
IMPACT OF SPIRITUAL PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL INTEREST ON SPIRITUAL LOVE AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN DARAZI SCHOOL OF SUFI THOUGHT

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ABSTRACT

The current empirical research examines the impact of spiritual prayer and spiritual interest on spiritual love and its impact on spiritual development in the Darazi School of Sufi Thought. Spirituality and spiritual development have been investigated in previous research. However, little research has been done so far to establish the association between the latent constructs of the research model. The population comprises all the public sectors, including general, medical, and engineering universities in Sindh province. The Unit of analysis was an individual research participant of the Darazi School of Sufi Thought (DSOST). By employing convenience sampling techniques to collect the quantitative data the usable sample size was $n=274$. Researchers used SPSS v.27 for data screening and SmartPLS 4 for outer and inner models. Results revealed that all the hypotheses were supported except one indirect effect. First, Spiritual prayer has a significant impact on spiritual love. Second, Spiritual interest has a significant impact on spiritual love. Third, Spiritual love has a significant impact on spiritual development. Fourth, Spiritual love mediates the association between prayer and spiritual development. Fifth, divine love does not mediate the association between divine interest and divine development at DSOST. Empirical research findings are useful for students, teachers, administrators, policymakers, curriculum developers, and people from

KEYWORDS

Spiritual Prayer, Interest, Love, Spiritual Development, Darazi School of Sufi Thought

INTRODUCTION

Sufism is free from religious borders, and it enables the Seeker of Truth to achieve divine proximity. The spiritual director is a real source of inspiration. The Seekers of Truth must practice spiritual prayers, meditation, a company of a spiritual director, self-discipline, and Sufi music, which enlightens his/her minds and souls (Göktaş & Chowdury, 2023). In this empirical research, originally, the term “Darazi School of Sufi Thought” was coined by Faruqi (1996). Darazi Sufi masters were fully accomplished in overt and covert knowledge of spiritualism. Their spiritual beliefs, as well as practices, made them unique. Sufism and the Sufis have been explored and discussed extensively by scholars everywhere in the world. However, some Sufis and researchers have clarified these terms. Carl W. Ernst perceived Sufism as a divine path of human life and soul purification that ultimately reunites with the Creator (Qazi, 1980). Similarly, Dhun-nun Egyptian (746-861 A. D.) divulged Sufi thought in a way that these Sufis are chosen by the Creator because they gave priority to Divine love to all the material world and all its charms (Syed, 1987). Moreover, Sachal Sarmast (R.A.) proclaimed that true Sufis are fully captivated by Divine love which enables them to discover the ultimate Truth (Easwaran, Eknath, 1992) and further added that true lovers surrender their own existence completely and ultimately fully convinced of the existence of only Oneness which leads them to the ocean of oneness (Faruqi, 1996). The Beloved of Allah, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) once enunciated that the secret of God was completely hidden, and He wished to be known by the creation He made but few truly recognized Him (Corbin, 1969). The Beloved Unseen came in many forms and remained concealed but recognized by true lovers (Hujwiri, 1990).

LITERATURE REVIEW**Spiritual prayer**

Prayer has been a source of alleviating many fatal diseases to improve quality of life in very ancient and modern times (Roberts, Ahmed, & Davison, 2009). In all the religions of the world which may include Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and Judaism, the prayer is used as a first-hand source to communicate with God (Dossey, 1996). It is obvious that in every religion believes in prayer as a healing source for any disease, curse, or crisis but a few uses it to elevate spirituality and cleanse the mind (Stein, 2006). Prayer creates a direct link between God and individual and it has everlasting impact on the mind and soul of an individual (Connors, 2012; 2019). Furthermore, prayer creates an undying association between God and individual which opens the divine mysteries. The more an individual pray to God, the more an individual receives an access to power beyond

one's thinking (Connors, 2005; 2019). The individual concentrates during prayer to create personal association with God for the elevation of soul (O'Brien, 2003). Prayer has also been studied in medical sciences in case when the patient's life is at stake and the patient becomes more inclined towards spiritual belief and prayer (Koenig, King, & Carson, 2012). There are four types of prayers in Christianity which includes prayer of transaction wherein an individual communicates with God, prayer of petition in which an individual makes a personal plea or request to God, prayer of submission wherein an individual completely submits everything to God, and prayer of intercession in which an individual tries to pray for others (Narayanasamy, 2006). Koenig (1997) emphasizes individuals from all walks of life to be involved in prayer as it is a constant source of healing all maladies. Personal prayer and perceived purpose in life are correlated with each other (Francis & Burton, 1994; Francis & Robbins, 2009; Francis & Penny, 2016). Spiritual prayer requires contemplation which increases individual's proximity with God (Davidson, Dunne, Eccles, Engle, Greenberg, ... & Vago, 2012; Grossman, 2008). Spiritual prayer is positively associated with the characteristics of gratitude, hope, and forgiveness (Jankowski & Sandage 2011; Sandage & Williamson 2010; Wood, Froh, & Geraghty, 2010). Some previous studies also highlighted the role of prayer for religious congregations among religious believers (Collins, 2014; Di Placido, 2022; Draper, 2019; Ferguson, 2020). Spiritual prayer helps in overcoming individual's stress in difficult circumstances when life is in danger because of fatal diseases like cancer and it improves quality life satisfaction (Boguszewski, Makowska, Bożewicz, & Podkowińska, 2020; Chirico, Sharma, Zaffina, & Magnavita, 2020; Roh, Burnette, & Lee, 2018; Yousif, Arbab, & Yousef, 2022; Wnuk, 2021a, 2021b, 2022). The prayer helps in recovering from unforeseen and unpredictable matters of life (Bendien, Kruijthoff, van der Kooi, Glas, & Abma, 2023).

Spiritual interest

The interest or motivation towards various activities are closely interlinked with each other and interest is much explored in an educational context (Ainley, 2012; Allen, Iliescu, & Greiff, 2022; Fredrics & Wang, 2019; Hattie et al., 2020; Knogler, 2017; Koskinen, McMullen, Halme, Hannula-Sormunen, Ninaus, & Kiili, 2022; Pekrun & Marsh, 2022; Renninger, Bachrach, & Hidi, 2019; Rotgans & Schmidt, 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Interest in an individual enhances performance in various activities successfully, and it is essential to initiate an activity to be done (Benden & Lauermaun, 2022; Bosch, Seifried, & Spinath, 2021; Kosovitch, Flake, & Hulleman, 2017; Wong, 2023). In the absence of interest, stress increases, and it reduces performance (Müller, Thomas, Carmignola, Dittrich, Eckes, Großmann, ... & Bieg, 2021; Usher, Golding, Han, Griffiths, McGavran, Brown, & Sheehan, 2021). Interest is paramount in predicting an individual's performance in various activities (Maltese & Tai, 2011). In an educational setting, motivation and interest are very imperative to boost learners' morale at the end of teachers. Similarly, in the context of spiritual development, the motivation and interest of the Seeker of

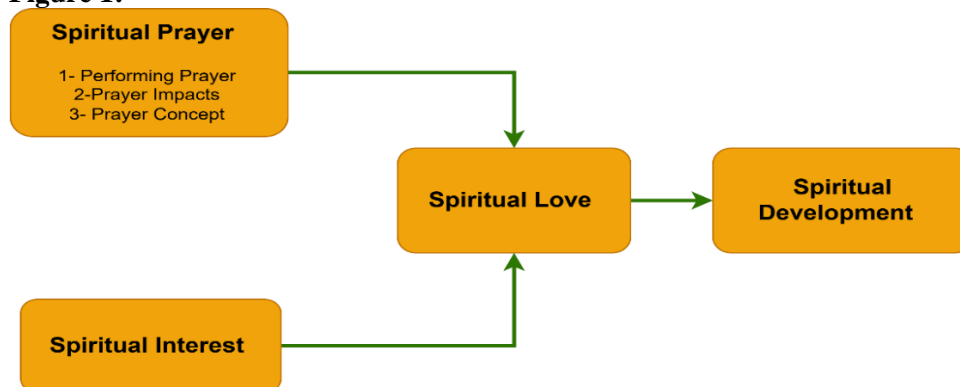
Truth are essential and may be further boosted by the spiritual director (Eckes, Großmann, & Wilde, 2018; Großmann, Hofferber, Wilde, & Basten, 2023; Kang, Keinonen, & Salonen, 2021; Schmäing & Grotjo-hann, 2022). Interest is explored with the help of pedagogical interest theory (Krapp, 1999, 2005). In the self-determination theoretical perspective, interest is associated with intrinsic motivation (Di Domenico & Ryan, 2017). A learner's autonomy increases interest and enthusiasm for achieving desired outcomes (Desch, Stiller, & Wilde, 2015). Role of interest and motivation in emotional and motivational theories highlight significance of students' interest and emotions for achievement in various activities in all the fields of knowledge (Hannula, Leder, Morselli, Vollstedt, & Zhang, 2019; Niss & Blum, 2020; Rellensmann & Schukajlow, 2018; Reuker & Künzell, 2021; Schulze Elfringhoff & Schukajlow, 2021; Schukajlow, Rakoczy, & Pekrun, 2023; Urhahne & Wijnia, 2021).

Spiritual love

In this ephemeral world, every living soul needs love and to be loved by others. Without love, life is not worth living and worth enjoying. In Triangular Love Theory of Sternberg, closeness, divine desire, and loyalty are important factors of love (Dariyo, 2003; Mahmud, 2019; Sternberg Robert, 1986). The person who is intoxicated with divine love can behold the Truth (Faruqi, 1996). Many previous studies explored spiritual love to attain spiritual elevation (El-Zein, 2000; Gray, 2020; Kaya, 2016; Mammadli, 2023). It is divine love which illuminates the Sufi's heart and soul to know oneself and achieve spiritual culmination (Mutlag, 2022). Rumi's belief about love manifested in his Mathnawi wherein love is like an ocean and the sky is considered as the foam above this ocean (Lumbard, 2007). Belief in Oneness and divine love are inseparable and when the heart of a Sufi is intoxicated with divine love which enables the true lover to behold the Truth (Golkarian, 2018).

Spiritual development

Sufism is the divine path which leads to spiritual culmination to behold the Unseen (Mutlag, 2022). It has been constantly questioned about the relationship between man and God (Bradshaw, & Kent, 2018). Different schools of thoughts such as Iranian Sufis, Indian Buddhists and American Transcendentalists firmly believe in the relationship of human beings with God and ultimate desire of humanity is to have proximity to God (Ansari, & Jahantigh, 2019). These school of thoughts believe in "Oneness" but Sufis believed in "Tawhid", while Buddhists believed in "Mandala" and Transcendentalists believed in "Nature" which is manifested in the essays of Emerson wherein he considered himself as an inseparable divine particle (Emerson, 2004, p. 4). In the light of the above literature, little empirical research has been carried out so far to determine the association between the latent variables of research framework. Therefore, current study proposes the research hypotheses as under.

Research Model of present study**Figure 1:**

Source: Researcher's proposed model

Notes: Spiritual prayer is higher order construct. Spiritual interest is an exogenous first order reflective construct. Spiritual love is an endogenous first order reflective mediating construct. Spiritual development is an endogenous first order reflective construct.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the positive relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual love at DSOST.
2. To determine the positive relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual love at DSOST.
3. To determine the positive relationship between spiritual love and spiritual development at DSOST
4. To determine whether spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual development at DSOST.
5. To determine whether spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual development at DSOST

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Does spiritual prayer have an impact on spiritual love at DSOST?
2. Does spiritual interest have an impact on spiritual love at DSOST?
3. Does spiritual love have an impact on spiritual development at DSOST?
4. Does spiritual love mediate the relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual development at DSOST?
5. Does spiritual love mediate the relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual development at DSOST?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. Spiritual prayer is positively related to spiritual love at DSOST.
2. Spiritual interest is positively related to spiritual love at DSOST.
3. Spiritual love is positively related to spiritual development at DSOST.

4. Spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual development at DSOST.
5. Spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual development at DSOST.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

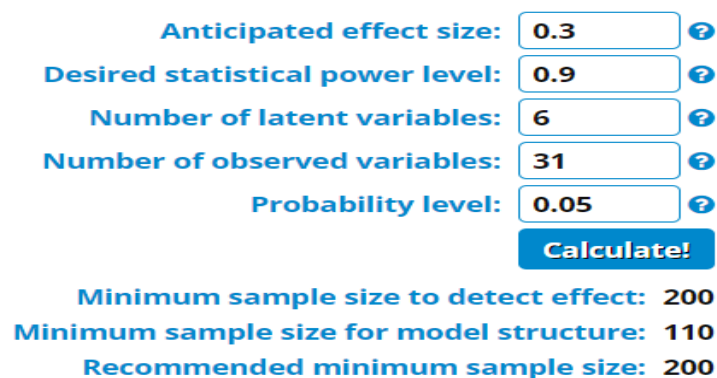
Sample and Procedure

The author collected data in person from the respondents and convenience sampling non-probability sampling techniques were used to have easy access to research participants (Bougie, & Sekaran, 2019).

Minimum sample size comprising n=200 research participants was suggested using Daniel Soper calculator (Soper, 2020). Nonetheless, the data were collected from n=300 respondents and after the data screening procedure using SPSS v.27, effect size may be detected using useable sample size was n=274 research participants.

Justification of Minimum size of sample

Figure 2:



Source: Author's estimation

Furthermore, SPSS v.27 was used to address data screening processes. Missing data was estimated using Little's MCAR test and it was significant. As a result, multiple imputations were appropriate techniques to fill the missing data. Data were collected from n=300 respondents and n=26 multivariate outliers were detected and removed from the dataset. Thus, detecting sample size consists of n=274 research participants which may be considered adequate enough for testing hypotheses.

The researcher ensured ethical considerations in present empirical research by following the guidelines (Bryman, 2016; Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2014). Nonetheless, it was assured that participants may take part voluntarily and may

withdraw without giving any reasons and may not receive any harm (Rooney & Evans, 2018) and their anonymity and confidentiality was ascertained (Babbie, 2020).

Table 1: Profile of Research Participants (n=274)

No	Variables	Categories	f	%
1	Gender	Male	131	47.8
		Female	143	52.2
2	Age	Less than and equal to 20	60	21.9
		21-25	62	22.6
		26-30	67	24.5
		31-35	28	10.2
		36-40	14	5.1
		41-45	19	6.9
		46-50	11	4.0
		51-55	8	2.9
		Over 56	5	1.8
3	Family Status	Single	177	64.6
		Married	88	32.1
		Divorced	5	1.8
		Separated	2	0.7
		Widow/Widower	2	0.7
4	Education	Bachelors	131	47.8
		MA/MSc.	95	34.7
		MPhil./MS	30	10.9
		PhD	18	6.6
5	Residence	Urban	115	42.0
		Rural	126	46.0
		Peri-urban	33	12.0
6	Socio-economic Background	Lower Class	34	12.4
		Middle Class	226	82.5
		Upper/Elite Class	14	5.1
7	Economic activity	Student	176	64.2
		Teaching Faculty	56	20.4
		Non-Teaching Faculty	42	15.3
8	Religiosity	Islam	240	87.6
		Hinduism	20	7.3
		Christianity	14	5.1

Source: Authors' estimation

Measures

The research model comprised 6 latent reflective constructs wherein 31

manifesting variables and researcher adapted these scales from the previous research. Nevertheless, data were collected using five Likert scales such as strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 5 and all the constructs were reliable.

Table 2: Measures

First Order Reflective Constructs	Item Codes	One Sample Item	Mean (SD)	No. of Items	α	Source
Performing Prayer	PP1	“I perform dawn morning prayer (fajr) in the Mosque every day”	4.4015 (0.67352)	7	0.85	Achour, Muhamad, Syihab, Nor, & Yusoff, (2019).
	PP2		4.0365 (0.84653)			
	PP3		3.8431 (0.94588)			
	PP4		4.1825 (0.97002)			
	PP5		3.6861 (0.97027)			
	PP6		4.3212 (0.78385)			
	PP7		3.6861 (1.06046)			
Prayer Impacts	PI1	“I feel relief from worries whenever I perform my prayer”	3.7810 (1.01790)	5	0.694	Achour, Muhamad, Syihab, Nor, & Yusoff, (2019).
	PI2		4.2226 (0.83736)			
	PI3		4.2409 (0.71124)			
	PI4		4.2153 (0.80360)			
	PI5		3.5657 (1.02231)			
Prayer Concept	PC1	“I believe that life without prayer has no meaning/power”	4.3613 (0.68267)	4	0.603	Achour, Muhamad, Syihab, Nor, & Yusoff, (2019).
	PC2		3.9672 (0.87015)			
	PC3		3.8978 (0.93593)			
	PC4		3.8723 (0.82215)			
Spiritual Interest	SI1	“I give myself pleasure by Sufi meditation”	2.8686 (1.34963)	4	0.763	Chi, Pan, & Del Chiappa, (2018)
	SI2		3.0693 (1.23396)			
	SI3		3.6350 (1.03333)			
	SI4		3.5620 (0.98977)			
Spiritual Love	SL1	“I love God”	3.8358 (0.97140)	8	0.832	Levin, (2001)
	SL2		3.5146 (0.94237)			
	SL3		3.5839			

						(0.93873)
	SL4					3.7190
						(1.02953)
	SL5					3.6642
						(1.03971)
	SL6					4.0328
						(0.87853)
	SL7					3.5146
						(0.93064)
	SL8					3.9051
						(0.87608)
<i>Spiritual Development</i>	SD1	“Spirituality assists me to be creative and to develop my values”		3	0.628	3.8394 (0.79590)
						Spurr, Bally, Ogenchuk, & Walker, (2012)
	SD2					3.7117
						(0.88169)
	SD3					3.9124
						(0.77483)

Source: Authors' estimation

Justification of using PLS-SEM technique

Researcher followed the suggested criteria using PLS-SEM technique in this empirical study (Legate, Ringle, & Hair Jr, 2024; Magno, Cassia, & Ringle, 2024; Vaithilingam, Ong, Moisescu, & Nair, 2024), therefore, SmartPLS version 4 was used to analyze the data due to the following prime reasons (Ringle, Sarstedt, Sinkovics, & Sinkovics, 2023; Sarstedt, Hair Jr, Cheah, Becker, & Ringle, 2019; Sarstedt, & Liu, 2024).

- i. The research model was a little bit complex having 6 latent constructs with 31 indicators and one the constructs i.e., spiritual prayer was HOC, and the remaining were LOCs used in the present research model.
- ii. The researcher model comprised one mediating variable such as spiritual love.
- iii. Detecting effect size by PLS-SEM technique, n=2474 was representative sample size to generalize the research findings.

Common Method Variance Bias

Researchers face the issue of CMVB when single source data are collected. To address the issue of CMVB, two different statistical techniques such as Harman's test of single factor and Full Collinearity Testing were used to establish that the collected data were unbiased. Results of single factor test revealed $15.537\% < 50\%$ (Baumgartner, Weijters, & Pieters, 2021; Leonard, Simmering, & Wall, 2024; Podsakoff, Podsakoff, Williams, Huang, & Yang, 2024; Reio, 2024). Moreover, VIF of full collinearity testing should be ≤ 3.3 (Kock, 2015). The results showed all constructs' VIF in outer models were PP=1.536, PI=1.710, PC=1.764, SI=1.035, SL=1.010, and SD=1.758 which clearly manifests that CMV bias does not exist in the dataset (Tehseen, Ramayah, & Sajilan, 2017).

DATA ANALYSIS

Measurement Model

To establish outer models before testing hypotheses, the author established outer models before testing research hypotheses by using suggested criteria (Hair, Sharma, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Liengaard, 2024; Magno, Cassia, & Ringle, 2024; Subhaktiyasa, 2024; Usakli, & Kucukergin, 2018). The author established an outer model by checking the required threshold values of loadings, CR, AVE and VIF. Therefore, factor loadings were greater than 0.60, CR was greater than 0.60, AVE was greater than 0.50 and $VIF \leq 3$ (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2009; Hulland, 1999). However, author established discriminant validity by assessing Cross loadings (≥ 0.60), FLC method (1981), and HTMT (< 0.85) which is considered very stringent criteria for all the latent constructs and measurement models were established in tables 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Table 3: Outer model LOCs

Constructs	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE	Outer VIF
Performing Prayer	PP1	0.711	0.886	0.528	1.606
	PP2	0.755			1.729
	PP3	0.644			1.47
	PP4	0.69			1.608
	PP5	0.757			1.845
	PP6	0.788			2.006
	PP7	0.731			1.806
Prayer Impacts	PI1	0.843	0.777	0.541	1.418
	PI2	0.719			1.317
	PI5	0.629			1.312
Prayer Concept	PC1	0.816	0.77	0.536	1.517
	PC2	0.81			1.552
	PC4	0.535			1.032
Spiritual Interest	SI1	0.915	0.893	0.808	1.615
	SI2	0.881			1.615
Spiritual Love	SL3	0.616	0.877	0.549	1.561
	SL4	0.816			2.389
	SL5	0.856			2.327
	SL6	0.521			1.234
	SL8	0.798			1.941
	SD1	0.523			0.737
SD2	0.55	1.267			
SD3	0.968	1.249			

Source: Researcher's estimation

Note: PP=Performing prayer, PI=Prayer Impacts, PC=Prayer Concept, SI=Spiritual Interest, SL=Spiritual Love, and SD=Spiritual Development.

Table 4: Outer model HOC

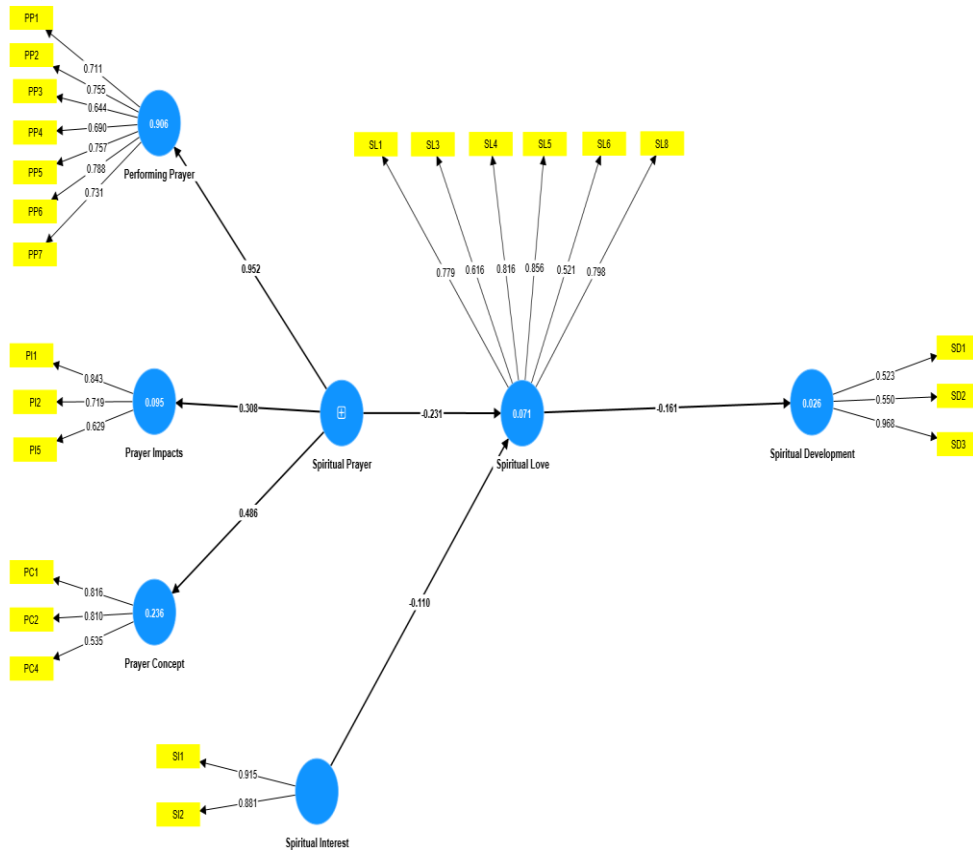
Second order constructs	Measure	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE
Spiritual Prayer	Performing Prayer	PP	.952	0.830	0.625

Prayer Impacts	PI	.707
Prayer Concepts	PC	.685

Source: Researcher's estimation

Measurement Model

Figure 3:



Source: Author's estimation

Table 5: FLC Method

S. No.	Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Performing Prayer	0.727					
2	Prayer Concept	0.246	0.732				
3	Prayer Impacts	0.13	0.122	0.735			
4	Spiritual Development	0.02	0.12	0.16	0.71		
5	Spiritual Interest	0.087	0.075	0.108	0.045	0.899	
6	Spiritual Love	0.238	0.107	0.054	0.161	0.135	0.741

Source: Researcher's estimation

Table 6: Cross Loadings

LOCs	Items	PP	PC	PI	SD	SI	SL
Performing Prayer	PP1	0.711	0.124	0.057	0.034	0.055	0.167
	PP2	0.755	0.188	0.061	0.03	0.024	0.227
	PP3	0.644	0.088	0.146	0.038	0.015	0.087
	PP4	0.69	0.088	0.093	0.019	0.068	0.155
	PP5	0.757	0.15	0.062	0.002	0.092	0.191
	PP6	0.788	0.273	0.093	0.022	0.098	0.268
	PP7	0.731	0.304	0.154	0.053	0.081	0.097
Prayer Concept	PC1	0.204	0.816	0.134	0.121	0.092	0.049
	PC2	0.133	0.81	0.054	0.153	0.046	0.046
	PC4	0.197	0.535	0.069	0.023	0.348	0.149
Prayer Impacts	PI1	0.093	0.14	0.843	0.178	0.055	0.058
	PI2	0.046	0.184	0.719	0.231	0.114	0.071
	PI5	0.147	0.061	0.629	0.063	0.075	0.125
Spiritual Development	SD1	0.009	0.096	0.073	0.523	0.047	0.039
	SD2	0.068	0.031	0.039	0.55	0.034	0.031
	SD3	0.033	0.115	0.166	0.968	0.037	0.175
Spiritual Interest	SI1	0.111	0.118	0.097	0.026	0.915	0.131
	SI2	0.04	0.008	0.097	0.057	0.881	0.111
Spiritual Love	SL1	0.256	0.041	0.073	0.139	0.091	0.779
	SL3	0.052	0.054	0.027	0.118	0.044	0.616
	SL4	0.166	0.129	0.025	0.113	0.069	0.816
	SL5	0.205	0.102	0.071	0.142	0.168	0.856
	SL6	0.115	0.051	0.002	0.103	0.04	0.521
	SL8	0.186	0.096	0.014	0.1	0.14	0.798

Source: Author's estimation

Note: PP=Performing prayer, PI=Prayer Impacts, PC=Prayer Concept, SI=Spiritual Interest, SL=Spiritual Love, and SD=Spiritual Development.

Table 7: HTMT_{0.85}

S. No.	Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Performing Prayer						
2	Prayer Concept	0.353					
3	Prayer Impacts	0.218	0.356				
4	Spiritual Development	0.111	0.203	0.336			
5	Spiritual Interest	0.107	0.352	0.17	0.074		
6	Spiritual Love	0.261	0.169	0.174	0.151	0.155	

Source: Researcher's estimation

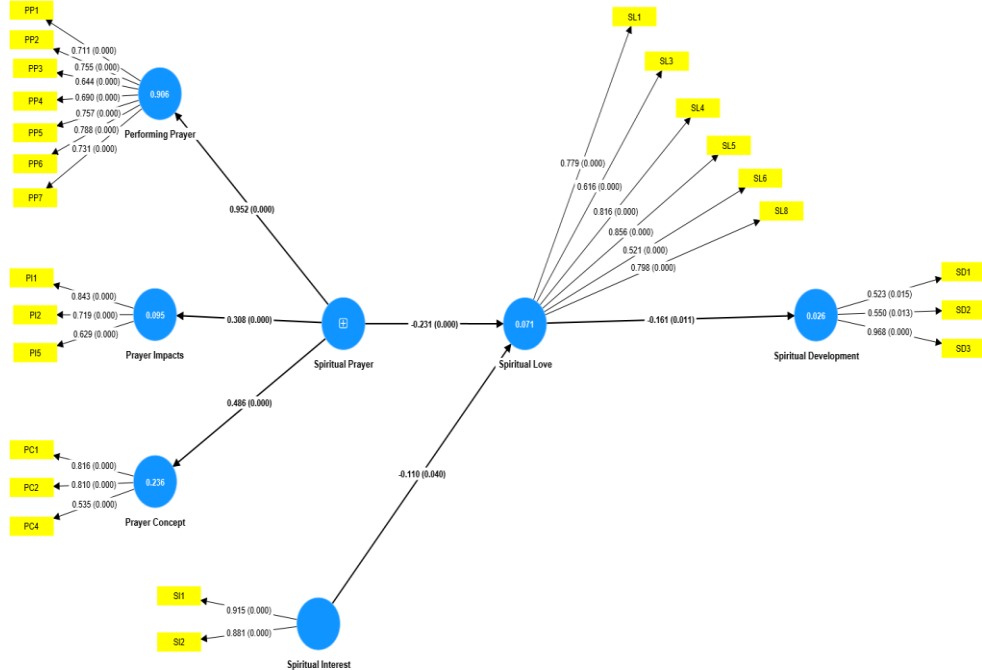
Hypotheses Testing

Researcher used PLS-SEM technique to check the proposed hypotheses by following suggested criteria (Aburumman, Omar, Al Shbail, & Aldoghan, 2022;

Cepeda-Carrion, Cegarra-Navarro, & Cillo, 2019; Kock, 2016; Dash, & Paul, 2021; Magno, Cassia, & Ringle, 2024; Subhaktiyasa, 2024; Ramli, Latan, & Nartea, 2018). Furthermore, the researcher estimated R² (Hair et al., 2010), Q² (Sarstedt et al., 2014), f² (Kenny, 2016) and finally PLSpredict (Shmueli, et al., 2019) while testing the hypotheses. Mediating hypotheses were tested using the suggested guidelines (Preacher & Hayes 2004; 2008).

Hypotheses Testing

Figure 4:



Source: Author's estimation

Table 8: Testing Direct Hypotheses

No.	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	BCI LL 5%	BCI UL 95%	Decision	f ²	R ²	Adjusted R ²
H _{A1}	SP → SL	0.231	0.064	3.582	0.000	-0.325	-0.113	Supported	0.057	0.071	0.064
H _{A2}	SI → SL	0.11	0.063	1.751	0.04	0.201	0.006	Supported	0.013	0.071	0.064
H _{A3}	SL → SD	0.161	0.07	2.307	0.011	0.211	0.232	Supported	0.026	0.026	0.022

Source: Author's estimation

Note: SP= Spiritual prayer, SI= Spiritual Interest, SL= Spiritual Love, and SD= Spiritual Development.

Q² (SL) = 0.471, and Q² (SD) = 0.503,

Table 8 shows that proposed direct hypotheses were accepted or supported. First, spiritual prayer is positively related to spiritual love in Darazi School of Sufi Thought because (β = 0.231) and p values = 0.000 < 0.05 whereas BCI LL (5%) = -0.325 and BCI UL (95%) = -0.113. Second, spiritual interest has a significant

impact on spiritual love in Darazi School of Sufi Thought because ($\beta = 0.11$) and p values = $0.04 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = 0.201 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.006. Third, spiritual love has a significant impact on spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought because ($\beta = 0.161$) and p values = $0.011 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = 0.211 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.232.

Table 9: Testing Indirect Hypotheses

No.	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	p-values	BCI LL (5%)	BCI UL (95%)	Decision
H _{A4}	SP → SL → SD	0.037	0.022	1.716	0.043	0.039	0.062	Supported (Mediation)
H _{A5}	SI → SL → SD	0.018	0.015	1.212	0.113	-0.019	0.036	Not Supported

Source: Researcher's estimation

Note: SP=Spiritual prayer, SI=Spiritual Interest, SL=Spiritual Love, and SD=Spiritual Development.

Table 9 shows that one indirect hypothesis was supported, and one indirect hypothesis was not supported. First, spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought was supported because ($\beta = 0.037$) and p values = $0.043 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = 0.039 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.062. Second, spiritual love does not mediate the relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought which was not supported because ($\beta = 0.018$) and p values = $0.113 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = -0.019 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.036.

Assessing Predictive Validity

Table 10: PLS predict (RMSE)

Items	Q ² predict (Items)	PLS-SEM (RMSE)	LM (RMSE)	PLS-SEM-LM (RMSE) Difference	Is RMSE (PLS-SEM) less than RMSE (LM)?	Decision
SD1	.426	.722	.89	-.168	Yes	High Predictive Power
SD2	.506	.68	.855	-.175	Yes	
SD3	.593	.587	.755	-.168	Yes	

Source: Researcher's estimation

Table 10 shows the proposed research model holds high predictive power and therefore generalizability has been established (Shmueli et al., 2019).

DISCUSSION

As far as this empirical study in the research area of Sufism is unique in nature. All the hypotheses were supported except one indirect hypothesis. First, spiritual prayer has a significant impact on spiritual love in Darazi School of Sufi Thought because ($\beta = 0.231$) and p values = $0.000 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = -0.325 and BCI UL (95%) = -0.113. Second, spiritual interest has a significant impact on spiritual love in Darazi School of Sufi Thought because ($\beta = 0.11$) and p values = $0.04 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = 0.201 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.006. Third,

spiritual love has a significant impact on spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought because ($\beta = 0.161$) and p values = $0.011 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = 0.211 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.232. Fourth, spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought was supported because ($\beta = 0.037$) and p values = $0.043 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = 0.039 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.062. Fifth, spiritual love does not mediate the relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought which was not supported because ($\beta = 0.018$) and p values = $0.113 < 0.05$ whereas BCI LL (5%) = -0.019 and BCI UL (95%) = 0.036.

Furthermore, in the first and second direct hypothesis the value of $R^2 = 0.071$ which clearly manifests that spiritual prayer and spiritual interest predict 7.1% change in spiritual development at DSOST. However, in third hypothesis, value of $R^2 = 0.026$ which clearly indicates that spiritual love predicts 2.6% change in spiritual development at DSOST. From findings, this present empirical research recommends selecting more relevant variables from recent studies to improve the prediction in spiritual development i.e., an endogenous variable.

The findings of present empirical research are in line with the previous studies on Spiritual Prayer (such as, Del Castillo, Del Castillo, & Koenig, 2023; Ferguson, Willemsen, & Castañeto, 2010; Finney, & Malony, 1985; Lowe, Wang, & Chin, 2022; Mastor, Samuri, Md Sham, Idris, Mohd Kashim, & Hopkins, 2023; McCullough, 1995; Paine, & Sandage, 2015; Paine, & Sandage, 2023; Stavros, 1998; Syamila, & Mansoer, 2023); Spiritual Interest (such as, Bhandari, Hallowell, & Correll, 2019; Endres, Weyreter, Renkl, & Eitel, 2020; Høgheim, Jenssen, & Federici, 2022; Nuutila, Tapola, Tuominen, Kupiainen, Pásztor, & Niemivirta, 2020; Pekrun, 2019; Raber, Ferdig, Gandolfi, & Clements, 2022; Roure, Kermarrec, & Pasco, 2019; Su, 2020); Spiritual Love (such as, Bensaid, ben Tahar Machouche, & Tekke, 2021; Borrello, Antonelli, Salvatori, & Dèttore, 2023; Currier, McDermott, Stevens, Isaak, Davis, Hollingsworth, ... & Stefurak, 2021; Currier, Stevens, Hinkel, Davis, & Park, 2022; Dias, & Cavalheiro, 2022; Estlein, Gewirtz-Meydan, & Opuda, 2022; Huo, & Xie, 2021; Hood, 2019; Kira, Shuwiekh, Al-Huwailah, Zidan, & Bujold-Bugeaud, 2021; Naila, SAEED, & AFRIDI, 2022; Montagna, 2023; Pfaltzgraff-Carlson, 2020; Pett, Lozano, & Varga, 2023; Sakulsinlapakorn, & Zhang, 2019; Shannonhouse, Aten, Hall, Silverman, & McMartin, 2020; Sunarya, Lutfiani, Santoso, & Toyibah, 2021; Wang Xu, Kim, Olmstead, & Enright, 2022) and Spiritual Development (such as, An, West, Sandage, & Bell, 2019; Barnes, 2023; Dollahite, & Marks, 2019; Momoh, & Naidoo, 2022; Mayhew, & Rockenbach, 2021; Makkar, & Singh, 2021; Motornaya, & Makhovykh, 2022; Pirozhenko, Khartman, & Soroka, 2021; Skrzypińska, 2021; Tojjeva, 2020; Zaman, 2019).

Contribution of current empirical research

As far as the literature is concerned, this empirical study is of a unique in nature regarding the study of Sufism and attempts to add contribution in the existing body of knowledge theoretically, methodologically, and regionally. As far as theoretical contribution is concerned, it is the first empirical research in Sufism which makes use of Two-factor Theory (Herzberg, 1959) wherein spiritual prayer is considered hygiene factor or extrinsic motivator because in the absence of it, the Seeker of Truth feels demotivated and spiritual interest is considered as an intrinsic motivator because in the presence of it, the Seeker of Truth feels motivated in attaining spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought. However, Cartwright (2001) highlighted the key role of spiritual development theorists. Briefly speaking, the theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1959), interest theory (Hidi, & Renninger, 2006; Krapp, Hidi, & Renninger, 1992), Love theory (Sternberg, 1986; Mahmud, 2019), Spiritual development theories (Fowler, 1981 and 1994; Oser, 1991; Oser, & Gmünder, 1991) were tested in a single model of this empirical research.

Second, this empirical research contributes methodologically because it identified the research gaps wherein little research work has been done so far and these gaps were left unexplored and unaddressed in the previous research regarding Sufism. Therefore, the first research gap was to investigate how spiritual prayer and spiritual love are related with each other at Darazi School of Sufi Thought. Second the research gap was to examine how spiritual interest and spiritual love are associated with each other at Darazi School of Sufi Thought. The third research gap was to examine how spiritual love and spiritual development are related with each other at Darazi School of Sufi Thought. The fourth research gap was to determine whether spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual prayer and spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought. The fifth research gap was to determine whether spiritual love mediates the relationship between spiritual interest and spiritual development in Darazi School of Sufi Thought.

Moreover, this empirical research is unique in its nature because this phenomenon has been left ignored in local and international context regarding Sufism and Darazi School of Sufi Thought.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Present empirical research recommends the following implications for the concerned parties regarding Sufism at Darazi School of Sufi Thought.

The Darazi spiritual directors should promote the culture of spiritual prayer among their Seekers of Truth so that their spiritual interest may be developed to attain spiritual development.

The Darazi spiritual directors should give spiritual company to Seekers of Truth so that they may be intoxicated with divine love to be spiritually enlightened.

The spiritual directors of Darazi School of Sufi Thought should arrange

workshops, seminars, symposiums, and conferences with the collaboration of national and international universities to promote the divine message of love, fraternity, equality, and global peace.

The educational institutions right from primary to tertiary level should develop the culture of oneness irrespective of any caste, colour and creed.

The curriculum developers should include chapters of Sufism and Darazi School of Sufi Thought in textbooks right from primary to tertiary level.

Spiritual prayer, interest and love are key contributors in developing spiritual attainment so these factors may be highlighted in the educational institutions right from primary to tertiary level.

This empirical study comprises some key limitations and direction for future research. First, the single source cross sectional data were collected from research participants of Darazi School of Sufi Thought from the public sector general, medical, and engineering universities of Sindh province. However, future researchers may collect data from other provinces of the country by including private universities and the results may be compared. Second, the mono method of data collection may cause common-method variance bias therefore, the researcher used full collinearity technique. The future researchers may use marker variables from recent literature if data may be collected through single source. Third, in the first and second direct hypothesis the value of $R^2 = 0.071$ which clearly manifests that spiritual prayer and spiritual interest predict 7.1% change in spiritual development. However, in third hypothesis, value of $R^2 = 0.026$ which clearly indicates that spiritual love predicts 2.6% change in spiritual development. Present empirical research recommends selecting more relevant variables from recent studies to improve the prediction in spiritual development i.e., an endogenous variable.

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