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Equality and Social Harmony in Early Buddhism

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This study investigates how the Buddha's advice on the equality and harmony of human beings can be utilized to develop the unity among different nationalities. Although there are sociological researches on this it is rare to find the Buddhist view of it. The purpose of this research is to present the Buddhist teachings on equality to create a mutual understanding among different nationalities. It is obvious that the human being has been undergoing suffering due to discrimination in the different eras of history. On this the Buddha emphasized the political, economic, social and religious equality. In the Pali Canon we find many Buddhist concepts for maintaining the equality and harmony among human beings. The concept of equality is established in human beings although the society is divided due to different social concepts. People become 'low' or 'high' not due to their social standards. The problem is related to mental development of human beings. People are divided due to their individual personalities. It is not based on their caste, but spiritual development. Buddhism guides all people to change their way of life. It is special to human beings because they become good or bad based on their behavior.

Key words: behavior, Buddhism, equality, harmony,