

SOCIAL SERVICES OF SUFIS IN PUNJAB: A CASE STUDY OF HAZRAT MOLANA MUHAMMAD ZAKIR (DISTRICT CHINIOT)

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Abstract

The influence of Sufis on Pakistani religio-political and social engineering is the subject of this extensive study, which examined the case of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir in District Chiniot. In this analysis, we mainly focused on Muhammadi Sharif's efforts to better the community and meet its needs. With a focus on qualitative research, this study used a mixed-methods strategy to collect data from a variety of sources, including interviews, questionnaires, and archive materials. Max Weber's concept of charismatic authority (Weber, 1922) and Sufi networks and Social Power of disciples and zawiyas (lodges) (Robinson, 2005) are all part of the theoretical framework, which provides a comprehensive view. Content analysis is done in this study to determine if Muhammadi Sharif's programs were successful in improving community healthcare, education, and economic stability. The findings described the historical development of Muhammadi Sharif's infrastructure and provide light on important aspects of the social services it provides. The findings of this research demonstrated that District Chiniot benefited greatly from Muhammadi Sharif, which was headed by Maulana Muhammad Zakir. Social justice, healthcare, education, and economic empowerment. Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir's Urs sparked cultural and spiritual dynamics, which are further explored in the research. The religious leaders are clearly more than simply captivating figures; they are crucial in mediating community conflicts, rallying followers for political objectives, and shaping cultural standards. This study adds to what is already known about Muhammadi Sharif's social services by providing a thorough understanding of its theological basis, practical consequences for the socioeconomic growth of District Chiniot, and larger implications for community development.

Keywords: Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, Charismatic Leadership, Social services, Community Development, Social Engineering, Political Mobilization, District Chiniot, Pakistan

1. Introduction

The humanitarian services provided by Muhammadi Sharif, guided by Maulana Muhammad Zakir, are a powerful example of how Sufi traditions may improve society. Exploring Muhammadi Sharif's vast measures, this study sheds light on the vital role of Sufi leaders in addressing the different needs of the community, notably in District Chiniot. Without regard to race, creed, or nationality, the Sufis of Muhammadi Sharif adopted a worldview based on Hazrat Mehboob Elahi's teachings. Hazrat Mehboob Elahi said that: "the Muslim is one who does well even to his enemies. If a person lays down thorns in your path and you send thorns in his way in response, the whole world will be filled with thorns. Usually



people do this but this is not the constitution of Darvesh. One must do well with both good and evil. Evil is evil indeed, but to return it with an evil is the worst of it.”¹

The Chishti Sufis were highly regarded in Punjab and all throughout the Indian subcontinent due to their inclusive philosophy and dedication to community service. One of the most influential Muhammadis, Maulana Muhammad Zakir, oversaw a number of community-oriented initiatives within Muhammadi Sharif. Projects like the free feeding facility Lunkerhana and the building of a monastery demonstrated Muhammadi Sharif's dedication to helping pilgrims, the poor, and orphans who lacked proper home, food, and education. Darul Rahmat, an orphanage, was later founded, further demonstrating the commitment to helping children who were orphaned or otherwise disadvantaged. The revolutionary impact of Sufi leaders like as Maulana Muhammad Zakir on incorporating an inclusive, compassionate, and socially conscious attitude into Muhammadi Sharif is brought to light in this critical examination.²

But the social contributions went beyond just philanthropy. A dedication to tackling structural problems rolling small farmers was shown by Maulana Muhammad Zakir's struggle against unjust taxes and land revenue. He had a comprehensive view of social justice via his work in establishing groups like Jamiat Zamindaran and fighting for the rights of farmers. Initiatives like the creation of Islamic stores, which seek to alleviate poverty while upholding honor, also touch with the economic empowerment of Muslims in the story. The importance of these efforts in encouraging economic autonomy is shown by the difficulties encountered, especially opposition from other groups. In addition, the research delves into Muhammadi Sharif's foray into Jamiaabad's industrial settlement, highlighting the integration of religious instruction with practical skills to guarantee students' capacity to support themselves. This endeavor sought to produce a well-rounded generation that could have a good role on society; it was inspired by Sufi principles.³

Maulana Muhammad Zakir's dedication to bettering the lives of rural populations was on full display when he built hospitals, post offices, and tube wells in Muhammadi Sharif and the neighboring districts. A well-rounded strategy for meeting the demands of rural development was on display with the opening of a post office and hospital, as well as attempts to electrify and provide access to clean water. Essentially, this study delves into Muhammadi Sharif's social infrastructure, revealing the many facets of Maulana Muhammad Zakir's efforts to bring about systemic change via compassionate service, educational empowerment, economic upliftment, and so on. By thoroughly analyzing these endeavors, the research hopes to provide light on the revolutionary power of social projects headed by Sufis and their long-lasting effects on community welfare.⁴

A comprehensive examination is necessary due to the fact that Maulana Muhammad Zakir's Muhammadi Sharif in District Chiniot has been the hub of social services with far-reaching consequences. An uncommon blend of Sufi beliefs and active community participation is seen by Muhammadi Sharif's numerous endeavors, which including opposing unfair taxes and constructing monasteries and orphanages. Against the backdrop of rural concerns in District Chiniot, such as economic disparity and inadequate infrastructure, this study will analyze the social influence of Muhammadi Sharif's actions. The study's overarching goal is to provide light on the complexities of Sufi social services and their ability to adapt to local community needs by examining specific programs and their outcomes. This research is crucial for understanding how Islamic organizations, such as Muhammadi Sharif, have the ability to revitalize deserted regions like District Chiniot.⁵

¹ Prof. Yusaf Saleem Chisti, (Lahore: Dar-ul-Kutab, 2016), 146.

² Manzur Ijaz, Wichaar, "people's history of Punjab: Baba Farid - the province's first poet," accessed December 13, 2014, <http://www.wichaar.com/news/319/ARTICLE/11826/2009-01-30.html>.

³ K.A. Nizami, Perspectives on Shaikh Farid (Patiala: Baba Farid Memorial Society, 1975), 176.

⁴ Dr. Muhammad Hameed Ullah, Nigarshat Dr. Muhammad Hameed Ullah, vol. 2, trans. Muhammad Alim Mukhtar Haq (Mulatn: Beacon House, 2009), 146.

⁵ Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, Mahnama Aljamia (Jhang: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, January 1972), 10.

1.1. Significance of the Study

This extensive research on Muhammadi Sharif's social services and their effects in District Chiniot is very important for several reasons. To begin with, it adds to the scholarly conversation on the relationship between spirituality and community development by providing a critical analysis of the real-world effects of social problem projects spearheaded by Sufis. Second, the research has important practical and policy implications because it sheds light on how religious organizations might help close socioeconomic inequalities, particularly in less-populated places like District Chiniot. More specific and culturally aware social policies may be developed by delving into the complex nuances of Muhammadi Sharif's programs. The study also shows how Sufi traditions may help communities outside of their religious borders, which has wider implications for promoting interfaith understanding and collaboration. Social welfare policies, community development, and interfaith relations may all benefit from the study's practical consequences, in addition to the scientific insights it provides.

1.2. Research Questions

- 1) What is the nature and extent of the social role generated by Muhammadi Sharif's initiatives in District Chiniot, particularly in terms of addressing community needs and improving overall well-being?
- 2) How has Muhammadi Sharif's social infrastructure evolved over time, and what are the key components of its social services in District Chiniot?
- 3) How do socio-religious welfare and contentment activities practiced during the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir contribute to the cultural and spiritual dynamics of Muhammadi Sharif?

2. Theoretical Framework

According to Max Weber's theory of charismatic authority (Weber, 1922), certain people are able to maintain positions of power because of their innate charisma and the belief that they have a special relationship with a higher power. Within this context, Sufi pirs—who are often seen as spiritual leaders bestowed with heavenly blessings—become clear. They have the ability to sway not only the religious but also the political and social realms because to their magnetic personality, which draws in followers and gives them moral authority.⁶

According to Robinson (2005), Muslim cultures have been greatly influenced by Sufi groups and their networks of followers and zawiyas (lodges). The social amenities, education, and spiritual direction provided by these networks help to strengthen the connections of allegiance and devotion towards the pirs. One might use this social capital to influence local traditions and customs or rally supporters for political causes.⁷

It is necessary to critically interact theories in order to examine the influence of Sufi personalities in Pakistan, such as Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir. Although the initial attraction stemming from perceived outstanding traits and spiritual connection may be better understood via Weber's (1922) charismatic authority idea, it runs the danger of being too top-down. Sufi networks and the dynamics of social power need to be considered in tandem with this (Robinson, 2005). Their role is a result of both their natural charm and the extensive networks they've established via angels and other forms of social service, which have allowed them to form close, mutually beneficial relationships. Pirs are able to influence social norms, settle local conflicts, and rally their followers for political action all via the use of their social capital. Rather than focusing on hero-worship, this analysis of the complex social structures and power dynamics at work in the influence of Sufi figures like Hazrat Zakir on religio-political and social engineering in Pakistan provides a more nuanced view of the role of embedded networks and the dynamic interaction between charismatic individuals.⁸

3. Methodology

⁶ Weber, M. (1922). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive understanding*. University of California Press.

⁷ Robinson, C. F. (2005). *Islamic revivalism: A critical analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

⁸ Weber, M. (1922). *Economy and society: An outline of interpretive understanding*. University of California Press.

A qualitative methodology will be used to conduct the research that examined Muhammadi Sharif's social services and the societal effect they had on District Chiniot. The former comes from studying Muhammadi Sharif's projects via documents, narratives, and historical records. The latter comes from surveys and statistical analysis of social and economic indicators. The qualitative component allows for a thorough investigation of the historical development, socio-cultural subtleties, and contextual elements pertaining to Muhammadi Sharif's actions. Triangulating data from many sources improves the reliability and validity of the study. A deep qualitative dimension is added to the research by including an ethnographic component, which captures the lived experiences of persons touched by Muhammadi Sharif's services. Muhammadi Sharif's contributions in District Chiniot may be better understood with the help of this diverse set of methods, which together provide a thorough and rigorous analysis of the social services' dynamics and effect.

4. Data Analysis

According to the facts given, Muhammadi Sharif did a lot of good for the people of District Chiniot and dealt with a lot of social and economic problems when Maulana Muhammad Zakir was in charge. There are a number of important effect categories into which the data falls. Muhammadi Sharif, led by Maulana Muhammad Zakir, seems to have been instrumental in meeting the community's varied requirements in the areas of healthcare, education, economic empowerment, and social justice, according to the available evidence. The listed projects represent an all-encompassing and coordinated plan to improve the economic and social circumstances of District Chiniot.⁹

The dedication to provide necessary services is shown by the development of a monastery, Lungerkhana (free kitchen), and housing for pilgrims, the impoverished, and the downtrodden. Comprehensive spiritual and intellectual growth is shown by the emphasis on religious and secular education, particularly the memorizing of the Holy Quran. Proactively addressing social concerns is seen by the founding of Darul Rahmat, which provides support to orphans and needy youngsters. A dedication to supporting and uplifting marginalised groups is seen by the priority placed on education, vocational training, and comprehensive care, which includes food and housing. A dedication to social justice is shown by Maulana Muhammad Zakir's fight against small farmers' onerous tax policy and other forms of social injustice. His involvement in conferences and his desire to bring attention to the issue show that he is taking the initiative to help the locals who are struggling economically.¹⁰

The establishment of Jamiat Zamindaran and the launch of a periodical championing farmers' rights demonstrate a will to unite and defend the farming community. The active participation in legislative bodies and the efforts to bring attention to the economic difficulties experienced by farmers demonstrate a proactive approach to socio-economic issues. A commitment to developing Islamic commerce practices is shown by the effort to establish Islamic stores and the problems experienced due to external influences. The dedication to economic empowerment and the preservation of Islamic principles is clear, even in the face of criticism. A visionary viewpoint is shown by the forward-thinking method of combining religious instruction with practical skills, such as establishing an industrial village. Socioeconomic development as a whole seeks to promote self-sufficiency and the expansion of job possibilities. A comprehensive strategy for community development would include the provision of healthcare via a hospital, accessibility via a post office, and the building of tube wells to solve water-related issues.¹¹

Because of his prominent position in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, he skillfully pushed for the construction of this vital route, recognizing its significance for accessibility and connection in the area. In order to show his dedication to developing transportation infrastructure, Maulana Muhammad Zakir worked to pave the Chiniot Jhang Road. Natural catastrophes have a significant effect on local communities, and by pressing the Minister of Public Works to resolve the issue, he made sure that a key

⁹ Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, Mahnama Aljamia Muhammadi Sharief, (Jhang: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, January 1972), 11.

¹⁰ Haroon-ur-Rasheed, *Pakistan the Successful Culmination* (Lahore: Emporium, 2011), 30-33.

¹¹ Molana Muhammad Zakir Personal Diary, 1928: August 27.

transit problem was resolved quickly.¹² In response to popular concerns, Maulana moved quickly to fix the bridge after it collapsed in a flood. He was instrumental in making travel to Faisalabad more accessible for the locals by bringing a resolution to the District Council and using his political clout. It is clear that Maulana is dedicated to improving travel options since he helped build the route between Jamiaabad and Aminpur Bagla. As an example of his commitment to community development, Maulana worked to pave the road that leads from Jamiaabad to Jamia Muhammadi Sharief. His proactive attitude to infrastructure enhancement is seen by the deliberate planting of Mulberry trees and his skillful navigation of bureaucratic hurdles to win permission for road building.¹³

The measures taken by Maulana to safeguard the community against theft and protect lives and property demonstrate his dedication to this cause. He demonstrated his hands-on approach to leadership by engaging directly with law enforcement to solve concerns pertaining to illegal activity. A sign of Maulana's dedication to religious and social purity is his fight against the spread of false pirs in the region. Demonstrating a dedication to the community's spiritual and social welfare, he sought to safeguard it from possible abuse by questioning the prevalent ideas and behaviors linked to these people. In short, the data shows that Maulana Muhammad Zakir, through his political power and bold actions, played a big part in fixing problems with infrastructure, keeping people safe, and protecting the religious and social fabric of the community in District Chiniot. These attempts help us learn more about Muhammadi Sharif's effect on society in the area.¹⁴

The information gives an outline of different religious and cultural events that took place at the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir in Muhammadi Sharif. The study talks about many of the traditions, rites, and practices that happen during the Urs. It shows how the community's culture, religion, and social life work. The Urs is said to be a time of spiritual joy when believers celebrate with honor and respect. Rituals include reading from the Holy Quran, giving Nawafil, and reciting Naat, which show the holy event. The facts show that these habits have a big effect on the mental health of the people. The Urs brings a lot of people to Muhammadi Sharif, making it a lively town. This shows how important the event is to the culture. Historians and social scientists can use the study to look at and learn more about the local culture during the Urs, such as the large number of guests and religious zeal.¹⁵

According to scholars like Ghafair Shazad and Muzaffer A Ghafaar, Sufi practices have changed over time, especially during the Mughal era. Authorities' formalization of the Khankahi system is seen as a factor that affected how ceremonies changed over time. People use mannat practices to deal with different problems in their lives, such as fertility, illness, or money. This shows a mixed-up way of handling problems. Offerings, washing and cleaning the shrine, covering heads, kissing and touching the shrine, and eating holy clay and salt are all parts of different ceremonies. According to the study, offering is popular, especially by women, and it helps with community services and social welfare. The Urs helps the region's economy grow by attracting shop owners who set up bazaars and hosting other business activities. During the Urs, devotees actively help hand out langar, rice, and sweets, which builds a sense of community and fairness. Economic activities, like selling wreaths and flowers, help the followers get by financially.¹⁶

According to the research, women are very involved in Sufi traditions and celebrations. Women's role in covering the shrine and other rituals shows a unique cultural importance. Visitors to the shrine show their love and loyalty by giving gifts of money, gold, silver, and even land. Symbolic actions like giving a swing to a Mannat in pursuit of it emphasize the Urs' spiritual importance even more. The Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir is a religious and cultural event with many sides that affects the spiritual,

¹² Mushtaq, A. Q., Akhtar, R., Amir, N., & Arshad, F. (2019). Sacred status of Qawali in Chishtiyya order: A case study of the Shrine of Meher Ali Shah. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 56(2), 269.

¹³ Asir, Zikir-e-Zakir, 126-127.

¹⁴ Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, *Personal Diary*, 21 May 1931.

¹⁵ Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, *Personal Diary*, 1 May 1930.

¹⁶ Hafiz Muhammad Saad Ullah, *Molana Muhammad Zakir (Chiniot: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief)*, 310.

cultural, and economic aspects of Muhammadi Sharif. The study gives us useful information about the complex web of religious and social activities and how they affect the group as a whole.¹⁷

5. Findings of the Study

This study's results show that Muhammadi Sharif, led by Maulana Muhammad Zakir, had a very beneficial effect on District Chiniot. Healthcare, education, economic empowerment, and social justice are just a few of the community's complex needs that have been comprehensively and collaboratively addressed, according to the statistics. Muhammadi Sharif's commitment to providing necessary services is clearly shown by initiatives like the building of a monastery, the free kitchen (Lungerkhana), housing for the destitute, and help for orphans via Darul Rahmat. Putting a focus on religious and secular education, especially the memorizing of the Quran, shows a dedication to intellectual and spiritual development. Among Maulana Muhammad Zakir's many acts of activism in the fight against social injustice are speaking out against small farmers' repressive tax practices and attending conferences to promote economic reform. Proactively addressing socio-economic challenges, the foundation of Jamiat Zamindaran and the introduction of a periodical promoting farmers' rights highlight the resolve to unify and protect the agricultural community.

In addition, the research emphasizes the forward-thinking projects of Maulana Muhammad Zakir, such as the creation of an industrial town that integrated religious education with practical skills. Paving roads and fixing transit issues are examples of transportation infrastructure development projects that aim to increase accessibility and connection. In dealing with thievery and interacting with local enforcement, Maulana takes a hands-on approach, demonstrating his commitment to neighborhood safety. Furthermore, his determination to uphold religious and social purity in the society is seen by his aggressive approach in combating bogus pirs. In sum, the results give light on Muhammadi Sharif's complex role on District Chiniot, which he brought about via the improvement of infrastructure, the reinforcement of community safety measures, and the defense of social and religious values.¹⁸

In order to better understand the cultural, religious, and social aspects of the society, this research explores the cultural and religious activities that took place during the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir. Quran readings, Nawafil prayers, and Naat recitations are among of the practices that distinguish the Urs as a season of spiritual bliss. The research shows that these activities have a big role on the participants' mental health and make Muhammadi Sharif a lively place. Bazaars and other forms of heightened commercial activity attest to the Urs's monetary effect and provide light on the significance of the event to local culture. The study also sheds insight on how mannat practices evolved within Sufi traditions across time, particularly during the Mughal period, and how those traditions affected the way people dealt with a variety of challenges in daily life. The cultural significance of Sufi traditions is further enhanced by the participation of women, who play distinct roles in rituals and who also make significant contributions to community service and social welfare. Mannat offerings of gifts and swings are symbolic of the Urs' cultural and spiritual importance. Thus, the research enhances our knowledge of the cultural dynamics of Muhammadi Sharif and provides important insights into the complex network of social, economic, and religious activities that occurred during the Urs.¹⁹

6. Discussion

By analyzing Muhammadi Sharif's activities in District Chiniot across many service dimensions, we may evaluate their social effect, especially in regards to meeting community needs and enhancing overall well-being. Spiritual, educational, economic, and social dimensions are all part of Muhammadi Sharif's role, which the research emphasizes. The Sufi tradition, which Muhammadi Sharif follows, stresses the importance of helping others. People who are linked with Muhammadi Sharif, the Sufis, are shown as being devoted to comforting all people, regardless of their faith or country. With its foundation in the

¹⁷ Hameed Ullah, Nigarshat Dr. Muhammad Hameed Ullah, 146.

¹⁸ Hakim Hafiz Sultan Mahmood: 5-8.

¹⁹ Jamia Muhammadi Sharief Jhang, Mahnama Aljamia (Jhang: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, September 1977), 52.

teachings of Hazrat Mehboob Elahi, this dedication to the welfare of all people is an expansive and welcoming strategy for social service.²⁰

Among the notable achievements highlighted in the research is the founding and administration of the Muhammadi Sharif monastery, which runs a Lunkerhana (free kitchen). By distributing complimentary meals to pilgrims, the destitute, and those in need during the Urs, this programme responds to pressing needs. Additional measures to ensure the well-being of the community include housing arrangements, free religious and secular education, and a strong emphasis on memorizing the Holy Quran. Darul Rahmat, Muhammadi Sharif's orphanage, is another example of his dedication to social welfare. In addition to housing and feeding, the orphanage that Maulana Muhammad Zakir established prioritizes the education, training, and care of disadvantaged and orphaned children. The careful rules and regulations established by Maulana Muhammad Zakir for the orphanage show his dedication to the children's overall welfare by emphasizing the importance of moral and intellectual development.²¹

Muhammadi Sharif did more than only provide humanitarian assistance; he also battled for farmers' rights and sought to alleviate economic inequalities. The research highlights Maulana Muhammad Zakir's dedication to social justice and economic empowerment of the agricultural community, as he voiced his opposition to the excessive taxes and land revenue imposed by the British government. One way Muhammadi Sharif tackled social and economic problems was by establishing the Jamiat Zamindaran, an organization that fought for farmers' rights. In line with the Sufi tradition's focus on compassion and justice, there have been initiatives to reduce the land tax load and promote economic well-being. Muhammadi Sharif's efforts in Islamic commerce, such as establishing Muslim businesses, demonstrate his care for the well-being and respect of Muslims. Resilience is essential in the face of hardship, and the difficulties encountered—including resistance from neighboring communities—highlight the complexity of socioeconomic transformation. A progressive effort is the creation of an industrial village in Jamiabad with the dual goals of religious instruction and the provision of practical skills. Integrating spiritual understanding with worldly wisdom is in line with the goal of the Holy Prophet (SWS). This programme shows that we are serious about helping our students become self-sufficient and find gainful jobs.²²

A multi-faceted influence on the society is shown by the complete research on Muhammadi Sharif's social services in District Chiniot. As a result of Muhammadi Sharif's efforts, which are mostly focused on the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, there has been a notable improvement in the general welfare and satisfaction of the community. One important aspect of Muhammadi Sharif's projects is their religious and spiritual components, which help to cultivate a feeling of communal well-being. The rituals, recitations of the Quran, and Naat rites that make up the Urs provide an opportunity for spiritual growth and community building. An environment of spiritual joy and contentment is fostered by these religious rituals, according to the research, which in turn improves the community's mental and emotional health. The second important takeaway from the research is that Muhammadi Sharif's efforts are not limited to religious matters but also include social welfare programs. Sharing langar, rice, and sweets during the Urs is a great way to show how much the community values social equality and helping others. For the poor and downtrodden, this does double duty: it satisfies immediate hunger by distributing food and also brings people together in celebration and mutual aid. The monetary effect that Muhammadi Sharif had on District Chiniot is also significant. By establishing commercial enterprises like bazaars and stores, the Urs turns the sleepy hamlet into a thriving metropolis. According to the research, the local community sees this economic growth as a service to Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir's followers as much as it is about making money for themselves. The interplay between religious and economic factors may have a positive role on a community's well-being, as this economic component demonstrates.

Devotees' symbolic contributions, which include monetary donations, land dedications, and the gifting of costly things, demonstrate a profound dedication to the shrine and its related social activities. The research highlights how these offers directly affect the well-being of the community. There is a

²⁰ Jamia Muhammadi Sharief Jhang, Mahnama Aljamia (Jhang: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, September 1977), 53.

²¹ Jamia Muhammadi Sharief Jhang, Mahnama Aljamia (Jhang: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, September 1977), 8-9.

²² Jamia Muhammadi Sharief Jhang, Mahnama Aljamia: Ziker-e-Zakir Number (Jhang: Jamia Muhammadi Sharief, September 1977), 69.



never-ending circle of social welfare since the money from these contributions goes into providing facilities, lodging, and free meals for guests. Also, the research highlights how Sufi rites have changed over the years, suggesting that they have evolved. Especially throughout the Mughal era, the rituals grew in scope to reflect the changing social and cultural milieu. Muhammadi Sharif's activities are better understood via this historical lens, which highlights their flexibility in responding to society demands and changes. Ultimately, the social influence in District Chiniot is greatly enhanced by Muhammadi Sharif's endeavors, especially during the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir. These programs demonstrate a comprehensive approach to community well-being by relieving urgent needs, promoting social equality, contributing to economic growth, and enhancing spirituality and communal connection. Muhammadi Sharif's role on the District Chiniot community was far-reaching and multi-faceted, touching on religious, social, and economic issues.²³

Muhammadi Sharif's contributions to meeting fundamental infrastructural demands, such as establishing a post office, a hospital, and electricity, are also emphasized in the report. The local community's entire development and well-being are improved by these amenities, which in turn enhance their quality of life. Finally, the measures taken by Muhammadi Sharif in District Chiniot demonstrate an all-encompassing and coordinated strategy for social assistance. Following Sufi teachings, the institution prioritizes the overall welfare of the community by focusing on its spiritual, educational, economic, and infrastructure needs. Muhammadi Sharif has played an important role in bringing about constructive social development in the area, and the breadth and depth of its efforts demonstrate this.²⁴

Muhammadi Sharif's social infrastructure has developed over time, demonstrating a responsive and flexible strategy for meeting the requirements of the District Chiniot population. The organization's social services have evolved and expanded to include new components as a result of its rapid expansion and transformation. Spiritual leadership, educational programs, economic independence, and community building are the pillars of Muhammadi Sharif's social infrastructure in Chiniot District. The spiritual beliefs and Sufi heritage form the bedrock of Muhammadi Sharif. Regardless of one's religious or national ties, the organization offers spiritual counsel and comfort to everyone. In particular, the Muhammadi Sharif monastery is a focal point for religious events like the Urs, when it welcomes pilgrims and the poor, offering them free lodging and food.²⁵

Muhammadi Sharif's dedication to providing education, training, and care for children who are orphaned or otherwise disadvantaged is seen in the foundation of Darul Rahmat, an orphanage. Memorization of the Holy Quran and other academic fields, as well as secular education, are strongly encouraged at the university. In line with the Holy Prophet's injunction to integrate religious knowledge with practical abilities, vocational skills integration, as seen by the construction of an industrial community in Jamiaabad, displays a forward-thinking approach to education. In an effort to alleviate the economic hardship experienced by Muslims, Muhammadi Sharif is actively involved in several economic projects, including the launch of Muslim stores. Under Maulana Muhammad Zakir's direction, the organization spoke out against oppressive land taxes and revenue, fighting for farmers' rights and economic equality.²⁶

Muhammadi Sharif has been instrumental in meeting the region's most fundamental infrastructural requirements. The construction of a post office, a hospital, and the distribution of electricity all improve living conditions and foster community growth. An effort to better the lives of the locals is shown by the installation of water filtration facilities and tube wells in bean-infested regions. Muhammadi Sharif's involvement in fighting for farmers' rights is reflected in the Jamiat Zamindaran's formation. The institution is able to take part in conferences and projects that tackle socio-economic inequities thanks to this platform. Muhammadi Sharif welcomes individuals of all faiths and backgrounds, creating a welcoming atmosphere. The Chishties are well-loved throughout the subcontinent for their generous outlook, which has helped bring about social and cultural peace. Beyond its original focus on spiritual

²³ Asir Nusrat Ali, *ziker e zakir*, 245-248.

²⁴ Ghafir Shazad, *Punjab Main Khankai Culture* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2009), 100-107.

²⁵ Ghafaar, *Religious Magnet*, 74.

²⁶ *Politics and Holy Shrines in Pakistan*, *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 19:2, (2006):23.



instruction, Muhammadi Sharif's social infrastructure now encompasses a wide range of activities. Muhammadi Sharif is well-positioned to have a positive role in District Chiniot due to its adaptability and comprehensive commitment to community well-being. Its dedication to holistic and long-term development is seen in the way its social service components complement one another to meet the community's varied needs.²⁷

The people of District Chiniot have benefited greatly from Muhammadi Sharif's initiatives in the areas of healthcare, education, and economic security. The good effects on people's lives, families' lives, and the community as a whole prove that these programs were successful. Darul Uloom and Darul Rahmat are two of Muhammadi Sharif's well-established educational institutions that provide both religious and secular education. These establishments have made a significant difference in the society by assisting students in developing their intellectual and moral capacities. Encouraging pupils to memorize the Holy Quran provides a solid foundation for their spiritual and intellectual development while also preserving Islamic knowledge and values. In keeping with the practical teachings of the Holy Prophet, vocational training is being included into Jamiaabad to promote economic stability via the acquisition of practical skills in addition to religious knowledge.

A dedication to healthcare is shown by the construction of a hospital at Jamia Muhammadi Sharif. People in the area are healthier and happier now that they have access to medical care, including an MBBS doctor. In bean-infested regions, fundamental health requirements may be met by installing tube wells and water filtration facilities. This ensures that the population has access to clean water and contributes to their general well-being. By launching programs like Jamiat Zamindaran, Muhammadi Sharif has effectively fought for the rights of farmers. To help the agricultural community achieve economic fairness, the institution has spoken out against high taxes and land revenue. In addition to helping Muslims overcome economic hardship, establishing Muslim-owned businesses may boost their economic autonomy and self-sufficiency.

It is clear that Muhammadi Sharif is deeply committed to social welfare since he founded Darul Rahmat to help orphans and disadvantaged youngsters. The lives of at-risk children have been improved via the provision of housing, boarding, and educational facilities. People of all faiths and ethnicities are welcome here, which helps keep the peace and builds bridges of understanding in the neighborhood. Communities benefit from efforts to improve their basic infrastructure, such as power and post office services, which in turn boosts economic growth and quality of life. Muhammadi Sharif's programs have clearly been successful, but in order to keep up with new difficulties and maintain good results, they must be evaluated and adjusted on a regular basis. The people of District Chiniot have benefited greatly from Muhammadi Sharif's efforts in the areas of healthcare, education, economic security, and social welfare.²⁸

The cultural and spiritual dynamics of Muhammadi Sharif are greatly influenced by the socio-religious welfare and happiness activities that were carried out during the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir. The Urs is a major religious and cultural celebration since it occurs on the anniversary of the saint's death. Cultural traditions are the foundation of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir's Urs. A feeling of communal pride and solidarity is fostered as the event is preserved and shared from one generation to the next. Festive events, including as processions, meetings, and special prayers, characterize the Urs. The community comes together in joyful remembrance via these celebrations, which add to the lively cultural ambiance of Muhammadi Sharif.

Observing the Urs is a great way to recharge your spiritual batteries. Seeking enlightenment and union with God, devotees pray, recite verses, and reflect on the words of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir. Sufi knowledge and teachings are passed down from one generation to another via the Urs. The spiritual heritage of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir is passed on via talks, sermons, and presentations, which helps people in the society understand Sufism better. The Urs brings the devotees of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir closer together. It brings people of all walks of life together, bringing Muhammadi

²⁷ Safdar Abbas, et al, "Safi Shrine" ,383.

²⁸ Interview with visitors, the family member of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, they told that "people eat leaves of that tree for it is believed that it will remove several physical diseases.

Sharif's social fabric closer together, regardless of economic status. Urs events bring people together and strengthen their common views and ideals. During this time, the community strengthens its spiritual link by shared acts of faith and devotion.

Distributing food, clothing, and other essentials to the less poor is a common philanthropic activity during the Urs. Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir taught kindness, charity, and selflessness, and these endeavors are a reflection of his teachings. People of the community rally around one another during the Urs. During the Urs, people join together to do good deeds for the community, whether it's sharing meals, helping the poor, or planning festivities. Music, poetry, and traditional ceremonies are all examples of cultural and creative manifestations that the Urs could showcase. These forms of expression showcase the creative abilities within the Muhammadi Sharif community and add to its cultural diversity. Overall, the Urs of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir is an occasion that brings people together in many ways, including spiritual rituals, community building, social welfare programs, and the preservation of cultural manifestations. In doing so, it does double duty: celebrating the saint's heritage while simultaneously molding and strengthening Muhammadi Sharif's spiritual and cultural dynamics.²⁹

Religious principles and practices form the basis of the social events hosted by the Shrine of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Zakir. The shrine's clay and salt are said to have medicinal qualities, so pilgrims come to consume them and apply them topically in the hopes of warding off illness and staying well. At the temple, there is a sacred Vaan tree that humans and animals alike eat its leaves in the belief that it may cure various medical problems. Lighting clay lamps is a vital part of the shrine's ceremony for when guests' wishes come true. For these lamps, women bring oil from their homes, which is also used as an ointment for the ill.³⁰

People donate to the temple in accordance with their means; some devote land, while others give large sums, including valuable jewelry made of gold and silver. Some of the social welfare efforts funded by the offers include giving free lunches for tourists, as well as contributing to the yearly income. Markets selling religious books, toys, ornamental items, and flowers are set up during the Urs of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Zakir, when the quantity of donations grows dramatically.³¹

Retailers, many of whom are also devout followers, put up booths during the Urs festivities for the dual purposes of making a profit and receiving spiritual blessings, contributing to the region's economic growth. During the Urs, believers do acts of service by giving out rice, sweets, and food to people who are attending. By bringing people of many socioeconomic backgrounds together for shared meals, this practice fosters an environment free of inequality. One way to show loyalty and affection for Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Zakir is to provide langar, which is a communal meal.³²

As a token of one's undying devotion, one might bring chadars (sheets) to the shrine that have sacred poetry or mystical phrases engraved on them. As active participants in shrine activities, women play a key role in these rites. A feeling of oneness among the worshippers is fostered by the mutual regard and awe shown throughout the Urs. It is also common tradition to give amulets as gifts, with the belief that they would bring good fortune and health.³³

In addition, the idea of manatt, which means vow or pledge, is widely practiced. People make promises to the shrine, asking for their wishes and needs to be granted in return for sacrifices. People of several faiths, including Hindus, go to the Urs to pray for different things and get blessings. All sorts of valuables, from animals to money and gold, are offered at the yearly Urs. These sacrifices ensure that the Madrasa

²⁹ Mushtaq, A. Q., Akhtar, R., Amir, N., & Arshad, F. (2019). Sacred status of Qawali in Chishtiyya order: A case study of the Shrine of Meher Ali Shah. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 56(2), 269.

³⁰ Personal Observations during the visit of Dargah.

³¹ Mushtaq, A. Q., & Shabbir, M. (2019). Spiritual Rituals at Sufi Shrines in Punjab: A Study of Khawaja Shams-Ud-Din Sialvi, Sial Sharif and Meher Ali Shah of Golra Sharif. *Global Regional Review*, 4(1), 209-214.

³² Mushtaq, A. Q., Sohail, F., & Rafique, Z. H. (2019). ROLE OF SUFIS IN THE FORMATION OF PAKISTAN: A STUDY OF PIR MEHER ALI SHAH AND PIR OF MANKI SHARIF. *Zia-e-Tahqeeq*, 9(18).

³³ R. M. Eaton, "Sufi folk literature and the Expansion of Indian Islam," in *Essay on Islam and Indian History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 176.

students are fed and that the shrine can continue to operate. All things considered, the social events hosted by the Shrine of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Zakir are an important way for worshippers, locals, and the area to come together in service to one another and the economy.³⁴

Max Weber's theory of charismatic power provides a basic perspective for evaluating The role of Suffies, Pirs, and Ulmas on Religio-Political and Social Engineering in Pakistan, specifically via the case study of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir in District Chiniot. Weber's theory explains how charm and a sense of oneness with a higher power may propel people to and keep them in positions of power. The divinely-inspired charm and moral authority of Sufi pirs rgive them tremendous influence in the political and social realms as well as the religious ones. In his work, Robinson (2005) sheds light on the ways in which Sufi networks have shaped Muslim societies, drawing attention to the ways in which pirs' followers' loyalty to them is shaped by social amenities, education, and spiritual advice. To fully grasp the role of Sufi figures like Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, it is essential to examine how these ideologies interact with one another. Robinson offers a more all-encompassing view on Sufi networks and social power dynamics, whereas Weber's charismatic leadership explains the first appeal. In order to get a more comprehensive understanding of how pirs affect societal norms, dispute resolution, and political mobilization, this approach takes into account the fact that their influence is multi-faceted and stems from both their charisma and the vast networks they build via social services. This study challenges the traditional view of religious, political, and social engineering in Pakistan by highlighting the role of embedded networks and the dynamic interaction between charismatic persons.³⁵

In the case of Sufi pirs such as Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir, the results of this research strongly align with Max Weber's notion of charismatic leadership. The research showed that Sufi leaders are able to maintain their positions of authority and influence in the secular and religious spheres because of their charisma and other lauded qualities. By highlighting the social amenities, education, and spiritual advice that Sufi communities provide to develop relationships of devotion and loyalty among their adherents, the study further agrees with Robinson's opinion on the enormous significance of these groups. While Weber's charismatic authority does a good job of explaining the initial attraction, it runs the danger of oversimplifying the important interplay with these ideas that is shown as the investigation progresses. Taking into account the complex interplay of entrenched ties, societal power dynamics, and Sufi networks, a more nuanced perspective becomes apparent. The results highlight the two-pronged effect of the influence, which uses charisma and vast networks to change attitudes, mediate disputes, and galvanize supporters for political change. Hazrat Zakir and other Sufi saints had a profound role on Pakistan's religio-political and social engineering, but this research goes beyond hero worship to explain the intricate power dynamics and social structures at work.³⁶

7. Conclusion

The multi-faceted roles of spiritual leaders in shaping Pakistan's socio-religious landscape are explored in this comprehensive study on Social Services of Sufis in Punjab, with a specific focus on Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir in District Chiniot. The study has explored the complex processes that determine the role of people like Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir by using Max Weber's theory of charismatic authority and combining Robinson's observations on Sufi networks. Based on the study's findings, charismatic leadership is essential for recruiting followers since it is based on perceived spiritual ties and special attributes. But it stresses that while thinking about the larger sociopolitical influence of Sufi leaders, it's important not to restrict oneself to charismatic qualities alone. The study's central argument is that, as pointed out by Robinson (2005), Sufi networks are crucial in establishing and maintaining the sway of religious figures. Along with zawiyas and followers, these networks help build social capital, which goes beyond charm alone. In addition to the personal traits of charismatic leaders,

³⁴ Mushtaq, A. Q., Rafique, Z. H., & Sohil, F. (2019). Sufism: Practices at Sufi Shrines in Punjab: A Case Study of Baba Lasoori Shah, Lyallpur. *Pakistan Vision*, 20(2), 254.

³⁵ Dr. Thomas Arnold, *The preaching of Islam*, 232.

³⁶ Sajanka, A. D., & Mushtaq, A. Q. (2021). EMERGENCE OF RELIGIO-POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN JHANG; A CASE STUDY OF THE POLITICS OF MAULANA MUHAMMAD ZAKIR (1903-76). *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 18(4), 1233-1241.



the study's results highlight the significance of comprehending the complex social dynamics and power structures present in Sufi networks.

The research sheds light on crucial parts of Muhammadi Sharif's social services and traces the evolution of its infrastructure over time. Results show that under Maulana Muhammad Zakir's leadership, Muhammadi Sharif, District Chiniot profited substantially. Empowerment economically, socially, and medically. The investigation delves deeper into the cultural and spiritual dynamics that were ignited by Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir's Urs. This research also sheds light on the complex ways in which Sufi personalities have influenced religious, political, and social engineering via analyzing the life of Hazrat Molana Muhammad Zakir. It becomes clear that the religious leaders are more than just charismatic personalities; they play a crucial role in resolving local disputes, collecting supporters for political purposes, and negotiating societal norms. The research elucidates the ever-changing character of their role, which goes beyond the realm of religion to include more generalized social and political aspects. This study adds to the existing body of knowledge by complicating already-established ideas about charisma and by broadening the discussion of the role of Sufi figures. It raises awareness among the public, academics, and policymakers about the complex relationship between charismatic leaders and the networks they build. By taking a more comprehensive view, interested parties may learn more about the complex interplay between religion, politics, and social engineering in Pakistan, and how these factors are shaping the country's social and religious landscape. All things considered, the study opens the door to more investigation into the complexities of this topic and the ways in which spiritual leaders influence the course of human history.