



Effects of Spiritual Initiation on Personality

Urooj Fatima, Dr. Asir Ajmal

Department of Psychology, Virtual University of Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

People's experiences and personality changes after enacting spiritual initiations were explored in this phenomenological based qualitative study. Two female participants, who have submitted initiations to two different spiritual masters, and also were able to get permission to share their experiences, were recruited into this study. They participated in 70-minutes semi-structured interviews which were pursued by other 30-minute follow-up semi-structured interviews. Transcripts were analyzed by using the principals of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Seven core themes emerged from the data including meaning and aims of spiritual initiation, reasons to submit initiation, role of the family, nature of relationship between spiritual teacher and disciple, the role of Sheikh as teacher and protector, effects on the personality of disciple and spiritual development. On the basis of these themes, it can be hypothesized that initiation can profoundly affect the disciple's worship practices, spiritual development, appearance, interpersonal relationships, subjective wellbeing and contemplation leading to transformation of personality.

KEYWORDS: Spiritual Initiation, Personality Change, Spiritual Master, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

1 INTRODUCTION

How to make a way towards the glories that are veiled, knowledge of transcendence truth? Knowledge is the core essence of Islam. Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) said "seek knowledge even if it be in China". Different scholars, philosophers and saints have identified the various forms of knowledge but journey to the knowledge of the transcendence truth begins by submitting initiation to a spiritual teacher. Undoubtedly, it is accurate that sunnah of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) and holy Quran are complete and sufficient for Muslims to seek guidance. Nevertheless, it is also correct that teacher's mentoring and guidance is also required to proficient any subject and to touch the essence of that subject. Allah could have send only holy Quran, If He have considered it ample but He created ease in our lives by bestowing us with the messenger Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) as the model of Quran so we could unswervingly be trained from the example of his conduct. Learning under guidance and with the help of a teacher is a core method in the traditions of Islamic teachings. For instance, if we take into account each hadith that Hazrat Imam Bukhari compiled is directly linked with Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), however narrations are made in a way that involve a chain of narrators, Which shows that each person must have learned from some other individual [1].

Knowledge is transformed from heart to heart from the heart of teacher to the heart of student. The same is in the realm of "Tasawwuf". The teacher "spiritual master" guides the disciple to purify the heart and soul, develops consciousness of Allah and establishes the lasting and profound connection with Almighty Lord. One might think that how spiritual master could help in attaining all such goals, thus "Dervish of Allah" is the one who spends years and years in extensive training to develop his conduct, worship practices, daily routine and knowledge of transcendence truth under the guidance of spiritual master. Moreover, he often passes years mastering the divine essence of worship and awareness about of Hadith, Quran, tafsir, fiqh, etc. Every phase and successive stage of their training further connects them through the chains of other Dervish to the Prophet (PBUH) who, certainly, was sent to link human beings to their Lord.

Whenever anyone joins the company of such a spiritual master, the divine nature of their knowledge and far-reaching experiences permit them to evaluate his/ her spiritual position and hence, prescribe the superlative "medicine" to treat the diseases of heart and soul. Dervish is a trained doctor to cure the ailments of souls just like medical doctor is for physical diseases [2].

However, the treatment and relationship with spiritual doctor formally begins when a disciple submits initiation. The phenomenon of initiation is surrounded in mystery and clouds of secret, down through the ages its teachings remained secret, hidden, protected and unread within texts symbolic writings and rituals. The

* **Corresponding Author:** Urooj Fatima, Department of Psychology, Virtual University of Pakistan.
Email: urooj@vu.edu.pk

Prophet (PBUH) gave some teachings, which were not to become common knowledge [3]. Hitherto mysticism has reigned for millenniums, initiation has always been considered as being most sanctified. Teaching divine knowledge through words has never been a tradition of mysticism, nor will it ever be done so. Instructing through words is not the Dervish's work rather he tunes to those who are willing to seek refuge with Allah and are receptive to the offered divine knowledge. In simple expression, the mystic is not the one who plays the instrument rather he serves as a tuner and when job is done proficiently, the instrument is presented into the court of Divine Player, whose playing becomes increasingly evident of the reflection of Divine music [4].

1.2 What is Spiritual Initiation?

Spiritual initiation means beginning of the journey, emergence of a linkage on the part of both disciple and Dervish [4]. Mystic teacher's journey begin with pupil by taking a step forward that the disciple may be entrusted and raised from his present condition. A step ahead on disciple's part as he becomes ready and receptive with open heart, without any hindrances and barriers for teacher's words, silence, deeds, actions or whatever comes from him [4].

Initiation is a kind of promise, or more simply it can be defined as entering into a new doctrine. Abu Muhammad Al-Jarari said "Sufism consists of entering every exalted quality (khulq) and leaving behind every despicable quality" [5]. Whenever a person enters into and commits to a particular doctrine he or she is supposed to give their self to the dervish and commit obedience to the spiritual master by being in a state as Sufis explain like a corpse in the hands of the washer of dead [6]. Through this initiation, the disciple is influenced by a specific spiritual sway that leads him/her to an entirely new journey of his life [7]. This spiritual initiation is basically linked with chain of processes (known as silsila) that was initiated by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as he gave this right to some selected people who forwarded it to their next generations and so on this process functioned through generation after generation [7].

1.3 Main Schools of Thought

There are four main spiritual orders in "Tasawwuf" i.e., Chishtiyya, Qaderiyyah, Naqshbandiyyah and Suharwardiyyah. Hazrat Khwajah Mu'eenuddin Chishti (R. A) is the founder of the Chishtiyyah order; founder of the Qaderiyyah Order is Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (R. A); Hazrat Shaikh Bahaaddin Naqshbandi (R. A) and Hazrat Shaikh Shahaab'uddin Suharwardiyyah (R. A) are the founders of the Naqshbandiyyah Order and the Suharwardiyyah order respectively [8].

1.4 Rites and Rituals of Submitting Initiation

The rites and rituals of initiation submission are different in different schools of thought but usually spiritual master takes the right hand of the disciple in his hand. Initiation is enacted on ladies verbally without touching the palms, many times holding a cloth from both ends; one corner by disciple and other is handed to dervish.

When a person cordially commits to such state of devotion and obedience, transformation of personality is inevitable aspect [3]. The impure and morally corrupt man is aware of only a minor part of his own soul; and since it is whole substance that has to be discovered, mystic experiences often initially leads to the experiences which are not spiritual but only psychic, however unusual or tremendous they may seem [3]. Thus the current paper aims to explore that whether some personality and behavioral changes take place after an individual submit to a spiritual master by enacting spiritual initiation or not? Curiosity about human personality and mysticism stems back to ancient times, and fairly ample research has been done in the different aspects of personality. Work has been done within the domain of personality and its effects on subjective wellbeing [9], personality and organizational setups [10], personality and forensic settings [11], and personality in relation with health psychology [12], etc. but while reviewing the existing literature about this phenomenon, researchers could not encounter enough systematic efforts made to particularly explore the effects of spiritual initiation on personality either within the context of Islam or mystical orders prevailing in sub-continent. However many researchers have encircled the phenomenon of spiritual initiation within the realms of other cultures and religions. Many studies of this domain can be found in the African culture such as the Thembandwa cult of Africa [13], the Southern Bantu diviners in Africa who use Ubalawu psychoactive drugs for spiritual initiation [14], initiation and its related aspects in Christian cultures [15], etc.

Human being is a very curious creation of God and he always want to know more and more about himself. That is why the studies on human personality have been a hot topic since very long ago as mentioned above. Similarly many definitions of personality were presented by scholars [16] and it was considered as "a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his/her cognitions,

motivations and behaviors in various situations” [16]. It has been found that only 2 or 3 percent of the people have the capability to change their basic personalities [17]. If you are an extrovert as a child, then you will remain an extrovert till your death. Same is the case with all the personality traits. Researchers found that personality largely remains stable because of the genetic factors. However, little change during the course of life reflects the influence of environmental factors [18].

Hence, the aim of present study involves the exploration of explicit personality changes and those spiritual experiences that followed the initiation to a spiritual master____ dervish. Can human beings change or encompass stable personality patterns? Answer to such questions always resulted in controversies and blistering debates. But we know from our experiences, and the childhood stories that we heard in our childhood that complete transformation of personality has been a frequent tradition of mystic world. Therefore the present study is an attempt to understand the nature, complexity of changes and experiences that disciple of specific spiritual order encounters.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1. To develop insights about the experiences of Muslims who have enacted spiritual initiations.
2. To explore the psycho-social reasons that why do individuals submit spiritual initiations.
3. To discover the personality and behavioral changes experienced by the Muslims after submitting spiritual initiations.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Participants

Two participants were selected for this qualitative study. Many individuals were approached but they could not participate because of not having permission from their spiritual masters to unveil their spiritual experiences. Finally, the participants who were able to acquire permission from their masters consisted of one educated house wife and one educated working women, both had submitted initiations to different spiritual orders. These participants were selected from different spiritual orders to gain and expand the insight into the phenomenon through diverse population. The house wife is a 35 years old lady, who graduated from Punjab University and submitted initiation to the “Sabri Chishti Order” in 1995. She belonged to a western liberal family and encountered perfervid discouragement from her family regarding her decision to submit initiation. She got married five years back and now is a mother of a four years old son.

The second participant was 28 years old lady, who was also married and had an 18 months old daughter. She was working as a research assistant at Lahore University of Management Sciences for last three years. She submitted initiation to “Chishtiyyah-Awaisiyyah order” in 2005. She belongs to a religious inclined family, having a deep accolade for “Sufism” and “Tasawwuf”, but she herself used to be a latitudinarian till the age of 21 years.

Substantially the participants were being selected, because of the delicate and sensitive nature of the study, few people agreed to talk about their personality changes after submitting initiation, as many people do not have permission from their spiritual master to reveal their experiences. These two participants were being selected from the people who gave the consent for interview. The reason to recruit these two participants was to explore and develop the deeper insight about phenomenon of initiation and its effects on personality.

These participants have submitted initiations to different spiritual masters and to different branches of Chishtiyyah order. Moreover the family support which they received for the decision of initiation submission and after the initiation submission also motleys and provides with an insightful aspect to this study.

2.2 Procedure

The participants were recruited through word of mouth and request through phone calls. Interviews were arranged through personal visits after getting initial consent. Due to the sensitive and spiritualist nature of the interview, one of the participants had to take special permission from her spiritual master regarding giving interview and when permission was granted, she agreed to give interview. Participants were assured regarding the maintenance of their confidentiality. The purpose of the study was made clear to the participants and their queries regarding the nature of this qualitative study were answered satisfactorily. It was also conveyed to the participants that in case of any kind of discomfort, they are free to terminate the interview.

Each participant was interviewed twice; initially an in-depth interview was conducted for seventy-minutes, which was traced by a thirty-minute follow up interview to explore the phenomenon in more depth

and to expand on the questions that seemed to require more detailed answers for capturing a clearer picture. Both interviews were semi-structured so that the participants could have enough flexibility and exemption to express their experiences in their own words. In accordance with participants' decision regarding location and convenience, each participant was interviewed in their homes. An interview guide was prepared prior to conduct interview and questions were drawn from the preliminary conceptual frame work each interview was recorded by using an audio recording device.

An intentional effort was involved on the part of interviewer to develop rapport with the participants and to put them on ease. Several follow up questions were asked throughout the interview to gain deeper and expanded understanding about initiation and its effects on them. Though participants showed some resistance to disclose information for which they do not have "ijazzah" permission from their spiritual master. Keeping in mind the flexibility and comfort of participants, initially questions were focused more on the things that they feel comfortable to disclose (i.e. What were the reasons that motivated you to submit initiation?), role of their family (what was the role of your family regarding your initiation). After the establishment of optimal level of rapport, questions regarding spiritual development were asked towards the middle phase of the interview (i.e. you said that the spiritual world is very beautiful and the fruition is enormous, will you please explain what you mean by fruition and beautiful world). Funnel approach was used as funnel approach helps build rapport between interviewer and interviewee and makes respondents comfortable during interview [19]. These kinds of questions enabled us to accumulate as much information regarding the experiences of spiritually submitted individuals as much possible.

Then the audiotapes verbatim of initial interviews were transcribed on the same day to generated transcripts required for data analysis. While preparing transcripts, the follow up questions were also identified simultaneously for further exploration of the different aspects of the phenomenon which seemed to acquire more detailed penetration into the phenomenon. A thirty –minute follow up interview was also arranged for each subject and again audiotape verbatim were transcribed on the same day for data analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

After conducting the interviews, demographic detail sheets were prepared for each participant. The researcher also noted down the reflections of visiting and having interviewed individuals with significant experiences from the mystic world of spiritualism, which in turn allowed gaining deeper understanding about the phenomenon and also helped in identifying the need for follow-up questions. While listening to audio tapes and preparing transcripts, whole interview process was virtually revisited and significant non-verbal cues that were being noticed during the interview were also noted down.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed to analyze the data transcripts because the aim of the study was to explore in detail and understand the complexity involved in the process of spiritual initiation and its effects on disciple's personality. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis is employed because it is specifically considered efficacious to analyze and understand the experiences an individual has in life, and what meanings those experiences hold in their life [20]. IPA was also selected because the aim is essentially a third-person's perspective (i.e. researcher's view of participants' experiences) as researchers we could never 'capture' their experience head-on, so an 'insider's perspective' on the participants' world was reconstructed that allowed to move into the wider interpretative world of participants.

After meticulously reading and re-reading each transcript, main ideas from the beginning to the end of each transcript were extracted. Then again returning back to the beginning of the each transcript, the emerging theme titles were documented. When similar themes emerged, same theme title was noted down. To develop connections between salient themes and to organize the sub-themes and main themes, charts and diagrams were drawn. Initially themes from each transcript were organized in the form of flow charts, and then connections were made between the similar themes that articulated from the transcript of different participant. The unique themes that emerged from the transcript of each participant were also incorporated.

To minimize the personal biases, conscious reflections were made about preconceptions of the data, and attempts were made to suspend them in order to focus on grasping the experiential world of the research participants. A conscious effort was involved to draw the accurate picture of the participant's world of experiences without the ejaculation of preconceptions. However the complete elimination of personal bias is not possible as the true nature of qualitative research involves the researcher's interpretation of the given phenomenon.

3 RESULTS

Using the principals of IPA, seven core themes were articulated from the data transcripts. The findings revealed that initiation is a beginning of life long journey, participants' perceived initiation as that process which leads to the discernment of states of internal and external build-up, purification of souls and purification of morals to help attain contentment and refuge with almighty Allah. The findings revealed that certain psychological, behavioral and social changes took place after initiation. Contentment, contemplation, courage and emotional wellbeing were increased. Though, great deal of obligations and practices are introduced to disciple, which lead to positive effects on behavioral, psychological and spiritual aspects of disciple. Seven main themes emerged with sub-themes as a result of data analysis.

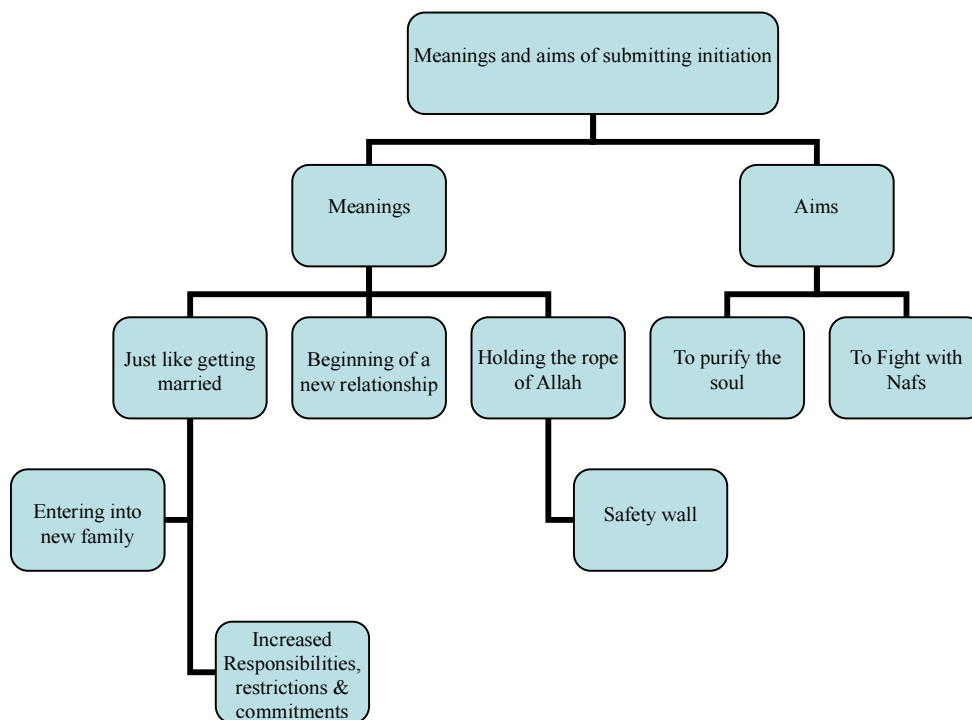


Figure 1. First major emerged theme

The first important theme that articulated from the transcripts of data was the “meanings and aims of submitting initiation” (see fig. 1) to the participants. One participant defined the initiation as “getting married” by this she meant that marriage is entering into a new family, a new relationship and new environment with new exposures. By using this analogy she drew on the relationship of a disciple to the spiritual order that, as a lady after marriage lots of responsibilities and restrictions come along with this new relationship. Same is the case with initiation, disciple becomes the part of another family, and mannerism to live with that family requires a lot of adjustments on the part of disciple. She further explained that people usually hold a misconception that if someone has submitted initiation, it would ease all their difficulties, that is not the case, this commitment and promise call for enormous efforts and exertions. But the difference from the worldly marriage lies in its “fruit” by which she meant the enhanced consciousness to almighty Allah and a deep sense of contentment, security and subjective wellbeing.

Participants considered initiation as safety wall from impurities and contamination of materialistic world, which wander all around us some times in shape of demand of family and society and some time as frequent exposure to indecent media.

“Neither marriage nor the walls of my house, my husband or money provided me that sense of protection which came through my association with this order and relationship with my spiritual teacher”

The sub-theme that emerged from the discussion about meanings of initiation was the “aim and purpose” of submitting initiation. The participants came up with two substantial aims of initiation. One aim is to purify

the soul and heart from lowly bestial attributes of lust, calamities' of the tongue, anger, malice, jealousy, love of the world, greed, ostentation and vanity e.t.c, enabling them for the residence of almighty Allah. And second goal identified by the participants as was “to fight with Nafs and adornment of heart with lofty attributes” by which she meant that developing the attributes of repentance, gratefulness, fear and love of Allah, hope, Tauheed, truth and complete faith. In this way attention towards Allah is inculcated in disciple. Participants also considered that each individual is a unique soul, so matters of each Nafs and soul are also dissimilar. The Spiritual teacher is the one who is going to diagnose the ailments/ diseases of soul and Nafs. The second theme that emerged was the “reasons to submit initiation” (see fig. 2). The participants perceived reasons were unique and dissimilar as the phenomenal field, nature and context of each individual is also unique. One participant identified that:

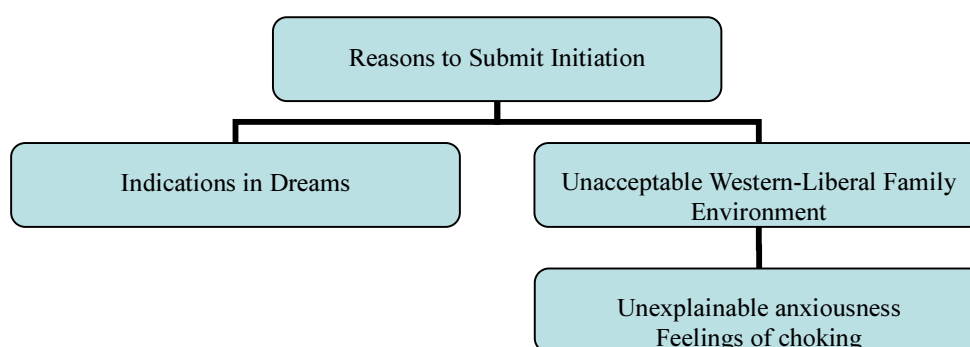


Figure 2. Second major emerged theme

“I had no prior idea about mysticism or spiritualism [ahh..], what I knew was that I do not want the alternate environment that was available to me, my family is a western liberal, and I never ever felt any attraction in liberalism rather I used to wonder how my brothers and sisters could remain happy? Why this (environment) cause pain to me[pointing towards chest]. Then once in 1993, I had an opportunity to spend five days in the company of few “Dervish” in Turkey, the very first time I felt contentment and peace here [pointing towards belly]”

Other participant’s experience related with reasons to submit initiation involved recurrent and intense dreams, conveying her message to submit initiation.

“I submitted initiation to “Awaisuyyah Chishtiyyah silsila”, after having recurrent, very vivid emotionally intense dreams [ahhh...] dreams shook my inner soul. I was being conveyed to submit initiation. Before that I never thought of submitting initiation though my whole family is religiously inclined, even my grandfather was known to have some status in spiritual world. But my nature was liberal; [ahhh...] you know! I used to wear sleeveless shirts and had friendships with boys of my class”

One interesting aspect regarding this theme is that both participants’ reasons were completely different. Both had different motives to enter but both are firm footed on their path to truth.

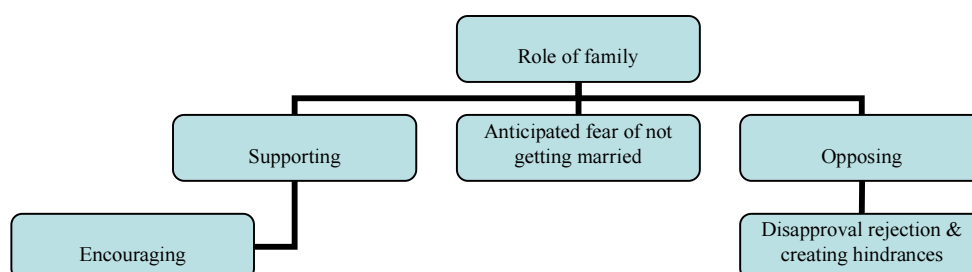


Figure 3. Third major emerged theme

The third theme which emerged was related to the “role of family” (see fig.3). An interesting aspect regarding this theme is that no matter the family were religious or liberal most of the family members discouraged the participants and both participants had to combat with family; both families were intimidating the participants that they would encounter difficulties to get married to an appropriate person.

“My initiation was very painful for my family, unbearable for them, where is she going? This age is to formulate the self-rules, who follow anyone else in this advanced age. Why she does not go to beauty parlors and parties, why she doesn’t want to have fun....? Or if she keeps on behaving like this who would marry her”

Although, one participant talked that the attitude of her mother was opposing while the father was approving and encouraging.

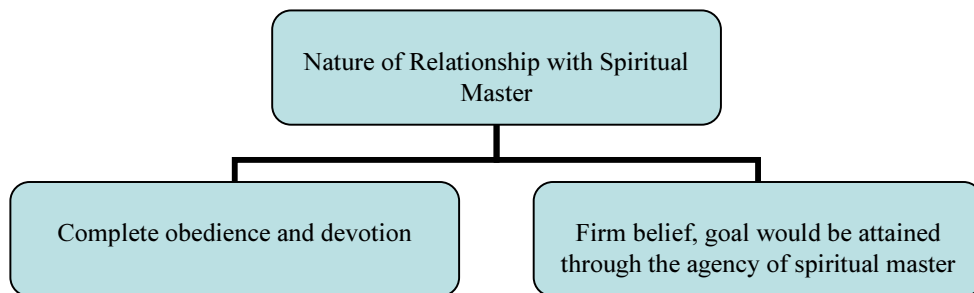


Figure 4. Fourth major emerged theme

The fourth core theme pertains to the nature of relationship between disciple and spiritual master (see fig.4). The profound respect, obedience, devotion and love are evident in the transcripts on the part of discipline for spiritual master. Participants’ conversations aimed at describing that this relationship built on the compatibility and harmony to such a degree that the discipline never discerns any rejection in his/her heart for any word, and command or act of spiritual teacher. Although the discipline may be affiliated by any word or act of spiritual master.

“When I surrendered myself to Hazrat sb., he pointed out, there is a need to break this or that [um....], it was painful to cut down the very parts of self, to get sculptured by the sheikh is not an easy task, but once surrendered and believed all goals would be attain through the agency of sheikh..... Whenever he operated the diseased part of “Self” he also provided with pain killers”

The fifth imminent theme dealt with the role of spiritual master as a teacher and protector (see fig.5). Participants explained him as a guide and doctor by which they meant that spiritual master is the one who diagnose and treat diseased soul, would prepare disciple to totally reform, and enabling to present in the majestic court of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and Almighty Allah. Participants viewed that the substantial aim is not the self of “dervish” (spiritual teacher) rather the eternal aim is to attain the approval of Allah with the help and guidance of Faqir.

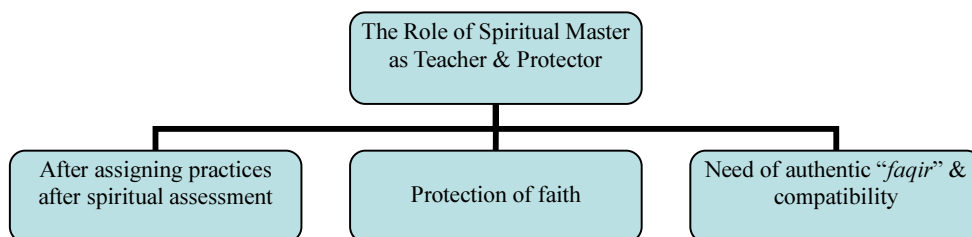


Figure 5. Fifth major emerged theme

“An authentic Dervish would hold your Nafs for you.... would develop esoteric acts, would present you in the court of Allah and would request Allah to accept his disciple.”

By this participant meant that the role of spiritual master is to provide esoteric protection, true protection only comes from the authentic agency and is guaranteed only after initiation.

“Faqir have internal matters, [um...] just like there is particular age of marriage and parents would say, No daughter is not prepared to take responsibility....let her study now [um...] in the same way faqir assesses the strengths and abilities of disciple and assign practices and invocation (Zikr) according to the requirements of certain case for spiritual development”

The participants also viewed spiritual master's company and association a manifold phenomenon. It would enhance the courage, subjecting well-being, increased love for Allah. Dervish's supplication represents the chains of supplications of other Dervish associated with him in hierarchy. An important sub-theme related with this major theme is the need for the authentic and compatible spiritual master. Every individual's soul has its unique tailor-made and compatibility is an essential condition for development. Another sub-theme was that spiritual master assigns various worship practices after assessment. Like invocation “zikr” “sama” and meditation. These three practices were identified by the participants.

The sixth articulated theme occupies primitive status of being directly linked with our research question. “Personality changes after submitting initiation” (see fig.6).

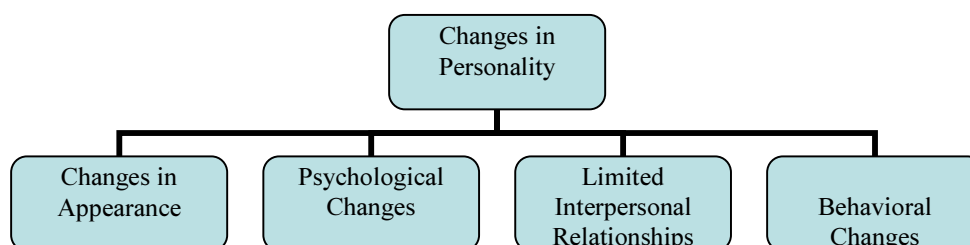


Figure 6. Sixth major emerged theme

The accounts of participants revealed that people do experience profound and clear changes in their interpersonal relationships, dressing and appearance, behavior, daily routine, thinking patterns occur. Data analysis revealed that profound personality changes occur after initiation as one of participants revealed about changes in her appearance.

“I used to wear sleeveless shirts but after initiation now such things never attract me,[ah...] now I fully cover my head and body while going out of home”

Another interesting phenomenon that unveiled during this study was change in nature of interpersonal relationships.

“After committing to “Chishti Sabri silsila”, I restricted myself just to my work and room. [ah...] I used to read Quran..., offered prayers and indulged completely myself to the practices given by Hazrat sb. For six years I had minimal contact and conversations with my family, no friendships because my friends were also the product of that western liberal environment. I asked my family to leave me on my own; I myself would come out of this state.”

While talking about psychological changes, participants talked about increased insights, consciousness, sense of security, contemplation and emotional wellbeing, satisfaction and joy.

The most fascinating theme that articulated from data is related with the “spiritual development and experiences”(see fig.7). The data from the transcript of both participants revealed that they had different kinds of spiritual experiences. One of participant talked about true dreams, supplication acceptance. An interesting thing related with this theme is that different spiritual orders differ not in their methods but also in the manifestation of development like disciple of Awaisyyah chishti order talked about “Zikre Sultani”, that is unique to the doctrine. Zikre sultani is characterized by the recitation of different Divine names of Allah without opening mouth or lips. This Zikr is automatic and it seems as sound is coming from within. While conducting interview, the father of participant went through the state of Zikre- Sultani, this enlightened state is unique to the Awaisyyah Chishtiyyah order. Another important revealed information was the “opening of spiritual ears”. Participant shared that the right ear opens first and then left. The participants obtained special permission to share this information.

“My father is blessed with explicit Zikre-Sultani but I am not. Zikre Sultani is bestowed if the disciple has a strong desire for it secondly the “Qalb” [i.e.heart] is strong enough to bear it but honestly speaking, I never yearned for it, because I have to move out and it attracts the attention of people as a women, it is difficult to manage. But for the last three years I have been continuously praying for the opening of my spiritual ears, and “Allhamdullillah” I was not thwarted”.

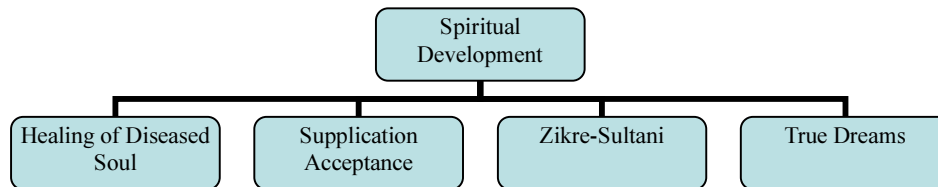


Figure 7. Seventh major emerged theme

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Sufism, in the present, as in the past, has been an effective means for spreading the reality of Islam, expanding the knowledge and understanding of spirituality and fostering happiness and peace. With it, Muslims can improve, transform, and elevate themselves and find recovery from the ignorance of this world and the misguided pursuit of some materialistic fantasy. But not much work has been done so far on this topic in the field of psychology. Doctrine of tasawwuf involves practices that have therapeutic value as also indicated by the findings of this study [21].

Considering the literature review, findings are similar to a large extend regarding the role of spiritual master and duties of disciple. However, much new and unique information was also sought. Findings suggest that a formal training starts after initiation accompanied by practices and restrictions just like a child who got admission in pre-nursery, long way to go, many years of rigorous exertions and exams to acquire any degree. Although, the spiritual teacher is far superior, he not only teaches, trains and assigns home works but also works as a doctor, who diagnoses and treats illnesses of soul and “Nafs”.

Our findings revealed that the authenticity and compatibility of spiritual teacher is imperative. Practices would be efficacious only when these essential conditions are present. Our findings also suggest that righteous deeds are accompanied by labor, toil and difficulty both from inner-self and from outward society. Like family’s opposition and disapproval. Our findings also revealed that the process of initiation can bring about positive changes in disciple’s contemplation; subjective wellbeing and can enhance the sense of security, satisfaction and contentment. Results also suggest that initiation led to change in outer appearance and interpersonal relationships deteriorate because of the opposition of family and incompatibility with friends. Temperament changes and increased anger during first year after initiation was also reported by participants. The findings also revealed that initiation has a link with spiritual development and increased spiritual states.

The findings of this study call for the exploration and research in the area, our roots, and our reality without which no tree could grow, no field of knowledge can progress. The research can prove to be significant for consolers, clinical psychologists, social psychologists and forensic psychologists.

5 Limitations

Though researchers felt being successful in gaining useful and unique information but study also has certain limitations. The participant did not have permission to reveal all the information so there are certain issues hidden and covered. Secondly the limited number of participants also restricts the generalizations of the study. For future researches it would be interesting to interview some practicing Dervish, or a comparative study regarding the practices of two different schools of thought would also be of interest.

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