

## **ABSTRACT**

The present study attempts to investigate the subordinates' perception of leadership styles, their characteristics and work behaviour in the Indian Air Force. The sample (N=362) consists of 75 officers and 287 airmen. A self-reported questionnaire was used for data collection. The results reveal that authoritarian (F) style predominates at airmen's level and nurturant-task (NT) followed by participative (P) style at officers' level. Characteristics of subordinates do not differ at both the levels. None of the characteristics of airmen predict predominant F style of officers. However, perceived status difference, dedication and personal care of officers predict the predominant NT style of immediate superiors. Work behaviour of airmen differs from that of officers. Officers are highly committed, more satisfied, accept challenging tasks, show better performances than airmen and achieve the target on time. They also express less desire to quit the organisation than airmen. Airmen are less committed, feel more stress and show greater intention to quit the organisation under F leader. They accept high challenging tasks, show better job performance and realise higher targets under NT leader. Again, they are strongly committed, highly satisfied, display greater work centrality and show less intention to quit the organisation under P leader. Similar manifestations are found among officers too. Officers are highly committed and accept challenging tasks under NT leader. They are strongly committed, highly satisfied, show better job performance and express unwillingness to quit the organisation under P leader.

### **Key words**

Leadership style, subordinates' characteristics, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, stress, challenging tasks, work centrality, intention to quit, job performance, target realisation and hard work.