

7 - 9 November 2025

Bangkok , Thailand

Transformation of Emotional Dilemma to Collective Empowerment in Social Media Activism - a Targeted Literature Review

Ambi Joseph , Dr. J.O Jeryda Gnanajane Eljo , P A Jose , V Revikumar

Bharathidasan University, India

Abstract

This literature review presents a critical study of the transformation from personal distress to collective activism, using Berkman's FLAG Emotion framework to study the emotional cycle of individuals in activism. This paper systematically connects the #MeToo movement with existing academic literature to examine four key emotional transformations—fear, loss, anger and guilt—that contribute to achieving collective empowerment in collaboration with a rational mindset that encompasses truth, fairness, reality and justice. The study explores the transformation of fear into a grounded understanding of the truth about systemic injustices; the shift from a sense of loss to a demand for justice in the face of cultural, social, and environmental destruction; the channelling of anger into a new reality of on-the-ground resistance; and the complex transformation of intergenerational guilt into a strong commitment to justice. The study aims to identify and synthesise key themes from the literature that contribute to this theoretical framework through the application of a systematic and targeted research methodology. It investigates how emotions in activism, which are not simply a byproduct of activism, but rather enable the transformation of debilitating emotions into sustainable and meaningful collective action. This selective strategy shows a critical gap in the literature, establishes the “FLAG Emotion” framework as a unique contribution to the study of emotions and social activism enabled by digital and social media, and provides a clear agenda for future research.

Keywords: Anger; Fear; Guilt; Loss; # Metoo Movement