

The “Right to Equality” in Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): a Qur’anic Analysis

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Abstract

The “Right to Equality” has been articulated in the first article of the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948”. The Qur’an and Sunnah had also instructed about it centuries before. But the Right has been neglected and violated throughout the globe with impunity despite clear declaration and stern actions from the UN and paramount emphasis in the Qur’an and Sunnah for protecting this right. The purpose of this study therefore, is to explore how this “Right to Equality” has been enshrined in UDHR and in the Qur’an and Sunnah; how it is being protected by UN and by the Qur’an and Sunnah; and whether this right is compatible with the sacred texts of the Qur’an and the instructions of the Sunnah of Prophet (PBUH). This study has adopted descriptive, analytical, evaluative and critical methods to describe the fundamental human right in the UDHR and the Qur’an, to analyse and evaluate its stance in the light of the sacred texts and provide critical evaluation whenever necessary. The study found that the UDHR enshrined this “Right to Equality” with a clear statement wherein no clause appears to be contradictory with the teachings of the Qur’an and Sunnah. The contradictions appear when some interpreters misconstrue this right according to their whims, and personal interests. Consequently, the abuse of this right, inequality, discriminations against some particular people on the basis of race, gender, colour, religion and ethnicity are common across the world, though UN is diligent with its other entities for promoting and protecting this right. The Qur’an Sunnah’s noble approach seems strongly effective for promoting and protecting it, as the Qur’anic commands and declaration of rewards for its implementation make this right actively implemented and the strong prohibitions, warnings and declaring sever punishments for violations make it strongly protected.

Keywords: Human Rights, Equality, Dignity, Violations, Discriminations, Implementations.

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