

## Traditional Approaches to Political Theory

The traditional approaches to the study of political theory have been described in the following sections.

### 1. Deductive Approach

To study the concepts of state, government and law, Plato and Aristotle adopted the

deductive and inductive approaches respectively. Plato laid emphasis on universal

values and reasoning. He had his own concept of the ideal state which was the

embodiment of morality, justice and truth. He drew his conclusions on the basis of

the first major premise. In other words, Plato proceeded from the universal to the

particular which is the main characteristic of the deductive approach.

Aristotle, on

the other hand, used the inductive approach in the study of political theory.

He

preferred to proceed from a particular to a general conclusion. First of all, he observed,

analysed and compared different constitutions of city-states and then drew the model

of an ideal constitution. In this case, the general conclusion was established from

particular facts. This is the inductive approach.

Aristotle was the first political philosopher who adopted this approach in the study of political science. Since the early days, both deductive and inductive approaches

are being popularly used in the field of the study of political theory. Besides these

two approaches, the other approaches used for the study of political theory are historical, comparative, philosophical, observational, experimental, psychological,

statistical, sociological and juridical methods. These are known as the traditional approaches used for the study of political theory.

In the deductive approach, one proceeds from a more general proposition to an equally general or less general proposition. The deductive approach is concerned with implication, and here, one may proceed from the general to the particular. All valid reasoning and universal truth are arrived at by deductive method. Here, the conclusion only makes explicit what is implied by the premise and one does not bother about the material truth or falsity of the premise or the conclusion. In the deductive approach, the formal truth is accepted and it is applied to different political situations. Political action is considered as right or wrong on the basis of the general conclusion. This approach puts emphasis on universal values and reasoning.