5.6 NATURE OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent.

Northouse's definition — "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal".

"Leadership is that combination of qualities by the possession of which one is able to get something done by others, chiefly because through his influence they become willing to do so".

— Ordway Tead

"Leadership is the activity of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives."

- George R. Terry

Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership knowledge and skills. This is called *Process Leadership* (Jago, 1982). However, we know that we have traits that can influence our actions. This is called *Trait Leadership* (Jago, 1982), in that it was once common to believe that leaders were born rather than to created.
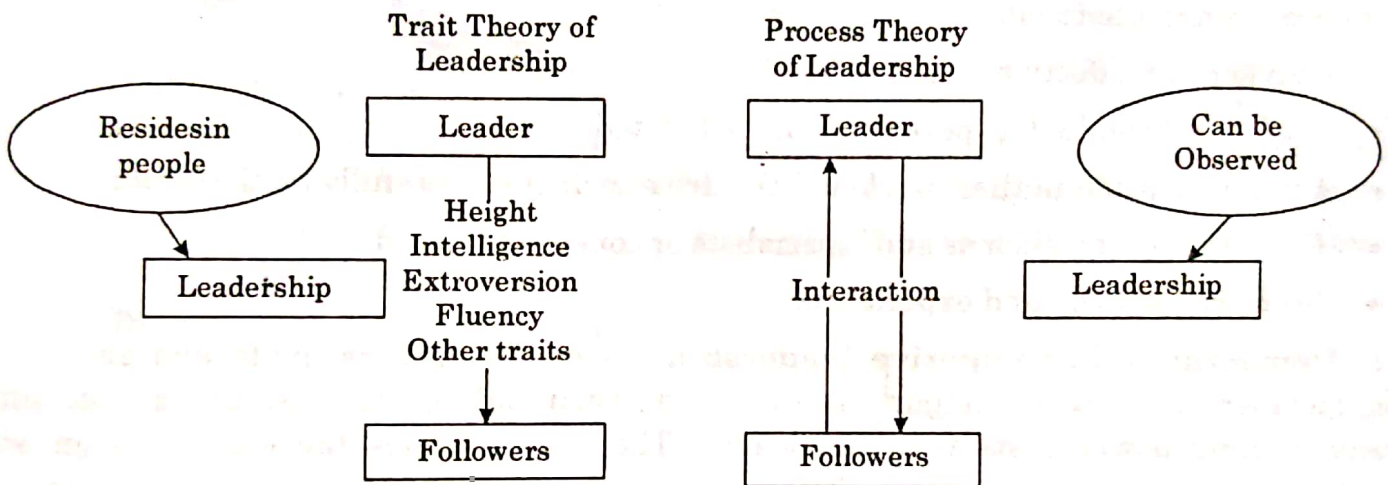
While leadership is learned, the skills and knowledge processed by the leader can be influenced by his or hers attributes or traits, such as beliefs, values, ethics, and character. Knowledge and skills contribute directly to the process of leadership, while the other attributes give the leader certain characteristics that make him or her unique. Skills, knowledge, and attributes make the *Leader*.

5.7 LEADERSHIP STYLES

1. Autocratic leadership style: In this style of leadership, a leader has complete command and hold over their employees/team. The team cannot put forward their views even if they are best for the team's or organizational interests. They cannot criticize or question the leader's way of getting things done. The leader himself gets the things done. The advantage of this style is that it leads to speedy decision-making and greater productivity under leader's supervision. Drawbacks of this leadership style are that it leads to greater employee absenteeism and turnover. This leadership style works only when the leader is the best in performing or when the job is monotonous, unskilled and routine in nature or where the project is short-term and risky.

Sometimes this style becomes the most effective style to use When:

- New, untrained staff do not know which tasks to perform or which procedures to follow
- Effective supervision provided only through detailed orders and instructions
- Staff do not respond to any other leadership style
- Limited time in which to make a decision
- A manager's power challenged by staff
- Work needs to be coordinated with another department or organization

2. The Laissez Faire Leadership Style: In this Styles , the leader totally trusts their employees/team to perform the job themselves. He just concentrates on the intellectual/rational aspect of his work and does not focus on the management aspect of his work. The team/employees are welcomed to share their views and provide suggestions which are best for organizational interests. This leadership style works only when the employees are skilled, loyal, experienced and intellectual.

This Style is an effective style to use when ...

- Staff highly skilled, experienced, and educated
- Staff have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own
- Outside experts, such as staff specialists or consultants used
- Staff trustworthy and experienced

3. Democrative/Participative leadership style: The leaders invite and encourage the team members to play an important role in decision-making process, though the ultimate decision-making power rests with the leader. The leader guides the employees on what to perform and how to perform, while the employees communicate to the leader their experience and the suggestions if any. The advantages of this leadership style are that it leads to satisfied, motivated and more skilled employees. It leads to an optimistic work environment and also encourages creativity. This leadership style has the only drawback that it is time-consuming.

Sometimes this style becomes the most effective style to use When:

- Leader wants to keep staff informed about matters that affect them.
- Leader wants staff to share in decision-making and problem-solving duties.