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The Extent of Semnan Medical Sciences University Students' Beliefs in the Effectiveness of NAMAZ in Individual and Social Life (A Survey Research)

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Abstract: NAMAZ is one of the important teachings of Islam connecting the human being to the creator of the universe. The faith in NAMAZ and being bound to it paves the way for purity and individual and social felicity. On the other hand, the university students are considered as the fundamental bases of the progress in every society in terms of human resources and the extent to which this educated class believes in NAMAZ can be very effective. Thus, the present study was placed atop of the researchers' agenda with the objective of investigating the extent of university students' beliefs in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life. The study has been carried out based on a survey method and the study population included 699 university students from Semnan Medical Sciences University. The information collection instrument was a two-part questionnaire comprised of demographic questions and researcher-constructed items indicating the extent to which the university students believe in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in their individual and social life. The questionnaire validity was investigated and confirmed using content validity test and experts' judgment and the questionnaire reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha method. The data were analyzed using SPSS software, version 18, and the descriptive statistical methods (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Mann-Whitney and variance analysis). The results indicated that the married university students in contrast to single ones, the non-native university students in comparison to the native students and the dormitory-residing university students as compared to those living in places other than dormitories have more faith in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in their individual and social life. A significant difference was evidenced between marital status variables ($P=0.018$) and university place of education ($P=0.007$) with the belief in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life. According to the aforementioned findings, saying prayers or NAMAZ causes growth and individual and social development, reduction in inappropriate behaviors, success at work and life and reduction in the amounts of sins. Thus, it is expected that the officials and educational managers of the university provide proper facilities and conditions for the fulfilling of NAMAZ by the university students.

Keywords: University Students, Belief, NAMAZ Fulfillment, Individual and Social Life.

INTRODUCTION

Worshipping the God and servitude to Him is the philosophy of human creation (ZARFAT: 56) and following of the religious teachings is the source of human beings' real life (ANFAL: 24). Religion is not a phenomenon like the other rites, traditions, customs, habits and conventions that have come about

gradually based on legislations or needs rather it has been granted to the mankind since the very beginning of his creation (Sadeghi Ardestani, 1995).

Religion and worshipping are the inherent and perpetual needs of the human beings to the extent that the historical and archaeological research and studies testify that the mankind has always had a sort of religion during the entire course of history (King, 1974). Religious beliefs, as a set of dos and don'ts, are the most effective psychological supports of the human beings, especially under unpleasant psychological conditions, and they serve the mankind's deliverance from meaninglessness and linking the mankind to the world (Motahhari, 1999). From the perspective of some psychologists, subtle and real religious feelings exist in the depth of the unconscious ego of any human being (James, 2008).

NAMAZ has been given a special position amongst the dos of the evident religion of Islam. In the Holy Quran, the God introduces NAMAZ as the support in all hardship (BAQARAH, 45), a means for remembering and mentioning the God (TAHA: 14) and pacifier of the hearts and a means of relieving the human beings from all sorts of anxieties and dreads (RA'AD: 28). NAMAZ is a means of depravity prevention (Makarem Shirazi, 2001). It is in the light of this worshipping practice that the mankind can reach the sureness of the heart for the fact that getting released of all the internal discomforts is easy and all the affairs are in the powerful hands of Him (Qazzali, 1996). The great apostle of Islam (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) has resembled the de-harming role of NAMAZ and purification of an individual and the society by means of this religious duty to the "cleansing of the body in a stream of water" (Horr Ameli, 1980). Imam Ali (PBUH) knows NAMAZ as a refresher of the hearts by which the apparent ear of the heart becomes capable of hearing after deafness and the apparent eye of heart becomes full-sighted after blindness and the hearts are tamed after enmity and insurgence (Sermon: 221) (Dashti, 2001).

The studies performed in this regard are also reflective of the idea that NAMAZ is effective in both individual and social aspects and that the individuals saying prayers and fulfilling NAMAZ enjoy a higher physical and psychological health level than those who do not say prayers (Karimi and Golchin, 2004; Campbell, Yoon and Johnstone, 2010). The results of the studies by Habibzadeh et al (2005) indicated that the amount of students' fidelity to the various aspects of religiosity is largely variable. The findings of the studies by Sotudeh et al (2010) demonstrated that there is a direct and significant relationship between the fulfillment of NAMAZ and self-esteem and general health in the adult population of Semnan County (Mehdzadeh, 2016).

Islamic revolution has been formed based on the belief that religion is the entire life. It was based on these same values that Iran's revolution could attain victory and the Islamic republic system was formed despite the wants of all superpowers and their affiliates. More than half of Iran's population is consisted of the adolescents many of whom are university students. The transferring of the values to the young and adolescent generation guarantees the survival and authority of the Islamic system. In terms of the human resources, the university students are enumerated amongst the fundamental bases of the progress in every society. The university students' inclinations towards imitating the western cultures, particularly copying of that part of the western culture that has dragged the today's western society to absurdity and lack of identity and moral decline and multiplicity and numerosity of the influence of such sources as cyberspace on the cognitive and affective domains, especially in our society that is based on and influenced by religious beliefs, and the practices therein are subject to the effects of the religious beliefs can lead to the emergence of serious crises in various ethical levels (Kazemi and Faraji, 2002; Taleban, 2003).

Monitoring of the religious beliefs, especially NAMAZ, meanwhile adding to the knowledge of the society's officials and correctors of the society, paves the way for the correction and formation of Islamic and value-based university. This is why the investigation of the extent to which the university students believe in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in their social and individual life becomes important and the current research paper has dealt with this issue.

Study Method

The present study is a cross-sectional research. The study population included all the boy and girl university students schooling in the universities subordinate to Semnan's Medical Sciences University, including universities of medicine, rehabilitation and nursing as well as Sarkheh Paramedical University, Damghan's school of hygiene and the affiliated hospitals. In the present study, 744 university students who were educating in Semnan's Medical Sciences University during 2012 were selected based on a convenience method. Out of the foresaid number, 699 individuals (94%) completed the distributed questionnaires and returned them. The study instrument was a questionnaire composed of two parts: the first one was related to demographic questions (gender, age, study field, education degree, education semester, marital status, living place and house. The second part of the questionnaire incorporated questions that assessed the extent of Semnan Medical sciences University students' beliefs in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life. The study questions were scored based on Likert's five-point scale from "very low" (or completely disagree) to "very high" (or completely agree) assigned with values in a range from 1 to 5 with the former being the lowest and the latter being the highest score respectively indicating the lowest and the highest beliefs. Permission was acquired from education department and coordination was made with the professors to personally attend the university students' classrooms, apprenticeship and internship centers and, meanwhile explaining the project's objectives and observing the ethical principles of research, questionnaires were distributed amongst them and they were asked to complete them and hand them over to the inquirers in case of being willing to do so. The validity of the prepared questionnaire was evaluated in an investigation of the articles and related texts and consulting with some experts of humanities and Quranic sciences as well as the other university specialists; the reliability of the questionnaire was verified based on test-retest method through its first being administered to 20 university students for which a correlation coefficient equal to 0.8 was obtained. To analyze the data, at first, the mean scores of the ideas were calculated for each individual in separate and in total and subsequently classified as follows: options in agreement with the very high effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life (mean scores equal to or above 4.5), options in agreement with high effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life (mean scores in a range from 3.5 to 4.49), options in agreement with intermediate effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life (mean scores in a range from 2.5 to 3.49), options in agreement with low effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life (mean scores in a range from 1.5 to 2.49) and options in agreement with the very low effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life (mean scores below 1.5). Such tests as Shapiro and Wilk, Mann-Whitney, one-way variance (or Kruskal-Wallis) and Tukey were utilized for data analysis. The data were analyzed in SPSS Software, version 18.0 and the significance level was 0.05.

Study Findings

In the present study 699 university students were evaluated: 68.4% (478 individuals) were female and the rest were male; 632 university students were single and 67 students were married; 913 university students lived in dormitories and 96 individuals lived in houses; 261 of the aforesaid number of the study sample volume were from medical school, 277 from nursing and paramedics, 94 from rehabilitation and 117 from hygiene school.

Some 75.5% of the students highly or very highly believed in the idea that NAMAZ is effective in their individual and social life of them and only 3.1% of the students had low and very low faith in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in their individual and social life and 21.4% had not clear ideas (table 1).

Table 1: the distribution of Semnan’s Medical Sciences University distribution in terms of the importance degree they have given to the various areas of NAMAZ fidelity (2012)

Area	Degree of importance											
	Very high		High		Intermediate		Low		Very low		Mean from 5	Std. deviation
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and Social life	152	21.7	376	53.8	149	21.3	21	3	1	0.1	3.84	0.68

Table 2: mean (out of 5) and standard deviation of the scores of the questions on the effectiveness of NAMAZ in social and individual life from the perspective of Semnan’s Medical Sciences University in separate in terms of age, marital status, living place and education department (2012)

Study question	Gender			Marital status			Living place			Education department				Education years in year/semester					
	Boys (n=221)	Girls (n=478)	p-value	Single (n=63)	Married (n=67)	p-value	Dormitory (n=613)	Others (n=86)	p-value	Medicine (n=261)	Rehabilitation (n=94)	Nursing and paramedics (n=227)	Hygiene (n=117)	p-value	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior or higher	p-value
Participation in group prayer causes the individual and social growth	3.95*(1.00)	3.84 (0.95)	0.158	3.85 (0.98)	4.06 (0.80)	0.053	3.89 (0.96)	3.75 (1.04)	0.241	3.75 (1.05)	3.80 (1.05)	4.03 (0.83)	3.91(0.92)	0.012	3.92 (0.96)	3.84 (0.97)	3.77 (1.03)	3.98 (0.94)	0.483
Improper social behaviors are more in individuals who say prayers than those who don't.	2.41 (1.13)	2.30 (1.08)	0.223	2.35 (1.09)	2.21 (1.16)	0.313	2.30 (1.08)	2.76 (1.16)	0.001	2.38 (1.07)	2.40 (1.10)	2.32 (1.12)	2.22 (1.10)	0.559	2.30 (1.07)	2.41 (1.11)	2.48 (1.23)	1.96 (0.89)	0.031
The individuals saying prayers are more successful.	3.92 (0.94)	3.76 (0.94)	0.030	3.77 (0.94)	4.16 (0.86)	0.001	3.81 (0.92)	3.79 (1.01)	0.880	3.70 (1.01)	3.79 (0.88)	3.98 (0.86)	3.75 (0.96)	0.009	3.79 (1.01)	3.80 (0.86)	3.86 (0.96)	3.88 (0.90)	0.881
Saying prayers causes power and stability and overcoming of problems	4.34 (0.71)	4.30 (0.72)	0.489	4.30 (0.71)	4.46 (0.73)	0.069	4.31 (0.72)	4.31 (0.61)	0.984	4.23 (0.78)	4.37 (0.66)	4.41 (0.61)	4.25 (0.78)	0.029	4.32 (0.75)	4.28 (0.69)	4.27 (0.70)	4.46 (0.64)	0.399
Besides having spiritual and religious merits, saying prayers in groups also has social and political advantages	3.97 (0.99)	3.82 (0.94)	0.061	3.85 (0.96)	4.01 (0.91)	0.188	3.86 (0.97)	3.91 (0.87)	0.692	3.72 (1.04)	3.78 (0.97)	4.05 (0.85)	3.92 (0.90)	0.001	3.83 (0.96)	3.92 (0.91)	3.82 (1.00)	3.90 (0.96)	0.711
Those who say prayers are less prone to sin perpetration	3.62 (1.14)	3.43 (1.14)	0.037	3.48 (1.14)	3.64 (1.16)	0.260	3.52 (1.14)	3.24 (1.21)	0.055	3.43 (1.16)	3.51 (1.25)	3.57 (1.11)	3.46 (1.09)	0.613	3.53 (1.13)	3.44 (1.14)	3.32 (1.27)	3.81 (1.01)	0.077

Numbers outside brackets indicate means and numbers inside brackets indicate standard deviations

The results also indicated that the mean and standard deviation scores of believing in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life are as follow: 3.90 ± 0.70 for the boy students as compared to the girl students; 3.99 ± 0.62 for the students with ages equal to or above 25 as compared to the students with ages equal to or below 24; 3.95 ± 0.60 for nursing and paramedic school as compared to the students from the other medical departments, rehabilitation and hygiene; 4.12 ± 0.72 for the PhD students as compared to the students from the other academic degrees such as associate's degree, BA, MA and general PhD; 4.01 ± 0.61 for the and higher senior students as compared to the freshmen, sophomores and juniors; 4.02 ± 0.61 for married students as compared to single students; 3.84 ± 0.68 for the non-native students as compared to the native students; 3.85 ± 0.68 for the students living in dormitories as compared to students living in places other than dormitories. A significant difference was only found between the marital status ($P=0.018$) and the university place of students' education ($P=0.007$) in terms of the effectiveness of NAMAZ in individual and social life and this has to be taken as meaning that the married students, in contrast to singles, and those schooling in nursing school, in comparison to those schooling in other school affiliates of Semnan's Medical Sciences University believe more in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in their individual and social life (table 2).

Discussion and Conclusion

The study findings indicated that the majority of the university students (75.5%) believe in the effectiveness of NAMAZ in social and individual life with high and very high degrees and this is a good value.

The findings of the present study are consistent with the results of the research by Iranian students' polling agency (2001) that was conducted with the objective of NAMAZ tendencies amongst the university students. The results of the study by Iranian students' polling agency are reflective of the idea that the university students' inclinations towards NAMAZ are very high in terms of both beliefs and behaviors. Furthermore, these students were found highly inclined towards saying prayers and fulfilling NAMAZ in both their individual and social lives¹. The results are also in compliance with the findings of the study by Banakar et al (2001) who investigated the medical sciences university students in Fasa and showed that the study participants believed that NAMAZ is highly effective in religious, ideological and psychological health, intermediately effective in social, cultural and ethical areas and lesser effective in educational, economic and physical aspects in contrast to the two first areas (Banakar et al., 2001). But, Nafisi and Dianat (2001) concluded in their study that the employees, faculty members and university students prefer to say their prayers right on its time. But, they do so not because of cognizance and love but for comfort of the mind of NAMAZ concerns during the rest of the night and day hours (Nafisi and Dianat, 2001).

Razieh Nasirzadeh, Mahdi Nasirzadeh and Muhammad Hadi Nasirzadeh found out in a research in Shiraz University that the most important motivation of the university students for fulfilling NAMAZ is acquiring tranquility, fulfilment of a canonical duty, fear of the divine chastisement and habit (Nasirzadeh et al., 2013).

As it was stated in the introduction to the discussion, based on the AYA 45 of SURAH BAQARAH, AYA 14 of SURAH TAHA, AYA 28 of SURAH RA'AD and AYA 45 of SURAH ANKABUT as well as the narrations ordered by the immaculate Imams (peace be upon them) and also the studies performed by the researchers, the society wherein the members fulfill NAMAZ should enjoy healthiness, peacefulness, purity and the other moral virtues (Kolaini, 1980).

The religious belief system enables individuals successfully manage the hardship, psychological pressures and the inevitable shortages coming about in the lifecycle, find meaning for their lives and be hopeful in the future. Based on a research by Mohsen Akbarpourbani and Mahmoud Reza Tavakkoli Muhammad,

¹ The information center website of the supreme headquarter of Namaz Fulfillment, "the effect of Namaz fulfillment motivations and the students' attitudes", retrievable at salat.nahad.ir/index.aspx?siteid=16&pageid=1372&pid=3

internal beliefs are directly associated with the employees' psychological health (Akbarpourbani and Tavakkoli, 2011).

Unfortunately, the role of religion and the effects and fruits mentioned in AYAT and narrations for NAMAZ are not observed the way they deserve amongst the people and they are particularly seen in a lower level than what is expected in academic environments and the current situation of the academic society is not a status expected from a society like Islamic Iran with such an extent of scientific and sociopolitical growth and with such an old history of religious culture; this is while the majority of the university students fulfil NAMAZ, 56.5% constantly keep on fulfilling NAMAZ and 39.5% usually fulfill NAMAZ (Mahdavinejad, et al., 2014). Based on the students' self-report, 75.5% believe that NAMAZ is effective in their individual and social life. Thus, proper pathological studies have to be carried out in this regard and corrective solutions should be introduced.

The other point based on the research is that the number of the individuals fulfilling NAMAZ in this same environment and finding themselves highly and very highly bound to the fulfilment of NAMAZ is lower than the individuals who have confessed that they say prayers. The questions raised here are: why all the individuals who realize NAMAZ as effective in their lives do not spend the required seriousness in remaining bound to it? And/or why the effects and results of NAMAZ is not evident in the deeds and behaviors of those who keep themselves bound to the fulfillment of NAMAZ? What barriers or factors have caused such a type of harm? How the factors giving rise to such harms can be removed?

The other point that can be considered as a risk is that general public mostly believes that the girls are more bound to the religious issues. The studies by Esmā'eili in 2001 in Tehran's state universities confirm this same finding (Esmā'eili Behbahani, 2001). But, this study indicated that this is not true because the girls know NAMAZ as a factor of success lesser than the boys so it can be stated that the enemies' advertisements have had more effects on the girls. Of course, the girls have been and are the primary targets of the enemies' advertisements for various reasons because the women play the essential role in infirming culture and fostering of the future generations. It has been stated in a narration from the great apostle of Islam (may Allah bestow him and his sacred progeny the best of His regards) that the change in the values of the society begins from the corruption of women (Majlesi, 1982) and, similarly, the felicity and subliming (Tabarsi, 1994) and success of the great men happens in the light of the believer and devoted women. In this regard, Imam Khomeini (may Allah consecrate the honorable soil of his tomb) orders that "the vice and the good of a society originate from the morality or corruption of its women. Woman is the only being from whose lap individuals are delivered to the society that their blessings can draw a society rather societies to the lofty human values and endurance or the opposite can happen" (Khomeini, 1999). In addition, the study indicated that the married individuals, as well, are more compliant to the fulfillment of NAMAZ in contrast to the singles and this is reflective of the role of the virtuous tradition of marriage. It is clear that the virtuous tradition of marriage plays a more effective role in paying attention to religious values, especially NAMAZ.

Conclusion

It is deemed appropriate that the respected officials seize this belief in academic environment as an opportunity and try creating more facilities for the fulfilment of NAMAZ, particularly in groups, as well as promoting marriage thereby to correct and solidify the society and the enjoy the benefits resulting from these two canonical duties. Also, more sensitivity has to be shown to the issues related to the girls as the primary targets of the enemies' cultural attacks for it has been shown in the research that success rates have been somewhat relative in this regard.

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