



Critically reflect upon the differences and similarities between Advocacy and Activism

ECAY5003 The Evolving Landscape of Advocacy Provision.

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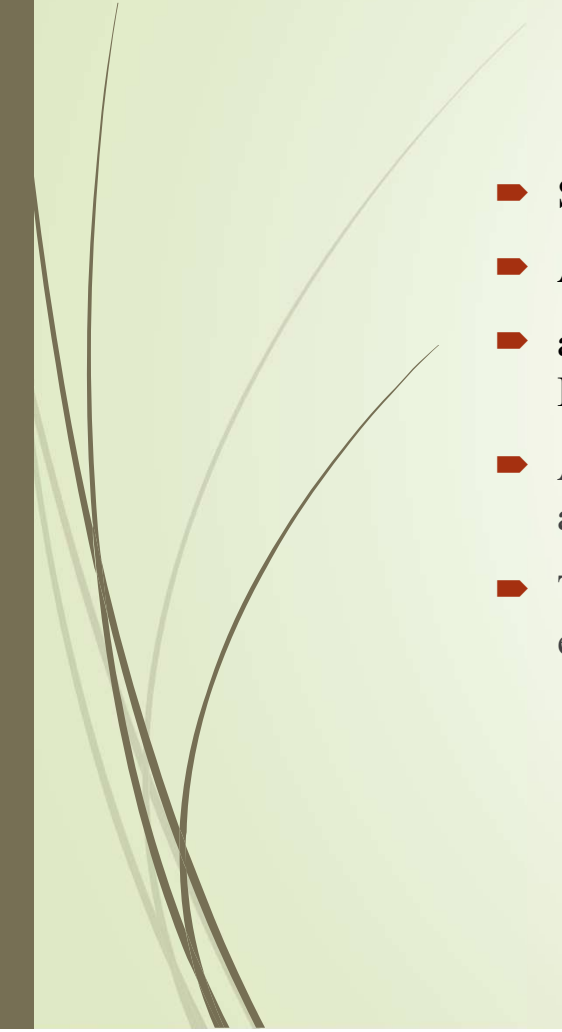


Introduction

- This Presentation will explain the definitions of Advocacy and Activism.
- It will then look at the differences and similarities.
- By using, journalist and activist John Pring's (2018; 2019a; 2019b) reports of a real-life case study, I will then explore the issues with the overlap between the two.



Advocacy



- Someone's advocacy of a particular action or plan is their act of recommending it publicly.
- Advocacy is the way in which lawyers deal with cases in court.
- active support, especially of a cause, ADVOCACY definition and meaning | Collins English Dictionary (Collins Dictionary, 2023)
- According to Jenkins (1987, p. 297), advocacy is 'any attempt to influence the decisions of an institutional elite on behalf of a collective interest'.
- The Advocacy Charter (Gov.UK,2023) Defines advocacy as a collection of purpose-driven elements.



Activism



- a “process by which groups of people exert pressure on organisations or other institutions to change policies, practices or conditions the activists find problematic” (Smith, 2005, p. 5).
- a doctrine or practice that emphasises direct vigorous action, especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue. Activism Definition & Meaning - Merriam-Webster.
- Amnesty International UK strives for global justice, liberty, integrity, and respect for human dignity. We look into and reveal human rights abuses, inform and inspire the public, and work to reform society for justice and safety.



Similarities & Differences

Similarities

- Advocacy and activism are conceptually similar as they both aim to draw attention to an issue, engage people, and influence decision-making or policies to create lasting change (McKeever, et al., 2023)

Differences

- De Moya and Bravo (2016) define the difference as ‘Advocacy supports groups by working within systems to address issues’.
- Activism is often perceived as ‘working from the outside to influence a system, which sometimes means working against organisations or individuals that have power.’ (Carragee & Frey, 2016; Ciszek, 2017; Poell & Rajagopalan, 2015)



The case study: John Pring

- The UK is a democratic society with freedom protected by law. In a series of articles, journalist and activist John Pring (2018; 2019a; 2019b) reported on power-sharing arrangements between two government departments permitted under [Section 29] of the Data Protection Act (Gov.UK, 2018). This provision enables agencies to disclose data for law enforcement purposes. The article highlights the possible misuse and impact of the act on discouraging and penalising disabled people in receipt of benefits from exercising their rights.
- According to Amnesty International UK, human rights activists face persecution because they often challenge those in power, such as governments and corporations. Furthermore, the investigation gives insight into the most dangerous kinds of activism: workers' rights, journalism, LGBTI, Indigenous, women's rights and those involved within the legal profession. The risk involved for both activists and advocacy worldwide is significant, often leading to imprisonment, injury and loss of life. The impact on their relatives and friends includes financial hardship, stigma, trauma and the fear of being targeted.



Implications

- ▶ Activism and advocacy play a vital role in bringing about change; however, though they have different definitions and purposes, they can also overlap. This overlap can be detrimental to the individual or group as a whole.
- ▶ Social movements are crucial in challenging the status quo of countries' systems of oppression and environmental issues. Advocacy and Activism are vital in bringing about change; however, although they have different definitions and purposes, they can also overlap. This overlap can be detrimental to the individual or group as a whole.



Conclusion

- Advocacy promotes solidarity, challenges inequality, and introduces opportunities for a just society. (Henderson & Pochin, 2001).
- According to Durkheim (1960), the basis of modern organic society is economic interdependence, reciprocity, and collaboration for mutual advantage, survival, and prosperity. This is the functionalist, social solidarity perspective.
- According to Dahrendorf's (1959) conflicts theory, however, conflict is as much a struggle between those in and out of power as it is a struggle for economic ownership and distribution.

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