

Black Lives Matter (2020)

What is the Black Lives Matter Movement?

In the year 2013, the movement of Black Lives Matter emerged. The movement was centered on the unfair death sentence of George Zimmerman, who was wrongly charged with the murder of Trayvon Martin (Black Lives Matter). This discriminatory murder became apparent once again in 2020 when George Floyd was killed at the hands of a police officer. This provided the protest with a force, as it emphasized the existing discrimination against Black people (Francis). The inhumane video of the police killing George Floyd made people protest against the inhumane treatment of Black people. The protest intensified as people took to the streets, and even widely protested on social media platforms.



Activists of Black Lives Matter march across the George Washington Bridge in New York City on September 12, 2020, to protest against the discriminatory killing of George Floyd by police (Morris).

Black Lives Matter Turned Into a Global Movement in 2020

The movement in 2020 was enhanced by the social media campaigns. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok shared videos and personal statements in real-time to organize protests with the hashtag *#BlackLives Matter*, which garnered support from people transcending physiographic locations (Westerman). These digital representations helped in transforming local protests into a global movement, through which millions of people

participated in the protests not only in the United States but also in other countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, and South Africa. This movement occurred during the Covid 19 pandemic, which negatively impacted Black communities, contributing to the inequality in healthcare and the economy. Lockdown and unemployment made the public aware of the inherent inequality, which fueled participation from every nook and corner of the world. Issues of systemic racism were integrated into mainstream conversations, which made people confront racial discrimination more than ever.



Left: The Black Lives Matter Movement in 2020 became a global movement. People fought for systemic racism using grassroots activism, social media, and advocacy (Black Lives Matter). Right: Around 15-26% of Americans joined this movement spanning every generation to protest against the inherent racial injustice (BBC, News).

State and Federal Reactions to Black Lives Matter Protests

There were mixed responses from the Government, which further highlighted the political tension within the United States. The Government's response at the federal level emphasized the lack of transparency in law and order (Silver et al. 352). On the other hand, President Donald Trump criticized the acts of violence that damaged property during the protests. This further intensified the protest, as many activists and civil rights groups mentioned that this did not give prominence to the demands of protestors in addressing systemic racism. The *George Floyd*

Justice in Policing Act was implemented by Democrats in Congress in June 2020, which increased accountability and limited the immunity of police officers (Francis). While this global movement forced Governments to address issues of discrimination, activists argued that figurative gestures overshadowed structural change.



Left: Protestors attach a chain to the statue of U.S. President Andrew Jackson in the middle of Lafayette Park in front of the White House in an attempt to pull it down as someone throws a roll of toilet paper at the statue during BLM protests in Washington, D.C (Millis). Right: Protesters in front of the U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa. The Black Lives Matter raised awareness about Brutal police killings. The society underwent a major change (WBUR).

Consequences of the Movement of Black Lives Matter (2020)

The killing of George Floyd and the establishment of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 influenced the perception of people. The killing of Floyd led to mass demonstrations in the United States and the majority of other nations, becoming one of the largest movements of protests in the history of modernity (BBC). It led to a greater legitimization of the policing styles, responsibility, and the emerging new demand for justice. One of the ways was that several city police departments were reformed, and the officers were even prosecuted for crimes, courtesy of the pressure put on them by individuals (Black Lives Matter). Together with a policy, the movement has helped to change social attitudes of people, combat systemic racism, and compel governments, institutions, and mass media to confront the question of racial inequality in a more open and pressing approach.



Demonstrators mark Juneteenth in Chicago on June 19, 2020. Three Black female community organizers and grew to involve millions of people globally (NBC News).

Impacts, Statistics, and Organizers Response

The founders, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi, and the activists, DeRay Mckesson and Johnetta Elzie were part of the organization of the protests and bringing awareness as well as the calls of systemic change in the movement of Black Lives Matter in the 2020s. The consequences of the case of death of George Floyd and the *Black Lives Matter* have brought about changes, however, racial inequality continue to affect the society at present. Black Americans form about 13% of the American population yet 37% of the entire population are in jail or prison, and that raises the issue of structural inequalities in the justice systems (Silver et al. 350). At the same time, the income among the black households is significantly lower than the white households with the average income of the former household being about 33 times lower. Such numbers prove the fact that the problem of institutional discrimination continues its existence, which confirms the demands of the movement to equal treatment and justice. Activists and organizers strive to fill such gaps and create a structural change in the long term.

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