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Muhammad Fadzryl Adzmy, Ashadi Ashar: Analysis of Social Movements by Athletes: Study on Black Equality and Justice Campaign by Lebron James

ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS BY ATHLETES: STUDY ON BLACK EQUALITY AND JUSTICE CAMPAIGN BY LEBRON JAMES

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the social movement advocating for civil rights and against racism, initiated by the prominent basketball athlete, Lebron James, in the United States. Social movements, as a form of collective behavior, have been a subject of significant academic inquiry since the early 20th century. Typically, research on social movements concentrates on the contextual antecedents of the issue and the motivational drivers of the involved actors. This research endeavors to delve deeper into the characteristics of the social movement spearheaded by Lebron James, focusing specifically on the struggle for the civil rights of Black individuals. A review of existing literature reveals a paucity of studies concerning social movements constructed or executed by athletes, particularly those designated as among the world's wealthiest, thereby underscoring the novelty and relevance of this investigation. Employing a qualitative methodological approach, this study utilizes data derived from rigorously selected and specific previous literature. The findings indicate, firstly, that this movement is characterized by the articulation of a collective identity, forging a strong connection between the athlete and the issues and populations whose rights are being championed. Secondly, the movement demonstrates the capacity for development and sustainability, attributable to factors such as solidarity and commitment fostered among its participants.

Keywords: Social Movements, Racism, Athletes, Civil Rights

Introduction

Racial discrimination and human rights violations against black people have existed for centuries. According to history, this practise first appeared in 1095, along with colonialization practises carried out by Europeans following the Crusades, which were sponsored by the Pope and Christians. The Catholic churches exploited religion and ethnicity to rouse European Christians to fight the Islamic Empire, whose inhabitants could be recognised by skin colour. The Catholic Church used this language because the Islamic Empire's invasion threatened its existence. This phenomenon preceded

the rise and inheritance of supremacy over religion and race, the subject of this inquiry.

Racist practises sparked community pushback. On December 5, 1955, Martin Luther King, president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, was appointed as a representative to speak at the protests against racism in the US. He banned all Montgomery blacks from the bus. The 1950 racism incident against black woman Rosa Park sparked this movement. On the bus, she faced racism. At that time, the Jim Crow laws were in effect in the US between 1876 and 1965, which established the principle of


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"separate but equal" for black people. According to the law of the time, black people were obliged to give up their seats to white people when the white seats were full. This shows that racism has existed for a long time and that white people feel superior to black people. This event also underlies the movement that Martin Luther King called for for all black people in Montgomery. They consider that all buses in the Montgomery area are symbols of humiliation, injustice, and inequality (Pilgrim, 2015).

Events that occur in this world are often tied to events that occur in the world of sports. According to Hartmann, sport is generally very pure, safe, and even positive; it can unite social forces (Hartman, in Brun, 2020). Hartmann also argues that many people in the United States think that politics is dirty, complicated, and creates conflict. The two things don't go well together. The discriminatory practices experienced by the black community not only encouraged the emergence of social activist figures and politicians but also sports athletes who participated in voicing the struggle for equality. In the world of sports, athletes have long been some of the most vocal and expressive leaders in societal change. Athlete social activism as a phenomenon in which sports athletes participate in social activities (including movements) has emerged since the early 20th century (Lazzaretti, 2023). Looking far back, the beginnings of athlete social activism can be traced back to 1920, when Rube Foster, a black baseball player and coach, opposed racism by forming the Negro National League as a forum for black baseball athletes, as well as efforts to integrate black athletes with white athletes, which would eventually become one of the most important events in the history of baseball with Jackie Robinson becoming the first black baseball athlete

to move from the Negro National League to Major League Baseball in 1947 (Rhoden, 2007).

Black athletes were one of the most important voices during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The role of professional athletes is uniquely positioned to provide services as representatives of social change. The influence of athletes also has the potential to affect the attitudes and confidence of fans, and this is not an easy thing (Coombs and Casillo, 2017). For athletes, the decision to engage publicly on potentially controversial topics such as civil rights, racial equality, and social justice issues can put their career at risk both in sport and in life outside their sports career (Coombs and Casillo, 2017). Athletes' social activism is spreading and reaching a peak in 2016. There have been numerous protests about race, gender, money, and nationality in the history of American sports and the Olympics. However, all have one thing in common, namely the struggle for justice, which is supported by the US Constitution. After 2016, the social activism of athletes continues to this day. Athletes are one of the figures who really struggle to fight for the rights of the black race; Lebron James is one of them.

This research wants to focus on the struggle for civil rights equality and anti-racism initiated by basketball athlete Lebron James. Born with the full name LeBron Ramyon James, he is the best professional basketball player in the United States. LeBron James has won National Basketball Association (NBA) championships several times, including with the Miami Heat in 2012–2013, the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2016, and the Los Angeles Lakers in 2020 (Augustyn, 2023). Lebron James, who has had a career for more than 10 years in the world of sports,

1 has also been identified several times and expressed his attitude as a social activist (Coombs and Casillo, 2017). It is noted that he has supported several campaigns such as Black Lives Matter, Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere, and I Promise School. Finally, Lebron James initiated the More Than Vote movement in 2020 to fight for voting rights and encourage participation in the United States presidential election for black citizens. In fact, this movement developed further after the United States presidential election. Two new movements were born and initiated: Protect Our Power and Defend Voting Rights. It will be interesting to look deeper into the direction of the social movement created by a popular athlete through stories and an analysis of the process of his presence.

1 Based on what has been explained previously, the author tries to explain the formulation of the problem; "What are the characteristics of the More Than A Vote movement as a social movement initiated by athletes in fighting for equality and justice for suffrage in the United States?". This study aims to analyse in more depth how an athlete or sports star is able to build a social movement that is quite popular and has strong sustainability.

1 Research from Combs and Cassilo (2017) entitled Athletes and/or Activist: LeBron James and Black Lives Matter discusses Lebron James' role as an athlete activist by identifying four frames that are often associated with James and the Black Lives Matter Movement. This research finds that Lebron James is very careful in his role as an athlete activist, which is assumed to be more of a social message delivery role than building a revolutionary movement that is contextualised through his brand and ambition. Then there is research from Galily entitled "Shut up and

dribble!" Athletes activism in the age of Twittersphere: The Case of Lebron James, which discusses how chronologically and conceptually Lebron James' activism can change not only in the field of sports but in a more important order, namely political discourse (Galily, 2019). It is argued here that the ability of top-level athletes who openly identify with one side of the political map to attract not only the fans whose opinions they amplify but also those on the other side of the political map, thus contributing to the enlargement of those opinions and movements,

Furthermore, research from Thomas and Wright (2022) analyse how the NBA and WNBA are helping destroy systemic racism. This research confirms that athletes have an important and powerful role to play in driving the conversation around institutional and systemic racism in society. Valiente on her research about Lilí Álvarez (2019) shows that experiences influenced social conscience in unexpected ways and on issues other than sports, such as religion and feminism. Another study from Cooky and Antunovic (2020), examines the articulation of feminism in the context of athlete activism and refocuses the role of sportsmen. Based on social media, official statements from athletes, and online news media coverage, this research uncovered feminist narratives in network communications, particularly in WNBA activism related to #BlackLivesMatter. This research finds findings by describing how narratives of solidarity and collectivism are informed by intersectional and neoliberal feminist articulations.

Based on the literature reviews, the authors found interesting things that eventually became the basis for determining the formulation of the problem in this study, that there was no

in-depth discussion regarding social activation carried out by athletes, in this case, LeBron James.

In this paper, the author uses identity-oriented theory. According to Singh in the book *Concept and Theory of Social Movements, the Perspective of Identity Theory* (the Identity-Oriented Theory) is an approach that originates from the social science tradition in Europe and is included in one of the contemporary theoretical orientations in the new social movement. Identity theory (the identity-oriented theory) in contemporary social movements is a critical basis for the perspective of resource mobilisation theory (Singh, in Sukmana, 2016). Resource Mobilisation Theory is considered to be less able to explain several expressions of various forms of new social movements, such as the disarmament movement, the environmental movement, the feminist movement, the peace movement, and the local freedom movement. In Europe, identity theory has a strong dominance and is in opposition to contemporary understandings of social movement rationality developed by American scholars, especially regarding the explanations provided by resource mobilisation theory. If resource mobilisation theory focuses heavily on rationalism and materialism, identity theory generally takes the opposite approach. Identity theory tends to be non-materialistic and expressive. This theory pays attention to questions regarding the integration and solidarity of groups involved in collective action (Singh, in Sukmana, 2016).

Therefore, identity-oriented theory is a concept that adopts a post-Marxist approach in critical analysis of the logic of post-materialism, post-industrialism, and post-capitalism social forms. These social

forms emerged as a result of contemporary critical thinking and the application of expressive empiricism as a means of understanding ideas about post-society, post-sociology, and the New Social Movements. Hunt and Benford argue that collective identity is widely used in social science sources that discuss movements (Singh, in Sukmana, 2016). Collective identity is seen as a prerequisite for the initiation of collective action and as a result of collective action movements. Researchers at various levels of analysis and with various theories have used collective identities in their studies. Collective identity has become a central aspect of analytical research on the emergence of movements, movement patterns, and movement impacts. Research on identity also involves analyses of dissatisfaction formation and framing processes, motivations for participation, choice of activist tactics, life outcomes, and emotions. Group identity appears to be a key concept involving almost all theoretical perspectives and empirical investigations in recent research on social movements.

The concepts of collective identity, solidarity, and commitment are explained systematically in the theory of collective action. These three ideas are interrelated to form a systematic basis, namely an overarching theory that combines the perspectives of psychology, social psychology, and macrosociology. In general, collective identity explains that participants in a movement or group of individuals have the same factors, such as feelings, interests, values, and goals. According to Snow and Soule (2004), collective identity involves a shared feeling as part of a group (we-ness) and participation in collective institutions. According to Hunt and Benford, collective identity can be defined as the cognitive, moral, and emotional elements of

individuals associated with society in general, such as categories, practices, or institutions. Collective identity reflects perceptions of shared status or relationships that may be imaginative rather than direct. Although collective identity is different from personal identity, it is still part of that personal identity. Collective identity may be first constructed by others, but ultimately it depends on how the individuals involved in forming it perceive it. Cultural elements such as names, stories, symbols, language styles, ceremonies, clothing, and so on are ways to express collective identity. However, not all of these cultural elements specifically express collective identity. Collective identity does not only involve rational thinking in making decisions or evaluating choices that benefit the individual. In contrast to ideology, collective identity also includes positive feelings towards other group members.

Furthermore, according to Hunt and Benford (in Snow and Soule, 2004), conceptually, solidarity and collective identity are two different things, but these two constructs build on each other and are related to one another. Solidarity is defined as the ability of social actors to recognise each other and be recognised as part of the same social group. Solidarity can be seen from two main perspectives: internal and external. Internal solidarity refers to a focus on the internal group and the members within the group. While external solidarity is an identification of identities and feelings that are connected to groups outside the group, The formation of internal and external solidarity is closely related to the formation of a world view or ideology. In short, solidarity involves identifying with a collective so that individuals feel they have the same goals and destiny.

The third is commitment and social movement. Based on what has been researched by Meyer and Allen, it is explained that the concept of commitment in the context of social movements in general includes things and factors such as trust, emotional attachment, self-identification with movement goals, and being active in movement activities (Meyer and Allen, 1991). The research explains that there are three components of commitment in a movement organisation: affective commitment, continuity commitment, and normative commitment.

Affective commitment is an emotional attachment between participants and organisations or movements. Participants who have affective commitment will be emotionally connected and identify themselves with the goals of the organisation so as to present the desire to continue to be part of the organization. Continuity commitment is basically a participant's attachment to a movement or organisation based on their long-term interests. Participants in the movement will feel that if they are not in the movement or leave the movement, they will feel a loss, and according to them, the risks they will receive will have a negative impact on them. While the last component, namely normative commitment, explains that participant engagement is based on responsibility for social norms or group values, which are viewed by movement participants as a moral or social obligation,

Through the elaboration related to the above concepts and theories, the author tries to answer the above problem formulation through an analysis using the above theories. By using the Identity Theory Perspective, the author seeks to explain in more depth the social

movement activism carried out by sports athletes in this context, namely LeBron James, who can be said to come from upper-class society but chooses to participate in social activities in fighting for rights and justice for black people in the United States who are experiencing oppression.

Methods

This research is a qualitative study. The data for this research is sourced from literature such as scientific journals, books, research reports, mass media, and other relevant and validated documents. This method is used due to the researcher's limitations with the research locus, where funding and time are the main constraints. However, the use of a literature review in this research does not diminish the essence of the research to obtain and describe phenomena, meanings, and social processes with a deep understanding. Social movements are often defined by their language and rhetoric.

A literature review allows researchers to trace the evolution of key concepts and narratives (Fairclough, 1995). Furthermore, Snow, Rochford, Worden, dan Benford (1986) argued social movements use "frames" to interpret and mobilize around issues, so a literature review can reveal how these frames have been constructed and contested. The literature review must be conducted systematically and rigorously, with clear criteria for selecting and analyzing sources.

In conclusion, while a literature review as a sole data source might appear limited, it holds significant value in specific sociological research areas, particularly when dealing with historical, theoretical, or ideational aspects of social movements.

Results and Disussion

Athlete's Social Activism: The Issue of Racism and the Movement of Black Communities in America

Black people in the US have long faced racism from white people and the government. This has created the impression that the criminal justice system in that country is racially biased and that minority groups are mistreated. In a recent Pew Research Centre survey, nine out of ten black adults said that the criminal justice system treats black people less fairly than white people (Gramlich, 2019). In a survey before last year's midterm elections, 79% of blacks and 32% of whites felt the criminal justice system's treatment of racial and ethnic minorities was a major issue in the US. On the other hand, several studies have consistently shown that white people are more likely to believe that the police treat minorities in the same way as white people, despite the fact that many facts show otherwise. This indicates racism is trivial.

After the 2013 death of Trayvon Martin by Florida police brutality, a Twitter hashtag movement called #BlackLivesMatter emerged. This movement began with Alicia Garza's hashtagged tweet and grew to show and voice concern about this situation. "Blacks. I adore you. Love us; our lives matter. Patrisse Cullors reuploaded this Garza piece with #BlackLivesMatter (Day, 2015). This social media-based uprising is a form of resistance to systemic racism in the United States. The Black Lives Matter movement has grown into a prominent symbol of the modern era's commitment to give a platform to black Americans' fight against racism. Black Lives Matter fights white supremacy and builds local power to stop state and citizen violence against black people (Black Lives Matter, 2013). In 2014, a policeman shot and

killed Mike Brown, a black adolescent, sparking the Black Lives Matter movement. The "Freedom Rides" protest seeks to alert the government and the world to the death of Mike Brown and warn the black community that racism is still prevalent (Luibrand, 2015).

The Black Lives Matter movement is not only a protest by black people in general; this movement has also received sympathy from athletes in the United States. At the end of the 2016 NFL season, a rugby league sport, the mainstay of the San Francisco 49ers team, Colin Kaepernick, did a knee jump during the United States national anthem and became an iconic act. Kaepernick's stance taps into the long history of civil rights protest in sports that dates from the 1960s to the turn of the nineteenth century and possibly before (Houghteling and Dantzler, 2020). In an interview, Kaepernick explained that his weekly demonstrations are not limited to police brutality and racial inequality but also to the institutions that perpetuate these problems. Kaepernick took this action with the aim of getting justice for minorities in the United States and intends to raise awareness that structural violence against minorities in the United States really exists. He thinks that he does not want to live in a country that oppresses minorities. Colin Kaepernick's action drew outrage from high-ranking US officials, including President Donald Trump. The NFL, which is a symbol of conservatism in the United States, is part of the 3Fs, namely faith, family, and football. The action was considered defiance and an insult to the national symbol because it was carried out while the US national anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, was being played. The impact of this action was that Kaepernick could no longer play in the NFL because

no club wanted to sign him until now (Houghteling and Dantzler, 2020).

Apart from the actions of Colin Kaepernick, reported by the basketball news channel *Mainbasket*, the Black Lives Matter movement was also carried out by NBA players. NBA players are concerned about the occurrence of racist acts received by George Floyd and Jacob Blake (Mainbasket, 2021). The George Floyd case is again proof that there are still acts of racism in the United States after the 46-year-old African-American man was killed after a Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin, knelt on his neck for 8 minutes, 46 seconds. Previously, there were reports of an arrest on behalf of Floyd on charges of using counterfeit \$20 bills at a minimarket in Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States of America (Hill, 2020). At that time, the police on duty claimed that Floyd had refused to be arrested. After the police handcuffed Floyd's hands, Floyd was dropped to the asphalt by Chauvin, who pinned his knee on Floyd's neck. Before he finally lost consciousness, Floyd winced in pain and begged Chauvin to let him go while saying "I can't breathe". This case also caused outrage from the global community, which sparked protests in a number of countries, including in 50 states of the United States. Racism also happened to Jacob Blake after he was shot seven times in the back in front of his own son. He was shot by a white police officer while trying to get into his car. This incident occurred in Wisconsin, United States.

Both cases sparked a backlash from NBA players, many of whom condemned the move and threatened to boycott NBA games. Even one of the NBA teams, the Milwaukee Bucks, has boycotted their match against the Orlando Magic. They issued a statement containing (NBA, 2020):

"Over the last few days in our home state of Wisconsin, we've seen the horrendous video of Jacob Blake being shot in the back seven times by a police officer in Kenosha and the additional shooting of protestors. Despite the overwhelming plea for change, there has been no action, so our focus today cannot be on basketball..."

The quote is evidence of disappointment and a form of resistance to what is accepted by black people in the United States. This act of racism not only sparked anger from Colin Kaepernick and NBA players but also the wider community by holding large-scale demonstrations in various states.

Lebron James and More Than Vote as an identity-oriented movement

Some people, especially athletes, think 2020 is the appropriate time to change due to the US political year. Many believe Donald Trump's presidency has generated a lot of unfairness, including racism. LeBron James, Chris Paul, and Patrick Mahomes are among the NBA and NFL players that believe lawmakers should change. Thus, they founded an organisation to encourage Americans, particularly black Americans, to vote. The US's history shows that public involvement, especially among black people, is still low due to recurrent repression from other groups, especially the government. Repression includes limits on in-person ballot papers, tougher identity verification on election day, and reduced election hours (Gardner, Rabinowitz and Stevens, 2021).

LeBron James was one of the athletes who was instrumental in launching the civil rights and anti-racism

movements. LeBron Ramyon James, also known as King James, is a professional NBA player with almost two decades of experience and accomplishments on and off the court (James, 2021). After starting his basketball career in high school, LeBron became the first second-year player to be named to the USA TODAY All-USA First Team in 1999. In his senior year of high school, he was named PARADE's High School Boys Basketball Player of the Year and Gatorade Player of the Year, helping his school St. Vincent-St. Mary High School become the first US school to rank in the national basketball championship. LeBron began his NBA career in 2003 by joining his hometown Cleveland Cavaliers through a draught pick system and was taken first in the first round. He was the first player in school to be directly chosen to the NBA, while players are usually selected through a draught pick system in their final year of college or after graduating.

LeBron James is regarded as one of the greatest NBA players of all time, having won the competition four times with the Miami Heat in 2012-2013, the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2016, and the Los Angeles Lakers in 2020, placing him alongside NBA legends such as Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (Augustyn, 2023). LeBron won 4 Finals MVPs, 4 NBA MVPs, and 18 All-Star NBA Selections, and in 2023, he became the NBA's greatest scorer with 38,652 points, surpassing Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's 38,387. In his three Olympics, LeBron won gold medals in 2008 in Beijing, China, and 2012 in London, England. Forbes said that LeBron became the highest-paid NBA player in 2019 with a five-year contract worth USD 88.7 million. LeBron James, who has had a nearly 20-year career in athletics, has also been identified and voiced his stance as a social activist multiple times (Coombs and Casillo,

2017). He has been documented to have supported various movements, including Black Lives Matter, Injustice Anywhere is a Threat to Justice Everywhere, and I Promise School. LeBron James is one of the world's most influential athletes due to his accomplishments, money, and off-field activities. He and his colleagues formed a US anti-racism movement with his influence.

LeBron James and other black athletes and entertainers founded a coalition to safeguard African-American suffrage. They exploited the global rallies against racial inequality to bolster their movement ahead of the 2020 presidential election. Reported by a leading American magazine, the New York Times, via telephone interview;

"Because of everything that was going on, people were finally starting to listen to us; we felt like we were finally getting our foot in the door. How long it takes is up to us. We don't know. But we feel like we've got some ears and some attention, and it's time for us to finally make a difference."

The group known as More Than A Vote encourages the public to take part in bringing about change through influencing policymakers, in this case the president, who is the most powerful actor in this regard (Martin, 2020). LeBron further stated that he would utilise his social media presence to oppose oppression of voting rights holders and would continue to be vocal in drawing attention to any efforts made by certain parties to prohibit prejudice against minority groups.

The organisation More Than A Vote was also started by people from different backgrounds and social classes, such as

LeBron James and other professional players. In contrast to social movements that originate from the lower classes and people directly affected by discrimination and injustice, LeBron is present here as a successful NBA megastar. Despite his moniker, LeBron James continues to engage in many forms of social activism, one of which is More Than A Vote, which is based on a strong identity push and coupled with his status as one of the world's most influential sports athletes. As a black athlete, he believes that there must be a change in a government system that continues to discriminate against black people in numerous aspects, both public and private.

The organisation is faced with a situation in which Republican legislatures have implemented laws limiting where and when people can vote, with Georgia at the forefront of the fight over that right (James, 2021). Throughout US history, voter registration has been racially discriminatory. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the discriminatory effect of "cleaning" the voter list. Election authorities in Georgia are disproportionately clearing the voter register and injuring non-white voters, as in history. Georgia had the highest voter roll-over in American history, removing 560,000 names in one day in 2017. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution discovered that black, Latino, and Asian voters were disproportionately illegally removed in the purge. Georgia removed about 313,000 names from its list in October 2019, continuing its purging for the 2020 election. True the Vote and other anti-voter organisations want to eliminate 364,000 Georgian voters before the January 2021 U.S. Senate runoffs. This makes fighting these coercive measures difficult for these organisations (Wilder, 2021).

More Than A Vote strives to educate, enlighten, empower, and raise awareness of voting rights. More Than A Vote focuses on minimising voter suppression in minority areas and raising turnout (Andscape, 2020). With the tagline "Change Isn't Made By Watching From The Sidelines", this organisation prioritises resistance to a system that discriminates against black Americans more than white Americans, notably in general elections. According to USA TODAY, the organisation partnered with the NAACP Legal Defence Fund to recruit 40,000 poll workers to help Florida voters with criminal records that are not tied to murder or sexual assault. LeBron James, a member of the group, also contributes to this campaign by ensuring that 23 of the 30 NBA teams use their home arena or practise facilities as voting locations. He stated why voting in person was so essential to him and the history of voter suppression, especially for black Americans (Medina, 2020).

In addition, Joe Biden created a record by winning the 2020 Georgia general election as the first Democratic candidate since 1992. Georgians ceded Senate authority to Democrats. More Than A Vote states this expands advocacy to mobilise black local election voters, promote a fair 2020 electoral process, and improve criminal justice. More Than a Vote has made a significant impact in Florida, by successfully raising \$100,000 US dollars to help restore persons' voting rights who have been accused of past offences (Morgan, 2020).

In March 2021, launched via the official Twitter social media channel, More Than A Vote released a narrative video by LeBron James that stated that the organisation formed a new movement called "Protect Our Power" with the aim of inviting black voters to fight for their

suffrage and against the suppression of their suffrage. This release also coincides with the NBA All Star Weekend agenda, where this agenda is an event for entertainment matches conducted by the NBA by competing the best NBA players who have been chosen by fans through a voting system. The "Protect Our Power" campaign carried out by the More Than A Vote organisation has collaborated with the Black Voters Matter Fund, Fair Fight Action, the Georgia NAACP, and the New Georgia Project to focus on laws in Georgia that will limit access to the ballot, with the state emerging as the centre of the contest for that vote (Merica, 2021).

Collective Identity as the Foundation in the More Than a Vote Movement

Currently, this organisation is existing through an initiation by a group of people who share the same identity, the black community, which forms a collective identity. Initiator circle members share identity, values, sentiments, and ambitions. Black athletes and artists are inviting black people to join the campaign. In addition to black individuals, this society welcomes non-black people who share its goals of fighting minority persecution. More importantly, the More Than a Vote movement proves communal identity. Black folks unite and share their feelings with movement members.

This movement promotes human rights for everybody. Every person has equal voting rights, and black people's acceptance of racism violates this right. Every citizen, especially in democracies, has the right to vote. Paying attention to examples of prejudice that their group accepts may help combat and reduce racism. Their principles also reflect the pleasant feelings and camaraderie among members. They united to fight for their

rights and against injustice recognised by the black community and society as a whole.

This movement's name, "More Than A Vote," implies that voting rights, especially for black people, are more important than they think. This name may also symbolise black suffrage's fight against injustice. They also express their identity through storytelling, symbols, and clothing. Participants of this movement pin #MoreThanAVote, #ProtectOurPower, and #BlackLivesMatter on every social media post to represent their collective identity. It continued with people wearing "Black Lives Matter, Vote, More Than A Vote" t-shirts and banners stating "Protect My Vote", "Vote", and "My Vote". Vote, Our Right, Our Fight" shows their unity. The ANDSCAPE news media reported their open letter (ANDSCAPE, 2020):

"But as a team, we came together to focus on one issue this year: systemic racism's impact on our right to vote. Black voter suppression has many forms. We are focusing on the threat of COVID-19 as a tool of suppression, the abuse of political power to make voting more difficult, and the misinformation intended to intimidate and deceive our community".

This group said that by jointly building strength, they could focus on one issue that year, namely racism that occurred in the government system and affected black people's right to vote. With the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic being used by the government as a tool to carry out this repression, namely through political power, they are trying to issue policies that will make it difficult for black people to participate in elections

and provide false information with the aim of intimidating and deceiving the black community.

Oppression and the growth of a sense of solidarity

This organisation was formed to support black Americans who were victims of racism. Solidarity in this organisation comes from the realisation that its members are part of a social community with shared goals and ideals. This More Than A Vote organisation promotes internal and external unity.

The organisation emphasises internal unity among movement members. This is obvious from the organization's many calls to fight racism in that nation together. Additionally, More Than A Vote's massive collective actions, such as peaceful street demonstrations, and Twitter's hashtags #ProtectOurPower and #MoreThanAVote can foster a sense of solidarity with fellow participants. The official More Than A Vote Twitter account published a campaign film showing peaceful street demonstrations attended by black and non-black people. The protesters carried placards reading "Protect My Vote", "Vote", and "My Vote, Our Right, Our Fight". As shown in the video, demonstrators tried to break through the police queue to voice their demands to the authorities. Other solidarity activities included athletes, who started this campaign, wearing Black Lives Matter and Vote shirts during warm-ups before games. LeBron James, Anthony Davis, and Quinn Cook wear Vote t-shirts during warm-ups for the opening NBA game of the September 2020 Western Conference finals between the Los Angeles Lakers and Denver Nugget (Sportsnet, 2020). In July 2020, LeBron James, Anthony Davis, and the Los Angeles Lakers wore Black Lives

Matter jerseys during the warm-up before their game against the Los Angeles Clippers, which began the NBA regular season. 2019–2020 after the COVID-19 epidemic halted play (Karalis, 2020).

This movement also builds outward solidarity by recognising and forming solidarity relationships with other groups. The "Protect Our Power" campaign, which partners with the Black Voters Matter Fund, Fair Fight Action, the Georgia NAACP, and the New Georgia Project, targets Georgia laws that would limit access to the ballot, making the state the epicentre of the vote. This organisation also tries to shape a worldview relevant to its movements by creating internal and external solidarity.

This organisation shows how they build a worldview as part of the process of building solidarity in an even higher dimension, namely Stacy Abrams, a Senate candidate from the Democratic Party, who delivered her speech regarding this movement by conveying messages regarding the struggles carried out by this organisation to all community levels the night before the election in Atlanta on May 22, 2018, she said (Smith, 2020):

"I think there are two pieces to focus on. One is ensuring that voter suppression does not have its intended effect, which is that by making it more difficult to vote, people decide not to bother trying. Our goal through Fair Fight and Fair Fight 2020 is to ensure that people know about the obstacles that are being placed in their way but (are encouraged to) vote in even larger numbers to overwhelm the intention of the system. The best way to defeat voter suppression is by having such a high turnout that

the barriers to voting have limited effect".

Even at a lower level, messages related to this movement are written on the back of the parking attendant's clothing there, which reads "Right to Vote," which shows that the solidarity actions of the participants in this movement are present at every level of society.

Commitment as an effort to maintain the sustainability of the movement

The More Than A Vote organisation, which was initiated by black sports athletes and other black figures, explained that the consequences of acts of racism received by black people made these actors feel concerned, and finally action was needed to create a change. One of the actors from this organisation, Diggin Smith, showed his concern for what the black community has received so far through an interview with the New York Times news media (Martin, 2020):

"I'm sick of seeing unarmed black men killed by the police, to put some action behind my frustrations, behind my anger, behind the helplessness that I've been feeling".

The affective commitment shown by these actors is evidenced by an open letter delivered by the organisation in August 2020, which was uploaded via the ANDSCAPE news media and signed by people who have officially joined this movement. People who have signed this open letter include LeBron James, Kevin Hart, Damian Lillard, Draymond Green, Patrick Mahomes, Ben Simmons, Emmanuel Acho, and many other black sports athletes and artists (ANDSCAPE, 2020). It can be seen by the signing of this letter by these people that, indirectly, they have shown their commitment to

participate in this movement on the basis of emotional ties to fellow black citizens and will continue to fight for the values they believe in through public spaces by exploiting the power they have in society.

LeBron James himself, along with More Than A Vote and the participants, have continuously shown their commitment by continuing to call for acts of resistance and providing assistance services to people who have experienced acts of discrimination both verbally and nonverbally. LeBron James, as one of the most vocal figures and as one of the people who initiated this movement, also said that he would use his social media platform to fight oppression of voting rights owners and would continue to be vocal in attracting attention to every effort made by parties certain to limit minority groups that are discriminated against (Martin, 2020).

The continuative commitment shown in this organisation can be seen in how the actors in this organisation have a long-term attachment to the goals of this organization. With ongoing actions that began with forming this organization through an open letter signed by the founders of this movement as reported in the ANDSCAPE (2020) news media, disseminating information regarding the actions and campaigns carried out by the movement massively on all social media platforms, present and vocally voice the messages they want to convey to achieve the goals of the movement through public dialogues such as interviews conducted by several actors as mentioned in previous discussions, in partnership with 23 of the 30 NBA teams to use their stadiums as election venues including the Atlanta Hawks, Detroit Pistons, Sacramento Kings, Los Angeles Lakers, Los Angeles Clippers, Golden State Warriors, Brooklyn Nets, and several

other basketball teams (Quinn, 2020). This movement collaborates with various other groups with the same goal, such as the Black Voters Matter Fund, Fair Fight Action, the Georgia NAACP, and the New Georgia Project, to launch a new campaign entitled "Protect Our Power," which is clear evidence of their commitment and is carried out continuously in order to realise the goals of the formation of this organisation (Merica, 2021).

Through interviews conducted by one of the actors in this organisation, namely LeBron James, he and his colleagues felt that encouraging people to exercise their right to vote by providing guidance on election procedures, starting from the administrative registration flow to the election procedures, is a social responsibility that they carry as public figures who have influence not only at the local level but also internationally. The normative commitment they show to this movement is by bringing the values of democracy, political participation, and voter justice to every message they convey to provide knowledge and understanding to the public. As reported by the Los Angeles Times and USA Today news media, he said (Morgan, 2020, Merica, 2021):

"Yes, we want you to go out and vote, but we're also going to give you the tutorial. We're going to give you the background of how to vote and what they're trying to do, on the other side, to stop you from voting. "We didn't tell you who to go vote for. We didn't pick one side versus the other; we just wanted to educate you, enlighten you, and empower you. And let you know how important your right is".

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With the aim of providing knowledge to the public, especially black people, regarding the importance of their voting rights, this organisation hopes that they can continue to provide information, services, and protection for black people and their voting rights from government oppression.

Conclusion

The Issues of racism and human rights discrimination against black people are serious humanitarian problems today. As a result of this problem, an organisation was initiated by LeBron James and his colleagues, namely More Than a Vote. This organisation formed with the aim of inviting the public to participate in realising change through changing policymakers by participating in general elections. Discrimination received by black people in the form of injustice in voting rights became the basis for the formation of this organisation.

This organisation is clear evidence of an identity-oriented organisation or movement, with three main indicators, namely collective identity, solidarity, and commitment, contained in this organisation. These three indicators or conceptions show how an organisation formed by a sports athlete can be a social movement and have a sustainable impact that is quite large for the socio-political life of society, especially in the United States at this time.

In the end, each explanation regarding collective identity, solidarity, and commitment in the More Than A Vote movement is a conception in the Identity-Orientation theory, in which the three are different but interrelated things. Collective identity is born from the same identity, values, feelings, and goals, and in this case, this movement is born from

a group of people who have these factors in common. To be able to carry out the movement, it takes not just the collective identity of its members but also a sense of solidarity and commitment from the participants.

If there is only collective identity and solidarity but no commitment from its members, then the movement will not be able to take place in a sustainable manner. If there is no solidarity and only collective identity and commitment, then it will be difficult for the movement to build a broad network of movements. In the end, if the movement is not based on collective identity, solidarity, and commitment, it cannot be created by movement participants because there is no basis or foundation for the movement. Therefore, these three things cannot be separated from each other; these three things are the systematic basis for building a movement that has an identity orientation.

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