



## PROF. MUHAMMAD SHAFIQUE (1936-2022): PIONEER OF PSYCHIATRY IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN

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Prof. Muhammad Shafique died on August 02, 2022. He was great teacher, a highly respected intellectual, truly compassionate clinician and above one of the most humane persons I have ever worked. I have fond memories of being his trainee (1988-1991) but my association with him started much earlier as a medical student. It was around 1984, when he organized an international psychiatric conference in Peshawar. We were involved in the conference as students and helped in organization. That involvement resulted in me taking psychiatry as career and work with Prof. Muhammad Shafique over almost three decades.

I recall Prof. Shafique as a kind gentleman who was always passionate about the care of his patients, true democrat with an open and enquiring mind and keen to learn. He would instill these qualities in his trainees. As far as I know, the doctors who have worked with him would not advice unnecessary investigations or the medications. I feel this achievement alone would suffice for his maghfirat (the God blessing after the death). This may not sound much but it is a sad reflection on the current state of medical training and practice where these poor patients suffer a lot due to huge burden of diagnostics and unnecessary medication.

'Shafique' literally means being kind or sympathetic and he truly was that. He participated in the development of many philanthropic projects in Peshawar, including the Burn-care center which was the first and only center for burn victims in KPK. He supported a large number of medical students and supported Shaukat Khanum Cancer Hospital in Peshawar.

He was a literary person and was an avid reader of both western and eastern

literature, with particular interest in the works of Allama Iqbal and Faiz Ahmed Faiz. On passing my FCPS exam, I gifted him some books to thank for his immense support and guidance. I still remember the glow on his face and how excited he was on receiving these books. He had a personal library and has given a huge number of books in donations to private libraries. He was the author of two Urdu books, *Kuch Yadein Kuch Safar* (autobiography) and *Zehn ki Dunya* (which is about psychological issues for common understanding), apart from writing many papers and articles.

Prof Muhammad Shafique was born on May 09, 1936, in Jalandhar, India and migrated to Pakistan in September 1947 when he was 11 years old during the Partition. He graduated from Nishtar Medical College in 1959. He was an excellent student and got distinctions in the subjects of Eye and Medicine. He moved to Peshawar afterwards and did his house job in medicine with Professor Muhammad Raza at Lady Reading Hospital.

He decided to pursue the relatively underdeveloped field of psychiatry and went to England for higher training in 1961. He returned back to Pakistan in 1964 and accepted the job of Medical Superintendent of Dhodial Mental Hospital. I simply can't imagine a fresh graduate with highest qualifications at that time from UK moving to far flung place like Dhodial, Mansehra even in this age with all modern facilities and excellent motorways and roads. This must be the great dedication and spirit for serving the humanity that we knew Prof. Shafique had.

After 5 years of serving in the far flung area of Dhodial he was appointed as Medical Superintendent in Peshawar Mental Hospital. After a period of 8-9

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months he transferred to Lahore Mental Hospital as an administrator in 1971 and after 2 years he was transferred back to Peshawar Mental Hospital and worked there for 4 years. During this time, he was also a visiting psychiatrist in Lady Reading Hospital where he started his own OPD sitting under a tree in Lady Reading Hospital, thus establishing a psychiatric service in the hospital.

In 1976, he was posted as Assistant Professor Psychiatry in Khyber Medical College and continued to work there until his retirement as Professor in 1996.

I briefly mentioned his career pathways to highlight the struggles of a highly committed professional who served different places under the most difficult circumstances. His contributions to psychiatry, medical education and philanthropy are enormous and must be honored and kept alive by all including his students, children and fellow teachers.

He was the true pioneer of psychiatry in Pakistan, being the third psychiatrist in all of Pakistan and first psychiatrist of KPK at that time. He started undergraduate and postgraduate training of his department in KPK, thus initiating the concept of specialization in his field. He was one of the first examiners of the post graduate exam of psychiatry in Pakistan. He brought the psychiatric services to the mainstream outpatient services as mentally ill patients were ostracized from society and were only kept in prisons or asylums in those times. He became the

first doctor ever to remove the shackles of mental patients in prisons and started the medicolegal system of psychiatry in KPK.

During his years of service, he developed mental health care at local, provincial and national levels. With the help of a few dedicated individuals, he took on refining mental healthcare and

establishing it as a respectable and clinically sound field of health. This included the reformation of the Lunacy Act, a legacy of the British healthcare system, and hence the Mental Healthcare Act of Pakistan was developed and refined by these exceptional physicians.

I am personally indebted to him for his

training, mentoring and support. It was such a privilege and honour to work with him and I truly consider myself immensely lucky to have him as a teacher. May Allah grant him highest place in Jannah and help us to truly follow the highest standards he has set for us (Aameen).



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