Student Name

Professor’s Name

Course

Date

The Rise and Fall of Private Sector Unions

**Question One**

Labor unions grew considerably in the 1950s with union memberships hitting highs of up to 40%. However, this growth did not last long since statistics show that private sector unionism has been on the decline since the 1960s as fewer and fewer workers are part of private unions. Also, the collective bargaining power of unions has reduced significantly due to the implementation of labor laws that favor employers at the expense of employees. There is need for a revitalized labor movement that tackles challenges associated with reduced labor union participation.

**Question Two**

The historical growth of unions has been controversial similar to public unions today. As the influence of unions rises, questions about their power and possible limits to this power start to creep up. These power dynamics considerations can lead to legislations that either harm or strengthen union’s bargaining powers. Today, public unions are more powerful than ever and it will be interesting to observe how this power changes in future.

**Question Three**

A fundamental difference exists between private and public unions. While private unions focus on the common good of improving working conditions and wages for the individuals they serve, public sector unions detract from the common good by promoting government inefficiencies and increasing the tax payers burden since they are funded by tax revenue. Overall, public unions need strict control and oversight, especially given their power today.

**Question Four**

There are several factors that contribute the decline in union membership. Firstly, the American economy structure has changed significantly with a sharp growth in ununionized sectors such as healthcare and hotels. Secondly, global competition and an increase in labor mobility reduces the power of unions and their appeal. Finally, federal law on employment has taken over most union roles making unions seem redundant.

Labor unions could leverage various strategies to attract larger membership. Firstly, they should harness the power of social media to reach their target audience individually through personalized communication. Secondly, the unions can reduce the bureaucratic inefficiencies associated with joining unions by automating the process. They should consider increasing member engagement by sending electronic reminders about agenda and meetings.

**Question Five**

1. **Functionalist Theory**

According to this theory, unions are a critical social subsystem which plays a critical role in society. If this is the case, then union membership will increase in future as more people realize their unique function.

1. **Conflict Theory**

This theory argues that social inequality in terms of race, gender, and economic class characterizes the society. Using this theory, union membership is likely to grow as the working-class fight against corporations for wealth and wage equality.

1. **Symbolic Interactionism**

This theory argues that people create and understand roles as they interact. When approached using this lens, union membership is likely to change in accordance with future interactions between the government, the workforce, and corporations. These interactions will define whether it increases, stagnates or declines.

**Question Six**

I learned a lot about the history of private and public unions. The lesson expounded on how union relations influence multiple social domains and contribute to social change. Most importantly, I finally understood the fundamental differences between public and private unions.