
**SUFI MUSIC IS EXCEPTIONAL IN PROMOTING SOCIABILITY:
A STUDY OF “SHAH-Jo-RAAG”**

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ABSTRACT

Sufi music is universally accepted for creating self-awareness, reducing stress, and offering mental well-being. It is a simple tool for healing, and connecting with others beyond religious and national differences. “Shah-Jo-Raag” is uniquely composed Sufi music that is the true voice of people beyond the boundaries to promote tolerance and human co-existence. It is played over an Indigenous musical instrument called “Danbooro”. It was invented by a poet and Sufi Saint of all times, Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, with five strings and a heart-shaped base. The Shah’s poetry that is sung through Shah-Jo-Raag was composed in the native Language of common folk. The compilation of his poetry is called “Shah-Jo-Risalo”. There are different Sufi themes in poetry and Sufi music “Shah-Jo-Raag” is a recitation of poetry. Thirty chapters are sung by a group of singers. A large number of people listen to the music, and they enjoy the chanting voice of melodies. In the present research paper, the content analysis research method was used. 30 Chapters of “Surs” were studied, and 04 published versions of “Shah-Jo-Rsialo” were used for the secondary data. Initially, 30 themes were drawn. These themes were reduced to 07, which were associated with seven women whose cultural stories were largely circulated among people in Sindh and across the world. Out of these, 06 themes were drawn concerning poetic verses for final interpretation. The poetic words were well-articulated in a thematic arrangement for the readers to study the mystic concepts of Sufi music.

Keywords: Sufi-music, Sociability, Shah-Jo-Raag, Shah-Jo-Risalo, and Musical Instrument (Danbooro)

INTRODUCTION

Islam is the religion of peace, tolerance, and brotherhood. The customary rituals, norms, and Islamic standards are the mainstream of Islamic practices. Islamic mysticism is a concept that flourished through the Sufi shrines across the country. These rituals, a comprehensive message of peace and brotherhood, are regularly arranged within the premises of Sufi shrines in Pakistan and South Asian countries. People are bestowed with an innate ability to

recognize the aesthetics of Sufi traditions through deep cognition. The state of spirituality in life is a true station where someone attains the high rank of humanity and begins to serve the human being through spiritual virtues like charity, sincerity, truthfulness, and sacrifice. The Sufi rituals are practices that connect the hearts of people beyond their differences. In the same way – Sufi music is a kind of heart-touching voice and pure to directly catch the soul of human beings across the world. Sufi music “Shah-Jo-Raag” is also unique in its composition and melodies arranged in order. It reflects the voice of oppressed people that can connect the hearts of many nations across the world. Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai composed his poetry in the Sindhi language (the native language and mother tongue of the local people). Besides, he included the substance of cultural stories to create an interest in poetic content. Therefore, Shah-Jo-Raag has been sung regularly at the Dargah of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, Bhitshah, and it is equally liked by all people. The music is preserved, and enriched with chanting melodies, with a combination of five strings firmed in the musical instrument “Dambooro”. The musical notations were composed by two musicians, namely Mr. Atal and Mr. Chanchal. They both came to Bhitshah during the time of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai. According to his guidance, Shah's poetic verses were placed in front of him, and composed "Shah Jo Raag". In this way, the voice of the Sindh soil based on human values became prevalent with the melody, the sound of the head, and the chanting voices. Starting from dusk till dawn, the tradition of singing goes on continuously. Initially, it was started only on Friday night, and then all the nights of the week prevailed. In the recent past, this process has continued even during the day.

SUFI MUSIC (SHAH-JO-RAAG)

The notations to Sufi music are a collection of verses, voices, and tones, the ups and downs of the voices are deeply connected in harmony. In Shah's treasured message, the repetitions of the melody, and the sounds of the vowels were not recorded in writing, but there is a fragment of the pained voice of the martyrs of Sindh that was memorized by the singers (Faqeers). In the language of Raag, the word Sindhi language is used as “Sad or call” In English, a melodious voice" means the beginning of the song, while the Sindhi word

"Hoongaro a completion of a verse" means the end of the couplet or verse. Every night Shah's Raag begins with chapter Kalyan. The term "Kalyan" means the prosperity of common folk. This tone is called "*Oh Mein Yan*" and Hoongaro, the last syllable of each stanza. Chapter Yaman Kalyan "*O Mein, yaan*", the last note of each verse is sung with a low-pitched voice. "*O Mian*" is sung while singing Sur Kanbhat verses. The chorus calls "*Alu Bhala Miayan*", the last song of the Hoongaro complete. The melody of sailors Sur Sarir Raa "*O Mian*", the last song of Hoongaro verses, while the famous singers sang "*O Wu Allah*" in Hungarian. At the end of each stanza, the sound of "*O Mian*" is added. Samundi sings "*Oh Owl*", and Hongaroo is "*Oh Wow, Oh Allah Bhallo Mian Allah*". The first and last notes of each verse are sung to the tune of "*Oh Woo Woo*". The song "*Barr bar wo hai hai*" is the Hungarian version of "*Hi hai*" in a line. After the first and last set of the chorus, the melody of "*woo woo*" is sung. Before singing the last song of the verse, the melody of "*Bar Bar Wo*" is sung.

The chapter on rain is called "Sarang" in the native language, it starts with the Sindhi notations "*Alo Bhlo Mian La, La O Mian La La La*", and the Hoongaro is "*La La La O Kareem Tun O Mula Ala*". The verses sing the first and last set with a rendition of "*Oh Myan La La La*". Each verse of Sunhani begins with "*O Mian Alu Mian O La La La*", ending with "*Omian Allah*" or the first part of the last stanza of the verse. "*O Wu Allah O Mian Allah*" is. In verses, the second poetic line in the three-lined verse, the second line in the four-lined verse, and the second and fourth lines in the five-lined verse are sung along with "*Mian O Wu Allah*". "*O Mian Alu Men Yan*" is sung on the tap and of the five strands of the Danbooro with the lights of the deep. Hoongaro "*Bhalo Mian Wo Allah*" or the last half of the verse is sung. While verse singing begins with the melody ending with "*Mian Alu*". The verse begins with the desi tune "*Hadi Bhallo Mein Yan*" and ends with "*Obhlo Wo Allah*". The melody of "*Oh Bhalo Wu Allah*" is sung with the first, second, and last set of two, three-set verses. Sur Kohyari – friendship with mountains "*O Mian Lala*", the end of the verse "*Mian Allah Tun O Maula Allah*". The melody of "*Mian Allah*" is sung with the first set of poetic verses singing. Hussain's cries are "*Oh Wu*" and "*Alo Allah Bhallo Mian Allah*". While singing the verse, they add "*O woo woo*" with the first, and second sets and "*Allu woo Allah*" with the last set. Surath sings "*O woo woo*" and begins the verse with

"Allah Kareem Raja Ji Ari O Raja Ji". Subaru Sindhi "Lalala La, O Mian" and Hungarian sings half of the last line of the verse. While singing the verse, the beginning with the word "Aloo" and the end of "Mian la la la" are sung. "Ya Aare Ya Aare" and "Yaari Marjani Aare O Rab Jaani" are sung in Baruvhindi. Ranojo called "O Mian Alumian Lalala Mian" and Hoongaro "O Wu Allah" and also sang the last half line of the verse. The beginning of the verse is sung with the sound of "O," and the end of the verse is sung with "Mayan". Surkapayati "Omyan Allah Hadi Bhallo Mian Allah", the last stanza of the verse in Hungary. "La O La" and "Oh Woo Woo Bhallo Mian Allah". "Aye Hai" and "Thiya Ha" are sung in harmony with the songs of the house. Surrip "Mian O Mian", "Bhlo Mian Allah". Apart from this, there is the sound of "Allah" at the end of the verse. Ramkli "Omian Alumin Yan", Hoongaro "Oh Min Yan O Tun Allah". "O" and "Aye" are sung while singing the verse. Most of the verses begin with "Sain Sain Alu" and "Baaj Khesa Allah" sung. Surlilan "Awwow" is sung to the tune of "Ya Allah Ya Allah". Surbilawal's call "O Mian Lalalala Mian O Tun Allah", Hoongaro "Allah Kareem Tun O Tun Maula Allah" is sung in the same way as "Mian O Tun Allah". Asa begins with the call "Alu Mian Alu Mian La" and is sung as the ending of the "Alu Mian La" or the last song of the verse. "Mean On" is added. "Allah Kareem Tun O Maulallah" of Surkamoud "Omin Yan E" is sung. The verse starts with "Bhali Bhalu Mian O Mian Re O Lalala" and ends with "Bhali Bhalu Mian Allah" while the chorus of "Re Lalala" is sung. Surmari's call "Omen Yan", and Hoongaro "Oh Wu Allah" is sung. Dhanasari sings "Alo Mein Yaan Alo Mein Ala" and the chant of "Allah Kareem Toon O Maula Allah" is sung. Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai's book is an inexhaustible source of knowledge of Sufism, human values, brotherhood, and living with tolerance. In this modern age, living in the presence of Shah's poetic words and Raag is a spiritual boon for all human beings. The purpose of this is to increase good behavior, like forgiveness. Shah's hand-written "Risalo" has been published, and translations have also been published in many languages.

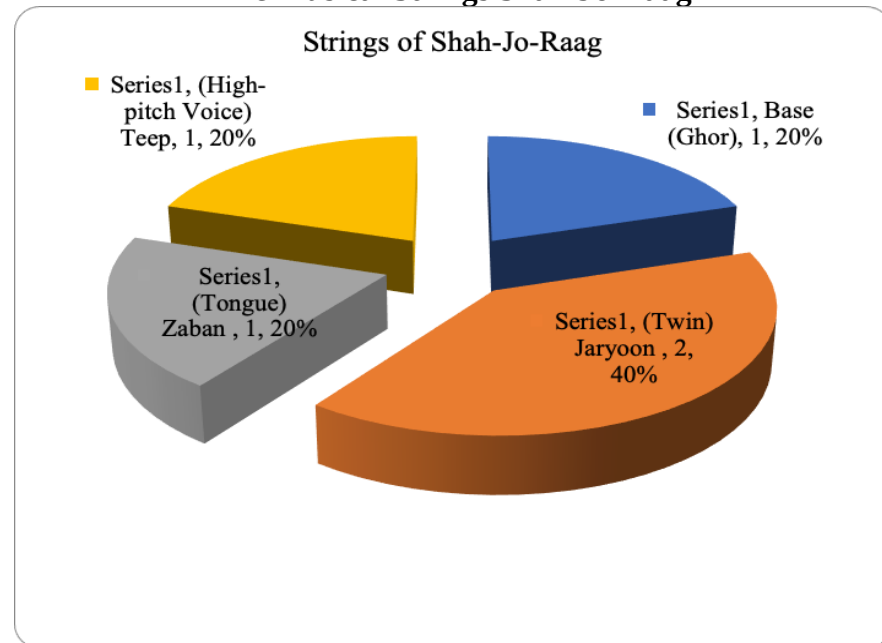
MUSICAL STRINGS OF DANBOORO

The five strings sequentially arranged in Danbooro are played through various melodious tones – as blow empty, meaning first voice, then a blow empty which is thrown with the empty hand on the

Danbooro or is left empty. The voice is sung slowly at first and then becomes faster in the latter. In the end, it is very fast. The leader starts singing. Then the sitting beside on the side sing the verses. Equally, Shah himself invented a musical instrument called ‘Danbooro or Tambooro’ in the local language. While inventing the musical instrument, indigenous material was used that was easy to access for local people. The five musical strings were added, reflecting the spirituality and around of the divine. Below is the distribution of the Sufi melody as it was merged in “Danbooro”. Its name is Danbooro, according to the poetic line “Tan Tasbih,” and Danboor reflects the term “Danbooro” according to his heart. It has five branches. The names of the five branches are as follows. Ghore, tongue, tape, and jaws (two tendons). The center of the tongue is the base (Ghor). The tongue touches the vowels that are sung. An upward stroke accompanies the tone of the voice. Both tongues and tapes are included in the joint support. Five Knots: The middle part of Dalbergia Sissoo wood – the same is brown, and five knots are formed from it. Five strings are heard, which shows the quality of the high spiritual state of mind during the singing of the voice, and with the sound of the song, the texture of Danbooro is rooted in the knowledge of Islam. It has significant parts, such as the upper part (Sung), while the gluband is a Ziziphous tree. It is a combination of Sang (upper part) and Tunbu (lower part). It does not use an iron cookie, but a base wood chip dipped in mustard is used. The wood of the Zizphus is used in “Gulooband” because the wood of the tree does not split. The main part placed on the ground below is called “Tunbu” and is made of Dalbergia Sissoo tree. It has a separate carb which, one by one, the leaves are picked over a few days, thus completing the heart-shaped part of Danbooro. There are two types of sounds in singing. One is the low-pitched voice (Giram), and the other is the high voice (Sanhoon). It is a combination of both low-pitched voice and high-pitched voice – it is a natural talent of singers to shape voice according to the prerequisite special notations of Shah-Jo-Raag. As the leader sings the Vai, the side singers will sing the Vai according to their voice, meaning the one whose voice is high will sing in a high voice, and if it is a low voice, then he will sing in the voice of the gram. But if the leader gives permission, then the side singer Faqir can also lead the way. Whether the number is five, six, or seven, more than that number

joins another group. Two-tones (Dotali) tap once, or twice, and there is no empty punch – the base “Ghor” string is the sound of this melody. The straight voice and the tongue are very strong. The rest of the taps and taps are very small. Most of the music is heard by Ghore. This is how the verses of Vai are sung. Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai's voice is very effective and captivating. Even without understanding it, every human being is forced to participate in its struggle. Whether it is a woman or a man, a child or an old man, everyone's attention is drawn when listening to the voice, and a person's eyes tremble. Because hearing the voice of the witness is spiritual worship.

Diagram 1:1 (i)
The Musical Strings Shah-Jo-Raag



Source: Shah-Jo-Raag (Noted 2022) live performed at the shrine of Bhittai around the year.

INTERPRETATION

The above diagram the combination of strings as sung by the Faqeers. The musical notations as originally arranged base (Ghor) 20%, Twin (Jaryoon) 40%, Tongue (Zaban) 20%, High-pitch voice (Teep) 20%. The singers (Faqeers) of Shah-Jo-Raag perform such a

melody that is so appealing. It catches the attention of people without understanding the true meaning of Sindhi words of music. The group sits in a half circle, while the leader is at the center of the singing group. All singers sing using the notations with musical strings in high-pitched voices and low-pitched voices. The chanting amalgamation makes it so fascinating and universal for humankind.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sociability is an art or a play form of association and coming in close coordination with people in a society. All humans interact with each other due to social needs and other social reasons. Sufi melody is fascinating to extend social relations with different communities beyond gender, religion, and other differences. Robert Langer viewed Sufi music as a kind of ritual that is performed, and it is a process of connecting to spiritual dimensions and formation of sociability beyond cultural and national differences. It is aesthetic that leads to changing factors for conscious or unconscious of changed ritual onto the surrounding socio-cultural fields. Sufi music is a kind of ritual that is performed at the shrines of Sufi Saints (Robert Langer, 2012). On the other hand, there are two views about Sufi music. A few people having rigidity in religious thought, consider it contrary to Islamic principles, but people having moderate thought and those who are Sufi in nature have taken the view and consider it as a means of searching the God. In Sindhi culture, Sufi music has been an integral part of cultural values. The Sufi music Kalam in the Sindhi Language has been disseminated to use to live in harmony and brotherhood (Alidina, G. Hyder, 2010). Sufi music in Sindh's "Shah-Jo-Raag" is unique and entirely fascinating in connecting the people. A German Scholar, Dr.Frembgen, said the dynamic of change was always at the Shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai a group of six to eight musicians/singers sang the Sufi Music (Shah-Jo-Raag) the whole night, and they continued with the same rhythm and devotion till morning. He said, "We need Sufi music to console our hearts," he also briefly discussed the difference in the behavior of people who nowadays visit shrines and argued that Sufi tradition was at the heart of Islam (Peerzada, Salman, 2013). The Sufi poetry of Bhittai focused on the struggle of marginalized women-folk, especially the seven queens of Sindhi folklore, i.e. Suhni, Sassui, Marvi, Noori, Moomal, Leela, and Sorath,

as also springing girls waiting for wives of sailors and merchants. Appreciating the ordeal faced by them, Bhittai has taken their character of faith, fidelity, and fortitude to face the tribal taboos and communal clichés, as a model for spiritual seekers. The allegories of Spartan queens comprise nearly half of the message of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (Shah, Mushtaque Ali, 2014). The people of Sindh have inherited all the customs and ceremonies from their elders. They have been sustaining them throughout generations. Every man and woman plays his or her role in life responsibly. Customs and ceremonies help him or her against some of the doubts, fears, and confusions. People of Sindh are very rich in practicing moral standards while meeting with each other, they start with the word of Allah (creator of entire creations). When they start to eat their meals or share everything with others. The language, literature, and culture of Sindh have resulted in liberating the intellectual and spiritual life (Allana, Ghulam Ali, 2010:210). In the early history of Islamic mysticism, only a person was considered to be a Sufi, who sought God's nearness by adhering to the tenets of Islam as revealed in the Quran. It was a mystic belief that the soul of man has emanated from His Divine Essence. Bhittai's music and poetry reflect the process by which man's inner life is evolved. The melody is the invention of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai; it contains couplets that end each chapter (Khamisani, Amena, 2003). Sufi teaching is highly needed for our future generations. It would address the rigidity and intolerance in society. Hazrat Inayat Khan (1882-1927), was a Sufi teacher in the sub-continent. He preached that Sufi music is a path to connect the inner self to the divine (Hazrat Inayat Khan, September 1996). Melody in the Sindhi language is called (Vaee), which means musical expressions. Its literary meaning is to say something as an inner voice or a painful or sorrowful story that is generally hard to explain. Many scholars have consented that the melody (Vaee), as it was composed by the disciples of Bhittai, has a unique musical form not found anywhere else in the world. It was composed some three hundred years back and continued in the same devotional and rhythmic style at the shrine of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (Qureshi, Zulfiqar Ali, 2018). It is an undeniable fact that Sufi music is sacred music, on the one hand, and Sufi music, on the other, is world music (Qureshi, Regula Burckhardt, 2013). Peter Pannke is a writer and musician. She is a German and has a strong personal travelogue

through the music and culture of the Indus Valley. He discovered music, words, images, Sufi colors, and customs that up the extraordinarily rich cultural tapestry of the Indus Valley. His writing contribution guides readers to the heart of the Sufi traditions through a combination of text, photographs, and the music itself (Pannke, Peter, 2015).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research design was implemented while using the content analysis technique. The poetic words, phrases, text, and thematic names of Chapter 30 (Surs) were examined. Initially, 30 (Surs) themes were drawn from the poetry “Shah-Jo-Risalo” of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai. 4 published versions (Translated into the English language) of “Shah-Jo-Risalo” were reviewed as of (1) Professor Amena Khamisani, (2) Aga Saleem (translation in Urdu and English language), (3) Aga Yaqoob, and (4) Syed Mushtaque Ali Shah. 30 themes associated with the names of Surs were drawn from the published books of Shah-Jo-Risalo. The themes that emerged from the raw data were coded and merged through inductive reasoning. The process was completed with careful examination and constant judgment. Oral traditions of musical noting were recorded and noted carefully as it was interpreted by different disciples and devotees. They keep memorizing the whole musical notes. The 07 themes were drawn – themes were associated with symbolic characters of Sindhi women whose cultural stories were largely circulated among the common folk. Out of these, 06 themes were drawn concerning poetic verses. The final interpretation was made with six 06 themes with a flavor of poetic words for the readers to study the mystic concepts of Sufi music.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Human Values (Themes Prescribed in Shah-Jo-Risalo): The names of the seven queens were associated with human values. These seven queens were famous as folktales of Sindhi women. Each character of a woman is associated with a significant human value. Below is the table of seven queens along with associated values.

Table 1.1
Seven Queens Associated with Human Values

S #	Name of Queen	The Associated Values
1	Marvi	Loyalty and determination
2	Sassui	Brave& courage
3	Moomal	Self-discipline
4	Leela	Self-acceptance
5	Suhni	Patience
6	Sorath	Truthfulness and Generosity
7	Noori	Simplicity and folk-wisdom

INTERPRETATION

The above table shows the names of seven legendary characters of Sindhi women. Each woman was associated with specific human, and social values as an inspirational symbol of the soil of Sindh. The musical melodies of “Shah-Jo-Raag” are titled chapters with the names of these women who belong to the indigenous people of Sindh. Their stories were true incidents during the Soomro period (1050 A.D. to 1351 A.D.) and the Sama (1351 to 1521 A.D.) period. The total of these stories is about sublime human characters and the practice of folk wisdom from the local communities in Sindh. The stories of the wise, and brave women of Sindh are symbolized in poetry as having standard moral lessons. As evidence of such legendary tales, the women of Sindh are famous as self-educated, very wise, and skillful. Of course, they endured suffering and pain, and suffering showed the practical example of human values, especially the Sufi message. Even today, the Sufi aspect of Sindh is considered to be treasured for mind and soul. This is shaped in Sufi music with special notations that are the chanting voice of these seven heroines of Sindh. The details of six themes as drawn from the poetry are given below:

1) Sufi Music (Themes) Sociability

سر دهر

The verses of Sur Dahar

وِڳر ڪيو وِتن، ڀرت نه چنن پاڻ ۾

پسو پڪيئڙن، ماڻهان ميٺ گهڻو

They always fly in flocks, and never break bonds
See! Birds cherish warmth, more than mankind

2) Sufi Music (Themes) Islamic values – Tolerance

سُرحسيني

Sur (Chapter) Hussaini

ووءا ووءا ڪندي وت، مچڻ ووءا وسارئين!

پاڻي هار ۾ پڌرو رونجھارا رت،

صبر وڌ ست، سگھا ميڙي سپرين.

Keep saying alas! Alas! Never that forget
Shed not apparent tears, but shed tears of blood within,
Patience is a great force; I meet soon my loved one

3) Sufi Music (Themes) Islamic values - struggle to find ultimate aim

سُرسُھڻي

Sur (Chapter) Suhni

ساري سڪ سبق، شريعت سندو سونهڻي

طريقتان تڪو وهي، حقيقت جو حق

معرفت مرڪ، اصل عاشقن کي

Learn first; oh Suhni! Lesson of Shariat
The truth of Haqeeqat far excels that of Tareeqat
Ma artifact is the ultimate aim of true lovers.

(4) Sufi Music (Themes) Strength of Mind & Creativity

سرمارئي

Sur (Chapter) Marvi

آلست ٻر بگم، جڏهن گن ٻيوم

قالو بلي قلب سين، تڏهن تڻ چيوم

تنهن وڻر گيوم وڃن ويڙيچن سين

When “Am I not the Lord? Fell on my ears
I replied wholeheartedly, indeed thou art
At that moment I made; a vow with my folks

(5) Sufi Music (Themes) Prosperity & well-being

سُر سارنگ

Sur Chapter Sarang

سائينم سدائين، گرین مٿي سنڌ سُڪار

دوست مٺا دلدار عالم سڀ آباد گرین!

Always make Sindh Oh Dear God! Land of abundance
Oh, Sweetheart Adorable! Let the entire universe prosper

(6) Sufi Music (Themes) Mysterious & Emotional Toughness

سر سمٽي وائي

Sur (Chapter) Suhni (Vai)

اڪيون پير گري، ويججي، ووا! ويججي.

سپيريان جي ڳالهڙي، ڪنهن سان ڪين ڪجي،

لڪائي لوڪ کان، ڳجهڙي ڳوٺ نجي،

مُحبتي ميهار جو سور نه ڪنهن سلجي.

Making eyes feet; let us start moving
Mention not sweetheart; keep it clandestine
Hiding him from the public; bring him to Hamlet
Don't share the pain of longing; for loving "Mehtar"

CONCLUSION

The Sufi Music "Shah-Jo-Raag" is consisted of 30 chapters' melodies. The musical notations and strings are played of these Surs that consisted of five thousand couplets and verses including thirteen hundred melodies "Vai". It is a framework of Sufi Music "Shah-Jo-Raag" and a Sindhi indigenous curriculum of Sufi Studies. It is considered the voice of oppressed people, a voice with a true message of love for humankind, and a voice that reduces stress and provides mental well-being and the love for entire creation. The truth is that the description of the suffering and pain of the poor people, on the one hand, and the other hand, the message of socialability is also clearly explained. Listening to Shah's music increases deep sociability, religious tolerance, and gender value. Because of this, people from local areas and abroad are very interested in listening and

understanding. Thus, Sufi music “Shah-Jo-Raag” is a direct way to reduce discrimination against many people. We will get the message of expanding the scope of human harmony through the promotion of this music.

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