Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

African Americans

In America, since the 1950s, an increase in demand for equality by African-Americans has been observed. One of the most obvious examples of acceleration in equality demand has been the “Civil Rights movement”. Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. have been two of the most influential and most revered African-American political activists. Both Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. were respected leaders of the Civil Rights movement, who struggled for freedom and racial equality. A difference in their leadership could be analyzed easily. King advocated non-violent direct action and passive resistance to achieve equal civil rights. On the other hand, Malcolm X was violent in his actions and rejected white Americas as well as Christian values by preaching the supremacy of black people over white people. According to James H. Cone, in the African American community, no issue is more holy than violence and non-violence (Cone et al, pp. 173-183). Both King and Malcolm symbolize this debate as both these civil rights movement leaders responded differently to violence and non-violence during the freedom fight that the African-Americans fought in the 1960s. Malcolm was more violent in his action and represented himself as the spokesman for the Nation of Islam (NOI) and the Black Muslim movement.

Martin Luther King Jr. is best known in American history for advocating non-violence and promoting the idea that non-violence could not only be used as an effective strategy for bringing a social change but also that it is at the heart of the philosophy of life. In a conflict situation, no limitation of his advocacy of non-violence was remarkable. According to Darryl D. Roberts, the lens of visibility of both Malcolm and King was different (Roberts et al, pp. 425-456). Martin Luther King Jr. used powerful actions and words of non-violent resistance. Few of his most commonly used weapons against racial inequality are protests, civil disobedience and grassroots that used to be organized for achieving seemingly impossible aims during the 1950s and 1960s.

Critics praised Malcolm X for raising his voice against the injustice that was at peak during the 1950s and 1960s. It was the same time when Malcolm rejected the superiority of the white people. Once Martin Luther King Jr. stated about Malcolm, "I think Malcolm X did serve a role, I think he played a role in pointing out the problem, calling attention to it, but his great problem was an inability to emerge with a solution. He had slogans that were catchy and that people listened to, but I don’t think he ever pointed out the solution to the problem”. According to Ryan LaMothe, Malcolm X underwent a series of changes after the political humiliation and a psychological change in his life was later observed (LaMothe et al, 103-129 ). Malcolm was violent in his words as well as actions and believed that one cannot get freedom; self-respect and dignity by letting others over-power him/her. Malcolm’s violent behavior could be seen in his speeches as in most of his speeches, he emphasized on self-defense. According to William W. Sales, Malcolm X accused King was bowing before white people and urged him to be more aggressive in his actions (Sales Jr & William). Controversial and outspoken, Malcolm X was notorious yet charismatic in the eye of the public. William believed that Malcolm X was a multifaceted leader whose strategies of change were dangerous for the racist status quo. Both the historical leaders had the same issue but their directions were altogether different. According to many experts, Malcolm’s agitation worked in favor of his struggle for freedom and once he even denied being American. Malcolm was violent but his effectiveness of agitation could be seen in the admiration of his work and commitment against the racial issues that characterized Malcolm’s life. According to August H. Nimtz, pieces of evidence showed the threat of violence to have been credible, the actual violence exemplified by Malcolm was required for reducing the the violent acts of whites against blacks. (Nimtz et al, pp. 1-22.). Malcolm started threatening the government in his speeches. Effectiveness of agitation Malcolm began with Birmingham that abetted subsequent civil rights gains.

Malcolm X was the minister of religion, spokesman, writer, political and human rights activist who throughout his life raised voice against racial inequality. He spent few years in jail and during his childhood, he began to rob food from the stores. During his life, he got involved in drug dealing, prostitution racketeering, and gambling, etc. He brought a revolution as an African-American leader and was a prominent figure of the Nation of Islam as well, who became popular for articulating concepts of race pride and nationalism in the early 1960s. It could be observed that though both these leaders were different in their ideology and approach, they were quite similar as far as their jobs are concerned.

Martin Luther King Jr. was religion minister, civil right activist, humanitarian and writer who struggled hard for breaking the racial discrimination. One of his greater victories throughout his life was his recognition as the first nonviolent activist. King Jr. was also a key figure of Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955, but being a part of the civil rights movement was the greatest job that he performed at his fullest. He was an exceptional spokesman as most of the experts and critics believe that Luther’s word and non-violent activities were far more influential and effective than the violence done by the whites. Luther motivated black people for joining hands so that they could fight against the oppression that they were subjected to.

Being a civil rights activist, Luther aimed to raise public consciousness regarding racism, segregation, and racial discrimination. One of the main goals of Dr. Martin King Luther Jr. was seeking racial equality for which he adopted non-violent strategies. He becomes immensely popular among both blacks and whites for his non-violent progression in the Civil Rights movement. His goal was earning equal human rights for African-Americans. During the 1950s and 1960s, he put efforts for bringing African-Americans on equal grounds so that both African Americans and white Americans could be treated without any discrimination. He aimed at making people socially, morally and politically conscious of the equality of human rights, as he was advocated for non-violent protests and grass rooting. His purpose was training people to raise their voice for claiming equality for being humans.

On contrary, Malcolm X was also working for a similar purpose like King Luther Jr. Malcolm's goal was to motivate African-Americans and he believed that they must return to their land, or in America, there should be a division of separate lands for the African-Americans where they would not be discriminated on the basis of race and color. Malcolm wanted to end racial discrimination and social injustice. Though, he was a violent and aggressive leader, yet he wanted to see African-Americans as equals of white people. So as a whole, it could be asserted that the effectiveness of Malcolm's violent strategy and attitude could be seen in the decreased violence that African-Americans were later subjected to.

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