a “serai” for male guests and followers.

In the center there was a “langer khana” where the poor people or followers can eat the food for two times. Another “serai” is in the center of the shrine, and this is only for families who visit from far areas. The grave of pir Mehr Ali shah is in the center of the shrine where people came with ablution and make dua because they think that they make “dua” with the “waseela” of pirs. There were other graves of the family members of pir sahib near the grave of pir Mehr Ali shah and there are many followers who came to visti all the graves for their special prayers. The other side of the shrine is for the rooms of current pir like pir Nizamuddin and pir shamshuddin, they sit in the rooms and their followers meet them for their religious and other faith for inner and outer healings. The house of pir sahib was also located near the shrine where only special female followers are allowed for some reasons.

### 3.14 Silsilah of pirs



Figure 4. Source, Google

Ghulam Naseeruddin Naseer (November 14, 1949 February 13, 2009) was a Pakistani poet and Islamic scholar who belonged to the Chishti Sufi order. He was the caretaker of the Golra Sharif shrine in Pakistan's Islamabad Capital Territory.

Syed Ghulam Moinuddin Gilani's greatgrandson, Naseeruddin Naseer, was the son of Meher Ali Shah of Golra Sharif. He is the nephew of Shah Abdul Haq Gilani, the shrine's incumbent Sajjada nashin. Their funeral is attended by tens of thousands of people. Ghulam Naseeruddin was a poet and a religious scholar. In the Potohar region, he was instrumental in propagating the Islamic message and he published 36 volumes about Islam, the Quran, and prophet Muhammad, penned poetry in Arabic, Urdu, and Punjabi.

### 3.15 Pir Mehr Ali Shah



Figure 5. Source, Google

Hazrat Pir Syed Mehr Ali Shah Gilani (R.A.) was born in Golra Sharif, which is located halfway between Rawalpindi and Islamabad, on 14 April 185 and He is known for being a Sufi saint, a famous Hanafi scholar, and a leader in the anti-Qadyani campaign. He wrote several publications, the most famous of which being Saif e Chishtiyai, a polemical treatise about Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Qadyani movement's unorthodoxy and heresy.

### 3.16 Syed Nizamuddin Jami Gilani



Figure 6. Source, Field Work

Syed Ghulam Nizam ud Din Jami Gilani Qadri, is the eldest son of Pir Syed Naseer ud Din Naseer (R.A). Pir sahib is the current sajjadah Nasheen of Astana e Mehria Golra Sharif. He was born in the town of Golra Sharif and the founder of Anjuman Mehria Naseeria Welfare Register, an organization whose aim is to promote Islam's message to every part of the globe. He is a well-known poet in the literary scene, known as Jami Gilaani. Unvaan e Arzoo, his first book of Urdu rubayat, was published when he was 24 years old. Later, a second volume of Urdu ghazals was published because he is following in the footsteps of Pir Syed Naseer ud Din.

### 3.17 Religious composition of Golra

Among the Muslims populace individuals follow various factions of Islam. Greater part of the populace in research region follows the Sunni faction while other follow Shia order of Islam. The city is well known for the shrine of pir mehr Ali shah and people came from far areas to visit the holy place. Likewise, most of the number of inhabitants in Islamabad that are the supporter of different shrines but many of them are Sunni and they support the shrine of golra shairf. The shrine of Bari imam also the popular shrine and people visit frequently but due to the living pirs and sisilah people prefer the shrine of pir mehr Ali shsh who have the huge reputation in Islamabad. The other significant part of legalism in the

space is that every one of the devotees of Islam are living in concordance and harmony for a long time.

### **3.18 Education**

Teaching assumes a domineering part in the advancement of any area. People around Golra are more taught so it is viewed as the most instructed area of Pakistan. This region has a ton of government and private schools, different public most noteworthy positioning numerous recognitions communities. In addition, if discussion about other region like Islamabad .is consider to the capital of state, Pakistan. Islamabad is viewed as the area of relocation, exchange, business, and training where individuals from in and outside the nation comes for schooling. Public capitals have a great deal of world colleges and school where huge number of understudies total for accomplishing higher or normalize nature of training. A portion of the popular instructive organizations under premise of Islamabad, which comes on Pakistan no 1 classification in research as quaid-I-azam universiy, International Islamic, Fast and Numel University and so forth.

### **3.19 Langer of Golra sharif**

Thousands of people come here every year because of pir mehr Ali shah's (babuji's) prayers, and langar is served to all. Approximately 10,000 people are serviced on a daily basis, and it is much more in Juma Prayers. During the Urs era, the population surpassed 4, 00,000 individuals. The Pir Mehr Ali Shah's (R.A) dua resulted in this (prayer) because Babu ji (R.A) ran a langar where people may get free food at any time of day and Free lodging was readily available, and guests were assigned rooms for their stay regardless of caste, colour, or belief and this procedure is still carried out today

Babu ji (R.A) ran a Langar where people may get free food at any time of day. Free lodging was readily available, and guests were assigned rooms for their stay regardless of caste, colour, or belief. The procedure is still carried out today. When it comes to the practice of keeping free langar, one must go a step further and interpret the term langar not merely as interpreted in the traditional meaning, but as it is really done by the hosts at Golra Sharif.



Part of the time, service in the langar and at periodic functions is voluntary, and part of the time, it is compensated. All of the institutions are well-maintained and administered, and the atmosphere at the ceremonial activities is in keeping with their spiritual dignity and the shrine's purity. A langar (free kitchen), three spacious guest homes, and one guest cabin have been provided to meet to the requirements of the people who visit these temples throughout the year. Furthermore, many Golra locals willingly vacate portions of their homes to accommodate the large number of visiting devotees who attend the unique ceremonial rituals.

### **3.20 Economy of Golra Sharif**

At Golra Sharif, langar takes on a broader meaning. The perspective expands beyond norm finds itself working in the practical, down-to-earth facilities of the given. Though guests are offered free accommodations as well as having a breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They all are the true believer of the respective shrine of Golra sharif in which many of them are stable wealthy and have a powerful background, but many of the muridain of pir sahib are poor and needy. These muridain always seeking help from their pir. However, the economy of the shrine also run through the clients (muridain) because these are the main source of the reputation of the shrine. Pir has to do a lot of favors for their muridain like they opened many shops near the shrine of Golra and the shopkeepers are their muridain who take care of these shops. These shops are also the big source of a good economy of Golra sharif. On the other hand, the powerful and wealthy muridain of pir contribute for the Langer, and other expanses of the shrine. The pirs of the shrine are the landowners and their followers are also the big source for their economy because every time when they visit the shrine, they donate some money for their own happiness.

## Chapter 4

### Belief system and experiential religiosity

In any religious belief system comes from the experience of something when someone experienced something or trying to know about anything. Belief system is the thing that can affect our everyday lives because in religion it is planned around some ethical codes, belief of one or more deities, incidences of supernatural powers which affect humans. There are hundreds of religions on the planets, and all are different from each other. Religion is the most dominant element in society and the best example of a belief system. On the other hand, experiential religiosity is totally linked with the belief system of something in the religion. It normally means first-hand experience that is explained through normal language. A religious experience comes when someone has had the personal and direct experience to feel God and prove it with feelings of religion. The system of beliefs and practices adherent to the notion of encountering the divine and the supernatural is none other than the religion and its embedment, which are experienced, observed and followed by different people, given by the circumstances and the settlements they live in. people observe their creator and the divine in a great variety, an individual having the experience to encounter his/her god might be completely different than any of the others, a person having belief and response to the supernatural can be



Figure7. Source, Field Work

Different from the second person experiencing the very same entity. Thus, the experiences, responses, beliefs and practices of groups and individuals stood by their religion is known to be the experiential religiosity (Vishkin & Bloom, 2019; Chen et al., 2020).

People come to their religious places just for the sake of winning the happiness of their Gods and must perform different kinds of rituals which make them sacred. For example, in our religion Islam people think that with the performance of “Hajj” we become like a newborn baby who has not committed any kind of sin. In Islam there are also different sects and belief systems and every believer has their own way to believe in the system of shrines. Many people just came here for “zyarat” of pir sahib because they think that with the process of “zyarat” and dua they can get rid of their evils and problems. As we know, in our society patron (pir) considered one of the most powerful people because of their religion affiliation and people have strong faith system and experiential religiosities from the time of their ancestors. Pir Mehr Ali shah have a huge circle of muridain and he is the most powerful person for his religious activities and make many followers and get the huge fame of the shrine Golra sharif. People passing through many illnesses like mental, physical, and other social evils like evil eye, black magic’s, evil spirits, domestic abuses, aggressions and having bad dreams. They do not consult a doctor for these kinds of diseases which prevail in our society, but these diseases only can be cured through the religious ways in Asian countries. As a researcher I observe many things in the locale of Golra sharif like people’s strong faith towards their pir, their duties, rules and performing the different kinds of rituals when they come into the shrine. In the starting days, I faced many difficulties for my interviews because they did not tell me the details about the problem but with the passage of time, I got the first hand data.

#### **4.1 Case study**

One of the murids I met there when I was sitting in the area of “saraye”. I saw two ladies there. One of them came to me and said “you are my friend”, and I replied yes. I found her a little unconscious. The other lady came to me and said that please pray for her. She was the mother of only one daughter who became ill because of black magic. I asked her about the girl, and she came to me with tears and told me the story of her daughter.

She tells me the story which I describe here in the form of narration. She said that I have only one daughter which is pretty good and healthy. She has done her masters and after that I and her father decided to fix her marriage. For this reason, we started to find a partner for our daughter. 6 months ago, one family came to see my daughter. They are the old neighbors. Their son recently came from China for marriage. After some days both families fix the engagement ceremony of my daughter, but one week after engagement some other relatives tell us that that boy is already married in abroad and his parents knows everything. When we discussed the matter with his parents and says that we cannot continue this engagement. Her mother replied “main bhi dekhti hon apki beti ab kon le k jay ga”. We ignore her words and tell our daughter she can apply for further study. After some weeks when she got admission in the university, she became ill with high fever and suddenly became unconscious. We started treatment for her, but she became ill day by day and was shocked and became unconscious with time. We also found some red bloody mud in her room, and someone guide us that we should take her for zyarat of shrine of pir Mehr Ali shah. However, from the last four months I came there with her and tell the whole problem to the pir sahib. They provide us many amulets (taweez), sacred water (dam wala pani), and some written verses for her cure and said that she was affected by black magic. Whenever we came there, she became happy to see the people here. She said that we don't clearly know who this to my daughter did but right after the incident of engagement she became ill. But with the experience of the shrine and dam of pir sahib I found slow recovery in my daughter, but she is not fully recovered yet. Pir sahibs advised us that we must take her every Thursday in the shrine for “Dam” and with this act we found better recovery in her.

So, this case study depicts the experience and faith of the muridain towards their Pir because when they failed with the doctor they have left only the option of religious cure. Though many people only believe in pir sahib in every situation, for them religion can cure any bad evil. Another murid which I asked about their experiential religiosity and belief system, says that:

*“main doctor hon aur me yahan apne husband k sath pichly 7 saal sy arahi hon. Ham pathan family se hain aur meri shadi ko 4 sal hogaye thy lekin olaad nahi thi.. Bohat ilaaj*

*kia lekin mayoosi hoi. Aik baar idhar sy guzarty hoye mere husband ne kaha in pir sahib sy dua kra lety hain. Aur ham har jumerat ko yahan ajaty thy usk kuch arsay k bad me umeed sy hogai aur mera beta peda howa. Tab sy ab tak hmara dill sy yakeen hai in k waseely sy hmari dua sunni jati hai, main har jumerat aa ker yahan sweets banti hon”.*

She also added that:

*“Jis trah ham jismaani takleef k liye kissi doctor k pas jaty hain aur dawaiyan le kar hm acha mehsoos karty hain usi trah hmary Pir hmar lia Rohaani doctor hoty hain jin sy dua le kar aur in k darbar pe hazri de kar hm apne deen k kareeb b hojaty hain aur rohaani takleef b door hojati hain.”*

Though this respondent clearly shared her experience of being a true follower of pir sahib and says that pirs are like a spiritual doctor for us because we became close to our religious affairs. She was a doctor and had strong faith in the shrine just because of her experiential religiosity and prayers of pir sahib. I observe her for two weeks of my field work whenever she comes here, she donates some money and other things to the people here in the shrine. She says that she has done all for her own satisfaction and happiness of her God.

Majority of respondents says that:

Shrines are gathering places for people of various sects and social classes and basically the concept of a shrine is enormous, but it all depends on your spirit, your connection to Allah swt or someone's Pir, and how you see and execute things. Many of muridain or old muridain who became “Malang” and perform some extra rituals of the shrine and doing a trance is a state of being disconnected from the outside world that increases one's love for Allah.

In the state of the belief system of Islam, the people of Islamic religion believe that all the Prophets sent by God to humankind shared the same dominant message, and that was the message of their oneness of God and obey the preaching of Islam. In Islamic religion there are many sects of Muslims like, Sunni, Shia, Wahhabi, deobandi and they all have their own beliefs, ritual, practices, and responses but they all are Muslims and believe in one God. In the society and culture of humans, humans are social animals, and they never live

alone. They have many social, religious needs for their survival. Though religion is the dominant element of Muslim culture and psychologically everything is connected with the religion in the human state of mind. Many people have different views and opinions about the social evils and other problems that have happened to them. In Muslim culture there is strong belief on healing practices with the help of shrines of Sufis who consider the sacred persons after the prophets. People have strong faith in their sacredness and think that they are the special person of God because of their long prayers and experiential religiosity for the religion. Moreover, just like teachings of prophets they also guided the people for the right paths and played a vital role to spread the meanings and teachings of Islam. Different sects of Muslims have strong faiths on different shrines because mostly the shrines belong to Syed families who have linked with the descendant of Hazrat Imam Hussain. Like the pirs of Golra Sharif belong to the Syed family of Pir Mehr Ali Shah. In our society mostly people have strong faith in the pirs and their shrines because of religious affiliation. Many powerful political families or other Syed families have strong links with shrines. They all make a social network of religious activities where they provide benefits to each other behind the religion. As the observations of the researcher elite class muridain have more access to pir sahib's shrine and sometimes they arrange the URS or other rituals for the shrines. Majority of the muridain who came from the far cities are the less privileged people who have empty mind they only rely on religious myths. Most of them are uneducated and have no readings of books or knowledge regarding Islam. They only follow experiences beliefs of their forefathers, but they are true believers and because of them the shrines can become the most popular shrine.

I observe many muridain in the serai of shrine who came here for one month in the time of URS of pir sahib, and they lived with the permission of pir sahib. My key informant also tells me about the serai and says that they have permission to stay here for one month with a solid reason. Otherwise, other poor and needy people who lived permanently in the shrine they can stay in the shrine. There are two serais in the shrine one for the families and other for the male members who lived here or who came as a guest to serve the shrine. The main thing I observe here in the shrine is the true belief of people especially old female muridain,

they spent whole day in the shrine and their relatively young girls stays in the house of pir for serving them without pay. One day I was waiting for my key informant in pir sahib's house, many of females enter in the house with luggage and they all are covered with veil. I asked them about the luggage and one of them said that we came here to spend the holy month of Ramadan. We are the old muridain of pir sahib and we came here every Ramadan to serve the family and they provide us everything we need. We are poor people that is why the wife of pir sahib provide us food, clothes, and money in every religious ritual. We feel honored for being a follower of Golra sharif. This is the state of faith system of people. The pirs of Golra have a huge circle of followers since the time of Pir Mehr Ali shah (babu ji) who stays in the heart of people for his religious services. When I asked some question about the spirit of the muridain from the family of pir sahib, the wife of one of the pir said that it is the blessing of God that they have a lot of respect because of religious affiliations. The wife of pir sahib also added that:

*“Ham khud apny Golra sharif k murid hain ham har dua apne experience aur yakeen ki waja sy bar bar mangty hain unk logo k waseely sy jo ALLAH k khas bandy hon”*

However, the wife of pir sahib also says that experience of something is obviously important because when you belong to the things you believe in, they set your experience (good or bad). Just like our good or bad experience we do things according to our mindset. She says that we also have religious experience and that's why we make prayers for our self. We also visit the respective shrine in the specific time because we are also the followers of shrine Golra sharif. The researcher also observes the value of females in the house of pir. They give extra respect to their female followers and in return the followers do some extra favors to serve them. In starting days, I think that there is whole patriarchal system like women cannot proper discuss her actual problem because pir only listen for few seconds. Though this reality is looking Harsh but when I investigated the house of pir, the whole authority was in the house of females. Many of muridain who have access with reference to powerful families they ask their problems to the wife of pir and through their families they can get amulets or “dam” for their problems. Other muridain who stays in the

house of pir they can easily cook food for their own choice because a small portion is full of their muridain who lived here and get the religious education in the house.

## 4.2 Fictive relations

Fictive relations are a type of social ties which have no base of blood or marriage. Such symbols of honorary kinship signify the importance of the person or the social contact with them. It is reported that when the patronage relation grows deep with time and mutual efforts, this strength becomes visible through obvious indications. Among them, the emergence of fictive relation is one of those indicators which signify the strength of the relation between the patron and client. Collins (2009) and found in Saher (2014) who labels the similar institutions in African American families through which non-kin members were merged into kin structure and it was found that the network of relation lasted longer in fictive kin. In this network of kin, the followers/ murids become family members and the distant kin becomes primary kin and their patrons managed them through strong fictive relation. As mentioned earlier, it is basic cultural pattern that prevailed throughout the country with changing potency (Lindholm, 1996).

The researcher observes the fictive relation in the system of shrine Golra sharif where the murids are living like the family members of pir sahib. Many mujawars and young boys who spent their life in the shrine and living in the sarai took care of the shrine like their own house and pir sahib treated them like their child. When I observed in the house of pr sahib I found many fictitious relations here because there was a small portion of rooms where the female members of muridain resided. There were all ages of muridain like some old women's, some mother daughter, some mature ladies and young girls living in the house of pir sahib like their family members because fictive relation is actually about when a person does not hold true kinship by blood or marriage, but still he/she is labeled to any kinship relation is termed as fictive relative or fictive kin.

The researcher asked them about their stories, religious experiences through rapport building. They all are looking so happy being here. One of the respondents shared that:



*” baji sahiba (Wife of pir) muje apni choti behn kehti hain kion k 10 saal sy main baji sahib k pas hoti hon unk sary kam main dekhti hon, meri beti k liye who boht sari chezen kapry aur pesy b deti rehti hain jesy wo unki beti ho. Mene kabi khud apni beti k liye kisi eid pe kapre nahi liye, sab baji sahiba karti hain”.*

## **Translation**

The lady respondent shared her views about the fictive relation between them, she said that in the house of pir sahib all the ladies were treated equally with respect and honor. She lived for ten years with the wife of pir Hassam ud din shah and she called her a sister because she took care of her house and other matters. The family of Pir Sahib treated her daughter like their own daughter and they lived happily with them. Many respondents talked about the same things about the family of Pir who treated them as their own child. Another respondent who are mujawir in the shrine of Golra Sharif says that:

*“I lived here in the sarai for 13 years and I spent my life to serve the pir nizamuddin shah and people called me pir bhai because I spent my whole day in the shrine. When pir sahib came into the shrine my duty is to receive him and called the people for dam near the door. I am the special murid of pir sahib, and he treated me like his family member and appreciated my efforts for the shrine”.*

A young respondent who is also in the picture with Pir Nizamuddin was looking very energetic and loyal with his duty. Whenever I come into the shrine, he always looks busy because he is the special person of pir sahib who always stands on the right side of pir sahib when they are busy handling their muridain. When I asked for the interview for my study, he was very confused to share anything about the pir, but with time he shared his responsibilities and said that Pir sahib is like the whole family for us; they take care of us like their child. Because of them people call me Pir bhai and give the same respect for me because I always stand with pir sahib.

### 4.3 The concept of mannat

In the Indian subcontinent, mannat is a wish that one wants to come to fruition and the vow one makes to God after his or her wish comes true, and this word is first used at shrines. South Asians often make pilgrimages to houses of worship which are related to the success of mannat; even as those sites have a positive non secular affiliation, people of all faiths visit them, Devotees make a promise to do a good painting for God whilst their mannat is fulfilled, including distributing candies at the residence of worship, giving alms to feed the terrible, and resolving to wish each day. Examples of mannat asked for at various non-secular sites encompass childless couples praying for a baby, girls praying for his or her husbands to find an accurate job, and many others.

As mentioned by Rehman (2013), shrine is a sacred area that relates to any non-secular priest or holy person. In South Asian culture people have strong non common trust to go to the sanctuaries to achieve their requirements through the blessedness of sanctum. The safety of the places of worship is in this way considered to be a demonstration of public help.

The couple of advantaged adherents who go to circulate cash, gives and dinner which is considered as Langar among the individuals present day at the shrines and this variable is a give of charm to the horrible local people to go to shrines. Langar capacity free open kitchen pointed toward imparting ingredients to others independent of religion, class, cast, variety, precept, age, orientation, or social status. This kitchen is opened for all and intended to make ingredients accessible to all muridains and guests. These people came in the shrine to make a wish for their mannat and make some promises in the shrine that whenever their wish became successful they donate Langer in the shrine. One of the respondent shared his views about mannat and says that:

*“main bachpan main apne waldayn k sath golra ati thi phir meri shadi k bad kuch halst aisy howe k ham ghareebon ka wahid sahara yehi dargah sharif hi hoti hain jis sy hamen boht aas milti hai, mainy golra sharif k dargah pe mannat mangi thi k merey dono beton*

*ka karobar set hojay aur dono ka apna ghar mil jaye aur barra arsy bad meri mannat ja ke poori hoi tab mene apne gaon sy 3 busses le k ayi aur pir sahib ki darbar me hazri di, phool rakhy aur darbar pe langer banta, kion ke meri mannat poori hoi thi. Mere dono betay aj is dargah ki waseely sy nokri aur apny ghar waly hain hmara sab kuch yehi pir sahib hain in k waseely sy hmari muraden poori hoti hain”*

### **Translation**

My respondent who was old lady shared her experience of mannat at the shrine of Golra sharif and said that we are less privileged people and our only hope are the shrines and prayers of pir sahib. We make mannat for our dreams and wishes in the shrine of pir sahib because the shrine of Golra have a huge name and people have strong faith on them. Many respondents in Golra shaif have almost same views about mannat because they have a strong experiential religiosity of mannat and other rituals regarding their faith. Another respondent also added their view and said that:

*“mujhy Golra sharif ki darbaar sy meri saas ne aik sufaid mardon wla kapra aur kuch meva (dry fruits) la k diya aur kaha yeh kapra quran e pak me rakh do aur meva kha lo, main mannat mang k ayi hon pehli aulaad beta hi hoga, aur ham mannat utany bhi jaingy, kuch arsay bad mera beta peda hogaya aur ham log pir sahib k darbar pe mannat utaar aye, hamary family k boht achy experience hain is liye ham kissi khaas kam k lie mannat mangty hain”*

### **Translation**

The respondents of Golra sharif as observe by the researcher most of them were uneducated and poor people. They have only hope for their survival was shrines and mannat. As the respondent shared that her mother in law make a mannat on the shrine of Golra sharif for her pregnancy and make a wish for a boy. She have done some rituals like bring white male dress and some dry fruits from shrine and give these things to her and she has strong faith for the birth of baby boy. When these wishes became successful they donate a huge amount of food and some sweets in the area of shrine and also arrange events in their houses which they called “jashan”.

#### **4.4 Theoretical discourse**

In the point of theoretical discourse the social exchange theory clearly fits on these kinds of social or religious relations because in the cultures of Pakistan shrines became the societal relational places more than religious places. Through the deep observations, I realized the fact that most of the people who continually visited the shrine were less privileged and poor people who came here with empty minds and their only hope were the shrines. Most of them are uneducated and they became strong believers by just hearing the experiences by other people or by their forefathers. They think that shrines and mannat can decide their fates. I observe the fact that people are mad for the performance of rituals in the shrine in comparison with the mosques. I see mosques were empty and shrines are loaded with the crowd of true religious believers. Though religion is the dominant element of our society, these shrines became the social network for the people and for patrons as well. Patrons (pir) want a huge circle of muridain because of the reputation of the shrine and clients (muridain) provide them their loyalties because they need them. However the network of social exchange makes their religious belief more strong and social exchange theory can be strongly applicable for these kinds of bonding.

The findings of the study accepted the strong link of the social exchange theory with strong faith and experiential religiosities among Pir ans Murids, because the religious setting of Golra Sharif is the actual place of a strong social network where people influence with each other experiences and these exchanges of beliefs, experiences make their faith stronger on their Pir. Most of the people are less privileged who came with empty minds and they made their faith on the basis of other's experiences and became the Muridain of the Pir. They visit the shrine and start an exchange of things with the Pir and follow the advice of Pir and make stronger patron-client relationships. The purpose of the research was also to look at the use of experiential religiosity in the patron (pir) – client (murid) relationship and how they both facilitate each other through the relation.

When it comes to religious affairs, Pakistanis have a high faith in shrines and pirs. As we all know, pirs have a large following, which includes landowners, politicians, the less fortunate, and their personal murids, who are taught for certain jobs and have varying levels of experienced religiosity. Sufi deities are major people in the arena who founded welfare and worship centres; also, the sites they travelled through progressively captured the obedient worries of their followers and transformed into shrines and sanctuaries, which

became venues for divine connections (Renard, 2020). Sufism has always been an important aspect of Central and South Asian society, as Gross argues, despite many obstacles and problems. It was questioned on many grounds since it was in opposition to the orthodox sect of Islam, but it had maintained its essence during this time. Sufism succeeded to preserve its cultural, ideological, and traditional traditions alive through oral traditions, holy man tales, poetry, and manuscripts. The shrines, according to Kalhoro and Khan, were the places, and the Pirs were the people, who had extensive access to Pakistan's political spheres and organizational activities. Their power was rooted in the masses who had devoted themselves to obeying the pir as the master and guide for their betterment, and they sometimes considered it sinful to go against the guidance of their pir, who is considered holy by his or her followers, as they are spiritually obligated to do so (Kalhoro & Khan, 2017).

Homans (1961) in the social exchange theory defines the concept of interaction as synonymous with the concept of "social behavior". He writes that "when an action emitted by one man is rewarded by the action issued by another man, then, regardless of the type of emitted behavior, we say that these two people interact." Rewards can be either tangible or intangible, and Homans does not restrict in any way this concept (everything can be a reward), distinguishing only a special class among them: sentiments externalized in behavior (sentiments) as signs of some internal psychological states, emotional attitudes towards others. We should add that behavior expressed within the scope of such understood interaction is called by Homans elementary social behavior. These initial assumptions are further developed by Homans. According to social exchange theory by Thibault & Kelly (1959), social behavior involves social exchanges where people are motivated by obtaining something of value (reward) in exchange for forfeiting something else of value (cost). Strauss (Strauss, 1949) [64] also explains that people build kinship relationships as well as cooperate with each other and exchange goods and services because they are depending on each other in their daily routines. Social exchange theory is related to the current topic; hereafter it can be applied in this study because this theory discusses the interaction among individuals and interaction is mostly based on some reciprocity, obligation, profit, and some other benefits.

Collins (2009) also originate in Saher (2014) labels the similar organizations in African American families through which non-kin members were compound into kin structure and it was found that the network of relation continued longer in fictive kin. In the house of pir sahib the pir's children's called their employees/ muridains aunt, sister, and also muridain called their pir " babu ji, sain ji.

Most of the respondents worked in the system of shrines and lived in the golra. They shared about fictive relations with their pirs, however muridain are not their aunt and uncle, but they both engaged themselves in such fictive relations in order to make their relation stronger. The researcher observed the fictive relation in the system of shrine Golra sharif where the murids are living like the family members of pir sahib. Many mujawars and young boys who spent their life in the shrine and living in the sarai took care of the shrine like their own house and pir sahib treated them like their child. When I observed in the house of pr sahib I found many fictive relations here because there was a small portion of rooms where the female members of muridain resided. There were all ages of muridain like some old women's, some mother daughter, some mature ladies and young girls living in the house of pir sahib like their family members because fictive relation is actually about when a person does not hold true kinship by blood or marriage, but still he/she is labeled to any kinship relation is termed as fictive relative or fictive kin. Mirza (1999) also highlighted that, it is observed that the female clients make familial fictive relationships at the household with their patrons, as stating them their pirs like Pir Mehr Ali shah as father like, big brother.

However, as I observe and analyze the fact that murids are less privileged and poor, they interact and give their services to their pirs by showing their loyalty to them and developing trust. They also contribute to the economy of the shrine. In return, pir give their services to them in public organizations. The theory of social exchange clearly fit for my findings because Pirs have experiential religiosities and they use religion as their way of economy and murid visits the shrine because they have their own experiential religiosity and strong beliefs towards their pir so they both are dependent of each other for religious and social needs. They have strong bonding of faith and their bonding provides social, moral and

economic support to each other. Murids have the huge histories of experience about their religious matters and they give powers to their pirs through their blind trust on pirs. Pirs also exchange many favors to their murids which include landlords, political bodies and less privileged people who are always ready for services in the honor of respective pirs.

## Chapter 5

### Material Services and Exchange

This chapter encompasses the details regarding the careful analysis and comprehensive interpretation of the data gathered from in depth interviews conducted on the murid and their pirs in the locale of golra sharif, Islamabad. The shrine of Golra Sharif would contain the case study of pir Mehr Ali shah and its place and their relation with their muridain. Shrines cover the social, economic and also the political life of people because society considers the pirs and their shrines sacred and holy places. Shrines also consider the complex institution because they have their internal organization and system carrying out various functions within it. When individual came here they are trained for their specific roles and duties regarding the pir and their shrine and they have some kind of experiential religiosity which make them the true believer of their religion. Though the shrine have a huge circle of muridain because of social relation with each other (pir and murid) and this relation became stronger with some kind of exchanges the research observe there. This section consists of murids and their pir's view and at this data analysis stage reviewing and cleaning of data has been done to ensure the coherence and suitability of the situation. In the following themes, the finding is described.



Figure 8. Source, Field work

In this picture captured by the researcher during field work, the lady came in the house of pir sahib with many gift bags and followers for the family of pir sahib.



The researcher observes her and asked about her from my key informant. She tells the researcher that many people came here with many gifts because they think that because of oir sahib they can achieve their goals so in return they bring gifts with their happiness.

## **5.1 Exchanges**

All the activities being carried out to promote the cooperation and mutualism between patron (pirs) and client (murids) fall under the categories of material services and exchange. Material exchange lies in give and take of material things in social life like, money, food, clothes and many things which are basic need for human survival. In present research, it means religious and emotional support, negotiation and consultation on certain issues and some additional services especially financial and public relation (PR) benefits. Respondents explained their point of view about their pirs and share their thoughts about their material services and exchange between them. Interestingly all the respondents were of the view that material and immaterial services and exchange is the basic necessity to manage their faithful relation stronger.

## **5.2 Clients (muridain's) perception**

According to one respondent, there lies a material exchange between them (she and her pir) and she recalled further in a friendly manner about an incident:

She says that:

*“Assi apni khushi naal Andy aan deg charha ditti kaddy pir sain di darbar ich nazrana ditta, is de badly assi duwawaan lende, pir sain de dart u saanu bahu kujh mil janda c”*

This is not necessarily but if anyone wants for their happiness. As she said that they donate money or something else just for their happiness and sometime their pir give them money food or other things in some special occasions. They are mentally, spiritually and emotionally attached with their patrons (pirs) and for them they can do every possible things.

She further added that:

*“Assi door konu Andy aan pir sain de panah gah Langer saanu mil janda koi v kam hoye assi ithaan panah lene aan assi pir sain de khaas murid bannan chahne aan”*

As she said that they came from far places and these people are the guests of pir sahib. They also exchange some favors for pir sahib like they donate degs and also became sweepers of the shrine and consider this act as an honor for their selves. These little acts of exchange make their relation stronger. These exchanges in the shrine people made for their own satisfaction because they mentally attached with their belief systems in the matter of religion.

Another respondent shares that:

*“The relation between us is obviously based on some kind of material or immaterial things but mostly we donate for them as their personal murids and they will remember us in their special prayers”.*

Exchange lies in many kind of things in society because humans are social animals and they dependent on each other for their basic needs. For this reason they exchanges some favors with each other for their survival in the society. In every society religion remain dominant on humans because religion is the main thing they believe in for their satisfaction. They are the people who need special prayers, attention and other social facilities through their religion. They mostly do some exchanges with the people which they have some bonds or interaction. Many other respondents also share their view about the element of exchanges between them.

Another added that:

*“Without some kind of exchange there is no relation”.*

Social relations are the backbone of the society and for them humans have to make some kind of exchanges. When they interact with each other they also exchange some favors for their strong bonding and these exchanges make their relation more reliable. Exchanges lies in many forms like doing social favors, money or emotional exchanges some kind of words they have to exchange with each other. As the respondent says that no relation can exist

without exchange of favors. So in their religious matters the religious believes also dependent on some kind of exchanges which make the relation stronger.

### **5.3 Patrons (pir's) perception**

*‘Hamary muridain bilkul hamary liye ik khas muqaam rakhty hain jab bhi aty hain apni khushi sy darbar k liye zarorat ki chezen laty hain yahan k Langer k liye b kuch muridain intizamat sambhal lety hain’*

According to the current sajjadah nasheen (pir) of golra sharif, they have a huge circle of their follower because of their grandfather's pir mehr Ali shah and pir naseer udin shah gilani. They are the great pirs and religious healers of their time and have inordinate reputation of the shrine Golra sharif. The current pir shared their view on social exchange and said that they have their muridain e khas who came to shrine and give some material things like money, chadar or food items for the shrine and make prayers for themselves. Pir sahib shared that their muridain exchange a lot of favors with their own happiness and our shrine also provide many benefits like food, shelter, taweezat and prayers. So the relation between patron (pir) clients (murid) became stronger with these kind of exchanges. Another pir also added that:

*“Hamari traf sy Golra village k ghareeb logon KO boht kuch diya jata hy balke darbar k Langer khany sy bohut sary log bachy a kr khana khaty hain, logon ka aqeeda unko yahan le k ata hy hum ALLAH k bandon ki khidmat kar saky hain”*

The village of Golra sharif is full of the clients(muridain) of pir sahib in which some people are poor and their only hope is the shrine of Golra sharif because the shrine mostly provide them food and shelter. In exchange they also do a lot of favors like dusting and cleanliness of the shrine and many of people have worked in the shrine for their own happiness.

## 5.4 Dependency

Society is itself dependent on the human's interaction and humans are totally dependent on each other because their interaction is necessary for social life. Many respondents talking about their religious beliefs and says that they are totally dependent on their pir sahib in their religious affairs as well as the other important decisions of their life. They are mostly true believers of pir sahib like in the matter of their health for example for some kind of serious illness, they are going for "DUM" first and then consult from the doctor. Mostly the old muridain of pir sahib totally dependent on the matters of their marriage decisions and birderi conflicts because they discuss their matters with the help of pir sahib and pir sahib have many references of their rich muridain so in their huge circle of muridain they all are totally dependent on each other.

## 5.5 Clients (murid) perception

Othe of the murid share his view on the dependency and says that:

*"We came every month and give a deg to the shrine of pir and receive the blessings of pirs".*

As they said that they visit every month the respective shrine of pir sahib just because they dependent on the blessings and prayers of their pir. People came here for their need because they strictly believes on the shrine of their pirs. They mostly donate degs and some money when they came to the respective shrine. They do these things for their own satisfaction because they consider everything sacred in the shrine. Their level of dependency is very high because their mind made up for these kinds of beliefs by their families and they act like their forefathers. Another respondent also share her view about dependency in their relation with pir sahib and says that:

*"Sada pir sain de wakh guzara nae, Mari bahu ithau dam kraandi a us nuu olaad hoi hy us da bacha v ithau dam karaa janada a, saadi har marz da ilaaj is dart u ay"*

As the respondent says that they are the true believers of the pir sahib and without visiting shrine they have nothing for their survival. They came here for dam in their normal routine otherwise they consider dum as essential part of their life when they are not well. Even rich people also have many experiences of the religious faith healing when they visit the respective shrine of pir sahib. As the respondent says that they have strong faith in the shrine of Golra from generations. They even came here for their life license which they called dum. They also says that in any kind of illness and problems they consult from pir sahib because they are nothing without visiting the shrine. The followers of pir sahib have many respect and faith for them and they even came in the shrine without shoes and they never show their back to the shrine.

Another respondent also shows that:

*“We are the true believers of pir sahib because our forefathers are totally dependent on their prayers and blessings, so we are also dependent on their duaa’s for every important matter of our life like marriage decisions, illness, job affairs or many other problems of life.”*

As the respondent shares that they follow the shrine of Golra from many years and generation to generation because in Muslim country people are totally dependent on their religion and they are true believers of their religion Islam. They have to strictly follow the rules of Islam and for this purpose they have to visit the holy shrines because they believe that shrine is the place where they ask for their needs and duas. They also believe in the pir of the shrine as they think that pir sahib is the Wasilla for their every need and dua. They also said that they are also dependent on their pirs in the matters of their decisions about marriages. For example mostly the syed families consult pir sahib for the proposal for their daughter because pir have many links with other religious people so in the matter of proposal pir and the reference of shrine play vital role for marriage decisions.

Another respondent added that:

*“Pirs are our spiritual doctor. They are our real life angels and ALLAH sent them for our guidance”.*

As the respondent shows their dependency on pir sahib and the shrine of Golra and says that they are the spiritual doctors for the people who visit their sacred shrine. They came there for their religious beliefs about illness healings and their many other social problems. According to the respondent pirs are the kind of angels which ALLAH sent them for humans and their guidance especially for their religious matters. Humans have many problems and diseases in their life which they either discuss with the doctor or with some spiritual healers because mostly people have issues like black magic and these kind of illnesses which they consulted from the pirs and shrines. Mostly people of Pakistan have believes in the evil eye, magic and many other social problems like “sayaa” and “jinnat” and then they consult from the religious healers for their satisfaction and need. They show their dependency on pirs by monthly or weekly visits to the shrines of their respective pirs where they have to perform some rituals and duties related to their faith system. Pirs have huge circles of muridain and they also have political references of rich people and sometimes they help the needy people for their practical and social life. Political or social references also play a role for the dependency of muridain especially for poor because they are totally dependent on their pir sahib in many situations like joblessness, dowry for their daughters, illness, duas, and the solution of social disputes or land disputes.



## **5.6 Patron (pirs) perception**

One of the patron said that:

“Muridain yahan mannat mang kr jaty hain bohot sari mnnaten inki pori hoti hai to wo phir hazri deny ajaty hain”

According to the statement of pir sahib people are totally dependent on the shrine because of their religious needs and prayers. Most of them believes on “mannot” (a special dua)

they made for something special through their religious faith. For this purpose they have to visit the shrine and especially when the mannat became successful, they give deg and some money to the shrine for the sake of ALLAH. They both actually dependent on each other in some manners like the reputation of shrine increase because of the faith and trust of muridain of pir sahib and muridain also need guidance and help in their social and religious issues.

### **5.7 Social role**

Social roles are basically the parts where every individual plays his own role as a member of the society. Society provided different roles and duties according to the situation and when it comes to religion, religion basically itself a dominant on person and their culture. In Islamic society, people have different sects, belief systems as well as have different pirs for the religious guidance. For them pirs are sacred as they are the spiritual leaders and have close relation with God. As we know who they strictly follow the shrines and pirs they have to visit the shrines with their own happiness and there have some social roles and duties which they have to perform. Many respondents shared about their social roles in the matter of religion.

### **5.8 Clients (murid) perception**

One of our respondent said that:

*Assi darbar Andy aa wal apni khushi nal darbaar te jhaaru laendy, is nu saaf rakh k dil wadda hojandaa te rab v raazi lagda”*

As the respondent said that they have to do some duties with their own happiness like for them shrine is the only place where they have to make mannat and seek help from the pir. They act like a pure client (murid) of pir sahib because they have to make some dusting and cleanliness of the shrine and they think that this act will be the reason to make their God pleased. As the researcher observe the environment of the shrine, all the people came there have their own unique perspective about the roles and duties of the shrine. They not

only make dusting but they have to enter in the shrine without shoes and they never show their back to the pir and shrine.

Another respondent added that:

*It is the part of our duty to make the place beautiful and clean where we have to make duas and prayers, so we do many things like donate some money to the renovation of the shrine”*

Shrine of Golra is one of the famous shrine where people came from far cities and even they spent a lot of money when they came from another cities. According to the respondents with the strong background and are special muridain of pir sahib. They make many favors for the renovation of the shrine with the permission of pir sahib. They think that the shrine of Golra is the responsibility of the people who came there so they must have to make the place beautiful and safe for the generation. Many clients of pir sahib having the political background they spent a lot of money to the small to the big renovation and give new quraan e pak to the shrine in their every visit. They consider pir as their spiritual leader and have to discuss their social, religious and private issues with their pir.

One respondent shared that:

*We have to do some special duties when we came to the sacred shrine like we give deg to the shrine for the sake of ALLAH, mostly we do this when we make some special “mannat” or dua.*

The researcher observe many things in the shrine like people, their needs, prayers, behavior, their illness, cures, maanat and duas, their donations, degs, langers and many other things which make the reputation of shrine more stronger. The interaction of people with each other will provide more energy to the faith system of people because they discuss their experiences with each other and through the observation the researcher can say that they are so emotional about their beliefs on the pir sahib, even the powerful people have enter with bare foots here just because of their respect and religious faith on the shrine. The respondents says that they have many social roles related to the shrine and giving a deg is also a big social role, though they give a deg for their religious beliefs and especially when



they are happy because of the fullness of their mannat but socially deg is the happiness of the poor society of the village of Golra Sharif.

Another respondent said that:

*We donate some money of clothes to the poor workers of shrine with permission of pir sahib. In time of URS we donate some extra money, new clothes, and many other favors for the shrine.*

According to many respondents they make favors for the shrine with their own happiness and they think that these favors are mentally suitable for their piece and satisfaction about their religious matters. Some clients says that they donate new clothes for the workers of Golra in the time of URS. When they perform their social role they ask to pir for this. There are also some role for the workers of the shrine which they have to fulfil on the basis of daily activities but the muridain do it for their religious powers. Religion is a dominant thing for human being and they have their own beliefs perceptions and behavior, so the observations of the researcher predict that every day the muridain of Golra sharif have to perform their duties and some important rituals when they came into the shrine.

### **5.9 Patron (pir's) perception**

Pir of Golra sharif shared about the social roles and duties and said that:

*“It is our duty to satisfy our muridain and guide them in their religious matters because our shrine is the place where people came together to became close to their God”.*

According to pir sahib the day begins with the call of Muazzin in the morning and people came here with Wazo (Abolution) and recite the holy Quran because shrine is the place where people came together for the closeness of their religion and the God. They have some confusions, social issues regarding their religious matters and they seek help from their pirs because some people take “baiyat” from the pir and without permission of the pir they cannot do anything. Pir sahib also added that:

*“We also treat passengers like our guests and take them to the “serai” because in which mostly are poor who came from far cities. The social functions of the shrines carried out by the group of people who are part of the shrine and are controlled by the living pir”*

As the statement of the pir sahib shows that pir sahib acts as the chief executive of the shrine and every function and duties of the shrine are in control of pir sahib. People came from far cities just because they have strong faith in their pir and it is the duty of the “mujawar” of the shrine to take them to the “serai” and provide them facilities. In the time of URS and religious festivals in the shrine, the whole village of Golra Sharif came there and participated in the religious activities. Some of them are the daily wage labourers who came there with families and benefited with other muridain because in the time of religious festivals of the shrine people came from other cities and donated many things like food items, clothes and money for poor people of the shrine and village. Political people take a big part in these duties and with the permission of pir sahib they do many things like renovation, cleaning and increasing the facilities of “serai” and renovation of Langer for the reputation of the shrine.

## **5.10 Spirituality**

Spirituality is actually about the belief that something more to being humans and there is something superior to one’s self. In religious matters spirituality means relationship with superior being such as religious healers, pirs and walli ullahs. Religion is one of the important thing in human’s life and is dominant one on humans because they have some special faiths about their whole life and the matters of death. There are many religious beliefs which include rituals and practices like prayer and meditation and also there are religious healers, wisdom keepers, shamans, pirs which are humans consider their spiritual or religious guider. Human’s spirituality actually composed of three features like relation with each other, their purpose of life and values they give to their religion. However the spiritual system of shrine of Golra sharif is based on dufi order of Islam where people believed on reality of Islam and have to choose the right path.

### 5.11 Clients (Muridian's) perception)

Many respondents of Golra talked about the belief of spirituality and says that:

*“Pir sahib sy itna gehra rishta hai keh shadi sy le kar bacha peda karne ki dates pir sahib sy poch kr Tay ki jati hai kion k pir sahib sy khandani taluq hai jis trah doctor hota h isi trah pir sahib KO ham rohani doctor keh saky hain”*

Many respondents talked about their spiritual relation with the pir of Golra sharif and one of the respondents says that pirs are just like a doctor, actually a spiritual doctor for those who have belief on them because pir give them peace through the sacred prayers and sometimes giving them a “dam wala pani”(sacred water). They have the huge circle of these types of muridain who even fix the marriage with the decision of their pir sahib because some families ask to pir sahib for the right proposal for their son or daughters and then with the duas and permission of their pir they are ready for the event. Another respondent says that:

*“Jb meri beti beemar hoi who kai bar achanak behosh hojati thi doctors k ilaj k bawajood b WO thek Na hoi tab pir sahib hi thy jinki waja sy uski jan bach gai, usko pir sahib k pas jab b le jaty hain sath ik kala bakra dena hota hy us sy meri beti thek hojati hy”*

Another belief on pir sahib is about some kind of illness or mental disturbance which believed that only a religious healer can heal these kind of problems. For example some people think that they mistakenly came to the shadow of tree in the time of night and they are effected with some type of illness which can only deal through religious and sacred things. Our respondent is also talked about her daughter and her illness as she gone through these kind of illness and when they visit the shrine of their pir and make some prayers, giving a “kala bakra” for the shrine then the girl will be alright. So the faiths of the people became stronger when these type of thing are happened then they only approach for the shrine which they have faith of believes.

One respondent added that:

*“Hamary abao ajdad k zamany sy b log yahan a ker dua b karty thy aur mannat b detay thay kion ke pir sahib sy hmara rohaniyat ka taluq bana howa hai, inko waseela bana kar koi b dua radd nahi hoti balke rohani sakoon milta hy aur yakeeen barh jata hy k dair sy sahi lekin dua poori hojaygi”*

So the respondent talked about spiritual beliefs in their life and shared that their forefathers are also the muridain of the respective shrine of Golra sharif. They says that their experiences through generations make them the true believers of the pir sahib.

### **5.12 Patron (pir’s) perception**

Pir (Patron) is actually is a sacred person who found the right path of Islam through many stages like self-motivation, mediation, continuous prayers and do things only for the God and the will of God. People called him pir sain or Murshid because pir became a religious guider and spiritual leader for them. The researcher also have some conversation with the living pir of Golra Sharif and found that:

*“Log hamary hath par baiyyat hi islye karty hain kion k who rohani sakoon chahty hain unka aqeeda sacha hota hy toh muraad b hasil ho jati hy, jb WO khud KO rabb k hukam k hawaly karty hain to rohaniyat ka Safar shroo hojata hy”*

As the pir (Patron) stated that spiritual guidance is came from the complete faith on their religious matters and the place where the muridain (followers) came for their internal peace. Spiritual guidance is actually a name of “baiyat” it means oath taking on someone’s hand and promised that following all the things he dictates. It is some kind of symbolic way of accepting the spiritual powers of their pir because pir treated them their special guests. The muridain of pir sahib is also the special people in the society and people called them “Pir bhai” because they served for the Golra Sharif. So the research can analyze that pir through the application of his spiritual powers would see the future of his followers and can tell them that they are protected from the influences of evils and illnesses. Spirituality

is the great power that pirs have to influence their muridain through their long prayers, mediation and also their social status. Social status of shrine also help pir to make huge numbers of muridain and treated them to their own way and murid have to completely submit their selves to the orders of pir sahib.

### **5.13 Theoretical discourse and analysis**

To conclude the chapter the researcher can analyze that mostly clients (muridain) have positive responses about their patrons (pir) and social relations and material exchanges with them. The shrine also arrange a number of personal services to their followers like mostly the people of village Golra often seek advice on their personal life issues, illness, unemployment, business loss, job requirements, disputes, marital issues and many more problems with their respective pir and they have to settle down their issues and provide them services. In Pakistan, there are many small shrines and they have a number of followers in different cities, in which some shrines are famous for curing specific diseases, some have social reputation for prayers.

The theory of social exchange supports the findings of my research because the same exchange was prevailing in the religious system of shrines which homans depicted in the theory. According to the theory most, if not all, ties between two people in the human resource network will be asymmetrical and based on patron/client roles. When two members of a human resource network are almost equal, the function of the patron should not be fixed, but rather based on who is in need at the time. When one person demands the patronage of another on a regular basis, the roles of patron and client may become more set. The argument is that when people meet in Pakistan, they're looking to establish a specific form of patron/client relationship since it's the most stable and predictable, with the most defined expectations and obligations. In this relationship, gaining authority is not a simple task. There are several phenomena that can be observed.

The majority of respondents stated that they not only do different types of material services and exchanges, such as easing each other (Pir and murid), but they also create expectations from one another. The majority of expectations expressed by respondents were for unasked

extra assistance for any function at the shrine of their Patron (Pir). The muridain too, hope that their companies will support them back by giving benefits like access to organizations for job, assisting them in times of crisis, or granting them other religious favors at least when they need it.

The shrine of Golra Sharif has its own reputation and status in the capital city of Pakistan because pir Mehr Ali shah mostly people called them (babujee) have their own power and status about religious activities regarding their followers and shrine. The current pirs of Golra sharif are the grandson of (babujee) pir Mehr Ali shah and the son of Pir Nasir Uddin shah gilani, they also have a huge circle of followers.

They have not only historical connection with followers but are cooperative and exchangeable, dependable and spiritual relation with them which make them honorable person in the society. The researcher analyze the fact that in the current era people are more dependent to the system of shrines and pirs, like clients (muridain) of patron (pir) thinks that their all religious issues and problems are now can handle with the help of pir through his prayers because their sacred pir is possessed of spiritual powers and only the pir can cure their family, increase their business and not only for human but including their animal from serious sickness and can protect their crops. They made social and material exchanges with their pir because of this purpose to become the “Muridain e khaas” of pir sahib.

The pir and shrine also need this exchange of favors because they need more followers who can advise others to visit the respective shrine because the shrine of pir has a special reputation in the society which make them unique. There are many elements of dependency that can be observed in the village of Golra, because the poor people of the village are totally dependent on the shrine of pir sahib and the “langer” of the shrine. Mostly the needy people worked in the shrine and their family members lived in the house of pir sahib and served the family of pir sahib. They both are dependent on each other because pir also need a lot of muridain for their reputation and name of shrine for their social status.

## Chapter 6

### Indebtedness in the system of shrine

Indebtedness refers to the feeling of owing gratitude for a service or favor. This is one of the most vital parts of the patron-client relationship which is developed and maintained on mutual efforts. Both of the parties help each other in time of need which leads to develop a sense of indebtedness between them. However, owing to more disparity of resources at clients' (murid) side, clients are always looking for some help towards their patron (pir). This is how the tie between these two strengthens. Finding their pirs helping them in the time of need develops a sense of indebtedness in murids which in turn pays back to the pirs in the form of more sincere and extra services. Interestingly, most of the cases were found similar in nature. All the respondents were of the view that in the time of need it becomes their responsibility to facilitate their followers and the more the follower remains indebted the more they perform well for the respective pir. However, when it comes to the system of shrines of Golra Sharif which is one of the best places for religious activities and also the home of poor and needy people. They came here for their personal life issues and seek help from their pir which makes the feeling of indebtedness for their pir sahib.

#### 6.1 Clients (murids) perspective

Many respondents talked about their social relation with respective pir of the Golra sharif which they show the great understand about their social or religious bond with them.



Figure 9. Source, Field Work

### **6.1.1 Case study**

This case study is about the murid of the golra sharif in which he shared the feeling of indebtedness for their pir sahib. His name is baba rehmat, He lived in the village Golra and worked for 10 years for pir sahib. As they visit the shrine frequently and have a great faith and experiences on the place. This case study is described here in the form of narration.

I am the worker of Pir Naseeruddin Gilani's sons for 10 years, I am also a true believer of their shrine. They take care of my whole family because we belong to a poor family. My family members, especially my daughters, helped in the house of pir jee.

They treated us like their family members and in every festival or Eid event they give us some money, clothes and some food for the children of my daughters. I am honored to tell you that the great pir jee nizamuddin sain (current pir) also arranged a Hajj and took me to Saudi Arabia to perform the holy hajj with their family. They know very well that I cannot afford the Hajj visa so they make me feel indebted and I am very thankful to them for this act. They planned my whole hajj and treated me like their family and this day makes me feel proud that I am the murid e khas of my pir.

Though the case study narrated the feeling of indebtedness for the follower because the family of pir sahib did a lot of favors for their followers and treated them like their family members. The followers of pir sahib in return give them some extra favors even in their household matters. The women muridain who lived in the house of pir sahib have to do extra favors and work for the old ladies in the family of pir sahib. They have to take care of them like a child. As the case study of baba rehmat depicted the element of indebtedness for their muridain, their relation gets strong through these activities which also enhance their faith on the religious activities because the family of pir sahib known as the guider of religion for the people.

### **6.1.2 Case study**

The second case study is about the lady who stays for 15 years with the wife of pir Nasirudin Gilani (late). She lived in the village of Golra near the house of pir sahib. She narrated herself and says that:



I lived in the respective house of pir sahib and I am much close to “amma ji” the mother of current shahzada sahiban (pirs). Currently amma ji is in England for vacations and giving me the responsibilities of their house. I have to take care of everything, every matter related to her because she was an old lady and a senior member of the family. She has her own ladies muridain (followers) who called them “bibi jee or apaa jee”. I feel honored to be the special murid of the family of pir sahib and also the special person for amma jee. She also takes care of me, my food and clothes. I feel indebted to her because she has solved every financial or social problem regarding my house and my family members. In the time of religious festivals of the respective shrine the family of pir sahib gives us extra money and clothes for our family members. They treat all their workers like family members, especially those who worked in the house of pir sahib.

One month ago, we had some financial problems regarding the elder daughter of my son. She wanted to study further in the university and my son cannot afford her expenses. I discussed the matter with amma ji and she arranged the admission fee for her and she got admission in the university for her further studies. My son also worked for the family of pir sahib and our family feels the element of indebtedness for the whole shrine. My bond with amma ji was so powerful because amma ji trusts me in every matter and shares her conversation about their family matters. There are many other female muridain who take care of the family members and children of pir sahib and they all are special muridain for them. Pir sahib also takes care of their families in matters of marriage and other facilities of their life, because it is the responsibility of pir sahib to treat them like their family members.

This case study also narrated the indebtedness of the muridain of Golra sharif who lived in the house of their respective pir. They all have the feeling of indebtedness for the family of pir sahib because they are mentally connected with them. They think that their families have a strong bond with this Syed family and without them they are nothing. These muridain have to make many efforts to take care and make them happy to the family member of pir sahib because they have the feeling of indebtedness for them. The researcher observed the main thing in the surroundings of Golra sharif is the power of pirs. Many girls in the house of pir sahib are just to serve for the ladies in the house of pir sahib and they call them “bibi sain” or “bibi ji”.

### **6.1.3 Case study**

This case study is about the young boy who was the special murid and mujawar of the shrine and he came there at the age of 17. Now he is 27 years old. During field work, whenever I came there near the durbar of pir mehr Ali shah, he sat there with an old man and they both always sat together with the box of amulets (taweez) and another box of money. When I asked about him he became shy and did not say anything about him. He only says that tell me your problem so I can help you with the amulet. However with time I asked about his duties and he told me his story in the form of narration.

The young boy said that I was from Kashmir and when I was a child I came there with my parents because my parents have strong faith in the shrine of Golra sharif. Suddenly my parents died in a road accident and left us (me and my elder sister) alone. My uncle and aunt took care of us in the starting days but when my sister got married and left me in the house of my uncle then I felt more alone because of some financial problems. I decided to come there and spend my life in this sacred place. The pir sahib knows everything about me and they provide me everything I need. There are many boys who have many stories and they also belong to poor families. We came there and have Quranic knowledge with other senior muridains of pir sahib. I usually sit there with the senior follower of pir sahib and provide the amulet of pir sahib to them. The pir family provides us everything especially in the religious festivals, eid and the Urs of pir sahib. They provide all the things which we need. Whenever I have to go to my village to meet my sister or my family, pir sahib gives us some money, food or many things which my family needs. They treated us like true family members because we live there.

The case study of a young boy clearly depicted the element of indebtedness which he felt for their pir sahib because when he left the house of his uncle. In this hard time pir sahib provides him new life and teaches him religious education that is the reason he became the true believer of pir sahib.

In this chapter mostly the element of indebtedness found from the side of muridains of Golra sharif because of their intimate trust, personal relations and other favors. When the researcher asked from the wife of pir sahib about the element of indebtedness she said that:

*“Our muridains are like a family for us because most of them spend their whole life here and serve us every time whenever we need them”.*

She also added that:

*“In our house there are many old women’s lived here who came here in their childhood and even after their marriages they lived here. For example some are widow, divorced. So they spent their life for serving us and treated us their family”.*

The researcher also observe the patron-client relation in the house of pir sahib and build a rapport with the wife of pir shams Uddin sahib. She was also from Multan and shared her experiences about the relation with their muridain. There are many girls in different ages who also serve in the house and they lived here with their own happiness. “Bibi ji” the wife of pir sahib also discuss about their bonding with their old female muridain who lived there for 10, 15, and 8 years and served the family of pirs.

#### **6.1.4 Case study**

This case study about the “nasim bibi” who is the special murid and servant in the house of pir sahib because she was paralyzed. The wife of pir sahib narrate the story of her and said that:

Nasim bibi was the regular follower of Golra sharif and she permanently came here when her husband divorced her just because she is paralyzed and ill. Her parents cannot afford her expenses because they are poor and have a small house. She also has a kid who lives in the house of her ex-husband because he had taken the child from her and divorced her. When she came to the “baab e Mehr ” (the house of pir), she said that she wanted to spend her life in this house and served the respected family of pir. Now she is our responsibility and she lives happily with us because we have to take care of her health and other expenses. She is the brave lady and in charge of the girls. She even takes care of other young murid girls like elder sister and cooks food for them. All the girls call her Nasim baji and respect her because she is the senior member of our muridain who has lived here since 16 years. She helps us in every religious or other festival and prepares some sweets and other food for distribution for “NIAZ”.

The case study that the wife of pir sahib discusses here is about the paralyzed lady who lived in the house of pir and served them. They both facilitate each other in different ways and have some kind of indebtedness for each other.

## **6.2 Theoretical discourse and analysis**

The theoretical discourse clearly fits into my findings of research because the relation of piri muridi is all about social exchange which maintains through the element of indebtedness between them. The social exchange theory gives better understanding of social relations and provides the most powerful understanding of workplace behavior. It is based on mutual obligations of the people of society. Though different views of social exchange, theorists agree that social exchange involves a series of interactions that make obligations (Emerson, 1967). During the research, I found and analyzed the element of indebtedness in both sides through different phases in their life. Golra Sharif is the big organization where people come from far away areas just to see their patron (pir) and they think that they can get rid of all their problems by kissing the hand of pir. The native people of Golra Sharif are the best example of indebtedness which I observe here because they think that all of their facilities they have is just because they are neighbours of pir's family. They both exchange their emotions, belief systems through religious activities. Pir wants their true followers for the reputation of the shrine and murids are the needy people who think that without pir and their duas they cannot achieve anything in their life.

The theory of social exchange supports the findings of the study because symbols of indebtedness between patron and their client become more prominent when their relations grow close. This happens when highlighting religious and social responsibility rather than contractual duty, this primary affiliation with each other contributes to the validity of the relationship and meliorates the patron's stats and security (Nayak et al. 1983). Majority of respondents think that Pirs are their spiritual doctor and they show indebtedness towards their Pir because most of them were less privileged and poor and their only hope are these shrines and Pir sahib. When compared to murids, who are believers, pirs have more authority, position, and power. Because of their experiential religiosity, they have a strong

belief in their pirs and give services out of respect. The relationship between pir and murid is said to be founded on loyalty, respect, trust, and social exchange. Because pirs have power and murids believe in their every word, pirs are influencers and murids are influential people.

According to Strauss (1949) social exchange is defined as a controlled system of behavior in the setting of society so, one can say that social exchange theory is about the interaction of individuals because no one can survive alone in this society. People are interdependent for many ways in their social life. Also, Social exchange theory depicted that, in society individuals adopt and create some ways and strategies which are aimed at getting the favor of someone and also human learns what they observe is beneficial for them and this theory explains that the basic objective of human interaction is the maximization of their interests and people know about the social, economic aspect of interaction then they are able to select the best and possible situations. In the religious matters people are more conscious about their belief system, their internal problems, health, and many other matters which they required help from the respectful and powerful person of the society and those people who considered to the special persons of the GOD. People need them and their powers so they both create their relation for their needs. The researcher found the element of indebtedness in all the murids especially those female murids who lives in the house of pir and serve them.

Blau discussed the social exchange theory and uses more financial matters terms and it depends on creating social design in friendly exchange designs in little gatherings and he added to recognizing social and monetary trades and exchange and power. Blau's center invigorated the scholar to look ahead, as in what they expected the award would be concerning their next friendly association. Anyway he felt that assuming people zeroed in a lot on the mental ideas inside the theory, they would cease from learning the creating parts of social exchange. As the theory depicts the clear relation of exchange between them, similarly I found many exchanges here in the locality of golra sharif because of the element of indebtedness between them. However, the strong faith system of the Muridain created

the element of indebtedness towards their Pirs when they came into the shrine they always came with some gifts and money or something else for the respective shrine.

The theory of social exchange supports the findings in the way that there are not only one exchange but many exchanges like the exchange of behavior, exchange of emotions, exchange of religious matters duas, and exchange of actions between pir and their murids. They both do these social exchanges for their needs of survival which creates the elements of indebtedness between them which make their bonding stronger. Though pirs are the powerful personality of that area and religion is also the dominant element of the society so all the people of Golra feel indebtedness towards their pir.

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## Chapter 7

### Benefits to less privileged murids from pirs

#### 7.1 Spiritual help

The success of many pirs is cultivating human resource networks is as important for pirs as it is for heads of households, employers, landlords or politicians. One's charisma plays a part in how one might be able to influence certain segments of a human resource network but the most important variable is one's situation within different human resource networks. Subsuming individuals within categories tends to minimize the impact of personal charisma in any event. Pirs bring together a range of individuals who are from different qaum, caste, biraderi, economic status and social status. Successful pirs are successful favor brokers. Landlords and politicians claim their status from very material sources, while pirs claim a more metaphysical source. Both however, must engage in the same strategies of patronage to consolidate their claim and to enhance their position.

During the research I saw that Meeting pirs. They are never entirely alone. There were almost always be someone within earshot. Typically during an important event they were be in a room filled with men sitting around. When people meet a pir they bow low in respect. They did not expose their backside or the soles of their feet to a pir. They do not address a pir by name, but rather some honorific title. When leaving the presence of a pir one does so by backing out of his presence. On numerous occasions when meeting both pirs and landlords, I have entered the room while the pir or landlord is receiving a leg massage. They recline on pillows while another man presses his hands into the leg muscles. The massage seems either to involve precise pressure applied with the finger tips or an unusual, full handed squeezing technique which looks (and feels) very imprecise and crude. My opinions on Punjab massage are most certainly irrelevant, since these kinds of painful leg massages are more than just a remedy to muscular pain, but also an expression of obedience and devotion. A pir's murid might all be pleased at the opportunity to press their pir's legs. I have been told that kissing a pir's feet is a common action, though the pirs I was fortunate enough to meet did not seem to allow this behavior.

The ability to control people may be either positive or negative that is, having the power either to make another person do something or to prevent another person from doing something they might have done. Power implies control of both material as well as cultural resources. Pirs are also embedded in our culture and they are also the main part of the religion according to the respondents. They have also the power and mold the mentality of people according to their need. They need more murids to maintain their power on people's mind. Power need not be coercive, though it may be. Furthermore, it need not be perceived by the effected person as being an imposition, though again, it may be. The mechanics of establishing power vary in different instances and according to the starting position of an individual or group.

The measure of power, on the other hand, may be more uniform. If power is the ability to effect the environment, including people, then one can measure the occurrence of such instances and compare it with instances when attempts to effect some change have failed. In this way, one may arrive at a relative measure of an individual's power. It may therefore be easier to begin with an evaluation of the degrees of power of different individuals and groups before dismantling the processes of attaining that level of power. In my findings pirs maintain their power in softly like help by people in the times of the needs. They implicitly apply their power. And did not forcing the people. They impress the people by their help. When the times of needs they help the people then people believe on them and start the Muridi. Their relationship is like the social exchange. This exchange is form of money material things and use links to one person to another.

Mostly respondents (murids) said that they gain mental satisfaction and them far away from their problems. Because their Pirs are the source satisfaction from their duas they said that:

*“Hmary peers Allah sy hamary leye dua krty hain hum to gunahgar hain Allah hmari kahan sunen gy ye peer naik hain ye Allah sy hmary gunaho ke mafi ke sefairsh karty hain is leye humen jb koi masla hota hai hm inhe sy apni dua kraty hain”.*



These sentences have clear explanation that how their lives depend on the pirs. When I was conducting the fieldwork murids also said that their pirs are not only the source of mental satisfaction but they also help them in education of their children, health support, gave food, dispute problems jobs and another many problems to use links to one mured to another mured. I am explaining bellow about that how peers use the links of murds for the help of another mured. Murid explain bellow that how the murid of peers help us. According to the findings the relationship in between peri and murdi is like the Patron client. Patron is powerful and have ability to control client and client is depend on the patron. But patron have need to implement his power on client. And client have also need patron to fulfil their need. Some writers have deliberately opted to focus on the role of client (Ayata, 1984; 1994; Mahmood 1987 Roniger and Ayata 1994).

To some degree this is basically substituting the word clientele for patronage and includes discussion of the role of patron. Despite inclusion of the role of patron, there is little consideration for the multiplicity of role behaviors the individuals may assume. Shrines are embedded, not just in the local welfare economy, but are also sometimes part of extractive institutions. Aided by superstition, ill-health and economic deprivation many shrine subjects are tied in a vicious cycle of dependence. Darling (1928) said that numerous accounts of this can be found in Speaking of the well-known connection between shrines and health, Darling notes that “superstitions are rife and the evil eye is universally dreaded. Since medicine has no power over the latter, medical aid is little sought, and those who are ill prefer to pay their hereditary pir large sums in order to invoke his supernatural powers”. Being more prone to superstition and illiteracy, women are particularly attracted to shrines. Given their greater concern for family problems in matters of income, birth and death, women are more drawn to the spiritual support system offered by shrines.

## **7.2 Educational help**

Rukhsana is 41 years old woman who is came in the shrine from last 11 years. She is loyal mured. Rukhsana’s financial condition is very poor and she is working at two different houses to support her family. But she also said that their financial condition is very poor

and she is helpless to fulfil the needs of her family because she is the only person to support their family members her husband has died fifteen years ago due to the addiction of drugs. And she wants to educate her children to make their life better from their education. Regarding the question why she came here in the shrine she said:

*“ because pir is the only source who pray for my problems and give taweez due to these things my many problems have solved that is why came their mostly.”*

I questioned her that how her Pir supports her in her personal life. Rukhsana explained that her Pirs another mured due to the my peer support them like in the way of zakat and sadqa provides her support in every matter such as providing money for her children's education, tuition fee, books, and even buying new school clothes for her children. Furthermore, the peer provided support recommend the another mured to Rukhsana to complete the admission forms of her children to get admission in the schools. She always guides her on these issues as Rukhsana does not know about the official and other processes related to children's education. Rukhsana also told that her elder daughter is studying in 10<sup>th</sup> standard and she needed tuition and guidance for her studies. She asked her peer to provide some tution in academy. The peer recommended his mured Shaista who had her own academy, to provide extra time and support to Rukhsana's daughter in her studies. On her peer's recommendations, Rukhsana contacted Shaista. Shaista had already knowledge about Rukhsana's financial condition. She enrolled Rukhsana's daughter in her academy with less admission fee and monthly tuition fee.

This case indicates that how pir help his loyal mured in every matter of life to use the links of the mured to another mured. Muredi is like a chain to help each other. Peer is source to connect them to each other. This the way for pir to help their mured to help them due to this type of help mured have strong believe on their peers.

### **7.3 Case 1**

Another case also indicates the loyalty of pir and mured. During my interview I sat in the lawn of golra sharef lawn almost daily to observe the activities in the shrine and I observed

one person who is looking poor and at the time when pir meet with the pir. That person observed daily, he just came and kissed the hand of the pir and give some money or many things for nazrana, side of the pir, it is done by every mured. When I participate and observed this activity I observed a person who came daily. I asked him to conduct the interview who is agree. I asked many questions that why he start the muredi He said that:

*“He started muredi from twenty years ago. He said that pir help me in my job twenty years ago. When I was jobless and could not support support my family members. Pir recommended me to another mured he has his own company I started canteen in the office because of my that tuck shop business my family financial condition was better and due to which I educate my two children now they are gain education one is in the medical colleg and another is doing BS information technology. When I started my business I promised to myself that when I start to gain the profit from my business I came daily here and give the 2 percent of my total profit to my peer. So I daily came here and take bosa (kissed the hands) of peers and give nazrana and peer give me dua.”*

This is another most important interview to explain the peer and mured reloyal relationship/ that how they depend on eachother and how they *depend* on eachother. Because peer wants the mured to maintain his peeri of their forefathers. When they help them to mureds to recommend the link to use the reference of peer. Due to which the less privileged mureds maintain his muredi abecasuse when peer help them in the times of too much need.

## **7.4 Case 2**

I randomly interviewed to the persons. They were husband and wife. They were also the loyal murid of the golra pir. He was the mured from 25 years. They said that they was very poor and the man was Anwar he has a burger stall now. They said that they have the only son. He was born due to the duas and taweez of the pir. They wanted to educate their son. Her son had some queries in some subjects. But they don't know which academy was suitable for Mossa (son of Anwar) they discuss with their Pir's Murid which is

recommended by the pir his name was Faisal. Faisal told them about an academy but he said that the fee of that academy per subject was high. He told to them that he will talk with the owner of that academy because he has some links with the owner of that academy. He gave the address of that academy to Anwar.

Anwar went with her son to that academy. They met with the owner of that academy. Academy's owner name was Umar. Umar asked from Mossa about his previous results. Due to his good marks, Umar gave the scholarship to Mossa and his fee was now 50% off. Now Mossa studied there after his college timing.

This situation indicates that Pir in return help her mureds to use the reference in the public's education sector by their references. The relationships of peer and to murid to another mured expanded tremendously in the 1960's. According to Roniger (1994) this was a reaction 'against evolutionary assumptions regarding the allegedly generalized move toward Western liberal forms of political development and bureaucratic universalism. Part of the dilemma for anthropologists was how to accommodate the ubiquitous presence of patronal relations in societies which were apparently moving towards more modern capitalist institutional structures. 'Friendship' are employed between patrons and clients this should be understood as 'instrumental' friendship rather than 'emotional' friendship, following Wolf's (1977) distinction between the two.

Likewise, where idioms of kinship are employed, this should be understood as providing the 'language of patronage' rather than offering an explanatory device fourth, patron and client roles are hierarchical. Thus Boissevain (1966) suggests, extending Kenny's argument, that there are only two basic roles in a system of patronage: patron/client and client/patron. The client/client role is ruled out by Kenny (1960), who argues that as soon as one client offers another a service he ceases to be a client. Boissevain (1966) applies the same logic to the patron/ patron role, noting that it too is a 'logical impossibility'.

## **7.5 Health support**

During my research my respondent Rani. She is a murid of her pir from seven years. He said that when she was pregnant from the duas and dam of the pirs. But she was poor and shifted in the city recently she needs a medical certificate of the government hospital. Rani replied that when she was shifted in Islamabad. Her husband already worked in this city last 10 years before. When she shifted in servant quarter provided by her husband employer. At the time of shifting she was pregnant. When she went to the hospital of Islamabad for the case of her baby delivery. The hospital management said to her that she need to made a certificate for the delivery and otherwise refused to deliver her baby because of hospital and governmental rules. She was worried about it because she could not go back to her home town in pregnancy condition because her home town was in Baluchistan and she could not travel in this situation.

The procedure for making that certificate was very difficult. Then she told about the entire situation to her pir. Pir recommended another mured to her His name was Sajjad. Sajjad understood that entire situation. Then he told to Rani that he will arrange that certificate for her. After two days he said to Rani that she has to go in that hospital and met with Mr.Sikandar. Sikandar was a doctor in that hospital when she went to that hospital. Sikandar told to hospital employees about Rani. After few hours Sikandar made that certificate of Rani. Then told to her to follow few steps. Those steps were few test of baby's health condition. She properly checked by the hospital like ultrasound and few steps to checked the condition of baby and Rani. All tests are positive and the doctor gave her the date of delivery and told her to come back on the mentioned delivery date. This case study indicated that hhow peers help their mured too much. They help them spiritually and also help them to recommend and said to their mureds to use the peer's reference for the access in the public institution.

## **7.6 Case 3**

During my interview a person who is sit in lawn of the shrine and waited for the pir. When I sit near him and told about my research he is ready to give the answers of my some

question. When I started my interview I observed that old man attiq's right eye was reddish and watery then I asked from him about his eye.

He said *that*

*This is the reason I came here and waiting for the pir because I want to take duas from my pir. My pir is the only source of duas for me and he also recommend to the doctor for my checkup of eyes. He recommended to the person she has his own eyes clinic because he is a specialist the doctor recommended me an eye operation of my eye. He operate and cure my diseases in free of cost. Because I am a poor man my son also didn't support me financially. I am a lonely now my pir is everything for me. I here almost daily and all time and perform ibadat and took food from the shrine. I work and clean the shrine because I have nothing to give the nazrana my services are the only things to give the nazrna ato my peer and the shrine*

## **7.7 Basic necessities**

In present research my respondent Akhtar. He lived near the Shrine. His age was 39 years. He had a jewelry stall. According to my question, he said that:

*I came from many years in the shrine and pper is really know about me and about my poor condition. And during ramzan or for sadqa purpose peer sahab recommend to their well off mureds to give me zakat or sadqa. Theeri mureds give me material things and support me. Akhtar also said that he did not pay the fee of his children his children are studying. And support him in grocery, clothes and in other material support. This case indicates that the mureds develops the trust of his peers by her loyalty and his punctuality to give the nazrana and came in the shrine.*

Since times immemorial shrines have played an important role in the religious culture and political economy of Punjab. The great Sufi mystics from Baba Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar of Pakpattan and Shaikh Bahawal Haq Zakariyya of Multan to Sayyid Jalaluddin Bokhari of Uch have dominated the popular imaginary of Punjab. Sufi saints served as important

conduits of religious transmission. As Gilmartin notes, “many rural Punjabi tribes have traced their conversion [to Islam] to these medieval saints”<sup>7</sup>. The physically imposing shrines dotted along Punjab are not only architectural masterpieces but also shape the lived reality of citizens. The tombs of saints are revered for their inclusive approach and social services. People from all walks of life, irrespective of caste, creed or religion, regularly pay their homage to these holy sites. For the seeker the shrine provides not just a sight of spiritual devotion but also a temporary refuge from a precarious existence. It provides food to the poor, house to the homeless and traveler, medicine to the ill, and solace to the depressed.

## **7.8 Settlements between groups**

Regarding the question to murid that how pir supports him in his personal life, respondent explained that her pir provides him support at that time when his brother was in the problem to recommend me his powerful murids link. He told me that his brother Jamil wanted to shift his snake’s shop from Trimarchi to Faizabad. But in Faizabad every month the briber take money from every tuck shopkeeper. But my brother refused to give money to that bribers. The bribers threat to Jamil that they will break his shop. My respondent said that he reported that situation to his pir. Pir recommended to his murid who was a police officer in that area. His name was Saad. Saad replied to my respondent that he will sort out that matter. And now police were highly elected in that area. And now briber had not come again. Another respondent also talked about the disputes’ settlement between the groups of two families in the locality of Golra sharif. He said that:

Sabir and shafiq is the cousin brothers from Abbasi family who own their cattle’s and one of them (sabir) open’s a dairy shop. Shafiq is younger brother who got angry with the decision of his brother and demand a money or some cattle for his part. Sabir refuses and said that you should worked with me in the shop. They both disagree with each other’s decision and start abusing their families with different things. Their elder family member who was the muridain of pir sahib, they tok the matter to the pir sahib and request him to settle down their matter because in the locality of Golra sharif every decision is made by

the willingness of pir sahib. Then pir sahib order them to solve their problem right here in the shrine of pir sahib and ask shafiq to help his elder brother in the shop. They both agreed with the decision of pir sahib. However, the disputes settlements are only possible in the locality when a powerful person like pir sahiba asked about something and muridain have no authority to refusing the decision of pir sahib.

## **7.9 Help to public organizations or labor services**

Regarding the question to my respondent khurshed. He told me that his pir helps her in the job of his son. I am a poor and I could not do the labor work. My son wanted to start a job but I need some reference to do the job for my son. I told my situation to the pir. Pir je recommended me to another murid. His name was rehman, he was in the ministry of information technology. He was a supervisor of IT Park's site.

He needed a guard for that site. So, he appointed Khursheda's son Sajid. Sajid done his job 2 years. His job was on contract. When his contract was ended. Then Rehman had ordered to appoint new guard. Rehman wanted to appoint Sajid again. He told to Sajad that he came also an interview again. Sajid came with all another person who they came for that interview. Sajid came in an interview where Rehman was present with another colleague. They take his interview informally from Sajid then appoints Sajid and another guard also. Now Sajid was a permanent employee in that site due to her mother's employers.

According to majority of respondents in the area of Golra, their patrons (pir) help them in the time of need, they came to ask them for the jobs and pir sahib is the only source for poor murids to provide them social and financial support. Though religion is the main source for their interaction and through pir and the shrine people interact with each other. Pirs have powerful followers like other Syed families, political, or army families and they also help their pir to enhance the reputation of shrine.



## 7.10 Case 4

Regarding the question that how pirs give benefits and help access to organizations. Zaheda replies that her husband was involved in drugs and do not work properly. He drove rickshaw in the evening because in the morning he fell asleep. So, I told the matter to the family of pir sahib. And they asked the matter to their powerful murid. He was an army officer. His name was Ihsan he told me about the job. He said Zaheda that her husband could come into his office. When Zaheda's husband came to Ihsan's office. Ihsan offered him as a driver in his office. Zaheda's husband went just for one day but he refused to continue that job and told to Zaheda that he will not go anymore because he could not spoil his rest and could not obey anyone's order. The case indicates that mureed of pir wanted to give his all facilities to the poor mureeds but it is all depend on that poor mured that how they perceive their supports.

All cases above indicates that how people believes are depend on the person who is nothing but he uses their links and fulfil the needs of people. The Islam of the masses in South Asia is syncretic blend of Arabian Islam and Hinduism and its offshoots. There can be no question that ritual and belief among South Asian Muslims is influenced by Hinduism. Within South Asia, however, there are different Islamic traditions and different practices in different regions and among different groups. One could look at the activities of the State Ministry, the Auqaf, responsible for managing religious shrines, or the role of the maulvi in the mosques. One could study the different sects, Shi'a, Sunni, Ismaeli and others to look at the ways that Middle Eastern Islam has been appropriated and syncretized with different beliefs.

Perhaps the best example of patronage and hierarchy in South Asian Islam, however, is the relationship individuals and groups have with Sufi saints, peer. The relationship between a person and his or her peer is arguably far more symbolically and materially powerful than that between people and their maulvi. Pirs manipulate situations and people in ways that reflect landlords, but it is not a direct parallel. Both landlords and pirs establish their credentials through group connections. Both claim some degree of approval from God. Both are seen to be responsible for the wellbeing of their supporters. Landlords do not

require the love of their supporters, while pirs, at least rhetorically, base their relationship on love. The followers of a pir speak lovingly of their holy man and he, in turn, will talk about his love for all of them.

Pirs sit at the center of human resource networks. For some this represents a vast variety of men and women from different socioeconomic groups, qaum and caste groups, and families and so on. Those who claim to have murid in the tens of thousands may be very powerful men indeed. The role which they attempt to project is based on that of ‘perpetual giver’ and not receiver.

The massive langar, or free kitchens and food suppliers, is a manifestation of the pir’s role as a provider. While this can be justified in symbolic terms since the things supplied to the shrine and the langar are not gifts to the pir directly, this is very much an exchange of goods, albeit in a ‘good faith economy’. It is not so much the exchange of goods which characterizes the economy of pirs, however, as the brokering of human resources. The pir is able to capitalize on relationships to resolve problems within his group. Like the men in Qaumism organizations who negotiate relationships from among the members of their qaum, the pir can bring different people together who are able to solve each other’s problems. Some of the acts of a pir are meant to bring individuals the benefit of God’s power. The spiritual healing in the form of talismans or prayers, is a direct intervention on the part of the pir, on behalf of an individual. I have been told that one task pirs or their closest devotees perform, is helping people find work.

The explanation of the solution may be metaphysical, but that does not deny the role of a telephone call to an appropriate devotee who may be in need of an employee. Religion has played a tremendously significant role in the construction of Pakistan as a State and in the development of a sense of national identity. The rhetoric used by the State tries to distance itself from the Islam practised on the ground however. Islam, as practised in both rural and urban areas, is an instantiation of the more basic social roles evidenced throughout the society. Pirs and shrines constitute one of the points of reference for most Muslims. While the Islam of the Quran may invoke equality between men and a direct relation to Allah, the

reality of South Asia, and Pakistan in particular, revolves around inequality and patronage. If one requires intervention for the most basic of activities in the secular world, then the habitus that created that requirement leads one to seek a similar sort of relationship of intervention and protection via third parties in relation to the divine world.

These pir and murids asymmetrical relationships may satisfactorily be labelled patron/client relationships, so long as it is understood that patrons require patrons as well as clients (which is indeed understood and even required which allows patronage only as part of a system). Thus, in general, most people will find themselves in both patron and client roles and assume each with equal ease. I have also argued that there are sanctions imposed for individuals who defy the basic rules of these relationships. This relationship of patron and client, forms the nucleus of a wider network that includes both super-ordinate and subordinate nodes. Within the human resource network most, if not all, relationships between two individuals, will be asymmetrical and based on patron/client roles.

Where two members of a human resource network are almost co-equals, the role of patron should not be static but dependent on who is in contextual or situational need. In cases where one individual repeatedly requests the patronage of another, the roles of patron and client may become more fixed. The point is that when individuals meet in Pakistan, they are seeking to instantiate a particular type of patron/ client relationship because it constitutes the most stable and reliable relationship in which expectations and obligations are the clearest. In this relationship power is not a trivial endeavor. There are phenomena which are observable and centered on conflicts of interest where something called power is clearly identifiable. There are other phenomena which are far more difficult to observe, but which involve expressions of power nonetheless. It would be wrong to insist that power can only be understood through an examination of conflict; yet there are risks in interpreting situations without conflict as expressions of power. Similarly, Colclough (2000), though not denying the validity of patron/client ties when not all such societies should necessarily be analysed as patron/client systems; however, one of the benefits of using such an analysis is that, like other established anthropological analytical strategies,

it renders comparison more feasible (though see below for a discussion of borrowing concepts across geographic and cultural boundaries).

Scott (1972) has written extensively about patron/client networks between peer and mureds. Scott has, in particular, examined mechanisms of resistance available to clients in South East Asia. This resistance is not, he argues, a negation of the patron/client system, at least it does not lead either to clients or patrons rejecting the asymmetrical reciprocity in between both of them, but is rather a tool for the weak to ensure that the powerful continue to maintain their part of the contract. While Wolf does not restrict his analysis to an examination of patronage in those conflicts, including introduces class factors as well, he does rely on the analytical concepts of patronage throughout his discussion.

According to the results some peers also exploit them as lords of the shrine the peers commanded both the body and the soul of the poor villagers. Even females are vulnerable to exploitation. Instances of sexual harassment and rape are a common occurrence, and routinely become the subject of press reports and literary caricatures. This regime of coercion is facilitated through control of resources. The peers are often caricatured as leading a rich and extravagant life. In one commentary, Albinia (2008), they are described as owning “expensive Italian clothes, fleets of Mercedes cars and credit cards from American Express”. Donations from urs are a key source. “A good urs”, Albinia notes, “can bring in 30 lakh rupees”. But their real power is derived through state patronage. The relationship of peer and mureds in this study is mostly positive. The peers mostly help out their mureds to maintain their power on them by patron client relationship. They are being lovely with them and help them in their problems and needs which had happen in their lives.

### **7.11 Theoretical discourse**

Theoretically discourse in the chapter is fit to the findings in this chapter that pir help the murids socially, spiritually and materially. These are the social exchange relationship they help them. The pir is powerful in this relationship. The pir stand in a unique position to

challenge this basic relationship but they are limited for various reasons. They are not able to stand completely outside the State or the culture, so they cannot achieve the kind of independence which might allow them to truly establish a kind of rational-legal authority in which their office holds the power rather than themselves. Blau However discussed the social exchange theory and uses more financial matters terms and it depends on creating social design in friendly exchange designs in little gatherings and he added to recognizing social and monetary trades and exchange and power.

Pirs are also embedded in our culture and they are also the main part of the religion according to the respondents. They have also the power and mold the mentality of people according to their need. They needs more murid to maintain their power on peoples mind from. Power need not be coercive, though it may be. Furthermore, it need not be perceived by the effected person as being an imposition, though again, it may be. The mechanics of establishing power vary in different instances and according to the starting position of an individual or group. Mostly respondents (murids) said that they gain mental satisfaction and far away from their problems. Because their pirs are the source satisfaction from their prayers and because they linked with pir they can get a better life for their future just like pir sahib has reference with powerful person in the country and abroad and they helped a lot for their muridain e khass.

The theory of social exchange support my findings in terms of power and exchange because Pir is able to capitalize on relationships to resolve problems within his group. The pir can bring different people together who are able to solve each other's problems. Some of the acts of a pir are meant to bring individuals the benefit of God's power. The spiritual healing in the form of talismans or prayers, is a direct intervention on the part of the pir, on behalf of an individual.

Lévi-Strauss is likewise perceived for adding to this hypothetical viewpoint from his work on anthropology. He fundamentally centered on frameworks of far reaching exchange, similar to the connection frameworks in families and gift exchange. According to majority

of muridain, pir do a lot of favors for their followers especially who lived in their house or in the locality of Golra sharif. Mostly these people are less privileged and un-educated or some are belong to the middle class family. They get access to the public organizations or jobs like security guard, driving for the powerful persons or many kinds of job with the reference of pir sahib. The results shows the reinforcement of experiential religiosity which enhance the patron-client relationship stronger. Male and female respondents both have different experience of shrine because female members mostly perform more rituals, practices and even create fictive relations in the house of pir. Mostly case studies clearly shows the practices, beliefs and responses for the religious activities of muridain, they all are the true believers of the shrine Golra sharif. The existence of patron-client relationship in the religious place like shrine make a social network in which patron-client (Pir and murid) totally dependent on each other for their needs. They both facilitate each other social need with religious practices.

The results of the studies also show some kind of patriarchal nature in the system of shrines, but in the house of pir (Bab e Mehr) the whole system is in the control of the wife of pir sahib. The researcher observed in the shrine different nature, like male members take more time with Pir sahib and female members can talk only a few seconds with pir. Despite the fact that the patron entertains client investigations regardless of their location, associations, or affiliations, there is a degree of discrimination for clients based on their gender. Male clients, for example, may have the closest access to the patron's chamber, whilst female clients are denied access to the patron's closet. When I looked into the causes of this inequality, I discovered that there exist biases against women and the basics of religious conservatism that have confined and limited female seekers to specific inner and outer borders. Female presence in Pir's private space is connected with obscenity, particularly when they are not accompanied by their male guardians, known as Mehrams. However my findings of the study shows the similarity of old researches which are un challenging and still prevails in the system of Golra sharif and their strong bonding with pir sahib through social relation like exchanges, the element of indebtedness creating a fictive relation with each other.

Moreover these things they both provide benefits to each other like clients (muridain) get different kinds of help and access to public spheres and patron (pir) they make a better management and effective social reputation in the system of shrine. Blau's center invigorated the scholar to look ahead, as in what they expected the award would be concerning their next friendly association. Anyway he felt that assuming people zeroed in a lot on the mental ideas inside the theory, they would cease from learning the creating parts of social exchange. They are able to manipulate categories and networks in ways which are already familiar to the people. Briefly mention the relationship between physical nonviolence and power.

Hannah (1970) says 'to speak of non-violent power is actually redundant' While it seems extreme to suggest that violence may never be legitimate. According to Homans assuming the costs of the relationship are more than the prizes, for instance in the event that a great deal of endeavors, cash and time were placed into a relationship which not responded with one another, then, at that point, the relationship might be cut off in light of the fact that a friendship need a two way and complementary relationship. The massive langar, or free kitchens and food suppliers, is a manifestation of the pir's role as a provider. While this can be justified in symbolic terms since the things supplied to the shrine and the langar are not gifts to the peer directly, this is very much an exchange of goods, a 'good faith economy'. It is not so much the exchange of goods which characterizes the economy of peers, however, as the brokering of human resources.

The pir is able to capitalize on relationships to resolve problems within his group. The pir can bring different people together who are able to solve each other's problems. Some of the acts of a pir are meant to bring individuals the benefit of God's power. The spiritual healing in the form of talismans or prayers, is a direct intervention on the part of the pir, on behalf of an individual. Lévi-Strauss is likewise perceived for adding to this hypothetical viewpoint from his work on anthropology. He fundamentally centered on frameworks of far reaching exchange, similar to the connection frameworks in families and gift exchange.

## Chapter 8

### **Summary conclusion and recommendations**

This section of the chapter contracts with the summary of results gathered through qualitative data in the previous section and the results are defensible with the previous studies. The present study was meant to find the experiential religiosity among patron-client (pir and murid) relationship and how murid get benefited with the help of their pir, how they both use patron-client relation for their benefits.

#### **8.1 Summary**

The current study explored the application of experiential religiosity among patron-client (pir and murid) relation and later access to public organization in the locality of Golra Sharif Islamabad. A solid work has been done on power and patronage by Stephen M. Lyon (2002) in context of patron client relationship on household. He show that the reciprocal duty of patron-client work as rooted principles of labor relations not only with the rural setup but also in urban organization and he explored that patron-client relationships and termed them as kind of interpersonal connections in all societies. Patron-client has present in many forms in religious, and political.

Patron-client is present in religious institutions in between Pir and their Murid. The religious institutions like shrine, darbar of Sufi saints, places of Majalis considered most sacred and effective places for the people who need them. These places especially the famouse shrine of Golra Sharif has its huge religious and social network because of expeieintial religiosities. Experiential religiosity of both (Pir and murid play a vital role for strengthening their faith system because pir considered the spiritual leader who have strong experience of religion and responsibility to guide the people to the right path. On the other hand the experiential religiosity of clients (murids) are equally important because mostly they have strong faith and experience of the shrine through their ancestral periods. Most of them are the less priviledged and poor people who came in the shrine with empty mind. However they make strong believe on shrines just by hearing the experience from other



persons who take mannat in the shrine. They both facilitate each other by social, religious and moral give and take. Through these experiences and beliefs they both make a social relation with exchanges, the feelings of indebtedness, fictive relations and benefits for each other through loyal social relations. The basic research question of the study was “how do they (pir and murids) use patron-client relationship as a strategy for strengthening their bond?” the hypothesis was made that they use application of experiential religiosity and patron-client social relation like (exchanges, indebtedness, fictive relation and benefits which helps their relation stronger. The main objectives were to explore the of patron-client relationship between pir and murids. Also to disclose the strong belief system and the mechanism of fostering indebtedness among them. Further it was best interest of the researcher to find out the experiential religiosity and the mechanism murids show loyalty in the services of their pir. Moreover it was pertinent to dig out the ways how pir help their murids. The targeted place was Golra Sharif Islamabad.

The qualitative research approach was opted to conduct the present study. Data was conducted through in-depth interviews, observation method and interview guide was also framed with the help of extensive literature. In the current study 20 interviews were conducted and these interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis and social exchange theory. For sampling technique, purposive sampling technique was used for effective research purpose and mostly those respondents were selected for sampling who have almost 10 to 20 years of experience with the shrine. With careful analysis the results exhibit that the patron-client relation is trustworthy and resembles a parent like bond for pir sahib's followers because some followers lived in the shrine and serve for pir sahib, for them the shrine is like their family.

The implementation of patron-client experiential religiosity strengthens both of their relationships and the researcher found the reinforcement of the practices, responses and beliefs because of the experience of muridin, and these things exist through a social network which is based on patron-client social relations. In the findings of this study, the same values and ethics were discovered in experiential religiosities, religious beliefs, social practices, social exchanges, indebtedness benefits, and fictive relationships which matches the old researchers on golra sharif. The researcher discovered that the shrine system is

patriarchal since female respondents had more practises and experiential religiosity than men, yet they can only speak for a few seconds. However, this patriarchal aspect is only seen at the pir sahib shrine, not in the pir sahib's home and it demonstrate the pir house's power and there is also a social network and patron-client relation in the house of pir sahib.

## **8.2 Conclusion**

The findings and results conclude that the patron-client relation is unchallenging and parent like relationship for followers of pir sahib. The application of experiential religiosity of patron-client helps both to make their relationship stronger. They make a social network with the help of religion. The researcher found the links between things in the shrine like people came to seek help in religious affairs and for the special prayers, for this purpose they make a social relation with pirs through some exchanges, fictive relations and become indebted for their pirs. Pir needs a huge circle of muridain for increasing the good reputation of the name of the respective shrine so they both make a social network with these efforts. The researcher found the deep links between pir and murid. Muridain make them feel special by kissing their hands and provide some extra services for the shrine in the honor of pir sahib. In this culture, they think that winning the happiness of their pir is actually winning the happiness of their God because pirs are the special person of the God who teaches them for the right paths. They always came with some “Nazrana” (money) for the shrine which researchers observe during the field work. The same values and ethics experiential religions beliefs and religious, social practices, the ways of social exchanges, indebtedness benefits and also fictive relation were founded in the results of present research which matches the old researchers on golra sharif. The researcher also found some patriarchal nature in the system of shrine because female respondents have more practices and experiential religiosity as compared to men but they can talk only a few seconds with pir. But this patriarchal nature is only found in the shrine of pir sahib, not in the house of pir sahib. The findings of the study also shows the female power in the house of pir sahib like the wife of pir sahib equally treated in the house through female clients.

The system of patron-client relation like social exchanges, the feeling of indebtedness, creating fictive relation was also present in the house of pir sahib. The female murdain brings many gifts for the family of pir sahib whenever they have to visit the shrine. Moreover they provide benefits to each other with this social relation like clients (muridain) get different kinds of help and access to public spheres and patron (pir) they make a better management and effective social reputation in the system of shrine. So these values and practices of patron-client relationship and the applications of experiential religiosities are unchallenging but they were reinforced in the system of Golra sharif Islamabad.

### **8.3 Recommendations**

- This study will significantly contribute to effective literature by exploring the important aspects of patron-client relationship between offices setting in other areas of Pakistan. Intellectually, this study provides a guideline to researchers to make new dimensions or new models of research.
- Golra Sharif, which is in Islamabad Pakistan presents the best setting to conduct research as it is regarded as the most urbanized localities in Pakistan. The research data collected from here could be extrapolated to the remaining highly urbanized regions of Pakistan.
- Further this research is conducted through qualitative research method. In future this study should conduct with mix methods to improve the effectiveness of research.
- As the shrine is an informal place and there is no sound data related to work ethics and code of conduct neither for patron-client (Pir and Murid). With this first-hand information about how the Pir manage with their Murid in the Golra, this study would prove to spread awareness among the general public and one can hope that this might draw attention of the competitive authority to draft some ethics and code of conduct for such an informal work setting.

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## Appendix

### Interview guide

Name. . . . .

Age . . . . .

Status . . . . . (Marital or non-marital)

Qualification . . . . .

### Guide for clients/murids

#### Objective 1. (Experiential religiosity and Belief system)

1. Do you think, you have family like relation with each other?
2. In your opinion have you both cultivated personal relations?
3. Do you think, your experiential religiosity is the main cause of your stronger relation with each other?
4. What are the stereotypes of your belief system?
5. In your opinion, people in the sacred shrine share their experiences with each other make your belief stronger?
6. Is there any experience of your loyalty with your pir?
7. In your opinion, the decision about something by your pir effected your life in a negative way?

## **Objective 2. (Material services and Exchanges)**

1. In your opinion material services and exchange is necessary in patron-client relationship?
2. What you think, you have relation of given-take with your patron (pirs)?
3. What are your thoughts, is there any exchange i.e. material and immaterial with your patrons (pirs)?
4. Have you both facilitated each other in the time of need?
5. What is total time period of services here?
6. How do you see your pir as influencer?
7. How much you depend on your pirs for taking important decisions of life?
8. In your opinion, material things play significant role for strengthening your relation with pir?
9. Do you believe that pirs are the actual spiritual leader?

## **Objective 3. (Creating indebtedness)**

1. Have you witnessed any incident when your pirs showed the element of indebtedness towards you?
2. Are you both (patron-client) loyal to each other?
3. How much trust do you have on each other?
4. What are the causes of strong faith towards your patron (pirs)?
5. In your opinion, pirs help to the economic situations of their needy clients?
6. In your opinion, every person of your family member have same faith and responses on your pir?
7. Do your think there are some psychological connections with belief system?

8. What are the important duties which make the murid superior than other murids?

#### **Objective 4. (Seeking help and benefits)**

6. In your opinion, how less privileged murid gets benefitted with the reference of pir?
7. Do you think you both have more spiritual bonding than social relation?
8. What do you think, how the reputation of your shrine will help to facilitate the poor murids to get access to public organizations?
9. Is there any experience of help by a pir regarding, marriage or financial problem of poor murids?
10. Do you think that, in the time of disputes pirs play the role of mediator?
11. What do you think that shrine of pir help people to get close with the religion Islam?

#### **Interview guide for patrons/pirs**

#### **Objective 1. (Experiential religiosity and belief system)**

1. In your opinion, people have strong belief on your shrine just because of their experiential religiosity or there is any other reason for their belief?
2. What do you think about shifting nature of teachings of Islam, people now days have strongly belief on Sufis and pirs?
3. In your opinion, your experiential religiosity provide the main power to the shrine?
4. Do you think that your murids who have political powers, they ever benefitted the reputation of shrine?
5. Is there any experience of loyalty and trust by the side of your murids?

6. In your opinion, what are the major responsibilities of being pir of many murids?
7. Do you think that loyalty and trust gave hope to your murids?

### **Objective 2. (Material services and exchanges)**

1. In your opinion, what are the determinants of your patron-client relationship?
2. It is true that your murids are totally dependent on you in their religious matters?
3. Do you think that, your political powers help to manage the strong relation with your murids?
4. Is there any experience of social exchange with your murids?
5. Do you think that all of your personal murids are loyal to you?
6. In your opinion, how do you managed your bonding with murids?
7. What are the services and duties of your murids for cultivating strong relation with you?
8. What is the total time period of your relation with your personal murids?

### **Objective 3. (Creating indebtedness)**

1. Do you think that these murids are backbone of your shrine?
2. Is there any experience of the element of indebtedness by your murids?
3. In your opinion, people came with hope of satisfaction to their problems?
4. Do you think that, you ever feel the element of indebtedness for your murids?



#### **Objective 4. (Seeking help and benefits)**

1. In your opinion, pirs have authority and they use it for the purpose of help for poor murids?
2. Do you think that the circle of murids help each other with your reference?
3. In your opinion, shrines are the places where individual profound access to political or public spheres?
4. Is there any experience of help from the side of powerful murids in political matters?
5. Have you both facilitated each other in the time of need?
6. How much trust do you have on your murids?