

# Theories of leadership

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Theories of leadership Lecturer: Introduction The trait approach has its basis on personality characteristics such as the interpersonal, intellectual, social as well as physiological values that are assumed to be innate and remain stable. This approach thus assumes that leadership capabilities are rooted in the characteristics of an individual. Therefore, effective leaders possess some attributes that distinguish them and of higher magnitude than other people.

The behavioral theory is based on patterns of behaviors exhibited by leaders. It combines both the natural attributes and what an individual is able to do. It thus assumes presence of a set of observable actions that promote leadership. This theory also considers modification of behavior due to either reward or punishment.

#### Similarities

Both approaches emphasize that a leader must exhibit certain actions in any given action. According to Judge et al. (2002), behavioral is part of trait because it holds that leaders have common personality attributes that cause them to behave in a certain way, however deviates in that all individuals have potential for leadership.

#### Differences

According to Daft (2007), trait approach of leadership holds that a leader is born and thus the attributes elicited are inherent whereas according to behavioral approach a leader can be trained to exhibit the actions that demonstrate leadership. Behavioral thus holds out that anyone can be developed to a leader with the proper environment; however, trait theory holds that leadership is determined at birth.

#### Conclusion

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The behavioral approach is a complimentary to the trait theory as it seeks to combine the innate with the consequent actions exhibited. Every individual is endowed with leadership potential and with conducive environment the ultimate leadership capacity can be attained.

#### References

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