

**A SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY OF MUSLIM SHRINES
IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN:
A CASE STUDY OF PIR BABA**



Submitted By

AZIZ UL HAKIM
PhD Research Scholar

Supervised by:

DR. NOOR SANAUDDIN

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR
Session: (2017-18)

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*A dissertation submitted to the University of Peshawar in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of*

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology



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UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR

APPROVAL SHEET

This is certified that contents and format of this thesis titled "*A Socio-Cultural Study of Muslim Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan: A Case Study of Pir Baba*" submitted by Mr. Aziz ul Hakim in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of degree of '*Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology*' have been approved by the supervisory committee after successful public defense.

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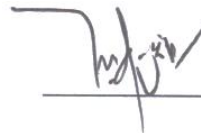
Evaluator/External Examiner

Dr. Akhtar Ali, Associate Professor,
Department of Rural Sociology,
Agriculture University, Peshawar



Internal Examiner

Dr. Muhammad Ibrar, Assistant Professor,
Department of Criminology,
University of Peshawar.



Research Supervisor

Dr. Noor Sanauddin,,
Department of Sociology
University of Peshawar



Countersigned By

Prof. Dr. Anwar Alam
Chairman, Department of Sociology
University of Peshawar



CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in this thesis, entitled "*A Socio-Cultural Study of Muslim Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan: A Case Study of Pir Baba*" was conducted by Mr. Aziz ul Hakim under the supervision of Dr. Noor Sanauddin, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar.

No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of Sociology, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar.

Scholar Name: Aziz ul Hakim

Signature: 

EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

a) **External Examiner-1:**

Dr. Aamir Jamal, PhD, Associate Professor,
Coordinator, Graduate Program in International and
Community Development (ICD), 2500 University
Drive NW Calgary, AB, Canada T2N 1N4
Email: aamir.jamal@ucalgary.ca

b) **External Examiner-2:**

Dr. Nor Hafizah Selamat, Associate Professor of
Sociology, School of Social Sciences, University
Sains Malaysia
Email: hafiz@usm.my

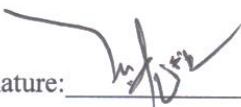
Evaluator/External Examiner-3:

Dr. Akhtar Ali, Associate Professor,
Department of Rural Sociology,
Agriculture University, Peshawar

Signature: 

Internal Examiner:

Dr. Muhammad Ibrar, Assistant Professor,
Department of Criminology,
University of Peshawar

Signature: 

Research Supervisor:

Dr. Noor Sanauddin,
Department of Sociology,
University of Peshawar

Signature: 

Head of the Department

Prof. Dr. Anwar Alam
Chairman, Department of Sociology
University of Peshawar

Signature: 

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Department of Sociology, UoP
25.03.2025**

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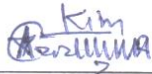
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Associate Professor
Department of Sociology
University of Peshawar

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

The following list provides a glossary of *Pashtu, Urdu, and Persian* terms used in this thesis with their English meaning.

Terms	Meaning
<i>Ahl-i-Sunna</i>	A sub-sect in the Deobandi sect of Islam
<i>Aulia</i>	Friends of Allah
<i>Barakah</i>	Doing something for the happiness of God
<i>Barelvi</i>	The Barelvi movement, also known as Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah (People of the Prophet's Way and the Community), is a Sunni revivalist movement that generally adheres to the Hanafi and Shafi'i schools of jurisprudence.
<i>Bayth</i>	Vow /Taking the oath of allegiance at the hand of a Sufi Saint
<i>Chadar Charana</i>	Covering the shrine with a decorated blanket /sheet
<i>Chillagah</i>	A place of worship of the saint
<i>Chisthia</i>	A Sufi order (chain) founded by Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (1236)
<i>Dam wala pani</i>	Sacred water, mostly found at shrines which visitors use for treatment of diseases
<i>Dargah</i>	Sufi Shrine
<i>Dhammal</i>	A Mystic /Sufi Dance which is usually performed in a trance state.
<i>Eid ul Adha</i>	Muslims annual celebration
<i>Eid ul Fiter</i>	The Muslim Festival marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan
<i>Jaby</i>	An illness in which children cry continuously, usually as a result of being afraid of something
<i>Khairat</i>	Alms
<i>Khanqah</i>	A place of worship of the saint
<i>Khwaga Ranja</i>	An ancient eye cosmetic (kohl) which most Muslims / Pakistanis use to decorate their eyes (Mascara).
<i>Kiramaat</i>	Miracles (supernatural powers associated with a shrine)
<i>Langer</i>	A large kitchen in a shrine which distributes free food to

	visitors
<i>Malang</i>	Servant of God/devotee of a shrine
<i>Mannat</i>	A wish that one desires to come to realization and the vow one makes to a saint after his/her wish comes true.
<i>Mazar</i>	Sufi Shrine
<i>Murid</i>	Disciples of the shrines
<i>Murid</i>	Disciple
<i>Naqshbandia</i>	A Sufi order (chain) founded by Khwaja Baha Ud Din Naqashbandi (1381-1398 AD)
<i>Nawafel</i>	A type of prayer offered for a special purpose
<i>Nazrana</i>	Donation
<i>Panjperi</i>	A sub-sect in the Deobandi sect of Islam
<i>Pir</i>	Saint
<i>Qadria</i>	A Sufi order (chain) founded by Shiekh Abdul Qadeer Jelani (1071-1166 AD) of Iraq
<i>Qawali</i>	A genre of mystical and holy music sung on the Sufi Shrines by devotees
<i>Rishta</i>	Marriage proposal
<i>Sajjada Nasheen</i>	Descendent of the saint and caretakers of the Shrine
<i>Sajjda Nasheen</i>	The successor or hereditary administrator of a Sufi master who typically functions as a custodian or trustee at the shrine
<i>Salar-i-Room</i>	Title of a famous Sufi - Shiekh Atta Ullah of Ajmeer Sharif
<i>Sama</i>	Characterized by devotional music, poetry, and contemplative practices
<i>Silsila</i>	Sufi Order /Chain
<i>Sufi</i>	Saint
<i>Sufiana Kalam</i>	Mystical Music / Sufi Poetry
<i>Suhrwardia</i>	A Sufi order (chain) founded by Abdul Najeeb Suhrwardi (1098-1168 AD)
<i>Sunni</i>	One of the two major sects in Islam
<i>Sury</i>	Spirit Possession
<i>Tappa</i>	A genre of Pashto folk poetry
<i>Tarkha Ranja</i>	An ancient eye cosmetic (kohl) which most Muslims /

	Pakistanis use to decorate their eyes (Mascara).
<i>Taweez</i>	Amulet
<i>Tazkia Nafs</i>	Self-realization /self-cleansing
<i>Tilawat</i>	Recitation of the Holy Quran
<i>Urs</i>	Celebration of the death anniversary of the saint
<i>Wahabi</i>	A sub-sect in the Deobandi sect of Islam
<i>Wali</i>	Friend of Allah
<i>Waseela/ Wasta</i>	Mediation, Intercession
<i>Zikar</i>	Recitation
<i>Zyal</i>	An illness in which children cry continuously without any apparent causes
<i>Zyarat</i>	Pilgrimage - Visiting and performing rituals on a Sufi shrine

ABSTRACT

Shrines occupy a significant place in the spiritual and religious lives of Muslims, especially those living in South Asia. In Pakistan, a large number of devotees visit shrines of religious and spiritual figures every year for their social, physical, economic, and psychological needs gratifications. Among these, the shrine of Pir Baba, situated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan, is one of the most famous and probably the most frequently visited shrines. Therefore, the researcher conducted this study in the shrine of Pir Baba with the aim of investigating the socio-cultural factors that determine the inclinations and beliefs of the devotees towards the shrines. Specifically, the study highlighted the socio-economic and psychological functions of the shrines in the lives of the devotees. The researcher employed a mixed-method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Within the mixed method, an “exploratory sequential strategy” was adopted for the collection and analysis of data. The qualitative results show that devotees consider Pir Baba as a holy saint (Wali) of Allah, and as a mediator (Waseela) between God and people. Devotees believe that the blessed shrine of Pir Baba has the power to change the fortune of the people. Therefore, the shrine performs different social, economic and psychological functions in the lives of the devotees. The quantitative results reveal a significant association between the beliefs of the devotees and the social, economic and psychological functions of the shrine in the lives of the devotees. The study also found that the beliefs and attitudes of people towards the shrines are gradually changing, and more and more people visit the shrine as a tourist attraction.

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Chapter – 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Shrines are holy places dedicated to specific saints or similar figures of respect, wherein they are revered. Shrines are found in almost all religions and regions of the world and are known by various names (E-Islam, 1967; Hassan, 1987). In South Asia, including Pakistan, the terms *Ziarat*, *Mazar* and *Dargah* are commonly used to refer to a Sufi Shrine. Shrines are associated with divinity and are considered sacred places where the saints and pious people are buried. People visit shrines and circle the tomb throughout the year to show their love, respect and devotion for the saints buried in the shrines and for their spirituality. The devotees of the shrines have a firm belief that these saints have spiritual links/contacts with God and can bring blessings, happiness, and cures to their followers (Tyson, 1997; Chaudhry, 2013). The followers share their social, psychological and cultural difficulties and pray for relief. The shrines are also characterized by rituals that show the fundamental legacies of the local culture and communities (Raj & Harman, 2006).

Researchers (e.g., Lwisa, 1985; Schimmel, 1982) trace back the holy beliefs of Muslims in South Asia to Islam, where the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is deemed as the mediator between God and his followers. Besides South Asian countries, shrines are also found in other countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, Morocco, Iraq, Syria, etc. Though it is believed that before the 12th century, there were many masters (*Pir*) and disciples (*Murid*) in South Asia, this relationship did not adopt a standardized form (Chittik, 2000). It was after the 11th century that these movements adopted the forms of ‘orders’ (*Silsila*), and the different saints (*Pir*)

buried in the shrines came to be associated with one of the four recognized Sufi orders/chains (Chittik, 2000; Khanam, 2006; Hassalani, 2009). The first order is *Qadria* (Silsela-e-Qadria), established by Shiekh Abdul Qadir Jelani (1071-1166 AD). The second order is *Suherwardia*, which was established by Abdul Najeeb Suherwardi (1098-1168 AD). The third order is known as *Naqshbandia* and was founded by Khwaja Baha Ud Din Naqashbandi (1381-1398 AD), and the fourth one is *Chisthia*, established by Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (1143-1236) in Ajmir (Aziz, 2000; Chittik, 2000; Khanam, 2006).

Some sacred objects, rituals, and practices are associated with Sufi shrines. These practices and rituals are compulsory elements of every shrine. Some of the elements and practices performed in all Muslim shrines with varying natures include Music (*Qawali*), *Minnat*, and *Urs*. Music (*Qawali*) is an essential element of shrines where musical artists sing spiritual rhymes. The artists sing Sufi and folk poetry, which are essential sources of emotional expression and are adored and valued by people. Similarly, *Minnat* is also a practice in shrines, which is a humble plea by a visitor for some material or non-material gain. The visitors deem the saint as a mediator in God's favour. Likewise, *Urs* is also an essential ritual in shrines. The term *Urs* in shrine culture is used for the death anniversary of the buried saint, which is celebrated every year by the devotees in respect and reverence of the saint (Raj & Harman, 2006).

Sufi shrines in the sub-continent have multidimensional social, economic, political and racial implications (Malik, 1990; Platteau, 2011; Brewster, 2011; and Frembegen, 2012). Since time immemorial, visiting sacred places has been considered a source of holiness, washing off sins and purifying the body and mind. Bring prosperity and blessings to individuals and their families (Gadith & Khalid, 2002). The visitors

strongly believe that since the saints have spent all their lives worshipping God and serving humanity, they have a special connection with super nature and, hence, have the power to mediate between people and God. Therefore, the shrines are well attended by people experiencing social, economic and psychological distress (Ahmad, 2001). However, people's perspectives on shrines vary from region to region. For instance, people in some regions are more inclined and committed toward Sufism than others (Campbell, 1998). Some prefer visiting shrines to treat illness and infertility rather than going to hospitals or doctors (Kurin, 1983 and Frembgen, 2004).

The Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, have deep historical and cultural significance, reflecting the region's rich Islamic heritage. These shrines are the resting places of Sufi saints, scholars, and warriors who played crucial roles in the spread of Islam and the development of Islamic culture in the region. Early Islamic influence: Islam arrived in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region around the 7th-8th centuries through Arab traders and military campaigns (Khan,2010). However, it was the Sufi saints from central Asia and Persia, arriving between the 11th and 16th centuries, which played a major role in converting the local population through their teachings of love, tolerance and mysticism (Baghi, 2017).

Ghaznavid and Ghorid period (10th-12th centuries): With the arrival of Mahmud Ghaznavi and subsequent rulers, Islamic rule was firmly established in the region. Many Sufi saints accompanied these invasions and settled in the region, spreading Islamic teachings and influencing the local culture. Shrines such as those in Peshawar and Kohat have roots in this era (Khan, 2010). Delhi Sultanate and Mughal Influence (13th-18th centuries): During the Mughal period, the region becomes a center for Sufi thought and mysticism. The Mughals patronized Sufi saints and their shrines, which

became centers of spiritual and social activity. Notable figures like *Sheikh Bahadur Baba* and *Pir Baba* gained prominence during this period (Baghi, 2017).

The Pashtun tribes of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa embraced Sufism, and local saints established strong connections with the people. The *Naqashbandi*, *Chisiti*, *Qadiri* and *Suhrwardi* Sufi orders found followers among the Pashtun, and their shrines became focal points for spiritual gatherings and community development (Khan, 2010).

British Colonial Period (19th-20th centuries): During British rule Sufi shrines played a dual role as centers of resistance and spiritual solace. Many Sufi leaders opposed colonial rule and inspired local movements. Shrines continued to serve as places of refuge and cultural preservation.

Post-independence (1947-present): After the creation of Pakistan, the shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained significant for spiritual and cultural reasons (Baghi, 2017). They continued to attract thousands of devotees, who seek blessings and participate in annual *Urs*. The shrines have also become a part of Pakistan's intangible heritage.

Notable Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:

- 1) Shrine of *Pir Baba* (Buner): A revered Sufi saint of the 16th century, Syed Ali Tirmizi (*Pir Baba*), his shrine is a major pilgrimage site in the region.
- 2) Shrine of *Kaka Sahib* (Nowshera): Syeed Kasteer Gul (*Kaka Sahib*), a revered Sufi saint of the 15th century, is known for his teachings of peace and harmony.
- 3) Shrine of *Shiekh Bahadur Baba* (Kohat): A well-known spiritual figure associated with the spread of Islam in Southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Overall, Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are not only religious landmarks but also symbols of the region's spiritual, cultural, and social identity. They continue to serve as places of devotion and unity, reflecting the enduring influence of Sufiism in the region (Baghi, 2017).

Though there are many shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, with devotees regularly visiting various saints and shrines in the province for centuries, a significant

study has yet to be conducted on these shrines. According to a survey titled “*Giving at Shrines*” (2016) conducted by the Pakistan Center of Philanthropy (PCP), there are nine shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which are registered with the Religious and Auqaf Department of Pakistan with 2000 regular donors. Moreover, there are thousands of small and large shrines in every district apart from those nine registered shrines in the province. However, no study has been conducted so far in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to explore the socio-cultural and psychological functions of shrines in the lives of devotees. One of the aims of this study is to fill the knowledge gap on the shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In addition, these shrines in KP are central to the region’s Islamic heritage and culture. By studying these shrines, researchers can explore the unique Islamic traditions, rituals, and practices that have evolved over time in the region. In addition, shrines are key places for religious worship and the expression of faith in Sufi and popular Islamic traditions (Shakir, 2018). Understanding these sites helps appreciate the broader significance of Islam in local communities and the devotion associated with these figures. Similarly, this study could provide insight into how these shrines have influenced the socio-political landscape over centuries. The shrines in KP often represent a fusion of Islamic and pre-Islamic cultural elements, especially given the region's multi-ethnic and multi-religious context. A study can help reveal how religious traditions have blended over time, creating unique cultural practices.

However, shrines often serve as focal points for the community, not only for religious activities but also for social gatherings, celebrations, and festivals. Researching these spaces can highlight their role in shaping local identities and social cohesion. Many people visit shrines for spiritual healing and to fulfill vows, which could provide insight into the socio-psychological impact of religious practices in contemporary

society. This can include the role of shrines in providing emotional and mental support (Shakir, 2018). Shrines attract a significant number of visitors, both from within Pakistan and abroad. Studying the role of these shrines in local economies can provide valuable information on the potential for sustainable tourism development, balancing religious significance with economic growth. Shrines, as cultural landmarks, are often under threat from urbanization or neglect. Understanding the condition and preservation needs of these shrines is crucial for the conservation of tangible and intangible heritage (Shakir, 2018).

Many shrines in KP serve as spaces for interfaith dialogue, where individuals from diverse religious backgrounds coexist. Examining these interactions can provide insights into the region's religious tolerance, coexistence, and conflict resolution. With the increasing influence of modernity and the rise of extremism in certain areas, shrines in KP may face challenges. A study could examine how these institutions are adapting to or resisting these changes, and the role they play in promoting religious tolerance and resilience (Shakir, 2018). However, many shrines are associated with Sufi saints who have had a profound impact on the spiritual and philosophical landscape of KP. Understanding the teachings and legacies of these figures can contribute to broader studies of Sufism and mysticism in South Asia. The messages of love, peace, and tolerance often associated with Sufi saints are still deeply embedded in the practices of shrine. A study could explore how these teachings continue to influence modern society and provide moral guidance.

Investigating the role of shrines in providing emotional or spiritual healing can offer insights into how religious sites contribute to the mental and emotional well-being of individuals. Shrines often serve as informal centers for support and solidarity, particularly during times of personal or community crisis (Shakir, 2018).

A study of Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa holds immense value for understanding the region's religious, cultural, historical, and social dynamics. Such a study can provide insights into the local practices, community development, tourism potential, and the overall spiritual atmosphere of the region, contributing to broader conversations about religious tolerance, cultural preservation, and interfaith relations.

1.2 Introduction to *Pir Baba*

Pir Baba is a renowned Sufi saint whose shrine is situated in District Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. His fame and legacy go beyond Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as frequently. A large number of people from other provinces and Afghanistan also visit his shrine. As per oral and written history, his real name is Sayed Ali Termezee, while *Pir Baba* is his title, which literally means '*Saint Father*'. He was born in 1502 AD in the region of Badakhshan, Afghanistan. His father, Sayed Qanbar Ali, had remained the governor of Qundoos, a prominent province in modern-day Afghanistan. Likewise, the grandfather of *Pir Baba* Sayed Ahmad Noor was a religious scholar and was respected as a pious person of his era. Historians view that *Pir Baba* was initially grown socially and spiritually by his grandfather Sayed Ahmad Noor, who, as a spiritual figure, left lasting spiritual and religious influences on his grandson (*Pir Baba*). From an early age, *Pir Baba* adopted the path of spirituality and knowledge and went out searching for 'truth' with his parents' permission. First, he went to Ajmeer Sharif (India) in search of knowledge where he got religious and spiritual wisdom from Shiekh Atta Ullah (also known as Salar-i-Room) in four Sufi traditions, which include *Azizia Chestia*, *Sahrwardia*, *Fakhra Shatraia* and *Najia Mulajia* (Baghi, 2017). After receiving his spiritual knowledge in Ajmeer Sharif, he went to Punjab, settled in the village of Pand Dad Khan in Gujrat (Pakistan) and became famous with the name *Pir Baba* among the people. He then moved to Peshawar and

finally came to Buner (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), where he started preaching Islam, and people from different religions converted to Islam through his teachings. *Pir Baba* died in 1583 AD in Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, where his shrine is located. Legends say that *Pir Baba* had miraculous powers that he used to resolve the people's familial, social, economic, and spiritual issues (Baghi, 2017). His miraculous power made him famous among the Pashtuns, the Punjabis, Sindhis, and other ethnic groups in South Asia.

Pir Baba is often compared and contrasted with another Pir of his era, *Pir Rohan* (real name; Bayazid Ansari). Pir Rohan (1525–1582/1585) was a Pashtun warrior, Sufi poet, intellectual and revolutionary leader who wrote extensively in Pashto, Persian and Arabic. Pir Roshan assembled Pashtun tribesmen to fight *Jihad* (holy war) against the Mughal emperor Akbar in response to Akbar's continuous military agitations. It is popularly believed that due to Pir Roshan's spiritual and religious hold over a large portion of Pashtuns, Akbar wanted to counter the influence of Pir Roshan by enlisting religious figures into the struggle, most notably *Pir Baba*. Hence, *Pir Baba* is sometimes accused of working at the behest of the Mughal kings to pacify the warrior tribes of Pashtuns by preaching Sufiism. However, some historians believe that the conflict between *Pir Baba* and *Pir Rokhan* was a clash of two opposite belief systems rather than strategic and political (Baghi, 2017). The only existing study on the Muslim shrine of Kaka Sahib in Nowshera has been conducted from an archaeological perspective. This research primarily focuses on the historical and physical aspects of the shrine, examining its structure, artifacts, and any relevant archaeological findings. However, there is a notable gap in studies exploring the shrine from other angles, such as social, cultural, religious, or economic perspectives,

which would provide a more holistic understanding of its significance to the local community and visitors (Shakir, 2018).

1.3 Statement of the Study

The sociocultural setting of South Asia, including Pakistan, is rich with Sufiism and holy shrines. Shrines constitute 32.8 per cent of Pakistan's total national heritage sites as per the Government of Pakistan Antiquity Act of 1975 (Shakir, 2018). People across different social classes, castes, professions, sects, ethnicities, and genders visit shrines for multiple purposes. The motives behind visiting shrines vary, including female fertility, health, resolution of family disputes, and better future of children.

Despite immense sociocultural significance, research has yet to be conducted on the shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, which this study aims to conduct. This study explores the different factors that motivate people to consult shrines and highlights the social, political, and economic functions of the shrines in the daily lives of the devotees. Moreover, the psychological functions of the shrines, such as spiritual healing, spiritual satisfaction and stress management, have also been elaborated (Shakir, 2018).

A sociological study of Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would yield valuable insights into the intersection of religion, culture, social dynamics, and politics in the region. Such a study would provide a nuanced understanding of how shrines contribute to social cohesion, identity, welfare, gender dynamics, and even political movements. Furthermore, it would shed light on how these sacred spaces evolve in response to modernization, urbanization, and shifting socio-political landscapes. The findings could have implications for the preservation of cultural heritage, interfaith harmony, and the role of religion in contemporary society.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To document the socio-economic and demographic profile of the visitors of the *Sufi Shrines*;
2. To explore the motives and expectations of the visitors from the shrines;
3. To understand the social, psychological and economic functions of shrines in the lives of the visitors;
4. To investigate the changing social status and role of shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

1.5 Research Questions

1. How do the social, economic and demographic characteristics of shrine visitors influence their beliefs and experiences?
2. How do the motives and social expectations of visitors influence their beliefs and experiences at the shrines?
3. How do the social, political, and economic functions of shrines impact the daily lives of the people?
4. How has the social status and role of the shrines changed over time in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

1.6 Significance of the Study

As there is a dearth of literature on the saints and shrines of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this study is significant as it attempts to fill the gap of knowledge by sociologically understating shrines and their social and cultural functions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Secondly, shrines are an essential aspect of our cultural heritage. Secondly, this study will help preserve this vital heritage by documenting and highlighting the various aspects of shrines, including specific material and non-material cultural practices and

religious rituals, which would be significant to the Auqaf and Religious Affairs Department of the Government of Pakistan. Thirdly, saints and shrines have been credited for their role in promoting religious pluralism, peaceful co-existence, and inter-faith harmony (Idris & Ahmed, 2011; Kurin, 1983), which this study further explains. The government of Pakistan has tried to promote Sufism by investing in shrines to counter the growing religious extremism and the narrowing space for religious diversity in the country (Thomsen, 2014). This particular study may help achieve that objective as it highlights how shrines are sources of peace and harmony. Fourthly, shrines have a well-established charity system. Almost all the shrines offer free food (*Langer*) to mostly poor devotees. In fact, many people visit shrines for the sole purpose of having free meals and getting alms from wealthy visitors (Abbas, 2013). This study will further explore this particular aspect of shrines, which, in turn, may enrich the available literature on philanthropy in Pakistan. Lastly, the study will explore the changing functions of shrines, such as 'religious tourism', which could be used by policymakers and investors to better utilize old sites for new purposes.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The researcher has tried his best to conduct a robust study, keeping in mind all the recommended methodological and philosophical underpinnings of research in the social sciences. However, like any other study, this study might also have certain shortcomings, some of which are pointed out below.

The study was limited to one famous shrine of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, i.e., Pir Baba. It might have been better to cover other shrines in the region, which would have improved the study's external validity. Secondly, many folk stories, proverbs, and folk songs (*tappa*) associated with Pir Baba have sociological significance. Due

to time and resource limitations, the researcher could not collect these oral sources. A thorough examination of this oral literature would have further enriched the analysis. Thirdly, very limited academic work exists on saints and shrines of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Most of the literature on *Pir Baba* and other saints and shrines of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been written from a religious point of view rather than scientific and sociological. Therefore, most of the academic literature cited in this study comes from Punjab and Sindh. Fourthly, the researcher also encountered challenges in collecting data from female participants at the shrine. This difficulty arose from the cultural sensitivity surrounding women's seclusion and the concept of *pardah*. Therefore, the researcher collected data through a female research assistant. Although the researcher trained the female research assistant, some compromises on data quality cannot be ruled out.

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Chapter – 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Many scholars have taken a keen interest in Sufism and shrines in Pakistan in the 19th and 20th centuries (e.g., Ewing, 1983; Hassan, 1987; Buehler, 1997; Khanam, 2006; Rehman & Lund-Thomsen, 2014). Most of the research studies highlight the culture of shrines and Sufism as a source of peace, humanity, asceticism, interfaith harmony, and fulfilment of spiritual devotions and wishes of the community, economic redistribution, love, and sympathy among the respective communities (e.g., Idris & Ahmed, 2011; Kurin, 1983; Rehman & Lund-Thomsen, 2014). Some scholars have also discussed the role of Sufi shrines in South Asian politics (e.g., Mayer, 1967; Aziz, 2001; Ali, 2005). They explain how these Sufis (saints) and their disciples (*Murid*) directly and indirectly influence local and national politics. For instance, the study conducted by Mushtaq (2000) focused on the shrine of *Golra Sharif*¹ in Islamabad, the capital, in which he has explained the role of disciples of the particular shrine in the social and political life of Pakistani society.

Sufi shrines hold great importance in Islamic culture, having significant socio-economic impacts. Sufism has a long-standing tradition in Pakistan, with *Chishti* shrines holding a prominent place in the country's Sufi culture (Iqbal & Farid, 2017). In addition, Chishti Sufis emphasize the significance of connecting with the Divine through devotion, meditation, and remembrance of God (*Zikar*). These practices are believed to purify the heart, alleviate spiritual ailments, and bring individuals closer to God, ultimately leading to spiritual healing. The shrines play a vital role in shaping

¹ Golra Sharif is Meher Ali Shah's shrine, located in the village of Golra near the Capital city of Islamabad

the beliefs, practices, and behaviors of the people. Devotees consider shrines to be sacred places and associate different traditions with them. They visit shrines to seek blessings and spiritual solace and to express their devotion and gratitude. The teachings and practices related to shrines can have a significant impact on the beliefs and behaviors of individuals. The followers consider the spiritual figures associated with shrines as intermediaries (*Waseela*) between people and the divine.

Most of the Sufi saints in the sub-continent are males. However, a significant number of female saints and shrines exist in the region. A study by Khan (2018) discussed the contribution of women to mysticism or Sufism using Mai Sahiba and her shrine in Dhoka Sahi Sharif in Punjab, Pakistan. A number of studies conducted in Punjab explain the religious practices and rituals at Sufi shrines and the perceptions of visiting shrines (Choudhry, 2010; Abbas, 2013; Batool, 2015). The history, traditions, architecture, beliefs and socio-cultural impacts of the shrine on the local community and society have been discussed (Khan & Sajid, 2011).

The intensity of the beliefs on shrines and the inclinations towards shrines vary from place to place and culture to culture. According to Campbell (1998), people's perspective toward shrines depends upon the order of their socio-cultural setting and the geographical location of shrines. A number of factors determine the attitudes of people towards saints and shrines and their visiting behaviors. Some people believe more and visit more frequently than others. A study by Shaikh (2010) explored the socio-demographic factors that influence the people's inclinations, beliefs and attitudes towards the shrines. There are always differences in individual beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes, as these are based on particular roles, positions, and social experiences (Bord & Faulkner, 1975).

Moreover, the individuals' beliefs are socially constructed because family and community members also play significant roles in learning various beliefs. Therefore, expectations and visits to shrines vary based on family and cultural background (Bord & Faulkner, 1975). Furthermore, culture imparts different rituals, practices, and beliefs to the people, including beliefs about shrines. Other cultures have different impacts on the beliefs, social expectations, social associations and social interactions of the people with shrines. For instance, some cultures are more traditional, fatalistic, and conservative; hence, they promote superstitions and expectations of the people from the shrines. The superstitions and beliefs about shrines exist not just in underdeveloped countries but also in technologically advanced countries. The sociological dimension of mythology shows that superstitions exist in specific social orders and vary from place to place. For example, Punjab is more oriented toward Sufism and shrines than other cultures and regions (Kurin, 1983; Voll, 1992). Most of these studies on Sufi shrines in Pakistan have been conducted in different districts of rural and urban Punjab and Sindh. The concentration of studies on Sindh and Punjab shows that shrines are more deeply embedded in these provinces. However, it does not mean that people in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do not believe in shrines or holy saints and that shrines do not exist in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

2.2 History of the Muslim Shrines in South Asia and Pakistan

Sufi shrines have remained historically as central places in the Muslim-dominated parts of the world and are considered rich social and historical heritages in South Asia, including Pakistan. These Muslim shrines performed the roles of religious, intellectual and educational centres in the small towns and their peripheral regions. Several researchers such as Khan (2015), Mokhtar (2012), Qureshi (2010), Shahzad (2014), Wolper (2003), Desplat and Schulz (2014), Edwards (2015) and Rehman

(2009) have conducted their studies on the evolution, distribution, and functions of shrines in Pakistan and South Asia. The historical research work of Jalal (2001), Anderson (2006), Hasan (1979) and Gilmartin (2014) describes the evolution of Sufiism and shrines culture in South Asia and Pakistan in precolonial post-colonial, pre-independence and post-independence periods. Among these historians, Gilmartin (2014) has published a masterpiece book entitled "Civilization and Modernity", in which he looks at shrines and their related Muslim civilization and culture from a historical perspective. Ahmed (2015) also argued that these shrines represented more significant cultures in the precolonial period. The evolutions of the shrines represent the social, cultural and political transformations from the precolonial period to the formation of Pakistan as a state in 1947. According to the Antiquity Act of 1975, shrines represent 28.3 per cent of the national cultural heritage of Pakistan.

The existence of shrines is a dominant trait of traditional societies because they preserve not only their physical heritage but also their intangible social and cultural heritages. However, due to rapid modernization, urbanization, and the development of cities, the space is shrinking due to its physical existence and the rituals, practices, and activities associated with the shrines (Ren, 2008; Secretariat, 2008). Before the advent of colonization, the saints (*Sufi*) and shrines played a vital role in the social and cultural integration and cohesion in South Asia. Gilmartin (2014) added that shrines occupied a middle position in the Islamic civilization and local political milieu.

Muslim saints (*Sufis*) have assimilated the local cultural activities, aspirations, and traditions of the local people within the rituals of the shrines (Pirani et al., 2008). During their travels and spiritual training, Muslim saints adopted local cultural practices to preach monotheistic divinity, love, and simplicity to all humanity and

creations. Followers of these saints engaged in practices and spiritual activities, including attending mosques, offering prayers, *Quranic* study, *Langar*.², *Qawali*³, *Mannat*⁴, and *Dhammal*⁵ (Abbas, 2010; Wolf, 2006). In this respect, Muslim shrines were also the centers of knowledge, ethics and moralities (Stovel *et al.*, 2005). Hence, Muslim Shrines have different layers and meanings for the people. Therefore, people consider them not only religious places but also social and cultural markers in the sub-continent region. An important aspect of all shrines is the myths, legends and rituals associated with the saints and shrines. Most of the shrines are linked with imaginative tales, and folk stories are associated with the saints because saints buried in the shrines were cherished as heroes and essential personalities within the local cultures and histories. The interpretation of the shrines is tied to their socially and culturally constructed identity. Cultural practices of the people produce sacred places (Iqbal, 2015). The different social and cultural setups interpret the different shrines in different ways, and the interpretation may vary with time (Graham, 2002). For instance, Charan (2018) conducted a study focusing primarily on Sufi shrines in Pakistan. He comparatively studied different shrines of different regions and cultures and discovered how many these practices and rituals within the shrines are different from those of other shrines. In his study entitled “Sufism and Sufi Practices in Pakistan”, Iqbal (2015) argues that Sufism is a mystical Islamic tradition emphasizing the inward search for God and attaining spiritual knowledge and enlightenment.

Some notable Muslim shrines in Pakistan include Data Darbar, the shrine of Hazrat Ali Hajveri, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Abdullah Shah Ghazi's shrine, the Shah Rukh

² *Langar*: Community kitchen of a shrine which serves meals to all free of charge regardless of religion, caste, gender, economic status or ethnicity

³ *Qawali*: is a form of Sufi Islamic devotional singing originating in South Asia

⁴ *Mannat*: A wish that one desire to come to realization and the vow one makes to a saint after his/her wish comes true.

⁵ *Dhammal*: Meditative dancing sessions are held at the shrine, during which participants enter a trance-like state to the tune of rapid drum beats.

Alam, the Hazrat Bari Imam Shrine, and the Shrine of Bibi Pak Daman. *Data Darbar*, located in Lahore, is the shrine of Hazrat Ali Hajveri, also known as Data Ganj Bakhsh. It is one of the most revered Sufi shrines in Pakistan and attracts thousands of devotees daily. One prominent figure in the Sufi tradition in Pakistan is 'Notan Wali Sarkar' (1917-1994), who lived in the town of Jhang, located in the Punjab province of Pakistan. '*Notan Wali Sarkar*' was the honorific title given to Hazrat Khawaja Muhammad Naqshbandi, who belonged to the Naqshbandi order. The Naqshbandi order traces its lineage back to the teachings of the Sufi master Khawaja Bahauddin Naqshbandi, who lived in Central Asia during the 14th century. The order emphasizes a direct connection with the divine through the practice of silent meditation, remembrance of God, and the purification of the heart (Pirani, 2018). Similarly, the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar is located in Sehwan Sharif, Sindh. It is a significant pilgrimage site for the devotees, which attracts believers in large numbers, especially during the annual *Urs*⁶ festival. Likewise, the Abdullah Shah Ghazi's shrine in Clifton, Karachi, is a popular place and attracts a large number of devotees. Moreover, the shrine of Shah Rukh-e-Alam is located in Multan, Punjab. At the same time, the shrine of Hazrat Bari Imam is situated in Margalla Hills, near Islamabad. Hazrat Bari Imam's shrine is dedicated to Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Kazmi, popularly known as Bari Imam. The shrine of Bibi Pak Daman is located in Lahore and is associated with a group of female saints. It is a revered place for Muslims, especially women, and people visit it to pay their respects and seek blessings. These are just a few examples of the famous Muslim shrines in Pakistan, which are rich in religious and cultural heritage and have numerous other shrines and holy sites across the nation.

⁶ *Urs*: the annual birthday celebration of the saint.

It is important to note that while visiting shrines holds deep cultural and spiritual significance for Muslims, they are not universally practiced or endorsed by all branches or interpretations of Islam. Some individuals and religious scholars criticize certain practices associated with shrine visits, considering them to be superstitious or unorthodox. These critics argue that true healing and spiritual connection can be sought through direct supplication to God without intermediaries. Historical discussions have made it clear that Muslim shrines are not merely places of worship; rather, they serve as dynamic social institutions that play a multifaceted role in society.

2.3 Socio-cultural Backgrounds of Devotees

Different socio-demographic factors shape people's beliefs and attitudes toward shrines. These demographic factors include age, gender, education, economic status, location, religion, and sect.

2.3.1 Age

People of different ages have different inclinations, superstitions, and beliefs about the shrines. In this regard, Batool and Tahir (2018) viewed that people of all ages visit shrines who, on the basis of their past experiences, transfer their knowledge about the shrines, associated beliefs and practices, and expectations to the next generations (Batool & Tahir, 2018). Older adults, due to their alleged conservatism and fatalism, have higher tendencies towards shrines than young people and to consult shrines in case they feel illness, diseases, or face troubles or miseries (Tahir, *et al.*, 2018).

2.3.2 Economic Status

The socio-economic conditions of people also determine their inclinations and attitudes towards superstitions and ritualistic behaviors. Studies such as those of Malik (1990), Ahmad (2001), and Abbas (2013) in Pakistan and elsewhere in South

Asia indicate that the majority of the shrines' visitors belong to the socially marginalized and deprived section of society. People from lower socio-economic statuses are relatively more superstitious and more inclined towards shrines. Moreover, studies reveal that the poor and rich attend the shrines for different reasons: social, cultural, economic and psychological needs for gratification (Eaton, 1987). For instance, for people who belong to poor socio-economic backgrounds, the *Langar* (free food) available at most shrines is a source of attraction (Abbass, 2013). Likewise (2006) has further added that the people from the lower ladder of society consult the shrine when they are in trouble and have to search for *Waseela* and *Wasta* (mediation) to God through the saints (George & Sreedhar, 2006).

On the other hand, the upper class and privileged people visit shrines to distribute meals and money to the poor visiting shrines with the hope of compensating for their lack of practical religiosity (Abbas, 2013). However, some wealthy and upper-class people also see the shrines for their spiritual and social needs gratifications. The high financial cost and unaffordable situation of the allopathic treatment also compel poor people to visit shrines for different physical and mental treatments. Therefore, economic conditions also have significant impacts on beliefs, attitudes and cognitive processes, as well as an inclination toward superstitions and shrines. In short, though people from both the upper as well as lower classes believe that the saint will play the role of mediator between God and Disciples on the Day of Judgment and will seek forgiveness for them (Eaton, 1974), the tendencies, frequency of visiting and the reasons for consulting shrines vary.

2.3.3 Gender and Education

The inclinations and attitudes of people vary on the basis of gender. In the rural areas of developing countries such as Pakistan, the literacy rate of women is low. The lack

of modern education is one of the reasons for the increasing tendency of women towards Sufi Shrines. It has been argued that the lives of most females are limited to domestic affairs, and traditional family politics makes their lives more stressful than those of male members of society (Santos, 2015). In a male-dominated Pakistani society, women lead miserable lives. The oppressive conditions for women increase the tendencies of women towards superstitious behaviours and, hence, consult different shrines for social and psychological space (Santos, 2015). Therefore, the intensity of inclinations varies on the basis of gender and education.

However, according to a study by Farooq and Kiani (2012) conducted in Punjab, both males and females visit the shrines in equal numbers and have equal respect and dedication for the shrines in question. Further, it has been learned from the views of these researchers that both genders have learned these traditions from their forefathers, and they have found solace, containment and spiritual satisfaction in their practices. Tahir, Qureshi, and Safi (2018) have argued that most females visit the shrines for *Mannat* to gain peace of mind and resolve their domestic issues.

2.3.4 Rural and Urban

The beliefs of the people also vary based on the location in which they reside. For instance, the people living in villages are more likely to have traditional and superstitious beliefs (George & Sreedhar, 2006). Hence, people of some rural societies, cultures and traditions believe in shrines and superstitions more than the urban dwellers. Likewise, being economically weak, the rural people mostly take the support of different superstitions and ritualistic behaviors, including believing in and visiting shrines. Generally, rural communities are more fatalistic and traditional and are more inclined towards visiting the shrines than urban communities. Usually, the people of a specific rural tribe are associated with a particular saint because he is

believed to have converted them to Islam (Ewing, 1983). In the book entitled "Shrines and Sovereigns: Life, Death, and Religion in Rural Azerbaijan", Grant (2011) explored the religious landscape and the significance of shrines within the context of rural communities. He examines the role of shrines as centers of religious devotion, pilgrimage, and communal gathering. In short, in some rural communities, all ways of life determine the shrines.

However, not all the followers of the Sufi saints belong to rural areas; some of them also belong to urban areas (Sreedhar, 2006). A study conducted in Indian society shows that urban residents are more superstitious than rural communities (George & Sreedhar, 2006). In short, literature shows that both rural and urban people visit shrines for different purposes.

2.3.5 Religion, Sect, and Shrines

The beliefs and inclinations of the people also vary on the basis of religion and sects. People from some religions and sects may be more inclined towards shrines compared to others. (George & Sreedhar, 2006). For instance, the *Ahl-i-Sunna* and *Barelvi* sects in Islam tend more toward shrines than *Ahli-Hadith*. On the other hand, according to the interpretation of the *Wahabi* school of thought, Islam does not allow visiting of shrines. Likewise, people belonging to the *Shia* and *Barelvi* sects of Islam are more inclined as compared to the people belonging to the *Suni* and *Wahabi* sects (Choudhry, 2010; Younas, 2017). In fact, visiting shrines is a controversial issue in Islamic Jurisprudence. The Shia school of thought not only considers visiting shrine as legal but also encourages it, considering this as an essential part of their beliefs system.

On the other hand, some Sunni scholars and jurists in the early Ottoman era discouraged and disapproved of the visitation of the shrines. Some *Suni* scholars not only discouraged but also considered this practice contradictory to the teaching of Islam. In this regard, some fundamentalists have tried to forcefully stop the visitation of shrines by attacking and destroying some famous shrines, including the shrine of Rehman Baba, situated in Peshawar. In short, the people associated with some sects, such as the *Shia* sect, are more inclined to believe in shrines as compared to the people who belong to the *Sunni* and *Wahhabi* schools of thought.

2.3.6. Sufi Orders (*Silsila*)

The beliefs and rituals of the devotees also varies on the basis of lineage and orders (*Silsila*) (Vahman, 2004). Each Sufi order (*Silsila*) or *Tariqa* brings its own beliefs, rituals and interpretation of Islamic teachings, which in turn influence the way devotees engage with shrine and dedicated to the saint. There are four notable Sufi orders such as *Chishtiyya* Order, *Naqshbandiyya* Order, *Suhrawardiyya* Order and *Mevlevi* Order (Buehler, 2015).

The *Qadiriyya* is one of the oldest and most widespread Sufi orders, founded by Abdul Qadir Jilani (1077–1166) in Baghdad (Buehler, 2015). This order is known for its devotion to God, asceticism, and its emphasis on humility. In addition, The *Naqshbandiyya*, founded by Baha-ud-Din Naqshbandi (1318–1389), is another influential Sufi order. This order is known for silent *Zikar*, piety, self-control and purification of heart (Schimmel, 1975). Similarly, The *Chishtiyya* order, founded by Khawaja Moinuddin *Chishti* (1141–1236) in India, is especially well known for its vibrant and ecstatic expressions of devotion. At *Chishtiyya* shrines, particularly those in South Asia (e.g., *Ajmer Sharif*), the practices reflect: *Qawwali* (devotional music),

Public Gatherings (*Urs*, (Rizvi, 1978). The last one is *Suhrawardiyya* order, founded by Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi (1155–1191), is known for its emphasis on light metaphysics, illumination and Philosophical Reflection (Vahman, 2004). The variation in beliefs, rituals and expectations of the devotees at the Muslim shrines reflect the diversity in spirituality and mysticism. Each order has different approach toward worship, spirituality and devotions.

It has been discussed above that the external demographic factors such as age, gender, education, economic status, Sufi orders and local have significant influence on the beliefs, rituals, practices and expectations of the devotees from the shrines. Similarly, Emile Durkheim is a well-known French sociologist and he viewed that the collective norms and values of the society influence the beliefs, rituals, worships and practices. In addition, (Goffman, 1963) also argued that the demographic compositions of the community such as age, gender, social class, education level, Sufi order and ethnic background shape the individual inclination and approach toward the shrines and rituals. It has been concluded that there are external social and economic dynamics which bring fluctuation in the beliefs as well as the rituals of the individuals in the society. Therefore, in this study the researcher study the effect of the socio-economic and cultural background or demographic compositions on the beliefs, rituals, practices and expectations of the devotees from the Muslim shrines.

2.4 Rituals at Shrines and the Social Expectations

The devotees perform different rituals within the premises of the shrine for the fulfillment of their social, economic and psychological needs and gratifications, such as *Mannat*, meaning (vow) a wish made by individuals to seek the blessings of a deity or a holy shrine. The study by Batool and Chaudry (2015) explored the concept of

Mannat, which is often associated with visiting religious shrines and making a request or a promise in exchange for the fulfilment of a desire or to express gratitude for a granted wish. It is believed that by making a *Mannat* or vow, they are establishing a personal connection with the divine and increasing the chances of their wish being fulfilled. Visitors may engage in various rituals and offerings to express their devotion and reinforce their prayers. This could include lighting candles, offering flowers or fruits, tying threads or cloth to sacred trees or structures, or performing specific prayers. Other rituals involve putting oil in the earthen lamp of the shrines, praying on the grave of the saint, placing a piece of cloth on the shrine (*Chadar Charana*) and taking an amulet (*Taweez*) (Abbas et al., 2013).

Believers often have deep faith and devotion towards the deity or the spiritual power associated with the shrine. They trust that their prayers will be heard and their wishes will be granted if they make a sincere *Mannat* (vow) and demonstrate their commitment through rituals and offerings. When a wish is fulfilled, it is common for individuals to return to the shrine to express gratitude. This may involve offering additional prayers, making donations, or participating in religious ceremonies as an acknowledgement of the fulfilment of their vows (Abbas et al., 2013).

Likewise, to treat different physical diseases, the visitors practiced different rituals within the premises of the shrines. They firmly believe chronic diseases can be cured by eating holy sugar and salt and drinking water (*Dam wala pani*) (Devotees, 2014). For instance, in a shrine in Punjab known as *Sial Sharif*, there is a berry tree, and the people eat leaves from that tree for the treatment of different illnesses and diseases. The people also drink hand pump water, which is believed to be the cure for different diseases. The devotees consider these things to be part of the worship, and the followers consider these things sacred and a source of *Barakah* (Blessing) and

protection from different types of diseases (Pirani, 2009). The descendant/ caretakers of the shrine (*Sajjada Nasheen*) give a bath (*Ghusal*) to the shrines with rose water, and during this practice, the followers recite *Darood Sharif* and *Surah Fateh* (holy verses) within the premises of the shrine. The concept of the convent (*Bayth*) is also expected at the hand of *Sajjada Nasheen* which is considered important for spiritual elevation. There are different steps of spiritual elevation, and *Bayth* is one of the first of them (Levin, 2008).

Iqbal (2015) has explored that the spiritual gathering at the shrines known as "*Sama*" are characterized by devotional music, poetry, and contemplative practices. These gatherings provided a platform for individuals to connect with the divine and experience spiritual ecstasy. Another notable aspect of Sufi practices is the concept of "*Zikr*", or remembrance of God. Followers would engage in repetitive chanting or recitation of the divine names to focus their attention on God and achieve spiritual union.

All of the above studies have been conducted in different areas of Punjab and Sindh provinces. There the devotees perform different rituals within the premises of the Muslim shrines such as "*Zikr*", or remembrance of God, "*Sama*" are characterized by devotional music, poetry, and contemplative practices, convent (*Bayth*), the followers recite *Darood Sharif* and *Surah Fateh* (holy verses), give a bath (*Ghusal*) to the shrines with rose water. The followers consider these things sacred and a source of *Barakah* (Blessing) and protection from different types of diseases. But all these practices and rituals have been observed in a shrine in Punjab known as *Sial Sharif*. However, in this study the researcher will explore the different rituals and practices within the shrine of Pir Baba in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because the inclination, beliefs

and expectations and rituals varies from shrine to shrine, culture to culture and society to society.

2.5 Social Expectations and Shrines

While visiting shrines, people often have a specific purpose in mind, such as seeking divine intervention for health, success, fertility, or resolving personal difficulties. According to Levin (2008), devotees visit shrines to fulfil their social, psychological, economic, and spiritual needs. It is common practice throughout the world that if someone visits sacred or religious places, this is for religious satisfaction, to seek forgiveness of sins and fulfilment of desires. In the same way, while visiting holy places such as shrines, people find their bodies and minds purified (Abbas et al., 2013). Other than religious purposes, the visitors also believe that visiting, praying, and practicing mystical rituals at shrines will enable them to attain a better socio-economic position, perfect health, strong ethical character, mental satisfaction, and spiritual containment. Shrines also fulfil people's desires, such as success in exams, marriage in a respectable family, favorable solutions to familial disputes, love marriage, childbirth, and the bright future of their child (Abbass, 2013). Abbass (2013) has argued that young females also visit the shrine to pray for their marriage.

On the other hand, married couples visit these shrines to resolve their family conflicts. These family conflicts include husband-wife disputes, in-law disputes, and intra-family disputes. Further, many attendees visit these shrines due to poverty, violent and abusive family relationships, as well as feeling dependent on their children, ongoing health problems and lack of inner peace and satisfaction.

Similarly, shrines also provide probabilities of gratification to visitors by offering them a space to accommodate their daily life difficulties (Sajjid & Khan, 2011).

People also visit shrines for economic and financial needs as the Shrines are believed to have the power to solve issues such as unemployment, low business, and lack of professional growth (Abbas *et al.*, 2013).

Pirani (2009) argued that due to lack of education, poverty, religion, inefficient and inaccessibility to health care facilities, patriarchy and oppression, collectivism, belief in the supernatural world, inequality, stigma, and oral traditions of healing through faith, people make therapeutic encounters through contact with the holy saints and shrines. Moreover, the visitors also expect physical health from the shrine, such as treatment of different physical diseases such as tuberculosis, cancer, typhoid and hepatitis. Attendees may attribute their illnesses to various causes, including supernatural influences, divine punishment, and imbalances in the body. Studies such as the one conducted by Pirani (2009) highlight the significant role of religious beliefs, rituals, and faith healers in the participants' conceptualizations and management of their health issues. Individuals frequently rely on a combination of traditional and biomedical approaches, seeking assistance from faith healers, traditional healers, and medical practitioners. The attendees experience social support and communal solidarity as they come together and share their experiences, which contribute to their overall well-being.

For those who see the shrine, the experience can be profoundly personal and transformative. The atmosphere is often filled with an air of spirituality, devotion, and hope. Many people find solace and a sense of community as they come together with others who share similar struggles or hopes for healing. The shrine becomes a space where they can pour out their hearts, seek guidance, and find comfort in the belief that their pleas are being heard (Veer, 2002; Nelson, 1996).

Devotees perform various rituals and practices at different shrines, each with its own unique customs and traditions. Similarly, their expectations from these shrines vary based on the region, cultural influences, and spiritual significance associated with each site. Previous studies have explored the expectations of devotees at various shrines in Punjab and Sindh, highlighting the diverse spiritual, emotional, and personal motivations that bring people to these sacred places. However, this study focuses on the shrine of *Pir Baba*, located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, to examine the specific expectations of its devotees. The researcher aims to determine whether the expectations of devotees at the Pir Baba shrine align with those observed at shrines in Punjab and Sindh or if they differ due to regional, historical, or cultural variations. By investigating these expectations, this study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the spiritual and social role of the shrine of Pir Baba in the lives of its followers.

2.6 Functions of Shrines in the Lives of Devotees

Shrines play a vital role in the social, economic, psychological, cultural, and spiritual lives of the people. Rituals, sounds, trance, dance and music in shrines perform the functions of ethnic and spiritual healing for the devotees (Brewster, 2011). Moreover, shrines provide avenues for social participation, entertainment in the form of devotional music and songs (*Qawali*), education, and free food and money distribution among poor people (Kurin, 1983). Other social functions of the shrine include social integration, social control, social welfare, and promoting interfaith and intercultural harmony. These have been explained below.

2.6.1 Socio-cultural Functions

Shrines play important social and communal functions and work as agents of social integration and social cohesions for the people of a community or society through shared beliefs, worship, practices and rituals. Shrines are the source of integration between the local indigenous and migrant people (Sumbal, 2016). The interaction between migrant Sufis, their shrines, and the tribal structure leads to a process of assimilation and integration. Furthermore, the teachings of Sufi saints emphasize love, compassion, and unity, which can foster a sense of solidarity among tribes and help bridge social divisions. A study conducted by Mushtaq (2000) argues that the shrines create social cohesions and social integrations among the people of the community and the followers. In addition, shrines act as avenues for social gathering, thus bringing people from various backgrounds and communities together. These provide a platform for people to interact, exchange ideas, and strengthen social bonds.

Furthermore, the shared experience of visiting a shrine fosters a sense of belonging among the community, transcending social, economic, and ethnic divisions. Therefore, all these principles, doctrines and beliefs strengthen the integration and cohesion among the followers as well as among the masses. Likewise, the act of visiting shrines and making vows is often a shared cultural practice. People may seek support and encouragement from their family, friends, or the community as they embark on their spiritual journey. This communal aspect can provide a sense of unity and solidarity. Besides, religious activities and rituals within the shrines, such as *Qawali*, also provide happiness and entertainment to society (Charan, 2018).

Piranis (2009) views that Sufi shrines culturally play a vital role in preserving and promoting cultural traditions and practices associated with Sufism. Sufi music, in particular, has gained recognition and popularity worldwide, contributing to the

dissemination of Sufi teachings and the appreciation of Sufi culture. The shrines often become essential community centers, hosting religious festivals, Sufi gatherings, and other cultural events. Shrines as institutions play a significant role in cultural development (Quraeshi, 2010). Sufi shrines act as educational institutions and learning centers for Sufi knowledge and accommodate diverse groups of people. Furthermore, different meanings and memories are attached to different rituals within the shrine. Though these elements and associations with shrines are geographically and culturally specific, the multi-functionality and easy accessibility of the shrines make them culturally inclusive public spaces (Alexander, 1979; Jacobs, 1961; Lynch, 1960). Hence, the inclusivity of the shrine promotes integration among socially heterogeneous people.

The shrines also perform philanthropic and social welfare functions for the society. For instance, shrines abode travelers and distribute food among the poor people of society. A study by Umashankar (2015) on the shrine of *Data Ganj Bakhsh*, Lahore, describes the centrality of the shrine as similar to a city within the city. The shrine of *Data Ganj Baksh* is the hub of welfare activities and provides shelter and food to people experiencing poverty and runaway children. Besides this, shrines are revered for their social services and inclusive approach; shrines provide food to the poor, solace to the depressed, home to the homeless, and stay for travellers irrespective of their religion, caste and creed (Levin, 2008; Rhi, 2001). As a public place, a shrine is open for all and accessible to all, and it also provides significant civic services, attracting people, including travelers, local tourists and residents.

Shrines also perform the roles of agents of social control by controlling the behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of the followers as well as the people of the local community (Veer, 2002). Shrines also control social structure and have a deeper influence on the

mental construct, cognitive processes and popular understanding of religious beliefs. Moreover, shrines also have distributive functions, such as shaping the lived reality of the citizens and offering spiritual devotions and temporary refuge from difficult situations (Levin, 2008; Rahi, 2001). In short, shrines function as informal means of social control in different societies and communities.

2.6.2 Economic Functions

Shrines also perform different economic functions in the local community (Veer, 2002). Sufi shrines attract a large number of visitors, including devotees, tourists, and pilgrims. These visitors contribute to local economies through their spending on accommodation, food, transportation, and local products. The influx of people stimulates the growth of businesses and employment opportunities in the surrounding areas. Religious tourism is the most rapidly flourishing economic sector in the world (Rasul *et al.*, 2016). A study conducted by Mushtaq (20002) views that the shrines often become economic centers, especially in rural areas. They attract a large number of visitors, including pilgrims, tourists, and devotees, leading to the development of local businesses such as restaurants, shops selling religious artefacts, and accommodation facilities. The visitors spend substantial amounts in the form of *Nazrana* (donations, alms) and also purchase different local products. The economic activity contributes to the local economy, providing livelihood opportunities to the residents. The enhanced economic activity is not merely limited to local entrepreneurs but also contributes to the growth of GDP, GNP and a state's per capita income (Rasul *et al.*, 2016).

2.6.3 Sufi Shrines and Interfaith Harmony

Sufiism is a mystical version of Islam that is based on tolerance, acceptance, mutual coexistence, and peace. Almost all the primary documents (Al-Hujwīrī, 1911/1976; Aulia, 1985; Khurd, 1885) on Sufism claim that the proper version of Islam is Sufism. This version of Islam is based on peace, mutual coexistence, acceptance, and tolerance. In simple words, it spreads mutual coexistence in culturally diverse societies such as Pakistan. A study conducted by Rahmatullah (2014) in Sindh, Pakistan, contends that Sufi shrines promote inter-faith harmony among different religions. He explored the phenomenon of multi-religious visitation to prominent Sufi shrines and its significance as a symbol of coexistence. According to him, Sufism has fostered a unique tradition of inclusivity, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. Sufi shrines have historically served as places of spiritual retreat, communal gathering, and healing. Moreover, they have attracted diverse individuals across diverse religious backgrounds for different religious, cultural and social purposes of life. The study argues that the Sufi shrine helps promote understanding, tolerance, and mutual coexistence among people of different religions.

Shrines such as the Dargah of Nizamuddin, located in Delhi, embody religious symbols with secular values, which have historically helped dilute the debates of communalism (Rahmatullah, 2014). Hundreds and thousands of people from different backgrounds, including Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Christians, visit the shrine of Nizamuddin regularly every year. This reflects the shrine's role in promoting inter-faith harmony among the people of different religions. Likewise, the shrine culture in Jammu and Kashmir embodies the harmonious nature of religious practices. The region has a long history of coexistence and cultural exchange between different religious communities. This is reflected in the shrines, where elements of Islam,

Hinduism, and Sufi mysticism often blend. Devotees, regardless of their religious affiliations, visit these shrines seeking spiritual solace and divine intervention.

2.6.4 Inter-Cultural Harmony

South Asia, including Pakistan, has been a melting point for different cultures. South Asia and Pakistan also have a very rich Muslim cultural heritage. Besides mosques and forts built by the Muslim rulers, there is a large number of Muslim shrines, which reflects Sufiism and mysticism based on Islam. Devotees across different countries visit the shrines for respect, attachment, and affiliation (Rahmatullah, 2014). For instance, in Pakistan, not just the local people visit the shrines, but people from neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan and Bangladesh also come to Pakistan to visit the shrines. The phenomenon of shrine visitation is not only religious but cultural as well. The cultures of South Asia, Central Asia, and East Asia are also a mosaic of cultures and religions (Leiden et al., 2007). The concept of shrines is pluralist in nature, and the shrines accept people irrespective of class, caste, race and ethnicity. Shrines are usually open to people of all religions, sects, cultures, castes, classes, and races. Similarly, the shrines and the servants (*Malang*) of the shrines have acceptance, tolerance, respect and reverence for the people of all the religions, sects, caste, class and sects. The shrines are also inclusive due to their acceptance of the diversity of social practices, social processes and social experiences which take place within these shrines (Carman et al., 2009).

The people of different cultures visit the same shrine and share cross-culturally shared beliefs and shared order (Rahamtullah, 2014). The narratives surrounding shrines are deeply intertwined with the shared history and folklore of the region. Many shrines are associated with mythical stories and legends that have been passed down through generations. These narratives provide a cultural and historical context and shape the

collective memory and identity of the local communities. The festivals and annual *Urs* celebrations at shrines are significant events all across the Indian sub-continent, which often involve music, dance, and recitation of religious poetry, creating a vibrant and festive atmosphere (Rahamtullah, 2014).

Shrines are essential repositories of cultural heritage (Mushtaq, 2000). These serve as guardians of traditions, rituals, music, and other cultural practices associated with the specific shrine. Preserving cultural heritage through shrines helps maintain cultural identity and provides a source of pride and continuity for the local community. The people consider significant preservation and conservation of cultural heritage in the form of shrines. They also view the preservation and revitalization of culture as necessary for the continuity of the culture.

Political Roles of the Shrines

Some anthropological and historical studies have argued that there has been an intriguing relationship between the royal and ruling class and Sufi shrines (Desplat & Schulz, 2014; Gilmartin, 2014; Malik, 1996; Wolper, 2003). Shrine is an informal, powerful organization, and its power exists in the extra associations and organizations of the community members. Malik and Malik (2017) argue that following the norms creates a domain of obedience, and the shrine elites command the undisputed loyalty of the followers.

After the political uprising in 1857, the British Raj brought political reforms to the sub-continent. They created different seats in the national and provincial assemblies, cantonment boards and district boards. By implementing this model, the British created a royal class for themselves and created a relationship with the local *Pir* (saints), landlords and guardians of the shrines (Royal & Rosberry, 1987). Thus, an

intertwined relationship was created between the state power and local elites, shrine families and guardians of the shrines. They were all working within the imperial power structure.

For example, Multan is a city in Pakistan that is famous for its shrines and Sufiism (Gillani, 1938). Masters (*Pir*) and guardians of the shrines (*sajjada nasheen*) played essential roles in the political and administrative development of the Multan city from the 11th century to the present time (Gillani, 1938). The ruler of the sub-continent used the influence of the guardians of the shrines and Master (*Pir*) and got political and administrative positions in the Multan region and tribes. For reasonable administrative control, peace and stability in the state, they always took the support of guardians of the shrines, shrines' families and the Master (*Pir*). In return, they were awarded administrative power, such as *Ziladar* (district administrative officer) and the honorary magistrate.

The followers of the shrines, having obedience to the guardians of the shrines, show allegiance to their unquestionable authority. This creates significant impacts on the power relations in the community (Mills & Gerth, 1953). Grant (2011) has explored the complex relationship between religion and sovereignty in rural communities. He explored the ways in which religious leaders and local authorities interact and how religious practices may intersect with political power structures. Likewise, Kalhoro (2016) explored the relationship between Sufi shrines, politics, and society in the Pakpattan District of Pakistan. Sufi shrines historically held a significant position in Pakistani society, acting as centers of religious devotion and spirituality. However, in recent times, there has been a notable shift in the role of these shrines, with increased involvement in political affairs. Kalhoro's (2016) study analyzed the intricate

relationship between the Sufi shrine and its impacts on the local politics of the society.

Shrines play a significant role in the social, psychological, and economic aspects of devotees' daily lives. These sacred sites serve as centers of social control, social integration, welfare, and philanthropy. They also promote interfaith and intercultural harmony by bringing together people from diverse backgrounds. Economically, shrines contribute to the local community by supporting small businesses, including vendors, transportation services, hotels, and restaurants. Additionally, devotees offer *Nazrana* (monetary and in-kind offerings), which further benefits the local economy.

From a psychological perspective, shrines provide solace, serenity, and emotional satisfaction to individuals seeking spiritual refuge. They serve as places of catharsis for those experiencing disappointment, depression, or distress, offering them a sense of peace and relief through spiritual practices and rituals.

This study aims to explore the extent to which Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa contribute to maintaining social control within the local community. Additionally, the researcher seeks to examine the role of these shrines in fostering social integration, interfaith harmony, and intercultural cohesion among the people. The study also investigates the economic opportunities that emerge in the vicinity of these shrines and how they support the livelihoods of local residents.

Furthermore, previous research, such as the study conducted by Pirani (2009), has examined the psychological and therapeutic aspects of Muslim shrines. Building upon such research, this study also seeks to analyze the psychological functions of shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, exploring how they provide emotional and spiritual relief to

devotees. Through this comprehensive analysis, the study aims to enhance the understanding of the multifaceted role that shrines play in society. According to the functionalist perspective of sociology, Muslim shrines serve critical social, economic, and psychological functions that contribute to the stability of both individual lives and the broader community. They play a central role in reinforcing social cohesion, religious values, and cultural traditions. The functionalist approach helps us understand how shrines serve as vital institutions that fulfill both individual and collective needs, sustaining social order and cohesion in Muslim communities (Durkheim, 1997). A sociological study of the functions of Muslim shrines in the lives of devotees explores the diverse roles these sacred spaces play in shaping individual and collective experiences. Muslim shrines, particularly in regions such as South Asia, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, serve as multifaceted institutions that address spiritual, social, psychological, and economic needs. From a sociological perspective, the functions of shrines can be analyzed through various theoretical frameworks, including functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory.

2.8 Rituals and Practices within the Shrine for Psychological Well-being

Shrines also perform psychological functions such as providing peace of mind, mental satisfaction and containment to the devotees and visitors. Most of the people visit Sufi shrines in situations where they have troubles, tensions, and suffering. They visit these shrines to get satisfaction and peace of mind, which assists in meditation. Visitors feel enlightened, peaceful and gratified when they leave the shrines. Likewise, Shrines also provide psychological support to the depressed, deprived and disappointed people of society. These functions include faith-based healing, satisfaction of spiritual needs, releasing of tension, anxiety and depression through

different rituals and practices at shrines (Sajid, 2011). Shrines make the mystical ease available in the socio-cultural setup. The ultimate purpose of visiting the shrines is to get happiness and satisfaction (Abbas *et al.*, 2013).

Furthermore, Sufism recognizes the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and soul. For this purpose, Chishti Sufis emphasize the purification of the heart and eradicating negative traits such as pride, envy, and anger. Through contemplation, self-reflection, and guidance from spiritual teachers (*Sufis*), individuals seek to achieve inner peace, emotional balance, and psychological well-being. The serene atmosphere of shrines, coupled with the presence of spiritually enlightened individuals, is believed to positively influence mental states and promote healing at the mental level. In this connection, researchers such as Pirani (2009), Iqbal (2012), and Rehaman (2014) have conducted research on the therapeutic features of Muslim shrines by explaining how these shrines perform psychiatric functions for the common masses. Pirani (2009) observed that Muslim shrines hold great significance for the Muslim community and serve as centres for spiritual practices, devotion, and communal gatherings. Likewise, Farid and Iqbal (2017) concluded that Sufi practices are the sources of spiritual, physical and mental healing in Punjab. Pirani (2008) has also argued that various rituals and practices often accompany the act of visiting a shrine for healing. Devotees may offer prayers, recite specific verses from the Quran, and make offerings such as flowers, sweets, or money. Many also engage in acts of devotion, such as performing special dances or reciting religious poetry, known as *Qawwali*, as a form of spiritual connection and expression. This has therapeutic effects on those who visit in search of soothing. The waiting period at the shrine can be a significant aspect of the healing process. Some devotees may stay for days or even weeks, engaging in acts of devotion and spending time in proximity to the sacred burial site. The belief is that

through these dedications, prayers and requests will reach the divine realm, and the desired healing or resolution will bear fruits.

Farid and Iqbal (2018) conducted a study entitled "Sufi Practices as the Cause of Spiritual, Mental, and Physical Healing at Chishti Shrines in Pakistan" and argued that Chishti shrines in Pakistan are sources of spiritual, mental, and physical healing. The Chishti order is one of the prominent Sufi orders in South Asia, and its practitioners believe in the transformative power of love, devotion, and meditation. At Chishti shrines, individuals seeking healing often engage in various practices and rituals that are believed to facilitate their well-being. For instance, *Zikr* is a form of meditation where the practitioners repeatedly recite God's names or sacred phrases. The practitioners aim to create a spiritual connection, promote mindfulness, and bring inner peace through focused repetition. Similarly, *Qawwali* is a devotional musical tradition that is commonly performed in shrines. It involves singing and chanting poetry that expresses love and devotion to God and Sufi saints. *Qawwali* is believed to induce a state of ecstasy and spiritual awakening among the participants. In addition, *Sama*, also known as "whirling" or "dance of the dervishes," is a mesmerizing and mystical form of dance associated with Sufism. *Sama* is performed as a spiritual practice to attain an ecstatic state, achieve inner harmony, and experience a sense of unity with the divine.

Faith healing is another aspect of Sufi practices at shrines. People with various ailments, both physical and mental, come to the shrine with faith and belief that their prayers and devotion will result in healing. They may offer prayers, recite specific verses or supplications, or engage in acts of charity as part of their healing process. In short, the healing experienced at shrines is seen as a combination of spiritual and psychological factors. While these practices may provide a sense of solace, comfort,

and hope, they are not meant to replace professional medical treatment. Many individuals who visit shrines also seek medical help alongside their spiritual practices (Farid & Iqbal, 2018)

2.9 Gapes in the literature

As evident from the literature reviewed above, most of the studies have been conducted on saints and shrines in Punjab, Sindh, and Kashmir. Such studies have yet to be performed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which has a rich history of saints and shrines. In fact, many of the famous saints currently situated in Punjab and Kashmir originally belonged to the Pashtun origin who migrated to cities across the Indian sub-continent to spread Islam and Sufi teaching. Yet, ironically, no study could be found on saints and shrines of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This study attempts to fill this gap by examining the socio-cultural aspect of the Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, using the Shrine of *Pir Baba as a case study*, which is located in the Buner district. Associated beliefs with the *Pir Baba Shrine*, expectations from the Shrine and rituals within it have been elaborated. Moreover, the socioeconomic, demographic and cultural factors that motivate people to visit the Shrine of *Pir Baba* have been explored for the first time. The only existing study on the Muslim shrine of Kaka Sahib in Nowshera has been conducted from an archaeological standpoint. This research mainly examines the shrine's historical and physical aspects, including its structure, artifacts, and related archaeological findings. However, there remains a significant gap in research exploring the shrine from social, cultural, religious, or economic perspectives. Such studies would offer a more comprehensive understanding of its importance to both the local community and visitors (Shakir, 2018).

A sociological study of Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would yield valuable insights into the intersection of religion, culture, social dynamics, and politics in the region. Such a study would provide a nuanced understanding of how shrines contribute to social cohesion, identity, welfare, gender dynamics, and even political movements. Furthermore, it would shed light on how these sacred spaces evolve in response to modernization, urbanization, and shifting socio-political landscapes. The findings could have implications for the preservation of cultural heritage, interfaith harmony, and the role of religion in contemporary society.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

Functionalist Perspective: Émile Durkheim's (1912), theory elementary form of religious life suggests that religious institutions like shrines serve the function of social cohesion, providing emotional and spiritual support to devotees and reinforcing shared values. Shrines in KP offer a space for collective religious rituals (Urs celebrations, *Qawwali* gatherings) that strengthen community bonds. Symbolic Interactionism focuses on how individuals attach meaning to shrine visits and rituals. Acts such as lighting candles, tying threads, or reciting Sufi poetry symbolize personal devotion and hope. The symbolic significance of shrines reflects people's aspirations for health, wealth, and social harmony (Merton, 1968). Conflict Theory: Karl Marx's perspective emphasizes the power dynamics within religious institutions. Shrines in KP reflect socio-economic inequalities, with elite families often controlling shrine administration and resources. Political influence and competition over shrine authority are also central to understanding shrine dynamics in the region (Durkheim, 1912). Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) in his theory of religion as social cohesion: Durkheim argued that religion serves to unify society by reinforcing collective norms, values, and a sense of belonging. In addition, he distinguished between the *sacred* (things set apart and forbidden) and the *profane* (ordinary elements of life), stating

that religious symbols and rituals reinforce social unity (Merton, 1968). Similarly, in this research study employed the Durkheimian approach as the theoretical framework. Emile Durkheim (1858-1917), a functionalist sociologist, put forward the sociology of religion in his book entitled "Elementary Form of Religious Life (1912)". His sociology of religion is an attempt to identify the essence of religion through studying it in its primitive forms. For Durkheim, religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices related to sacred things, and it consists of three elements: 1) Beliefs in sacred things, 2) Practices (worship and rituals), and 3) Organization (Mosque, Church, Sufism) (Durkheim, 1912). Shrines fulfil all the three elements of religion outlined by Durkheim. It also works as a collective representation of common of a particular faith, creating a sense of belonging, solidarity, and social control. Emile Durkheim argued that religion is a system that separates the world into *sacred*, i.e. objects with spiritual significance, and *profane*, i.e. objects that are mundane and every day. The distinction between the sacred and profane determines human thoughts, feelings, emotions and activity, even if objects are not explicitly religious. Explaining the functions of religion, he argued that the collective performing of rituals and shared beliefs, norms and values are essential for maintaining integrity, stability and harmony in the group. In addition, Emile Durkheim also viewed that the "effervescent" state of rituals minimizes individual distinction and emphasizes the unity of a group (Durkheim, 1912).

In the context of Pakistan, several scholars have attributed the spread of Islam to saints and shrines (Hassan, 1987). Borrowing words from Durkheim, it can be safely said that shrines are the elementary form of Islam in the sub-continent. These shrines were considered spiritually attractive places, and people visited them to accommodate their social, psychological, and spiritual needs. Over time, these shrines changed and evolved into socio-religious organizations that attained sacred status and started

performing different social, economic and psychological functions in the lives of the people.

Functionalists have tried to explain religious rituals in terms of individual needs and social equilibrium (Durkheim, 1903). They argued that rituals are adaptive responses to the social and physical environment. Based on Emile Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, the researcher explored how holy shrines and their associated rituals have functional importance for those who visit shrines and participate in performative rituals. Durkheim argues that religious ideas and ideals are not static but dynamics. The various elements of religion are changing with the changes in social organization (Durkheim, 1903). Therefore, certain rituals are replaced by others, and their specific functions change with time. Emile Durkheim's theory of religion helped the researcher to underscore the current status of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*, its social, cultural, economic, and psychological functions in the lives of devotees, and the changing sacred status of the shrine over time.

Sociological theories offer diverse perspectives on the role of religion in society, each contributing to an understanding of religious institutions such as Muslim shrines in Pashtun culture. The theories of Max Weber, Karl Marx, Clifford Geertz, and Talcott Parsons provide distinct frameworks for analyzing the function of shrines in terms of social, economic, cultural, and psychological aspects. This critical analysis examines the relevance and limitations of these theories in explaining the role of shrines in Pashtun society (Weber, 1905, Marx, 1867, Geertz, 1973, Parsons, 1951 and Parsons, 1937).

Max Weber (1864–1920) explored how religious beliefs influence economic and social life, arguing that religious ideas can drive significant societal transformations. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905), Weber contended that

societies transition from mysticism to rationalization, where religion becomes more structured and bureaucratic. Applying Weber's theory to Muslim shrines in Pashtun society, one could argue that these shrines have evolved over time due to changing social dynamics, including political shifts and modernization (Weber, 1905).

However, Weber's theory may have limitations when applied to Pashtun shrines. While he emphasized rationalization, Muslim shrines in Pashtun society often maintain their mystical and traditional elements rather than becoming highly bureaucratized. The continued significance of saints, supernatural beliefs, and intercessory practices suggests that these shrines resist complete rationalization. Moreover, unlike Weber's analysis of Protestantism, which linked religious beliefs to capitalist development, Pashtun shrines function more as communal and spiritual centers than as drivers of economic transformation (Weber, 1905).

Karl Marx (1818–1883) viewed religion as a tool used by the ruling class to maintain power and control over the working class by promoting ideologies that justify social inequality. He famously described religion as the "opium of the people," suggesting that it provides false hope and consolation, diverting individuals from recognizing and challenging systemic oppression. Applying Marx's theory, one could argue that Pashtun shrines serve as places where devotees seek spiritual solace, often as a response to economic hardship, social struggles, or political instability (Marx, 1867).

From a Marxist perspective, these shrines could be seen as reinforcing the status quo by pacifying individuals and preventing them from actively addressing structural inequalities. Instead of organizing for social or economic reform, devotees may accept their suffering as part of a divine plan, awaiting rewards in the afterlife. However, this perspective may be overly deterministic. Shrines also serve as sites of resistance and

social mobilization, where marginalized groups find a sense of solidarity and identity. In some cases, shrine-based networks provide economic support, challenge political authorities, and foster grassroots activism, which contradicts the notion that religion solely functions as a mechanism of control (Marx, 1867).

Clifford Geertz (1926–2006) argued that religion is a system of symbols that provides meaning to human life. Through "thick description," Geertz emphasized the need to analyze religious practices within their cultural context, recognizing how rituals, myths, and symbols shape collective experiences. In the context of Pashtun shrines, Geertz's framework is particularly useful, as these shrines embody a fusion of religious beliefs, cultural traditions, and social practices (Geertz, 1973).

Muslim shrines in Pashtun society are not merely places of worship but also social and economic hubs. They reinforce cultural identity, provide psychological support, and facilitate communal interactions. The integration of local folklore, spiritual healing, and intergenerational traditions highlights how these shrines function as cultural institutions. However, Geertz's symbolic approach may understate the material and power dynamics at play within religious institutions. While he focuses on meaning-making, he does not adequately address issues of economic exploitation or political control that can be associated with shrine-based religious structures (Geertz, 1973).

Talcott Parsons (1902–1979) viewed religion as an institution that helps maintain social order and cohesion by reinforcing shared values and norms. He argued that religion provides individuals with a framework to cope with existential crises while legitimizing social institutions and roles. In the case of Muslim shrines in Pashtun society, Parsons' theory highlights their role in fostering community cohesion and social stability (Parsons, 1951).

Shrines serve as gathering places where social bonds are reinforced through collective worship, communal events, and shared rituals. They provide moral guidance, conflict resolution mechanisms, and economic support, thereby promoting societal equilibrium. However, Parsons' functionalist approach tends to overlook conflicts and power struggles within religious institutions. While shrines may contribute to stability, they can also be sites of contestation, particularly in cases where different sects, political actors, or economic stakeholders vie for control over shrine resources and influence (Weber, 1905, Marx, 1867, Geertz, 1973, Parsons, 1951 and Parsons, 1937).

Each of these sociological theories offers valuable insights into the role of Muslim shrines in Pashtun society, but none provides a comprehensive explanation on its own. Weber's theory highlights the evolving nature of religious institutions, but Pashtun shrines continue to maintain mystical elements. Marx's critique of religion as a tool of control is relevant in some cases, yet shrines also serve as spaces of resistance and solidarity. Geertz's symbolic approach effectively captures the cultural significance of shrines, though it does not fully address power dynamics. Parsons' functionalist perspective underscores the stabilizing role of shrines but downplays conflicts within religious institutions.

A holistic understanding of Muslim shrines in Pashtun culture requires an integration of these perspectives. Shrines function as religious, social, economic, and psychological institutions, shaping and being shaped by broader societal forces. Recognizing the interplay of spiritual beliefs, cultural traditions, economic interests, and political dynamics allows for a more nuanced analysis of their significance in contemporary Pashtun society.

Chapter – 3

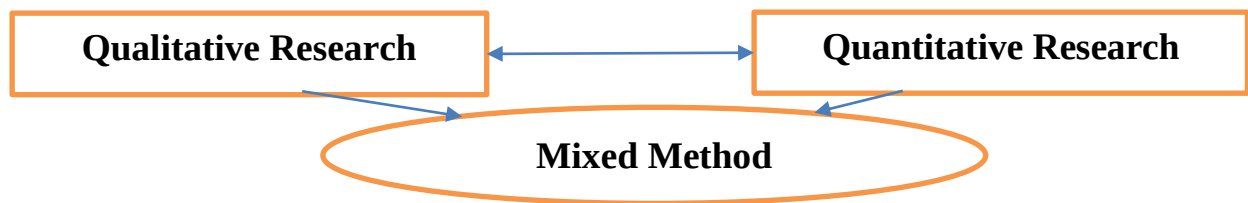
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methods employed for data collection and analysis. The researcher used a mixed-method approach, which integrates qualitative and quantitative tools (Creswell, 2011). A single qualitative or quantitative method would not have been enough to thoroughly explore the phenomenon under study. For instance, the qualitative method could not describe in detail the socioeconomic and demographic factors that affect the expectations from the shrines, frequency of visitors, rituals, beliefs, and emotional attachments with the shrines. Furthermore, qualitative studies are usually less generalizable, subjective, and contain only soft data. On the other hand, a quantitative approach was needed to explore the shrine visitors' deep-rooted beliefs, emotions and lived experiences. Methodologically, it is essential to go deep into the participants' thought processes and provide a detailed understanding of the context and the participants.

The employment of mixed methods bridges the gap between these two methods. It is pertinent to mention here that the limitations of one method are the strengths of the other method and fulfill the lag behind spaces of each other (Cresswell, 2015). The researcher used mixed method research for the comprehensive understanding of the Muslim shrines in the context of Pashtun culture. It has been mentioned above that both the qualitative and quantitative data portray a complete picture of the research problem. Hence, the researcher also used mixed method research for the sake of validation and triangulation (Creswell, 2017). By using both methods, researchers can validate or cross-check their findings. If both qualitative and quantitative data lead to

similar conclusions, the results are strengthened. Conversely, if they diverge, it can point to areas requiring further exploration. Similarly, some research questions were addressed by qualitative method and some were by quantitative method. Mixed methods allow researchers to approach these questions from multiple angles, which can lead to more accurate and comprehensive answers (Tashakkori, & Teddlie, 2010). In essence, the rationale for using mixed methods lies in the combination of strengths from both qualitative and quantitative approaches, allowing for a more thorough and reliable understanding of the research topic (Johnson, 2004). Therefore, this study used a combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches for the sake of comprehensive understanding of the problem, validation and triangulation, contextualizing findings and enhancing credibility (Bergman, 2008).



(Creswell Mixed Method Design, 2006)

Figure – 3.1: Mixed-Method Approach

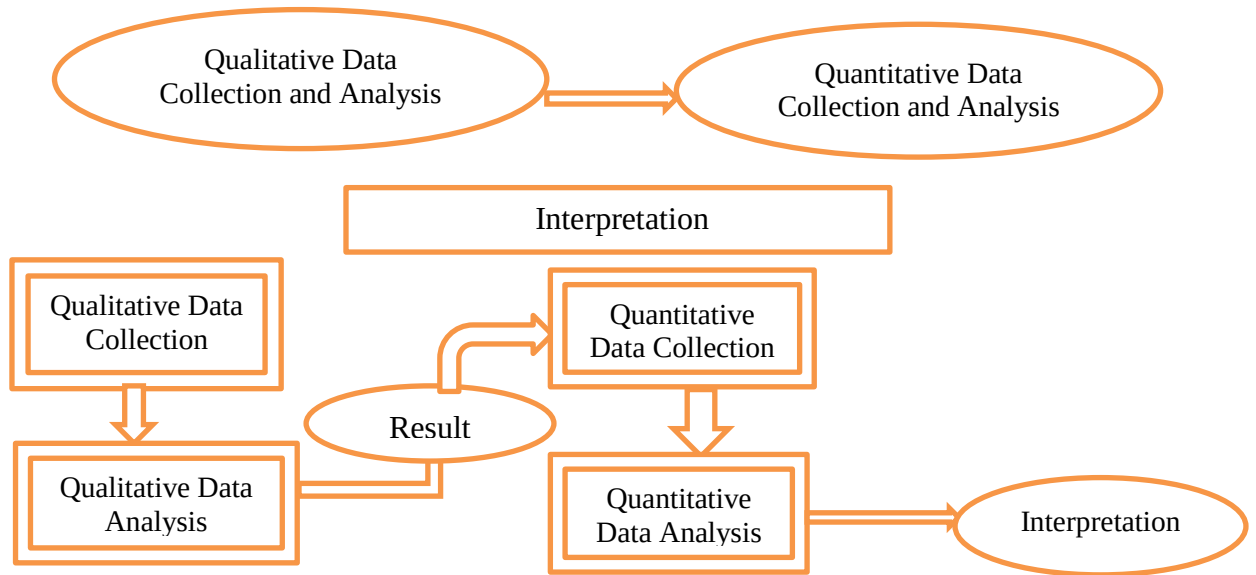
3.2 Research Design

3.2.1 Exploratory Sequential Design

The study used an *exploratory sequential method*, which consists of two phases, i.e., the qualitative method in the first phase and the quantitative method in the second phase. The qualitative method has served as a base for the quantitative method, and the qualitative method is supported by the quantitative. In addition, an exploratory research design is required in exploratory studies where variables are unknown, measuring instruments are not available, and where there is no guiding framework or

theory. This design has a qualitative beginning and is best suited for exploring a phenomenon (Creswell et al., 2003).

In this study, the qualitative data collected from the sampled participants (explained below) provided the base for developing quantitative tools and data collection. Eventually, the results of both forms of data were compared.



Exploratory Sequential Model of Creswell, Adopted from Plano Clark (2003):

Figure – 3.2: Exploratory Sequential Approach

3.3 Phase 1: Qualitative Study

3.3.1 Universe of the Study

The research study was conducted at the *Pir Baba* shrine located in the district Buner-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Pir Baba* is the most famous shrine in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and district Buner is considered the land of Sufiism. Therefore, the researcher selected this particular Shrine as a case study. A pilot survey was conducted to learn about the potential respondents, their types, and the general features of the Shrine and the area. After in-depth observation and investigation from the local key informants, servants (*Malang*) of the shrines, and the administration of the shrines, it was found that there

are mainly two types of visitors to the shrines. First, there are “Resident Devotees” who visit the shrines almost daily and who consider themselves as the servants (*Malang*) of shrines. They usually spend most of their time in the vicinity of the Shrine. Second, there were “Visitor Devotees” who visited the shrines frequently, usually on Monday (*Pir Wraz*), Thursday (*Ziarat Wraz*), or Friday (*Juma*). Including demographic information in a pilot survey is a standard and important practice in any research study, including one focusing on Muslim shrines (Fink, 2013). Gathering demographic data helps in several ways, ensuring the survey is well-targeted and the findings are robust (Bryman, 2016). Here’s why addressing demographics in a pilot survey is important for a study on Muslim shrines. Addressing demographic information in a survey is necessary for the sake of understanding sample representation such as ensuring diversity: By collecting demographic data, researchers can assess whether the survey sample reflects the diversity of the target population, such as variations in age, gender, socioeconomic status, education, or geographic location (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014). This ensures that the results are not biased by an over-representation of one group. Hence, stratified analysis is necessary, If there are different types of shrine visitors (e.g., men vs. women, different age groups), demographic data will allow researchers to stratify the results. This can highlight patterns of behavior, beliefs, or practices specific to different demographic groups. Assessing cultural or regional variation such as geographic insights to religious practices, there may be significant regional differences. For instance, people in different provinces or regions might have varying experiences or interpretations of practices at shrines (Oppenheim, 1992). Demographic information about the respondents’ geographic location can help researchers analyze regional differences in beliefs, practices, and expectations (Krosnick, & Presser, 2010). For cultural

understanding demographic details, such as ethnicity or local customs, can shed light on how different cultural norms affect participation in shrine-related activities, such as pilgrimages, rituals, or prayer (Groves, Fowler, & Tourangeau, (2009). Therefore, the researcher has stratified the samples into different categories on the basis of gender, education and location in the following (Table No.3.1).

3.3.2 Sampling for Qualitative Data

Collecting data from the whole population is not possible in a research study. Therefore, the technique of sampling is used, which is a method or procedure of selecting a segment of the population to represent the larger population. This study used convenient sampling techniques to collect data from the various categories of visitors to the shrines. The researcher stayed in the Shrine for almost a month to collect relevant data from the potential participants to be interviewed.

Determining the appropriate number of participants to be interviewed is a crucial aspect of research. However, the number of interviews required depends on various factors such as methodological and epistemological perspectives, research questions, participant characteristics, access issues, time limitations, available resources for data collection, and practical considerations like transcription and data handling. Qualitative research aims to achieve a deep understanding of a phenomenon or focus on exploring the meanings and variations of meanings within a given issue, process, or situation (Dworkin, 2012). While some qualitative research experts avoid specifying a particular number of interviews that are "enough," others offer more specific recommendations. For instance, Warren (2002) suggests that a minimum of 20 to 30 interviews is necessary.

Similarly, Adler and Adler (2012:10) suggest that qualitative interviews typically involve a range of participants somewhere between twelve and sixty, with an average of thirty. While these guidelines should not be regarded as absolute standards, they provide helpful guidance for researchers in terms of expectations and what can be considered a reasonable approach within a specific field. Bartlotti (2000:110) captures this ongoing discussion by emphasizing the importance of gathering sufficient data to support a thesis and avoid criticism that the conclusions are based solely on the perspective of a single individual or reflect the biases of the researcher. Likewise, considering the length of the time and difficulty in transcribing thousand hours of interviews, it is best advised to keep the sample size in the range of one dozen to 60, and its mean value is 30 (Adler, 1987). Considering these guidelines, the researcher collected qualitative data from 30 participants through semi-structured interviews until a "saturation point" was achieved. Ten (10) of the research participants were "resident devotees", and 20 were "visiting devotees". Purposively and proportionally, the 10 respondents were selected from the resident devotees while 20 respondents from visiting devotees, because the number of the resident devotees were less as compared to the number of visiting devotees. In addition, the tourists were also included in the visiting devotees.

3.3.3 Categories of Sampled Research Participants

In accordance with the objectives of the study, the researcher identified various categories of the research participants based on variations in beliefs, expectations, and rituals of the visitors across age, gender, education level, economic status, religion, sect, and location. Individuals' different social positions and identities influence the beliefs and associations of people with shrines (Tahir *et al.*, 2018). For instance, younger people have different beliefs and experiences about shrines than old people,

and so do women compared to men. Likewise, illiterate people have different levels of thinking, perceptions, attitudes, and experiences about life compared to literate people. These considerations allowed the researcher to categorize the research participants based on age, gender, education, and location as shown in the following table (Table. No. 3.1).

Table – 3.1: Categories of Sampled Research Participants

Gender	Younger (Age 30 and below)	Older (Age above 30)	Total
Male	15	15	30
Female	15	15	30
Total	30	30	
Education	Married	Unmarried	Total
Illiterate	20	10	30
Literate	10	20	30
Total	30	30	
Location	Upper Class	Lower Class	Total
Rural	10	20	30
Urban	20	10	30
Total	30	30	

3.3.4 Observations, Research Diaries and Field Notes

Sociologists have recognized that "the field" and "the fieldwork" are not distinct and separate entities (Sanauddin, 2015). There is an interconnection between the field and our daily experiences, which implies that we are constantly engaged in the field (Caplan, 1993; Schrijvers (1993). This realization allowed the researcher to identify and hold discussions with people who provided relevant data. For instance, during the initial stage of my research, while going to Buner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa t, I observed a phrase, "Welcome to the land of Sufiism", at the entrance of District Buner. On the way, we observed children selling some green leaves. On inquiry, we came to know that it was *Manu* used to avoid evil eyes. In this study the researchers used grounded theory method because the researcher tried to explore the existence of the Muslims shrines in Pashtun society as well as associated beliefs of the devotees. Beside this, expectations of the devotees from the Muslim shrines and the social, economic and psychological functions of the Muslims shrines in the daily lives of the devotees. In this connection, the nature of the grounded theory is inherently inductive, meaning that its aim to develop new theories rather than to test the existing one. Grounded theory allows the researcher to develop a theory directly from the perceptions, experiences, and perspectives of the participants (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Similarly, in this study the researcher documented the perceptions, beliefs, and expectations of the devotees from the Muslims shrine in Pashtun society. When we are studying phenomena that are culturally or contextually rich (e.g., religious practices at Muslim shrines, grounded theory provides a flexible and adaptive approach to uncover how people experience and make sense of their lives in these specific contexts Charmaz (2006). Grounded theory provides a systematic and flexible approach to developing theories that emerge directly from the data. By using

grounded theory, researchers can generate rich, context-specific insights into complex social phenomena like religious practices at Muslim shrines, while remaining close to the participants' lived experiences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The approach's focus on theory generation, flexibility, and the emphasis on participant voices makes it a powerful methodology for exploring under-researched or dynamic topics (Glaser, 1992). Therefore, in this study the researcher used grounded theory to study Muslim shrines in the context of Pashtun society and document the unexplored beliefs, practices, rituals and expectations of the devotees from the shrine.

The researcher collected data through interview guide, it is attached in (Appendix-1 Pashtu Version), (Appendix-2 English Version) and observations. Throughout my fieldwork, the researcher maintained a field diary where I diligently recorded pertinent details regarding the research and any challenges or concerns encountered during the fieldwork. Moreover, a type recorder was used to record the interviews of the participants. The researcher was keenly attentive not just to the speeches of the participants but also to the types of words they used and their facial expressions, emotions, and feelings. Moreover, the *Mannat*⁷, prayers, practices, worship, expectations and rituals of the participants were keenly observed. The silent observations conducted apart from formal interviews provided further insights into the rituals performed within the Shrine. The field notes were noted in the research dairies while the formal interviews were tape-recorded.

I myself collected data from most of the male participants within the premises of the Shrine. Considering the cultural sensitivity of the research area, a female research assistant was employed to collect data from the female research participants when the

⁷ Mannat: is a wish that one desires to come to fruition and the vow one makes to a deity or saint after his/her wish come true

researcher was unable to do it himself. The female research assistant was trained in the field of social research. The rationale and objectives of the research were explained, and interview guides were thoroughly discussed and practiced the research assistant. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to one and a half hours. Most of the interviews were informal and took place within the premises of the Shrine. The female research assistant were collected the data from the female respondents and she also belong to Buner and was already known by the community. She holds the Pashtu version of interviewed guide as it is attached in the (Appendix-1). The interviewer was native Pashtu speaker and most of the interviews were also Pashtu speaker. In addition, the interviewer was also graduated in BS sociology. Therefore, there was no communication gap between the interviewer and interviews; therefore, she collected relevant data about the research questions. In Pashtun culture, where strict gender roles often govern interactions between men and women, female participants might feel more comfortable discussing religious beliefs, practices, and personal experiences with a female research assistant. Sensitive topics related to women's roles in religious settings, such as their practices at shrines or beliefs about spirituality, might be more openly discussed with someone of the same gender. In some parts of Pashtun society, direct interaction between unrelated men and women is discouraged, especially in private or personal contexts. A female research assistant would likely have better access to female participants, particularly in a religious or cultural setting like a shrine, where women may feel more comfortable engaging with a woman researcher. Overall, choosing a female research assistant in Pashtun society is a practical decision that ensures ethical engagement, enhances rapport-building, respects cultural boundaries, and ultimately produces more comprehensive and accurate data on the

religious practices, beliefs, and expectations of women, especially in gendered contexts like Muslim shrines.

3.3.5 Transcription of Data

Transcription is the art of transforming spoken words from recorded interviews into written text. Apart from the spoken language, nonverbal cues like silence, gestures, body language and emotional aspects such as tears, sighs, and coughs etc. provided essential insights into the study (Poland, 1995); Wellard & McKenna, 2001) and, therefore, the audio files were transcribed into written text.

The study used the guidance of Tagliamonte (2006), which advocates for a balanced approach to transcription. According to Tagliamonte, (2006) transcriptions should be detailed enough to capture essential information for analysis while maintaining simplicity for ease of reading. Adopting these guidelines, all the relevant portions of the interview verbatim, including the non-verbal cues, were transcribed. However, I exercised discretion in omitting any talk that lacked significant relevance to the research. Each decision to omit was made after carefully listening and ensuring the segment's true irrelevance. I have provided brief mentions of the omitted contents wherever necessary. A meticulous transcription protocol was developed to remain consistent throughout the transcription process, and faithfulness to the data was ensured. The transcription process connected me back to the field and the participants and further enhanced my understanding of data.

The interviews were conducted in local Pashto languages, which were translated along with transcription. According to Sechrest et al. (1972), the translation process is significantly enhanced when the researcher possesses a profound comprehension of the source language and a deep familiarity with the associated culture. This linguistic

and cultural expert enables the researcher to grasp the comprehensive implications embedded within specific terms, ensuring that the cultural connotations of words are effectively conveyed to the readers. Like any other language, Pashto carries its own set of assumptions and values that pose challenges while translating them into the grammatical and syntactical structure of the English language. My familiarity with the Pashtu language and culture helped me translate the beliefs, attitudes, and expectations of the participants from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*.

However, I faced challenges while translating some of the Pashtu proverbs, Pashtu folklore and Pashtu folk stories. For instance, a participant used Pashtu folklore, “*Ka Pir Baba Darla dar na karam. Zargy de sabar ka ma khudy na darkaweena*”. I took the help of the literature and linguistics experts for translating such Pashtu folklore and folk stories,

3.3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis differs from quantitative analysis as it involves transforming data into meaningful findings without using a predetermined formula in the process (Patton, 2002, p. 432). Additionally, in qualitative research, data collection and analysis are not entirely separate entities, as some initial analysis occurs during the fieldwork itself (Flick, 2006; Maxey, 1999). In other words, data collection, analysis and interpretation proceed simultaneously (Neuman, 2011). Likewise, activities such as data handling and organization, including transcription, require an initial familiarity with emerging themes (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Flick, 2006; Mason, 2002). Keeping these in mind, my analysis journey commenced during the fieldwork and encompassed several phases and levels of data handling and interpretation.

I relied on research diaries and field notes to initiate the data analysis process. This served the dual purpose of capturing data and providing reflections on the interview contents and the quality of researcher-participant interactions. It also facilitated the process of translating statements, constructing transcripts, categorizing data into themes, selecting participants' quotes, reviewing data, and organizing data into themes. Some of these aspects have been briefly discussed earlier in this chapter, while others will be further elucidated below.

Transcription is a crucial part of data analysis (Wellard & McKenna, 2001), so I simultaneously noted important themes and participants' comments in a separate file while transcribing the interviews. By the time all the interviews were transcribed, a compiled list of significant themes had emerged from the data. A more detailed and meticulous analysis of the data followed the transcription process.

The types of data to be analyzed were categorized into seven major themes. These themes include the beliefs of the devotees, the rituals of the devotees within the premises of the Shrine, social expectations of the devotees from the Shrine, social functions of the Shrine, economic functions of the Shrine, psychological functions of the Shrine and the changing status of the Shrine. All the themes are elaborated on in detail in Chapter 4 of this research study. The researcher closely examined the data to identify the standard topics, ideas and themes. The most common six-step approach to thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006) was adopted in this study, which includes familiarization with data, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, naming themes and writing up themes. The qualitative results were then fed into the next phase, i.e., the designing of the questionnaire for the quantitative study phase of the study.

3.4 Phase 2: Quantitative Study

As per the exploratory sequential method, the qualitative results provided a base for the quantitative phase of the study. Variables were identified, and a questionnaire was prepared and used for quantitative data collection. The researcher conducted a pilot study in *Pir Baba* to collect information about the number and types of visitors from the local key informants, shrine administrators, disciples (*Muird*) and servants (*Malang*) of the shrines. The average number of resident devotees was identified to be around 30, and they were permanently living at the Shrine. In addition, there are visiting devotees who visit the Shrine on specified days, such as on Friday, to pray and participate in certain rituals and then leave. The total number of devotees, including resident devotees and visiting devotees, was estimated to be 530. A total of 223 participants were selected for the sample using the sample calculation formula of Raosoft (2004). This calculation is based on a 95% confidence interval with a 05% margin of error.⁸ A convenient sampling technique was used to select respondents for the quantitative study. Using the proportion allocation sampling method, the sample size was further decided, and 13 respondents were selected from resident devotees, while 210 respondents were selected from visiting devotees. Similar techniques have been used by other researchers, such as Younas *et al.* (2020). The categories and numbers of devotees/visitors have been summarized in the following table.

⁸ The sample size calculation formula can be found here <<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>>

Table – 3.2: Number and Types of Visitors at Pir Baba Shrine

	Average Number	Sample size
Resident Devotees	30	13
Visiting Devotees	500	210
Total	530	223

3.4.1 Tool of Data Collection

The quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire, which consists of three portions: demographic information of the devotees, beliefs of the devotees, and the changing status of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. All these variables have been illustrated in the following conceptual framework;

Table – 3.3: Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Framework		
Demographic Variables	Independent Variable	Dependent Variables
➤ Age ➤ Gender ➤ Marital Status ➤ Education ➤ Economic Status ➤ Religion ➤ Religious Sects ➤ Sub-Sects within Sunni Sect ➤ Sufi Order ➤ Locality ➤ Province	Beliefs of the Devotees	Rituals Performed by the Devotees
		Social Expectations from the Shrine
		Expectations in terms of health from the Shrine
		Social Functions of Shrines
		Economic Functions
		Psychological Functions
		Changing the Sacred Status of the Shrine

3.4.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

In social science, measuring the reliability of an instrument is of great importance in ascertaining whether quantified variables give consistent responses or results. Therefore, the researchers first check the reliability of the tool before adopting it for data collection (Kember & Leung, 2008). This study adopted Cronbach's Alpha, which was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha is commonly used as an appropriate statistical scale or tool for the demonstration of the

reliability of the quantitative data collection instrument. (Taber, 2018). The range of Cronbach's Alpha is always between 0 and 1 (Melanie, 2012). George and Mallery (2003) have provided these guidelines for its use, i.e. if the value of Alpha is >0.9 = Excellent, >0.8 = Good, >0.7 = Acceptable, >0.6 = Questionable, >0.5 = Poor, and <0.5 = Unacceptable. The following table shows the results of Cronbach's Alpha of the construct in this study.

Table – 3.4: Testing Reliability of the Questioner

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Beliefs	0.746	7
Rituals	0.850	17
Social Expectations	0.986	24
Expectations in terms of Health	0.986	11
Social Functions	0.970	16
Interfaith Harmony	0.952	8
Inter-Cultural Harmony	0.965	8
Economic Functions	0.979	11
Psychological Purpose	0.886	7
Psychological Practices	0.978	7
Psychological Feelings	0.936	5
Changing the Sacred Status of Shrines	0.978	9

3.4.3 Data Analysis

After collection, the quantitative data was described and analyzed using different statistical tools and procedures. Choosing valid statistical tools for descriptions and analysis of variables depended on the nature, reliability and validity of the tests. The data was subjected to both Uni-Variate analysis and Bi-Variate analysis. In the Uni-variate analysis, the data was analyzed using simple frequency, percentage, One- way ANOVA, and a T-test.. A simple one-way is used to compare the means among three

or more groups (Field, 2013). On the other hand, the T-test is used to compare the means of the two groups (Warner, 2013). This study used a T-test to compare the means of males and females. The quantitative data was analyzed by using SPSS 20. One-way ANOVA and t-test were used to measure the mean difference in beliefs among different categories of people.

On the other hand, for Bi-Variate analysis, the Chi-Square test was used to measure the association between independent and dependent variables. Statistical Chi-Square Test is expressed in the given formula of McCall and Robert (1975) as follows;

$$\chi_{obs}^2 = \sum_{j=1}^r \sum_{k=1}^c \frac{(O_{jk} - E_{jk})^2}{E_{jk}}$$

O_{jk} = Observed frequencies at jth row and kth column in the cross-classified categories.

E_{jk} = Expected frequency, assuming no relationship among variables.

The degree of freedom is calculated as follows;

$$df = (r-1)(c-1)$$

df = degree of freedom.

r = number of rows

c = number of columns (McCall, 1975).

3.5 Data Interpretation

In data interpretation, the researcher compared both the qualitative and quantitative results through convergent design as proposed by Creswell (2015). In this design, the two data sets were compared and the researcher assessed that much the qualitative and the quantitative results converge and diverge or up to what extent the qualitative and quantitative results are consonant and inconsonant with each other (Creswell, 2015).

The convergent views were given the name of consonant views, while divergent views were given the name of inconsonant views.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Research inquiry involves interference in the personal and social lives of the people; therefore, upholding ethical values is necessary on behalf of the researchers (British Sociological Association, 2017). This research study ensured necessary care to ensure the privacy, safety and rights of the research participants. Ethics approval for the study was obtained from the graduate study committee, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar, in October, 2021. The research adhered to the ethical guidelines set forth by the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2002) and the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth (ASA, 1999).

Before conducting the interviews, the participants were informed about the general purpose of the study, and the theme of the study was explained to them. The privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of the participants and the data are ensured. I conducted all interviews using tape recordings, clarifying that these recordings were exclusively intended for my research purposes. The participants were given the right to withdraw at any stage of the interview. The researcher ensured that the study's commitment to advancing the cause of knowledge should not violate the rights of the people nor disturb the social life of the people (British Sociological Association, 2017).

Chapter – 4

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter focuses on qualitative data analysis and is divided into eight sections, which present the main themes extracted from the qualitative data. The first theme explains *Pir Baba* and his shrine in the eyes of devotees, including the legacy of *Pir Baba*, Miracles/ *Kirramat of Pir Baba* and the different beliefs associated with the shrine. The second theme describes the worship, rituals and practices of the devotees performed within the shrine, such as offering prayer, reciting the Holy Quran, circling the shrine (*Zyarat Karna*), knotting a thread with the shrine, eating Holy salt, tying children on the shrine and the celebration of *Urs*. The third theme explores the socio-cultural background of the devotees and the frequency and intensity of their visits to the shrine. The fourth theme explains the expectations of the devotees from the shrine, such as hoping for fertility, wishing for a male child, fulfilling marriage of choice, recovery of health and resolution of family disputes.

The fifth theme delineates the social functions of the shrine: social integration, social control, provision of free food, provision of space for recreation and leisure time, and inter-faith and intercultural harmony among people belonging to different religious and cultural backgrounds. Likewise, the sixth theme describes the economic functions of the shrine, such as presenting *Nazrana* to the devotees and explaining the financial benefits to the local community, vendors, hotels, and business people. Similarly, the seventh theme highlights the psychological functions and the psychological reasons for which the devotees visit the shrine. Lastly, theme eight describes the changing status of the shrine, such as different tourists visiting the shrine and different sectarian influences altering the sacred status of the shrine.

4.1 Pir Baba in the Eyes of Devotees

The data shows that for the devotees, *Pir Baba* is a great spiritual and religious figure or saint who has spent all his life worshipping Allah and is considered someone closer to Allah. In the Islamic and South Asian literature, a saint is someone who submits his own will to the will of Allah and his Prophet. A saint is believed to have the attributes of piousness, virtuousness, frequent worship of Allah and protection of oneself from evil (Baghi, 2017). For a saint, this world is temporary, which is why they devote their lives to God. They are considered to be true *Faqir* (humble persons, egoless) for their believed self-sacrifices and public services (Rozehnal, 2006 & Baghi, 2017). The saints have very high ranks and are esteemed status in the eyes of devotees, disciples, and ordinary people. When they are alive, the people have great reverence for them, and after their deaths, their tombs/shrines become sacred places of great importance. A Pashtu verse written on the wall of *Pir Baba's* shrine describes it like this:

"This shrine of the saint (Pir Baba) is no dusty grave on this earth, It is a piece of the garden of the heaven."



1:

A Picture of Pashto Poetry on the Wall of the Shrine of Pir Baba

It shows the high status of the shrine of *Pir Baba* in the eyes of the devotees, disciples and the common masses. A devotee from Jalala, the researcher interviewed, expressed his feelings and affiliation with *Pir Baba* like this:

“If someone claims to be equal to a saint (Pir Baba) in status and rank, it is completely wrong, as a saint is someone closer to God. The saint has direct access to God compared to other people. Therefore, ordinary people cannot be equal to the saints of God in status and rank.”

Likewise, another devotee also expressed his reverence for *Pir Baba* as below:

“People visit the shrine and pay their respect and honor the sacred figure of Pir Baba. Pir Baba is the king; we are beggars and needy, begging for mercy, peace and comfort which he may shower upon us. If you spend some time here within the shrine, you will feel the satisfaction and the peace of mind.”

Hence, the shrine of *Pir Baba* has a higher status in the eyes of the devotees, disciples, and common masses. Devotees and disciples prefer the shrine of *Pir Baba* over other shrines and tombs.

Islam is a diverse religion, having various cultural and regional expressions. Practices related to shrines may differ significantly depending on the local traditions and interpretations of Islam in a particular area (Farida, 2009). Moreover, attitudes towards shrines can also vary within different Islamic theological schools and religious sects (Campbell, 1998). Likewise, people of different cultures, religions, and social backgrounds have different inclinations toward the shrines.

Like other traditional cultures, Pashtun culture also has inclinations towards shrines and saints. The beliefs related to saints and shrines get inculcated into the minds of children, women and adults during the process of socialization. Likewise, the customs, traditions, norms, values, folklores and rituals associated with the saints, their miracles and their shrines are learned as part of the local culture and transmitted to the next generation (Gilmartin, 2014). The learnings are reinforced by the religious Mullahs who present the importance of the saints and their miracles in their sermons and the devotees of the saints who narrate the miraculous stories to their children and other people (Farida, 2009; Werbner, 2003).

A devotee from Mardan, a participant, expressed his belief system in these words:

"Allah listens to Pir Baba more than us because he is unique among humans. He was the darling of Allah (Nazwali wo aa Khudy)."

Another devotee stated:

"Human beings may change their fortunes by visiting the shrines of this special saint of Allah."

The devotees, thus, consider *Pir Baba*, a great saint of Allah. Furthermore, he is also considered a mediator between God and humans who can convey the wishes and messages of the devotees to Allah. Sajid and Khan (2011) found similar beliefs in their study of the shrine of Barilla Sharif, Gujarat. A historian viewed during his interview that the same beliefs associated with shrines and saints among the people of Swat and Buner. He explains that these people have adopted these beliefs as a result of assimilation while living in the vicinity of Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism. He further highlights that in the past, some social problems, such as

social inequality, poverty, and ignorance, were at an extreme level in Swat and Buner. The fear of illness and death in the situation of social insecurity made the people take refuge in the shelter of spiritual and religious leaders (Anderson, 2006).

Hence, Muslim shrines are believed to be sacred places with a special spiritual connection to Allah. The beliefs of the devotees regarding the shrines lead them to visit these shrines as acts of devotion and piety. The beliefs and practices associated with Muslim shrines and saints reflect the diverse and multifaceted nature of Islam as practised in different regions and communities. It is essential to approach these beliefs with cultural sensitivity and understanding, recognizing the historical and social contexts that contribute to their prevalence (Shahzad, 2014).

4.2 The Shrine of *Pir Baba*

The shrine of *Pir Baba* is located in District Buner, surrounded by lush green hills and scenic beauty, making it a serene and peaceful place for visitors (Baghi, 2017). The researcher observed the shrine of *Pir Baba* as a beautiful example of Islamic architecture. It features a white marble structure with a traditional dome and minarets and is adorned with intricate calligraphy and decorative elements. The shrine of *Pir Baba* is a place of religious and cultural significance, and its architectural elements reflect the traditions and spirituality associated with Sufi shrines in the region (Baghi, 2017). The shrine typically features a central dome, which is a prominent architectural element. The dome symbolizes the heavens and often has calligraphy or decorative motifs on its surface.

Similarly, the shrine of *Pir Baba* has minarets or tall towers. These minarets serve both a functional and decorative purpose. They may be used for the call to prayer and also serve as distinctive landmarks. In addition, the shrine of *Pir Baba* has an open

courtyard, which is a space for devotees to gather, offer prayers, and engage in spiritual activities. The courtyard has a designated area for ablutions (ritual purification). There is an entrance gate leading to the shrine of *Pir Baba*, which is decorated with calligraphy, geometric patterns and verses from the Holy Quran. The tomb of *Pir Baba* lies within the main prayer hall. The shrine has a main prayer hall where the visitors offer their prayers and engage in *Zikar* (remembrance of God). The prayer hall is often adorned with carpets and has niches for Quranic recitation.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* is decorated with intricate calligraphy, floral patterns, verses from the Quran, and poetry by the Sufi saints. During the fieldwork, the researcher observed the decoration of the shrine, which was not only aesthetically pleasing but also held spiritual significance. These elements collectively create a sacred and welcoming environment for visitors, where they can engage in acts of devotion, seek blessings, and participate in the spiritual and cultural rituals associated with the shrine of *Pir Baba*.



Like most other saints who usually have their monasteries (*Chilagah*) (Baghi, 2017), the monastery of *Pir Baba* is located at the bottom of the mountain behind his shrine. I visited his *Chilagah* during the fieldwork for this study. The *Chilagah* is situated in a long cave on the mountain. I observed a man offering water from a clay pot and tea to some visitors at the entrance of the cave. The person was the volunteer servant (*Malanag*) of the shrine whose job was to explain the history and spiritual importance of the *Chilagah* to the visitors. Inside the *Chillagah*, five to ten disciples were sitting on a mat guiding visitors. These disciples pointed towards different places within the *Chilagah*, and they described these as places of worship for *Pir Baba*.⁹, *Pira Aby* and *Dewana Baba*¹⁰. *Pira Aby* is a female Sufi saint whose shrine and the shrine of *Dewana Baba* are located at some distance from the *Chillagah* and the shrine of *Pir Baba*. A servant-refer to an individual or group of people who maintain or serve a religious shrine explained to me with enthusiasm:

“This is the place of worship of Pir Baba. When someone visits this place and prays here, God enlightens his/her future”.

Another servanthaving a torch in his hand, stated:

“This is the place of worship of Dewana Baba. If you want to visit it, I will lighten this place for you with a torch. If you pray here, God will bless you.”

Likewise, another servant pointed towards a corner and explained:

"This is the place of worship of Pira Aby. Let's visit and pray here. Every wish in your heart will be fulfilled by visiting and praying in this place.”

⁹ Pira Aby: She is a female saint, and her shrine is also located in Buner-Near to Daggar, KP, Pakistan

¹⁰ Dewana Baba: His original name was Jan Khan, and he was a disciple of Pir Baba. and his shrine is located in Buner-Mandezai, KP, Pakistan

The shrine's servants guide visitors inside the cave and expect some *Nazrana* (donations/charity) in return, which is their usual business.

I observed about a dozen different male and female visitors at the *Chillagah* who were visiting for different purposes, such as seeking purification of their bodies and souls as well as having some other social and economic purposes in their minds. I observed a female visitor from District Mardan who was sharing her experience with another female who feared entering the cave. A man relative of the woman who accompanied him to the chillagah explained to her:

“The same was my situation when I was entering the Chillagah for the first time. The fear was overtaking me. My heart was purified after I entered the cave two or three times. Now, I have been purified from every sort of evil. That is why, instead of fear, I feel satisfaction.”



The photo above shows a painted wall with the inscription “Chillagah of Pir Baba” on it. In addition, there is an instruction for visitors to “remove your shoes before

entering the Cave” and Pashto poetry, which means that “*Those who follow the way of saints will never die; they remain alive and well in their grave till the day of resurrection.*” The poetry reveals the belief of devotees that Pir Baba is alive, mediating between people and Allah.

The devotees believe that transgressed and sinful people feel fear in the *Chilagah*, but when they are purified from their sins, they feel satisfaction and serenity instead of fear. The people, therefore, visit the *Chilagah* to purify their bodies and souls from different types of evils and sins. This belief and experience make the shrine even more sacred and magical, so most visitors consider visiting the shrine an essential part of the ritual (Baghi, 2017).

Upon climbing to the monastery, there is a big graveyard with vast sizes of tombs with the names of the deceased written on them, associated with *Pir Baba*. The majority of the names on the tombs have the addition of the suffix '*Badshah*', which literally means 'king', but here it refers to a 'holy' or 'exalted' person. The devotees explained that the name *Badshah* is commonly used for the descendants of *Pir Baba*. Sometimes, the name *Badshah* is used for a person who has attained a higher status in spirituality. Most of the graves belonged to the descendants and relatives of *Pir Baba*, who were inspired by his teachings. It was found that the people of the society had a spiritual attachment not only to *Pir Baba* but also to his descendants and disciples. The visitors express their spiritual, psychological, and emotional attachments by visiting the shrine and practising different rituals in its vicinity.

4.3 The Legacy of *Pir Baba*

It is widely believed that *Pir Baba* rendered a lot of services and sacrifices for the preaching and spreading of Islam in the Pashtun belt, especially in Swat, Buner and

Malakand Division. For instance, a resident devotee, while pointing towards the seminary (*Madrassah*) established by *Pir Baba* in *Pacha Kali*, said that it was the primary evidence of his services for the preaching and spreading of Islam. The *Madrassah*, which is situated at the shrine of *Pir Baba*, produced religious scholars and disciples who carried out his legacy. Its prominent example is Mian Qasim Baba.¹¹, who also preached Islam to the people of Swat. A devotee narrated the story of Mian Qasim Baba as:

“Mian Qasim Baba was the disciple of Pir Baba, whose shrine is located in Matta, Swat. Many people revere him for his services and sacrifices in spreading Islam. The devotees express their attachment by visiting his shrine and practicing different rituals.”



The study finds that the preaching of *Pir Baba* was not limited to the land of Buner but instead extended to other regions as well beyond Buner. He sent his disciples to different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan to preach and spread Islam.

¹¹ Mian Qasim Baba: He was a descendant and disciple of Pir Baba, and his shrine is located in Swat

Many people converted to Islam after being inspired by the teachings of *Pir Baba* and his disciples. A historian, Baghi (2017), mentioned in his book “*The History of Buner*” that *Pir Baba* created a large number of Sufi saints as his disciples, such as ¹²Akhunderweza Baba who is buried in Hazar Khwani Peshawar, Akhun Gada¹³, Mula Haroon¹⁴, Mula Yousaf Baba¹⁵ and Dewana Baba¹⁶. Most of these disciples of *Pir Baba* are buried in Buner except for the mentioned Akhunderweza Baba, whose shrine is located in Hazar Khwani, Peshawar. Other prominent disciples of *Pir Baba* include Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim (Hesar Baba), Maulana Habib Gul (*Nelu Baba*), Maulana Akhun Karim Dad Baba, and Maulana Abubakar Saib (*Kabul Grami*). They preached Islam in Swat, Malakand and Peshawar. All these saints had taken an oath of allegiance (*Bayath*) on the hand of *Pir Baba*, and they preached and spread Islam in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

4.4 Miracles /Kirramat of Pir Baba

It is commonly believed that Allah gives miraculous power (*Kirramat*) to his special people. By bestowing miraculous power, Allah raises the prestige and honor of his special people, including Sufi saints. Miraculous power is a supernatural power through which God's special people, such as saints, can perform unique acts that ordinary people cannot perform (Baghi, 2017). Devotees usually attribute different spiritual powers to different saints who are famous for their unusual and supernatural actions. The devotees of *Pir Baba* also attributed different miracles to him. For

¹² Akhunderweza Baba is also a religious saint, and his shrine is located in Hazar Khwani Peshawar, KP, Pakistan.

¹³ Akhun Gada: He was a disciple of Pir Baba and the father of Akhunderweza Baba.

¹⁴ Mula Haroon: His complete name was Haroon Rashid, and he was the disciple of Pir Baba.

¹⁶ Dewana Baba: He was Pir Baba's disciple, and his shrine is located in the tehsil of Mandeza Buner, KP.

instance, one of the devotees narrated a miraculous story associated with *Pir Baba* like this:

“Once, there was a big landlord in a village who had no male child. His wife came to Pir Baba and pleaded that how she was deprived of the male child. Pir Baba picked some soil from the earth and asked the woman to eat from it, which she did. After some time, the woman got pregnant and was blessed with a male child through the miraculous powers of Pir Baba.”

Another devotee also narrated a similar (or the same) story associated with the miraculous power of *Pir Baba*, which is the birth of a male child to the issue-less woman. He said:

“There was a political leader who had no male child, but when he visited the shrine of Pir Baba, Allah blessed him with a male child.”

Furthermore, the devotees described the miracles of *Pir Baba* regarding the healing of incurable illnesses of various kinds. These include curing cancer patients at their last stages, recovering patients from their deathbeds, healing severe mental illnesses and curing those incurable patients when the doctors had given up hope and stopped treatments. A respondent expressed:

“I had a child who could not walk even after turning three years old. He started walking smoothly after I brought him to the shrine of Pir Baba. It is the virtue of Pir Baba who blesses his devotees and those who need help.”

Another participant expressed his deep affiliation with the shrine of *Pir Baba*:

“My brother had no son till he came here and presented himself to the Darbar (shrine) of Pir Baba; God blessed him with three male kids.”

Thus, the devotees of *Pir Baba* attribute different miracles to *Pir Baba* and his shrine, such as the provision of male children, recovery of patients from incurable illnesses and the healing of hereditary weaknesses of children. The findings are consistent with existing studies, such as that of Hasan (1979) conducted in Punjab.

4.5 Worships, Practices, and Rituals Performed by the Devotees

Like the devotees in Punjab and Sindh, who perform different rituals within the shrines (Manzo, 2003), the devotees of *Pir Baba* also perform different worship, rituals, and practices within the shrine. The following section explains the various rituals and ceremonial activities performed by devotees in the shrine of *Pir Baba*.

4.5.1 Offering Prayer and Recitation of the Holy Quran

During the field study, I observed the majority of the devotees offering *Nawafal*¹⁷ Prayer and reciting specific verses from the Holy Quran within the premises of the shrine. In this respect, one of the visiting devotees who belonged to Swat expressed:

“I offered two Rakat¹⁸ Nafal prayers here in the proximity to Pir Baba's shrine (Dargah). Moreover, I, along with my children, collectively recited Surah Yaseen, Surah Fateha, and Darood Sharif (various holly verses) and prayed for ourselves.

¹⁷ Nawafal; refers to is a type of non-obligatory prayer

¹⁸ Rakat; is a single iteration of prescribed movement and supplications performed by Muslims as part of the prescribed obligatory prayer

Thus, the two standard practices observed within the premises of Pir Baba's shrine are reciting the Holy Quran and offering *Nawafil* prayers for Barakah.¹⁹ The recitation of the Holy Quran is of significant importance in Islam. The Muslims believe that reciting the Holy Quran not only brings spiritual benefits but also invokes blessings and mercy of Allah. The devotees of *Pir Baba* engage in the recitation of specific chapters or *Surahs* from the Quran, such as Yaseen and Surah Fateha, which are considered particularly beneficial. *Surah Yaseen*, for instance, is often recited for various purposes, including seeking blessings, forgiveness, and divine intervention in matters of difficulty or distress. The act of reciting the Quran in proximity to the shrine of *Pir Baba* holds additional significance for devotees (Mokhtar, 2012). It is believed that the environment of a revered shrine is spiritually charged, and any good deeds performed within this sacred space carry even more incredible blessings and spiritual rewards (Qurashi, 2010). Therefore, devotees take the opportunity to engage in the recitation of the Quran within the premises of the shrine to seek spiritual elevation and closeness to God (Pirani, 2009).

Besides reciting the Holy Quran, the devotees offer *Nawafil* Prayers for *Barakah*. *Nawafil* Prayers, also known as voluntary prayers, are non-obligatory prayers that Muslims perform to earn extra rewards and seek closeness to Allah. The term "*Barkah*" generally refers to blessings or divine favour. Within the context of the shrine of *Pir Baba*, devotees engage in offering two *Rakat* of *Nawafil* prayers with the intention of seeking blessings and favour from Allah (Ahmed, 2015).

Offering *Nawafil* prayers at a shrine holds a specific cultural and spiritual significance. The shrine of *Pir Baba* is likely a place with spiritual blessings and miracles attributed to him. Devotees believe that by offering these special prayers in

¹⁹ Barakah; generally refers to blessings or divine favor.

such a spiritually charged environment, they are more likely to receive blessings, have their prayers answered, and experience positive changes in their lives through divine intervention (Secretariat, 2008).

The practice of reciting the Holy Quran and offering *Nawafil* prayers for *Barkah* within the premises of the shrine of *Pir Baba* expresses the beliefs and devotions of the devotees in the powers of these practices to bring spiritual benefits and blessings. The shrine acts as a focal point for their religious practices, creating a sense of community and spiritual connectedness among the devotees who come to seek solace and divine mercy at this revered place (Mushtaq, 2000).

4.5.2 Circling the Shrine (*Zyarat Karna*)

During my fieldwork, I observed the majority of the devotees circling the shrine of *Pir Baba*. One of the devotees expressed his circling of the shrine as:

"I circled here (Zyarat karna) around the shrine of Pir Baba and I prayed for my own welfare and for the whole human beings".

The act of circling a shrine, also known as "*Zyarat Karna*", is a common practice in various Sufi traditions and other religious contexts (Shaikh, 2010). It involves walking or moving in a circular pattern around a sacred site or tomb in a symbolic gesture of devotion, reverence and seeking blessings. It is the manifestation of a number of beliefs and symbolic meanings. For instance, through circling the shrine of *Pir Baba*, the devotees engage in a physical manifestation of their spiritual connection and devotion to *Pir Baba*. The devotees circle the shrine to gain spiritual benefits. This includes seeking blessings, guidance, protection, or the fulfilment of personal wishes or needs (Bord & Faulkner, 1975). The act of praying reflects a strong belief

in the intercession of *Pir Baba*, viewing him as a spiritual guide who can act as an intermediary between the devotees and the divine. Likewise, the act of circling and praying for humanity demonstrates the recognition of a shared human experience and interconnectedness. It emphasizes the idea that all humans are part of a more prominent spiritual family and that the well-being of one individual is tied to the well-being of the whole of humanity. A strong faith in the spiritual significance of the shrine of *Pir Baba* drives the devotees' actions. Such faith can be a source of comfort, hope, and inspiration, helping individuals cope with life challenges and uncertainties.

Thus, circling the shrine of *Pir Baba* and praying for oneself and humanity reflects a profound spiritual journey that combines devoted individuals with a broader sense of compassion and connectedness. It exemplifies the core values of Sufi traditions and demonstrates the power of faith, community, and altruism in shaping the devotees' spiritual experiences.

4.5.3 Knotting Thread with the Shrine and Eating Holy Salt

During the fieldwork, I observed primarily females knotting a thread and a cloth with the shrine of *Pir Baba*. This act likely carries religious or symbolic significance, which may be specific to the followers of *Pir Baba*. Furthermore, the female devotees also took the holy salt from the disciples and servants of *Pir Baba*. The female research assistant shares her observation that I observed a female devotee explaining to another female devotee:

“This Holy salt is a cure for the otherwise incurable infertility”.

This implies that the female devotees believed in the sacred properties of this salt and sought its potential healing effects to address their fertility issues. Infertility is both a

deeply personally and culturally significant issue for couples who desire to have children but are unable to conceive (Shaikh, 2010). These devotees perceive the shrine as a place where they can find potential solutions to their infertility issues (George & Sreedhar, 2006).

The belief in the healing properties of holy salt and the act of knotting thread and cloth may be rooted in local traditions, religious beliefs or folklore (Santos, 2015). Devotees tying threads on shrines are a common practice in many cultures and religions, particularly in South Asia. This ritual holds significant symbolic meaning and is performed for various spiritual and personal reasons.

The researcher was particularly interested in exploring the various motives of people behind various rituals and the meaning devotees attach to the symbolic acts of tying a thread and other such rituals. Based on the interviews and informal discussions with devotees, the researcher has summarized the various meanings and motives of these rituals, which are explained below.

Wishes and Prayers: Devotees often tie threads to make wishes or prayers. They believe that by tying a thread, their wish will be granted, or their prayer will be heard. This act symbolizes a connection to the divine and a plea for intervention in their lives.

Vows and Promises: Some devotees tie threads as a form of making a vow or promise to the deity. They may vow to perform a particular act of devotion or to lead a righteous life in exchange for a blessing or favor.

Protection and Blessings: Tying a thread can also symbolize seeking protection and blessings from the deity. It is believed that the thread carries the blessings of the deity and protects the devotee from harm and misfortune.

Gratitude and Thanks: Devotees may tie threads as a way of expressing gratitude for blessings received. This act is a way of giving thanks for the fulfilment of prayers or ongoing protection and support.

Cultural Tradition: In many cultures, tying threads is a long-standing tradition that has been passed down through generations. It is part of the community's cultural heritage and religious practices.

Unity and Connection: The act of tying threads can also symbolize unity and a collective connection to the divine. It represents the communal aspect of worship and the shared beliefs of the devotees.

In short, trying a thread on the shrines and other such rituals has deep symbolic meanings, enhancing the spiritual connection between the saints and his followers.

4.5.4 Tying Children on the Shrine

During the fieldwork, I interviewed women within the shrine who faced the problem of survival of their children. They narrated that most of their children usually die during infancy. One female devotee expressed:

“My children do not survive, and they are dying in their infancy stage. Therefore, I tied this child to the shrine so that he may survive due to the blessings of Pir Baba.”

She considers the shrine of *Pir Baba* a sacred and virtuous place, and Allah may bless her child with survival through the virtue of *Pir Baba*. Other researchers have also found such findings, such as Kurin (1983) and Voll (1992). The devotees explain that the logic and reasons behind such beliefs have been transferred to them from their ancestors. Whenever they faced the same problem, they visited the Shrine of *Pir*

Baba, and by virtue of him, Allah protected their children from infant mortality (Tahir et al., 2018).

4.5.5 Celebration of *Urs*

The term "*Urs*" refers to the death anniversary of a Sufi saint. In Sufi tradition, the *Urs* is a significant celebratory event that marks the passing away of the saint. It is observed annually on the same date. It typically includes various activities such as prayers, recitations of poetry, singing of *Qawali* (Sufi devotional songs) and the gathering of devotees at the saint's shrine or tomb (Abbass, 2013). During the *Urs*, people across different walks of life, including followers of the Sufi saint and other visitors, come together to pay their respects, seek blessings and participate in the festival. The *Urs* is often viewed as a time for spiritual reflection, renewal of faith, and a celebration of the saint's life and his teachings (Sajjad & Khan, 2011). The specific date of a *Urs* varies depending on the Sufi saint's death anniversary. Different Sufi saints have different *Urs* dates and are usually known to and observed by their followers and devotees (Abbas *et al.*, 2013). Some well-known Sufi saints with widely observed *Urs* celebrations include Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya in Delhi, India, and Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer, India (Iqbal & Farid, 2017). Like most other saints, the devotees of *Pir Baba* also celebrate their saint's death anniversary with devotion and enthusiasm. A devotee of *Pir Baba* explained:

"We usually celebrate Urs on 11 Rajab 20but now, due to security issues, we celebrate the Urs by the directive of security and police forces. On the occasion of Urs, the Sufi poets, saints, and scholars come from different areas of the country and they sing Qawali, poems and present speeches".

²⁰ Rajab is the name of the Islamic month in which the fourth Rashid Caliph of Islam was born.

The *Urs* of *Pir Baba* is a significant and popular event that the devotees continue to celebrate despite security threats. The *Urs* of *Pir Baba* is not just a day of remembrance but also an occasion for various spiritual and cultural rituals such as *Minnat* (Divine Intercession), in which the devotees seek the intercession of the saint, believing that the saint can act as an intermediary between them and the divine. Similarly, the devotees also perform poetic sessions called Qawali - a devotional musical genre that is an integral part of Sufi gatherings. It involves singing praises of Allah, His Prophets, and the Sufi saints. In addition, the devotees also perform prayers and recitation from the holy Quran during the *Urs* celebration. These practices hold particular spiritual and psychological importance in the lives of the devotees.

The *Urs* celebration is a time of unity, devotion, and spiritual reflection for the followers of the Sufi saint. It brings people from different religions and sects together to commemorate the saint's life and teachings, reinforcing their shared beliefs and cultural practices.

The social expectations from Muslim shrines extend far beyond religious devotion; they serve as dynamic institutions catering to diverse social, economic, and cultural needs. These expectations highlight the shrine's role in social solidarity, moral guidance, and cultural continuity while also revealing underlying social inequalities and evolving cultural narratives. Sociological inquiry into these expectations provides valuable insights into how religious institutions adapt to changing social realities.

4.6 Socio-Cultural Characteristics of the Devotees

The inclination of people towards the shrines varies on the basis of age, gender, level of education, occupation, religion, sect and economic statutes. Studies conducted in Punjab reveal that gender-based differences exist in the beliefs towards the shrine

(Santos, 2015). Usually, women are found to be more inclined towards the shrine than men. In the typical patriarchal Pakistani culture, women have mental illness and lack of self-confidence due to deprivations and are predominantly dependent on males. The plightful conditions of women ultimately make them more superstitious and rely on the beliefs of shrines (Tahir *et al.*, 2018). This study also finds women to be more inclined towards the shrine of *Pir Baba*. Women were more enthusiastic and devoted as compared to men. In spite of the patriarchal culture and *Purdah*²¹ which restrict women's movement in Pashtun culture; a large number of women visited the shrine, practiced different rituals, and asked for *Minnat* from the shrine. On the premises of the shrine, there is a separate place for women, and a curtain (*Purdah*) is fixed between male and female devotees.

Like existing studies (Santos, 2015), this study finds that people from across different professions, including shopkeepers, daily waged workers, government servants, students, homemakers and business people, visit the shrine of *Pir Baba*. However, this study additionally finds that illiterate and economically poor people were more inclined towards the shrine, though some rich people also visited the shrine of *Pir Baba*, in contrast to existing studies (Kurin, 1983). Which states that the majority of the shrine visitors are Muslims from the Shia sect; this study finds that the majority of the visitors of *Pir Baba's* shrine are Sunni Muslims. Furthermore, the majority of the devotees I interviewed and observed at the shrine of *Pir Baba* belonged to different rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The people of rural areas, being illiterate, irrational, poor and superstitious as compared to the people of urban areas, are more likely to be inclined towards the shrines (George & Sreedhar, 2006). Likewise, the rural people, being more prone to traditionalism, fatalism, and conservatism, have

²¹ *Purdah*: The system of secluding women and enforcing high standards of female modesty in much of Pashtun culture

more positive inclinations towards the shrines. Hence, the beliefs and inclinations towards the shrine of *Pir Baba* vary on the basis of gender, occupation, education level, economic status, religion, sect and urban-rural dwellings.

4.6.1 Visitation Pattern of the Devotees to the Shrine

The visitation pattern of devotion to a shrine can vary greatly. Devotees may visit the shrine in different numbers and at different intervals for a variety of reasons, including religious beliefs and practices, personal beliefs, cultural traditions, special occasions (Ali, 2001; Mayer, 1967) and individual circumstances of the devotees (Gilmartin, 2014). In a somewhat similar pattern, the devotees visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* in different numbers and after different intervals of time. Depending on the frequency of visitation and time spent at the shrines, the devotees can be categorized into visiting devotees and resident devotees. The visiting devotees are those who visit the shrine once, twice, thrice or many times at different intervals of time. The interval of time ranges from days, weeks and months to years and decades. Similarly, the visiting devotees spend hours, days, weeks, and some even months and then go back to their own homes and villages. For instance, an old age devotee, who can be categorized as a visiting devotee, stated,

“I have visited the shrine of Pir Baba since my childhood after specific intervals of time. Sometimes, I visit the shrine after one year and after six months at other times. I also visit the shrine on the special occasion of Urs, depending on the needs.”

Similarly, another visiting devotee from Swat said:

“I visited this shrine 4 or 5 years ago, and now I pay my visit again to the shrine”

On the other hand, the resident devotees are those who remain at the shrine from morning to evening and spend a large part of their lives within the premises and serving the shrine. The residents devoted are mostly the descendants (*Gadda Nasheen*), servants (*Malang*) and disciples of *Pir Baba*. During my fieldwork, a respondent who can be categorized as a resident devotee said,

"We are the descendants of Pir Baba and have served this shrine since our childhood. We are always here on the shrine's premises from morning to evening."

Likewise, another stated:

"I am always here, every day and at every time throughout the year. I am the custodian of the shrine of Pir Baba, and I serve it."

The study finds that some devotees visit the shrine alone while others visit with their family members, friends, and relatives. One devotee expressed:

"Today, I visited the shrine alone, but next time, I will also bring my family members, such as my mother, wife and children."

Further, a devotee from Bajaur stated,

"I am not alone; we four friends have come in a group here. They (friends) are praying there in the shrine".

Likewise, a devotee stated:

"I have my wife, mother and sister, and they are on the other side of the veil (Purdah)."

The above statements reveal the diverse and varied visitation patterns of devotees to the shrine of *Pir Baba*. Thus, the visitation pattern of devotees to the shrine of *Pir Baba* is multifaceted and influenced by a variety of factors. These factors range from individual beliefs and personal circumstances to religious events, customs, and geographical considerations (Iqbal & Farid, 2017). The presence of both visiting and resident devotees further adds to the diversity of experiences and commitments associated with this spiritual site.

4.6.2 *Pir Baba* in Relation to Other Saints in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Sufi shrines are found across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During my interaction with devotees of *Pir Baba*, they mentioned the names of the shrines of other Sufi saints that they visited for their social, cultural and spiritual needs gratifications (Baghi, 2017). Some of the prominent saints include Mian Qasim Baba, Dewan Baba, Akhunderweza Baba, Kaka Saib, Manzary Baba, Ghazai Baba, Mady Baba and Esar Baba. A devotee from Jalala described his affiliation with *Pir Baba and Mady Baba* as follows:

“I am the descendent of Mady Baba of Jalala. Mady Baba was the disciple of Pir Baba and has remained a servant of Pir Baba during his life. First, I visited the shrine of Mad Baba and then came here to offer my greeting to Pir Baba.”

While comparing *Pir Baba* with other saints, a devotee remarked:

“All saints are great, but Pir Baba has no match as he occupies a unique status among all the saints of the world”.

Likewise, another devotee stated:

*"I am the descendant of Mian Qasim Baba of Matta Swat.
Today, I visited the shrine of the great saint Pir Baba."*

Another devotee from Rustum stated:

*"Today, I visited this shrine of Pir Baba. Besides this, I
sometimes visit the shrine of Kaka Saib of Nowshera, who is
also a great saint."*

One local devotee from Buner said:

*"You know that Buner is famous for Sufiism. Besides the shrine
of Pir Baba, we also visit the shrines of Dewana Baba, Pira
Aby, and Shalfandy Baba. These are our saints, and we respect
them all."*

The devotees consider all Sufi saints to be glorious and venerated people of God. However, they believe *Pir Baba* to be different and higher in status and rank than all the other saints in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These devotees not only visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* but also give particular preference to *Pir Baba* over all other Sufi shrines. Even the devotees of other Sufi saints have great reverence for *Pir Baba*, as many of the Sufi saints are believed to be the disciples of *Pir Baba*. For instance, a devotee from Jalala expressed a strong affiliation with *Pir Baba*, claiming to be a descendant of *Mady Baba*, who was a devoted disciple of *Pir Baba*. This shows the inter-generational devotion and loyalty to a specific Sufi saint, passing down through family lines. While comparing *Pir Baba* with other saints, one devotee remarked that while all saints are great, *Pir Baba* occupies a unique and elevated status among all the saints in the world. This sentiment indicates the exceptional reverence and

admiration the devotees have for *Pir Baba*. Even the devotees of other saints make unique visits to Pir Baba's Shrine (PCP, 2008).

Thus, the observations and statements reflect the deep-rooted devotion of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa towards Sufi saints and their shrines (PCP, 2008). The beliefs and practices surrounding these saints are an essential aspect of the local culture, providing spiritual guidance and comfort to the devotees. The veneration and particular preference for *Pir Baba* among the devotees indicate his significant influence and revered status in the region. The Sufi tradition in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continues to play a central role in shaping the religious and cultural identity of the local population.

4.7 Expectations of the Devotees from the Shrines

The devotees expect the shrines to solve their social, economic, psychological and physical problems (Levin, 2008; Malik, 1990; Pirani *et al.*, 2008)). Other research studies such as those (Mayer, 1967; Aziz, 2001; Ali, 2005) conducted in Punjab describe different expectations for which the devotees visit the shrines, such as success in exams, daughter's marriage in a respectable family, favorable solution of family disputes, achieving love marriage, childbirth and better future of the child. This study also finds different expectations for which the devotees visit the shrine of *Pir Baba*. These expectations are explained under the following themes:

4.7.1 Wish for Fertility

Studies conducted in Pakistan, such as that of Abbas *et al.* (2013), reveal that childless women visit the shrines to fulfil their wishes for children through the intercession (*Waseela*) of saints. Similarly, this study also finds that childless couples consult the

shrine of *Pir Baba* to have their prayers for children answered. For instance, a devotee narrated:

“It has been five years since our wedding, yet still, we are childless. Therefore, my wife and I have visited the shrine of Pir Baba so that God may bless us with child through the intercession (Waseela) of his special saint (Pir Baba).”

Likewise, another visitor stated:

“My brother referred me to consult the shrine of Pir Baba as I am still childless even after three years of my marriage. Earlier, my brother had the same problem and was also deprived of a child despite ten years of his wedding. God blessed him with three male and two female children when he visited the shrine of this great saint (Pir Baba). I hope that wish may also be fulfilled.”

Thus, devotees who face the issue of fertility visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* in the hope that Allah will bless them with children through *Pir Baba's* virtues.

4.7.2 Hope for Male Children

In countries like Pakistan, preference for male children is a common phenomenon (Muhammad, 2009). Likewise, our study finds that the son is considered a source of power and strength in Pashtun society. The devotees I interviewed expressed that without male children, we would not just remain powerless but would also be left without any support in our old age. A devotee from district Bajaur-Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expressed:

“I have five daughters but not a single son. Therefore, I, along with my wife, have visited this great saint so that may Allah fill the cradle of my wife with a male child through the barakah (blessing) of this friend (Wali).”

Similarly, another participant, who belonged to Peshawar, stated:

“My family members cursed me for not having a male child. My neighbour suggested that my wife pray and pay Nazrana (donation) at the shrine of Pir Baba so that Allah would bless us with a male child. Since then, we visit this shrine once a month”.

During the fieldwork, I heard several stories where couples with no sons were ultimately blessed with male children after visiting the shrine of Pir Baba. For instance, a servant of *Pir Baba*’s shrine narrated:

“There was a man in the Yousafzai tribe who had no male child to inherit his property after his death. Once, when Pir Baba visited his village, his wife urged Pir Baba to pray for her so that Allah may bless her with a male child. God fulfilled her wish when Pir Baba prayed for her.”

So, a large number of sonless couples visit the shrines of *Pir Baba* to fulfil their aspirations for male children. This finding needs to be consistent with existing studies such as those of Abbas (2013), Iqbal (2012), Rahman (2014), and Khan (2018).

This practice reflects the deep-rooted beliefs in spirituality and the use of religious means to fulfill personal desires, especially the desire for a son. Moreover, this

indicates the shrine's cultural significance and function as a focal point for addressing the devotees' particular aspirations (Batool & Chaudry, 2015).

The anecdotes of individuals believed to have male children after visiting Pir Baba's shrine highlight the emotional impact of fulfilling this desire. These stories reflect the hope and happiness experienced by those who have received a male child through spiritual means (Ahmad, 2001).

4.7.3 Getting Success in Marriage of Choice

The selection of a life partner of choice is a severe challenge in Pashtun society, especially for females, where elders of the families decide for them (Fisman *et al.*, 2006; Naz & Rehman, 2011). Where the expressions of feelings and emotions are taboo, people seek supernatural help, such as shrines, for the fulfilment of their aspirations. For instance, in the study, I found the devotees explaining that they were praying to soften the hearts of their beloved for their proposals (*Rishta*) by the intercession (*Waseela*) of the saint of God. A devotee expressed his emotions like this:

*“I have a girl in my heart who I want to marry. I am praying
here so that Allah may soften her parents' hearts to accept my
proposal.”*

The devotee shares a Pashtu poetry (*Tappa*).²²:

*“Ka Pir Baba darla dar na kram
Zargy de sabar ka ma Khudy na darkawena”.*

²² Tappa is the oldest and most popular genre of Pashto poetry and has remained the most helpful source of expression.

Translation: If Pir Baba is unable to give my hand to you (in marriage),

*Then stop longing for me! Even God is not willing to fulfill your
desire*

This Pashtu *tappa* shows that people rely on Pir Baba's blessings to get a partner of their choice. In fact, *Pir Baba* is sometimes the last hope for devotees who wish to marry a spouse of their choice.

A research participant from Dir shared a folk story;

*There was a girl from Timergara and a boy from Salarzu who
met each other on the way while they were visiting the shrine of
Pir Baba. They liked each other and made the wish (Minnat)
from Pir Baba to get married, which Pir Baba accepted.
Hence, they were successful in getting a love marriage,
something scarce in Pashtun culture.*

Hence, the devotees believe that *Pir Baba* can fulfil the wish of getting a spouse of choice to visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* for the success of their marriage aspiration of choice (Abbas et al., 2013). Other studies have also found similar findings (Abbas, 2013; Malik, 1990; Pirani et al., 2018).

The above statements insights into the challenges faced by individuals in traditional Pashtun societies when it comes to selecting a life partner by choice, especially for females. In these conservative societies, females often lack the freedom to express their emotions and attachments openly. Instead, the decision regarding marriage is typically made by parents and elders of the families. To navigate this challenging situation and seek the fulfilment of their desire for a choice marriage, young men and women often turn to supernatural powers, seeking assistance from saints and shrines

(Malik, 1990). One such popular figure is *Pir Baba*, and his shrine becomes a place of pilgrimage for many seeking help in convincing their beloved parents or finding a resolution to the obstacles hindering their desired marriage. Devotees who visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* believe that through intercession (*Waseela*) of the saint, Allah will soften the hearts of their beloved parents, leading to their approval of the marriage. This reflects the cultural belief in the power of saints as intermediates between humans and the divine (Pirani et al., 2018). The Pashtu *Tappa* shared by a devotee emphasizes the idea of being patient and having faith. It implies that if one has sought the blessings of *Pir Bab* and prayed sincerely, then Allah will prevail, and if the marriage does not happen, there must be a divine reason behind it.

Several participants shared personal stories or reasons for visiting *Pir Baba's* shrines. These accounts depict the struggle they face in convincing their beloved's parents or finding acceptance for their choice of partner. Some of them have faced rejection multiple times, but their love and determination drive them to continue seeking blessings and guidance from *Pir Baba's* shrine.

This cultural practice of seeking supernatural help for choice marriages highlights societal norms that restrict open expressions of love and emotions, particularly for females. In these circumstances, visiting a shrine becomes a way to seek divine intervention, hoping for a favorable resolution to their romantic aspirations (Abbas, 2013).

In a nutshell, the findings present a fascinating cultural perspective on how traditional beliefs and societal norms influence the process of choosing a life partner in Pashtun societies. It shows the complex dynamics and challenges faced by individuals,

especially females, in pursuing choice marriages and how they turn to religious practices for guidance and support.

4.7.4 In Search of Good Health

The search for good health is one of the reasons why devotees visit the shrines. In traditional societies, reasons such as fear of medical treatment, biases towards medical treatments, prescriptions of plenty of medicines by doctors and sometimes the failure of medical treatments make the patients associate their illness with supernatural influences such as evil influence (*Asar*) or *Amal* or *Saya* or Magic. The people then consult the shrines in search of healing. A devotee described his illness as:

“I am suffering from Malaria, which is not being cured despite frequent visits to doctors. Now, I have come here in the hope that Allah may heal my illness.”

Likewise, the devotees consult the shrine of *Pir Baba* for the treatment of diseases such as severe headaches, kidney stones, typhoid, etc. A resident devotee stated:

“The women bring their children for the treatment of children who have the issue of frequent crying (Jaby), and physically weak children.”

Likewise, a devotee from Peshawar said:

“My only son is suffering from the illness of frequent crying (Zayl kay). So, I brought it here so that Pir Baba, may give him good health.”

Moreover, I also observed some devotees who had brought their physically and mentally disabled children on their backs to the shrine of *Pir Baba*, hoping the

blessings and spiritual energy of *Pir Baba* would bring improvements in their condition or heal them. The finding is consistent with the study of Rasul *et al.* (2016).

The visits to the shrine are ingrained in the hope that through the intercession (*Waseela*) of *Pir Baba*, Allah will grant them good health and relief from their ailments (Mushtaq, 2002). The presence of a former hut of a foreign doctor, who treated leprosy in the vicinity of the shrine in the past, indicates that both conventional and medical practices and spiritual healing were sought side by side. The beliefs and practices surrounding the shrine reflect the complex interplay of traditional spirituality and modern medical approaches in the healthcare-seeking behaviors of people in the region (Pirani, 2009).

4.7.5 Resolution of Family Disputes

Family dispute or conflicts exists among the family members and are a significant issue for people in Pashtun society, especially for women who have to live in the usually oppressive conditions of the joint family system. This study finds that devotees, especially females, visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* in the hope of resolving family disputes. The disputes include disputes with in-laws, husband and wife issues, disputes among brothers, etc. A devotee from Mardan, stated:

“My parents were having bad terms with me and my wife. However, they had a good relationship with my brother and his wife. Therefore, we visited this shrine of Pir Baba and prayed that Allah softened my parents’ hearts and turned their attitudes positive towards us.”

Likewise, an old devotee from Swat stated:

“The environment of my home had worsened due to my daughter-in-law's quarrels with my wife and my two daughters. I always advised my son to forbid her from destructive behaviours, but my words did not affect her. Now, I am here to pray for her destructive behaviours to change.

Similarly, a resident devotee described:

“As you can observe, a large number of women are visiting the shrine because they face different domestic problems and deprivations at home such as violence of husbands, mother-in-law and father-law, etc.”

Thus, the devotees believe that the shrine of *Pir Baba* can resolve their family disputes and visit the shrines in the hope of resolving family conflicts. It is believed that through the saint's intercession, Allah may soften the hearts of their family members, promote understating, and restore harmonious relationships within the family (Pirani, 2009; Abbas, 2013).

4.7.6 Seeking Success in Litigation

Disputes such as land disputes are common in Pashtun society. Conflict may exist among brothers, cousins, relatives (*Biradari*), and others in the community. To resolve such disputes, some people may file litigation in the courts, while others may also visit the shrine for success in that litigation (Abbas, 2013). The devotees of *Pir Baba* visit his shrine for favourable and prosperous decisions. A devotee said:

“I have a land dispute trial in the court of law with my opponents tomorrow. For the purpose of a successful decision,

I have brought this goat and rice to the shrine of Pir Baba as a Nazrana so that Allah be on my side in deciding the case in my favour.”

Litigation in the court is a legal and formal process aimed at resolving disputes through legal means. Alongside the legal process, some people also turn to spiritual means, seeking divine intervention for a favorable and successful outcome (Islam, 2002; Mushtaq, 2002)). This practice demonstrates the deep faith and belief of the devotees in the power of *Pir Baba*'s spiritual influence to influence the outcome of the legal proceedings. Likewise, it also reflects a strong belief in the saint's ability to influence outcomes beyond the realm of the physical world (Ewing, 1983).

4.8 Social Functions of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

Consistent with the functionalists' perspective, as argued by Durkheim (1912) and Merton (1968), the shrines contribute towards the social integration, stability, and equilibrium of society by fulfilling the social expectations and needs of the people (Veer, 2002). Similarly, the shrine of *Pir Baba* exemplifies how religious organizations can serve specific functions such as social integration, social control, social welfare, inter-faith harmony and intercultural harmony within a society and adapt to external influences. The following section explains the findings of the study regarding the various social functions played by shrines.

4.8.1 Role of *Pir Baba* in Promoting Social Integration

The devotees of *Pir Baba* share the same beliefs, rituals, customs, traditions, order (*Selsela*) and intercession, which help in the integration of the devotees with each other and with the cultural values. A devotee said:

“We share a common saint (Pir), a common worldview and common beliefs”.

The findings are inconsistent with Durkheim's theory of religion, which argues that religion is a source of integration among followers due to common beliefs, rituals, and practices (Durkheim, 1912). Likewise, strong integration exists among the servants and disciples of the shrine of *Pir Baba* due to common beliefs, order (*Selsela*), and common lineage with *Pir Baba*.

In the past, these descendants were more integrated and ethnocentric and maintained a strong sense of identity and unity within their pedigree and lineage. They even followed the tradition of marrying within their clan to preserve their lineage. However, with the influence of modernity, some of these traditions have changed, leading to a shift in their integration pattern. A descendent of *Pir Baba* stated:

“Unlike in the past, the descendants of Pir Baba can now marry ordinary people. Modernity has changed the pattern of unity.”

Hence, the changes in traditions and modern influences can impact the level of integration within such communities over time (Boston & Brill, 2007).

4.8.2 Protection and Social Control

It was found that people are afraid of *Pir Baba*'s miraculous powers, which is why they usually avoid engaging in antisocial behaviour in Buner. People believe that *Pir Baba* will become angry if they indulge themselves in evil or deviant activities, which maintains social order and control in the community.

Informal means of social control play a significant role along with the formal means in maintaining law and order. Through the cultivation of ethics and morality in society, religion has a considerable influence on people's behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. Shrines are related to Islamic legacy, and different cultures in South Asia share the same spirit in the form of diverse practices and rituals. The shrine of *Pir Baba*, being part of the Islamic legacy, serves as an essential agency of social control. A descendent and servant (*Malang*) of the shrine of *Pir Baba* described how the Taliban were unable to control Buner due to the presence of *Pir Baba* in the district:

“When the Taliban attacked Buner from the Swat side in 2008, they intended to destroy the shrine of Pir Baba. However, they were defeated by the Kirramat of Pir Baba, which made them scared.”

Similarly, one another resident devotee viewed;

“In the recent wave of terrorism, the Taliban (TTP)²³ could not control Buner the way they controlled Swat and other areas of KP in the recent wave of terrorism. Buner is the land of Sufis, where three big saints, Dewana Baba, Malang Baba and Pir Baba, have spent time here in Buner. They have protected this land from three big evil-intended movements, which were the movement of Hassan Bine-Sabah, Roshani Movement and Tahreek e Taliban Movement. All the ill-intended movements fear the (Kirramat) of the Sufi saints.”

²³The TTP refers to the Tehrek-e- Taliban Pakistan

The followers of *Pir Baba* believe that the shrine protects the local community from every sort of evil act and incident by keeping their enemies in control and keeping away the evils. Similarly, Veer (2002) also viewed the Sufi shrines as protecting the nearby community from evil-intended movements as well as from crimes because the criminals feel fear from the miracles (*Kirramat*) of the Sufi saints. In the same way, it was the belief of the devotees that the shrine of *Pir Baba* not only protects the land of Buner from the outside ill-intended movements but is also a source of social control among the members of the local community and forbids them from wrong and evil acts. The shrine of *Pir Baba* has developed a pro-social attitude among the local people and also promotes conformity among the people of the local community. This aligns with the idea presented by Veer (200), who viewed that Sufi shrines, in general, protect nearby communities from crime and evil-intended movements because criminals fear the spiritual powers (*Kirramat*) associated with Sufi saints.

4.8.3 Provision of Free Food to the Poor and Wayfarers

The shrines in Pakistan provide free food to the poor and the destitute from their public kitchen called *Langar* or *Langar Khana* (Lyon, 2002). A descendent of *Pir Baba* stated:

“This is the Langar of Pir Baba, which we run and provide free food to the wayfarers, visitors and the poor.”

The devotees described *Langar* as a place where food is prepared and distributed to the devotees and those in need. The *Langar* in the shrine of *Pir Baba* is economically dependent on the devotees' contributions, who provide resources to support food distribution. The descendants and servants of *Pir Baba* take on the responsibility of managing and running the *Langar*. They view themselves as the custodians of the

shrine, carrying on the tradition and practice of providing food to those who visit the shrine. The practice of *Langar* in Sufi shrines has a profound cultural and spiritual significance. It reflects the values of hospitality, generosity and community care. It symbolises inclusivity and equality, where all visitors, regardless of their social status or background, can partake in a communal meal together. This tradition is rooted in the teachings of Sufi saints, who emphasized compassion, service, and the importance of caring for the less fortunate (Malik, 1990; Platteau, 2011).

From a sociological perspective, the *Langar* in the shrine of *Pir Baba* demonstrates how religious practices can foster a sense of community and social cohesion. By providing food to devotees and those needs, the *Langar* creates a shared experience and a sense of belonging among participants. It reinforces the idea that everyone is equal before the divine, and the act of sharing a meal strengthens social bonds (Charan, 2018).

Furthermore, the practice of *Langar* is an example of how religious institutions can play a role in addressing social and economic disparities within a community. By providing free meals to the needy and destitute, the *Langar* helps alleviate hunger and provides basic sustenance to those who may be struggling financially. It showcases the commitment of the shrine and its followers to serve the broader community and uphold principles of compassion and altruism (Sumbal, 2016).

Thus, *Langar's* presence in *Pir Baba's* and other Sufi shrines exemplifies the intersection of religious beliefs, cultural values, and social responsibility. It is a powerful embodiment of the principles of service, hospitality, and social integration within the context of a religious institution.

4.8.4 Shrine as a Space for Recreation and Leisure Time

The shrines are essential sites of recreation not only for followers but also for those who casually visit the shrine. The premises of the shrines are not exclusively for spiritual purposes but also serve practical functions, such as offering a space for people to conduct their day-to-day affairs. The shrine of *Pir Baba* provides entertainment, rest, and enjoyment to visitors. A passenger from Shangla stated:

“I have an appointment with the Doctor, which is fixed for 2 o'clock. I am waiting and will rest here under the shadow of the maple tree in the premises of the shrine till my appointment time.”

The shrines provide space to the farther passengers for respite and stay (Mushtaq, 2002). It is suggested that the shrine serves as a place of leisure where people can enjoy a tranquil environment under the shade of trees. This aspect aligns with the notion of shrines being places of solace and spiritual refuge (Alexander, 1979; Jacobs, 1961; Lynch, 1960). Another aspect of the shrines that could be considered as a latent function is that the shrines provide opportunities for dating and meeting for couples, which is in the conservative Pakistani society (Kurin, 1987; Gilmartian, 1990). This raises concerns of many about the shrine possibly facilitating interactions between unrelated men and women, which are seen as inappropriate in a conservative Pakistani society (Pirani, 2009).

4.8.5 Contribution of Sufi Shrines in Promoting Inter-faith Harmony

Interfaith harmony refers to the promotion of peace, tolerance and co-existence among the people of different religions and sects through the lesson of love, justice, compassion, harmony and empathy, which exist in various faiths (Nizami, 2007).

Sufism, the Islamic version of mysticism, is known for its lessons of inter-faith harmony (Chaghatai, 2006; Schimmel, 2003). The people of Buner, the land of Sufis, by taking inspiration from Sufism, have peacefully co-existed with the people of other religions for centuries (Aulia, 1985; Islam, 2002).

This study highlights that the Sufi shrine of *Pir Baba*, a place of spiritual significance, contributes to bringing people of diverse beliefs together and promotes a sense of understanding and acceptance. Not just Muslims but people of other religions, such as Sikhs and Hindus, also visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* on the special occasions of *Urs* and *Eidul Adha* and *Eidul Fitr*. During the data collection, I visited a *Gurdwara of Sikh*, which has existed in the vicinity of the Bazar of *Pir Baba* for a long time.

A resident devotee stated:

“A Sikh from Para Chinar recently visited the shrine of Pir Baba. Moreover, there is also Gurdwara of Sikhs in the near vicinity of the shrine in Bazar of Pir Baba.”

The Muslims and the Sikhs have been living peacefully in Buner for a long time, and they both have tolerance, respect, reverence and acceptance for each other. The resident devotees, who are the disciples of *Pir Baba*, understand the concept and importance of interfaith harmony and co-existence, which they associate with the miracles (*Kiramat*) of *Pir Baba*’s shrine. A visiting devotee said:

“The Sikhs and Hindus are living with us in Buner and have good social relation with us. They participate in our social and religious rituals and have reverence for our saints, shrines and religion and we have for theirs.”

Thus, the shrine of *Pir Baba* creates a sense of acceptance, tolerance, and reverence among people of different religions. It fosters an environment where people from different religious backgrounds can interact, share in each other's religious rituals, and show reverence for each other's faith (Baghi, 2017).

4.8.6 Contribution of Sufi Shrines in Promoting Intercultural Harmony

Countries such as Pakistan, where people having different cultures, customs, traditions, norms, values and languages live together, can cause hatred, prejudice and enmity among socially and culturally diverse people (Rahmatullah, 2014). On the other hand, integrated forces such as Sufi shrines utilizing beliefs, rituals, worship, and lessons common in various cultures create reverence, mutual acceptance and tolerance among the people of different cultures, languages and customs. According to the Pakistan Center of Philanthropy (PCP) (2008), there are more than eight prominent shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the shrine of *Pir Baba* is the most famous of them. The prestige and respect of *Pir Baba* is not to Pashtuns but is an equally venerated figure among people of other ethnicities. During the fieldwork for this study, the resident devotees stated that *Pir Baba* is equally important in the eyes of Pashtuns, Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluchs and Persians, and other ethnic groups in South Asia. Likewise, some visiting respondents from Punjab and some Persian respondents from Afghanistan also stated that *Pir Baba* was a great saint and that visiting his shrine was of great religious, social, and spiritual importance in their lives.

A resident devotee stated:

“Not only Pashtuns, but Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluchs and Persians are also visiting the shrine of Pir Baba to express their love, respect and reverence for Pir Baba.”

Likewise, a visiting devotee said:

“I came here from Lahore, Punjab to the shrine of this great saint Pir Baba. “

Similarly, one other devotee expressed:

“I am from Gujranwala, Punjab and this great saint (Pir Baba) has a lot of disciples in Gujranwala.”

Moreover, a respondent from Afghanistan stated:

“I came from Afghanistan and I am Persian speaker”.

A historian and a descendant of Pir Baba, Anwar Baig Baghi, writes in his book "The History of Buner" that Pir Baba spent some time in the village of Pand Dadan Khan, Gujrat-Punjab. For this reason, Pir Baba has a significant following in Punjab as well.

4.9 Economic Functions of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

4.9.1 Economic Expectations of the Devotees from the Shrine

The devotees keep different economic expectations from the shrines, such as promotions in jobs, improvement in business and avoiding financial problems and crises (Levin, 2008). It is believed that *Minnat* within the premises of the shrine can change the fortune of the people. A 35-year-old devotee described:

“I have a small fruit shop, and my business has been declining for the last year. I have come here so that by the intercession of this great saint, may Allah make my business successful.”

Similarly, a respondent from Buner said:

“I have many financial issues, as I have difficulties in arranging the marriage of my adult son and other domestic

expenses. I expect this saint's Barakah, May Allah, to solve my issues”.

The statements of the devotees reveal that they have various economic expectations from the shrine which is believed to have a connection to the divine, with the saint acting as an intermediary (*Waseela*) between the devotees and God. As a result, the devotees come to the shrine hoping to improve their financial situation, seek prosperity, and resolve economic difficulties (Khan, 2018).

It is not just business owners who seek economic gain at the shrine; Some devotees share that they seek employment opportunities. The shrine is a place where their economic aspirations can be fulfilled and is an integral part of the coping mechanisms for devotees in the face of economic hardships (Malik, 1996; Wolper, 2003; Levin, 2008).

4.9.2 Presenting *Nazrana* by the Devotees

I observed during the fieldwork that the visiting devotees were offering *Nazrana* (donation, alms) while the resident devotees and servants (*Malang*) were receiving *Nazrana*. It is common in Pakistan that whenever the wish of a devotee is fulfilled, they present *Nazrana* as a token of gratitude (Batool & Chaudhry, 2015). Sometimes, the donation is paid by hand to a Malang or descendant of the Saint, while sometimes, the donation is put secretly in a box available for this purpose. Offer *Nazrana* as a way of showing reverence and gratitude for the saint, a resident devotee stated:

“People present handsome amount of Nazrana to the shrine while they visit and also once their wishes are fulfilled.”

Similarly, another visiting devotee stated:

“I presented money as Nazrana to the box and also contributed to the Langer (Kitchen) because thousands of people come to eat and drink at the shrine. Who will arrange this if not us?”

During the data collection, I observed some people who were sitting on the way to the shrine from the mosque. A resident devotee explained to me that these people had permanently occupied those positions as visitors usually generously gave those alms (*Khairat*). Furthermore, there were 5 to 8 servants of *Pir Baba* within the *Chillagah* who guided the devotees in *Chillagah* and demanded *Nazarana* in return. A muscular man guided us inside the cave and demanded *Nazrana* from the researcher as well. During another visit to the shrine, I observed many attendees keeping *Nazrana* on the grave of *Pir Baba*, which the custodians (descendants) of *Pir Baba* would collect from time to time and put into the *Nazrana* Box attached to the cage of the tomb. When they had collected *Nazrana*, they allowed devotees to go inside the cages of the tomb. The amount of *Nazrana* offered varies from person to person, depending on their capacity and the intensity of their beliefs.

4.9.3 Economic Benefits to Local Community/ Vendors, Hotels and Businessman

Religious tourism is an excellent source of income generation across the globe. In 2014, Pakistan earned 283 million US\$ from the international religious tourism (UNWTO, 2015). Religious sites of different religions, including Muslim shrines, are the second reason why international tourists visit Pakistan. Shrines of Sufis attract tourists from different regions and religions of the world. They spend money by purchasing different things from the local shopkeepers, hotels and vendors. The majority of the non-local visitors I interviewed stated that they had paid for car

parking, had tea, ate meals in a local hotel and purchased cold drinks from the local shops.

Visitors further stated that they had purchased different ornamental goods such as bangles, ganja, rings, handicrafts, perfumes, and clothes from local vendors on the premises of the shrine. Some local tourist women visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* for shopping. One of the vendors near the gate of the shrine stated:

“The shrine is usually crowded in the spring session, on Eid days and usually on Sunday, and our business is usually good on these days, and we sell a lot of goods on those specific days”.

A visiting devotee stated:

“I have purchased’ Khwaja Ranja, Tarkha Ranja (Khol, Maskara), Bangles and some sweets for children.”

This indicates that shrines serve not only as religious sites but also as hubs of economic activity for the local markets (Kurin, 1983; Qureshi, 2010).

4.10 Psychological functions of the shrine

Studies reveal that across the world, followers visit sacred places such as shrines to manage their different social and psychological affairs (Levin, 2008), such as the purification of the body and soul, washing off sins, fulfilment of different desires and achievements of merits (Brewster, 2011). Nowadays, stress and depression are highly reported psychological problems in Pakistan. For the healing of these psychological problems, the clients use different traditional therapeutic measures such as practising rituals, meditation and fulfilment of their wishes by using saints as intermediates (Baasher, 1982; Glik, 1988; Hussain *et al.*, 2007; Pirani *et al.*, 2008; Pfleiderer, 1988).

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the devotees visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* for different psychological purposes and practice different rituals (Muhstaq, 2002).

These shrines foster a sense of community and spiritual connection, which can provide comfort and relief to individuals facing mental health challenges.

The psychological effects experienced by devotees after engaging in these practices illustrate the intricate interplay between spirituality, faith, and mental health.

A devotee stated:

"Pir Baba is a great saint. Once a year, I visit his shrine to renew my spiritual connection with him."

He further stated:

"Once in a year I visit this Darbar of Pir Baba to revive spiritual and emotional attachment with God by the intercession of Pir Baba. After attaining the shrine, I feel my soul and body becoming free from every sort of evil."

Majid from Mardan said that:

"When I get bored with my daily business, I hand it over to my son and present myself here to the Darbar of Baba to avoid my worries and boredom."

Zahid said that:

"Fed up with my poor and stressful life, I came here so that by the intercession of this great saint (Pir Baba), Allah may change my fortune."

It can be derived from the devotees' statements that they visit the shrines for different psychological purposes, such as spiritual satisfaction, healing, relaxation from boredom, mental catharsis, and self-realization (*Tazkia Nafs*), expression of sorrows and grievances, peace of mind and soul, and purification of body and soul from sins (Veer, 2002).

These visits offer a sense of hope, comfort, and connection to the divine, which can have positive psychological effects. The practices associated with these visits, such as rituals and meditation, may also contribute to stress reduction and emotional healing (Pirani, 2012). The research findings shed light on the complex interplay between spirituality, faith, and mental well-being in the context of visiting sacred places.

During the field, I found the devotees of the shrine of *Pir Baba* performing different practices to satisfy their needs. A resident devotee described:

“I am the real disciple and descendent of Pir Baba, and I have taken oath on the hand of my elders, and I practice all spiritual activities such as Minnat and meditation. I am also serving here in the shrine and Langar. Practising all these activities gives me satisfaction and serenity. Therefore, I spend most of the time here on the shrine's premises worshipping Allah.”

A devotee from Punjab stated that;

“I offer few Rakat of Nawafel prayers and pray here in the shrine. This worship reduces my mental tension, disturbance and boosts up my peace of mind and serenity of the heart.”

One of the devotees belonged to Buner stated:

“I feel serenity, satisfaction, Hashash Bashash within the shrine by performing Minnat from the shrine”.

Similarly, another visitor expressed his feelings:

“I feel mental and spiritual satisfaction and presence here in the shrine increases my serenity of heart.”

The findings are inconsistent with other research studies which also find similar practices and rituals such as praying, attending mosque, *Quranic study*, *Minnat* (intercession), *Langer* (Feast), *Sufiana Kalam*, *Qawwali*, *Dhamal* (ritual trance dance) and Drumming (Malik, 1990; Wolf, 2006; Abbas, 2010). All these practices are considered a source of satisfaction, serenity and mental relaxation from tensions and worries (Pirani, 2008).

4.11 The Changing Status of the Shrine

This study reveals that the sacred status of the shrine of *Pir Baba* is changing due to modernization, education, rationality, and urbanization. Other issues that affect the shrine include tourists' visiting and sectarian influence, tourists' visiting, and then *Panj Piri* sects (Nelson, 1996; Veer, 2002).

4.11.1 Visiting Tourists

One local respondent stated it as:

"I just visit the shrine for the sake of excursions to relax. We don't expect anything from the shrine of Pir Baba, and he can do nothing".

The various religious and non-religious aspects of the shrine, such as the festivals, artistic, historic and scenic sites, the spiritual and social gatherings, and the entertainments that the shrine provide, are significant sources of attractions for both the religious as well as the secular tourists (Khan & Sajid, 2011; Kurin, 1987; Nelson, 1996; Nolan & Nolan, 1992). In the modern world, only some of the visitors to the shrine come for holy, sacred, spiritual and religious purposes. Instead, a lot of the tourists visit the shrine to see a new and historical place and for recreation (Nelson, 1996). One resident devotee stated:

“Shrines are sources of entertainment not only for the follower but also for the visitors. Sometimes the villagers accompanied various other villagers and they together visit the shrines for entertainment, seeing historical, artistic and religious site.”

“Some attendees visit the shrine for sacred purpose (Zyarat) and others just for fun.”

Likewise, one of the servants of the shrine described:

“Both the believers as well as non-believers visit the shrine. The believers come on Thursdays (Zyarat), Fridays (Juma) and Mondays (Pir) while the non-believers usually visit on Eids and on Sundays.”

One another resident devotee expressed:

“Nowadays, the shrine remains much more crowded on Eid Mela as compared to Urs while in the past the Urs was more crowded. Now, the attendees visit the shrine to see a new place and take photos, make videos and leave”.

Eids are general Islamic festivals, while *Urs* festival is related explicitly to *Pir Baba*. Hence, with time, the purpose of visiting the shrine of *Pir Baba* has altered. Many visit just for fun, entertainment and outings. For instance, one young attendee stated:

“I come to shrine just for excursion and joy and I don’t expect something from Pir Baba who can do nothing.”

Many of the tourists approach the shrine of *Pir Baba* as a historical place that reflects the history of Buner. They expect to learn new things and explore the local culture. Likewise, the visiting tourists come to see the art and design of the shrine (Frembgen, 2012; Nolan & Nolan, 1992) as the shrines hold historical, Islamic, and cultural importance. A visiting tourist explained:

“We have found this shrine just a historical place; this shrine of Pir Baba has amazing history which traces back four or five hundred years back.”

During the fieldwork, I interacted with visitors of different social and economic backgrounds who had just visited the shrine, studied some fixed flacks about *Pir BaBa*, purchased different things from the vendors, and left the shrine.

Though some visitors approach the experience with deep spiritual intentions, others treat it as an opportunity for cultural exploration, social gatherings, and recreational activities. Thus, in the modern era, the shrine of *Pir Baba* has become the centre of attention for many visiting tourists.

4.11.2 Sectarian Influence on the Shrine of Pir Baba

Studies reveal that sectarian influence leads to a change in the attitudes of the people towards the shrines (Tahir et al., 2018). Due to the interventions of specific sects such

as Wahhabi²⁴ And Panj Piri²⁵ the number of visitors to the shrines has decreased to a great extent. Almost all the resident devotees I interacted with expressed that Panj Piri and Wahhabi teachings have influenced the attitudes of the people towards the shrine of Pir Baba. The Panj Piri and Wahhabi priests (Mullahs) forbade and gave instructions to the public that visiting and practising rituals at the shrines are paganism (Tahir et al., 2018). Regarding the influence of such intervention, one resident devotee stated:

“When Wahabies and Panj Piri Mullahs’ intervened to our society, the reverence for the shrines and saints has decreased among the people.”

One Deobandi visitor expressed:

“If you go to the shrine for prayer, it is allowed. However, if you go for some other paganist practices (Sheerky amal), it is forbidden.”

Likewise, another visiting devotee said:

“Wahabies and Panj Piri Mullahs are strongly against the visiting of shrine and eating devoted foods from the shrine and Langar which they consider as forbidden (Haram) in Islam.”

One Panj Piri priest (Mullah) had radical views and stated:

“Eating Holy salt, other holy food and also eating from Langar is forbidden in Islam. If you feel extreme level of hunger and you do not have something else for to eat, even at this instant you can eat the meat of pig but you cannot eat the

²⁴ Wahabism is a conservative religious organization derived from Sunni Islam, and its objective is the purification of Islam.

²⁵ Panj Piri: Panj Piri is a sub-sect in the Sunni sect, and they follow Maulana Tayyab, who belong to Panj Per –District, Swabi, KP, Pakistan

food from Langar. The Langar food is devoted on the name other than God. Things which are devoted on the name other than Allah, are strictly forbidden in Islam.”

A Wahabi priest was equally radical and stated:

“Visiting shrine with some expectations in the mind is Paganism”.

Thus, the teachings of *Wahabi* and *Panj Peri* sects are strictly against visiting, making wishes and practising any rituals at the shrines. These have intervened in society and discouraged their followers from engaging in rituals and practices at shrines, considering them paganism and forbidden (*Haram*) in Islam.

4.12 Summary of the Chapter

To sum up, *Pir Baba* and his shrine have high status and rank in the eyes of the Devotees. The devotees believe in the miraculous powers of *Pir Baba* and keep different expectations from the shrine of *Pir Baba*, such as hope for a male child, hope for fertility, recovery of health, success in litigation and family dispute resolutions, etc. Moreover, the shrine of *Pir Baba* performs different social, economic and psychological functions in the lives of the devotees, such as integration among the devotees and local communities, inter-cultural and inter-faith harmony among the people of different religions and cultures, social control in society, provision space for leisure time and rest. Likewise, the *Langar* provides free food for people experiencing poverty. Apart from these social functions, the shrine of *Pir Baba* also promotes inter-faith harmony among the people of different religions and sects. Apart from this, the shrine of *Pir Baba*, which is an important cultural, religious, and historical heritage site, is equally essential for both the devotees and visiting tourists. Though, with approaching modernization and due to the intervention of radical *Panj Peri* and *Wahabi* teachings, the sacred status of the shrine is changing, it is still an essential site for the devotees as well as the visiting tourists.

Chapter-5

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter consists of two types of analysis: univariate and bi-variate. Uni-variate analysis describes and summarizes the collected data through frequencies and percentages in tabular form. The first part of the univariate analysis describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including age, gender, education, marital status, economic status, and religious and sectarian affiliation of the devotee. This part also delineates the attachment pattern, the time the devotees spend in the shrine and the devotees' knowledge and perceptions of *Pir Baba*. Similarly, it statistically sketches the social expectations of the devotees from the shrine and the social, economic and psychological functions of the shrine in the lives of the devotees. In the end, this part also marks out the changing social status of the shrine. Further, this section also measures the variation in age, gender, economic status, education, etc., of the devotees using ANOVA.

The second part of the chapter consists of a bi-variate analysis in which the researcher used inferential statistics (Chi-square) to express the association between the dependent variable (beliefs on the shrine) and independent variables (social expectations from the shrine, social, economic, and psychological functions of the shrine in the lives of the devotees, etc.).

5.1 Part 1: Uni-Variate Analysis

Uni-variate is an analysis of one variable through frequency, percentage means and comparison of means of different groups or categorical variables through ANOVA and Sample T-test. The following is the Uni-Variate analysis of the beliefs of the devotees, rituals performed by the devotees, and social expectations of the devotees

from the shrine. Furthermore, the different social, economic, and psychological functions performed by the shrines in the lives of the devotees and the shrine's changing sacred status are in the face of different social factors. However, it also includes the different demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, economic status, religion, sect and Sub-sects in Sunni, local and province or culture, which affect the beliefs of the devotees analyzed through ANOVA and gender through sample T-test.

5.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Devotees

Data was collected about the demographic characteristics of the devotees (respondents) as these characteristics of a person influence their beliefs about the shrimp and their association with shrines, social expectations from shrines, and socio-economic and psychological functions of the shrines in the lives of the devotees.

5.1.2 Age Compositions of the Devotees

Age determines the social, psychological and economic status of the people of a society. Further, age is a social marker based on the different roles and statuses assigned to people of different ages. Beliefs, experiences, and expectations vary based on age. As seen in the following table (Table-5.1.), out of the total 223 devotees from whom data was collected, the majority of them, i.e., 75(33.6%), were in the age range of 20-30 years. Similarly, 70 (31.4%) and 50 (22.4%) of the respondent's ages were in the range of 40-50 and 30-40, respectively. However, a few participants, i.e., 28 (12.6%), were above 50 years old.

Table – 5.1: Frequency distribution and of the Age groups of the devotees

S.No	Age	Frequency	Percent
1	20-30	75	33.6
2	30-40	50	22.4
3	40-50	70	31.4
4	Above 50+	28	12.6
	Total	223	100.0

During the data collection, it was noted that most of the shrine visitors were young people who were partly interested in tourism and excursions. Some of these young people also had genuine problems, so they visited the shrine.

5.1.3 Gender of the Devotees

The gender of a person also influences his/her religious attitude and affiliation. The following table shows that out of a total of 223(100 %), the majority, i.e., 179 (80.3%) of the visitors were female, and 44(19.7 %) of the respondents were males.

As mentioned in the methods chapter, the researcher hired female research assistants to collect data from female visitors. Most of the males were accompanied by two or three females which might be one reason why the number of female visitors was higher than that of male visitors.

Table – 5.2: Frequency Distribution of the Gender of the Devotees

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Females	179	80.3
Males	44	19.7
Total	223	100.0

Studies conducted in different areas of Punjab and Sindh found that women in Pakistan are more inclined toward superstitions and shrines than men. The reasons

behind the inclination of women toward superstitions and shrines are primarily domestic, such as quarrels among in-laws at their homes. Similarly, most of the time, women in Pakistan live in tense environments, which compel them to visit the shrines for psychological relief and to bring peace to their homes. Moreover, in the rural areas of developing countries such as Pakistan, women's education has a low literacy rate. Therefore, women are more inclined and positive toward spiritual healing and shrines.

5.1.4 Marital Status of the Devotees

The marital status also changes the role and responsibilities of the individuals in the society. The married male and females face different domestic, social, and economic problems. Whenever they do not have an immediate solution for those problems in their minds, they take the support of the supernatural power, and to fulfil that purpose, they visit the Sufi shrine and the virtues of a saint (*Pir Baba*), where they pray to God to solve their problems. Therefore, in this study, the researcher has collected data mostly from married people as 185(83%) of the sampled devotees were married. Kamal and Younas (2020) also observed that married people are more inclined toward *Piri and Muridi* than unmarried people. Married people have more problems and are more inclined towards shrines than unmarried people. On the other hand, 38(17 %) of the devotees were unmarried because the purpose of their visits was almost different from that of the married devotees. The married devotees expressed their purpose of visitation in terms of fertility, expectation of male children and success in business, whereas the unmarried devotees expressed their purpose of visits in terms of choice marriages, success in business, and other aspects of life.

Table – 5.3: Marital Status of the Devotees

S. No	Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
1	Married	185	83.0
2	Unmarried	38	17.0
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.5 Education Level

Education is the development process of mental faculties such as knowledge, skills and potential. It also develops the individuals' critical thinking about society and their approach toward social life. So, in this study, the researcher considers the education level as a demographic variable because it brings fluctuation in beliefs, expectations, feelings, and understanding about the shrine. The data collected from the respondents is summarized in the following table. It has been found that out of the majority of the devotees, 155(69.5 %), were illiterate, and 56(25.1 %) were matriculated, respectively. Only 5(2.2 %) and 7(3.1 %) of the devotees were intermediate and bachelor-passed respectively.

Overall, it has been found that education can significantly influence an individual's beliefs, expectations, and critical thinking. Educated individuals may have a different perspective on religious or spiritual matters than those who are less educated. By considering education as a demographic variable, the researcher explored how education levels might influence the devotees' beliefs and understanding of the shrine (see bi-variate analysis). Further, the data indicates a significant disparity in education among the respondents. The majority were less educated and had different perceptions and interpretations of religious practices than those who had completed higher education. In addition, education is not only about acquiring knowledge and skills but also about exposure to different ideas and social contexts. The researcher may be

interested in understanding how the social context and critical thinking skills influence the devotee's approach to social life and their understanding of the shrine.

This study has found that less educated people believe more in shrines. The illiterate devotees considered the shrine a sacred place where they hoped to solve their problems.

Table – 5.4: Education Level of the Devotees

S. No	Education	Frequency	Percent
1	Illiterate	155	69.5
2	Metric	56	25.1
3	Intermediate	5	2.2
4	Bachelor	7	3.1
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.6 Economic Status of the Devotees

Economic status also influences the relationship between dependent and independent variables. So, in this study, the researcher considered the financial status of the devotees because variation in economic status also brings variation in beliefs, expectations, and feelings, as well as the association of the devotees with the shrine. The following table shows that out of the total 223(100%) devotees, according to their self-reported views, the majorities, 151(67.7%) of the devotees belonged to the lower class. On the other hand, 68(30.5%) of the devotees belonged to the middle class, and 4(1.8%) of the devotees belonged to the upper class.

Other research studies also support this finding. Abbass (2013) has argued that the majority of visitors to shrines belong to poor socio-economic status, have illiterate backgrounds and lead stressful, miserable lives for whom the *Langar* (free food) available at most shrines is a source of attraction. Moreover, the research studies

conducted by Batool, Chaudry, and Farooq (2015), entitled "*Mannat* and other associated beliefs with shrines," found that the lower class mostly visits shrines for their different needs. So, the majority of the devotees belong to the poor and underprivileged classes because they expect their various needs from the shrine, such as physical, social and psychological needs. However, another researcher, Chaudhry (2010), disagreed with the view that only the lower class and poor people visit the shrine, but according to him, the rich also visit the shrine. The rich and poor try to get the mediation of the Sufis to get what they do not possess. The rich try to get power and maintain control of the resources. On the other hand, people with low incomes try to get access to resources and power. In short, the poor visit the shrine in large numbers compared to the rich, but they both visit for two opposite purposes.

Table – 5.5: Economic Status of the Devotees

S. No	Economic Status	Frequency	Percent
1	Lower	151	67.7
2	Middle	68	30.5
3	Upper	4	1.8
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.7 Religious Affiliation of the Devotees

Sociologists and anthropologists have focused on religion and its significant influence on the social life of human beings since long ago. Among the others, Emile Durkheim and Malinowski have focused on the functional aspects of the religion. The number of devotees associated with different religions has been illustrated in the following table. As seen in the table, almost all of the respondents recruited in this study were associated with the Islamic faith, and no respondents were associated with any other religions. However, it does not mean that only Muslims visit the shrine. The shrine is

open to people of all faiths and sects. However, on the specific days of the fieldwork, the researcher could not find many non-Muslims on the shrine's premises; therefore, data were collected from one member of the Hindu community and one from the Sikh community.

During data collection, it was also noted that many non-Muslims live near the Shrine of Pir Baba in peace, coexistence, and tolerance with the majority of the Muslim population. This means that the spiritual version of Islam is based on tolerance, acceptance, and mutual coexistence. Hence, the Shrine of Pir Baba, on one side, is the source of integration and association among Muslims. On the other hand, its spiritual influence on the community is also a source of acceptance, harmony, and tolerance.

Table – 5.6: Frequency Distribution Showing Religious Affiliation of the Devotees

S. No	Religion	Frequency	Percent
1	Islam	221	99.1
2	Hinduism	1	.4
3	Sikhism	1	.4
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.8 Sectarian Affiliation of the Devotees

Almost all significant and divine religions of the world are divided into different sects, such as Islam has been divided into Shia and Sunni. These two sects have different inclinations and attitudes toward the shrine, summarized in the following table. Out of the total 223(100 %) respondents, most of the devotees, 182(81.6 %), were associated with the Sunni sect. On the other hand, 41(18.45) of the devotees had no sectarian affiliation, or they preferred not to disclose their sectarian affiliation. However, the research studies which were conducted in Punjab show that the Shia sect is more inclined toward the shrine as compared to the Sunni sect, but here in the

Northern side of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the majority of the Muslims are attached to the Sunni sect. Therefore, the Shrine of *Pir Baba* is visited more by the Sunnis as compared to the Shinas. However, resident devotees viewed the Shia from Para Chinar and other Southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa visiting the Shrine of *Pir Baba* in smaller numbers. During the fieldwork, the researcher discovered that most devotees of an unknown sect do not show affiliation with any sect of Islam but consider themselves Muslims. They expressed no sectarian concerns and preferred to be known as ‘simple and plain Muslims’.

Table – 5.7: Frequency Distribution Showing Sectarian Affiliation of Devotees

S. No		Frequency	Percent
1	Sunni	182	81.6
2	No sectarian affiliation (They did not know/disclose any sectarian affiliation)	41	18.4
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.9 Sub-sects of Sunni –sect

There are mainly two sub-sects in the Sunni sect - Wahhabi and Deobandi. Out of the total 223 (100%) devotees, the majority of the devotees, 158 (70.9%), were Deobandi who expressed attachment to mysticism and the Sufi version of Islam. On the other hand, 63(28.3%) of the devotees did not show affiliation with any sect, and only 2(0.9%) of the Wahhabis visited the shrine, mainly for excursions and tourism. The Wahabis generally consider activities within the premises of the shrine as paganism, unlike Deobandi visitors who show their inclination and moderate attitude toward the shrine.

Similarly, many visitors who were not affiliated with any sect of Islam also expressed their positive attitudes toward the shrine. However, fewer Wahhabis show their

negative attitudes toward the shrine or lack of inclination towards it. During the data collection, Wahhabis expressed their views on the visiting of the shrines and practicing different rituals or activities outside of Islam. Hence, Deobandi and other common Muslims have relatively positive attitudes and inclinations towards the shrine, but Wahhabis consider it paganism and activities outside of Islam.

Table – 5.8: Sub-sects of Sunni –sect

S.No	Sub-sects of Sunni	Frequency	Percent
1	Wahhabis	2	0.9
2	Deobandi	158	70.9
3	Others	63	28.3
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.10 Sufi Orders of the Devotees

Sufiism is very hierarchical. The designation of the Sufi may be ascribed and achieved. The ascribed is by birth, such as being born Sayed (decedents of the holy prophet, Muhammad) or *Gada Nasheen (decedents of the saint)*. However, Sayed's status by birth could be enhanced through meditation and seclusion. Every person in the Sufi order is connected to a Murshid (Spiritual guide), who is connected to another higher-order guide, and the chain continues till the top leader in the order. There are four main Sufi orders in mystical Islam: Naqshbandia, Cheshtia, Qadria, and Sohrwardia.

Pir Baba was also associated with a *Chestia* Sufi order, and he also had a lot of disciples. The summary of the disciples and the other familiar devotees is illustrated in the above table. Out of the total 223 (100%) devotees, the majority, comprising 195 (87.4%), did not associate with any Sufi order. Furthermore, these devotees lacked sufficient knowledge about Sufism and did not know the names of various Sufi

orders. This suggests a prevalent lack of affiliation or awareness among this significant portion of devotees regarding specific Sufi traditions. This also shows that many of the devotees were followers of Pir Baba and might have been devoted Muslims, but they did not necessarily adhere to Sufi teachings and traditions.

The table shows that a smaller percentage of devotees, totalling 28 (12.6%), did exhibit an association with a Sufi order. Some were resident devotees, such as *Malang* and *Munjawar (care-takers)*, while others were visiting devotees. The Malang and Manjawar were explicitly affiliated with the *Chestia* order, likely due to their discipleship under *Pir Baba*, who himself belonged to the *Chestia* Order.

The presence of devotees associated with the *Chestia* order indicates a localized influence within the community, mainly through the spiritual leadership of *Pir Baba*. This association may reflect a more profound connection among devotees who follow a specific Sufi order, possibly influencing their beliefs, practices, and overall spiritual outlook. Understanding these affiliations provides insights into the diverse spiritual landscape within the community, with the majority remaining unaffiliated. At the same time, a notable minority aligns themselves with a specific Sufi order, emphasizing the nuanced nature of religious practices among the devotees.

Table – 5.9: Frequency Distribution of Sufi Orders of the Devotees

S.No		Frequency	Percent
1	<i>Chestia</i>	28	12.6
2	No affiliation with Sufi order	195	87.4
	Total	223	100.0

5.1.11 Local of the Devotees

Previous studies have observed that people in rural areas are more conservative, traditional, fatalistic and dogmatic than urban people (Bukhari & Khan, 2019). Bukhari and Khan (2019) conducted a study in rural Multan and found that due to irrationality and lack of education, rural families have more inclination toward the shrine than urban families. Similarly, Safi, Qureshi, and Tahir (2018) also advocated the view that there will be more inclination among the people of rural areas toward superstitions and shrines than in urban areas. This study found that out of the total 223(100 %) respondents, 203(91 %) of the devotees belonged to different rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as other provinces. On the other hand, 20(9 %) of the devotees belonged to urban areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Afghanistan.

Table – 5.10: Local of the Devotees

S.No	Local	Frequency	Percent
1	Rural	203	91.0
2	Urban	20	9.0
	Total	223	100.0

It has been concluded from the secondary and primary collected data and field observations that the majority of the devotees belong to rural areas.

5.1.12 Province of the Devotees

Pakistan has four central provinces: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, and Baluchistan. The people of every province have different cultures, traditions, languages, customs and rituals. Some cultures are more flexible and Sufism-oriented, and some cultures are rigid and have fewer tendencies toward mystic Islam. Similarly, a research study conducted by Younas and Kamal (2019) found that the Kashmiri people believe more in *Piri Muridi* than the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Moreover, they further validate that the Punjabi and Sindhi people are more inclined toward *Piri Muridi* than those of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, in this study, the researcher found many people from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the Shrine of Pir Baba mainly because the Shrine is located in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. However, people from Punjab and Sindh specifically visited the Shrine of *Pir Baba* for spiritual as well as for some social, psychological and economic gratifications. Despite the distance, Punjabi and Sindhi still visit the shrine in large numbers, meaning that there is more inclination toward the shrine among them.

The data collected from people of different ethnicities and provincial backgrounds are summarised in Table 5.1.11. It has been found that out of the total 223(100) devotees, the majority of devotees, 186(83.4 %), 24(10.8 %) of the devotees were belonging to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab respectively. Conversely, 13(5.8 %) and 0(0 %) of the devotees were belong to Sindh and Baluchistan. The presence of the people from Punjab and Sindh within the shrine's premises shows their inclination and association with the shrine.

Table – 5.11: Province-Wise Distribution of the Devotees

S.No	Provinces	Frequency	Percent
1	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	194	87.0
2	Punjab	24	10.8
3	Sindh	5	2.2
4	Baluchistan		
	Total	223	100.0

It has been concluded from the secondary data that the people of Sindh and Punjab are more inclined toward the shrines than those of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, during data collection within the Shrine of *Pir Baba* premises, most of the

devotees belonged to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa compared to other provinces. The frequent visitation of specific ethnicities shows the specific values of a culture. Every shrine has a specific value and rank in a specific culture. For example, *Golra Sharif* is a frequent visitor to Punjab. However, Shrine of *Pir Baba* is the most frequently visit shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

5.2 Attachments, Pattern of Visits, and Time Spent by the Devotees in Shrine

5.2.1 Duration of Attachment of Devotees with Shrine

The devotees have an attachment to Shrine at different intervals. Out of the total 223(100 %), the majority of the devotees, 130(58.3 %), stated their attachment to Shrine from 1-5 years. In addition, 72(32.3 %) of the devotees stated their attachment to the nerine from (6-10) years. In contrast, 19(8.5 %) and 2(0.9 %) of the devotees stated their attachments from (11-15) years and more than 20 years, respectively.

Table – 5.12: Duration of Attachment of Devotees with Shrine

S.No	Number of Years	Frequency	Percent
1	1-5 years	130	58.3
2	6-10 years	72	32.3
3	11-15 years	19	8.5
4	More than 20 years	2	.9
	Total	223	100.0

The collected data and field observations, as well as the devotees' views, have concluded that devotees have attachments with shrines from 1 to 15 years. This range of attachment intervals shows the intensity of the devotees' attachments to the Shrine of *Pir Baba*.

5.2.2 Average Stay/ Residence of Devotees at Shrine per Visit

The devotees spend different times at the Shrine of *Pir Baba* per visit. The summary of the residence of the devotees per week has been summarized in the following table. Out of the total 223(100 %) of the devotees, the majority of the devotees, 187(83.9 %), spend less than two days at Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, 32(14.3 %) of the devotees spend 2-3 days per week at Shrine. In addition, 3(1.3) and 1(0.4 %) spend the whole week and month, respectively.

Table – 5.131: Average Stay/ Residence of Devotees at Shrine per Visit

S.No	Stay at Shrine	Frequency	Percent
1	Less than two days	187	83.9
2	2-3 days	32	14.3
3	Whole week	3	1.3
4	Month	1	.4
	Total	223	100.0

5.2.3 Relationships of Devotees with *Pir Baba* as a Saint

The devotees have different types of relationships with *Pir Baba* and Shrine. These relationships or associations have been summarized in the following table. It has been found that out of 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 173(77.57 %) were visiting devotees – the people who visit Shrine of *Pir Baba* on special occasions or seldom, 27(12.10 %) were disciples- the devotees who are almost present or stay within Shrine of *Pir Baba*, 12(5.4 %) were the descendants –offspring or progeny of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, 11(4.9 %) were the servants (*Malanag/ Munjawar*)- the devotees who served the Shrine of *Pir Baba*.

Table – 5.14: Relationships of Devotees with *Pir Baba* as a Saint

S.No	Relationships	Frequency	Percent
1	Descendent	12	5.4
2	Disciples	27	12.107
3	Servant/ Malang/Manjwar	11	4.9
4	Visiting Devotees	173	77.57
	Total	223	100.0

The collected data shows that devotees visited the Shrine of *Pir Baba* in large numbers. However, descendants, disciples, and servants were also present on the Shrine premises. The visited devotees spend a moment, day, week or a maximum of a month within the premises of the Shrine to accomplish their social, economic or psychological needs. On the other hand, the servants, *Manjwar (Malang)*, and disciples are almost always present within the Shrine premises, and they serve the Shrine in terms of brooming, supervision, and *Nazrana* collection.

5.2.4 Usual time of Stay at the Shrine of *Pir Baba* per day.

Usually, the visiting devotees spend different intervals within the premises of Shrine of *Pir Baba*. Out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 193(86.5 %) of the devotees have spent 1-5 hours in Shrine. They were occasional visitors; they visited Shrine for specific purposes to solve specific purposes and to solve unique problems. On the other hand, 26(11.7 %) of the devotees spent 6-10 hours, and only 4(1.7 %) were completely present throughout the day in Shrine.

Table – 5.15: Usual time stay at the Shrine of *Pir Baba* per day

S.No	Time Spent	Frequency	Percent
1	1-5 hours	193	86.5
2	6-10 hours	26	11.7
3	One day	4	1.7
	Total	223	100.0

The above primary information notes that the devotees spend different intervals of time within the shrine's premises. Further, field observations and collected data conclude that the devotees' stays within the Shrine depend upon their attachments, associations, and expectations from the Shrine.

5.2.5 Pattern of Visits of the Devotees of the Shrine

Some devotees visit the Shrine of *Pir Baba* alone, and some are in the company. The numbers of the devotees and devotees in the company have been summarized in the following table. Out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 150(67.26 %) of the devotees visited Shrine in the company. However, 73(32.7 %) of the devotees visited Shrine alone.

Table – 5.16: Pattern of Visits of the Devotees to the Shrine

S.No		Frequency	Percent
1	Visiting Alone	73	32.7
2	Visiting in Company	150	67.26
	Total	223	100.0

The above primary data shows that many devotees visit the Shrine visiting company with other family members, relatives, and friends. Further, the views of the devotees

express that they bring their spouses, family members, relatives and friends for different social, economic and psychological purposes.

5.2.6 Visiting Shrine by the Devotees in the Company of Kith and Kin

As we can see in the earlier Table, most devotees did not visit Shrine alone; they visited with others such as families, friends, relatives, and other members of society. It has been found that out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 153(68.6 %) and 48(21.5 %) of the devotees visited Shrine with family members and friends, respectively. On the other hand, 15 devotees (6.7 %) and seven devotees (3.1 %) visited the Shrine with relatives and other community members, respectively. Similarly, research study conducted by Sajid and Khan (2011) in Punjab-Gujrat also found that some devotees are motivated by friends and some devotees are motivated by relatives. Batool, Chaudry, and Farooq (2015) also testified that considering these places holy has been transferred to us by our family and amalgamated by their parents and grandparents.

Table 5. 2: Visiting Shrine by the Devotees in the Company of Kith and Kin

S.No		Frequency	Percent
1	Family Members	153	68.6
2	Friends	48	21.5
3	Relatives	15	6.7
4	Any other	7	3.1
	Total	223	100.0

5.2.7 Visit of Devotees to Other Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

There are large numbers of shrines in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. After *Pir Baba*, the most frequently visited shrine of *Kaka Saib* is situated in the Nowshera District. According to the data, 138(61.9 %) devotees visited the Shrine of *Kaka Saib*.

Another famous shrine is *Malang Baba*, which has been visited by 125(56.53 %) devotees for *Barakah*. The Shrine of *Mady Baba* is situated in Jalala, near Tahkt Bhai, and 120(53.8) devotees said they have visited the Shrine of *Akhunderweza Baba* was the disciple of Pir Baba, who died in a confrontation with the army of Mughal King Akbar Badshah. The shrine of *Dewana Baba* is also located in Buner, which is why Buner is also called the land of Sufism. Almost 70(31.4 %) of the devotees said they had visited the Shrine of *Dewana Baba*. The shrine of Mian Qasim Baba is situated in Matta Swat, and 105 devotees (47.85 %) have also visited the Shrine. Furthermore, the Shrine of *Hesar Baba* is situated in Totakan Malakand, and 48(19.7 %) of the devotees also visited the Shrine. Shrine of Ghazi Baba is in Bajur Agency, and 44(19.7 %) devotees also visited Shrine. Moreover, the Shrine of Manzary Baba is in Dargai Malakand, and 30(13.45 %) devotees also visited the Shrine. All these are shrines whose attendees frequently mentioned their n. Besides these shrines, many other shrines exist in different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and the people of the local communities have different expectations of them.

Table – 5.18: Visit of Devoted to Other Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

S.No	Name of the shrines in KP	Visited	Not Visited
1	<i>Kaka Saib</i>	138(61.9)	85(38.1)
2	<i>Malang Baba</i>	125(56.053)	98(43.94)
3	<i>Mady Baba</i>	120(53.8)	103(46.2)
4	<i>Akhun Derweza Baba</i>	120(53.8)	103(46.2)
5	<i>Mian Qasim Baba</i>	105(47.085)	118(52.91)
6	<i>Dewana Baba</i>	70(31.4)	153(68.6)
7	<i>Hesar Baba</i>	48(21.5)	175(78.5)
8	<i>Ghazi Baba</i>	44(19.7)	179(80.3)
9	<i>Manzary Baba</i>	30(13.45)	193(86.54)

From the above data, it has been concluded that devotees also visit the Shrine in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, besides the Shrine of Pir Baba. Among the saints of these shrines, the devotees viewed about them that they were the disciples of *Pir Baba*. For example, the devotees of the *Akhun Derweza Baba*, *Mian Qasim Baba*, *Dewana Baba* and *Hesar Baba* are the disciples of *Pir Baba*. In short, the devotees not only expressed reverence and worth for the Shrine of *Pir Baba* but also venerated other shrines of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Table – 5.19: Knowledge and Perceptions of the Visitors about *Pir Baba*

S.No	Statement	Yes	No	Not Sure
1	<i>Pir Baba</i> was a great saint of Allah	167(74.9)	32(14.3)	24(10.8)
2	<i>Pir Baba</i> was a preacher of Islam	185(83)	2(0.9)	36(16.1)
3	As a saint, he was different in rank from common people	198(88.8)	6(2.7)	19(8.5)
4	He was a disciple of Shiek Atta Ullah Shah (<i>Salar-i-Room</i>)	14(6.3)	1(0.4)	208(93.3)
5	He migrated from Afghanistan	185(83)	3(1.3)	35(15.7)
6	He practised meditation	188(84.3)	5(2.2)	30(13.5)
7	He possessed various miraculous powers (<i>Kirramat</i>).	128(57.4)	5(2.2)	90(40.4)
8	His father was a soldier of Mughal King Humayun	128(57.4)	5(2.2)	90(40.4)
7	He died in 1583	19(8.5)	4(1.8)	200(89.7)

Devotees have different knowledge and perceptions about the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. 167(74.9 %) of the devotees viewed *Pir Baba* as a great saint of Allah. On the other hand, 32(14.3) of the visitors negate this view. However, 24(10.8 %) of the devotees believed we needed to learn about *Pir Baba*. In addition, 18,5(83) of the devotees stated that *Pir Baba* was a great preacher of Islam. On the other hand, 36(16.1 %) and 2(0.9 %) of the devotees were not sure and negated this statement. Similarly, the majority, 198(88.8) of the devotees, stated that *Pir Baba* was a saint of a different rank from the ordinary people. On the other hand, 19(8.5 %) and 6(2.7 %) devotees

needed to be more sure and did not know *Pir Baba*. Notwithstanding, most 185(83 %) devotees viewed *Pir Baba* as migrating from Afghanistan *Termaiz*. In contrast, 35(15.7 %) and 3(1.3 %) of the devotees needed clarification on this statement and did not know, respectively. Furthermore, the majority 188 (84.3 %) of the devotees viewed him as a saint; *Pir Baba* practiced meditation and had a place of worship (*Chilagah*) at the bottom of the mountain. The majority, 128(57.4 %) of the devotees viewed *Pir Baba* as having different miraculous powers (*Karramat*). On the other hand, 90(40.4 %) and 5(2.2 %) of the devotees needed to learn to learn and be sure about *Pir Baba's* miraculous power, respectively. In addition, the majority, 128(57.4 %) of the devotees, viewed that the father of *Pir*, *Sayeed Qamabar Ali Shah*, was King Humayun's soldier. On the other hand, 90(40.4) and 5(2.2 %) of the devotees needed to be more sure and did not know the father of *Pir Baba*. Finally, the majority, 200(89.7 %) of the devotees, did not know the exact year of death, 1583. However, 19(8.5 %) and 4(1.8 %) of the devotees had little knowledge about the year of death of *Pir Baba*, respectively.

In short, the above primary data shows *Pir Baba's* biographical information. The devotees said that *Pir Baba* was a great saint of Allah and a preacher of Islam. As a saint, he was different in rank from common people. He was a disciple of Shiek Atta Ullah Shah (*Salari-Room*). He migrated from Afghanistan and practiced meditation in seclusion. He possessed various miraculous powers (*Kirramat*). His father was a soldier of Mughal King Humayun. He died in 1583 in Buner, and now Shrine is located there.

Table – 5.20: Beliefs of the Devotees about *Pir Baba*

S.No	Statement	Yes	No
1	<i>Pir Baba</i> is a friend of Allah	189(84.8)	34(15.2)
2	<i>Pir Baba</i> is alive in your perception	191(85.7)	32(14.3)
3	God listen more to the <i>Pir Bab</i> than common people	196(87.9)	27(12.1)
4	The blessings from <i>Pir Baba</i> can change your fate	174(87)	49(22)
5	<i>Pir Baba</i> cannot talk but can listen to the visitors	85(38.1)	138(61.9)
6	<i>Pir Baba</i> is a mediator between God and us	155(69.5)	68(30.5)
7	The decedents and family members of the saint are also Holly and closer to God	181(81.2)	42(18.8)
8	<i>Pir Baba</i> can perform miracles	183(82.1)	40(17.9)

A research study conducted by Sajid and Khan (2011) in Punjab *Barilla Sharif* found different types of beliefs of the devotees about the *Barilla Sharif*. They found that the devotees considered a saint as the friend of Allah and considered him alive; they believed that God listened more to the saint of Barilla Sharif as compared to the common man. This study found that the devotees have different beliefs and perceptions about *Pir Baba*. It has been found that out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, i.e., 189(84.8 %) of the devotees, believed that *Pir Baba* is a friend of Allah. On the other hand, 34(15.2 %) of the devotees did not believe it. Moreover, most 191(85.7 %) devotees believed *Pir Baba* was alive. On the other hand, 32(14.3 %) did not believe that *Pir Baba* was alive. Furthermore, the majority of 191 devotees (85.7 %) believed that God listened more to *Pir Baba* than other common people in the society. In contrast, 27(12.1 %) of the devotees did not agree with the statement that God listens more to *Pir Baba* than other people in the society. Moreover, the majority of 174(87 %) of the devotees have viewed that the blessing from *Pir Baba* can change the fate of the visitors and believers.

Conversely, some 49(22 %) of the devotees did not believe that the blessing of Baba of *Pir Baba* could change the fortune of the believers. Furthermore, the majority,

138(61.9 %) of the devotees, have viewed *Pir Baba* as not being able to talk to the believers, followers, and disciples but listening to their *Mannat* and demands. Most devotees, 155(69.5 %), considered *Pir Baba*, a mediator between God and themselves. On the other hand, some 68(30.5 %) of the devotees did not consider intercessory (*Waseela*) between God and themselves. Furthermore, the majority of 181 devotees (81.2 %) also consider the descendants and disciples of *Pir Baba* holy and closer people to God.

Conversely, some 42(18.8 %) of the devotees have not considered the descendants and disciples of *Pir Baba* holy and closer people to God. Majority 183 (82.1 %) of the devotees also believed in the miracles of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, some 40(17.9 %) devotees did not believe in *Pir Baba's* miracles.

It has been summarized that the devotees consider *Pir Baba* a friend of Allah. Further, most of them viewed *Pir Baba* as alive and solved the people's different social, psychological, and economic problems. They also perceived that God listened more to the *Pir Bab* than common people of his sanctity and piousness. In addition, they also viewed that the blessings from *Pir Baba* could change the fate of the devotees. Devotees expect good fortune and success in different social and economic matters. The devotees also believed that *Pir Baba* could not talk but listen to the visitors and that he was a mediator between God and us. Moreover, the believers also viewed the descendants and family members of the saint *Pir Baba* as *holy* and closer to God. The devotees expressed special veneration and respect for *Pir Baba*, who can perform multiple miracles in the lives of the devotees.

Table – 5.21: Rituals and Practices Performed by Visitors at the Shrine

S.No	Statement	Yes	No
1	Circling the Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i>	173(77.6)	50(22.4)
2	<i>Minnat</i> from the Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i>	185(83)	38(17)
3	Performing <i>Barakaha</i> prayer within the premises of the Shrine	11(4.9)	212(95.1)
4	Participation in the celebration of <i>Urs</i> of <i>Pir Baba</i>	35(15.7)	188(84.3)
5	Lightening candles on Shrine	28(12.6)	195(87.4)
6	Singing <i>Qawwali</i>	12(5.4)	211(94.6)
7	Knotting the thread or cloth	115(51.6)	108(48)
8	Tie children on the Tomb	43(19.3)	180(80.7)
9	Touching the tomb with hands and then rubbing hands on the body	100(44.8)	123(55.2)
10	Eating holy salt from Shrine	56(25.1)	167(74.9)
11	Drinking holy water for <i>Barakah</i>	168(75.3)	55(24.7)
12	Taking Amulet from the servant/ <i>Malang</i> of Shrine	66(29.6)	157(70.4)
13	Taking <i>Bayath</i> (Oath) from the disciple (<i>Mureed</i>) of <i>Pir Baba</i>	59(26.5)	164(73.5)
14	Not turning back to the tomb	42(18.8)	181(81.2)
15	<i>Chadar Charana</i> (Covering tomb with cloth)	149(66.8)	77(33.2)
16	<i>Jarho Dena</i> (Brooming Shrine)	45(20.2)	178(79.8)

Devotees usually perform different rituals in the Shrine, i.e. *Bayath* or having oath in the *Pir*, *Mannat* (Intercession), touching the tomb by the devotees and rubbing on his own body, tasting and taking holy salt and food from the Shrine, knotting the thread, bowing and taking round, not turning back to the tomb. It has been found that out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 173(77.6 %) of the devotees were circled the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, 50(22.4) of the devotees did not practice circle around the Shrine. Moreover, the majority, 185(83 %) of the devotees, practised and 38(17 %) devotees did not practice *Mannat*. The majority, 212(95.1 %) of the

devotees, did not offer *Barakah* Prayer within the Shrine of *Pir Baba* while 11(4.9 %) of the devotees were offered *Barakah* Prayer. 188(84.3) of the devotees have participate in the celebration of the *Urs* ceremony of *Pir Baba*. However, 35(15.7 %) of the devotees have participated in the *Urs* celebration of the saint. Moreover, most of the 195 devotees (87.4 %) have not enlightened candles at the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. However, 28(12.6 %) devotees have enlightened candles at the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. Majority The majority, 115(51.6 %) of the devotees, have knotted thread or cloth with Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, 108(48 %) of the devotees have not knotted the thread or cloth with the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. The majority, 123(55.2 %) of the devotees, did not practice touching the tomb by hand and then rubbing on the body. However, some 100(44.8 %) of the devotees have touched the tomb with their hands and then rub on their bodies. In addition, most 167(74.9 %) devotees have yet to eat holy salt from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. In contrast, some 56(25.1 %) devotees took holy salt from the servants of *Pir Baba* and ate that salt. The majority, 168(75.3 %) of the devotees, have taken holy water from the servants of *Pir Baba* for *Barakah* and other physical and psychological purposes. Similarly, the majority, 157(70.4 %) of the devotees did not take an amulet from the servant of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, some 66(29.6 %) of the devotees have taken amulet from the servant of Shrine of *Pir Baba* for different physical and psychological needs. 164 devotees (73.5 %) did not take an oath (*Bayath*) in the hands of the *Pir Baba*'s descendants, disciples, or disciples wholesome, i.e., 59(26.5 %) of the devotees have taken oaths (*Bayath*) on the hand of *Pir Baba*. Moreover, the majority, 149(66.8 %) of the devotees practiced covering tombs (*Chadar Charana*) with a cloth. In contrast, 77(33.2 %) of the devotees did not practice covering the shrine. In the end, the majority of 178(79.8 %) devotees were not broomed Shrine for the sake of *Barkah*. However, some 45(20.2 %)

of the devotees broomed the Shrine of Pir Baba, and they considered it a symbol of affiliation and association with Pir Baba and the Shrine.

In a nutshell, the devotees performed different rituals within the premises of the Shrine, such as circling around the Shrine of Pir Baba and Minnat from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. In addition, the devotees also performed *the Barakaha* prayer on the Shrine premises. They offered *Barakah* prayer to fulfil different needs. Similarly, they also participated in the *Urs* of *Pir Baba*, and during the celebration of *Urs*, they lighted candles in the Shrine and sang *Qawwali*. In addition, most female devotees were observed knitting thread or cloth to the Shrine. The female devotees expressed their views that they do this practice for fertility and expectations of male children.

Similarly, one another practices tying children on the tomb; the women are also associated with their fertility and expectations of male children. They added more, and for this purpose, they also ate holy salt from the Shrine and drank holy water for *Barakah*. Similarly, the devotees also considered taking an Amulet from the servant/*Malang* of the Shrine as a source of healing for diseases and *Barkah*.

Moreover, the devotees also took *Bayath* (Oath) from the disciple (*Mureed*) of *Pir Baba*, and they considered it a source of access to *Pir Baba*. Similarly, they also did not turn their backs on the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. They did this practice for the purpose of presenting reverence to the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. In addition, the devotees covered the tomb with cloth (*Chadar Charana*) for gratification and satisfaction for different social, economic, and psychological needs. Similarly, most of the resident devotees or servants (*Malang, Munjawar*) broomed Shrine, and they considered this practice a sense of honor. However, most of the female devotees were observed practicing

broom shrines, and they also believed that through this practice, we would get close to *Pir Baba*, and by his intercession, Allah would fulfil our needs.

Table – 5.22: Purposes for which the Devotees visited the Shrine

S.No	Statement	Yes	No
1	Hoping to get good health for yourself / your close one	172(77.1)	51(22.9)
2	Hoping to solve familial disputes	120(53.8)	103(46.3)
3	Expecting wealth and economic prosperity	123(55.2)	100(44.8)
4	Hoping to get employment	141(63.2)	82(36.8)
5	Expecting professional growth	126(56.5)	97(43.5)
6	Hoping for business growth	129(57.8)	94(42.2)
7	Hoping to get pregnancy/fertility	115(51.6)	108(48.4)
8	Hoping to get a male child	140(62.8)	83(37.2)
9	Praying for the survival of your children	165(74)	58(26)
10	Hoping to get married	152(68.2)	71(31.8)
11	Hoping to get married to a partner of your choice	150(67.3)	73(32.7)
12	Expecting to avoid domestic violence	145(65)	78(35)
13	Expecting dissolution of family conflict	135(60.5)	88(39.5)

The devotees visit the Shriner of *Pir Baba* for different physical, social, economic and psychological expectations. Regarding these expectations, a research study by Shaikh, Ibrahim and Khatoon (2010) conducted this study in Karachi and found that the devotees visit shrines for different purposes such as rewards (*Swab*), domestic problems, financial business problems, infertility problems, health, unemployment problems, to get rid of Jinn, *Bhooth*, *Saya*, to see love and to seek choice marriage. This study found that out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 172(77.1 %) of the devotees hoped for good health and also for the closer one from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, some 51(22.9 %) of the devotees did not expect health for themselves or their loved ones. Moreover, most 120(53.8 %) of the devotees were hoping for the Shrine of *Pir Baba* in the resolution of familial disputes. The majority

of 123 devotees (55.2 %) also expect *Barakah* to have wealth and economic prosperity from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. Moreover, most 129(57.8 %) devotees expect *Barakah* in business or business growth from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. Furthermore, the majority 115(51.6 %) of the devotees expected pregnancy and fertility of their spouses from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. The male children are considered the source of power in the patriarchal society. The majority, 140(62.8 %) of the devotees, believed that *Pir Baba* is a source (*Waseela*) of male children for male childless parents.

In addition, the majority, 165(74 %) of the devotees, also believed that by the virtues of *Pir Baba*, the child of the people would survive. However, most 152 devotees (68.2 %) expect or hope for marriage from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, some 71(31.8 %) of the devotees did not expect and hope for marriage from Shrine of *Pir Baba*.

Furthermore, most 150(67.3 %) of the devotees also expect a choice marriage from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, some 73(32.7 %) devotees did not expect marriage of choice from Shrine of *Pir Baba*. Last, 14Last 135(60.5 %) of devoid teens were expected to avoid domestic conflicts to avoid dissolution of family conflicts respectively from Shrine of *Pir Baba*. On the other hand, some 78(35 %) and 88(39.5 %) devotees did not expect domestic violence and family conflict resolution from Shrine of *Pir Baba*. Similarly, a research study conducted by Farid and Iqbal (2017) advocates that almost all devotees visit Shrine for the fulfilment of different wishes such as success in exams, achieving a love marriage, finding favorable solutions to family disputes and conflicts, better future for children and childbirth and marriage of daughters within respectable families.

In short, it has been summarized that the devotees visit the Shrine of *Pir Baba* for different purposes, such as hoping to get good health for themselves or their loved ones. The devotees expect healing and recuperation from different diseases. During the data collection, devotees explained their problems, such as kidney stones, cancers, headaches, etc. Similarly, the devotees also expressed some social expectations, such as solutions to familial disputes. In addition, the devotees also visited the Shrine of *Pir Baba* for economic prosperity, employment, professional growth, business growth, pregnancy/fertility, getting a male child and praying for the survival of the children. However, few female devotees hoped for marriage and marriage of choice. Few devotees expressed their attachments, but they also expressed their grievances and restrictions from the side of culture and society. They explained that we cannot express our attachments at home. Therefore, by the intercession of *Pir Baba*, they expected Allah would tie them into their expected relationship. Most of the female devotees also described the reason for their visits as avoiding domestic violence and also expected the dissolution of family conflict. They viewed that at home, we are facing different types of violence from the side of husband, father-in-law, mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Besides this, the devotees also mentioned different familial disputes, such as quarrelling between them. To resolve these disputes, they visited the Shrine of *Pir Baba*.

Table – 5.23: Visitors’ Expectations in terms of Health and Healing from Shrine

S.No	Statement	Yes	No
1	Seeking cures for different diseases by eating holy food such as salt and drinking holy water	156(70)	67(30)
2	Seeking a cure for Hepatitis	140(62.8)	83(37.2)
3	Expect a cure for Tuberculosis	143(64.1)	80(35.9)
4	Expect a cure for Typhoid	140(62.8)	83(37.2)

5	Expect a cure for Paralysis	153(68.6)	70(31.4)
6	Healing of children with frequent crying (<i>Zyal</i>)	149(66.8)	74(33.2)
7	Healing of continuously crying children (<i>Jaby</i>)?	150(67.3)	73(32.7)
8	Seeking treatment for physically weak children (<i>Sury</i>)	152(68.2)	71(31.8)
9	Healing from witchcraft and magic	152(68.2)	71(31.8)
10	Treatment of Mental Health	172(77.1)	51(22.9)
11	Warding off evil eyes	171(76.7)	52(23.3)

The devotees visit the Shrine to treat and heal different diseases and illnesses. Farid and Iqbal (2017) conducted a study and found that shrines are believed to throw out diseases. The devotees' expectations in terms of health and healing from the Shrine of Pir Baba are illustrated in the above table. It has been found that out of the total 223(100%) devotees, the majority, 156(70 %) of the devotees were expecting cure of different diseases by eating different holy food from the *Lunger* as well as devoted food to the Shrine. Furthermore, most 140 devotees (62.8 %) had expectations from the Shrine of *Pir Baba* regarding seeking a cure for hepatitis. Similarly, the majority, 143(64.1 %), 140(62.8 %), 153(68.6 %), 150(67.3 %), 152(68.2 %), 152(68.2 %), 172(77.1 %) and 171(76.7 %) of the devotees expected treatment and healing of Tuberculosis, Typhoid, Paralysis, frequent crying (*Zyal*), continuously crying children (*Jaby*), physically weak children (*Sury*), witchcraft and magic, Mental Health and Warding off of evil eyes from Shrine of *Pir Baba* respectively. In short, most devotees expect treatment and healing for fatal and non-fatal diseases and illnesses. Some of them did not expect in terms of health and healing from the Shrine of *Pir Baba*.

It has been concluded that the devotees visit the Shrine to seek cures and treatment for different diseases by eating holy food, such as salt, and drinking holy water. They expected cures for different diseases such as hepatitis, Tuberculosis, Typhoid, and

Paralysis. To heal and recuperate from different diseases, they practised different rituals such as drinking Holy water, eating Holy food, rubbing stones on their bodies and circling Shrine. They viewed that by performing these practices with the virtues of *Pir Baba*, they would get closer to Allah. In return, they will recuperate from different diseases and illnesses.

Similarly, the devotees also brought their frequent crying children (*Zyal*) and children with continuous crying (*Jaby*) for treatment and healing. Similarly, the devotees also brought their physically weak children (*Sury*) for treatment and healing. Hence, they expected treatment of these different physical diseases and illnesses. However, the devotees also expected healing from witchcraft and magic. Similarly, the devotees also hoped for mental health treatment to ward off evil eyes. In short, devotees expect cures for different social, psychological, and spiritual diseases.

Table – 5.24: Views of the devotees about *Pir Baba*'s contributions to the promotion of social control and social integration in society

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	<i>Pir Baba</i> contributes to society in terms of social control and social integration	134(60.1)	89(39.9)
2	People feel fear of <i>Kirammat</i> of <i>Pir Baba</i> , which does not let them do something wrong	153(68.6)	70(31.4)
3	The Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> promotes positive and pro-social attitudes among the people of the local community	155(69.5)	68(30.5)
4	Bring conformity among the people	164(73.5)	59(26.5)
5	<i>Pir Baba</i> safeguards society from the curse and ill-intended movements such as the Taliban	166(74.4)	57(25.6)
6	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration among descendants due to common lineage	178(79.8)	45(20.2)
7	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration among disciples due to shared beliefs	171(76.7)	52(23.3)
8	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration and love among the devotees	169(75.8)	54(42.2)
9	The Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> provides space for rest and solace to away farers and patients.	194(87)	29(13)
10	The Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> provides free food to poor people in the area	202(90.6)	21(9.4)
11	Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> serves as a space of leisure for local communities	204(91.5)	19(8.5)

Sufi Shrines perform different social functions in the lives of the devotees, and overall, it also contributes to society in terms of social integration, social control, and providing food to the poor, needy and destitute and space to far away people for rest and solace. Sufi Shrines also perform functions in the form of political patronage and prestige and provides recreation opportunities. Almost all these social functions of shrines were observed by Sajid and Khan (2011) in their study on the Shrine of *Barella Sharif –Gujrat*, Punjab. The research findings regarding the social functions of the Shrine of *Pir Baba* have been summarized in the above table. Out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 134(60.1 %) devotees, viewed Pir Baba as contributing to society regarding social control and social integration.

On the other hand, 89(39.9 %) of the devotees did not agree with the view that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* contributes to society regarding social control and social integration. In addition, the majority of 153 devotees (68.6 %) agreed that people were doing some things right due to fear of *Kiramat* of *Pir Baba*. Furthermore, the majority of 155(69.5 %) devotees viewed the Shrine of *Pir Baba* as promoting a positive and pro-social attitude among the local community. On the other hand, some 68(30.5 %) of the devotees disagreed that Shrine and the teaching of the *Pir Baba* promote positive and pro-social attitudes among the local community.

Similarly, the majority of 164(73.5 %) devotees also viewed the Shrine of *Pir Baba* as bringing conformity among the people of the local community and society. On the other hand, some 59(26.5 %) devotees did not agree with the view that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* brings conformity among the people of the local community and society. Simultaneously, the majority, 166(74.4) of the devotees viewed that *Pir Baba* safeguards the society from the curse and ill-intended movements such as the Taliban. Moreover, the Shrine of *Pir Baba* also promotes integration among the people of the

local community. In this regard, the majority of 178(79.8 %) devotees viewed the Shrine of *Pir Baba* as promoting integration among descendants due to common lineage, while 171(76.7 %) of the devotees, stated that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes integration among disciples due to shared beliefs and practices.

Moreover, 169(75.8 %) of the devotees believed that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes integration and love among the devotees. Conversely, some 54(42.2 %) devotees did not agree with this view. Majority, 194(87 %) of the devotees, viewed the Shrine of *Pir Baba* as providing space for rest and solace to wayfarers and patients, while only 21(9.4 %) of the devotees did not agree with the statement. Similarly, the majority of 204(91.5 %) devotees viewed the Shrine as a leisure space for local communities.

In a nutshell, the Shrine of *Pir Baba* is believed by jamority of the devotees that its promotes social control and social integration through fear *Kiramat*, pro-social attitude, social safety and security, and providing space for leisure time.

The Shrine of *Pir Baba* performs multiple social functions in the lives of the devotees. These social functions include social control and social integration among the society's people and *Pir Baba*'s disciples. The devotees expressed common beliefs and practiced everyday rituals, which created a sense of integration and conformity among the people of the society. In addition, following common beliefs and attachment to Shrine also control the behavior, thinking and feelings of the people of a community or society. People feel fear of *Kiramat* of *Pir Baba*, which does not let them do something wrong.

Moreover, the Shrine of *Pir Baba* is also a source of positive and pro-social attitudes among the people of the local community. Hence, it brings conformity among the people and safeguards society from the curse and ill-intended movements such as the

Taliban. Promotes integration among descendants due to common lineage, promotes integration among disciples due to shared beliefs, provides space for rest and solace to away farers and patients, provides free food to poor people of the area, serves as a space of leisure for local communities.

Table – 5.25: Views of Devotees about the Role of Pir Baba in the promotion of inter-faith harmony among the People of Different Religions and Sects

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Shrine promotes inter-faith harmony among the people of different religions and sects	203(91)	20(9)
2	Develop mutual understanding among people of different religions	165(74)	58(26)
3	Promote the notion of life and let us live	202(90.6)	21(9.4)
4	Promotes mutual co-existence among people of different religions	147(65.9)	76(34.1)
5	Promote peace and acceptance of different beliefs	149(66.8)	74(33.2)
6	Shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> have acceptance for <i>Gurdwara</i> in the near vicinity	168(75.3)	55(24.7)
7	Shrines have also acceptance by people of every sect of Islam	169(75.8)	54(24.2)
8	Sikhs and Hindus have lived peacefully with Muslims of <i>Buner</i> for a long time	170(76.2)	53(23.8)

In a research study, Ali and David (2021) analyzed inter-faith harmony among Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims. They viewed that before the advent of Islam in Sindh in 712, there were living people of different religions, i.e. Buddhists and Hindus, and they practiced their rituals and festivals. Furthermore, Khuro (1993) elaborated that they lived with tenderness, love, kindness, strength, helpfulness and friendliness. Even after the advent of Islam, due to the influence of the culture, the people of Sindh tried to live in peace and harmony (Syed, 2010). Moreover, Sufism is an Islamic version of mysticism and a school of practice that stresses the inward search for God and avoids the materialistic aspect of life (Specia, 2017). Sufism inspired Siddhis; they lived together with pace, tolerance, and acceptance for a long time.

Similarly, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Buner is called the land of Sufism, and there have also been people of Sikh and Hindu Communities for a long time. However, they live with each other with tolerance, acceptance, peace and reverence. The researcher found that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes mutual understanding among the people of different religions. Most 202 devotees (90.6 %) also viewed the Shrine as promoting living and letting to live.

On the other hand, some 21(9.4 %) of the devotees did not agree with this view that to live and let to live. Furthermore, the majority, 147(65.9 %) of the devotees, viewed the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes. It has been summarized in the above table. Out of 223(100 %) of the devotees, the majority, 203(91 %) of the devotees viewed the Shrine as promoting inter-faith harmony among people of different religions and sects. On the other hand, some 20(9 %) of the devotees did not agree with the view that the Shrine promotes inter-faith harmony among people of different religions and sects. The majority of the devotees, 165(74 %), viewed that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* tolerates the diversity of religions. In contrast, some 58(26 %) of the devotees disagreed with this statement that the Shrine of mutual co-existence among people of different religions.

In contrast, some 76(34.1 %) devotees disagreed with this statement that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes mutual co-existence among people of different religions. Most 149(66.8 %) devotees viewed the Shrine of *Pir Baba* as promoting peace and accepting the diversity of beliefs among the followers and disciples. On the other hand, 74(33.2 %) of the devotees disagreed that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes peace and acceptance of the diversity of beliefs. The majority, 169(75.8 %), 170(76.2 %) of the devotees viewed that Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes acceptance for every sect and promotes a culture of tolerance among the people of local Buner and for the

people of other religions such as Sikh and Hindus. In short, the Shrine of Pir Baba promotes the culture of tolerance, acceptance, peace and mutual co-existence among the people of different religions and sects. Most research studies advocate that Sufism is a cause of love, peace, interfaith harmony and asceticism (Idris & Ahmed, 2011; Kurin, 1983; Rehman & Lund-Thomsen, 2014).

It has been concluded that the Shrine promotes inter-faith harmony among people of different religions and sects. It develops mutual understanding among people of different religions and promotes the notion of live and let to live. Similarly, the Shrine promotes mutual co-existence among people of different religions. In addition, Shrine promotes peace and acceptance of different beliefs. For example, the Shrine of *Pir Baba* has accepted a *Gurdwara* in the near vicinity.

Furthermore, the Shrine has accepted people of every sect of Islam. It has also influenced the local social mile; it spreads a mystic version of Islam based on peace, acceptance, and mutual co-existence. Similarly, the Sikhs and Hindus have lived peacefully with Muslims of *Buner* for a long time.

Table – 5.26: Views of the Devotees about the Role of *Pir Baba shrine* in Promoting inter-cultural Harmony

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Shrine promotes inter-culture harmony	168(73.1)	60(26.9)
2	People of different cultures share the same religious values	172(77.1)	51(22.9)
3	Promote tolerance for other ethnicities	186(83.4)	37(16.6)
4	Promote tolerance for other languages	195(87.4)	28(12.6)
5	Accept other cultures	197(88.3)	26(11.7)
6	Promote reverence for other cultures	190(85.2)	33(14.8)
7	Accept diversity of cultures	167(74.9)	56(25.1)
8	Appreciate the diversity of visitors	170(76.2)	53(23.8)

The Sufi shrines have been found to promote inter-cultural harmony, such as sharing the same religious values, promoting tolerance for other ethnicities and languages, reverence for other cultures, accepting diversity and appreciating the diversity of visitors. Out of the total 223(100 %) devotees, the majority, 168(73.1 %) of the devotees viewed the Shrine as promoting inter-culture harmony. On the other hand, some 60(26.9 %) devotees disagreed. In addition, the majority of 172 devotees (77.1 %) viewed that at the shrine, people of different cultures share the same religious values, which can lead to intercultural harmony.

On the other hand, some 51(22.9 %) devotees disagreed with the view that Sufi shrines promote inter-cultural harmony. Moreover, most 186 devotees (83.4 %) viewed shrines as promoting tolerance for other ethnicities such as Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi, etc. Some 37(16.6 %) devotees disagreed with this statement. Similarly, the majority, 195(87.4 %) of the devotees, stated that Sufi shrines promote tolerance among people of different languages.

Furthermore, the majority, 197(88.3) of the devotees viewed that people accept other cultural practices due to shared practices and beliefs while 26(11.7 %) devotees did not agree with the stance that the Sufi shrine promotes acceptance of other cultural practices.

In short, most 190(85.2 %) devotees stated that Sufi shrines promote reverence for other cultures. and the majority of 167 devotees (74.9 %) also viewed the Sufi shrines as accepting of diversity of cultures. Apart from this, Sufism is a cause of inter-faith harmony. It is also a source of inter-cultural harmony. Most other research studies also advocate that Sufism is a cause of intercultural harmony throughout Pakistan (Idris & Ahmed, 2011; Kurin, 1983; Rehman & Lund-Thomsen, 2014).

It has been concluded that Shrines promote inter-cultural harmony among people of different cultures. People of different cultures share the same religious values, which promotes tolerance for other ethnicities and languages. In short, Muslim shrines promote reverence for other cultures and encourage and appreciate the diversity of cultures.

The Shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a significant role in fostering intercultural harmony among people from diverse cultural backgrounds. This is evidenced by the shared religious values of individuals from different cultures, promoting tolerance and acceptance of other ethnicities and languages within the shrine's community.

The above-noted data underscores the idea that Muslim shrines symbolize cultural inclusivity and respect for diversity. By providing a common ground where individuals from various cultural backgrounds come together to worship and pay homage, these shrines promote a sense of reverence for other cultures. This fosters an environment of mutual understanding and appreciation, ultimately contributing to the promotion of intercultural harmony.

Furthermore, acknowledging shared religious values among people of different cultures highlights the unifying power of faith in bridging cultural divides. Within the shrine's sacred space, individuals from diverse backgrounds find common ground in their devotion to the Sufi saint and the spiritual teachings associated with the Shrine. This shared spiritual bond transcends cultural differences and fosters a sense of unity among worshippers, regardless of their cultural or linguistic heritage. In essence, the conclusion underscores the critical role that Muslim shrines play in promoting cultural diversity and tolerance. By embracing and celebrating the richness of various cultural traditions, these shrines are catalysts for building bridges between communities and

fostering harmony and cooperation. Muslim shrines contribute to creating a more inclusive and harmonious society through their inclusive ethos and promotion of shared values.

Table – 5.27: Economic Activates Performed by the Devotees at the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Performed economic activities at the shrine	171(76.7)	52(23.3)
2	Presenting <i>Nazrana</i> to shrine/ Malang	170(76.2)	53(23.8)
3	Presenting food or cash for the <i>Langar</i>	172(77.1)	51(22.9)
4	Purchasing goods from the vendors	163(73.1)	60(26.9)
5	Purchasing Bangles, <i>Ranja</i> , perfumes, beads etc.	173(77.6)	50(22.4)
6	Purchasing local handicrafts	186(83.4)	37(16.6)
7	Purchasing ornamental goods and toys for Kids	194(87)	29(13)
8	Pay for parking and staying at a hotel	197(88.3)	26(11.7)
9	Pay for eating meals in the hotel	188(84.3)	35(15.7)
10	Payment for local taxi and transportation	167(74.9)	56(25.1)

The devotees / visitors perform different economic activities at the Sufi's shrines. Some of these activities are; presenting *Nazrana* (donation) to the Malang or *Nazrana* Box, presenting food or cash for the langer etc. Previous research , such as those conducted by Batool, Chaudry and Farooq (2015), have found that there is no compulsion for *Nazrana*, the devotees present *Nazrana* according to the Affordability. It has been found that the majority of 170(76.2) of the devotees presented *Nazrana* to the *Nazrana* Box and Malang of Shrine. Similarly, the majority, 172(77.1 %) of the devotees presented food and cash for the Langer, while some devotees spend different amounts of money by purchasing different goods, eating food and transport, etc. In this regard, the majority of 173(77.6 %) devotees purchased different goods such as Bangles, *Ranja*, perfumes, beads, and other handicrafts and ornamental goods and

toys for kids. Similarly, the majority, 197(88.3 %) of the devotees are non-local and pay for parking and staying at hotels. In short, the Shrine also contributes to the local community's revenue and the descendants of the *Pir Baba*. In addition, the Malang admitted that we have an equal share in the revenue of the Shrine, and every descendant has their turn after some interval of time.

It has been concluded that the devotees Perform different economic activities at the Shrine of *Pir Baba*. They presented Nazrana to the shrine/ *Malang*, presented food or cash for the *Lanagr*, purchased goods from the vendors, purchased bangles, *ranja*, perfumes, and beads from the local vendors, etc. In addition, they also purchased local handicrafts, ornamental goods and toys for kids. Similarly, the devotees paid for parking, stayed at the hotel, and paid for local taxis and transportation. In short, the devotees financially contribute to the economy by selling and purchasing different goods from local vendors.

Table – 5.28: Visit of the Shrine by the Devotees for Psychological Purposes

S.No	Purposes	Yes	No
1	For spiritual purpose	184(82.5)	39(17.5)
2	To relax from the boredom	173(77.6)	50(22.4)
3	For mental and physical catharsis	122(54.7)	101(45.3)
4	For self-realization (<i>Tazkia-Nafs</i>)	124(55.6)	99(44.4)
5	For expression of sorrow	142(63.7)	81(36.3)
6	For peace of mind	127(57)	96(43)
7	For purification of body and soul from sins	129(57.8)	94(42.2)

The devotees visit the shrine for different psychological purposes: spiritual, relaxation, physical catharsis, self-realization (*Tazkia Nafs*), and expression of sorrows, peace of mind and purifying the body and soul. Farid and Iqbal (2017) also presented this view that mental peace and satisfaction are the main attractions that bring people to the shrine. This study found that out of the total 223(100 %) devotees,

184(82.5 %) of the devotees visited the shrine for spiritual purposes, and 173(77.6 %) of the devotees visited the shrine to relax from boredom. Similarly, 122(54.7 %) devoted the shrine to mental and physical catharsis and 124(55.6 %) devotees visited the shrine for self-realization (*Tazkai Nafs*). Moreover, a majority of the devotees also visited the shrine to express their sorrow and repentance and to restore peace of mind.

The range of spiritual purposes identified - such as relaxation, catharsis, self-realization, expression of sorrows, and purification - suggests that the shrine accommodates a broad spectrum of spiritual needs. This diversity implies that individuals from different backgrounds and struggles find something meaningful and relevant in the spiritual atmosphere of the shrine. The mention of relief from boredom and hopelessness highlights that some visitors may seek distraction or a sense of purpose. This suggests that the shrine offers emotional solace and a sense of direction or meaning to those who may feel lost or disheartened. The references to mental and physical catharsis indicate that the shrine is perceived as a place where visitors can find healing for both mind and body. This aligns with seeking purification and relief from sins, suggesting a holistic approach to spiritual well-being. In addition, the shrine likely serves as a gathering place for individuals sharing similar struggles and aspirations. Visiting the shrine may provide a sense of community and connection, reinforcing the spiritual experience for visitors. The shrine's significance extends beyond its physical presence; it likely holds symbolic value and is associated with rituals that contribute to the spiritual experience of the visitors. These rituals may serve as a means of expressing devotion, seeking forgiveness, or connecting with something greater than oneself.

In summary, the shrine of *Pir Baba* is a sacred space where individuals find solace, healing, and a sense of purpose. Its ability to cater to diverse spiritual needs suggests

its importance as a cultural and religious institution, offering refuge and support to those searching for meaning and tranquillity.

Table – 5.29: Practices and Rituals of Devotees on the Shrine for Psychological Satisfaction

S.No	Practices and Rituals Performed	Yes	No
1	Practice <i>Minnat</i>	149(66.8)	74(33.2)
2	Indulge yourself in spiritual activities	149(66.8)	74(33.2)
3	Practice meditation	171(76.6)	52(23.3)
4	Spending free time on the premises of the shrine	169(75.8)	54(24.2)
5	Sitting aside in the shrine and praying	172(77.1)	51(22.9)
6	Working in the <i>Langer</i>	163(73.1)	60(26.9)
7	Brooming and cleaning the shrine	172(77.1)	51(22.9)

The devotees visit the shrine to feel psychologically well and satisfied. For this purpose, they do different practices within the shrine, such as *Minnat*, meditation, and spending time there, invoking positive energy, enabling them to come forward and fulfil their needs. Out of the total 223(100 %) of the devotees, the majority, 149(66.8) of the devotees practised *Minnat* in the shrine. Similarly, the majority of 149(66.8) devotees indulged themselves in different spiritual activities for the sake of satisfaction. These activities included meditation and spending free time on the shrine's premises, praying, working in the *langer* and cleaning the shrine, etc. In contrast, only a minority of the devotees did not engaged themselves in these rituals.

The analysis suggests that devotees engage in various practices within the premises of the shrine of *Pir Baba* for their mental and psychological satisfaction. The act of *Minnat* involves making supplications or requests, often to a saint or spiritual figure like *Pir Baba*. This practice suggests a desire for divine intervention or assistance in addressing personal needs or concerns. It reflects a belief in the power of prayer and a connection to the spiritual realm. Engaging in spiritual activities such as meditation

and spending free time in the shrine premises indicates a quest for inner peace, enlightenment, or spiritual growth. These practices provide devotees with opportunities for introspection, self-discovery, and communion with the divine. In addition, sitting aside in the shrine and praying implies a deep-seated faith and devotion to *Pir Baba*. Prayer serves as a means of communication with the divine, offering solace, guidance, and a sense of connection to something greater than oneself. Contemplation allows devotees to reflect on their lives, seek clarity, and resolve inner conflicts. Working in the *Langer* (community kitchen) and participating in cleaning and maintenance activities within the shrine demonstrate acts of service and devotion. These practices contribute to the upkeep of the sacred space and foster a sense of community and unity among devotees. Serving others and caring for the shrine may bring a sense of fulfilment and purpose, reinforcing one's spiritual journey. The overarching motivation behind these practices is seeking mental and psychological satisfaction. Whether through prayer, meditation, service, or contemplation, devotees find fulfilment, peace of mind, and a sense of purpose within the spiritual environment of the shrine.

In summary, the devotees' engagement in various practices within the shrine of *Pir Baba* reflects their deep spiritual commitment and the quest for inner fulfilment. These practices serve as a means of connecting with the divine and contribute to personal growth, community bonding, and the overall well-being of individuals seeking solace and spiritual nourishment.

Table – 5.30: Feelings of the Devotees at the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine	186(83.4)	37(16.6)
2	Feel serenity on the premises of the shrine	195(87.4)	28(12.6)
3	Feel hopeful and satisfied after attending the shrine	197(88.3)	26(11.6)
4	Feel free from every sort of worries	189(84.8)	34(15.2)
5	Feeling free from sins	168(75.3)	55(24.7)
6	Spiritually feel purified	169(75.8)	54(24.2)

The devotees have different feelings about the shrine; the majority, 186(83.4 %) of them, believed that they felt satisfaction and peace of mind within the premises of the shrine. The majority of the devotees felt serenity as well as hope after visiting the shrine and viewed that we feel free from every sort of worry. Similarly, a majority of the devotees believed that we feel free from sins and spiritually purified, feel satisfaction, serenity, peace of mind, and purification of body and soul.

It has been concluded that the devotees feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine of *Pir Baba* as they view serenity on the premises of the shrine and feel hopeful and satisfied after attending the shrine. Further, they viewed that we feel free from every sort of worry, from sins, and spiritually feel purified.

The conclusion suggests that devotees experience a profound sense of satisfaction, peace, and spiritual renewal within the shrine of *Pir Baba*. Serenity within the shrine indicates a tranquil and peaceful environment conducive to inner reflection and spiritual connection. This sense of calmness may provide a respite from the hustle and bustle of daily life, fostering a hopeful outlook on the future. Devotees expressing a sense of liberation from worries and sins suggest a belief in the transformative power of their spiritual experiences at the shrine. This feeling of freedom may stem from a sense of forgiveness, redemption, or spiritual cleansing attained through prayers, rituals, and acts of devotion. The notion of feeling spiritually purified highlights the

transformative impact of the shrine visitation. Devotees may perceive themselves as shedding burdens and negative energies, emerging spiritually rejuvenated and cleansed from the experience. This purification process may contribute to a sense of renewal and inner peace. After attending the shrine, the feeling of satisfaction suggests that devotees derive a sense of fulfilment and contentment from their spiritual practices and interactions within the sacred space. This satisfaction may stem from a deep connection with the divine, a reaffirmation of faith, or a sense of belonging to a community of like-minded individuals. In addition, the positive emotions experienced by devotees, including serenity, hopefulness, and satisfaction, point to the shrine's role as a source of psychological and emotional support. The spiritual practices and atmosphere within the shrine contribute to devotees' overall well-being, offering solace, comfort, and a sense of purpose in their lives.

In short, the statements reflect the profound impact of the shrine of *Pir Baba* on devotees' spiritual, emotional, and psychological states. It is a sacred haven where individuals find peace, hope, and spiritual renewal, transcending worldly worries and sins to experience profound satisfaction and purification.

Table – 5.31: Changing the Sacred Status of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	People visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for spiritual purposes	170(76.2)	53(23.8)
2	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for tourism purposes	136(61)	87(39)
3	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> to spend leisure and free time	155(69.5)	68(30.5)
4	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> to see a historical place	157(70.4)	66(29.6)
5	Some people visit the shrine to enjoy the <i>Mela / Urse</i>	167(74.9)	56(25.1)
6	People visit <i>Pir Baba</i> in large numbers in <i>Eid</i> as compared to <i>Urs</i>	168(75.3)	55(24.7)
7	Most of the new generation visits the shrine only for tourism purposes	181(81.2)	42(81.8)
8	Most of the new generation do not know the historical and spiritual status of the <i>Pir Baba</i> shrine	172(77.1)	51(22.9)
9	Most tourists visit <i>Pir Baba</i> in large numbers in the spring and summer season	172(77.1)	51(22.9)

The relationship and association of the people with the shrine are dynamic because they may change due to different socio-economic factors. Due to rapid changes in society, people's attitudes, perceptions, thinking, beliefs, and feelings are also changing rapidly. The people's changing attitudes, beliefs and perceptions about the Muslim shrines have been summarized in the above table. Out of the total 223(100 %) of the devotees, the majority 170(76.2 %) of the devotees visited the shrine for spiritual purposes. However, 136(61%) of the devotees also mentioned that they visited the shrine as tourists. In addition, the majority, 155(69.5 %) of the devotees, visit the shrine to spend leisurely within the premises of the shrine. In contrast, 157(70.4 %) of the devotees visited the shrine to see a historical place.

Moreover, the majority of 167(74.9 %) of the devotees viewed that we visit the shrine on the occasion of Mela / Urs to enjoy and entertain the environment. The majority, 168(75.3 %) of the devotees viewed that people visit the shrine in large numbers on the occasion of Eid as compared to Urs. Most 181 devotees (81.2 %) viewed the new generation visiting-rine for tourism purposes.

The majority, 172(77.1 %) of the devotees viewed that most tourists visit *Pir Baba* in large numbers in the spring and summer. In short, in the modern era of rationality, some individuals still believe in shrines. However, many people visit the shrine on the occasion of Eid and during spring and summer sessions for tourism purposes. Similarly, Rasul, Fatima and Sohail (2016) also found that Muslim shrines such as *Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh*, *Hazrat Shah Hussain*, *Hazrat Mian Mir*, *Hazrat Bahauddin Zakaria*, *Hazrat Baba Farid* in Punjab, *Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar* and *Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhattai* in Sindh are known not only for holy purposes but also for tourism sake, to see historical places and being entertained over there as well.

The observations regarding the visitors to the shrine of *Pir Baba* reveal a multifaceted dynamic where spiritual, cultural, historical, and recreational motivations intersect. Some individuals visit the shrine for tourism and leisure, indicating that it holds significance beyond its spiritual role. This suggests that the shrine may be considered a cultural landmark or a place of interest for sightseeing and relaxation. The observation that some people visit the shrine to see a historical place highlights the shrine's historical significance. The shrine is a site of religious devotion and holds historical importance, perhaps due to its architectural or cultural heritage. It has been mentioned that attending Mela/Urs suggests that the shrine hosts festivals or gatherings that attract visitors for celebratory purposes. These events likely contribute to the region's cultural vibrancy and serve as opportunities for communal gatherings and festivities.

Moreover, it has been observed that visitors, mainly tourists, flock to the shrine in more significant numbers during the spring and summer seasons, indicating a seasonal pattern in visitation. This could be due to favorable weather conditions, making it more conducive for outdoor activities and sightseeing. In addition, the majority of people visit the shrine on the occasion of *Eid* compared to *Urs*, which suggests that *Eid* holds greater significance or popularity among the general populace. This could be due to cultural traditions or the festive nature of *Eid* celebrations compared to *Urs* commemorations. Similarly, new generations need to be made aware of the historical and spiritual status of the shrine, indicating a potential disconnect between older and younger generations regarding cultural and religious heritage. This could be attributed to changing social dynamics, educational priorities, or shifts in religious practices among the younger population.

In short, the shrine of *Pir Baba* serves as a multifunctional space that attracts visitors for spiritual, cultural, historical, and recreational purposes. Its significance extends beyond religious devotion to encompass tourism, leisure activities, and cultural celebrations. However, there appears to be a generational gap in awareness of the shrine's historical and spiritual significance, highlighting the need for efforts to preserve and transmit cultural heritage to younger generations.

5.2.8 Effects of Demographic Factors on the Beliefs of the Devotees

In this section, the researcher analyzed the variation in belief systems among devotees based on various demographic factors, including age, gender, education level, economic status, religion, sect, and province. This variation in beliefs or the impact of demographic variables on belief systems was assessed through One-way ANOVA and T-tests.

One-way ANOVA was utilized to measure the effect of multiple categories of variables on belief systems. This statistical method allowed for the examination of how factors such as age, education level, economic status, religion, sect, and province influenced the beliefs of devotees.

On the other hand, T-tests were employed to analyze the effect of two-category variables, such as gender, on belief systems. This statistical analysis helped to determine whether there were significant differences in beliefs between groups based on gender.

By utilizing both One-way ANOVA and T-tests, the researcher was able to comprehensively assess how various demographic factors influenced the belief systems of devotees. These statistical techniques provided valuable insights into how different demographic variables interacted with beliefs among the study population.

5.2.9 Effect of Age on Beliefs System

The following tables are the results of ANOVA for measuring age's effect on the devotees' beliefs on shrines. The one-way ANOVA we use for causal comparison of means of the group variable such as age. The ANOVA result shows that the age group's effect on the devotees' beliefs is significant $F(3,219) = 72.558$, $P = (0.000)$ because the different age groups affect the devotees' beliefs. There is a significant difference between the beliefs of devotees of different groups of ages. Similarly, the table of the multiple comparisons of Post hoc test also shows that the devotees of middle ages, such as, (those 30-40) and (40-50) are more inclined toward the shrines as compared to those older aged 50+) and younger (20-30) years of ages. This means that the inclination toward the shrines was found more in the middle age group due to their different needs and gratifications.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
20-30	75	1.1467	.35616	.04113	1.0647	1.2286	1.00	2.00
30-40	50	1.0000	.00000	.00000	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	1.00
40-50	70	1.0000	.00000	.00000	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	1.00
Above 50+	28	1.7857	.41786	.07897	1.6237	1.9477	1.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.016	3	4.672	72.558	.000
Within Groups	14.101	219	.064		
Total	28.117	222			

Multiple Comparisons

(I) Age of the Respondent	(J) Age of the Respondent	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
20-30	30-40	.14667 [*]	.04633	.002	.0554	.2380
	40-50	.14667 [*]	.04217	.001	.0636	.2298
	Above 50+	-.63905 [*]	.05620	.000	-.7498	-.5283
30-40	20-30	-.14667 [*]	.04633	.002	-.2380	-.0554
	40-50	.00000	.04698	1.000	-.0926	.0926
	Above 50+	-.78571 [*]	.05989	.000	-.9038	-.6677
40-50	20-30	-.14667 [*]	.04217	.001	-.2298	-.0636
	30-40	.00000	.04698	1.000	-.0926	.0926
	Above 50+	-.78571 [*]	.05674	.000	-.8975	-.6739
Above 50+	20-30	.63905 [*]	.05620	.000	.5283	.7498
	30-40	.78571 [*]	.05989	.000	.6677	.9038
	40-50	.78571 [*]	.05674	.000	.6739	.8975

5.2.10 Effects of Gender on Beliefs of the Devotees

The following tables show the measured results of the Independent Sample t-test and show the effects of gender on the beliefs of the devotees. An independent sample t-test shows the comparative results of two gender categories. The researcher used a sample independent t-test because here, the categorical variables consist of only two categories. The t-test results show $F(221) = 145.404$, $P = (0.000)$ that there is a strongly significant difference in beliefs of two different groups of gender. ANOVA measures the difference in frequencies of the devotees; it does not mean that males visit the shrine in large numbers as compared to females. However, collecting data from the female devotees was difficult due to cultural restrictions. Other research studies by Kamal and Younas (2020) in Punjab found that women are more inclined toward *Piri Murdi* and shrines than men.

Farooq and Kayani (2012) disagreed that there is no significant difference in beliefs toward superstitions between males and females. However, Sreedhar (2006) found

that males are more rational than females, which is why there is a difference between the beliefs of males and females. During the study, more females were observed in the premises of the shrine than males because two or more females accompanied every man. However, the researcher had only access to those women who were accessible for data collection. That is why fewer females were consulted for data collection, as the results show.

Table – 5.32: Group Statistics

	Gender of the Respondents	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Beliefs	Male	179	1.0615	.24083	.01800
	Female	44	1.5000	.50578	.07625

Table – 5.33: Independent Samples Test

	Leven's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig	T	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	St. Error Difference	95 Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Beliefs Equal Variances assumed	145.404	0.000	-8.390	221	0.000	.43885	.05227	-.54156	-.33554
Equal Variances are not assumed.			-5.598	47.891	0.000	.43885	.07835	-.59608	-.28101

5.2.11 Effects of Marital Status on the Beliefs of the Devotees

The following tables show the effect of marital status on the devotees' beliefs about the shrines. The ANOVA results show $F(1,221)=95.882$, $P=(0.000)$ that there is a significant difference between the beliefs of married and unmarried people. Married people believe more in the shrine than unmarried people because they have different expectations regarding children, wealth, and economic and professional growth than unmarried people. Previous studies conducted by Bhatti (2007), Malik (2013) and Farooq and Kiyanni (2020) also attested that married people have more responsibilities and grievances in their lives as compared to unmarried people, which is why they visit the shrine in large number and have more attachments and association with shrines as compared to unmarried people.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Married	185	1.0595	.23712	.01743	1.0251	1.0939	1.00	2.00
Unmarried	38	1.5789	.50036	.08117	1.4145	1.7434	1.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.507	1	8.507	95.882	.000
Within Groups	19.609	221	.089		
Total	28.117	222			

5.2.12 Effects of Education Level on the Beliefs of the Devotees

The following tables show the results of ANOVA that show that education level influences the beliefs of the devotees. The results show $F(3,219)=39.812$, $P=(0.000)$ and the post hoc test result also shows the multiple comparisons of beliefs on shrines

among people of different levels of education. Furthermore, the results express that illiterate and matriculated will have more beliefs about shrines than graduated and highly educated. Similarly, a study conducted by Charan, Wang and Yao (2018) also viewed that the beliefs vary among people of different levels of education.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
illiterate	155	1.0645	.24647	.01980	1.0254	1.1036	1.00	2.00
Metric	56	1.1964	.40089	.05357	1.0891	1.3038	1.00	2.00
Intermediate	5	2.0000	.00000	.00000	2.0000	2.0000	2.00	2.00
Bachelor	7	2.0000	.00000	.00000	2.0000	2.0000	2.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

(I) Education of the respondents	(J) Education of the respondents	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Illiterate	Metric	-.13191*	.04494	.004	-.2205	-.0433
	Intermediate	-.93548*	.13096	.000	-1.1936	-.6774
	Bachelor	-.93548*	.11137	.000	-1.1550	-.7160
Metric	Illiterate	.13191*	.04494	.004	.0433	.2205
	Intermediate	-.80357*	.13453	.000	-1.0687	-.5384
	Bachelor	-.80357*	.11555	.000	-1.0313	-.5758
Intermediate	Illiterate	.93548*	.13096	.000	.6774	1.1936
	Metric	.80357*	.13453	.000	.5384	1.0687
	Bachelor	.00000	.16877	1.000	-.3326	.3326
Bachelor	Illiterate	.93548*	.11137	.000	.7160	1.1550
	Metric	.80357*	.11555	.000	.5758	1.0313
	Intermediate	.00000	.16877	1.000	-.3326	.3326

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

5.2.13 Effects of Economic Status on Beliefs of the Devotees

There are people of different economic statuses, and these economic statuses pattern the people's consciousness differently. In other words, the economic status influences the thinking, feelings, beliefs, and actions of the human being. Therefore, the people of a society with different economic statuses have different beliefs and different attitudes toward a phenomenon. The result of ANOVA also shows $F(2,220)=24.302$, $P=(0.000)$, that there is a significant difference between the beliefs of three different self-reported classes.

Similarly, the means of the multiple comparisons table also illustrates different means, such that there is no difference between the means score of the lower and middle classes, but the upper class is different from the other two classes. Similarly, other studies like Charan, Wang and Yao (2018) found that the beliefs in shrines are more in the lower and middle class as compared to the upper-class or highly-income people. In short, the lower and middle class will have more belief in shrines as compared to the upper class.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Lower	151	1.0662	.24950	.02030	1.0261	1.1063	1.00	2.00
Middle	68	1.2794	.45205	.05482	1.1700	1.3888	1.00	2.00
Upper	4	2.0000	.00000	.00000	2.0000	2.0000	2.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.088	2	2.544	24.302	.000
Within Groups	23.029	220	.105		
Total	28.117	222			

Multiple Comparisons

(I) Economic Status of the respondents	(J) Economic status of the respondents	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Lower	Middle	-.21319*	.04725	.000	-.3063	-.1201
	Upper	-.93377*	.16390	.000	-1.2568	-.6108
Middle	Lower	.21319*	.04725	.000	.1201	.3063
	Upper	-.72059*	.16646	.000	-1.0486	-.3925
Upper	Lower	.93377*	.16390	.000	.6108	1.2568
	Middle	.72059*	.16646	.000	.3925	1.0486

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

5.2.14 Effect of Sectarian Affiliation on Beliefs on Shrines

There are two main sects in Islam, Shia and Sunni, and beliefs on shrines vary between these two sects. Earlier research studies conducted by Choudhry (2010) and Younas (2017) in Punjab viewed that *Shia* has more favourable attitudes towards *Piri Muridi* and shrines than Sunni. However, in the northern area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, there is less number of Shia sects as compared to *Suni*, but some Sunnis also have positive attitudes toward the shrine as the results of the following tables show that there are significant differences among the beliefs of the Shia and Sunni about the shrines. In addition, some of the devotees do not associate themselves with any sect of Islam. The ANOVA results show $F(1,221)=81.663$, $P=(0.000)$ that there is a significant difference between the Sunni and some other devotees who do not associate themselves with any sects.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Sunni	182	1.0604	.23896	.01771	1.0255	1.0954	1.00	2.00
Nill	41	1.5366	.50485	.07885	1.3772	1.6959	1.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.586	1	7.586	81.663	.000
Within Groups	20.530	221	.093		
Total	28.117	222			

5.2.15 Effect of Sub-Sects in Sunni on Beliefs on Shrines

There are mainly three main sub-sects in Sunni such as *Wahhabi*, *Deobandi* and *Beralvi*. These sub-sects of Suni's sect have different attitudes and beliefs about the shrines. Similarly, there are significant $F(2,220)=15.972$, $P=(0.000)$ differences among the beliefs of the devotees of these different sub-sects of Sunni. However, the other studies conducted in Punjab by Choudhry (2010) and Younas (2017) just differentiated in beliefs of the Shia and Sunni. The Shia has more beliefs in shrines as compared to the Sunni. However, some Sunnis also have a positive attitude toward the shrines. Within the Sunni, Deobandi and *Beralvi* have more positive attitudes toward the shrines as compared to Wahhabi and *Panjpiri*.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Wahhabi	2	1.0000	.00000	.00000	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	1.00
Deobandi	158	1.0696	.25532	.02031	1.0295	1.1097	1.00	2.00
Panjpiri	63	1.3492	.48055	.06054	1.2282	1.4702	1.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.565	2	1.782	15.972	.000
Within Groups	24.552	220	.112		
Total	28.117	222			

Multiple Comparisons

(I) Sub-sect of Sunni	(J) Sub-sect of Sunni	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Wahhabi	Deobandi	-.06962	.23771	.770	-.5381	.3989
	Others	-.34921	.23994	.147	-.8221	.1237
Deobandi	Wahabi	.06962	.23771	.770	-.3989	.5381
	Others	-.27959*	.04978	.000	-.3777	-.1815
Panjpiri	Wahabi	.34921	.23994	.147	-.1237	.8221
	Deobandi	.27959*	.04978	.000	.1815	.3777

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

5.2.16 Effects of Sufi Orders on Beliefs on Shrines

There are four main Sufi Orders: *Chestia*, *Sahrwardia*, *Naqshbandia*, and *Qadria*. Almost all the devotees are usually associated with any of these Sufi's orders believe on shrines. Other researchers, such as Choudhary (2010), conducted a study in Punjab, and viewed that Sufism is not a coherent category; at one level, it can also divided into four main orders, as mentioned earlier (Rizvi, 1983). According to Baghi, (2017), *Pir Baba* was associated with *the Cheshtia* Order, which is why some resident devotees who are adherent to the *Cheshtia* Order are usually observable on the premises of the shrine of *Pir Baba*, and some devotees visit his shrine. However, most visiting devotees viewed themselves as not being associated with any of these Sufi orders. Therefore, ANOVA results show $F(1,221)=3.218$, $P=(.074)$ that there is no significant difference in the beliefs of different Sufi orders. The majority of the scores of means show that devotees were not associated with any one of these Sufi orders, and the other hand, the score of *Chestia* mean is very limited because a small number of spiritual and Sufi followers believe in the shrines and visit the shrine.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Chestia	28	1.0357	.18898	.03571	.9624	1.1090	1.00	2.00
Nil	195	1.1641	.37132	.02659	1.1117	1.2165	1.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.404	1	.404	3.218	.074
Within Groups	27.713	221	.125		
Total	28.117	222			

5.2.17 Effects of Area or Local on Beliefs

Most of the research studies, such as Tahir, Qureshi and Safi (2018), viewed that rural people believe more in shrines than urban people. The ANOVA results also verified that there $F(1,221) = 223.333$, $P = (0.0000)$ has an enormously significant difference between the beliefs of the devotees of rural and urban areas. The results mean score shows that the rural people are more inclined toward the shrines, have different expectations, and practice different rituals.

Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Rural	203	1.0690	.25402	.01783	1.0338	1.1041	1.00	2.00
Urban	20	1.9500	.22361	.05000	1.8453	2.0547	1.00	2.00
Total	223	1.1480	.35588	.02383	1.1010	1.1949	1.00	2.00

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.132	1	14.132	223.333	.000
Within Groups	13.984	221	.063		
Total	28.117	222			

5.3 Part II: Bi-Variate Analysis

Bivariate analysis entails demonstrating the association between two variables: the dependent and independent variables. Therefore, in this study, the researcher conducted a Chi-Square test to identify such associations, and the results are presented in the following tables.

Table – 5.34: Association between the Rituals and the Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statement		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Circling the shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i>		162	28	190	$\chi^2=43.590$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	173	50	223	
2	<i>Minnat</i> from the shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i>		175	15	190	$\chi^2=75.967$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	185	38	223	
3	Performing <i>Barakaha</i> prayer within the premises of the shrine		186	4	190	$\chi^2=21.889$ P=(0.000)
			26	7	33	
		Total	11	212	223	
4	Participation in the celebration of Urs of <i>Pir Baba</i>		177	13	190	$\chi^2=76.051$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	188	35	223	
5	Lightening candles on the shrine		160	21	190	$\chi^2=2.643$ P=(0.094)
			26	7	33	
		Total	28	195	223	
6	Singing <i>Qawali</i>		178	12	190	$\chi^2=2.203$ P=(0.139)
			33	0	33	
		Total	12	211	223	
7	Knotting the thread or cloth		105	85	190	$\chi^2=7.014$ P=(0.007)
			10	23	33	
		Total	115	108	223	
8	Tie children on the Tomb		147	43	190	$\chi^2=9.253$ P=(0.000)
			33	0	33	
		Total	43	180	223	
9	Touching the tomb with hands and then rubbing hands on the body		90	100	190	$\chi^2=3.311$ P=(0.050)
			10	23	33	
		Total	100	123	223	

10	Eating holy salt from the shrine		52	138	190	$\chi^2=3.476$ P=(0.044)
			4	29	33	
		Total	56	167	223	
11	Drinking holy water for <i>Barkah</i>		159	31	190	$\chi^2=48.154$ P=(0.000)
			9	24	33	
		Total	168	55	223	
12	Taking the Amulet from the servant/ <i>Malang</i> of the shrine		55	135	190	$\chi^2=0.260$ P=(0.374)
			11	22	33	
		Total	66	157	223	
13	Taking Bayat (Oath) from the disciple (<i>Mureed</i>) of <i>Pir Baba</i>		51	139	190	$\chi^2=0.098$ P=(0.470)
			8	25	33	
		Total	59	164	223	
14	Not turning back to the tomb		42	148	190	$\chi^2=8.987$ P=(0.001)
			0	33	33	
			42	188	223	
15	Chadar Charana (Covering tomb with cloth)		139	51	190	$\chi^2=23.289$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	149	74	223	
16	Jahro Dena (Brooming the shrine)		45	145	190	$\chi^2=9.792$ P=(0.000)

χ^2 = Represents Chi-Square Value. P= Level of Significance, which should be less than 0.05

The devotees perform different rituals within the shrine's premises, which are associated with the devotees' beliefs about the shrine. Devotees who believe that the saint within the shrine is a mediator between people and God, perform different rituals, and an enormously significant (P=0.000) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and the circling (*Zyarat*) of the devotees from the shrine. Similarly, these devotees practice *Minnat* within the shrine, so an enormously significant (P=0.000) association was also detected between their beliefs and *Minnat*. Besides this, they also pray for *Barakah* within the premises of the shrine, and an enormously significant association (P=0.000) was found between their prayers and their beliefs. The devotees who believe in the shrine and have an attachment to the saints also participate in the celebration of *Urs*, and a similarly enormously significant

($P=0.000$) association has been found between their participation and their beliefs in the sacred status of the shrine. However, a non-significant $P= (0.094)$ association has been detected between lightening candles on the shrine and the beliefs of the devotees because the devotees enlighten candles on the shrine on the special day of *Urs* and *Eid*, and they do not repeat this practice on any other days.

In the same way, a non-significant $P= (0.094)$ association has been detected between the singing *Qawwali* by the devotees and their beliefs. It is pertinent to mention here that the devotees sing *Qawwali* on the special day of *Urs*, and therefore, non-significant association has been with the beliefs of the devotees.

Moreover, the believers used to sing *Qawwali* but only on the special occasions of *Urs*, and they also presented different speeches and poems on those special occasions, not usually. However, some devotees, specifically females, tie different clothes and threads to the shrine for different purposes, and a significant $P= (0.007)$ association has been detected between their practice and their beliefs because their beliefs compel them to practice that ritual. The women bring their children to the shrine for *Barkah* and survival, and for that purpose, they tied their children to the tomb, and a significant solid ($P=0.000$) association has been found between their beliefs and their practice. The devotees touched the tomb with their hands and rubbed their bodies, and significant $P= (0.050)$ found their practice and beliefs in the shrine's sacred status. This act of devotees shows that they consider the shrine a source of health and healing and *Barkah*. In addition, a significant $P=(0.044)$ association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and eating holy salt from the shrine, but the devotees took holy salt for the fertility of women, either the women themselves or their husbands or someone else, viz near relatives.

Similarly, the devotees also took holy water from the servants (*Munjawar*) of the shrine for the sake of *Barakah*, and an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association has been detected between their practice of taking holy water and the beliefs of the devotees. Similarly, a non-significant $P=(0.470)$ association has been noted between the beliefs of the devotees and taking oath (*Bayath*) on the hand of the disciples of *Pir Baba* because mostly the visiting devotees visited the shrine for social purposes, not for religious and spiritual purposes that is why non –significant association has been detected. The devotees bring their demands and needs to the shrine, and they also bring decorated clothes to cover the tomb. Significant association ($P=0.000$) has been found in the beliefs of the devotees and this practice of covering the shrine with clothes. Some servants devote their lives to the shrine's services, and they clean and broom the shrine. Besides this, the visiting devotees also sometimes clean and broom the shrine for the sake of *Barakah*. That is why an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association has been noted between the beliefs of the devotees and this practice of cleaning the shrine.

The conclusion indicates that devotees who hold beliefs in the shrine engage in various rituals within its premises. The Chi-square results illustrate significant associations between these beliefs and a wide array of rituals, including circling the shrine, seeking Minnat (supplication) from the shrine, performing baraka prayer, participating in Urs celebrations, lighting candles, singing Qawali, tying knots, touching the tomb, consuming holy salt and water, receiving amulets, taking Bayat (oath), avoiding turning back to the tomb, covering the tomb with cloth, and participating in shrine maintenance activities like brooming.

These rituals serve as means for devotees to fulfil diverse social, psychological, and physical needs. Rituals such as participating in Urs celebrations, singing *Qawali*, and

taking *Bayat* from a disciple foster a sense of community and belonging among devotees. These communal activities strengthen social bonds and affirm collective devotion to Pir Baba. Practices like seeking *Minnat*, tying knots, and consuming holy salt and water give devotees spiritual empowerment and reassurance. These rituals offer a channel for expressing desires, seeking protection, and finding solace in times of distress. Rituals such as circling the shrine, touching the tomb, and participating in shrine maintenance activities like *Jahro Dena* (brooming) physically engage devotees with the sacred space. These actions may be seen as acts of reverence, purification, and physical connection to the spiritual presence believed to reside within the shrine. In addition, Many of these rituals are deeply rooted in symbolism and tradition, reflecting the cultural and religious heritage associated with *Pir Baba*. For example, lighting candles symbolizes enlightenment and spiritual guidance, while covering the tomb with cloth (*Chadar Charana*) may symbolize reverence and protection. Overall, these rituals contribute to the spiritual fulfilment of devotees, providing avenues for expressing devotion, seeking blessings, and connecting with the divine presence believed to reside within the shrine. Each ritual holds significance in addressing different aspects of devotees' spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being.

In summary, the association between beliefs in the shrine and the performance of various rituals underscores the integral role of these practices in meeting the multifaceted needs of devotees. These rituals serve as tangible expressions of devotion, tradition, and spirituality, enriching the religious experience and fostering a deeper connection between devotees and *Pir Baba*.

Table – 5.35: Association between the Social Expectations and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statement		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Hoping to get good health for yourself / your close one		172	18	190	$\chi^2=130.624$ P=(0.000)
			0	33	33	
		Total	172	51	223	
2	Hoping to solve familial disputes		120	70	190	$\chi^2=45.124$ P=(0.000)
			0	33	33	
		Total	120	103	223	
3	Expecting wealth and economic prosperity		121	69	190	$\chi^2=37.746$ P=(0.000)
			2	31	33	
		Total	123	100	223	
4	Hoping to get employment		135	55	190	$\chi^2=33.804$ P=(0.000)
			6	27	33	
		Total	141	82	223	
5	Expecting professional growth		120	70	190	$\chi^2=23.142$ P=(0.000)
			6	27	33	
		Total	126	97	223	
6	Hoping for business growth		119	71	190	$\chi^2=12.051$ P=(0.001)
			10	23	33	
		Total	129	94	223	
7	Hoping to get pregnancy/fertility		105	85	190	$\chi^2=7.014$ P=(0.007)
			10	23	33	
		Total	115	108	223	
8	Hoping to get a male child		130	60	190	$\chi^2=17.483$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	140	83	223	
9	Praying for the survival of your children		155	35	190	$\chi^2=38.414$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	165	58	223	
10	Hoping to get married		142	48	190	$\chi^2=25.580$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	152	71	223	

11	Hoping to get married to a partner of your choice		140	50	190	$\chi^2=24.030$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	150	73	223	
12	Expecting to avoid domestic violence		135	55	190	$\chi^2=20.528$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	145	78	223	
			10	23	33	
		Total	135	88	223	

The devotees visit the shrines for different social and economic reasons. Most of them expect good health for themselves and their close relatives and family members, as illustrated in the above table. A strong significant (P=0.000) association was noted between the sorts of expectations and beliefs of the devotees. Moreover, women faced with familial disputes with their husbands, mothers-in-law, and sisters-in-law visit the shrine because they search for some supernatural way to resolve a familial conflict. They find this way in the form of the shrine. The chi-square results also show enormously significant (P=0.000) associations between the beliefs of the female devotees, specifically in this case, and some male members and resolving family disputes. In addition, almost all the devotees who have lost wealth or are economically weak visit the shrines for economic growth and prosperity; a strongly significant association shows the chi-square results between the beliefs of the devotees and their economic growth and prosperous life.

Similarly, the devotees also consider unemployment a curse from the side of God. So, they visit the shrines because they believe that it makes their link with God through the intercession (*Waseela*) of the Sufi saint who is buried in the shrine. Regarding this statement, an enormously significant (P=0.000) association was found. Almost all the female devotees visited the shrine while hoping to get pregnant and fertility, and a

similarly significant (0.007) association was found between their beliefs and expectations of fertility.

Moreover, the male children are considered a source of power, and the females feel secure while having a male child. A strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between this desire of the female devotees specifically and the male devotees for a male child and their beliefs in the shrine. Some female devotees specifically face the problems of miscarriages and infant mortalities of their children, and they also believe that by visiting the shrine through the virtues of the saint, God may survive and protect their children from death. Regarding this, an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was noted from chi-square results between the beliefs and expectations of the devotees from the shrines to survive their children. The young males and females visit the shrine with the expectation of getting married in the place of their own choice, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between their beliefs and their expectations of marriage by choice. Almost all the women face different forms of domestic violence from the side of their husband, mother, her-in-law, and sister-in-law, and they visit the shrine with the expectation of getting rid of domestic violence. A strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was noted between the beliefs of the female devotees and expectations from the shrines in terms of getting rid of this problem of domestic violence.

The observation and analysis of statistical results reveal significant associations between the beliefs of devotees and their expectations from the shrines of *Pir Baba*. These expectations encompass a wide range of personal, familial, and societal desires, indicating the depth of faith and reliance placed on the spiritual power of the shrine. Devotees hope to attain good health for themselves or their loved ones through their beliefs in Pir Baba's shrine. This reflects a common desire for physical well-being and

relief from ailments, demonstrating the belief in the healing power of the shrine. Believers seek the resolution of familial disputes, indicating a desire for harmony and peace within their families. This suggests a belief in the shrine's ability to reconcile and restore familial relationships. Expectations for wealth, economic prosperity, and employment reflect material aspirations among devotees. They look to the shrine for blessings and assistance in improving their financial circumstances, highlighting a belief in divine intervention for material success. In addition, devotees hope for professional growth and business expansion, indicating aspirations for career advancement and financial stability. They attribute these expectations to their faith in Pir Baba's shrine as a source of guidance and support in their endeavors. Believers express hopes for pregnancy, fertility, and the birth of a male child, as well as prayers for the survival and well-being of their children. These expectations reflect deeply held cultural and familial values, with devotees seeking divine assistance in family planning and parenthood. Devotees hope for marriage, particularly to a partner of their choice, and expect to avoid domestic violence. These expectations underscore the importance of marital harmony and safety within the devotees' lives, with the shrine seen as a source of guidance and protection in relationships.

Overall, the associations between beliefs and expectations from the shrine of *Pir Baba* reflect the multifaceted nature of devotees' hopes and aspirations. They illustrate a profound trust in the shrine's spiritual power to address various aspects of devotees' lives, encompassing health, wealth, family, career, and relationships. These expectations manifest faith and reliance on the shrine as a source of divine assistance and guidance in navigating life's challenges and pursuits.

Table – 5.36: Association between Expectations of Devotees in terms of Health/Healing and their Beliefs

S.No	Statement		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Seeking Cures for different diseases by eating holy food such as salt and drinking holy water		146	44	190	$\chi^2=28.974$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	156	67	223	
2	Seeking a cure for Hepatitis		130	60	190	$\chi^2=17.487$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	140	83	223	
3	Expect a cure for Tuberculosis		133	57	190	$\chi^2=19.260$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	143	80	223	
4	Expect cures of Malaria and Typhoid		130	60	190	$\chi^2=17.483$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	140	83	223	
5	Expect a cure for Paralysis		143	47	190	$\chi^2=26.390$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	153	70	223	
6	Healing of children with frequent crying (Zyal)		139	51	190	$\chi^2=23.289$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	149	74	223	
7	Healing of continuously crying children (Jaby)?		140	50	190	$\chi^2=24.030$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	150	73	223	
8	Seeking treatment for physically weak children (Sury)		142	48	190	$\chi^2=25.580$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	152	71	223	
9	Healing from witchcraft and magic		142	48	190	$\chi^2=25.580$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	152	71	223	
10	Treatment of Mental Health		162	28	190	$\chi^2=48.147$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	172	51	223	

The devotees expect physical health from the shrine. Low-income people visit the shrine to recover their health and heal when they cannot afford the hospital

expenditures. Moreover, when some devotees are unsatisfied with the doctors' treatment, they visit the shrine; sometimes, they even simultaneously visit both the shrines and the doctors. Regarding expectations of the devotees from the shrine in terms of health and healing, a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was noted from the chi-square results between the beliefs of the devotees and seeking cures for different diseases by eating holy food and salt and drinking holy water. In addition, they expect a cure for Hepatitis, Tuberculosis, Malaria, Typhoid, and Paralysis, and a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was detected between the devotees' beliefs on shrines and shrines' expectations regarding these different diseases. Moreover, the women bring their children for healing of different illnesses such as healing of children with frequent crying (*Zyal*), healing of continuously crying children (*Jaby*), and seeking treatment for physically weak children (*Sury*) and strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association has been found between the beliefs of the male and female devotees and the treatment of different types of cure of these different types of illness. Beliefs in witchcraft, the effect of evil eyes, and mental illness are more common among rural and Pashtoon women, and most males also believe in these issues. They visit the shrine to heal these types of illnesses, and an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and the cure of these types of illnesses and diseases.

The above statements of the devotees highlight the expectations of believers seeking health and healing from various physical and psychological ailments through their faith in the shrine of *Pir Baba*. These expectations center on consuming holy food and water and believing in the shrine's spiritual power to cure various diseases and conditions. This reflects a belief in these items' sanctity, healing properties, and spiritual blessings. The believers' express expectations for the cure of various

physical diseases, including hepatitis, tuberculosis, malaria, typhoid, and paralysis, demonstrate a reliance on the shrine as a source of divine intervention and healing for various medical conditions. In addition, there are expectations for the healing of children with specific ailments, such as frequent crying (*Zyal*), continuous crying (*Jaby*), and physical weakness (*Sury*). This highlights parents' concerns for their children's well-being and belief in the shrine's ability to relieve these ailments. Believers also expect protection from witchcraft and magic through their faith in the shrine. This reflects a belief in the shrine's spiritual power to ward off malevolent forces and provide protection against supernatural harm. Additionally, there are expectations for treating mental health issues through the shrine's spiritual intervention. This underscores the recognition of mental health concerns within the community and the belief in the shrine's capacity to address psychological well-being. These expectations signify believers' holistic approach to health and healing, encompassing physical and psychological well-being. The shrine of *Pir Baba* is perceived as a sacred space where believers seek solace, relief, and divine intervention for a myriad of health concerns. These expectations reflect the deep-seated faith and reliance on the shrine's spiritual power to provide comfort, healing, and protection in times of distress and illness.

Table – 5.37: Association between Social Control and Social Integration and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	People feel fear of <i>Kirammat</i> of <i>Pir Baba</i> , which does not let them do something wrong.		124	66	190	$\chi^2=14.329$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	134	89	223	
2	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> promotes positive and pro-social attitudes among the people of the local community.		143	47	190	$\chi^2=26.390$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	153	70	223	

3	Bring conformity among the people		145	45	190	$\chi^2=28.086$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	155	68	223	
4	<i>Pir Baba</i> safeguards society from the curse and ill-intended movements like the Taliban.		155	35	190	$\chi^2=34.396$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	166	57	223	
5	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration among descendants due to common lineage		167	23	190	$\chi^2=51.965$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	178	45	223	
6	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration among disciples due to shared beliefs		160	30	190	$\chi^2=40.702$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	171	52	223	
7	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration and love among the devotees		158	32	190	$\chi^2=38.035$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	169	54	223	
8	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> provides space for rest and solace to wayfarers and patients.		183	7	190	$\chi^2=98.585$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	194	29	223	
9	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> provides free food to poor people in the area		187	3	190	$\chi^2=92.471$ P=(0.000)
			15	18	33	
		Total	202	21	223	
10	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> serves as a space of leisure for local communities		185	5	190	$\chi^2=57.121$ P=(0.000)
			19	14	33	
		Total	204	19	223	

Due to *Kirramat* and sharing beliefs, the Sufi shrine brings social control and social integration among the people of the local communities as well as the disciples, devotees, and followers of the Sufi saint. Social control and social integration among people due to shared beliefs have been illustrated in the above table that people feel fear due to *Kirramat* of *Pir Baba*, which does not let them do something wrong, and a strong significant (P=0.000) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and the influence of the *Kirramat* of *Pir Baba* on the behavior of the people.

Moreover, the history of *Pir Baba* also influences the people's personalities, which develop positive and pro-social attitudes among the people. Similarly, a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the devotees' beliefs and their positive attitudes toward *Pir Baba*. These beliefs can divert the negative energy toward submissiveness, conformity, and inclusivism.

Similarly, a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and the optimistic spirit of the beliefs, which conform to their personalities according to the existing norms and values of society and religion. The devotees believed *Pir Baba* and other Sufis buried in Buner, such as *Dewana Baba*, safeguarded Buner from curses and ill-intended movements. One of these was the Taliban movement. Statistically, chi-square results also show an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association between the devotees' beliefs and expectations from the *Pir Baba* regarding security from ill-intended movements and curses. There in Buner living a large number of descendants of *Pir Baba*, and they are famous by a prefix with their names, which are *Bachas*; they are much more integrated due to common lineage, and the descendants of *Pir Baba* have a very long lineage tree because it is extended back more than 500 years. These descendants are much more integrated, and a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was detected between their beliefs and integration due to common lineage. Besides descendants, there are also many disciples of *Pir Baba*, and they have taken an oath (*Bayath*) from the hands of other disciples of *Pir Baba*. They follow the same order and procedure as the other descendants of *Pir Baba*, and a similarly strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was detected between the common beliefs of the devotees and their integration and love among themselves due to shared beliefs.

Moreover, the devotees of *Pir Baba* also believe that the shrine of *Pir Baba* performs philanthropic functions, one of them being the provision of space for leisure and rest to wayfarers and patients. Similarly, an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was detected between the beliefs of the devotees and their approach toward the shrine, which is that it is not only a sacred place but also performs social function as a place of solace and rest. Another philanthropic function is the provision of free food, and a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was also detected between the beliefs of the devotees and their approach toward the shrines that provide free food to the poor, needy, and destitute people. Apart from this, it is a holy place. It also serves as a space of leisure for the local communities, and an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was noted between the beliefs of the devotees and their approach toward the shrine that serves the local community as a public space.

The views of the devotees show a strong association between the beliefs of devotees and social control within the community surrounding the shrine of *Pir Baba*. Strong believers in the *Kirammat (Miracles)* of *Pir Baba* are less likely to engage in wrongdoing, indicating that their faith serves as a deterrent to deviant behavior. This suggests that the beliefs and teachings associated with the shrine promote moral and ethical conduct among its followers. The shrine of *Pir Baba* fosters positive and pro-social attitudes among the local community, leading to conformity and adherence to shared beliefs and values. This promotes social cohesion and integration among community members, reinforcing collective identity and solidarity. Devotees believe that *Pir Baba* safeguards the society from curses and ill-intended movements, such as the Taliban. This belief in the shrine's protective power contributes to a sense of security and stability within the community, instilling confidence and trust in the shrine's spiritual authority. The shrine promotes integration among descendants and

disciples through shared lineage and beliefs, fostering a sense of unity and belonging among community members. This integration strengthens social bonds and reinforces communal ties, facilitating cooperation and collaboration for common goals. The shrine serves as a space for rest and solace for travelers and patients, providing a refuge for those in need. Additionally, it offers free food to people experiencing poverty and serves as a leisure space for local communities, promoting inclusivity and support for vulnerable populations.

In summary, the beliefs associated with the shrine of *Pir Baba* play a significant role in promoting social control, conformity, and integration within the local community. Through the reinforcement of positive behavior, pro-social attitudes, and the provision of community services, the shrine serves as a unifying force that fosters cohesion, solidarity, and well-being among its followers. As a source of spiritual guidance and social support, the shrine maintains order and harmony within the community, embodying values of compassion, generosity, and collective responsibility.

Table – 5.38: Association between Inter-faith Harmony and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Develop mutual understanding among people of different religions		188	2	190	$\chi^2=98.546$ P=(0.000)
			15	18	33	
		Total	203	20	223	
2	Promote the notion of life and let us live		155	35	190	$\chi^2=38.414$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	165	58	223	
3	Promotes mutual co-existence among people of different religions		187	3	190	$\chi^2=92.471$ P=(0.000)
			15	18	33	
		Total	202	21	223	
4	Promote peace and acceptance of different beliefs		137	53	190	$\chi^2=21.870$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	147	76	223	

5	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> has acceptance for <i>Gurdwara</i> in the near vicinity		138	52	190	$\chi^2=42.274$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	149	74	223	
6	Shrines have also acceptance by people of every sect of Islam		158	32	190	$\chi^2=38.035$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	168	55	223	
7	Sikhs and Hindus have lived peacefully with Muslims of <i>Buner</i> for a long time.		160	30	190	$\chi^2=45.097$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	170	53	223	

The shrine of *Pir Baba* provides a diverse environment in terms of religion and sects within the religion. Acceptance and tolerance for other religions and sects are illustrated in the above Table.No.5.14.5. The shrines provide space to the people of different religions and sects and develop mutual understanding among them. Similarly, a strongly significant (P=0.000) association has been detected between the beliefs of the devotees and their approach toward the statement that shrines develop mutual understanding among diverse religions and sects. Moreover, due to the devotees' flexible and soft beliefs, there is a strongly significant (P=0.000) association between their beliefs and the notion to live and let to live. However, Sufi beliefs promote mutual co-existence among the people of different religions, and a similarly strongly significant (P=0.000) association was found between the beliefs and concept of mutual co-existence among the people of different religions. In every society, there is a diversity of beliefs, but here, there is also a strongly significant (P=0.000) association between the beliefs of the devotees and the capability of tolerance for other beliefs. The devotees also highlighted a strongly significant (P=0.000) association between the beliefs of the devotees and the acceptance of the shrine of *Pir Baba* for *Gurdwara* near the vicinity.

Similarly, there was also a significant ($P=0.000$) association between the beliefs of the devotees and agreement with the statement that every sect of Islam accepts the shrine. The devotees stated that here in Buner, the Sikhs and Hindus is also living with us for a long time, and we have lived with each other in peace for a long time. Similarly, an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between their beliefs and this statement of the devotees.

The findings illustrate that the shrine of *Pir Baba* fosters an environment of acceptance, tolerance, and mutual understanding among individuals of diverse religions and sects. The shrine provides space for people of different religions and sects, promoting mutual understanding. This demonstrates a culture of inclusivity and openness, where individuals from varied religious backgrounds coexist harmoniously. There is a strongly significant association between the beliefs of devotees and their approach toward developing mutual understanding and mutual co-existence among diverse religions. This reflects the Sufi beliefs promoted by the shrine, emphasizing harmony, respect, and acceptance of religious diversity. Devotees' flexible and soft beliefs correlate strongly with their capacity for tolerance toward other beliefs. This suggests openness to different perspectives and a willingness to coexist peacefully with those holding different religious or spiritual convictions. The shrine of *Pir Baba* is perceived as accepting of a nearby *Gurdwara* and accommodating toward various sects of Islam. This demonstrates an attitude of inclusivity and respect for religious diversity within the local community. Devotees highlight the long-standing peaceful co-existence of Sikh and Hindu communities with Muslims in Buner. This is a testament to the shrine's role in fostering interfaith harmony and social cohesion over generations.

In summary, the shrine of *Pir Baba* serves as a symbol of acceptance, tolerance, and mutual respect for diverse religious and sectarian identities. Through its inclusive ethos and promoting Sufi values, the shrine fosters an environment where individuals from different religious backgrounds can coexist peacefully, fostering understanding and harmony among communities. These findings underscore the importance of religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue in promoting social cohesion and fostering a culture of peace within diverse societies.

Table – 5.39: Association between Inter-Cultural Harmony and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	People of different cultures share the same religious values		152	38	190	$\chi^2=31.135$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	163	60	223	
2	Promote tolerance for other ethnicities		162	28	190	$\chi^2=48.147$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	172	51	223	
3	Promote tolerance for other languages		175	15	190	$\chi^2=70.177$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	186	37	223	
4	Accept other cultures and ethnicities		186	4	190	$\chi^2=113.783$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	197	26	223	
5	Promote reverence for other cultures		179	11	190	$\chi^2=82.645$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	190	33	223	
6	Accept diversity of cultures		157	33	190	$\chi^2=40.940$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	167	56	223	
7	Appreciate the diversity of visitors		159	31	190	$\chi^2=39.342$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	170	53	223	

The devotees believe that the Shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes inter-cultural harmony among people of different ethnicities and cultures. It has been summarized in the above table that people of different cultures share the same religious values, and a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was also found between the beliefs of the devotees and their views that the shrines promote inter-cultural harmony. In this era of ethnic base intolerance, a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the believers' views and their agreement with the statement that promoting intercultural tolerance can lead to ethnic base tolerance. Pakistan is a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic country, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees on shrines and the statement that it promotes tolerance for other languages.

Similarly, a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and their attitudes about the shrine that it accepts cultures and ethnicities. Moreover, there was also a noted association between the beliefs of the devotees and their positive attitudes toward the shrine, which promotes reverence for other cultures. Overall, an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was detected between the devotees' beliefs and their attitudes toward the shrine that promotes acceptance of the diversity of cultures. Moreover, devotees of different ethnic backgrounds visit the shrines, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and their attitudes toward the appreciation of diverse visitors.

It has been noted that the shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a significant role in promoting inter-cultural harmony and tolerance among people of different ethnicities and cultures. Devotees believe that the shrine promotes inter-cultural harmony by fostering a shared sense of religious values among people of different cultures. This indicates that the shrine is a unifying force that transcends cultural differences and

promotes mutual understanding and respect. In an era marked by ethnic-based intolerance, devotees strongly agree that the shrine promotes intercultural tolerance, potentially mitigating ethnic-based prejudices and conflicts. This suggests the shrine is a beacon of tolerance and acceptance in a diverse society like Pakistan. In addition, the shrine is perceived as promoting tolerance for other languages, reflecting its inclusivity and openness to linguistic diversity. This attitude fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance among individuals from different linguistic backgrounds. Devotees believe that the shrine accepts and reveres diverse cultures and ethnicities, indicating its role as a symbol of cultural pluralism and acceptance. This acceptance fosters a sense of belonging and inclusivity among visitors from various cultural backgrounds. Overall, there is a strong association between the beliefs of devotees and their positive attitudes toward the shrine's promotion of acceptance of diversity of cultures. This suggests the shrine catalyzes celebrating and embracing cultural diversity, enriching the community's social fabric. Devotees of different ethnic backgrounds visit the shrine, indicating its appeal and accessibility to individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This appreciation of diverse visitors reflects the shrine's role as a welcoming and inclusive space for all, regardless of cultural or ethnic identity.

In short, the shrine of *Pir Baba* serves as a platform for promoting inter-cultural harmony, tolerance, and acceptance in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society like Pakistan. Through its inclusive ethos and celebration of diversity, the shrine fosters mutual understanding, respect, and appreciation among individuals from different cultural backgrounds, contributing to social cohesion and unity in the community. These findings underscore the importance of religious and cultural institutions in

promoting intercultural dialogue and fostering a culture of peace and inclusivity in diverse societies.

Table – 5.40: Association between Economic Activities and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Presenting <i>Nazrana</i> to shrine/ <i>Malang</i>		160	30	190	$\chi^2=40.702$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	171	52	223	
2	Presenting food or cash for the <i>Langar</i>		160	30	190	$\chi^2=45.097$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	170	53	223	
3	Purchasing goods from the vendors		161	29	190	$\chi^2=42.117$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	172	51	223	
4	Purchasing Bangles, <i>Ranja</i> , perfumes, beads, etc.		153	37	190	$\chi^2=36.062$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	163	60	223	
5	Purchasing handicrafts		162	28	190	$\chi^2=43.590$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	173	50	223	
6	Purchasing ornamental goods and toys for Kids		175	15	190	$\chi^2=70.177$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	186	37	223	
7	Pay for Parking and staying at the hotel		183	7	190	$\chi^2=98.585$ P=(0.000)

The visitors perform different types of economic activities within the shrine's premises. These economic activities have been summarized in the above table that the devotees present *Nazrana* to the shrine box and *Malang* because there is a strongly significant (P=0.000) association found between their beliefs and this act of presenting *Nazrana* to the shrine box or *Munjawar* or *Malang*. Similarly, strongly significant (P=0.000) associations were also noted between the food or cash presented by the devotees to the *Langer* and their beliefs. However, there is a strong significant

($P=0.000$) association between the beliefs of the devotees and the economic activity they perform in the form of purchasing goods from the vendor. Moreover, the devotees also purchase bangles, perfumes, and beads, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between their beliefs and their various activities.

Moreover, a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the act of the devotees purchasing local handicrafts and their beliefs. Besides the believers, the tourists and the devotees purchase goods and toys, and a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association has been detected between the act of purchasing the devotees and their beliefs. Some non-believers also purchase goods and toys. However, if the devotees visit the shrine, they also pay for parking cars, staying at the hotel, eating meals, and paying for local transport. A strong significant association is found between the beliefs of the devotees and these economic activities.

The above statistical analysis highlights the diverse economic activities performed by visitors within the premises of the shrine of *Pir Baba*, indicating the intertwining of economic practices with religious beliefs and cultural traditions. These activities include: presenting *Nazrana* and contribution to *Langer*; devotees present *Nazrana* (offerings) to the shrine box or *Malang*, as well as contribute food or cash to the Langer (community kitchen). These acts are strongly associated with their beliefs, reflecting a deep-seated reverence and commitment to the shrine's spiritual significance. *Nazrana* offerings symbolize devotion and gratitude, while contributions to the Langer demonstrate a commitment to serving the community and fulfilling religious obligations. Purchasing goods from vendors: Devotees engage in economic activities such as purchasing goods from vendors within the shrine premises. This practice is strongly associated with their beliefs, indicating a connection between religious devotion and economic transactions. The purchase of goods may include

items such as bangles, perfumes, beads, and local handicrafts, reflecting the cultural significance of these items and their association with religious rituals and traditions. Tourists' and non-believers' purchases: Tourists and non-believers also engage in economic activities by purchasing goods and toys within the shrine premises. Economic transactions are not limited to devotees but also involve visitors from diverse backgrounds who may be attracted to the cultural and commercial aspects of the shrine. Payment for services: Devotees who visit the shrine also engage in economic activities such as paying for Parking, accommodation, meals, and local transport services. These payments are strongly associated with their beliefs, indicating a willingness to invest financially in their religious pilgrimage and support local businesses that cater to visitors' needs.

Overall, intertwining economic activities with religious beliefs and practices within the shrine of *Pir Baba* underscores the complex relationship between spirituality, culture, and commerce. Economic transactions serve not only as a means of sustenance and livelihood for vendors and service providers but also as expressions of devotion, gratitude, and communal solidarity among devotees and visitors. The shrine serves as a hub of economic activity, where religious rituals and traditions intersect with commercial exchanges, contributing to the economic vitality of the local community while preserving the cultural heritage and spiritual significance of the shrine.

Table – 5.41: Association between Psychological Purposes and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	For spiritual purpose		183	7	190	$\chi^2=169.558$ P=(0.000)
			1	32	33	
		Total	184	39	223	
2	To relax from the boredom		173	17	190	$\chi^2=134.011$ P=(0.000)
			0	33	33	
		Total	173	50	223	
3	For mental and physical catharsis		121	69	190	$\chi^2=41.745$ P=(0.000)
			1	32	33	
		Total	122	101	233	
4	For self-realization (<i>Tazkia-Nafs</i>)		122	68	190	$\chi^2=38.514$ P=(0.000)
			2	31	33	
		Total	124	99	223	
5	For expression of sorrow		135	55	190	$\chi^2=30.197$ P=(0.000)
			7	26	33	
		Total	142	81	223	
6	For peace of mind		121	69	190	$\chi^2=23.745$ P=(0.000)
			6	27	33	
		Total	127	96	223	
7	For purification of body and soul from sins		119	71	190	$\chi^2=12.051$ P=(0.001)
			10	23	33	
		Total	129	94	223	
8	To manage a stressful life due to poverty		135	55	190	$\chi^2=30.155$ P=(0.000)
			7	26	33	
		Total	142	81		

The devotees visit the shrine for different psychological purposes, as summarized in the above table that the devotees look for the spiritual link with God through Sufi saints. An enormously significant (P=0.000) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and their spiritual purpose of visiting the shrine. However, some visitors also visit the shrine to relax and escape boredom. The chi-square results also noted the strongly significant (P=0.000) association between the beliefs of their expectations from the shrine to boredom and relaxation. Nowadays, it is the era of

tension and anxiety, and people feel different psychological complexities for that purpose, if they do not find someone in society to express their grievances, then they visit the shrine and express themselves by intercession (*Waseela*) of Sufi saint which is buried in the shrine to God. Through this method, they perform their mental and physical catharsis, and a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association has been detected between the beliefs of the devotees and their practice within the shrine for catharsis. Almost all the devotees have spiritual links with the shrine's saint, and strongly significant ($P=0.000$) associations were found between the beliefs of the devotees and their sense of self-realization at the shrine.

Moreover, devotees visit the shrine to express their sorrows. The chi-square results also show an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association between the beliefs of the devotees and their expression of sorrow within the shrine. Furthermore, the devotees also visit the shrine for peace of mind. An enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was also found between the beliefs of the devotees and their feelings of peace of mind in the shrine. The devotees also visit the shrine to purify bodies and souls, and a significant (0.001) association was found between their beliefs and feelings of purification of bodies and souls. The poverty-stricken devotees also visit the shrine to manage their stressful lives. A strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the devotees' beliefs devotees and their visiting the shrine to manage the management of stressful life.

The above statistical data highlights the multifaceted role of the shrine in addressing psychological complexities and providing solace to its visitors, such as spiritual connection and link with God: Many devotees visit the shrine to establish a spiritual connection with God through the intercession of the Sufi saint buried in the shrine. This reflects a deep-seated belief in the spiritual power of the saint to facilitate

communication with the divine, underscoring the importance of spiritual practices in the lives of devotees. Some visitors seek relaxation from boredom by visiting the shrine, suggesting that the shrine serves as a place of respite and diversion from the monotony of daily life. This highlights the shrine's role as a sanctuary where individuals can find temporary relief from mundane concerns and distractions. In addition, in an era marked by tension and anxiety, individuals visit the shrine to express their psychological grievances and seek catharsis through the intercession of the Sufi saint. This expression is a form of mental and physical release, allowing devotees to unburden themselves and find emotional relief. Devotees visit the shrine for self-realization and to express their sorrows, indicating a desire for introspection and emotional release. The shrine serves as a space where individuals can confront their innermost thoughts and feelings, fostering personal growth and emotional healing. Many devotees seek peace of mind and purification of body and soul at the shrine, suggesting a desire for spiritual cleansing and inner tranquility. The shrine serves as a sanctuary where individuals can find spiritual renewal and solace amidst life's challenges and uncertainties. Poverty-stricken devotees visit the shrine to manage their stressful lives, seeking comfort and support in times of hardship. The shrine serves as a source of strength and resilience for individuals facing adversity, offering hope and encouragement in the face of economic hardship.

Overall, the shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a pivotal role in addressing the psychological needs of its visitors, providing a sanctuary for spiritual reflection, emotional release, and psychological healing. Through its spiritual practices and sacred atmosphere, the shrine offers devotees a sense of connection, solace, and renewal, empowering them to confront life's challenges with resilience and faith. These findings underscore the

enduring significance of religious institutions in providing comfort and support to individuals in times of psychological distress and spiritual seeking.

Table – 5.42: Association between Psychological Practices and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Practice <i>Minnat</i>		138	52	190	$\chi^2=19.584$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	149	74	223	
2	Indulge yourself in spiritual activities		139	51	190	$\chi^2=23.289$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	149	74	223	
3	Practice meditation		160	30	190	$\chi^2=40.702$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	171	52	223	
4	Spending free time on the premises of the shrine		159	31	190	$\chi^2=43.658$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	169	54	223	
5	Sitting aside in the shrine and praying		161	29	190	$\chi^2=42.117$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	172	51	223	
6	Working in the Lungar		153	37	190	$\chi^2=36.026$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	163	60	223	
7	Brooming and cleaning the shrine		162	28	190	$\chi^2=48.147$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	172	51	223	

The devotees practice different rituals within the shrine for psychological satisfaction, spiritual healing, mental peace, and serenity. It has been summarized in the above table that the devotees practice *Minnat* at the shrine, which shows a strongly significant (P=0.000) association with the beliefs of the devotees. Similarly, the devotees also indulge themselves in spiritual activities such as meditation, and a strong significant (P=0.000) association was found between the beliefs of the

devotees, the practice of meditation, and other spiritual activities. Moreover, a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was also found between the beliefs of the devotees and their free time spent within the premises of the shrine. Furthermore, these devotees sit in the shrine and pray for themselves, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association is detected between their beliefs and spending time in the shrine. Moreover, the devotees, for their spiritual satisfaction, also worked in the *Langer* and brooming and cleaning the shrine. A strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was also detected between the beliefs of the devotees and their practices.

The above analysis provides insight into the various rituals and practices that devotees engage in within the shrine of *Pir Baba* for psychological satisfaction, spiritual healing, and mental peace. These practices and rituals include: Devotees practice *Minnat* at the shrine, seeking divine intervention and blessings for their personal needs and desires. This practice is strongly associated with their beliefs, indicating a deep-seated faith in the efficacy of supplication and intercession through the Sufi saint buried in the shrine. Devotees engage in spiritual activities like meditation, which serve as a means of connecting with the divine and attaining inner peace. This practice is strongly associated with their beliefs, reflecting a belief in the transformative power of spiritual practices in fostering spiritual growth and emotional well-being. Devotees spend their free time within the shrine's premises, seeking solace and spiritual nourishment in the sacred atmosphere of the shrine. This practice is strongly associated with their beliefs, suggesting a desire for spiritual retreat and contemplation away from the distractions of daily life. Devotees sit aside in the shrine and pray for themselves, engaging in acts of devotion and seeking spiritual guidance and support. This practice is strongly associated with their beliefs, indicating a belief in the efficacy of prayer and meditation to connect with the divine and receive

spiritual blessings. Devotees engage in service activities such as working in the Langer (community kitchen) and cleaning the shrine, contributing to the upkeep and maintenance of the sacred space. This practice is strongly associated with their beliefs, reflecting a sense of devotion and commitment to the spiritual well-being of the shrine and its community.

Overall, these rituals and practices serve as means of seeking psychological satisfaction, spiritual healing, and mental peace for devotees visiting the shrine of *Pir Baba*. Through supplication, meditation, prayer, and service, devotees find solace and spiritual nourishment, deepening their connection with the divine and fostering a sense of inner tranquility and well-being. These practices underscore the transformative power of religious rituals and spiritual engagement in addressing devotees' psychological and spiritual needs, offering a path toward personal growth, emotional healing, and spiritual enlightenment.

Table – 5.43: Association between Psychological Feelings and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	Feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine		175	15	190	$\chi^2=70.177$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	186	37	223	
2	Feel serenity on the premises of the shrine		185	5	190	$\chi^2=115.180$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	195	28	223	
3	Feel hopeful and satisfied after attending the shrine		186	4	190	$\chi^2=113.783$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	197	26	223	
4	Feel free from every sort of worries		179	11	190	$\chi^2=88.866$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	189	34	223	
5	Feeling free from sins		157	33	190	$\chi^2=36.776$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	168	55	223	
6	Spiritually feel purified		159	31	190	$\chi^2=43.658$ P=(0.000)
			10	23	33	
		Total	169	54	223	

The devotees visit the shrine for positive changes in their feelings, and it has been summarized in the above table that the devotees feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association has been found between the feelings and beliefs of the devotees. Moreover, the believers also feel serenity in the premises of the shrine, and a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association was detected between their feelings and beliefs. Mostly, the hopeless and dissatisfied people visit the shrine for the sake of feeling hopeful and satisfied, and a similarly strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was noted from the chi-square results and beliefs of the devotees. Whenever the devotees worried about some aspect of their lives, they visited the shrine, and strong significant ($P=0.000$) associations were found between their feelings of being free from worries and their beliefs. Moreover, the devotees feel free from sins and purified, and strongly significant ($P=0.000$) associations were found between their beliefs and those sorts of feelings after attaining the shrine.

The analysis shed light on the positive changes in feelings experienced by devotees upon visiting the shrine of *Pir Baba*, highlighting the transformative impact of religious engagement on emotional well-being. Devotees feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine, indicating a sense of contentment and tranquillity derived from their spiritual experience. This feeling is strongly associated with their beliefs, suggesting that their faith in the shrine's spiritual power contributes to their emotional well-being. Believers also experience serenity in the premises of the shrine, reflecting a sense of calmness and inner peace inspired by the sacred atmosphere of the shrine. This feeling is strongly linked to their beliefs, indicating that their faith enhances their ability to connect with the spiritual energy of the shrine and find solace therein. Hopeless and dissatisfied individuals visit the shrine seeking hopefulness and satisfaction, indicating a desire for emotional upliftment and positive change. This

desire is strongly associated with their beliefs, suggesting that their faith in the shrine's spiritual efficacy instills hope and optimism in their hearts. Devotees visit the shrine to seek relief and comfort when faced with worries or concerns. The feeling of being free from worries is strongly linked to their beliefs, implying that their faith in the shrine's divine intervention alleviates their anxieties and burdens. Devotees feel free from sins and purified after visiting the shrine, reflecting a sense of spiritual cleansing and redemption. This feeling is strongly associated with their beliefs, indicating that their faith in the shrine's sanctity and the intercession of the Sufi saint leads to feelings of spiritual renewal and purification.

Overall, these observations underscore the profound emotional impact of visiting the shrine of *Pir Baba* on devotees, eliciting feelings of satisfaction, peace, serenity, hopefulness, and spiritual purification. The associations between these feelings and the devotees' beliefs highlight the integral role of faith in shaping their emotional experiences and perceptions of the shrine. Through their spiritual engagement with the shrine, devotees find solace, comfort, and renewal, reaffirming the transformative power of religious devotion in fostering emotional well-being and spiritual fulfillment.

Table – 5.44: Association between Changing Sacred Status of the Shrines and Beliefs of the Devotees

S.No	Statements		Yes	No	Total	Chi-Square
1	People visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for spiritual purposes		159	31	190	$\chi^2=39.342$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	170	53	223	
2	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for tourism purposes		71	119	190	$\chi^2=0.197$ P=(0.407)
			11	22	33	
		Total	82	141	223	
3	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> to spend leisure and free time		35	155	190	$\chi^2=4.920$ P=(0.16)
			1	32	33	
		Total	36	187	223	

4	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> to see a historical place		146	44	190	$\chi^2=25.544$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	157	66	223	
5	Some people visit the shrine to enjoy the <i>Mela / Urs</i>		63	127	190	$\chi^2=15.251$ P=(0.000)
			0	33	33	
		Total	63	160	223	
6	People visit <i>Pir Baba</i> in large numbers in <i>Eid</i> as compared to <i>Urs</i>		157	33	190	$\chi^2=36.776$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	168	55	223	
7	Most of the new generation visits the shrine only for tourism purposes		170	20	190	$\chi^2=57.969$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	181	42	223	
8	Most of the new generation have yet to learn the historical and spiritual status of the <i>Pir Baba</i> shrine.		161	29	190	$\chi^2=42.117$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	172	51	223	
9	Most tourists visit <i>Pir Baba</i> in large numbers in the spring and summer.		161	29	190	$\chi^2=42.117$ P=(0.000)
			11	22	33	
		Total	172	51	223	

People visit the shrine of Pir Baba for various purposes. While most of the visitors visit the shrine for sacred and spiritual purposes, some also visit the shrine for secular, tourist, and scenic purposes. The table shows that that the people also visit the shrine for spiritual purposes, and a strong significant (P=0.000) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and their purpose of visiting the shrine. However, many tourists also visit the shrine, and non-significant (P=0.407) associations were found between the beliefs and visits of tourists to the shrine. Furthermore, the residents' devotees elaborated that on some special days, the tourists visit the shrine, such as on Sunday and *Eid* day, while on *Urs* day, Monday, Thursday, and Friday, mostly the believers visit the shrine. So, the shrines are sacred places for believers and public, historic, artistic, and scenic places for tourists.

A strong significant (P=0.000) association was found between the devotees' beliefs and their views that some people visit the shrine to experience it as a historical place. They further elaborated that some people visit the shrine to enjoy *Eid Mela* and *Urs*,

and there are more crowd in *Eid* than *Urs*. They also highlighted that the new generation can learn something other than *Pir Baba's* historical and spiritual status. The tourists visit the shrine during the summer and spring sessions. There is a strong significant ($P=0.000$) association between these views of the devotees and their beliefs as observers.

The above analysis elaborates on the diverse reasons for visiting the *Pir Baba* shrine, catering to believers seeking spiritual fulfillment and non-believers seeking secular and tourist experiences. Believers primarily visit the shrine for sacred and spiritual purposes, while non-believers visit it for secular, tourist, and scenic purposes. The association between beliefs and the purpose of the visit is strongly significant for believers, reflecting their deep-seated faith and spiritual motivations. In contrast, the association could be more significant for tourists, indicating that their visit is not driven by religious beliefs but rather by other interests such as tourism and sightseeing. Believers predominantly visit the shrine on special religious days such as *Urs* day, Monday, Thursday, and Friday, while tourists visit on days like Sunday and *Eid* day. This highlights the dual nature of the shrine as both a sacred pilgrimage site for believers and a public, historical, artistic, and scenic attraction for tourists. The shrine thus serves as a cultural and religious landmark, attracting diverse visitors with varying interests and motivations. Believers spend their time at the shrine engaging in religious practices and worship, while visitors and the local community may spend their leisure time there. The association between beliefs and leisure time spending is non-significant for believers, suggesting that their focus is primarily on spiritual activities rather than leisure pursuits. Some people visit the shrine to experience its historical significance and enjoy events like *Eid Mela* and *Urs*. The association between beliefs and views on the shrine as a historical place is strongly significant,

indicating that believers recognize and appreciate its cultural heritage and significance. However, there is a concern that the younger generation may be less aware of the shrine's historical and spiritual importance, highlighting the need for education and preservation efforts to maintain its cultural legacy. Tourists primarily visit the shrine during the summer and spring, attracted by its scenic beauty and cultural significance. The association between the views of devotees and tourist visitation patterns is strongly significant, suggesting that observers recognize the seasonal trends in tourist visitation and their impact on the shrine's atmosphere and ambiance.

In summary, the shrine of *Pir Baba* serves as both a sacred pilgrimage site for believers seeking spiritual fulfillment and a cultural and tourist attraction for visitors interested in its historical and scenic value. The associations between beliefs and visitation patterns highlight the complex interplay between religious devotion, cultural heritage, and tourism, shaping the shrine's role as a multifaceted destination catering to diverse interests and motivations.

5.4 Summary of the chapter

Analysis of the data in the tables and themes shows that demographic variables affect the beliefs of the devotees. Demographic variables included age, gender, education level, marital status, economic status, religion, sect and sub-sects in Islam, etc. In this connection, the majority of the visitors were below 40 years of age, meaning younger. Similarly, the majority (80.3 %) of the devotees were male, 185(83 %) of the devotees were married, and 155(69.5 %) of the devotees were illiterate. In addition, the majority, 151(67.7 %) of the devotees belonged to the lower class. Almost all of the

devotees were Muslims (99.1%), and most of them (81.6 %) were associated with the Sunni sect, especially the Deobandi sub-sect of Sunni.

Interestingly, the majority, 195(87.4 %) of the devotees, were not associated with any Sufi order. They considered themselves Muslims and showed affiliation with but did not link themselves with a specific Sufi order. The majority of the devotees, 130(58.3 %), stated their attachment to the shrine for 1-5 years. The majority of the respondents who took part in this study (77.57 %) were visiting devotees, while (12.107 %) were disciples of *Pir Baba*, and the descendants (5.4) of *Pir Baba*. Most 167(74.9 %) devotees believed that *Pir Baba* was a great saint of Allah and they visited the shrine to perform different rituals and worship within the shrine's premises. For instance, they circle the shrine, perform *Barakaha* prayer within the premises of the shrine, participate in the celebration of *Urs* of *Pir Baba*, lightening candles on the shrine, sing *Qawwali*, knotting the thread or cloth with the shrine, tie children on the tomb, touching tomb with hands and then rubbing hand on the body, eating holy salt from the shrine, drinking holy water for *Barakah*, taking amulet from the servant/malang of the shrine, taking *Bayath* (Oath) from the disciple (*Mureed*) of *Pir Baba*. A strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and their aforementioned practices and worship within the premises of the shrine of *Pir Baba*.

In addition, the devotees visit the shrine for different purposes, such as to get good health for themselves and their loved ones or to solve familial disputes, expecting wealth and economic prosperity, hoping for employment, professional growth, and business growth. Some women visit the shrine to get pregnant and fertility, to get a male child, and to pray for the survival of their ailing children. Moreover, devotees, especially females, also visit the shrine to get married and to a partner of their choice.

Some women also visit the shrine to avoid domestic violence, and they are also expecting the dissolution of family conflicts at the shrine of *Pir Baba*.

Moreover, the devotees also expected from the shrine of *Pir Baba* in terms of health and healing. The devotees expected to seek cures for different diseases by eating holy food, such as salt, and drinking holy water. In addition, the devotees also expected a cure for hepatitis, a cure for tuberculosis, a cure for typhoid, and a cure for paralysis. In the same manner, the devotees also expected healing of children with frequent crying (*Zyal*), healing of continuously crying children (*Jaby*), seeking treatment for physically weak children (*Sury*), and healing from witchcraft and magic. Similarly, the devotees also expected mental health treatment and warding off evil eyes. Likewise, the chi-square results show an enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association between the devotees' expectations regarding health and healing and the beliefs of the devotees.

The devotees believed that the shrine of *Pir Baba* contributed to society regarding social control and social integration. They viewed that people are afraid of the *Kirammat* of *Pir Baba*, which does not let them do something wrong. Similarly, the shrine of *Pir Baba* is believed to promotes positive and pro-social attitudes among the people of the local community. In addition, they believed that the shrine of *Pir Baba* brought conformity among the people of the local community. safeguards society from curses and ill-intended movements like the Taliban.

Moreover, the devotees believed that *Pir Baba* promotes integration among descendants due to common lineage, integration among disciples due to shared beliefs, and integration and love among the devotees. In addition, the devotees viewed the shrine of *Pir Baba* as providing space for rest and solace to away farers and

patients. The shrine of *Pir Baba* provides free food to poor people in the area, and the shrine serves as a space of leisure for local communities. Similarly, enormously significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and the contribution of the shrine of *Pir Baba* in terms of social control and social integration.

Furthermore, the shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes inter-faith harmony among the people of different religions and sects, mutual co-existence among the people of different religions, and peace and acceptance of different beliefs. The devotees believed the shrine of *Pir Baba* also promotes inter-cultural harmony among people of different cultures, such as Punjabi, Pashtun, Sindhi, and Persians. They believed that it promotes tolerance for other ethnicities, promotes tolerance for other languages, diversity of cultures and appreciation of the diversity of visitors. Likewise, a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and inter-cultural harmony among the people of different cultures.

Moreover, the devotees perform different economic activities, ultimately benefiting the local communities. These includes *Nazrana to the shrine*, food or cash for the *lanagr*, purchase goods from the vendors, purchase bangles, *ranja*, perfumes, and beads, purchase local handicrafts, purchase ornamental goods and toys for kids and pay for parking, eating a meal in the hotel, etc.

The psychological purposes of visiting the shrine include spiritual purposes, relaxation from boredom, mental and physical catharsis, self-realization (*Tazkia-Nafs*), expression of sorrows, peace of mind, and purification of body and soul from sins. Similarly, the devotees perform different rituals and practices within the shrine's premises. They practice *Minnat*, indulge themselves in spiritual activities, practice

meditation, and spend free time on the premises of the shrine. In the same way, they sit aside in the shrine and pray for themselves; they are working in the *Langer* and brooming and cleaning the shrine. As a result, after attaining the shrine, the devotees have different feelings: feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine, feel serenity in the premises of the shrine, feel hopeful and satisfied after attending the shrine, feel free from every sort of worries, feel free from sins and spiritually feel purified. Similarly, a strongly significant ($P=0.000$) association was found between the beliefs of the devotees and the psychological purposes of visiting the shrine, different practices within the shrine for psychological purposes, and psychologically feeling well.

Lastly, it was noted that the sacred status of the shrine also changes, so devotees visit the shrine for non-sacred and spiritual purposes. For instance, they visit the shrine for tourism purposes, to spend leisure and free time, and to see a historical place; some people visit the shrine to enjoy the *Mela and Urs*. Most of the new generation needs to learn the historical and spiritual status of the *Pir Baba* shrine, and most tourists visit *Pir Baba* in large numbers in the spring and summer seasons.

Chapter–6

RESULTSAND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The qualitative data was thematically analyzed, and various themes were delineated, encompassing the beliefs of the devotees, the diverse rituals and practices enacted within the shrine premises, and the social expectations vested in the shrine by its adherents. Additionally, the socio-economic and psychological functions that the shrine fulfills in the lives of devotees were also subject to thematic analysis. Furthermore, an examination of the evolving sacred status of the shrines was undertaken. Subsequently, associations between the devotees' beliefs and the rituals they perform within the shrine, as well as between the social expectations of the devotees and the social, psychological, and economic functions, were assessed using the Chi-Square test.

This chapter is devoted to three major sections: (a) a comparison is drawn between the qualitative and quantitative findings to ascertain the extent of their concordance or contradictions, (b) the findings of this study are linked with the broader literature on shrines, (c) discusses the findings in the light of sociological theoretical perspectives.

6.1 Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of Devotees

A research study shows that people's inclination toward shrines varies based on age, gender, education, occupation, religion, sect, and economic status. Studies in Punjab (Santos, 2015) have found gender-based differences in beliefs, with women more inclined toward shrines due to dependence on male resources in a patriarchal society. Earlier research indicates that Pakistani culture is predominantly patriarchal, leading to deprivation and superstition among women (Tahir et al., 2018). During my

fieldwork at the shrine of *Pir Baba*, I observed that women were more enthusiastic and devoted than men. Despite patriarchal restrictions, many women visited the shrine, practising various rituals and seeking blessings. A separate area with a curtain (*Purdah*) was reserved for women.

Previous studies (Santos, 2015) show that people from all occupations visit shrines. My interviews at *Pir Baba's* shrine included respondents from various professions, though most were less educated and economically poor. While other studies (Kurin, 1983) suggest most shrine visitors are Shia Muslims, my findings indicate that most visitors were Sunni Muslims, often unaware of specific Muslim sub-sects.

George and Sreedhar (2006) noted that rural people, being economically poor, have a greater inclination toward shrines than urban dwellers. My fieldwork confirmed this, as most devotees came from rural areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where traditionalism and superstitions are more prevalent.

In summary, beliefs and inclinations toward the shrine of *Pir Baba* vary based on gender, occupation, education level, economic status, religion, sect, and area.

6.1.1 Age of the Devotees

The data reveals that devotion to the shrine transcends age boundaries, with a diverse representation across different age groups. Fieldwork observations and interviews with devotees of all ages, including children accompanied by their parents, suggest that religious practices and beliefs are instilled from a young age. Most respondents (33.6%) were aged 20-30, indicating a strong presence of younger devotees. Significant proportions were also aged 30-40 (22.4%) and 40-50 (31.4%), highlighting active participation among those in their prime adulthood. Although

fewer in number, individuals over 50 years still comprised 12.6% of respondents, showing continued relevance among older generations.

ANOVA results indicate a significant effect of age on devotees' beliefs, with middle-aged individuals (30-50 years) showing more inclination towards the shrine than younger (20-30 years) or older (50+ years) devotees. This aligns with Batool and Tahir's (2018) findings that elders, influenced by conservatism and fatalism, exhibit greater shrine devotion and pass these beliefs to younger generations.

The diverse age representation underscores the shrine's significance across different life stages, ensuring its enduring appeal and relevance within the community. The active participation of young adults suggests a potential for the continuation and evolution of religious practices, while the presence of children highlights the intergenerational transmission of these traditions. The involvement of older individuals emphasizes the persistent nature of devotion across generations.

6.1.2 Gender of the Devotees

Qualitative findings from observations and interviews show that women are more inclined to visit shrines than men. Quantitative data supports this, revealing that out of 223 visitors, 179 (80.3%) was women and 44 (19.7%) were men. Earlier studies also highlight the patriarchal nature of Pakistani society, where women often face deprivation, tension, and a lack of self-confidence, leading them to seek solace through religious practices like visiting shrines (Tahir et al., 2018). The t-test results ($F(221) = 145.404$, $P = 0.000$) confirm a significant difference in gender beliefs.

Santos (2015) noted that in Pakistan's patriarchal society, women endure challenging circumstances and turn to superstitious practices for comfort. Contrary to this trend, a

study by Farooq and Kiani (2012) found that men and women visit shrines in equal numbers in Punjab.

Overall, this study and previous research reveal the complex relationship between gender dynamics, patriarchal structures, and religious practices in Pakistan. Women's greater inclination towards shrines is tied to their dependence on male resources in a patriarchal society. This societal structure limits their access to opportunities and resources, driving them towards religious practices for solace and empowerment. Shrines offer women a sense of agency and community, serving as a refuge from patriarchal oppression.

In conclusion, addressing the structural inequalities within Pakistani society is crucial for promoting gender equality and empowering women to participate in both religious and social spheres fully.

6.1.3 Marital Status of the Devotees

Married individuals face unique domestic, social, and economic challenges, influencing their motivations for visiting shrines. During fieldwork interviews, married female devotees mainly expressed concerns about fertility and male offspring, while male devotees sought success in business, employment, and marriages. Quantitative data supports these trends, with 83% of the 223 devotees being married. A Study by Kamal and Younas (2020) shows that married individuals are more inclined toward *Piri* and *Muridi* than unmarried ones. ANOVA analysis reveals significant differences in shrine-related beliefs between married and unmarried individuals ($F(1,221) = 95.882, P = 0.000$), with married individuals showing more muscular attachments due to greater responsibilities and challenges. Previous research corroborates these findings, highlighting the role of marital status in

shaping devotees' experiences and motivations. Overall, these findings emphasize the impact of marital status on devotees' spiritual and social lives.

6.1.4 Education Level

Qualitative interviews and quantitative data reveal that most shrine devotees have low education levels. Specifically, 69.5% of the 223 devotees are illiterate, 25.1% have completed matriculation, and only a tiny fraction have higher education (2.2% intermediate and 3.1% bachelor's degrees). ANOVA results indicate significant differences in shrine beliefs based on education level ($F(3,219) = 39.812, P = 0.000$), with less educated individuals showing stronger beliefs in shrines. This trend aligns with Charan, Wang, and Yao's (2018) findings on education and belief variations.

The high prevalence of illiteracy among devotees suggests that shrines primarily attract individuals from less-educated backgrounds. While a quarter of the devotees have primary education, few have higher academic achievements, indicating that the shrine may not appeal to more educated individuals. This has socio-economic implications for the shrine's visitor profile. In conclusion, the findings highlight the low literacy levels among shrine devotees, suggesting a strong link between educational attainment and the nature of religious beliefs.

6.1.5 Economic Status of the Devotees

An individual's social position is determined by their economic status, significantly influencing their beliefs and actions. Interviews with devotees reveal that most belong to the lower socio-economic strata, though some higher-status individuals also visit shrines due to social challenges. Quantitative analysis shows that out of 223 respondents, 151 are from the lower class, 68 are from the middle class, and only four

are from the upper class. ANOVA results confirm significant belief differences among social classes $F(2,220) = 24.302, P = 0.000$).

This aligns with Charan, Wang, and Yao's (2018) findings, which noted stronger shrine beliefs among the lower and middle classes compared to the upper class. Abbass (2013) and Batool, Chaudry, and Farooq (2015) similarly observed that shrine visitors are mostly from impoverished backgrounds, seeking solace and assistance. However, Chaudhry (2010) argues that both affluent and impoverished individuals visit shrines for different reasons: the rich aim to bolster their influence, while the poor seek access to resources and power structures. Thus, while lower-class devotees are more numerous, their motivations differ from those of wealthier visitors.

6.1.6 Religion and Sect of the Devotees

Previous research suggested that shrine visitors are predominantly *Shia* Muslims, with *Shia* and *Barelvi* sects of Sunni showing more favorable attitudes towards *Piri Muridi* and shrines compared to other sub-sects of Sunni (Kurin, 1983; Choudhry, 2010; Younas, 2017). However, fieldwork in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the shrine of *Pir Baba* revealed that most shrine visitors are Sunni Muslims (81.6%), with a significant portion (18.4%) not affiliating with any sect. ANOVA analysis confirmed significant belief differences between Sunni and unaffiliated devotees ($F(1,221) = 81.663, P = 0.000$). This contrasts with studies in Punjab, where Shia visitors were more inclined toward shrines. The regional difference is attributed to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's predominantly Sunni population. Some Shia visitors from southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa do visit the shrine but in fewer numbers. The presence of non-sectarian devotees further complicates the sectarian landscape. In summary, these findings highlight regional variations in shrine visitation patterns, emphasizing the need to consider local contexts when studying religious practices in Pakistan.

6.1.7 Visitation Pattern of the Devotees to the Shrine

Devotee shrine visits vary significantly based on the specific shrine, religious beliefs, and personal circumstances (Gilmartin, 2014). Qualitative findings indicate that personal needs, expectations, and cultural events like *Urs* influence visits. For example, an elderly respondent visits the shrine of *Pir Baba* intermittently, ranging from yearly to special occasions. Quantitative data show that of 223 devotees, 58.3% have been attached to the shrine for 1-5 years, 32.3% for 6-10 years, 8.5% for 11-15 years, and 0.9% for more than 20 years.

This combined data reveals diverse visitation patterns with both recent and long-term attachments. While qualitative insights highlight personal motivations and varied visit frequencies, quantitative findings provide a broader view of attachment durations. They illustrate the complex interplay of factors shaping devotees' relationships with the shrine.

6.1.8 Average Stay/ Residence of Devotees at Shrine per Visit

Quantitative findings reveal that 83.9% of devotees spend less than two days at the shrine of *Pir Baba*, indicating brief visits primarily for rituals, prayers, or blessings. Meanwhile, 14.3% of devotees spend 2-3 days per week at the shrine, reflecting higher devotion and commitment. A small fraction, 1.3% and 0.4%, spend an entire week or month, showing the highest levels of dedication and engagement. These findings highlight a range of devotee commitment levels, from brief visits to extended stays, indicating varying degrees of religious fervor and personal devotion.

Emile Durkheim analyzed social facts, all those external collective ways society shapes structure and constrains our behavior. Social facts include the group's collective beliefs, tendencies, and practices. In addition, he also explained that society

is not a mere collection of individuals. However, it also includes social relationships, i.e., family, friends, community, societal patterns, demographic trends, and social organizations, e.g., church, marriage, bureaucracy, and occupational divisions. All these forces individually or collectively control individual and group behavior. Similarly, in this study, the researcher considered different socio-demographic factors that influence the devotees' beliefs, tendencies, and inclinations toward the shrines. These socio-demographic variables include age, gender, education, economic status, and religious and sectarian affiliation of the devotees.

The group's age-based diverse beliefs, tendencies, practices, and rituals underscore the shrine's significance across different life stages, ensuring its enduring appeal and relevance within the community. The active participation of young adults suggests a potential for the continuation and evolution of religious practices, while the presence of children highlights the intergenerational transmission of these traditions. The involvement of older individuals emphasizes the persistent nature of devotion across generations. In short, age as a demographic factor influences the beliefs of devotees of different age groups. In addition, the findings of this research study reveal the complex relationship between gender dynamics, patriarchal structures, and religious practices in Pakistan. Women's greater inclination towards shrines is tied to their dependence on male resources in a patriarchal society. This societal structure limits their access to opportunities and resources, driving them towards religious practices for solace and empowerment. Shrines offer women a sense of agency and community, serving as a refuge from patriarchal oppression. Marriage is also a form of social relationship that influences the devotees' beliefs, tendencies, and inclination toward the shrine.

Similarly, the findings of this study show that married individuals show more muscular attachments due to greater responsibilities and challenges in their lives. The high prevalence of illiteracy among devotees suggests that shrines primarily attract individuals from less-educated backgrounds. Education is also a social fact that influences the devotees' beliefs, tendencies, and inclinations toward the shrines. The findings show that illiterate people are less rational, they believe in religious dogmas, and they are more inclined towards the shrine as compared to educated people. The findings of this study reveal that both affluent and impoverished individuals visit shrines, though for different reasons: the rich aim to bolster their influence, while the poor seek access to resources and power structures.

Similarly, Karal Marx's view is class consciousness. The upper class visits the shrine to bolster their influence and to persist in their status quo, and it is one type of consciousness of the upper class, while the lower class visits the shrine to get access to resources and power structure (Marx, 1843). So, the lower class has a different consciousness than the upper class. This variation in class consciousness also brings variation in beliefs, inclination, attachment, and attitude toward the shrine. Ultimately, this class consciousness leads to different social expectations and needs fulfillment. In addition, on one side, class differences, and consciousness shape different approaches and expectations from the shrine.

Similarly, Marx also believed that religion is an ideology that, like all other ideologies, reflects truth, but this truth is inverted. Because people cannot see that the capitalist system produces their distress and oppression, they give a religious form to their distress and oppression. This means that religion may distract people's attention from reality. Similarly, the different flaws in the socio-cultural and economic structure motivate the people to visit the shrine to solve their problems. These socio-

demographic factors include, as I discussed earlier, gender; the patriarchal structure compels more females to visit the shrine as compared to males. It is commonly viewed that Pashtun culture is a dominant culture; there is oppression, suppression, and exploitation of the females from the side of the males. It is considered gender-based stratification and inequality between males and females. This gender-based inequality is deeply rooted in Pashtun culture, which compels the females to visit the shrine for different needs and gratifications.

Further, these findings highlight regional variations in shrine visitation patterns, emphasizing the need to consider local contexts when studying religious practices in Pakistan. Geography also affects people's beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions. The earlier studies show that the Shia in Punjab is more inclined toward the shrine. However, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, few Shia devotees visited the shrine from the southern district, while the majorities were non-sectarian devotees. In summary, it has been found that the presence of different sects varies from place to place. Similarly, the attachment of the devotees also varies from region to region and sect to sect within the regions.

Overall, it has been found that according to the view of Emile Durkheim, some external social facts control or regulate the behavior of the individual in society. In these social facts, socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, education, economics, and religion control or regulate the behavior of the human being, such as beliefs, attachments, tendencies, inclinations, and attitudes of the human being towards the shrine. From the point of view of Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx and the findings of this study, the external macro-structure, patriarchal, class-based stratification, affiliation with religions and sects, and geographical and socio-cultural background motivate the devotees to visit the shrine. It means that gender-based

grievances, economic-based grievances, and religious dogmas command the behavior, attitudes, and beliefs of the devotees about the Sufi shrines.

6.2 Their Devotional Connections of *Pir Baba*'s Followers to Other Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is rich in Sufi shrines, and devotees often visit multiple shrines to fulfill their social, cultural, and spiritual needs (Baghi, 2017). During fieldwork, devotees mentioned visiting the shrines of saints such as *Mian Qasim Baba*, *Dewan Baba*, *Akhunderweza Baba*, *Kaka Saib*, *Manzary Baba*, *Ghazai Baba*, *Mady Baba*, and *Esar Baba*. Qualitative findings reveal a deep reverence for *Pir Baba*, with devotees expressing unmatched admiration, highlighting his elevated stature.

While *Pir Baba*'s shrine is highly revered, many devotees also visit other shrines, showing a broad engagement with multiple saints. This suggests that despite *Pir Baba*'s unique place in their hearts, devotees' religious practices encompass a broader spectrum of spiritual traditions. The qualitative findings emphasize the emotional and spiritual connections to *Pir Baba*, enriching the understanding of his shrine's significance within the broader devotional landscape of the region.

The above findings reveal that despite the people's engagement with multiple saints, the shrine of *Pir Baba* is highly revered. This high-rank reverence of the shrine of *Pir Baba* in the eyes of his devotees reflects the social reality as well as the customs, traditions, norms, and values of Pashtun culture, which command people to visit the shrine of *Pir Baba*.

6.3 Beliefs of Devotees regarding the *Pir Baba* and his Shrine

Attitudes toward shrines vary across Islamic theological schools, religious sects, cultures, and social backgrounds (Campbell, 1998). Devotees express deep reverence

for *Pir Baba*, considering him a unique human of God with the ability to intercede and change fortunes. Qualitative findings show that Devotees believe *Pir Baba* holds a unique status and can positively influence their lives. They believe in *Pir Baba's* ability to mediate with Allah and bring blessings. The quantitative findings, on the other hand, reveal The majority (84.8%) believe *Pir Baba* is alive and a friend of Allah, and that God listens more to him. Most (87%) believe *Pir Baba's* blessings can change fortunes and consider him a mediator between themselves and God. The majority (82.1%) believe in *Pir Baba's* miracles.

While qualitative findings emphasize belief in *Pir Baba's* special status, a smaller portion of devotees in the quantitative findings disagree. While most devotees in the quantitative findings believe in *Pir Baba's* miracles, a notable proportion does not. Overall, qualitative and quantitative findings offer nuanced insights into devotees' beliefs. While consensus exists on *Pir Baba's* special status, variations in specific beliefs reflect individual interpretations and cultural backgrounds, highlighting the complexity of religious belief systems within shrine devotion.

Durkheim definition of religion, more precisely, the sacred, is comprehensive. He argued that all societies, from primitive to modern times, categorize all things exclusively into sacred and profane categories. Sacred includes all those religiously institutionalized things, such as religious traditions, religious sites, religious prayers, and collectively recognized symbols. Similarly, the above findings also reveal the devotees' beliefs about the *Pir Baba* shrine. The devotees consider the shrine of *Pir Baba* to be a sacred religious site and practice different religious traditions and rituals within the premises of the shrine of *Pir Baba*.

Further, they have different sacred beliefs about the shrine of *Pir Baba*. For example, devotees consider *Pir Baba* a friend of Allah who is alive and believe that God listens more to him. Most believe *Pir Baba's* blessings can change fortunes and consider him a mediator between themselves and God. The majority believe in *Pir Baba's* miracles. The devotees have all these beliefs about the shrine of *Pir Baba* because they consider it a sacred and reverend place. The collectivity of the society has a confident, reverential attitude toward certain sacred things. If some individuals do not worship the sacred things in the particular community, it detaches the individual from the community in which these sacred things are worshiped.

Further, Emile Durkheim viewed that things and ideas a society or religion deems sacred by the beliefs that they classify as, and attach to, the sacred. The beliefs are states of opinion and consist of representations of symbols. Durkheim emphasizes the social and collective nature of social facts, stating that religious beliefs are not unique to the individual but are, and must necessarily be, shared collectively. In the same way, the devotees of the shrine of *Pir Baba* have similar beliefs, and this is the collectivity of the society that develops specific types of beliefs about the shrine of *Pir Baba*. For instance, the devotees believe that *Pir Baba* is alive; he is a mediator between God and us, and he changes the misfortune of the devotees. These beliefs are the representations that express the nature of sacred things and the relation with which they are sustained. The devotees consider the shrine of *Pir Baba* a sacred place. They express their attachment to the shrine through beliefs (Durkheim, 1912). All these are shared beliefs among the devotees, and the socio-cultural landscapes have shaped the devotees' beliefs about the shrine of *Pir Baba*. However, Karl Marx's view is that religion is the opiate of the people. He further elaborates that religion is the sign of the oppressed creature, the heart of the heartless world, as it is a spirit of the spiritless

conditions (Marx, 1843). In light of the view of Karal Marx and findings, It can be argued that the devotees visit the shrine when they feel dissatisfied, heartless, and spiritless because they believe that *Pir Baba* is a mediator between God and us.

Similarly, they also believe *Pir Baba* changes fortunes; therefore, they visit the shrine for hopefulness and spiritual revival when they become hopeless and spiritless. Karal Marx further elaborated that religion distracts people's attention from reality. Similarly, if the devotees visit the shrine for hope, satisfaction, and success, these beliefs divert the devotees' attention from reality. If their attention is diverted from reality, ultimately, these beliefs will become barriers to development and prosperity.

6.4 Rituals and Practices performed at the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

Qualitative findings show that devotees perform various rituals such as offering prayers, reciting sacred verses, and tying holy salt or threads. *Your* celebrations involve Sufi poets, saints, and scholars who perform *Qawwali*, recite poems, and deliver speeches. Emotional expressions of devotion include tying children to the shrine for survival and expressing reverence for *Pir Baba's* unique status. Quantitative findings, on the other hand, also show that most devotees circle the shrine and practice *Minnat* (77.6%). Some participate in *Urs* celebrations (15.7%), light candles (12.6%), and take amulets from shrine servants (29.6%). Practices like tying children to the tomb (19.3%) and eating holy salt (25.1%) show varying degrees of prevalence. While qualitative data emphasize tying children to the tomb and the significance of holy salt, quantitative data show a lower prevalence of these practices. Certain practices like touching the tomb, obtaining amulets, and avoiding turning back to the shrine are highlighted more in quantitative data than qualitative findings. These findings are in line with previous studies of Ullah (2014) and Kalhoro (2016) who

highlighted the everyday shrine rituals such as circling the shrine, offering prayers, and taking vows.

Qualitative and quantitative findings provide complementary insights into shrine rituals, offering a comprehensive understanding of devotees' practices at the shrine of *Pir Baba*. While qualitative data offer cultural and spiritual context, quantitative data provide statistical information on the prevalence of these practices, enriching our understanding of shrine devotion.

Emile Durkheim argued that rituals and rites constitute essential elements of religion. The rituals are fixed modes of action-specific practices. Durkheim emphasizes the social and collective nature of rituals, stating that religious rituals are not unique to the individual but are, and must necessarily be, shared collectively. Rituals are the rules of conduct that prescribe how a man should be comforted in the presence of sacred objects (Durkheim, 1912). Similarly, the findings of this study reveal that the devotees perform different rituals within the shrine of *Pir Baba*, such as circles around the shrine and practice *Minnat*; some participate in *Urs* celebrations, light candles, and take amulets from the shrine servants—practices like tying children to the tomb and eating holy salt show varying degrees of prevalence. In addition, children are tied to the tomb, touched to the tomb, obtain amulets, and avoid turning back to the shrine. All these practices represent the spiritual and socio-cultural background of the devotees as well as the social collectivities of the devotees.

Similarly, Durkheim also studied religion within a “primitive” culture for several reasons. First, he believed that it is much easier to gain insight into the essential nature of religion in a primitive culture because the ideological systems of primitive religions are less well-developed than those of modern religions, resulting in less

obfuscation. Religious forms in primitive society could be “shown in all their nudity,” and it would require “only the slightest effort to lay them open” (Durkheim, 1912). Similarly, the researcher also studied the shrine of *Pir Baba* within Pashtun culture to get insight into the essential nature of the religion and the people's traditional beliefs about the shrine.

Emile Durkheim believed that society is a source of religion; he was particularly interested in the totemic of Austria-Austria. Totemism is a religious system in which certain things, such as plants and animals, come to be considered sacred and as an emblem of the clan. The totems are the material representations of the nonmaterial force at their base, and that nonmaterial force is none other than society. Similarly, the shrine of *Pir Baba* is also a totem because the devotees consider it a material representation of the Sufi, which attracts a large number of devotees, and they consider it a sacred place. Further, Durkheim believed that the gathering was the actual cause, but even today, people are reluctant to attribute this power to social forces. Similarly, the devotees gather on a special occasion of *Urs*, and they express their emotional attachments and devotions within the shrine of *Pir Baba* in the form of *Qawwali*, ecstasy, and *Dhammal (dance)*. The devotees link this special gathering of (*Urs*) with the spiritual and socio-cultural values of the society.

Emile Durkheim viewed that three conditions are needed for religion: firstly, religious beliefs; secondly, rituals; and finally, religion also requires church (Durkheim, 1912). Further, his theory of religion represents the individual's connectedness to society. He also viewed that individuals learn about the sacred and its associated beliefs by participating in church community rituals. (Rawls, 1996). Similarly, the devotees who practice the above-mentioned different types of rituals have learned all these rituals

from society and from interacting with other disciples and devotees of *Pir Baba* within his shrine.

6.5 Social Expectations or Purposes for Devotees Visiting the Shrine

Devotees frequently visit shrines, expecting their social, economic, psychological, and physical issues to be resolved (Malik, 1990; Levin, 2008). Research in Punjab reveals various reasons for these visits, such as achieving success in exams, arranging a daughter's marriage into a respectable family, resolving family disputes, achieving love marriages, ensuring childbirth, and securing a better future for children. Devotees also engage in rituals like lighting oil lamps, praying at saints' graves, placing cloths on shrines (*Chadar Charana*), and obtaining amulets (*Taweez*) from shrine servants (Abbas et al., 2013).

Pirani et al. (2008) add that devotees visit shrines to cope with stress, poverty, abusive relationships, dependence on children, health issues, and lack of inner peace. Specific studies, like those on the shrine of Hazrat Mian Mir in Lahore, highlight that childless women seek fertility through the saint's intercession (*Waseela*) (Abbas et al., 2013).

Marriage selection poses a significant challenge in traditional, conservative societies, where women often cannot express their emotions openly, and marriage decisions are made by elders (Naz & Rehman, 2011). When medical treatments fail or are deemed ineffective, some devotees attribute their ailments to supernatural influences and seek healing at shrines (Pirani, 2009). This is also observed at the shrine of *Pir Baba*, where devotees seek health and healing.

Family disputes, often exacerbated by patriarchal oppression in societies like the Pashtun community, drive many, especially women, to seek conflict resolution at

shrines (MacIver, 2010). Some devotees even pray for favorable outcomes in legal matters (Abbas, 2013).

Quantitative data reveals that most devotees visiting the shrine of *Pir Baba* hope for good health (77.1%) and resolution of family disputes (53.8%). Additionally, many expect economic prosperity (55.2%) and business growth (57.8%). Fertility is another significant expectation, with 51.6% hoping for pregnancy and 62.8% seeking male children. Devotees also seek protection for their children (74%), marriages (68.2%), and choice marriages (67.3%). Furthermore, many visit to avoid domestic violence (65%) and resolve family conflicts (60.5%).

Farid and Iqbal (2017) also found that devotees visit shrines for success in exams, love marriages, resolve family conflicts, secure a better future for their children, and marry daughters into respectable families. Their findings align with a robust statistical association between devotees' beliefs and their social expectations of the shrine.

Both qualitative and quantitative data highlight the diverse reasons for visiting the shrine of *Pir Baba*, such as seeking treatment for various diseases, resolving familial issues, and aspiring for economic prosperity. Women also visit to seek refuge from domestic violence. Kalhor (2016) supports these findings, noting that devotees seek solutions to various social, economic, and psychological problems.

However, discrepancies exist between quantitative and qualitative data. While quantitative data suggests devotees also pray for child survival, employment, and professional advancement, qualitative data does not strongly support these views. This suggests a divergence in how devotees perceive and express their needs and aspirations.

Overall, integrating qualitative and quantitative findings offers a comprehensive understanding of devotees' expectations from the shrine of *Pir Baba*, highlighting health, familial harmony, economic prosperity, and social well-being as critical aspirations. Further research could explore the factors behind the differences between quantitative and qualitative data, enriching our understanding of religious practices and beliefs at shrines.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative data reveals the complex interplay between cultural beliefs, religious practices, and personal experiences. Devotees seek solutions to various issues, including infertility, marital challenges, health problems, and family disputes, through their faith in *Pir Baba's* intercession. While most devotees believe in the shrine's efficacy, there is significant variation in beliefs, highlighting the nuanced nature of faith and spirituality in the context of shrine visits.

The above findings reveal that the devotees visit the shrine to seek solutions to their various issues, including infertility, marital challenges, health problems, and family disputes, through their faith in *Pir Baba's* intercession. Morality also includes attachment; it is a positive aspect of group commitment, not external duty but out of willing attachment (Durkheim, 1925). Discipline was the demand of society, and attachment is society seen as part of us. Finally, autonomy is the rational grounded impulse of the will (Giddens, 1972). Similarly, findings reveal that it is the rational will of the devotees that they visit the shrine to fulfill their social, economic, familial, and psychological needs gratifications.

However, Weber analyzed primitive religions and other religions of the world; he viewed religion as an impediment to the rise of rationality because Weber noted that the sacred is uniquely unalterable. He elaborates that early religion was composed of a

bewildering array of gods. Early religion had household, local political, occupational, vocational, and kin-group gods. It has been clear from his view that Weber believed that that cultural force rationally impelled this set of gods.

Parsons argued that religion is a significant cultural determinant of social action. He also claimed that just as modern society evolves and becomes more complex in its structure and institutions; it has a more differentiated division of Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton's labor, as elaborated by Durkheim. Religion has its own relatively narrow functional specialization (e.g., worship and transmission of religious doctrine (Smelser, 1959). For Parsons, this general process of functional differentiation and specialization is critical to the evolution and modernization of society, demonstrated, for example, in the separation of church and state in the US, each with its autonomous functions. Secularization – understood in terms of the increased institutional differentiation of society and the attendant decline in the authority and scope of religious institutions – does not mean religion's disappearance as a normative or cultural system (Smelser, 1959). It means, instead, that while the church has a narrower and more specific institutional function in individual lives, Christianity, for example, as a value system in the US, exerts cultural leverage on the society as a whole: it provides the value system underlying social action across all institutional spheres (Smelser, 1959). Parsons argues: “A true differentiation always involves at the same time an allegiance to common values and norms. In terms of the ultimate trusteeship of these values, the church is the higher authority”. In the American and Western context, mainly due to the links between Protestantism and capitalism discussed by Weber, specifically Protestantism, providing the shared cultural reference point. Parsons called this the Christianizing of secular society – extending

the calling and individual responsibility beyond religious salvation into every aspect of secular society (Smelser, 1959).

Similarly, this research study explored the different socio-economic and psychological functions of the Sufi shrine, specifically the shrine of *Pir Baba*. The social functions include social control and social integration, interfaith, and inter-cultural harmony. In addition, the economic functions include the devotees' contribution to the *Nazrana Box* and the amount they contribute to the local community's economy. Similarly, the psychological functions include the different psychological functions the shrines perform in the lives of the devotees, such as satisfaction, self-realization, catharsis, and serenity. However, the findings also reveal the impacts of external factors on the shrine's sacred status, such as the influence of *Panj Peri* and *Wahhabi* sects and tourism.

6.6 Social Functions of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

Like other social institutions, the shrines serve important functions in devotees' social, psychological, and economic lives. It contributes to social integration, stability, and equilibrium by fulfilling social expectations and needs (Veer, 2002). The shrine of *Pir Baba* is perceived as a vital institution that fosters social control, promotes positive social attitudes, and enhances community integration through shared lineage, beliefs, and practices. It also offers a place for rest, solace, and leisure, contributing significantly to the social fabric of the Buner region. The quantitative data supports these views, showing solid associations between devotees' beliefs and the shrine's social functions. The data indicates that the shrine plays a multifaceted role in the lives of devotees, serving as a source of moral guidance, community cohesion, and social support. While there is a significant consensus on the shrine's positive impact, a

notable minority of devotees hold differing views, reflecting the community's diversity of opinions and experiences. The shrine's influence on social control and integration highlights its importance in maintaining social equilibrium and addressing communal needs in the region.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* symbolizes resistance against external threats, particularly from the Taliban. In 2008, when the Taliban attempted to destroy the shrine, the spiritual power ('*Kirramat*') of *Pir Baba* is believed to have thwarted their efforts. This narrative underscores the shrine's role as a protective force, maintaining social order and shielding the community from destabilizing forces. This perspective illustrates the shrine of *Pir Baba* as a deterrent against external threats and a guardian of social stability. The narratives highlight the shrine's role in community resilience, linking spiritual power with historical resistance to militant ideologies. This symbiotic relationship between spirituality and social cohesion fosters a collective identity and empowerment, enhancing the community's capacity to navigate and mitigate threats.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a multifaceted role, enhancing social control, promoting positive social attitudes, and fostering community integration. It serves as a moral guide, a center for community cohesion, and a source of social support. While there is broad consensus on its positive impact, a minority of devotees hold differing views, reflecting the diversity of opinions within the community.

The shrine serves as a sanctuary for physical and spiritual needs, providing a sense of refuge and support. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data highlights its role as a central institution that fosters community well-being and cohesion.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* is a central institution in the Buner region, providing spiritual guidance, social control, community integration, and health support. It fosters

resilience against external threats, promotes positive social attitudes, and offers solace and healing. The combined qualitative and quantitative findings comprehensively view the shrine's multifaceted influence on the local community. Parsons viewed religion as paving the way toward social integration. This refers to how religion provides a standard matrix of value-commitment broadly shared between denominations, which form the basis of the sense that society as a whole forms a religiously based moral community (Parsons, 1967).

6.6.1 Promoting Inter-faith Harmony

Previous studies, such as Anjum (2011), indicate that the people of Sindh, who share cultural similarities with Buner, are spiritual and peaceful and believe in love, peace, and interfaith harmony. Similarly, the shrine of *Pir Baba* is perceived to promote interfaith harmony and tolerance among diverse religious communities, including Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus. Qualitative Insight states that the devotees and researchers have noted that the shrine of *Pir Baba* fosters mutual understanding and co-existence among different religious groups. Special occasions such as *Urs*, *Eidul Adha*, and *Eidul Fitr* see participation from people of various faiths, highlighting the shrine's role in promoting interfaith gatherings.

However, quantitative Insight reveals that the shrine of *Pir Baba* promotes the "Live and Let Live" Philosophy: 90.6% of devotees believe the shrine promotes the philosophy of "live and let live," while 9.4% do not. Interfaith Harmony: 91% of devotees believe the shrine promotes interfaith harmony among different religions and sects, with 9% disagreeing. Tolerance for Religious Diversity: 74% view the shrine as promoting tolerance of religious diversity, while 26% disagree. Mutual Co-existence: 65.9% believe the shrine promotes mutual co-existence, whereas 34.1% do not. Peace and Acceptance of Diverse Beliefs: 66.8% say the shrine promotes peace and

acceptance of diverse beliefs, with 33.2% dissenting. Acceptance of Different Sects and Cultures: 75.8% and 76.2% of devotees believe the shrine promotes acceptance and tolerance among different sects and for people of other religions.

The qualitative and quantitative data consistently highlight the shrine of *Pir Baba* as a beacon of interfaith harmony and tolerance. Most devotees believe the shrine Fosters a culture of peace and mutual co-existence. Encourage the philosophy of "live and let live." Promote tolerance and acceptance of religious diversity. It serves as a communal space where people of different faiths can gather and celebrate.

Comparison with Other Studies:

The findings align with broader research on Sufism, which identifies Sufi shrines as centers of love, peace, interfaith harmony, and asceticism (Idris & Ahmed, 2011; Kurin, 1983; Rehman & Lund-Thomsen, 2014). The shrine of *Pir Baba* exemplifies these characteristics by providing a space for diverse religious practices and fostering a culture of tolerance and acceptance.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a significant role in promoting interfaith harmony and social cohesion in the Buner region. It is a testament to the peaceful co-existence of different religious communities and the enduring influence of Sufi traditions in fostering unity and mutual respect. Combining qualitative narratives and quantitative data provides a comprehensive understanding of the shrine's impact on promoting interfaith harmony and tolerance.

Devotees report positive social relations between Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus, participating in each other's social and religious activities. This emphasizes the shrine's role in fostering mutual respect and understanding among diverse religious groups. A significant majority of devotees (90.6% to 91%) believe the shrine of *Pir*

Baba promotes interfaith harmony, acceptance of diversity, and a culture of tolerance. This widespread recognition highlights the shrine's role in fostering peaceful co-existence among different religions and sects. Most devotees (66.8% to 76.2%) view the shrine as a promoter of peace and acceptance of diverse beliefs, sects, and cultures. This suggests that the shrine serves as a beacon of peace and inclusivity, encouraging followers to embrace diversity and practice tolerance.

The qualitative narratives and quantitative findings illustrate the shrine of *Pir Baba's* significant role in promoting interfaith harmony, tolerance, and social cohesion. Both sources highlight interfaith interaction and cooperation, indicating a shared reverence for spiritual figures and a willingness to engage in dialogue and mutual respect.

The high percentage of devotees endorsing the shrine's role in fostering peace, acceptance, and tolerance reinforces the notion that Sufism, embodied by *Pir Baba's* teachings, promotes love, peace, and interfaith harmony.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* emerges as a symbol of religious pluralism and inclusivity, where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together in reverence and mutual respect. The qualitative and quantitative findings underscore the transformative impact of the shrine's teachings on fostering social cohesion, peaceful co-existence, and acceptance of religious diversity.

The prevalence of such beliefs among devotees aligns with broader scholarly perspectives emphasizing Sufism's role in promoting love, peace, and interfaith harmony across religious boundaries. Similarly, a study by Rahmatullah (2014) highlights how Sufi shrines promote interfaith harmony and mutual co-existence among people of different religions and sects.

The combined qualitative and quantitative evidence demonstrates the shrine of *Pir Baba's* profound influence in nurturing interfaith understanding, tolerance, and peace among the diverse religious communities of Buner. This aligns with the broader role of Sufi shrines in promoting love, peace, and interfaith harmony, underscoring the shrine's significance as a unifying force in the region.

6.6.2 Intercultural Harmony

Pakistan's diverse cultural landscape, with its varying customs, traditions, norms, values, and languages, often leads to hate, prejudice, and enmity among different groups (Rahmatullah, 2014). However, Sufi shrines, like that of *Pir Baba*, act as integrating forces that create reverence, acceptance, and tolerance among people from different backgrounds. The Pakistan Center of Philanthropy (2008) highlights that the shrine of *Pir Baba*, among other significant shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is particularly famous for promoting such integration. Devotees from various regions, including Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Afghanistan, express love, respect, and reverence for *Pir Baba*. This indicates that the shrine is a unifying force that transcends cultural boundaries.

Participants at Sufi shrines, especially at *Pir Baba's*, experience a sense of unity and integration, sharing common beliefs, rituals, and practices despite their different cultural backgrounds. This convergence is evident in the significant number of devotees (77.1%) who believe that Sufi shrines promote inter-cultural harmony by sharing the same religious values. This shared reverence for *Pir Baba* among diverse cultural groups fosters a sense of acceptance and tolerance, illustrating the shrine's role as a symbol of artistic unity.

Quantitative data supports the qualitative findings, showing that a substantial majority of devotees view Sufi shrines as promoting tolerance for different ethnicities (83.4%), languages (87.4%), and cultural practices (88.3%). This suggests that Sufi traditions effectively bridge cultural divides and foster mutual understanding among diverse communities. The significant agreement among devotees underscores Sufism's role in promoting inter-cultural harmony in Pakistan.

Many devotees believe that Sufi shrines foster inclusivity and acceptance of cultural diversity. Specifically, 85.2% of devotees state that Sufi shrines promote reverence for other cultures, while 76.2% appreciate the diversity of visitors. These findings highlight the role of Sufi shrines in fostering respect and admiration for diverse cultural identities despite some dissenting opinions.

Both qualitative and quantitative data converge on the idea that Sufi shrines, such as *Pir Baba*, play a crucial role in promoting intercultural harmony and acceptance in Pakistan. Qualitative narratives provide rich insights into the lived experiences of devotees, illustrating the cultural integration fostered by Sufi traditions. Quantitative data offers statistical support, showing widespread agreement among devotees regarding the positive impact of Sufi shrines on intercultural relations.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* attracts visitors from beyond Pakistan's borders, including non-Pashtu speakers from Afghanistan. This transnational influence further validates the shrine's role in promoting tolerance and acceptance among people from different cultures. Devotees from various ethnic groups, such as Pashtun, Punjabi, Persian, Baluchi, and Sindhi, revere *Pir Baba*, highlighting the shrine's capacity to foster unity across diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Earlier research studies also support that Sufism promotes intercultural harmony throughout Pakistan (Idris & Ahmed, 2011; Kurin, 1983; Rehman & Lund-Thomsen, 2014). The Bi-variate analysis (Chi-square) results show a strongly significant association ($P=0.000$) between the beliefs of devotees and the promotion of inter-cultural harmony through Sufi shrines.

Overall, the combined qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that Sufism is a unifying force that transcends cultural differences, promotes tolerance, acceptance, and reverence for diversity, and fosters harmonious co-existence among culturally diverse communities in Pakistan. The shrine of *Pir Baba*, in particular, emerges as a symbol of cultural integration and reverence, highlighting the transformative impact of Sufi traditions on fostering inter-cultural harmony. Parsons provides a standard matrix of value-commitment broadly shared between denominations, which forms the basis of the sense in which the society as a whole forms a religiously based moral and religious culture (Parsons, 1967). Similarly, the above findings reveal the shared spiritual beliefs, rituals, and expectations among the people of different religions.

6.7 Economic Functions of the Shrine of Pir Baba

The devotees may have different economic expectations from the shrines, such as job promotions, business improvement, and avoiding financial problems and crises (Levin, 2008). In this respect, the devotees believed that *Minnat* within the shrine's premises could change the people's fortune.

Devotees from various regions, including Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Afghanistan, express love, respect, and reverence for *Pir Baba*. This indicates that the shrine is a unifying force that transcends cultural boundaries.

They believe making vows (*Minnat*) within the shrine's premises can change their fortunes. According to a study by Batool, Chaudry, and Farooq (2015), there is no compulsion to make offerings (*Nazrana*), which can include presenting food (*Daig*), gold, or service over a period. Devotees offer *Nazrana* based on their affordability. The study found that out of 223 devotees, 76.7% performed economic activities at the shrine, while 23.3% did not. Similarly, 76.2% of devotees made offerings to the *Nazrana* Box and shrine caretakers, and 77.1% contributed food and cash for communal meals (*Langar*).

The data suggests that Sufi shrines are centers of economic activity. For example, 77.6% of devotees purchased goods like bangles, perfumes, and beads, and 83.4% bought handicrafts. Additionally, 87% of devotees spent money on ornamental goods and toys for children. Non-local devotees, who made up 88.3% of the visitors, contributed to the local economy by paying for parking and accommodation. Furthermore, 74.9% of non-local devotees used local taxis and transport services.

The Chi-square analysis shows a significant association ($P=0.000$) between devotees' beliefs and their economic activities at the shrine. The quantitative data indicates that most devotees engage in financial activities such as purchasing goods and contributing offerings, with 76.7% participating in economic activities and 76.2% making offerings.

Both qualitative and quantitative findings highlight the importance of economic factors in Sufi shrine visitation. Qualitative data reveals the economic expectations of devotees and their belief in the shrine's transformative power in addressing financial issues. It also underscores the shrine's economic impact on local vendors and the wider community.

Quantitative data validates these assertions, showing a significant proportion of devotees engaging in economic activities and making offerings. This strong correlation between shrine visitation and economic engagement illustrates the multifaceted nature of the devotees' relationship with the shrine, encompassing both spiritual devotion and material aspirations.

Sufi shrines serve as spiritual centers and hubs of economic activity, contributing to local livelihoods and economies. Devotees' financial expectations and contributions reflect a complex relationship with the shrine, including spiritual devotion and material aspirations.

6.8 Psychological functions of the shrine

Shrines, including the revered *Pir Baba* shrine, play a significant role in the lives of devotees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, serving as places of spiritual connection, solace, and renewal. Many devotees visit the shrine to rejuvenate their spiritual connection with *Pir Baba*, seeking emotional attachment with God through his intercession. They perceive the shrine as a sanctuary where they can find solace and escape from the stresses of daily life. Few devotees visit the shrine with hopes of a change in their fortunes, believing in *Pir Baba's* ability to influence worldly affairs. They engage in religious practices such as prayer, Quranic study, and meditation to seek satisfaction and serenity.

Most devotees visit the shrine for spiritual purposes, relaxation, catharsis, self-realization, and peace of mind. They actively participate in activities like *Minnat* (intercession), meditation, and communal service at the shrine, reflecting their deep religious devotion.

After visiting the shrine, most devotees report feeling satisfaction, peace of mind, serenity, and hopefulness. They believe in the shrine's power to alleviate worries, purify the soul, and provide spiritual guidance.

Qualitative insights reveal devotees' subjective experiences and beliefs, emphasizing the shrine's emotional and spiritual significance. Quantitative data quantifies the prevalence of these experiences, validating the profound impact of shrine visits on devotees' well-being.

The shrine of *Pir Baba* serves as a vital religious and communal space where devotees find solace, engage in religious practices, and seek spiritual fulfillment. The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches offers a comprehensive understanding of the shrine's multifaceted role in the lives of devotees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Similarly, other studies also recognize the diverse psychological functions performed by shrines in the lives of devotees.

Émile Durkheim significantly impacted our understanding of the social functions of religion. In his seminal work, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912), Durkheim proposed that religion serves several crucial functions within society. Durkheim believed that religion helps to create and reinforce social solidarity. It does this by providing a set of shared beliefs and practices that unify individuals within a society. Religious rituals and ceremonies, according to Durkheim, play a key role in strengthening social bonds and fostering a sense of community (Durkheim, 1912). Marx would likely argue that such social cohesion could be used to perpetuate the status quo, where social hierarchies and inequalities are less challenged (Marx, 2000). He argued that religion contributes to the collective conscience or the shared beliefs, values, and norms that bind people together. This collective conscience is crucial for

maintaining social order and ensuring that individuals act in ways that are consistent with societal expectations (Durkheim, 1912). From a Marxist perspective, Sufi shrines might be seen as vehicles for ideological control. Sufi shrines could reinforce the existing social order by promoting spiritual ideals and practices emphasizing submission and devotion. This could align with Marx's view that religion and spiritual practices often maintain the dominant class structures and inhibit revolutionary change (Marx, 2000).

Religion also regulates behavior by establishing moral codes and ethical guidelines. Durkheim saw religious doctrines and practices as mechanisms through which societies articulate and enforce moral standards. Religion provides a framework for individuals to find meaning and purpose in life. By explaining existential questions and life events, religion helps individuals make sense of their experiences and the world around them. Durkheim viewed religion as a means of social control, reinforcing societal norms and rules. Through religious teachings and rituals, societies influence individual behavior and ensure conformity to social norms. Durkheim's analysis pioneered the focus from viewing religion merely as a system of beliefs to understanding it as a fundamental component of social structure and function. His work emphasized that religion is deeply intertwined with the social fabric, shaping and reflecting the collective values of a society (Durkheim, 1912).

Similarly, the above findings also reveal that the shrine of *Pir Baba* performs social functions such as social solidarity and social control among the devotees. Besides this, it also performs tasks in the form of inter-faith because the people of different religions, Sikhs and Hindus, participate in religious activities and live with Muslims with mutual co-existence. Inter-cultural harmony means that people of different cultures visit the shrine and share the same beliefs, rituals, and practices. By analyzing

Sufi shrines through Durkheim's sociological lens, we can appreciate how these religious institutions serve spiritual and social functions and play a significant role in the economic life of their communities. Similarly, the findings also reflect that the shrine of *Pir Baba* contributes to the local economy in terms of business opportunities and *Nazrana*. Sufi shrines often hold significant wealth, including donations, property, and offerings. Marx might critique this concentration of resources as a form of economic power that reinforces existing class disparities. He could argue that the economic benefits to the shrine institutions are not distributed equally and could perpetuate economic inequalities. Sufi shrines often provide economic support to local communities, which can be seen as patronage. Marx might view this as a way to secure followers' loyalty and stabilize local economies under the influence of the shrine's leadership (Marx, 2000). This economic support might prevent people from questioning the broader economic system or seeking radical change. Durkheim's perspective emphasizes that religion is not just a set of beliefs but a crucial component of social structure that contributes to individuals' and societies' psychological well-being and cohesion. Marx's theory of alienation could be applied to understand how Sufi shrines address psychological needs. Individuals might feel alienated from their work and communities in a capitalist system. Sufi shrines offer a space where individuals can seek solace and find meaning, potentially helping them cope with feelings of alienation and discontent. However, Marx might argue that this psychological consolation is superficial and does not address the root causes of alienation in the capitalist system. Sufi shrines provide spiritual satisfaction and a sense of purpose, which Marx might interpret as escapism from the harsh realities of socio-economic conditions. By focusing on spiritual development and the afterlife, individuals might be less inclined to confront and change their material conditions

(Marx, 2000). Marx would likely see this as a way in which religion and spirituality can function to perpetuate the existing social and economic order by diverting attention from material struggles (Marx, 2000).

Applying Marx's critical framework to Sufi shrines highlights their potential roles in reinforcing social, economic, and psychological structures. Marx might critique these institutions for perpetuating existing inequalities and serving as mechanisms that stabilize the socio-economic status quo. However, it is also worth noting that this analysis would need to be nuanced, considering the diverse roles Sufi shrines play in different contexts and how they can act as sites of resistance and transformation (Marx, 2000).

6.9 Changing the Sacred Status of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

The transformation of the sacred status of *Pir Baba* shrine is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by various socio-cultural factors. Among these, modernization, education, rationality, and urbanization play significant roles, alongside tourism and sectarian influences, particularly from the *Wahabi* and *Panj Piri* sects. Nelson (1996) and Veer (2002) note the evolving perception of the shrine due to these factors, highlighting a shift from traditional spiritual reverence to a more secular and touristic approach.

The qualitative findings underscore this shift, revealing a dichotomy between spiritual visits (*Zyarat*) and tourism-driven visits. While some devotees still adhere to spiritual practices and view the shrine as a site for *Minnat*, meditation, and *Langar* service, others lament the influx of tourists disregarding its sanctity. This trend is supported by quantitative data, indicating a notable increase in tourism-related visits and a decline

in awareness among the new generation regarding the shrine's historical and spiritual significance.

Moreover, the intervention of sectarian ideologies adds another layer to this complex narrative. *Wahabi* and *Panj Piri* sects' influence contributes to declining traditional practices and reverence for shrines, further accentuating the shift towards secular motivations for shrine visits. Abbas, Safdar, Qureshi, and Zakar (2013) observe that devotees engage in shrine rituals to fulfill psychological needs, suggesting blending tradition with modern psychological gratification.

While some devotees find solace and satisfaction in spiritual activities within the shrine, others are drawn to its historical and leisure aspects. This reflects a broader societal trend where religious spaces like the *Pir Baba* shrine are increasingly viewed through secular lenses. The findings highlight the intricate interplay between tradition and modernity, with implications for religious beliefs and practices in contemporary society.

Critically, while the qualitative and quantitative data provide valuable insights into evolving perceptions of the shrine, they may need to capture the full complexity of individual motivations and experiences. Additionally, the influence of sectarian ideologies on shrine visits warrants further exploration, particularly in understanding how they shape devotees' attitudes and behaviors. Overall, the study offers a nuanced understanding of the changing sacred status of the *Pir Baba* shrine amidst the forces of modernization, tourism, and sectarian influences.

Chapter – 7

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

7.1 Conclusion

It has been concluded that the shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a significant role in the lives of devotees and the broader community. Devotees attribute a profound spiritual significance to the *Pir Baba* shrine, considering it a sacred space where divine blessings and interventions are sought. The belief in *Pir Baba's* unique connection with Allah as a friend and intercessor reflects devotees' deeply ingrained faith and trust in his spiritual powers to influence their fortunes.

The thesis highlights the impact of various demographic factors on the beliefs and practices of devotees. These factors include age, gender, marital status, economic status, religion, sect, *Sufi* order affiliation, and attachment to the shrine of *Pir Baba*. Further, the demographic variables also influence the perceptions and expectations of the devotees. This underscores the diversity within the devotee community and how individual backgrounds contribute to their interpretations of the shrine's significance. This comprehensive age diversity demonstrates the shrine's enduring significance and role in maintaining a cohesive religious identity within the community. The strong presence of young adults points to the resilience and adaptability of spiritual practices, suggesting that these traditions will likely persist and evolve with future generations.

Additionally, the active participation of children accompanied by their parents highlights the importance of early exposure in fostering lifelong devotion. Meanwhile, the continued engagement of older individuals underscores the deep-rooted and enduring nature of shrine devotion, reinforcing its importance as a cultural and spiritual cornerstone across all stages of life. Overall, this study reveals the complex

relationship between gender dynamics, patriarchal structures, and religious practices in Pakistan. Women's greater inclination towards shrines is tied to their dependence on male resources in a patriarchal society. This societal structure limits their access to opportunities and resources, driving them towards religious practices for solace and empowerment. Shrines offer women a sense of agency and community, serving as a refuge from patriarchal oppression. Married individuals with specific domestic, social, and economic challenges exhibit more attachments to shrines as a source of solace and support. Marriage's greater responsibilities and pressures drive male and female devotees to seek divine intervention for various aspects of their lives, from fertility and offspring to business and marital success. In addition, low literacy levels among shrine devotees have been found, suggesting a strong link between educational attainment and the nature of religious beliefs. The predominance of less-educated individuals among the devotees underscores how educational background influences the appeal and significance of shrine worship. Socio-economic status has a significant influence on shrine-related beliefs and practices. While most shrine visitors come from impoverished backgrounds, seeking solace and assistance, the presence of some middle and upper-class individuals indicates varied motivations across socio-economic strata. The lower and middle classes demonstrate stronger shrine-related beliefs, driven by a need for support and empowerment in the face of economic hardships. Conversely, upper-class visitors, though fewer, often visit shrines to enhance their social influence and maintain power structures. This complex interplay of financial status and religious practice highlights the multifaceted role of shrines in addressing the diverse needs of different social classes within the community.

Similarly, this study highlights significant regional variations in shrine visitation patterns, emphasizing the importance of considering local contexts when studying

religious practices in Pakistan. Contrary to previous research that predominantly identified shrine visitors as Shia Muslims, this study reveals a majority of Sunni Muslim devotees, with a notable presence of non-sectarian visitors. This regional disparity is likely due to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's predominantly Sunni demographic. The varying levels of commitment among devotees of the shrine of *Pir Baba* range from brief visits to extended stays. Most devotees spend less than two days at the shrine, primarily engaging in rituals, prayers, and seeking blessings. However, a significant portion demonstrates higher devotion by spending multiple days per week at the shrine, while a small yet highly dedicated group remains for an entire week or month.

In addition, the multifaceted engagement with various Sufi shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reflects the region's rich tapestry of devotional practices. While *Pir Baba's* shrine holds a unique and elevated position in the hearts of many devotees, the widespread visitation of other saints' shrines underscores a broader, inclusive spiritual landscape. This duality highlights the deep-seated reverence for individual saints alongside a collective embrace of diverse spiritual traditions, illustrating the complex and layered nature of Sufi devotion in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Similarly, devotees' beliefs reveal a resounding consensus on *Pir Baba's* special status while also highlighting variations in specific beliefs. These differences reflect the devotees' diverse individual interpretations and cultural backgrounds, underscoring the complexity of religious belief systems within shrine devotion. This intricate tapestry of reverence and belief emphasizes the rich and multifaceted nature of Sufi spiritual practices in the region, illustrating how personal and communal faith intertwines in the adoration of *Pir Baba*.

The diverse rituals and practices at the *Pir Baba* shrine offer a comprehensive understanding of devotees' behaviors. The devotees perform a wide array of rituals, including circling the shrine, seeking *Minnat* (supplication) from the shrine, performing *Barakah* prayer, participating in Urs celebrations, lighting candles, singing *Qawali*, tying knots, touching the tomb, consuming holy salt and water, receiving amulets, taking *Bayath* (oath), avoiding turning back to the tomb, covering the tomb with cloth, and participating in shrine maintenance activities like brooming.

These rituals serve as means for devotees to fulfil diverse social, psychological, and physical needs. Rituals such as participating in Urs celebrations, singing *Qawali*, and taking *Bayat* from a disciple foster a sense of community and belonging among devotees. These communal activities strengthen social bonds and affirm collective devotion to Pir Baba. Practices like seeking *Minnat*, tying knots, and consuming holy salt and water give devotees spiritual empowerment and reassurance. These rituals offer a channel for expressing desires, seeking protection, and finding solace in times of distress. Rituals such as circling the shrine, touching the tomb, and participating in shrine maintenance activities like *Jahro Dena* (brooming) physically engage devotees with the sacred space. These actions may be seen as acts of reverence, purification, and physical connection to the spiritual presence believed to reside within the shrine. In addition, many of these rituals are deeply rooted in symbolism and tradition, reflecting the cultural and religious heritage associated with *Pir Baba*. For example, lighting candles symbolizes enlightenment and spiritual guidance, while covering the tomb with cloth (*Chadar Charana*) may symbolize reverence and protection. Overall, these rituals contribute to the spiritual fulfilment of devotees, providing avenues for expressing devotion, seeking blessings, and connecting with the divine presence believed to reside within the shrine. Each ritual holds significance in addressing

different aspects of devotees' spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. This holistic view underscores the enduring significance of shrine rituals in the spiritual lives of *Pir Baba's* followers. As Emile Durkheim viewed that the external social facts compel individual on different types of behavior. Similarly, it has been concluded that there are some external norms and values in Pashtun society which control perspectives, perceptions, and experiences of the devotees about the shrine of *Pir Baba*. And these beliefs, perceptions and perspective compel devotees to visit the shrine of *Pir Baba* and perform different rituals within the premises of the shrine.

In addition, it has also been found that the devotees have different expectations from the shrine of *Pir Baba* including seeking health and healing from various physical and psychological ailments through their faith in the shrine of *Pir Baba*. These expectations center on consuming holy food and water and believing in the shrine's spiritual power to cure various diseases and conditions. This reflects a belief in these items' sanctity, healing properties, and spiritual blessings. The believers' express expectations for the cure of various physical diseases, including hepatitis, tuberculosis, malaria, typhoid, and paralysis, demonstrate a reliance on the shrine as a source of divine intervention and healing for various medical conditions. In addition, there are expectations for the healing of children with specific ailments, such as frequent crying (*Zyal*), continuous crying (*Jaby*), and physical weakness (*Sury*). This highlights parents' concerns for their children's well-being and belief in the shrine's ability to relieve these ailments. Believers also expect protection from witchcraft and magic through their faith in the shrine. This reflects a belief in the shrine's spiritual power to ward off malevolent forces and provide protection against supernatural harm. Additionally, there are expectations for treating mental health issues through the shrine's spiritual intervention. This underscores the recognition of mental health

concerns within the community and the belief in the shrine's capacity to address psychological well-being. A well-known anthropologist Clifford Geertz viewed that religion is a culture system. Similarly, Muslims shrines are not only religious institutions but they also guide the daily lives activities of the people and the people have different expectations from these shrines in terms of solutions of social, physical and psychological problems. . This comprehensive understanding underscores the multifaceted role that the shrine of *Pir Baba* plays in addressing its devotees' diverse social, economic, psychological, and physical needs. In addition, the shrine of *Pir Baba* is a central institution in the Buner region, playing a multifaceted role in enhancing social control, promoting positive social attitudes, and fostering community integration. It serves as a moral guide and a center for community cohesion, offering spiritual and social support. This intricate relationship between spirituality and social dynamics highlights the enduring importance of the shrine of *Pir Baba* in the lives of its devotees.

Similarly, the shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a pivotal role in promoting interfaith harmony, tolerance, and social cohesion in the Buner region. The findings consistently highlight the shrine as a beacon of peace, mutual coexistence, and acceptance of religious diversity. Devotees overwhelmingly view the shrine as fostering a culture of "live and let live," promoting interfaith gatherings, and encouraging tolerance among diverse sects and religions. This widespread recognition underscores the shrine's significance in nurturing positive social relations between Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus, facilitating participation in each other's social and religious activities. The findings align with broader research on Sufism, which emphasizes the role of Sufi shrines in promoting love, peace, and interfaith harmony.

In addition, the shrine of *Pir Baba* exemplifies the unifying power of Sufi traditions in Pakistan's diverse cultural landscape. The findings underscore the shrine's significant role in promoting tolerance, acceptance, and reverence for cultural diversity. Devotees from various ethnic backgrounds and regions, including Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Afghanistan, converge at the shrine, demonstrating a shared reverence that transcends cultural and linguistic barriers. This convergence fosters a sense of unity and mutual respect, aligning with broader research on the integrative role of Sufi shrines. The shrine of *Pir Baba* thus emerges as a powerful symbol of cultural integration and reverence, illustrating the transformative impact of Sufi traditions in fostering harmonious coexistence among Pakistan's culturally diverse communities.

Furthermore, the shrine of *Pir Baba* functions not only as a spiritual sanctuary but also as a significant hub of economic activity, reflecting the multifaceted relationship between devotees and the shrine. Both qualitative and quantitative data highlight the economic expectations of devotees, such as job promotions, business improvements, and financial stability, and their belief in the shrine's transformative power to fulfill these aspirations through practices like making vows (*Minnat*) and offerings (*Nazrana*). The findings demonstrate that a substantial majority of devotees engage in various economic activities, including purchasing goods, contributing to communal meals, and supporting local vendors and services, thereby bolstering the local economy. This economic engagement underscores the dual role of Sufi shrines in addressing both the spiritual and material needs of the community, illustrating their integral place in the cultural and economic fabric of the regions they serve.

In addition, the shrine of *Pir Baba* in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa holds profound significance for devotees, functioning as a center of spiritual connection, solace, and renewal. The findings reveal that the majority of visitors seek emotional and spiritual

fulfillment through various religious practices, including prayer, meditation, and communal service. These practices provide devotees with satisfaction, peace of mind, and hopefulness, reflecting the shrine's powerful role in alleviating worries and offering spiritual guidance. The shrine not only serves as a sanctuary for personal and spiritual growth but also fosters a sense of community and collective devotion. This comprehensive understanding underscores the multifaceted impact of the shrine on the psychological and emotional well-being of its visitors, aligning with broader research that highlights the diverse functions of shrines in enhancing the lives of devotees.

However, the transformation of the sacred status of the *Pir Baba* shrine is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by modernization, education, rationality, urbanization, tourism, and sectarian influences. The dichotomy between traditional spiritual reverence and a more secular, touristic approach underscores the evolving perception of the shrine. While many devotees continue to engage in spiritual practices, others lament the growing influx of tourists and the diminishing awareness of the shrine's historical and spiritual significance among younger generations. The influence of *Wahabi* and *Panj Piri* sects further complicates this narrative, contributing to a decline in traditional practices and reverence for shrines. This shift reflects broader societal trends where religious spaces are increasingly viewed through secular lenses. The study highlights the intricate interplay between tradition and modernity, with significant implications for religious beliefs and practices. While the data provides valuable insights, it may not capture the full complexity of individual motivations and experiences, suggesting a need for further exploration of sectarian influences and their impact on shrine visitation. Overall, the findings offer a

nuanced understanding of the changing sacred status of *Pir Baba* shrine amidst contemporary socio-cultural dynamics.

Overall, the shrine of *Pir Baba* plays a significant role in fulfilling various social, economic, and psychological functions in the lives of its devotees. Similarly, Emile Durkheim, in his theory of the elementary forms of religious life, argued that religion serves diverse functions within society. The shrine of *Pir Baba* is one of the Muslims shrine in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and it perform all above the mentioned functions in the lives of the devotees. However, Durkheim also suggested that religion undergoes different evolutionary stages over time. In a similar vein, the Muslim shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa serve multifaceted roles in the lives of devotees, fulfilling social, economic, and psychological needs. However, the sacred status of these shrines has been changing due to various external social dynamics. Today, in addition to their religious significance, these shrines have also become destinations for tourism.

Talcott Parsons, another influential sociologist, posited that religion, through shared beliefs, rituals, and experiences, plays a crucial role in promoting stability, equilibrium, and integration within society. This perspective aligns with the findings from research on Muslim shrines, which indicate that these sites contribute significantly to social control, social integration, and harmony among different faiths and cultures. By fostering interfaith and intercultural dialogue, these shrines help to create an environment of peace and mutual coexistence. As such, these sacred spaces not only serve religious functions but also help in promoting broader societal values, facilitating a sense of unity and collective well-being.

It has also been concluded that, on one hand, Muslim shrines and the associated beliefs contribute to stability, equilibrium, and integration within society. These religious sites help maintain social harmony and unity, providing individuals with a sense of purpose and collective identity. However, on the other hand, Karl Marx viewed religion as “opium” for the people, suggesting that it has the potential to divert attention away from the real issues and challenges that individuals face in their daily lives. According to Marx, religion offers temporary solace and comfort to devotees, but in doing so, it may distract them from actively addressing the underlying problems of social inequality, poverty, and injustice.

In the long run, Marx argued that religion could contribute to a form of social passivity, where people are more focused on seeking spiritual relief rather than engaging in the practical work needed to improve their material conditions. This could ultimately hinder progress and development in society, as individuals may become resigned to their current circumstances, relying on spiritual explanations rather than seeking tangible, systemic solutions to their problems. Thus, while religious practices, such as visiting shrines, may provide short-term psychological comfort, they could also perpetuate a sense of complacency, delaying the drive for social and economic change that is necessary for societal advancement.

7.2 Suggestions

The study emphasizes the importance of preserving and documenting various Muslim Sufi shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including *Pir Baba*, *Kaka Saib*, *Akhun Darweza Baba*, *Esar Baba*, and *Mian Qasim Baba*. It suggests documenting beliefs, emotional attachments, social expectations, and practices at these shrines, highlighting their social, psychological, and economic functions.

- These shrines represent tangible and intangible heritage, showcasing the art and beliefs of Muslims and Pashtuns. Preserving these aspects reflects the social and spiritual evolution of the Pashtun community over time. In addition to the shrine of *Pir Baba*, efforts should be made to preserve the other shrines along with their associated tangible and intangible heritage.
- Sufism and mysticism promote acceptance and tolerance among different religious and sectarian groups. Highlighting the significance of these aspects can revive spirituality and promote harmony.
- Muslim shrines foster inter-cultural harmony, uniting people of different cultures under shared beliefs and practices. This integration can contribute to national unity.
- The architectural beauty and historical significance of these shrines attract tourists, contributing to the local economy. Exploring and promoting other religious sites can further enhance tourism and economic growth in the region.

7.3 Future Research Directions

Future research directions stemming from this study offer a plethora of avenues for scholars across various disciplines, such as sociology, tourism, economics, archaeology, and anthropology, not only in Pakistan but also in other regions of South Asia. Researchers are urged to delve into the diverse expectations held by devotees visiting different shrines, shedding light on the nuances of religious practices and cultural traditions.

Moreover, there exists an untapped reservoir of folklore intertwined with shrines and Sufism, comprising folk stories, mythical beliefs, devotional songs (*Qawwali*), and proverbs. These rich narratives and oral traditions surrounding shrines possess

immense potential for deeper exploration. By delving into this folk literature, researchers can unveil the intricate web of beliefs, the socio-psychological functions of shrines, and the spiritual and intellectual evolution of individuals and communities associated with these sacred sites and Sufi orders.

Furthermore, future studies could focus on the role of shrines in promoting tourism and local economies. By examining the impact of shrine tourism on regional development, researchers can provide valuable insights into strategies for harnessing the cultural and spiritual heritage of these sites to drive economic growth and sustainable tourism practices. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions can offer a broader understanding of the cultural significance and socio-economic implications of shrine tourism.

In essence, future research endeavors in this domain have the potential to enrich our understanding of the intricate interplay between religion, culture, and society, shedding light on the multifaceted dynamics of shrine devotion and its broader implications for individuals and communities alike.

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APPENDICES

(Appendix-1)

A Socio-Cultural Study of Muslims Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Supervisor: Dr. Noor Sanauddin, Assistant Professor Department of Regional Study, University of Peshawar

Research Scholar: AZIZ UL HAKIM, PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the concept of shrines and *Sufisim* in Pashtun culture and to preserve the living culture heritage which is associated with these shrines which can further lead to inter-faith harmony and peace.

Why am I being ask to participate in this study?

Your participation or your response about the shrines is important for us because you are visitor of the shrine of *Pir BaBa*. So, you will have rich and valid information about the shrines that is why the researcher wants to ask questions from you about the shrines.

We would greatly appreciate your assistance in providing information about the shrines and about the different rituals and practices of the shrines.

If you agree, I can visit your home or other covenant place.

Yours.....and the phenomena you consider to have been the most important to yours feelings of satisfaction will be discussed. The interviewer will be take away the notes which will be taken away to be put together with the all of the information we collect. We are seeking 30 respondents to take part in the first part of the interviews. This information will help us to make a set of questioners to use to actually measure the opinions of other. In the second stage, the information will be collect through questioners from 223 respondents conveniently in the premises of the shrine.

All information collected will remain:

1. **ANONYMOUS:** Your name and address must be known to the researcher, so he can find you but it will never mentioned in his research report and your personal detail will be locked away, quite separate from the other materials.
2. **CONFIDENTIAL:** You will not be able to be identified by anything that is written in the text of the research paper and dissertation.

The same care will be taken with the names or characteristics of anyone you mention in the interview.

AZIZ UL HAKIM Phone: 03018819365 Email: azizuom464@gmail.com

SUPERVISOR: DR. NOOR SANAUDDIN Phone: 0345-2503778 Email:

CHAIRMAN DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR:

If you decide to participate, please fill in the consent form which is attached to this letter. Whatever your decision on this matter, thank you for devoting some time to reading this statement and considering its contents.

This information sheet is yours to keep.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

A Socio-Cultural Study of Muslim Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Demographic Information

1. Age:

- a) 20-30 b) 30-40 c) 40-50 d) Above 50

2. Gender

- a) Male b) Female

3. Education

- a) Illiterate b) Metric c) Intermediate d) Bachelor e) Higher Study

4. Economic Status

- a) Low b) Middle c) Higher

5. Religion

- a) Islam b) Hindu c) Sikh d) Buddah e) Others

6. Religious Sect

- a) Shia b) Sunni c) Wahabi e) Deobandi

7. Sufi Order

- a) Naqashbandia b) Saharwardia c) Chestia d) Qadria

8. Where do you belong in Pakistan?

9. Since how long have you been visiting this shrine?

10. What is the primary purpose of your visit to the shire?

11. Are you alone here or do you have a company of your family / friends with you?

12. Do you visit any other shrine in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?

13. Would you please tell me something about Pir Baba? What, in your opinion, is so special about *Pir Baba* shrine?

14. Would you please tell me about the specific desire (Murad) or the purpose of your visit to *Pir Baba*?

15. What you expect from *Pir Baba* in terms of health?

16. What do you expect in terms of fulfillment of economic needs?

17. Do you think this shrine enhances fertility of men and women?

18. Do you think this shrine helps in resolving family disputes?

19. How does this shrine affect marital relationship?

20. How does this shrine effect social integration of devotes and local community?

21. What is the role of this shrine in social control of the local community?

22. What are the influences of this shrine on the mind of the people?

23. What is the role of this shrine in mental satisfaction of the people?

24. How does this shrine influence the emotions of the people?

25. What do you feel during presence in the shrine?

26. What do you feel about yourself spiritually after attending the shrine?

27. How much this shrine is religiously meaningful for you?

28. How do socio-culture conditions affect the practices in the shrines?

29. How do dynamic social and cultural conditions affect the visitation of the shrine?

30. What is your attitude toward the shrine?

31. What is the purpose of your visiting this shrine?

Appendix-2

A Socio-Cultural Study of Muslims Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Supervisor: Dr. Noor Sanauddin, Assistant Professor Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar

Research Scholar: AZIZ UL HAKIM, PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, University of Peshawar.

Introduction

The aim of this research study is to investigate social and demographic characteristics of the visitors of the shrines. Further, to analyze social, economic and psychological functions of the shrine of *Pir Baba* and its changing sacred status.

Why am I being ask you to participate in this study?

Your participation or your response about the shrines is important for us because you are visitor of the shrine of *Pir BaBa*. So, you will have rich and valid information about the shrines that is why the researcher wants to ask questions from you about the shrine of *Pir BaBa*.

We would greatly appreciate your assistance in providing information about the shrines and about the different rituals and practices of the shrines.

If you agree, please fill this questioner

All information collected will remain:

ANONYMOUS: Your name and address must be known to the researcher, so he can find you but it will never mentioned in his research report and your personal detail will be locked away, quite separate from the other materials.

CONFIDENTIAL: You will not be able to be identified by anything that is written in the text of the research paper and dissertation.

The same care will be taken with the names or characteristics of anyone you mention in the interview.

AZIZ UL HAKIM Phone: 03018819365 Email: azizuom464@gmail.com

SUPERVISOR: DR.NOOR SANAUDDIN Phone: 0345-2503778

If you decide to participate, please fill in the consent form which is attached to this letter.

Whatever your decision on this matter, thank you for devoting some time to reading this statement and considering its contents.

This information sheet is yours to keep.

Consent Form

Thank you for your cooperation

To be completed

I certify that I have read and discussed the above consent procedure and I willingly continue to answer this questioner.

Signature of the interviewer

Date

Signature of the Participant

Date

A Socio-Cultural Study of Muslim Shrines in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Date: _____ **Respondent No.** _____

A: Socio-demographic Profile of the Respondents

1. **Name** (Optional) _____
2. **Age:**
a) 20-30 (b) 30-40 (c) 40-50 (d) Above 50
3. **Gender:**
a) Male b) Female
3. **Marital Status:**
(a) Married (b) Unmarried (c) Widowed (d) Separated
4. **Education:**
a) Illiterate b) Metric c) Intermediate d) Bachelor e) Higher Studies
5. **Economic Status:**
a) Lower b) Middle c) Upper
6. **Religion:**
a) Islam b) Hinduism c) Sikhism d) Buddahism e) Christianity f) Others
7. **Religious Sect:**
a) Shia b) Sunni c) NA
8. **If you are sunny, what is your sub-sect?**
a) Wahabi b) Deobandi c) Panj Peri d) Other _____
9. **Sufi Order (if any):**
a) Naqashbandia b) Saharwardia c) Chestia d) Qadria e) Nill
10. **Locality:**
a) Rural b) Urban
11. **Where do you come from?**
a) KP b) Punjab c) Sindh d) Baluchistan e) Afghanistan
12. **Since how long are you spiritually attached with this shrine?**
a) 1-5 years b) 6-10 years c) 11-15 years d) 16-20 years e) More than 20 years
13. **How would you describe yourself in terms of stay here?**
a) Visiting devotee b) Resident Devotee
14. **If you are resident devotee, how long do you stay on average per week?**
a) Less than 2 days b) 2-3 days c) whole week
15. **Your relations with pir baba?**
a) Decedent b) Disciple c) Servant/Malang/Manjawar
16. **If you are visiting devotee, how much time do you usually spent here in the shrine per visit?**
a) 1-5 hours b) 6-10 hours c) One day d) One week
17. **Are you visiting the shrine alone?**
a) Yes b) No
18. **If no, who else do you have with you in this visit?**
a) Family Members b) Friends c) Relatives d) Any other _____
19. **Have you ever visit any other shrine in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa?**
a) Yes b) No
20. **If you have visited other shrines in KP, please select all of those options which are applicable to you**

S.NO	Name of the shrines in KP	Visited	Not Visited
1	Dewana Baba		
2	Malanag Baba		
3	Akhun Derweza Baba		
4	Mian Qasim Baba		
5	Hesar Baba		
6	Ghazi Baba		
7	KaKa Saib		

8	Manzary Baba		
9	Shalgazy Baba		
10	Mady Baba		
11	Any Other		
12			
13			

B. Perceptions of Devotees about Pir Baba

21. Please go through the following statement about *Pir Baba* and selected the appropriate option against each of the statements.

S.No	Statement	Yes	No	Not Sure
1	<i>Pir Baba</i> was a great saint of Allah			
2	<i>Pir Baba</i> was a preacher of Islam			
3	As a saint he was different in rank from common people			
4	He was a disciple of Salar-i-Room			
5	He migrated from Afghanistan			
6	He practiced meditation			
7	He possessed various miraculous powers (Kirramat)?			
8	His father was a soldier of Mughal King Humayun			
7	He died in 1583			

C. Rituals and Practices performed by devotees at the Shrine

22. Please select the appropriate option against the various practices and rituals performed by you in the shrine of Pir Baba

S.NO	Statement	Yes	No
1	Circling around the shrine of Pir Baba		
2	Minnat from the shrine of Pir Baba		
3	Performing Barakaha prayer within the premises of the shrine		
4	Participation in celebration of Urs of Pir Baba		
5	Lightening candles on the shrine		
6	Singing Qawali		
7	Knotting the thread or cloth		
8	Tie children on the Tomb		
9	Touching tomb with hands and then rubbing hand on the body		
10	Eating holy salt from the shrine		
11	Drinking holy water for Barkah		
12	Taking Amulet from the servant/malang of the shrine		
13	Taking Bayat (Oath) from disciple (Mureed) of Pir Baba		
14	Not turning back to the tomb		
15	Chadar Charana (Covering tomb with cloth)		
16	Jahro Dena (Brooming the shrine)		
17	Others		

D. Beliefs of Visitors / Devotees regarding Pir Baba

23. Please select the appropriate option against each of the following statements.

S.No	Statement	Yes	No
1	<i>Pir Baba</i> is a friend of Allah		
2	<i>Pir Baba</i> is alive in your perception		
3	God listen more to the Pir Bab than common people		
4	The blessings from <i>Pir Baba</i> can change your fate		
5	<i>Pir Baba</i> cannot talk but can listen to the visitors		
6	<i>Pir Baba</i> is a mediator between God and us		
7	The decedents and family members of the saint are also holly		

	and closer to God		
8	Pir Bab can perform miracles		

E. Purpose of Visits of the Devotees

24. What is /are you purpose of visit? Please select all those options for which you have ever visited the shrine.

S.NO	Statement	Yes	No
1	Hoping to get good health for yourself / your closer one		
2	Hoping to solve familial disputes		
3	Expecting wealth and economic prosperity		
4	Hoping to get employment		
5	Expecting professional growth		
6	Hoping for business growth		
7	Hoping to get pregnancy / fertility		
8	Hoping to get a male child		
9	Praying for survival of your children		
10	Hoping to get married		
11	Hoping to get marriage to a partner of your choice		
12	Expecting to avoid domestic violence		
13	Expecting dissolution of family conflict		

F. Visitors' Expectations in terms of Health and Healing

Do you visit *Pir Baba* for the purpose of seeking good health?

- a) Yes b) No

25. If yes, please mark those illness / health issues for which you have ever visited *Pir Baba*

S.No	Statement	Yes	No
1	Seeking Cure of different diseases by eating holy food such as salt, and drinking holy water		
2	Seeking cure from Hepatitis		
3	Expect cure from Tuberculosis		
4	Expect cure of Typhoid		
5	Expect cure of Paralysis		
6	Healing of children with frequent crying (<i>Zyal</i>)		
7	Healing of continuously crying children (<i>Jaby</i>)?		
8	Seeking treatment for physically weak children (<i>Sury</i>)		
9	Healing from witchcraft and magic		
10	Treatment of Mental Health		
11	Warding off of evil eyes		
11	Any other		

G. Role of *Pir Baba* is Social Control, Social Cohesion, Inter-Faith Harmony and Inter-culture harmony

26. Do you agree that the shrine of *Pir Baba* contribute to society in terms of social control and social integration among the people?

- a) Yes b) No

27. If yes, please select appropriate option against each of the following statements.

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	People feel fear from <i>Kirammat</i> of <i>Pir Baba</i> which do not let them to do something wrong		
2	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> promotes positive and pro-social attitude among the people of local community		
3	Bring conformity among the people		
4	<i>Pir Baba</i> safeguards the society from curse and ill-intended movements such as the Taliban		

5	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration among descendants due to common lineage		
6	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration among disciples due to share beliefs		
7	<i>Pir Baba</i> promotes integration and love among the devotees		
8	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> provides space for rest and solace to way farers and patients?		
9	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> provides free food to poor people of the area		
10	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> serves as a space of leisure for local communities		

28. Do you agree that the shrine of *Pir Baba* promote inter-faith harmony among the people of different religions and sects?

a) Yes b) No

29. If yes, please select appropriate option against each of the following statements.

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Develop mutual understanding among people of different religions		
2	Promote the notion of live and let to live		
3	Promotes mutual co-existence among the people of different religions		
4	Promote peace and acceptance for different beliefs		
5	The shrine of <i>Pir Baba</i> have acceptance for <i>Gurdwara</i> in near vicinity		
6	Shrine have also acceptance for people of every sect in Islam		
7	Sikh and Hindus live peacefully with Muslims of <i>Buner</i> since long time		

30. Do you agree that Shrine of *Pir Baba* promote inter-cultural harmony?

a) Yes b) No

31. If yes, please select appropriate option against each of the following statements.

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	People of different cultures share same religious values		
2	Promote tolerance for other ethnicities		
3	Promote tolerance for other languages		
4	Accept other cultures		
5	Promote reverence for other cultures		
6	Accept diversity of cultures		
7	Appreciate the diversity of visitors		

H. Economic Functions of the Shrine of *Pir Baba*

31. Do you perform some economic activities during your stay at shrine?

a) Yes b) No

32. What are the various economic activities taking place in the shrine? Please select all those activities which you have performed during your visit of the shrine.

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Presenting <i>Nazrana</i> to shrine/ <i>malang</i>		
2	Presenting food, or cash for the <i>Lanagr</i>		
3	Purchasing goods from the vendors		
4	Purchasing Bangles, <i>Ranja</i> , perfumes, beads etc.		
5	Purchasing handicrafts		
6	Purchasing ornamental goods and toys for Kids		
7	Pay for Parking and staying at hotel		
8	Pay for eating meal in the hotel		
	Payment for local taxi and transportation		
	Others		

I. Psychological Functions of the Shrine

33. What are the psychological purposes of visiting the shrine? Please select those options which are applicable to you

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	For spiritual purpose		
2	To get relax from boredom		
3	For mental and physical catharsis		
4	For self-realization (<i>Tazkia-Nafs</i>)		
5	For expression of sorrows		
6	For peace of mind		
7	For purification of body and soul from sins		

34. What are your usual practices during stay at shrine for psychological satisfaction? Please mark options which are applicable to you

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Practice <i>Minnat</i>		
2	Indulges yourself in spiritual activities		
3	Practice meditation		
4	Spending free time in the premises of the shrine		
5	Sitting aside in the shrine and praying		
6	Working in the lunger		
7	Brooming and cleaning the shrine		

35. How do you feel in the shrine? Please select appropriate option against each of the following statements.

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	Feel satisfaction and peace of mind inside the shrine		
2	Feel serenity in the premises of the shrine		
3	Feel hopeful and satisfied after attending the shrine		
4	Feel free from every sort of worries		
5	Feeling free from sins		
6	Spiritually feel purified		

J. Changing status and Functions of Pir Baba Shrine

36. Do you agree that some people visit the shrine for purposes other than religious in nature?

a) Yes b) No

37. If yes, please select appropriate option against all the following statements.

S.No	Statements	Yes	No
1	People visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for spiritual purpose		
2	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for tourism purpose		
3	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> for spending leisure and free time		
4	Some people visit <i>Pir Baba</i> to see a historical place		
5	Some people visit the shrine to enjoy the Mela / Urse		
6	People visit <i>Pir Baba</i> in large number in <i>Eid</i> as compared to <i>Urs</i>		
7	Most of the new generation visit the shrine only for tourism purpose		
8	Most of the new generation don't know the historical and spiritual status of the <i>Pir Baba</i> shrine		
9	Mostly tourists visit <i>Pir Baba</i> in large number in spring and summer season		

THANKS

انٹرویو گائیڈ

محمانوم عزیز اکھیم دے دہ پیچور یونیورسٹی، سوشیالوجی ڈیپارٹمنٹ پی ایچ ڈی سکالریم۔ محمادہ تحقیقی مقالے عنوان دے ”پہ خیر پختونخوا کی دہ زیارتونو یامزرونون معاشرتی اوکلتوری مطالعہ کول دی“

محمادہ تحقیق بنیادی مقاصد پہ خیر پختونخوا کی زیارتونون لہ دہ تلوکون خلقتون معاشرتی خصوصیات پہ کاغزی شکل کی محفوظ کول دی، اودہ دی سرہ سرہ چی مونگ دامعلوم کړوچی دہ خلق دہ زیارتونون نہ سہ امیدونہ لری۔ اودنہ شان دہ دی زیارتونون دہ خلقتون پہ روزمرہ ژوند کی معاشرتی، نفسیاتی او معاشی طور سہ کردار لری۔

دہ دی نہ علاوہ چی مونگ دامعلوم کوچی دہ زیارتونون پہ مقدس حیثیت کی پہ جدید دور کی سومرہ بدلون راغلے دے۔ پہ دی حوالہ چی تاسو مونگ لہ کم معلومات را کوی هغه به په راز کی ساتل کیگی۔ اودنہ شان هغه به دہ تحقیقی مقاصدون نہ علاوہ دہ نوروں هیس قسم مقاصدون دہ پاره نہ شی استعمالے دے۔ که تاسو مونگ سره په انټرویو کولوراضی یی نو تاسو زائے او وخت وٹاکی چی مونگ خپل حاضری وکولو۔ شکریه۔

شمار یاتی معلومات:

۱۔ عمر: (۱) ۲۰-۳۰ کال (ب) ۳۰-۴۰ کال (ت) ۴۰-۵۰ کال (ج) ۵۰ کال نہ سوا

۲۔ جنس: (۱) نر (ب) ماده

۳۔ تعلیم: (۱) بے تعلیم (ب) لسم (ت) دولسم (ث) سوار لسم (ج) اعلیٰ تعلیم

۴۔ معاشی حالات: (۱) کمزوری (ب) درمیانہ (ت) ڈیرخه

۵۔ مذهب: (۱) اسلام (ب) ہندومت (ت) عیسائیت (ث) دہ دی نہ علاوہ

۶۔ مذہبی فرقہ: (۱) شیعہ (ب) سنی (ت) وہابی (ث) دیوبندی (ج) دہ دی نہ علاوہ

۷۔ تاسو پاکستان کی دہ کومی سیمی سرہ تعلق ساتی؟

۸۔ تاسو دہ سومرہ وخت نہ زیارت تہ تلل کوی؟

۹۔ تاسو دہ زیارت دہ تلو بنیادی مقصد ه وی؟

۱۰۔ تاسو زیارت لہ یوازی زی که دہ کور ملگری یادوستان در سره وی؟

۱۱۔ تاسو پہ خیر پختونخوا کی بل کوم زیارت لره چر تہ تلے یی؟

۱۲۔ تاسو دہ تصوف دہ کومی سلسلے سرہ تعلق لری؟

۱۳۔ که تاسو مہربانی اوکی او مونگ تہ داوائی چی تاسو پیر بابا تہ دہ کوم مراد پوره کید و دہ پاره راغلی ئی؟

- ۱۴- ده صحت په حواله سره ده پير بابا داسی سره کرامات دی؟
- ۱۵- پير بابا نه دولت په لحاظ سره څه توقع لری؟
- ۱۶- تاسو سه سوچ لری چی پير بابا ته ده اولاد ده مراد ده پاره تلل سنگه دی؟
- ۱۷- تاسو په نظر کی داسی سره خاندانی ناچاقي واله تنازعات شته چی هغه پير بابا له ده تلو په وجه حل شوی وی؟
- ۱۸- تاسو په نظر کی داسی سره ده واده رشتی وال سره واقعه شته چی هغه ده پير بابا ده زیارت په وجه شوی؟
- ۱۹- ده پير بابا پير وکاری ده مریدانوں اوده زائے خلقو په درمیان کی ده اتفاق او یووالی لحاظ سره سومره کردار لری؟
- ۲۰- ده پير بابا زیارت ده خلقو په زهنونوں باندی سومره اثر لری؟
- ۲۱- تاسو ده دی خبری سره سومره اتفاق لری چی ده پير بابا زیارت خلقو له زهني اطمینان ورکوی؟
- ۲۲- ده پير بابا زیارت ده خلقو په جزباتو باندی یعنی خفگان، خوشحالی، اطمینان، بے اطمینانی باندی سومره اثر لری؟
- ۲۳- تاسو په زیارت کی ده موجودگی په وخت سره محسوسوی؟
- ۲۴- ده پير بابا زیارت کولونه پس روحانی طور باندی سنگ محسوسوی؟
- ۲۵- مذہبی طور باندی پير بابا تاسو ده پاره سومره اهمیت لری؟
- ۲۶- په معاشره او کلتور کی چی کومه تبدیلی رازی هغه په پير بابا کی چی کوم رسومات لگی په هغه سومره اثر لری؟
- ۲۷- معاشرتی او ثقافتی تبدیلی پير بابا له ده تلو تلو په تعداد سومره اثر لری؟
- ۲۸- تاسو ذاتی سره نظر لری زیارت له ده تلو په لحاظ سره؟