**Overview**

Angela Merkel is the Chancellor of Germany and the first woman to hold this position in the history of modern Germany. As a leader, Merkel had to navigate through different challenges from the global economic crisis to terrorism and aftermath refugees’ influx to Germany and other European countries. Merkel is one of the most powerful leaders in Europe;she is now aiming at serving the third term in office which can count as one of her most historic achievements since Konrad Adenauer who was the first person achieving this. On the economy front, Merkel was able to boost the German economy in a time most of other European countries were suffering severely from trembling economy.

On energy and climate change, Merkel was pushing in the direction of clean energy. She has announced a plan to close eight of Germany’s 17 nuclear reactors and then completely abandoning the dependency on nuclear energy by the year 2022. This plan has received great internal support and support from the EU countries which resulted in positioning Germany as one of the global leaders in combating climate change.

On social issues, under the administration of Merkel parents benefits were introduced in Germany. “Elterngeld” is the equivalent of maternity pay which was made available for both parentsto ease the financial burdens on families to boost the birth rates in Germany as they were very low.

Barack Obama was the 44th President of the United; his election was a historical event in the history of the country as he was the first African American serving in this position. Obama assumed his responsibility in a very challenging time (2009) for the country. Economic crisis with thehigh unemployment rate (%10) (World Bank), crashed auto industry and two open wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. One of the most important successes of the Obama Presidency was the rescuing of the economy from the crisis through the introduction of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009 which was $787 billion to stimulate the economyof the greatest economic disasters the most severe downturn since the Great Depression.

Another success of the Obama administration was enacting a protection measure to prevent similar conditions to the one resulted in the financial meltdown in 2007, Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act in 2010 regulated the financial institutions. This measure has added more restrictions to their practices and allowingthe government to take them into receivership if they pose a threat to the economy, and limits their ability to trade with customers’ money for their profit.

**Comparison and Contrast**

Both leaders have been able to successfully navigate their countries through tremendous global challenges, from economicchallenges represented by the 2007 crisis to the global security and terrorism challenges. Both leaders have proven to be very successful in highly challenging times.

Merkel was selected by the time's magazine in 2015 as the person of the year due to her leadership role both in the global and European stages. Her “lead from behind” leadership style have been tested and proven effective especially in the European stage during the economic crises. In a time the of crisis when leaders of Europeancountries were struggling with the crisis, Merkel had an innovative idea to faceit. She advocated for reducing working hours for workers and had their earnings topped up by the government rather than employers while other countries were laying people off.

Obama on the other hand was more of a participative leader, he always to obtain support as possible to his agenda through dialoguewhich allowed him to better handle some situationsefficiently. Globally, Obama worked to create global alliances to face challenges of common interest.

**Evaluation & Analysis**

The common denominator between the two leaders is their participative approach in the decision-making process, this approach is proven to be effective in achieving institutional goals, but it comes with its share of dysfunctionality.

**Pros**:

Participation in decision-making process increases the understanding of the issues involved by those who must carry out the decisions. Individuals are more dedicated to actions where they have involved in the relevant decision-making and not when carrying them out as subordinates. When colleagues make decisions collaboratively, the social commitment to one another is greater and thus increases their commitment to the decision. This increase in work ownership will result in boosting up productivity as employees will be more engaged in their day to day tasks. The participativeenvironment can motivate and inspire employees in an exercise to build the team capacity where employees will have the opportunity to grow and obtain new skills.

**Cons:**

The larger the organization/ the team, the more difficult it becomes to build consensus on different issues, policies, and individual tasks. The back and forth and collection of an analyzing feedback constantly to ensure consensus over issues can be extremely time-consuming. In addition to time, participative decision making makes it almost difficult for leaders to achieve their vision about certain policies, the result will a far more refined, and edited version of what was suggested originally as a result will be inclusive of feedback collected from the team.

**Public Leader Influence**

My weakness that can inhibit my ability to become a leader is my fear of public speaking. Public speaking is a highly important quality of any leader, as a matter of fact, if we compare all leaders the public speaking skills might be the most shared quality among them. Studies from McKinsey Global Institute, International Data Corporation, and the [Journal of Communication](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1972.tb00141.x/abstract) have done it for you. The highlight of their findings Leaders spends about 80% of their workdays communicating.

Communication takes place in multiple forms, but the most effective is the ability to address the public on any occasion whether it is staff meeting level or to address an entire nation. I believe that I should master this quality to be an effective leader within a group setting.

**Conclusion**

The two examples have similarities in their leadership style in both local and global contests. Additionally, they both were successful in their endeavor steering their nations through difficult times facing global crises like economic recession and terrorism.

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