

Discussion

Name of Student

Institutional Affiliation

1-1 Discussion

Social movements can be defined as organized, collective efforts by groups of people who aim to promote or resist change in society based on shared beliefs and ideals. These movements typically emerge in response to perceived injustices or societal needs, seeking to influence public opinion, policies, or societal norms through various forms of advocacy and action (Selvanathan et al., 2020). The core of a social movement is its pursuit of social change, whether through reformative or transformative approaches, relying on mobilization of resources, creation of alliances, and implementation of strategic actions to achieve desired outcomes.

An example that fits this definition is the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. The movement sought to end racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans and secure legal recognition and federal protection of the citizenship rights enumerated in the Constitution and federal law (Shannon & Hunter Jr, 2020). It was characterized by strategic leadership, nonviolent protest, and mass mobilization, epitomizing an organized effort to bring about social change in accordance with the shared beliefs and ideals of equality and justice.

Comparing this definition to the one provided in this week's resources, there may be similarities or differences based on the emphasis on aspects such as the role of ideology, the methods employed, and the scale of change envisioned. Resources often highlight the dynamics within movements, including the role of technology, transnational impacts, or the socio-economic contexts that shape them, which might expand or focus the definition differently.

Leaders in social movements play critical roles as strategists, spokespersons, motivators, and symbols of the movement. They are instrumental in shaping the movement's goals, tactics, and public image, and in mobilizing and sustaining the participation of

members (Giugni & Grasso, 2022). Effective leaders are able to navigate challenges, adapt strategies, and maintain the cohesion and morale of the group.

The success of a social movement can be measured by its ability to achieve its objectives, whether through policy changes, shifts in public opinion, or changes in social practices. However, success can also be seen in the movement's capacity to influence future activism, contribute to the political education of its participants, and reshape societal values, even if immediate objectives are not fully achieved. Thus, the impact of a social movement can be both immediate and long-term, affecting various levels of society in complex ways.

References

- Giugni, M., & Grasso, M. (2022). Social Movements. In P. Harris, A. Bitonti, C. S. Fleisher, & A. S. Binderkrantz (Eds.), *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Interest Groups, Lobbying and Public Affairs* (pp. 1213–1221). Springer International Publishing.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44556-0_98
- Selvanathan, H. P., Lickel, B., & Dasgupta, N. (2020). An integrative framework on the impact of allies: How identity-based needs influence intergroup solidarity and social movements. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 50*(6), 1344–1361.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2697>
- Shannon, J. H., & Hunter Jr, R. J. (2020). The Civil Rights Act of 1964: Beyond Race to Employment Discrimination Based on Sex: The 'Three Letter Word' That Has Continued to Vex Society and The United States Supreme Court. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences, 3*(3).
https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3649409

Responses

Response 1

One significant social movement since 2004 is the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, which began in 2013. Applying my classmate's definition, which emphasizes collective efforts to address societal issues, the BLM movement aligns well with this framework. The movement organizes around the values of racial justice and police reform, using both grassroots activism and larger-scale protests to press for change. This definition works effectively for BLM because it captures the essence of a decentralized, yet coordinated, campaign to influence societal norms and policies concerning racial inequality and systemic injustice. The definition is apt as it encapsulates the movement's dynamic use of digital platforms to mobilize, educate, and create spaces for collective action and dialogue, which are central to its method of effecting change.

Response 2

Evaluating the success of the #MeToo movement based on my classmate's definition, which likely emphasizes achieving specific goals through collective action, the movement has been markedly successful. Launched into the global spotlight in 2017, #MeToo has significantly shifted public discourse and attitudes towards sexual harassment and assault, particularly in the workplace. This movement has led to tangible changes, such as stricter policies against harassment in corporate and entertainment industries, and has empowered individuals to come forward with their experiences. These outcomes align well with the definition's focus on achieving change through shared efforts and advocacy. The movement's success is evident not only in policy changes and raised awareness but also in the ongoing cultural shift towards greater accountability and support for victims of sexual misconduct.