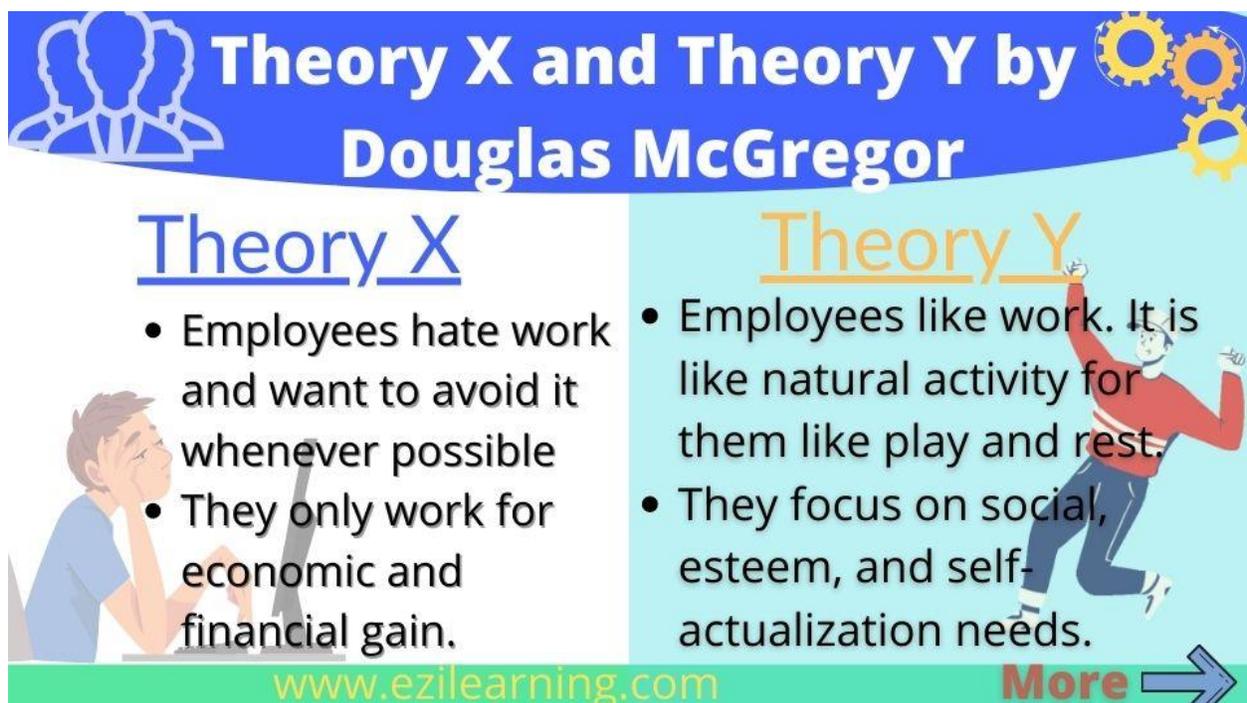


Theory X and Y in Management

Introduction

Douglas McGregor, an American professor of management developed a new motivation theory named '**Theory X and Y**'. His theory in the field of management changed the way of motivating employees. According to him, different people have different attitudes, someone has positive and someone has a negative attitude towards work. They need to influence in a different way. The subordinates who have a negative attitude towards work/dislike work should closely supervised by the manager. There should be the provision of punishment. But employees who have a positive attitude towards work should be rewarded. There is no need for close supervision.



Theory X and Theory Y by Douglas McGregor

Theory X

- Employees hate work and want to avoid it whenever possible
- They only work for economic and financial gain.

Theory Y

- Employees like work. It is like natural activity for them like play and rest.
- They focus on social, esteem, and self-actualization needs.

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Douglas classified human beings into two distinct labels; negative label theory X and positive label theory Y. Persons who have a negative attitude toward works fall under negative label theory X. And persons who have a positive attitude toward work fall under positive label theory Y. **A negative attitude means avoiding or disliking work or avoiding responsibility. And a Positive attitude represents liking work or being responsible towards their works.**

Theory X says that people are influence and controlled by reward and punishment system. Whereas Theory Y says that people are self-controlled and self-motivated. Managers only need to play a supportive role to get work from them.

Difference between Theory X and Theory Y

Theory X and Theory Y see human nature from different two points. One is from pessimistic ([pessimistic](#)) and the other is from ([optimistic](#)). **The following are the set of assumptions of Theory X and Theory Y.**

Theory X	Theory Y
Employees hate work and want to avoid it whenever possible	Employees like work. It is like natural activity for them like play and rest.
They resist the change in the organization.	They welcome the new technology in the organization.
They are less ambitious and responsible.	They are ambitious and responsible.
They must be corrected, controlled, or threatened with a reward and punishment system to get work from them.	They are self-motivated and self-controlled.
They are less creative.	They are intellectual, imaginative, and creative.
They only work for economic and financial gain.	They work for rising their standard in an organization and also for enhancing their capability.
They focus on psychological and security needs.	They focus on social, esteem, and self-actualization needs.

Theory X is based on the traditional assumption about human nature and the way of managing workers. The manager who evaluates worker behavior from this point of view adopts restrictive controls and close supervision. Principles of command, direction, and authority must follow in the organization where such employees work.

Theory Y is based on the modern assumption about human nature and the way of managing workers. Employees of this group are self-motivated and self-controlled. There is only the supportive role of the manager to the workers. Both manager and employee work together to achieve the goals.

In conclusion, as the manager to get the work done from the subordinate, it's necessary to understand the behavior pattern of each worker as well as groups to motivate and control them.

Other Theory of Management

- [Scientific management theory](#)
- [Administrative management theory](#)
- [Maslow's Need of hierarchy theory](#)
- [Bureaucracy theory of management](#)

Frequent Ask Question

Why is theory X bad?

Theory X is bad because theory X focuses on influencing and getting the work done by employees through autocratic leadership. But in modern times, theory X is not applicable in many organizations. It is not possible. There are certain groups like labor unions etc. that prevent employee rights. The autocratic leadership style invites many problems in the organization like strikes, labor turnover, etc. So, theory X is bad.

What is the application of Theory X and Theory Y?

Douglas McGregor developed a theory '**Theory X and Y**' to influence and motivate the employee of different attitudes either positive or negative. This theory helps the manager to get the work done from both types of subordinates. This theory explains how to influence both types of workers.

What are the examples of Theory X and Theory Y Companies?

The companies where the autocratic leadership style followed come under Theory X like Defense Industry (military). And the companies where participative leadership style is followed come under theory Y like Space X. Elon Musk himself participates in all daily activities.