

Development and Validation of the Piri-Muridi Scale

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Present study was carried out to develop and validate a multidimensional instrument to assess attitudes of people towards the institution of Piri-Muridi. Literature was reviewed and focus discussions were conducted to generate items for the scale. The item-pool consisted of 68 items that were further grouped into 7 categories for pretesting of the scale. Scale was administered on murids ($n = 106$) and non murids ($n = 130$) from five regions of Potohar, Pakistan. Exploratory Factor analysis yielded two major factors i.e., belief on piri-muridi and perception of changes in piri-muridi. Psychometric properties of the scale were established.

Keywords: Sufism, piri-muridi, factor analysis, belief system

The *piri-muridi* relationship (a relationship between spiritual healer and his disciple in learning Sufism) is central to *Sufism* (mysticism in Islam) or religious life in Islam (Pinto, 1995). However very little research has focused on this relationship, which is of interest in several ways. The idea of spiritual healing is very close and has its foundations in the sacred Sufi doctrine; especially in the regions of Central and South Asia (Alario, 2003; Aswad, 2006; Claude, 2002; Pinto, 1995). According to Rizvi (1992), *Sufism* (mysticism) began in the eighth century. It does not have a single founder, and it is not certain when the term *Sufi* was used or the first time. Researches (Anjum, 2006; Chittick, 1983; Ewing, 1983; Nanda & Talib, 1989; Rehman, 1979) indicate that the origin of Sufism cannot be traced back to a single, definite cause.

The basis of Sufi tradition lies in the synthesis of Persian civilization with Islam; incorporating ideas and practices of other

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mystic systems such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Gnosticism. According to *Kashf-Al-Mahjub* (name of a book; the oldest Persian treatise on Sufism; translated by Nicholson in 1990), in 623 AD, forty-five men of Mecca joined other devotees from Medina and took an oath of fidelity to the doctrines of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUP). They formed a fraternity and sought to bring prosperity and patience in their lives by practicing the religious teachings the Prophet (PBUP). These men took the name of “Sufi”. They were given the name because they used *Suf* (a wooly lair cloth and abandoned use of silk and other expensive materials). They were referred to as *sufis* by the locals. In a different tradition, it is believed that the word Sufi is derived from the word *Suf* that means wise and pious (Akbar, 1987). This school of thought says that the influence of the word *Sufa* finally originated the name of Sufi to be referred towards the religiously pure personalities of early Islam. *Pir*, *murshid*, *wali*, and *sheikh* are the alternative terms for Sufis. *Wali* (an Arabic word that means near to God) and *pir* (a Persian word simply meaning an older man), are two very popular terms often used as an alternative for Sufi, especially in Southeast Asia (Khan, 1989; Gilmartin, 1979).

In Pakistan, *pir* is the general term for spiritual guide, Holy man, and wielder of spiritual power and blessing. Its real meaning in Persian is ‘old man’ or ‘respected elder’ (Ewing, 1983). The *pir* is a guide, helper, and teacher who helps one get closer to God. The *pir* can guide the *murid* (disciple) because he is believed to be “spiritually purer and perfect by the standards of the Quran, and his role as a guide is effective because he has knowledge” (Pinto, 1995, p. 128). According to Esposito (2003), *murid* refers to a person who is committed to a teacher in learning Sufism. Ajmal (1984) described *piri-muridi* as a religious doctrine. It is the method that gives this doctrine an almost existential character so that the *murid* can begin to consciously live out his dependence on God. Further this awareness of dependence, expressed in acts of self-surrender opens the *murid* to receive the self-manifestation of God, and consequently leads to union with God. According to Pinto (1995), within the *piri-muridi* relationship, the *murid* is utterly dependent on the *pir* for any spiritual attainment. The purpose of *piri-muridi* seems to be the annihilation of *murid* in the *pir* in order to finally attain union with God. Important rituals and traditions of *piri-muridi* include:

1. *Bait* According to Hassan (1987), in *piri-muridi* paradigm, all *murids* are expected to participate in a formal initiation ceremony during which the *murid* makes a solemn oath,

known as '*bait*' meaning swearing spiritual obedience and allegiance to the Pir.

2. *Sajjada-nashin* Ewing (1983) defines *sajjada-nashin* as the descendant of pir or descendant of a disciple of a pir, who tends to the shrine which is erected over the pir's tomb or grave, known as a *dargah* or *khanqah*.
3. *Urs* According to Aziz (2001), the institution of the urs is connected with the general Muslim practice of observing the death anniversary (*barsi*) of all close relatives. Since the *barsi* of the deceased holy man (pir) is a special occasion, it is not observed with befitting solemnity but celebrated with due and prescribed pomp and show. The event and activities associated with it are justified by the fiction that on this day the holy man did not die an ordinary death but that his soul merged with the eternal i.e. *fana* (death or ceasure or end) leading to *baqa* (permanence, eternity, everlasting state of bliss).
4. *Khanqah* The earlier centers of Sufism were places where the master or his successors mediated, engaged in *zikr*, (recitation of Holy verses) talked about religious problems, and gave lessons in the thought and practices of Sufism (Pinto, 1995).

Sufism embodies certain beliefs and practices held and enacted by distinct Sufi orders, a mystical path of purification attained through contemplation, experiential inner knowledge of God, and organized rituals and practices manifested in the relationship between the Pir and the disciple. Although it is institutionally practiced, Sufism embodies intellectual, emotional, and psychological dimensions of collective representations refracted in individual beliefs and worldviews, which are spiritually and politically oriented expressed in hereditary, social, and trans-social or spiritual terms (Aswad, 2006). Present study focuses upon developing a valid and reliable instrument to measure people's attitudes towards this social, heredity, and spiritual institution. Alston (1991) sets out in comprehensive detail the results of his fifty years of thought on the topic of religious epistemology. He points out the factors that defend the intangible power of the 'mystical perceptual practice'. In particular, he argues for the rationality of engaging in the religious beliefs. In his view, those who believe in the

piri-muridi traditions are justified in forming beliefs as they do because their practice is socially established, has a functioning override system, and a significant degree of self-support; and because there is lack of sufficient reasons to take the practice to be unreliable. Each tribe has, over the millennia, formalized its own particular religion based on these ancient terminologies, traditions, fears, superstitions, and local eccentricities (Lubna, 1987; Shcimmel, 1975; Weber, 1946).

This study attempts to demonstrate the complex interplay between expressions of Sufi belief in the local setting commonly known as piri-muridi and would attempt to explore the belief on this institution from the inner perspective of murids through development and validation of an instrument. The reason for reverence of saints is to satisfy the instinct to look up to purification with in the human sphere, to satisfy this religious belief, when people lack of perfection, and spiritual strength in themselves. People try to identify with a person who possesses spiritual purity and religious knowledge that's why the concept of *karamat* (miracle) is closely associated with these pirs and saints. People consider the possessors of spirituality called pirs, not only exercising the highest virtue and sanctity in religious and spiritual sphere but have also the power to do things which appear impossible under the normal thought pattern, things which are called miraculous and or which break the habitual course. People use to attribute meaning to things that go on well or bad in their lives. Thus, people develop strong belief in karamat of the saints. Murids having stronger belief in piri-muridi try to contemplate their religious perfection and purification by showing their affiliations with pirs, while non murids try to do so at their own expense. This affiliation with Pir is secured through the bait (Ajmal, 1986; Ewing, 1983; Pemberton, 2006; Pinto, 1995; Rehman, 1979).

Reciprocity is the mode of communication in the piri-muridi relationship (Lapidus, 2001). This communication is rooted in belief system and expressed in the form of attitudes that leads us to the phenomena of healer (pir) and patient (murid). Here we see that healers are pirs, *moulvies*, or *aamil*; medium is shrines, *taveez* (amulet); Murids are possessed by supernatural being like magic, witchcraft, or evil eye; and spiritual blessings and powers of these pirs provide a cure to all the problems faced by murids (Zafar, 1981).

Changing times have brought forth increased confusion about religions and has raised numerous moral issues. Lack of knowledge and confusion makes the ordinary person vulnerable. One of the principle effects of this state of affairs has been an unprecedented outpouring cult for controlling and maneuvering mankind on the

subject of religion in general and mysticism in particular (Ajmal, 1986; Aziz, 2001; Ewing, 1983; Hassan, 1987). The present research will further look into the dark side presented by the corrupted Sufi doctrines and practices (Robotka, 2006; Zabeth, 2006). Some of these negative changes in pirs are pantheism, weakening of the hold of Shariah (path of Holy Prophet PBUH), greater rigidity of the orthodoxy in response, alliance with the state and the worldly powers, exploitation of ordinary men in the sacred name of God, inculcation of ritual enthronement of superstition, exaggerated claims of intercession, and mediation by sajjada-nashin. Piri-muridi is deeply rooted in society and politics to gain seats of power (Aziz, 2001; Ewing, 1983; Khan, 1989; Rozehnal, 2006). Pemberton (2006) postulates that such developments and changes sparked condemnation of the popular veneration of pirs and the considerable political, military, and economic influence that many of these spiritual masters were able to wield. This research will endeavor to identify the inter- and intra-socioeconomic and political factors that help to maintain a pir-murid relationship as an institution in our society with the help of generating focus group discussions and developing an attitudinal instrument measuring all these above mentioned dimensions.

After reviewing the literature related to studies on Sufism and more generally spoke of as piri-muridi in Southeast Asia, its original conception and changing aspects (Aziz, 2001; Ewing, 1983; Rozehnal, 2006; Sayeed, 1968; Smith, 1988; Stoddart, 1981; Subhan, 1970; Trimmingham, 1998) two notable negative trends are revealed. First, we have observed a virtual absence of shared objective measures or methodologies across investigations; many studies are based on ethnographic field work major relying on interview technique and historical evidence regarding the issue. Consequently, the literature presents a highly confusing picture of the status of quantitative instrumentation and the actual state of scientific knowledge involving spirituality and spiritual healing.

Second, a vast majority of research and efforts are being put forth by investigators from anthropology and religious studies (Ewing 1983; Hassan, 1987; Khan, 1989; Pemberton, 2006; Zafar, 1981). By extension, it appears that psychologists are contributing considerably less to the growing scientific interest and evolving research in this area and can attempt to explore the basic thought pattern, perception, ideology, and attitude of people towards piri-muridi in Pakistan (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The present study aims to incorporate multidimensional aspects of constructs related to the institution of piri-muridi. Most concepts and phenomena of interest to the institution of piri-muridi research are complex and unlikely to be

adequately represented by a simple single instrument. However this study is a pioneering step to explore the phenomena objectively and precisely and aims to capture some aspects of this institution. The validation of the instrument will be done with the help of contrasted groups including murids and non murids from five regions of Potohar division, Pakistan.

Method

The present study aims to develop an indigenous scale to measure people's attitudes and opinions towards piri-muridi. For this purpose, study was conducted in three phases (1) generation of item pool, (2) empirical evaluation of scale through factor analysis, and (3) validation of the scale based upon contrasted groups. The study hypothesized that murids will have more favorable attitude towards piri-muridi as compared to non murids.

Generation of Item Pool

The item pool for the scale was generated with the help of literature review and focus group discussions.

Literature review For the scale development, the existing literature on the said topic was extensively explored through books, research articles, internet, and from various sources. The available literature helped to identify the components of attitude and opinion towards *piri-muridi* scale.

Focus group discussions To generate the items, a series of focus group discussions were conducted. Focus groups were conducted as it provided a platform for a carefully planned discussion that was designed to obtain perceptions, feelings, subjective phenomenology, opinion, and ideas of people about the topic under consideration. It further provides a fast, easy, practical and first hand way of getting in touch with the target population. Focus groups were conducted while keeping following steps in to consideration.

Step 1: Focus group guideline

A focus group guideline was formulated with the help of existing literature review and by taking views of the subject experts on the topic, to inquire opinion of people on topic under consideration. The

guideline contained brief statements and questions regarding content and objectives of the study. In the construction of the topic guideline questions areas and issues were outlined and under each of the key issue special probing questions were also included. The questions addressed the issues including how people define the spiritual guide; what linguistic term is most frequently used for these spiritual guides in Pakistani society; what are the social, economic, domestic and spiritual factors or problems that compel people to seek services of these pirs. The focus group guideline also addressed the spiritual modes of treatment adopted and used by these pirs i.e., *taveez*, *shakat* (type of amulet), *dum* (recitation of holy verses) etc. It also addressed important contemporary changes in the sacred institution of piri-muridi, including the factors that contributed most in bringing about the negative changes in this institution; how this institution has changed as history separates us from the original teachings and practices of Sufis. Most importantly focus group guideline included questions related to the consequences of these negative changes in piri-muridi. It also explored rituals related to piri-muridi e.g., *urs*, *bait*, *langer* (charity food), etc. The sequence of topics and questions in the topic guideline was from the general to specific.

Step 2: Composition of focus groups

A total of 7 focus groups were conducted for this purpose, the total number of participants were 51 in these focus groups. Each session of the focus groups took an average of an hour for its completion. Important points were noted by the researcher and furthermore with the consent of the participants all focus groups were audio recorded. At the end participants were thanked and acknowledged for their cooperation and participation. A total item pool of 68 items was generated with the help of focus group discussions.

Step 3: Categorization of items

The item pool was categorized into seven categories with the help of committee approach comprised of three experts (a psychologist, a religious expert, and an anthropologist) who had an insight into the issues pertaining to the subject. The categories were emerged with the help of thematic analysis technique. With the help of committee approach items were stated carefully in the form of attitudinal statements according to seven identified categories.

1. Belief system of people (13 items)
2. Functions of piri-muridi (6 items)
3. Factors compelling people to seek service of pirs (13 items)

4. The changes in piri-muridi (13 items)
5. Consequences of negative aspects of piri-muridi (11 items)
6. Mode of spiritual cures by pir (5 items)
7. Gender issues and piri-muridi (6 items)

Scoring of items The initial form of the scale included 68 items; 34 items were scored in reverse. There were five response categories including *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree*, and *strongly agree* scored as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively. The negatively stated attitudinal statements were reversed scored. The higher mean score on total initial form of Piri-Muridi Scale (PMS) indicates more positive attitude and low score indicates relatively less positive attitude towards piri-muridi.

Sample

The sample consisted of 239 participants from the localities of Golrah Sharif, Kaliaam Sharif, Mohra Sharif, Khanwar Sharif, Eid Gah Sharif, and Faizabad Sharif of Potohar region, Pakistan. Sample was chosen with the help of purposive convenient sampling technique. There were 154 men and 85 women. The mean age of respondent was 36 years ($SD = 13.5$). Mean education of respondents was 12 years ($SD = 8.5$). Twenty nine respondents had education level up to 8 years (12%), 96 respondents had up to 12 years of education (40%). Most of the respondents ($n = 64$) were having education of above 14 years (26 %), while 48 respondents were having education up to 14 years (20%). Mean income of respondents was 10,000 Rs. 172 respondents were married and 65 were single. Data was collected from localities where sajjada-nashin resides. It was assumed that people in these areas will be more indulgent and inclined towards piri-muridi. Moreover, the institution of piri-muridi is a part of their regular observation and practice.

The study aimed to compare attitudes and opinions of murids and non murids towards piri-muridi for further establishing the psychometric properties of the scale. Murid is defined as a person who has taken an oath of commitment called bait to sajjada Nishin of his respective locality. For this purpose the original sample was split into murids and non murids from five regions of Potohar (murids = 109; non murids = 130) including Mohra Sharif (murid = 23, non murid = 30); Golrah Sharif (murid = 18, non murid = 24); Eid Gah Sharif (murid = 20, non murid = 32); Khanwal Sharif (murid =

22, non murid = 27); and Kalam Sharif (murid = 33, non murid = 10).

Procedure

The respondents were approached at their homes, at Khanqahs of their pirs, or at their work places; data was collected individually. Written instructions were given on each questionnaire and respondents were briefed. Respondent's consent for participation in present study was taken with the help of consent form. Respondents were assured that information obtained from them will only be used for research purpose only.

Results

Factor Analysis (Construct validity) of Piri-Muridi Scale

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to determine the factorial structure of the scale and to test the dimensionality of initial form of Piri-Muridi Scale (PMS). Bartlett test of Sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was computed for the verification of data fit for factor analysis. According to these results, KMO value was .85, for piri-muridi Scale and Bartlett test of Sphericity value was 9035.54. As these values were significant ($p \leq .00$) the data was considered appropriate for factor analysis. After this, EFA was carried out using direct oblimum method on the 68 items through Principal Component factor analysis. EFA suggested extraction of two major factors; the criterion of selection of items was factor loading of .40 and above and their loadings exclusively on one factor. Factor 1 had an Eigen value of 15.19 and explains 33.25 % of total variance. The second factor has an Eigen value of 12.06 which explains 27.05 % of total variance; Findings demonstrate the construct validity of the scale.

The contents of the items for each factor were analyzed systematically. It was revealed that all items were theoretically consistent and items in Factor 1 were comprised of 19 positive attitudinal statements about piri-muridi, labeled as 'Belief on Piri-Muridi' (BPM; e.g., pirs are nearer to God than an ordinary person; The person who follows a pir would get share in life hereafter). The second factor comprised of 19 negative attitudinal statements towards piri-muridi, labeled as 'Perception of negative change in Piri-Muridi' (PCPM; e.g., the institution of piri-muridi has lost its spiritual essence; In modern times pirs have adopted luxurious life styles).

Table 1

Factor Loadings of Items Selected for the Piri-Muridi Scale (N = 239)

S. No	Item No. in Scale	F1	F2
		BPM	PCPM
1	1	.685	
2	2	.729	
3	3	.750	
4	4	.666	
5	5	.529	
6	9	.609	
7	10	.662	
8	11	.692	
9	12	.478	
10	13	.774	
11	15	.744	
12	16	.605	
14	19		.486
15	24	.555	
16	25	.696	
17	26		.486
18	27		.596
19	28	.541	
20	31		.651
21	32		.598
22	33		.668
23	34		.500
24	35		.517
25	36	.617	
26	37		.689
27	38		.691
28	39		.721
29	41		.504
30	42		.657
31	43		.582
32	44		.474
33	68		.472
34	46		.630
35	54		.596
36	63	.556	
37	64	.451	
38	50		.602

Note. Factors loadings of only selected items mentioned. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Hence, the final selected items in Piri-Muridi Scale were 38; 19 were reverse scored items. Factors were labeled in the light of literature review and committee approach consisted of subject matter experts and researchers.

The high mean score on subscale “Belief System on Piri-Muridi” (BSPM) indicates higher strong positive belief on piri-muridi and low score indicates less positive belief on piri-muridi. High mean score on subscale “Perception of Negative Changes in Piri-Muridi (PCPM)” indicates less perception of negative changes in piri-muridi, and low score indicated high perception of negative changes in piri-muridi. The negative attitudinal statements are reversed scored.

Reliability and Validity Analyses

Cronbach Alpha Coefficient determined an internal consistency coefficient of .91 for the entire scale. For subscales, BSPM reliability was .90 and for PCPM reliability was .93. The inter-subscale correlations and correlation with total score on scale were highly significant ranging from .68 to .84. Item-to-total correlations were also calculated to test the relationship of each item with the total scale and to determine the internal consistency of inventory. Results indicated that all the items are significantly correlated with correlation value ranging from .51 to .77 ($p < .01$).

For comparison of murids and non murids on their attitudes towards piri-muridi from five regions of Potohar, Pakistan, the following analyses were carried out:

Table 2

Mean, Standard Deviation, and t values of Murids and Non murids on Piri-Muridi Scale and its Subscales (N = 239)

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Murid (n = 109)</i>		<i>Non Murid (n = 130)</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
PMS	137.23	23.01	101.55	35.60	12.20	.000
BSMP	84.45	16.85	54.31	14.95	14.54	.000
PCMP	55.43	15.34	49.19	15.09	3.14	.002

df = 234

For validation of scale based upon contrasted groups data was collected from murids and non murids. The difference in the means of murids and non murids, on the PMS was found to be statistically significant. The means show that murids ($M = 137.23$) appear to have more positive attitude towards pirs as compared to non murids ($M = 101.55$).

Table 2 further shows the differences in the mean scores of murids and non murids on subscale BSPM. The difference in the means of murids and non murids, on BSPM was also found to be statistically significant ($t = 14.54$, $df = 234$, $p < .01$). The table shows that murids ($M = 84.45$) appear to have strong belief on piri-muridi as compared to non murids ($M = 54.31$).

Table 3
Mean, Standard Deviation, and t values of Murids and Non murids on Piri-Muridi Scale and its Subscales along Selected Regions of (N = 239)

Scale	Murid		Non murid		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
PMS ^a	128.71	16.42	120.33	12.52	1.53	.136
BSMP	69.61	7.69	61.11	15.95	1.71	.097
PCMP	59.00	12.17	59.22	9.5	.058	.954
PMS ^b	143.05	22.07	107.73	18.99	5.32	.000
BSMP	80.10	16.99	51.04	15.38	5.88	.000
PCMP	63.35	9.07	52.17	14.80	1.35	.002
PMS ^c	143.80	26.79	88.86	22.91	5.49	.000
BSMP	82.40	11.49	50.26	13.53	6.16	.000
PCMP	63.40	17.11	40.66	14.79	3.53	.002
PMS ^d	133.87	21.40	114.25	17.72	1.75	.008
BSMP	93.63	16.17	63.25	20.72	3.45	.001
PCMP	53.36	12.18	43.75	2.50	1.68	.000
PMS ^e	149.14	16.51	111.16	19.07	4.38	.000
BSMP	88.85	10.39	59.83	19.28	3.65	.002
PCMP	62.25	7.95	53.88	6.64	2.56	.019

Note. ^aGolrha Sharif (murid = 18, non murid = 24); ^bMohra Sharif (murid = 23, non murid = 30); ^cEid Gah Sharif (murid = 20, non murid = 32); ^dPir Kalam Sharif (murid = 33, non murid = 10); and ^ePir Khanwal Sharif (murid = 22, non murid = 27).

The difference in the means of murids and non murids from Mohra Sharif, Eid Gah Sharif, Kalam Sharif, and Khanwar Sharif were found to be statistically significant for piri-muridi scale and its subscales. Results indicate that murids show more favorable attitudes towards piri-muridi and have strong positive belief in the sacred institution of piri-muridi; non murids from this region also have strong perception of negative changes in piri-muridi. Nonetheless, the difference in the means of murids and non murids from Golra Sharif was found to be statistically nonsignificant. The significant mean differences between murids and non murids show that the developed scale is discriminatory in measuring attitudes of the two contrasted groups on the construct of piri-muridi.

Discussion

Islam as Geertz (1973) observed, not only exists in scripture but simultaneously in images, objects, and public discourse or ceremonies expressive of certain conception of the universe; A belief that a perfect harmony exists between the nature of reality and our habitual ways of acting, thinking, and actual imaging. In such a way, Islam has established channels of communication between high culture and daily life, and while synthesizing the two, has thereby made allowance for diversity and individuality. There exists a relationship between religious institutions and ideas on one hand, and social context in which they develop and operate on the other hand. To understand any society and the behavior and the customs of its people, a study of their belief system becomes indispensable.

The construct of piri-muridi is an important component of Islamic traditions. Piri-muridi relationships evolved alongside the development of Sufi orders, ways, and the emergence of outstanding mystics from the ninth to sixteenth centuries. The relationship between pirs and the murid is one of the basic pillars of Sufi organization. The lives of Sufi saints are woven into Islamic teachings; Spirituality, local poetry, and Sufi shrines that serve as centers of popular piety; a nodal points of local identity for devotees and culture. In such a way piri-muridi is an institutionalized form of socialization.

Very little research effort is being put forth in this phenomenon in that is deeply rooted in our history, religious practices, culture, and society. The need arises to explore the components of piri-muridi as perceived by inheritors and followers of this discipline. The present

research is an attempt to trace the psychological nature of these explanations and exploration and measurement of attitudes that people hold towards piri-muridi a socioreligious institution.

The literature suggested the virtual absence of some objective measure to explore this diverse phenomenon precisely. The aim is to understand and measure people's attitude and opinions towards piri-muridi objectively with a well-defined measure. The scale was constructed through certain standard procedures. The review of literature suggested that piri-muridi is relatively a new concept in the field of psychological and social research. Therefore extensive focus group discussions were generated to identify different dimensions, constructs, rituals, and belief system of people about piri-muridi. With the help of these focus group discussions another strong area identified has been the perception of negative changes in the constructs and rituals of piri-muridi by people. The information obtained through focus groups and literature reviews were taken into account while developing the item pool for Piri-Muridi Scale. While developing item pool for Piri-Muridi Scale, a systematic empirical process of item generation and careful writing and selection of items for development of an instrument is greatly emphasized by researchers (Kline, 1986; McKeachie, 1990; Wylie, 1974).

Piri-Muridi Scale was administered on a sample of 239 respondents who were either murids or non murids of sajjada-nashin of the respective area where they reside (109 murids and 130 non murids). To calculate construct validity and the dimensions of Piri-Muridi Scale, factor analysis was carried out (see Table 1). The results of factor analysis using Principal Component analysis revealed two major factors in Piri-Muridi Scale. The criterion for selection of items on each factor was factor loading of .4. This was in accordance with Kline (1986) notion that item inclusion in the scale requires consideration of the magnitude of their loading. According to this criterion, 38 items were selected from the initial items pool of 68 items. Alpha reliability coefficient of total Piri-Muridi Scale and its subscales were computed and it ranged from .93 to .90.

t test analysis carried out in this part of study showed that murids and non murids of different regions of Potohar differentiated significantly on their attitudes and opinions towards piri-muridi. It was hypothesized that "Murids will have favorable attitude towards piri-muridi than non murids" which is supported by present study (see Table 2). Murid is a person who has been committed to a pir through the bait; A person who has observed and experienced the different practices and indulge in different rituals of piri-muridi has shown a more favorable attitude towards it. The findings further suggest that

murids who have favorable attitude towards piri-muridi also have more strong belief on piri-muridi.

In present study Pir is defined as sajjada-nashin and all the characteristics of Holy saints are attributed to these sajjada-nashin. It is believed that the Holiness of great Sufis and saints is normally inherited by their descendents, this kind of belief on sajjada-nashin, results from the general idea that the sajjada-nashin is being blessed by Allah, endowed with extra ordinary spiritual and material power that is inherited. That can be a reason why homage is paid to these sajjada-nashins as people pay more reverence and trust for pir's family than other people. Sajjada-nashins being familiar with this, exert their influence upon the masses even beyond the socio religious sphere. Consequently, sajjada-nashin came to be recognized as the religious and political authority in their respective region. People show positive attitude towards pirs because of their association with great Sufis. And also have a strong perception of change as an expression of dissatisfaction with contemporary practices in piri-muridi. The important finding of present research is that non murids have strong perception of certain negative changes in the institution of piri-muridi. The reason can be that with the passage of time the piri-muridi as a socio-religious organization has evolved and changed. The spiritualism of these great Sufis and knowledge of spirituality shifted from a learned process to an inherited one. The spiritual power of the founder of Sufi orders came to be transmitted through their descendents who became the centre of devotion of the follower of saints who after their death were usually buried in these Khanqahs. The statements measuring negative attitudes towards piri-muridi addressed the factors for changes in the institution. It included lack of religious and spiritual knowledge in contemporary pirs, inherited Sainthood, direct or indirect participation in politics, the conflicts of sectarianism, etc. All these factors have contributed to the negative changes in piri-muridi and non murids are found to have strong perception of these changes than murids.

The results showed that the Piri-Muridi Scale differentiated significantly between attitudes of murids and non murids. Murids have more favorable attitude and stronger belief on piri-muridi than non murids. The study included the sajjada-nashins of Potohar region only. These pirs have strong regional affiliations and are the most well recognized pirs in the locality of Potohar. These pirs and their regions depict the true picture of traditional piri-muridi, as all subjects of the study were well aware with the traditional constructs and rituals of piri-muridi, prevailing in areas where they reside since centuries. All of these piri-muridi institutions in these localities belong to *silsilah*

(chain) of spiritual tradition going back to the founder of a particular order. These founders being pioneer in the establishment of Islam in Indian subcontinent (now Southeast Asia) are main reason for proliferation of Sufi orders in subcontinent. These saints established their Khanqahs and worked to spread Islam in subcontinent. For example according to Rehman (1979), Pir Meher Ali Shah of Golrah Sharif is considered to be a pioneer of great Sufi Chishti silsilah at Golrah Sharif and spent his life in teaching about Islamic and wrote many books. The positive attitude and strong belief of murids in piri-muridi can be a manifestation of great reverence, respect, and gratitude for these pioneers of great Sufi order in each region.

The present research identified several facts related to the concept of piri-muridi. First, the study found that murids have more favorable attitude and stronger belief on piri-muridi than non murids; that murids have stronger perception of negative changes in the institution of piri-muridi. In an attempt to explore the tradition's changing aspects, the present research threw light on certain fundamental factors that are inevitable contributor in bringing about negative changes in this sacred institution. One such factor is that pirs have co-opted into the ideology and institutions of the state of Pakistan as political agents and power brokers, mediators in regionalized networks of local identity and power. At the same time, Sufism remains rooted in everyday practice. The lives of people are woven into great reverence, gratitude, and respect for shrines, and pirs, that serve as centers of popular Holiness, institutions for revelation of stresses and satisfaction of needs for murids. No doubt the ideology, ideal functions, teachings, and spiritual essence of piri-muridi is the same and will remain the same. The shift of the mystic doctrine of piri-muridi to a socioeconomic and political institution cannot be overlooked.

The rituals and ceremonies associated with piri-muridi in Pakistan are a mixture and continuity of traditions developed in Southeast Asia over the years. Today this changed institution of piri-muridi has deep roots in the working and functioning of people of rural and even urban societies. Despite marked changes in the institution, and strong perception of these changes, it is still maintaining its social, economical, political, and educational functions. There is a need to revive the Sufism in its true and pure spiritual Islamic essence.

Limitations and Recommendations

Convergent and discriminant validity of the scale should be established; as this is an exploratory study and a pioneer attempt to

investigate the complex phenomena of piri-muridi. Future research in this area can be designed to validate the scale further. Secondly, Confirmatory Factor analysis (using maximum likelihood method and some goodness of fit indices) can be used to further strengthen the scale's psychometric properties.

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