

How could I create the enthusiasm and willingness to pray in the students?

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Abstract

Prayer is the key to happiness, and leads to worldly and spiritual happiness of humans. The man who prays, the heavenly blessings will be revealed upon him/her. The man deserves to be always thinking about prayer and strengthening his/her interest in it. This research is on the field of attracting students to pray especially at school. The main objective of this research is to achieve a situation in where students are aware of the importance of prayer and will be willingly present in the school prayer room. This research is a qualitative research. Its methodology is action research, so the objective of the research was shared with school authorities and teachers. A critical group was formed and then the issue of prayer was discussed with the students. The method to collect data was a survey method and the tool to collect data was interview and observation. Action research is one of the research methods that solve some specific problems and the results are only predictive interoperability. This article is has a democratic credential.

Keywords: Praying, willingness to pray, attraction to prayer, praying in school

Introduction:

Prayer is the pillars of worship and so prayer is very important. Prayer lights the way in which God has bestowed upon His servants and it is gracious. But unfortunately some people destroy the bright lights and remain aimless and wandering on the dark of life. The one who prays undoubtedly will be guided by God and his/her affairs will be in the hands of God, but the one who does not pray, he/she is certainly a follower of Satan. There are many hadiths that show that people who were unbound and bad guys, because they were praying so they have been guided by God in the right way. Instead, there were good people who have left the prayer and the misery has overcome upon them.

The Problem Review:

During my training course I realized that students do not have the interest and commitment to pray in school, and only the class that is its turn to pray and only a few of the other students were praying.

The prayer alarm (break) in school is the third prayer alarm in which even students in my class do not adhere to pray, while they have reached the age of puberty and should be eager to pray.

I decided to talk with students and ask them indirectly the reason for not praying at school. So I discussed in class about the importance of prayer, the benefits of prayer and consequences for not praying. Then I asked students their comment. A student said that when I observe and meet all moral issues such as honesty, helping others, etc. why I should pray? Another student said, what is the benefit of prayer? And another student did not know prayer is one of the religious obligations in Islam and said that it was not at all about religion prayer stated in the Holy Qur'an! Some also said when they grew up, they will start praying, but some students said that they pray by they do not like to pray in school and they prefer to pray when they went home.

After listening to the students I realized that only a few were dedicated to prayer and only half were committed to pray in school. Seeing the situation in the fifth grade class really saddened me. These new blooms are still in the prime of their life and such uninformed students are really unfortunate for relevant authorities. I also provided information on prayer with my students, but I knew this is not enough and decided to look for a solution to be efficient in the whole school.

The Questions and Objectives of the Research:

According to what was said, the aim of the research was to arrive to the situation in which students have enough information about the prayer and willingly show their commitment to pray.

In this research I tried to answer the following questions:

1. What is the reason for this apathy and lack of commitment to prayer?

2. How can I make the students interested and committed to my prayers?
3. How can I show my students the importance of prayer?

The Background:

A) Theoretical Background:

1. Fazlollahi and Maleki Tavana (2013) in their research expressed prayer is the reason of mental and heart calm and it makes away any frustration and nihilism from the person. God Almighty says: "and establish the prayer for my remembrance" (Taha, 14), such a remembrance and relationship prevents man any deviation and neglect. Prayer creates discipline spirit in the human and become his/her underlying interactive motion. True prayer connects people with God so strong that he/she sees God the supervisor of his/her actions. This advantage, which is its peak of training and education, reaches in prayer to infinity.
2. Farahani Bourghani (1993) writes in his article the prayer as pillars of Islam is one of the most important and the most basic acts of worship for Muslims and has been stressed as a continuous assignment. There is in verses and hadiths that if the prayer is accepted, other acts of worship will be accepted, and if prayer is failed, other actions will be rejected.
3. Nasr et al (2008) in his paper writes holding congregational prayer is more important, because congregational prayer is the prayer with the value of an ideal society and involves the elements such as leadership, unity and discipline. So, one of the most important issues that has attracted human communities religious thought, this is how they make the children of the community religious and committed to prayer and put them plenty of interest from this increased heavenly interest.
4. Zehtab (1991) in his research says about the prayers: "prayer forbids indecency and dishonor" because prayer is the need to God the needless and the agent for protecting human from corruption and deviation and it connects human to the everlasting raging ocean. Hojjateleslam Gharaati expresses a good sense of Aqşam-al-salat: "If the wicks of prayer is drawn up, the wicks of corruption and crime will be drawn down."

B) Practical Background:

1. Mohammad Nourian (2010) in a research titled introduction of prayer, fasting, Jihad, Khums and Zakat and in social teachings textbooks and reading textbook in elementary schools in Iran, studied what aspects of prayer, fasting Jihad, Khums and Zakat are discussed in the textbooks. Among the results, it is seen that only 16.14% of the subjects and themes of the textbooks discuss prayer.

2. Kamali Nahad (1992) in a research entitled the study of causes and factors affecting high school students tend to prayer, found that 70 percent of students pray and 28 percent of them pray very little or do not pray at all. Students who do not participate in congregational prayer expressed the reasons such as unsuitable weather conditions of prayer room, physical facilities, health services, lack of adequate time for prayer, being boring the prayer ceremony.

3. Beiglou (1993) carried out a research titled the study of the causes and factors affecting attraction of students to pray in school. In this research, the importance of belief and faith of the person is in first place and the presence of school staff in the ranks of the congregational prayer in secondary place.

4. Hosseini (1995) found a significant relationship between school education and praying by students. He believes teachers performance and their participation in congregational prayers in establishing an intimate relationship with the students to hold the more majestic are effective.

According to the records, we found that the studies carried out about prayer in schools seek to achieve to the effective factors in attracting students or getting away them from prayer. But when we found the reasons, what should we do? In addition, most of these studies were carried out several years ago and due to the rapid cultural and social changes in Iran, they are not effective in the present age.

In the present research, I interview competent authorities and studied the factors affecting the motivation of the students about prayer and provided a practical and applied solution; the positive results have been shown.

The Research Methodology:

This research is of quantities type and the method is action research. Therefore, beginning with school officials and teachers, we shares the subject with them. A critical group was formed and then the issue of prayer was discussed with the students. The method to collect data was a survey method and the tool to collect data was interview and observation.

The Evidence Collection 1:

In the first stage in a prayer alarm, I studied students more accurately than ever before to witness the number of students participating in the prayer. Unfortunately, the students who participated in the prayer were statistically the same.

In the meantime I spoke with the students about it in the morning program and I was also aware of the views of students. Some were in favor of increasing the number of praying students and some opposed to this issue and others also did not participate in the discussion at all. A meeting was held with the school administrative staff, teachers and other students at school to discuss the reasons for the disinterest of

students to prayer. I raised in the meeting opinions of the students and I listened carefully to the different opinions. As those present in the meeting expressed their views, I also got some important notes.

By putting together words and ideas of the attendees and students it was clear to me that, unfortunately, students are uninterested to pray in school and do not have the desire to do so.

Reviewing and Analyzing Data:

After reviewing the comments and opinions and studying books and many articles and results of visiting the prayer room and the discussions on this area, as well as consulting with critical group, the causes of apathy and unwillingness to pray in school were found and the necessary measures to solve the problem were taken.

Some of the reasons for lack of interest of students to pray in school:

1. The students were bored.
2. The prayer and recess alarms are done simultaneously, so that the ablution and praying expand the whole break time and the students have not any time to relax and eat.
3. The pattern role of teachers and administrative staff of school is not played well in this regard.
4. Keeping students in class after break time, due to never-ending lesson topic and therefore lack of a time for prayer.
5. Punishing students for long prayer, so they go in class a little later.
6. There was an unpleasant smell of shoes in the prayer room
7. Lack of adequate weather conditions in the prayer room
8. Poor knowledge of students about prayer

After studying books and articles related to the topic, consulting with experts in this field, the general conclusion was that the process to encourage students to pray should be done by the proper principles and practices and specific planning, so that:

As the first step in the education of children is started from home and family and learning at an early age is done steadier and more sustainable, it is essential parents to the proper upbringing of children, especially in connection with the prayer.

Due to the fact that children are always vulnerable with social inclusion in the community, greater monitoring and control by parents should be applied, and thereby prayers make them resistant to the personal and social problems and provides the field of development and excellence. Parents should teach

their children from infancy that the prayer is their main tasks and they should participate in congregational prayer and so they thank to the blessings of God (Faraani Bourghani, 1993).

Families must devote a fixed time to prayer. Collective worship in the family has a lasting impact on children's spiritual growth. Some families take a certain time for congregational prayer. For example, they select daily prayers for this and they do congregational prayer in family environment. These type of activities make home environment to a holy and spiritual place. (Yab, quoted by Hajizadeh, 2012).

A right school for religious beliefs is backup and supplement of religious education at home. Proper training of children requires a religious environment. Therefore schools must be a religious environment and full of useful and interesting lessons for children. The school must have a clear plan to foster the religious spirit of children and teachers must be a practical model in the program. (Yab, quoted by Hajizadeh, 2012).

Selection of Solutions and other related actions:

Given the importance of religious spirit in children and spreading a culture of prayer and the problems in schools, the solutions proposed to solve the problem are listed as below:

1. Holding a meeting with parents and taking about the importance of prayer and asking for more attention to prayer at home
2. Holding a meeting with school administrative staff and talking about the importance of prayer and the problems and asking for more effort to improve their role model.
3. Holding a meeting with teachers and recalling education priority on education, and therefore more attention to this issue in class, especially in the area of students prayer.
4. Inviting religious experts to talk to students about prayer and its importance
5. Preparing the heating and cooling systems for prayer room
6. Preparing ventilation system suitable for prayer room
7. Talking the students about observing cleaning and washing socks
8. Asking the students to providing information about the prayer and posters and wall newspapers (this can be done competitively).

I discussed the solutions with the critical group and after studying the relation of the presented solutions with the subject and given the importance of the subject and different aspects of the problem, it seems that

it is necessary to present several solutions to resolve the problem. So it was found that item 4 can cover items 1 to 3 and item 7 can cover item 6. It can be said about item 8 that because of the involvement of students in the subject, especially if the contest and the prize are raised, it can be a good solution. In this way, items 4, 7 and 8 were selected to run and solve the problem.

I raised the selected solutions in the meeting of teachers and school administrative staff and I ask all colleagues specially the principal of the school to cooperate and the work began as follows:

The first step: at first, I spoke to a religious expert with a history of working with children and invited him to participate in a meeting about prayer on Nov. 22, 2015. Then I invited parents and informed the teachers the invitation to set up their class schedule so that the class is not stopped.

Finally, the appointed time came and the meeting was held with a great welcome of students and parents. Fortunately the selection of an appropriate religious expert was done well and he was able to work well. Program was planned to be ended up to call to prayer. During the process of preparing for prayer I saw the students enthusiasm. They happily participated congregational prayer, so congregational prayer was held with certain grandeur.

The second step: A recall to a competition with the subject of the best wall newspaper about prayer was informed on the school bulletins board. all students were struggling to submit the best work. I saw in break times a few students who gathered together and they were trying to do their work. The school principal conferred prizes to honor and encourage students who participated in the competition (the prizes such as school bags, books, generally stationery needed and interested by students). The letters of appreciation were prepared. In the same meeting held on Nov. 22, 2015, the subject of the competition was introduced for the first time, so the deadline for submitting works was announced dated Dec. 6, 2015 and in the winners who were able to offer the best work received the prizes on Dec. 9, 2015 and the letters of appreciation were awarded the honor of the students who participated in the competition but were not able to earn the best rating.

The top (winner) wall newspaper of the competition were displayed in the school hall.

Then the teachers were asked to discuss the importance of prayer with the students in a certain and short time of class to create positive effects and not to be transitory and the students' enthusiasm to pray remains fresh.

The third step: I spoke with the authorities of the school on health issues, so they spend some time to talk about this issue every morning. Also in the prayer break time, freshener sprays were used in the prayer room. Moreover, few of the students were selected as health representatives to give tips and hints to their friends.

Fortunately, after the above said, we saw that the unpleasant odor was greatly reduced and students complied with health issues.

Evaluation of the Solutions:

With regard to the observations after the implementation of solutions, as well as statements by school authorities and even students, there is no doubt on the positive impact of implemented solutions and their reliability is confirmed. I raised the results obtained in the meetings with school authorities as well as the critical group and they confirmed the results. So it is clear that the solutions offered are acceptable and valid.

By implementing this project: The teachers and other school authorities strive to implement properly their model role. The students pray in school enthusiastically and are aware of the importance of prayer and they are always careful to observe their personal grooming.

The Evidence Collection 2:

After the implementation of the proposed solutions, I saw the moments that indicate the effectiveness of the solutions implemented. For example, in the prayer break time, the prayer room of the school was almost full, even if in some cases, prayer was not held congregationally, but again the students attended in the prayer room for praying. In the break time before the prayer break time, I observed several times the students preparing for ablutions and prayer in the next break time. Also I talking to the students and realized that the students are attended in the discussion in the class. As well as the students developed the health and unpleasant odor was greatly reduced. School authorities were satisfied with the better implementation of their model role at school and asserted that they are very happy to create a positive impact on the students. According to what has been said it is clear that the solutions implemented have been effective and fruitful.

Validating the findings:

To ensure the validity of the practical research I used the competent people as reference who are qualified to comment and approve or fuss, are aware of the problem of the students particularly religious issues and also are experts in the educational issues of elementary school. So I chose a group as an supervisor and research critic so that I can enjoy comments, suggestions, and criticisms since the beginning of implementation of the project. This group consisted of assessor of action research, school principal, guidance school teacher of my training course, two training course university students studying in educational science.

In the present research, I tried to observe all moral issues:

I should say about the participants awareness of the subject of the research that because the awareness of parents and students on the article may create some biases, I avoided to say about the research but they were fully aware that I aim to encourage students and teachers to prayer. It should be noted that since the

issue of prayer interconnected with daily life, only the awareness of parents and students of the importance of prayer is necessary and effective to cooperate in the implementation process of the research-without knowledge of the research.

But the school authorities were fully aware of in the research and to carry out any of the stages of research specially the implementation of the solution, the necessary arrangements were taken.

Because the research was in connection with all students, so no certain student was not considered and I conducted all group discussions and observations on groups of students, and I did not publish the names and characteristics of the students.

In all steps of the research, I tried to meet the commitment so that everything noted in this article such as group discussions, observations, conclusions and ... is true and no certain subject is not derived from my subjective opinions.

I observed accurately the subject and problem of the research at this term in the school and according to our responsibility and due to the fact that neglecting the issue of prayer can have devastating effects on students' future, I decided to try to reach a favorable conclusion and complete all stages of the research work by attempting to do the work reliably.

To track the subject and persist the results, I asked the principal of the school to hold various activities and competitions on prayer every three or four months. Religious experts must be invited from time to time. I asked the principal to emphasize on the discussion in classes on religious issues specially prayer in the meetings with teachers.

Discussion and Conclusion:

This research is in line with the research conducted on prayer. The difference is that most of them discussed the reasons of the problems of neglecting prayer by students, but in this research the problem was solved by the measures taken. Based on interviews with students, teachers and school administrative staff it was clear that the cause of the neglecting prayer by students is neglecting the religious educational issues of students and lack of awareness of the importance of prayer. Thus, in consultation with critical group and school authorities, the activities such as inviting experts to lecture at a meeting with students and their parents, holding various competitions on prayer, dedicating a part of the class time to discuss religious matters specially prayer and etc... were carried out and fortunately, the research objective was to achieve a situation where students pray with enthusiasm and willingness.

It is suggested to implement the solutions presented in this research in other schools, benefit the students in other schools from the positive results and provide growth and prosperity of students in the field of religious education specially in relation to prayer.

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