

Malcolm x and african american leaders

[History](#), [African American](#)



Malcolm X is one of the most recognized African American leaders in the history of the United States of America. He is responsible for the influencing of the Africans Americans into fighting for their civil rights (Sales 4). According to him, the sustainable fair and just future of the African American people was solely dependent on their efforts to shape it at that time (Keller, 26). According to available historical information, despite the declaration of American independence and assertion by the nation that all men are equal, the African American community was evidently marked with high levels of segregation.

They were discriminated against equal opportunities such as acquiring quality healthcare, education and employment. Such were to be blamed for the poor social and economic conditions that were evident among the African Americans. Malcolm X was born during the time of eminent segregation practices against the black community (Davis 6). From available information, Malcolm X experienced the burning of their residential home by the Ku Klux Klan following his father's vocal involvement in fighting for the rights of the African Americans (Davis Jones 14).

Just to be appreciated is the fact that their family moved from residence to residence due to eminent death threats by the Ku Klux Klan. It is also claimed that their father was later killed by white supremacists, a factor that resulted them to be brought up by foster parent (Benson 6). All these are a proof enough on the nature of life among the black community during the time. This paper is written as a discussion on the influence of Malcolm X in the quest for civil rights by the African Americans.

The author also gives an account of the earlier life of Malcolm X as an evidence of the changing influence of the individual to the African American community. Early life of Malcolm X Malcolm X, born in May 19th, 1925, in Omaha, Nebraska was the son of Earl and Louise Little, a couple of the Baptist Christian religion (Davis 4). According to historical information, his father was an African American leader and activist holding leader of the local Universal Negro Improvement Association.

The influence he gained from his father and other members of the UNIA are closely attributed to the future shaping of Malcolm X in fighting for the pride and self-reliance of the blacks community. Being a leader of the blacks, Malcolm's father received many threats from the Ku Klux Klan group, forcing the family to relocate consistently to new residential premises (Davis 5). According to Malcolm X, the inhuman attitude of the whites against the black was evident since his childhood. Malcolm witnessed the torture and killing of three of his father's brothers by the Whiteman (Sales 8).

Other incidences included the burning of their residential house in 1929 at Lansing, Michigan. This was further complicated by the assassination of their father in the 1931 and the subsequent failure by one of the two life insurance companies to pay their family of their father's death benefits. Following the institutionalization of their mother in a mental hospital, Malcolm X and his sisters and brother had to be brought up as orphans by foster parents (Benson 25). It was also claimed due to his unique color complexity; Malcolm was subject to teasing from his brothers as well as receiving harsh treatment from his father.

According to him, this contributed significantly to his conviction that whenever one wanted something, they are bound to make noise (Gormley, 9). Although Malcolm was very bright in school, his dream of becoming a lawyer was negated by his teacher who never believed that African Americans can be lawyers. Following this discouragement from the teacher, Malcolm dropped out of school despite being the best student in the eighth grade class. He moved to live with his sister in Boston, a move that saw him establish a strong friendship with criminals (Davis, 9).

During this time, Malcolm got a job for selling sandwiches to people riding trains between Boston and New York. This made him appreciate life in the New York, a factor that prompted him to shift from Boston and settled in Harlem, New York in 1941 (Davis, 11). While in Harlem, New York, Malcolm indulged in criminal activities as a way of making a livelihood. He was constantly involved in drug trafficking, gambling, robbery, and racketeering as well as managing prostitution activities. In 1943, Malcolm joined military service but was later dismissed on claims that he was mentally impaired (Davis 14).

He shifted back to Boston where he engaged in a series of burglary activities particularly targeting white families. Malcolm was arrested in early 1946 and charged with illegal possession of firearms and burglary, a move that saw him sentenced for ten years in the Massachusetts State Prison. Although all through his life, Malcolm had been hostile against religion, in 1948, he reversed in decision through the influence of a letter from his brother

Philbert which touched of the Nations of Islam and the view that the whites were satanic (Benson 16).

He later in that year bowed down in prayer and became a member the Nation of Islam denomination. Until his paroling from prison in 1952, Malcolm asserts that his faith in Allah changed his prison life, making him experience ultimate freedom despite being in jail. Important influence by Malcolm X in the society Malcolm X has identified as among the most influential individuals for the African American community during the mid twentieth century. While in prison, Malcolm X got the opportunity to further his studies, factor that contributed significantly in his speaking skills.

Malcolm is greatly praised for the much influence he brought in changing the traditional perception of the blacks as an inferior race (Gormley 26). Being a senior member of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm constantly asserted that the blacks were the original and thus the superior race in the world (Gormley 27). Still, by declaring publicly that the white race was bound to be inferior, Malcolm greatly stirred the fight forequalityby the African Americans.

Given the fact that African Americans had for a long time become tired of waiting for justices and equality with the whites, the influence of Malcolm found much acceptance among the blacks more than the civil rights movement did. Just to be appreciated is the fact that Malcolm was for the view that a nonviolent movement seeking for equal rights for the black community might never be practical (Jones 17). Based on this reasoning, he advocated for the blacks to be self-reliant through the black nationalistphilosophy.

Such received much appreciation from the blacks as it found a lasting solution to the problem of racial segregation that had affected their lives for centuries. Another outstanding influence by Malcolm is evident in his religious devotion (Jones 19). According to available information, it is clear that through his influence while serving as a minister at the Nation of Islam, he managed to grow the population of the religion from 5, 000 to over 25, 000 by 1964. Still on the question of religion, Malcolm stood for the truth as spelled in the doctrine of his faith (Keller 56).

Such could be explained by his move to denounce his membership in the Nation of Islam based on immorality concerns of their leader, Elijah Muhammad. It is claimed that Elijah Muhammad had engaged in relationships with women working for the religion despite the teachings of the religion to uphold faithfulness. This had the implication that Malcolm stood for the truth. The teachings of Malcolm were influential in triggering the establishment of the African Americans community an economically self-reliant community (Gormley 47).

According to available information, Malcolm believed that the blacks can only realize respect and equality from the Whiteman if they engaged in economically viable investments (Gormley 45). Just to be noted is that the poor can rarely be honored in the community. This influence by Malcolm calling for economic establishment by the African American community as a lasting solution to their social and economic problems is found to have served as a starting point for the economic efforts found within the

community. Malcolm X was a fearless and affluent African American speaker. Just like Martin Luther King Jr.

, Malcolm influenced many African Americans to engage in fight for their constitutional right. As he once put it, the best way of getting the things you need in life is by making noise (Sales 78). It is only the outspoken who get their problems appreciated and thus effectively addressed. Such was the influence Malcolm brought to the black society. He encouraged them to love and appreciate one another as a way of avoiding self-hatred (Sales 79). He was consistently involved in identifying and critiquing the segregation practices by the white despite the many death threats he got for doing so.

Advocacy for African culture and tradition was a pivotal influence brought by Malcolm to the African American community (Gormley 69). It is evidently claimed that Malcolm emphasized that the African Americans were just blacks who happened to be in America (Jones 26). He consistently claimed that the whites were out to make the blacks lose knowledge of their precious history as Africans. For him, assuming an American name was a contradiction of the ultimate culture of the black people (Keller 44).

Indeed, that is why he changed his surname Little to X asserting that such were names associated with the slave-master. In his view of the Christian faith which was thought as being for the whites, Malcolm claimed that Christianity believed that blacks are a cursed race, a factor that contributed to his discouragement of the African American community from practicing Christianity. Conclusion It is clearly evident that Malcolm X indeed had a

strong influence in almost all aspects of the lives of the African American community.

he believed and strived to make the blacks appreciate them as a superior rather an inferior race relative to the whites. He believed in influencing the blacks never to loose track of their historical origin and experiences.

Although his approach for mitigating segregation of the African Americans took a violent approach, he was no doubt a pivotal influencing force behind the devotion of the blacks in fighting for their civil rights. Therefore, Malcolm X was and will remain to be a strong influence to the African American community of the US.

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