

An Examination of the Concept, Components, and Implications of Innate Human Dignity from the Perspective of the Qur'an, with a Comparative Assessment of Humanism

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Introduction

Understanding the status and position of the human being within the created order has always been a central concern of humanity and, in particular, of scholars engaged in anthropology. Across various secular and religious traditions, extreme and divergent theories have emerged-some attributing a demonic nature or inherent sinfulness to human beings, while others affirm unlimited dignity and boundless worth for the human person. Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to clarify the Qur'an's view-as a revealed and error-free source-concerning innate human dignity, its constitutive elements, and its implications, and to compare and evaluate this view in relation to the prominent secular perspective of humanism.

Methodology

This research explicates the Qur'anic perspective on the concept, components, and implications of innate human dignity and then compares and evaluates it with the humanist worldview. The study adopts a comparative approach and employs library research and descriptive-analytical methods.

Findings

According to the Qur'an, the components of innate human dignity include rationality and the possession of spirit, human free will and volition, bearing the divine trust (amānah), and having an innate, God-given disposition (fiṭrah). The Qur'anic text considers several consequences for this dignity: vicegerency (khiḷāfah), the capacity to learn the Names, worthiness of being honored before the angels, the subjugation of the universe for human benefit, the right to life, the right to freedom, equitable social privileges, the obligation to preserve human reputation, and the prohibition of insulting others. Although the Qur'an and humanists agree on the principle that human beings possess inherent dignity, several major divergences remain: the Qur'an limits the scope of human dignity and freedom, rejects absolute anthropocentrism, stresses the primacy of the spiritual dimension, considers reason insufficient for securing human felicity, refuses all discrimination among human beings, and defines for humans a level of pleasure and purpose beyond mere animalistic satisfaction-points that humanism does not accept.

Conclusion

The main conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. Qur'anic analysis shows that the root k-r-m is used to describe various classes of beings-immaterial and material-and denotes an intrinsic nobility independent of comparison with other creatures.



2.The Qur'an identifies rationality, possession of a divine spirit, human free will, bearing the divine trust, and the God-given fitrah as the components of innate human dignity.

3.The implications of human dignity in the Qur'an include divine vicegerency, the capacity to learn the Names, worthiness of angelic prostration, the subjugation of the cosmos, the right to life and to freedom, equitable social rights, the obligation to protect human honor, and the prohibition of insulting others.

4.In the humanist worldview, the human being relies entirely on autonomous reason, sees no need for God or revelation, and marginalizes anything that does not serve material enjoyment.

5.Both the Qur'an and humanism affirm that human beings possess inherent and intrinsic dignity.

6.Despite this shared affirmation, the Qur'an's unique and unparalleled view of human dignity differs from humanism in significant ways: the limited scope of dignity and freedom, rejection of absolute anthropocentrism, dual-dimensioned human ontology, primacy of the spiritual dimension, insufficiency of unaided reason, complete rejection of discrimination, and its articulation of supra-animal purposes and pleasures for the human being.

Keywords

innate dignity, humanism, anthropocentrism, Qur'an, comparative analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Compliance with research ethics. The authors observed the ethical principles in conducting and publishing this scholarly research, and this is confirmed by all of them.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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