**PREAMBLE**

Ergonomics is the scientific discipline concerned with designing according to human needs, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance. (Human Factors and Ergonomics Society). The field is also called human engineering, and human factors.

Ergonomics is the science of designing the job, equipment, and workplace to fit the worker. Proper ergonomic design is necessary to prevent repetitive strain injuries, which can develop over time and can lead to long-term disability.

Occupational safety and health (OSH) is a cross-disciplinary area concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work or employment. The goals of occupational safety and health programs include to foster a safe and healthy work environment (Oak Ridge National Lab Safety, 2012). OSH may also protect co-workers, family members, employers, customers, and many others who might be affected by the workplace environment.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) "Occupational health should aim at: the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations; the prevention amongst workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions; the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health; the placing and maintenance of the worker in an occupational environment adapted to his physiological and psychological capabilities; and, to summarize, the adaptation of work to man and of each man to his job".

"The main focus in occupational health is on three different objectives: (i) the maintenance and promotion of workers’ health and working capacity; (ii) the improvement of working environment and work to become conducive to safety and health and (iii) development of work organizations and working cultures in a direction which supports health and safety at work and in doing so also promotes a positive social
climate and smooth operation and may enhance productivity of the undertakings. The concept of working culture is intended in this context to mean a reflection of the essential value systems adopted by the undertaking concerned. Such a culture is reflected in practice in the managerial systems, personnel policy, principles for participation, training policies and quality management of the undertaking."

In recent years, Indian economy has surged at a good pace, and when we talk about various industries which have contributed in its growth and expansion, the Indian leather industry comes at top place. And now, several leading brands of world-leading countries such as US & Europe are either importing or looking forward to get the leather chemicals, pure leather and products made from it, from India. Apart from this, the leather industry in India is also one of the oldest one and currently employs approx. 2.5 million people. However, among all leather products that are being manufactured in India, footwear manufacturing in India holds the top position.

Moreover, reports from the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion of various industries also stated that the Indian leather industry is developing at a very good pace. However, till now Indian leather industry has contributed approximately 3% in the global trade, whereas China contributes approximately 20%. To increase the competitiveness of the Indian industry, Indian Finished Leather Manufacturers and Exporters Association and the Government of India are making efforts to promote this industry and increase the market share (Kumar, 2012).

This research study tries to find out the various occupational hazards among the footwear manufacturing workers of Kolkata, India. The study also aims at finding the environmental stressors, productivity and application of ergonomic intervention to increase productivity of the various footwear manufacturing sectors.