3.1 MEANING OF SOME KEY TERMS

a) Stress

Modern life is full of stress. Stress on individuals ranges from personal day to day life to their organizational activities. Urbanization, industrialization, competition, modernization and increasing scale of operations in the society are causing increasing stresses. People perceive stress when they cannot meet up to the environmental expectations and feel a misfit within themselves. Consistently increasing rate of psychosomatic and psychological disorders and feeling of frustration and dissatisfaction with life in general reflect the high stress being experienced by the people in the present day world. During last two decades frequency, severity and span of psycho-social stress have drastically increased. The basic reason being the tremendously changed physical and socio-cultural environment of the contemporary society and lifestyle of people. People’s life in contemporary societies has become more demanding, complicated, mechanical and dependent, and is running by the clock. Ever increasing need and aspirations, stiff competition, pressures of meeting deadlines and uncertainty of future and weakened social support system have made the life of majority of people highly stressful in modern societies.

The term stress has been derived from the latin word stringere which means to draw tight. The term used to refer to hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. It was used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to denote force, pressure, strain, or strong efforts with reference to an object or person. Various terms have been synonymously used with stress, viz., anxiety, frustration, conflict, pressure, strain etc.

(Cannon 1914)\(^1\) in his work on homeostasis had used the term stress to describe emotional states that had possible detrimental physical impact on the focal organism. (Cannon 1935)\(^2\) modified the use of the term stress to describe physical stimuli and used the term strain for organism’s response to the stressor. (Wolff

[46]
described it as a state of human organism. (Basowitz et al. 1958) have described stress as that class of stimuli which produce anxiety and reportable experience of tense dread. (Selye 1956) has done considerable research on stress and viewed that stress is a non-specifically induced change within a biological system. It is non-specific because any adaptation to a problem faced by the body, irrespective of the nature of the problem is included in stress. Stress at workplace is a common feature and majority of people experience it. He popularized the term “General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). He defined stress as non-specific responses of the body to any demand made upon it. He was of the opinion that organism makes a universal pattern to response to all types of internal and external demands made on the body. The GAS has three stages, i.e., alarm, resistance and collapse. The alarm stage is the body’s initial response to stressor, e.g., increase heart rate and blood pressure, and release of glucose to provide energy for action. If the stress is prolonged, the stage of resistance emerges. The process of homeostasis comes into play at this stage. The body tries to maintain equilibrium. There is continuing effort to adapt to the stressor during this stage. The body cannot go on coping with stress indefinitely. The third stage of collapse is characterized by a loss of resistance to the stressor, and exhaustion, collapse and even death can occur. But this model of GAS has been challenged by the stress researchers as it does not provide any significance to cognitive processes and individual differences in these physical responses to stressors.

Stress conceived as a stimulus has been used to describe environmental situations or conditions characterized as new, intense, rapidly changing, demanding, sudden or unexpected, (Beehr 1984; Beehr and Bhagat 1985). Stressful stimuli can also include stimulus deficit, absence of expected stimulation, highly persistent stimulation, fatigue and boredom. In this perspective, stress has been treated as an independent variable. (Lazarus 1966) considered such events as failure or the threat of failure, noxious or unpleasant agents in the environment, isolation and rapid social changes as
stressful stimuli. The common features of stressful stimuli are undesirable, unpleasant, uncomfortable, threatening and demanding. (Weitz 1970) enlisted eight types of stressful situations, namely speeded information processing, noxious environmental stimuli, perceived threat, disrupted psychological function, isolation, confinement, blocking, group pressures and frustration. These stimulus situations may be more suitably called “stressors” instead of “stress”. These situations are very likely to cause or generate the feeling of stress in most of the focal persons, but not necessarily in everyone. People react to their life situations or social conditions in terms of their own interpretative meanings of these situations or events. Much depends upon context, mood and experience when people come to interpret the meaning of an event. The actual amount of stress-felt is determined by the stressful situations in combination with other personal and situational variables.

(Sinha 1993) concluded that stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Two conditions are necessary for potential stress to become actual stress. He further observed that there must be uncertainty over the outcome and the outcome must be important. Regardless of the conditions, it is only when there is doubt or uncertainty regarding whether the opportunity will be seized, the constraint removed, or the loss avoided that there is stress. Stress is highest for those individuals who perceive they are uncertain as to whether they will win or lose and lowest for those individuals who think that winning or losing is a certainty.

But importance is equally important. If the individual regard winning or losing as unimportant, there is no stress. For example, if job security or earning promotion is a casual matter for an employee, he will not mind going through a performance review frequently. The transactional model of stress describes it as part of a complex and dynamic system of transaction between the person and his
environment. It emphasizes that stress is an individual perceptual phenomenon rooted in psychological process.

**Occupational Stress**

In general sense, stress is the pressure people feel in life due to their reaction to situation. In today’s changing and competitive work environment, stress level is increasing both in the workers as well as the managers. As a result of this work stress, more and more managers are showing signs of chronic fatigue and burnout. Stress leads to reduced efficiency in even best of the individuals, which in turn leads to reduced productivity. Stress at work resulting from increasing complexities of work and its divergent demands has become a prominent and pervading feature of the modern organizations. Occupational stress is a major hazard for many workers. Increased workloads, downsizing, hostile work environments, shift work etc are just a few of the many causes of stressful working conditions.

(Caplan Cobb and French 1975)\textsuperscript{11} have accordingly defined occupational stress as any characteristics of job environment which possesses a threat to the individual. (Cohen 1980)\textsuperscript{12} have expressed that by occupational stress is meant negative environmental factors or stressors associated with a particular job. (Parasuraman and Alluto 1981)\textsuperscript{13} reported that job demands, constraints and job related events or situations were not in themselves stressful; but they may be capable of producing psychological stress and strain depending upon personal attributes and other factors. (Ross and Altmair 1994)\textsuperscript{14} have defined occupational stress as the result of interaction of work conditions with characteristics of the worker such that demands of the work exceed the ability of the worker to cope with them. (Lazarus 1984)\textsuperscript{15} has described occupational stress as an environmental situation perceived as presenting a job demand which seems to exceed the capacity and
resources of the employee to meet or deal with it. Work related stress has become the top agenda for many government agencies now-a-days. Work stress is given much impetus since it directly affects the government in the public sectors and the business in the private sectors. Person’s attitude and expectations lead to stress. If he fails to fulfill the expected demands he comes under stress. This kind of stress is self induced by person himself. Stress is not tangible. It breeds in the minds of the people and exists through their actions. Occupational stress can affect health when the stressors of the workplace exceed the employee’s ability to have some control over their situation or to cope in other ways. Stress is highly individualistic in nature. Some people have high tolerance for stress and strive well in face of several stressors in the environment. Infact, some individuals fail to perform well unless they experience a level of stress which activates and energizes them to put forth their best efforts. On the other hand, some people have very low level of tolerance for stress and they become paralysed when they have to interface with routine everyday factors that appear undesirable to them. Managing stress at workplace is a very vital issue. When stress is not checked its adverse effects start pouring in.

**Public Sector**

Public sector is that part of the economy which is concerned with providing basic government services. Public sector includes government and publicly-controlled or publicly-funded agencies, enterprises, and other organizations that deliver public programs, goods, or services. It is that portion of society which is controlled by national, state or provincial, and local governments. The public sector overlaps with the private sector in producing or providing certain goods and services. The extent of this overlap varies from country to country, state to state, province to province, and city to city. This overlap is most often seen in
waste management, water management, health care, security services, and shelters for homeless and abused people.

**Private Sector**

Private sector is that part of the economy that is not state controlled, and is run by individuals and companies for profit. The private sector encompasses all for-profit businesses that are not owned or operated by the government. Companies and corporations that are government run are part of what is known as the public sector, while charities and other nonprofit organizations are part of the voluntary sector. In most free-market economies, the private sector is the sector where most jobs are held. This differs from countries where the government exerts considerable power over the economy, like in the People's Republic of China.

**Managers**

A manager is the person responsible for planning and directing the work of a group of individuals, monitoring their activities at job, and taking corrective action when necessary. Manager is tasked with supervising and directing one or more employees or departments to ensure that these employees or departments carry out assigned duties as required. Depending on the size of the company there may be a single, dual or triple management layer involved. Managers may direct workers directly or they may direct several supervisors who direct the workers. The manager must be familiar with the work of all the groups he/she supervises, should be friendly enough to understand the potentialities of the group and channelize them to most productive use.

A manager may have the power to hire or fire employees or to promote them. In many companies, a manager may only recommend such action to the next level of management. The manager has the authority to change the work assignments of
team members. In large companies management is basically divided into three tiers: top management, mid-management and lower management. Lower management includes managers who operate at basic levels of commerce. Mid-level management looks after lower-management and generates reports for senior management. Senior or upper management commonly consists of a board of directors or shareholders who own the company and are responsible for making key decisions that affect the company.
3.2 TYPES OF STRESS

Occupational stress is related to the job place. Stress is an inherent factor in any type of vocation or career. At its best, the presence of stress can be a motivator that urges the individual to strive for excellence. However, excess stress can lead to a lack of productivity, a loss of confidence, and the ability to perform routine tasks. There are various types of stress which are discussed below-

- **Eustress**: Eustress can be defined as a pleasant or curative stress. Often, it is controlled stress that gives competitive edge in performance related activities like athletics, giving a speech etc. The term eustress was first used by endocrinologist (Selye 1983), when he published a model dividing stress into two major categories: eustress and distress. In his article, Selye concluded that stress involves enhances function (physical or mental, such as through strength training or challenging work) and it is considered eustress. They are able to exert a healthy effect on people. It gives one a feeling of fulfillment or contentment and also makes one excited about life. Unfortunately, it is a type of stress that only occurs for a short period of time. Eustress is often called the curative stress because it gives a person the ability to generate the best performance or maximum output.

- **Distress**: Distress is the most commonly referred to type of stress, having negative implications. It is bad or negative stress. It is a stress disorder that is caused by adverse events and it often influences a person’s ability to cope. Some events leading to distress may be death of a loved one, financial problems, heavy work responsibility or workload, strained relationship, chronic illnesses etc. Distress can be classified further as acute stress and chronic stress. Acute stress is the most common type of stress. It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and the anticipated demands and pressures of the near future. Acute stress is
thrilling and exciting in small doses, but too much is exhausting. Overdoing on short term stress can lead to psychological distress, tension headaches, upset stomach and other symptoms. Acute stress symptoms are recognized by most people. The most common symptoms are emotional distress- some combinations of anger or irritability, anxiety and depression etc. Acute stress can crop up in anyone’s life and is highly treatable and manageable. While acute stress can be thrilling and exciting, chronic stress is not. This is the grinding stress that wears people away day after day, year after year. Chronic stress destroys bodies, minds and lives. It wreaks havoc through long term attrition. It is the stress of poverty, of dysfunctional families, of being trapped in an unhappy marriage or in a despised job or career. Chronic stress comes when a person never sees a way out of a miserable situation. It’s the stress of unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. The worst aspect of chronic stress is that people get used to it. They forget it is there. People are immediately aware of acute stress because it is new; they ignore chronic stress because it is old, familiar and sometimes almost comfortable. Chronic stress kills through suicide, violence, heart attack, stroke and perhaps even cancer. People wear down to a final, fatal breakdown. Because physical and mental resources are depleted through long term attrition, the symptoms of chronic stress are difficult to treat and may require extended medical as well as behavioural treatment and stress management.

Hyperstress: When a person is pushed beyond what he or she can handle, they are supposed to be experiencing hyperstress situation. Hyperstress results from being overloaded or overworked. It’s like being stressed out. When someone is hyperstressed, even little things can trigger a strong emotional response. People who are most likely to suffer from hyperstress may be working mothers who have a multi-task, juggling between work
and family constraints or may be people under constant financial strains or people working in fast pace environment etc

- Hypostress: Hypostress stands in direct opposite to hyperstress. This is because hypostress is one of those types of stress experienced by person who is constantly bored. Someone in an unchallenging job, such as a factory worker performing the same task over and over will often experience hypostress. The effect of hypostress is feelings of restlessness and a lack of inspiration.
3.3 GENERAL ADAPTATION SYNDROME (GAS)

Hans Selye in 1956 developed a comprehensive model to explain that people have a fairly consistent physiological response to stressful situations. This response called General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) provides an automatic defence system to help people cope with external/environmental demands. The defense system occurs in three stages: alarm reaction, resistance and exhaustion. A diagrammatic view of these stages is shown in figure 3 (i). The line in this figure shows the individual’s energy and ability to cope with the stressful situation, i.e., the normal level of resistance.

Alarm Reaction:
In the alarm reaction stage, also called initial or shock phase, the perception of a threatening or challenging situation causes the brain to send a biochemical message to various parts of the body that, in turn, make the defense mechanisms active. This stage is characterized by increased respiration rate, heartbeat, blood pressure, muscle tension, adrenalin discharge, and gastrointestinal ulceration. At first, the individual’s energy level capacity and coping effectiveness decrease in response to the initial shock. The extreme shock may result in incapacity of the individual to cope with stress. In most situations, the alarm reaction alerts the person to the environmental condition and prepares the body for the resistance change.

Resistance:
The bodily signs characteristics of the alarm reaction disappear and the body has activated various biochemical, psychological and behavioural mechanisms. As a result, the person’s resistance increases above the normal level during this stage. However, if the stress persists, or the defensive mechanism proves ineffective, the person’s organism deteriorates to the next stage of exhaustion.
Exhaustion:
People have a limited resistance capacity. When the resistance adaptation capacity is exhausted, the signs of alarm reaction reappear. Resistance level begins to decline abruptly. Finally, the organism gets collapsed.

Fig 3(i): Hans Selye’s General Adaptation Syndrome
3.4 SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

The nature and severity of occupational stress may be more adequately and conveniently understood by observing physical and psychological symptoms which occur in the employee under the conditions of job stress. (Beehr and Newman 1978) have outlined three categories of these symptoms, i.e., psychological symptoms, physical symptoms and behavioural symptoms. When stress persists and becomes excessive, it culminates to strain and, in turn, affects a person’s physique, psychology and behaviour. The body prepares itself for ‘fight’ or ‘flight’. The excessive stress develops various symptoms that harm the employee’s job performance and health, and threaten their inability to cope with the environment.

- Psychological Symptoms: Stress manifests in various forms of emotional disorders. These emotional and cognitive problems occur under conditions of job stress. In their study (Singh and Singh 1992) have found that stress gets its reflection in the form of anxiety, depression, helplessness, hopelessness and anger. Psychological symptoms of occupational stress also include job dissatisfaction, disliking for the job, boredom, frustration, isolation and resentment. The stressful people with the slightest provocation are easily induced to anger and anxiety and become unable to relax. In his study (Dua 1994) reported that the employees suffering from occupational stress generally tend to have low psychological commitment to the organization. (Revieki and May 1985) reported that occupational stress exerted a direct effect on depression of the employees. In his extensive study, (Jagadish 1984) noted that occupational stress generated from various inadequacies and constraints of job life negatively correlated with psychological well being of the employees. The results also indicated that stress resulted from “intrinsic impoverishment” was one of the most potential causes of deterioration in employees’
psychological health. Having these problems, the employee is less able to cope with job problems in ways that would improve his work conditions and enhance his mental outlook.

- Physical Symptoms: Most of the early concern with stress was directed at physiological symptoms. This was primarily because the topic was researched by specialists in the health and medical sciences. This research led to the conclusion that stress could create changes in metabolism, increase heart and breathing rates, increase blood pressure, bring on headaches and induce heart attacks. Though it is difficult to know how much these physical symptoms have been caused by a particular job stress versus other aspects of employee’s life, it has been established that consistent job stress links with certain physical symptoms and diseases. Among the common physical symptoms of occupational stress are cardiovascular diseases, gastrointestinal problems, allergies and skin diseases, headaches and respiratory diseases. (Brown 1977)\(^2^2\) reported that a number of physical complaints like ulcer, headaches, chest pains, constipation, bronchial asthma etc are outcomes of occupational stress at organizations.

- Behavioural Symptoms: Job stress also bears behavioural symptoms which are easily observable. There is general agreement that a high degree of job stress drives people adopt certain easily visible behavioural symptoms like sleeplessness, excessive drinking, smoking, absenteeism, obesity and gluttony. The behavioural symptoms of job stress can be classified into two categories. The first category of the symptoms belongs to the focal employees, while the other belongs to the organization. The employee-centred symptoms are avoidance of work, increased intake of alcohol or drugs, overeating or under eating, aggression towards coworkers or family members and interpersonal problems in general. The organizational related symptoms of job stress include absenteeism, leaving
the job, accident proneness and decrease in work efficiency. Job stress can also lead to less visible behavioural symptoms in the form of bad decision-making, negative internal politics, reduced creativity, apathy and so on. Consistently acting and feeling out of character is a serious warning that one is losing the capability to cope with tension. Inability to feel or express any emotions indicates loss of contact with one’s surroundings. (Jagdish 1987) reported that about 25% of Indian executives and 44% of middle level executives report that job stress drives them to high level of alcohol consumption. Like the psychological problems resulting from stress, the behavioural problems are often not attributed to stress by co-workers or supervisors and they generate little sympathy.

Table-3.1 Symptoms of stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digestive Problems</th>
<th>Nervousness and tensions</th>
<th>Emotional instability</th>
<th>Excessive Consumption of alcohol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Worry</td>
<td>Sleeping problems/absenteeism</td>
<td>Uncooperative attitude</td>
<td>Feelings of inability to cope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to Relax</td>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Independent hospital visits, 2009, 2010
PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

1. Elevated blood pressure
2. Increased muscle tension (neck, shoulder, back)
3. Elevated pulse and increased respiration
4. Sweaty palms
5. Cold hands and feet
6. Slumped posture
7. Tension headaches
8. Upset stomach
9. Higher pitched voice
10. Change in appetite
11. Urinary frequency
12. Sleeplessness
13. Difficulty in feeling asleep or waking up
14. Dry mouth and throat

BEHAVIOURAL SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

1. Decreased productivity and quality of job performance
2. Tendency to make mistakes
3. Forgetfulness and blocking
4. Diminished attention to details
5. Preoccupation, day-dreaming
6. Inability to concentrate on tasks
7. Reduced creativity
8. Increased use of alcohol or drugs
9. Increased smoking
10. Increased absenteeism and illness
11. Lethargy
12. Loss of interest
13. Accident proneness

**EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS OF STRESS**
1. Emotional outbursts and crying
2. Irritability
3. Depression
4. Withdrawal
5. Hostile and assaultive behaviour
6. Tendency to blame others
7. Anxiousness and suspicion
8. Feeling of worthlessness
3.5 SOURCES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Though occupational stress initially arises from constituent factors of job and its psycho-physical environment, these factors are not inherently stressors. Infact, personal characteristics of the employee and his cognitive appraisal of the job factors in the framework of his capacity and resources determine the extent of stress he would experience from a job factor or situation. And that is the reason one can only hypothetically predict the potency of the job factors or situations for causing stress but cannot categorize or generalize any work-setting variable as a universal stressor. However, some factors like job insecurity, work overload, demotion, loss of job, extreme heat or cold etc are likely to cause stress to the majority of employees. The various causes or sources of stress can be classified into four broad categories: environmental, organizational, group and individual.

- Environmental Stressors: Environmental factors have a strong impact on employee stress. These factors include fast technological change, family demands and obligations, political factors, ethnic identity, relocation and transfers. (Pestonjee 1987)\(^{24}\) concluded that environmental force has a direct and strong bearing on the level of employees’ stress. Political factors are likely to cause stress in countries which suffer from political uncertainties, as in Iraq and Haiti, for example. New innovations can make an employee’s skill and experience obsolete in a very short period of time. The phenomenal rate of technological and social change also had its great impact on people’s lifestyle which is carried over into their jobs. Computers, robotics, automation and other forms of technological innovation are a threat to many people and cause stress. Where medical science has made tremendous developments and advancements by increasing the life span of people and reducing the life claiming threats of many dreaded diseases on the one hand, the modern life style caught up in the rush-rush, urbanized and busy lifestyle have brought forth many
complexities and increased the potential for stress on the job, on the other. Changes in the business cycle create economic uncertainties. When the economy is contracting, people become increasingly conscious and anxious about their security. It is no surprise that suicide rates skyrocketed during the great depression of the 1930’s. Minor recessions also increase stress levels. Downward swings in the economy are often accomplished by permanent reductions in the workplace, temporary lay-offs, reduced pay and the like. Weak financial position of a person forces him to do extra job or the spouse has had to join work to meet ever increasing ends. Such situations reduce time for recreation, relaxation and family activities. The overall effect is more stress on the employees. (Bhagat and Allie 1967)\(^{25}\) in their study observed that technological change, economic and political factors, financial position and family pressures are stressors as unresolved environmental demands. The physical environmental conditions such as excessive noise, poor lighting, safety hazards, poorly designed office space, lack of privacy and poor air quality also cause stress. (Evans and Johnson 2000)\(^{26}\) reported that clerical employees experience significantly higher stress levels in noisy open offices than in quiet areas.

- **Organizational Stressors:** Stressors exist not only outside the organization, but within it also. Organizational stressors may come in many forms, such as organizational policies, procedures and structure. Downsizing, for example, may be extremely stressful to both employees who lose their jobs and also who remain in the organization. This is because the remaining employees are forced to pick up the slack of the workers who have left. In a study (Kivinaki et al. 2000)\(^{27}\) have established that percentage of employees suffering from high blood pressure doubled after the company laid off ten percent of its work force.
Job Role: Job Role is a major source of satisfaction as well as frustration for the employees. Certain characteristics or inadequacies of job role have been noted as prominent source of occupational stress. (Ivancevich and Matteson 1980)\textsuperscript{28} observed that whenever the expectations and demands of an employee conflicts with the expectations and demands of the organization, the employee experiences role pressure. (Kahn et al. 1964)\textsuperscript{29} reported that role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload and role underload are important organizational stressors. (Pareek 1981)\textsuperscript{30} had identified ten situations of role stress ie., inter-role distance, role stagnation, role expectation conflict, role erosion, role overload, role isolation, personal inadequacy, self-role distance, role ambiguity and resource inadequacy.

Job Characteristics and Attributes: Characteristics of the job are also a very common source of employees’ satisfaction, frustration and stress. Task complexity and difficulty, quantitative and qualitative demands of the job and employees’ controllability over task are the frequent sources of occupational stress. The pace at which an employee is required to do work is one of the characteristics of the job causing stress to the employee. Another major aspect is the extent of control an employee has over the work process. The pressure of repetitive work in machine pacing system gradually becomes a continuous source of stress to the worker. Another important characteristic of the job is its attributes. If the job lack enrichment and provide little opportunity to satisfy the needs of autonomy, social interaction, power, use of knowledge and abilities etc, they become stressful to their incumbents.

Physical work conditions and the technology: Another set of factors in the work setting which cause stress are related to qualities of physical work environment and technology. Inadequate, taxing, or hazardous physical
conditions at work such as insufficient or excessive lighting, continued loud noise, extreme cold or heat, fluctuation in temperature, crowded workplace etc. These physical qualities of work environment cause direct sensory stress and indirect psychological stress through their potentiality for causing negative health consequences. Technical limitations, rapid change in technology, inadequate technical management, incongruence among task, technology and organizational structure, inadequate man-machine system, and mechanization of man are the potential sources of stress prevailing in work setting.

• Performance feedback and reward system: Performance feedback is another important factor which enhances employees’ motivation and performance, but causes dissatisfaction and stress if it is inadequate or absent. If feedback is not given at proper time or it is less frequent, it is likely to cause stress to the concerned employee or worker. Rewards and incentives which employees receive for their work also play an important role in enhancing employees’ motivation and performance. But if it is not adequate the results may be vice versa. The rewards for better or exceptional job performance include monetary compensation or benefits, recognition, appreciation, privileges and promotion. These non-financial rewards are usually more effective in improving employee’s motivation and performance level. If the employees feel they are not being adequately, proportionately or timely rewarded for their efforts and sincerity, they are likely to encounter stress.

• Interpersonal relations at work: Interpersonal relations among employees and employee-employer have consistent links with job stress (Payne 1980). Quality of occupational relationship plays a dominant role in determining employee’s job behaviour and job strains. (Kets de Vries
had studied three types of interpersonal relationships viz., relationship with co-workers, relationship within work groups and relationship with superiors and subordinates. As the social support from the co-workers and work groups, and supervisors buffers the job stress and consequent strains, the poor or strained interpersonal relationships at work is associated with the feeling of threat for the employees. When employees have poor relationship with co-workers, they blame the job stress they experience on their co-workers. Conversely, those workers who report a greater amount of group cohesion are more able to cope with stress on the job. Relationship with superior or leaders are equally important in determining the amount of job stress. Another potentially stressful relationship within the job place is observed in interactions with customers or clients. One group of employees who have been identified as being at risk for experiencing job stress are those who are involved in providing service to others (Schuler 1984). Medical personnel having more contact with patients report high level of emotional exhaustion (Maslach and Jackson 1981).

- Organization structure and climate: Besides the job role and job characteristics, certain features of the structure, climate and culture of the organization also cause severe psychological stress to its employees. There are two kinds of organizational structures depending upon the degree of involvement of employees in decision making and direction of work. They are centralized and decentralized organizational structures. It is often studied that organizations welcoming or allowing participation of employees in the workplace are less stressful. (Ivancevich and Donnelly 1975) reported that employees in decentralized organizations experience less stress and more job satisfaction. Through these differential effects it may be concluded that decision making enhances the meaningfulness an

[67]
employee finds in work and provides the employees with a greater sense of autonomy, responsibility, certainty, control and ownership (Cooper 1987)\textsuperscript{36}. Climate and culture of the organization has also been found to be the source of satisfaction and stress. Organizational culture refers to the beliefs and expectations shared by the members of the organization. An important stress that results from organizational culture is the existence of competition. Many workers feel stress due to power struggles or office politics prevailing in the organization. (Matteson and Ivancevich 1987)\textsuperscript{37} in a study established that superiors or managers engaging in power games and political alliances can place stressful expectations and demands on subordinates. Poor organizational climate may also cause employee stress.

- Organizational change: Organizations in the global market place are continuously changing. These consistent changes in organizational structure and its functioning are the results of advancements in technology, economic constraints and rational competitions. Although most of these changes are necessary, it carries the risk of huge cost in terms of increased health care expenses, lost productivity and lower level of job satisfaction. This cost may be directly attributed to distress that envelops when employees in an organization encounter consistent changes. These changes at organizational level cause stress at individual level. Organizational change occurs when there is a shift in the activities of business, when the firm launches a new product line or enters in a new market. Whenever such changes take place the employees find it cumbersome to adjust to the new working methods, new market with dynamic characteristics and new product features. As such changes in working patterns, insecurity, uncertainty and fear of failure results in occupational stress (Lawler 1994)\textsuperscript{38}. However, the relationship between organizational change and occupational stress has not been extensively
investigated. In a study (Mack, Nelson and Quick 1998)\(^{39}\) have observed that the impact of organizational change on level of employee stress is a subjective issue and differs from person to person. Each employee evaluates the changes by filtering it through his or her own unique perceptual process and the potential impact of the change is determined by this evaluation.

- **Group Stressors:** Every employee is a part of a small group or a bigger group. He is a part of a project, a section, unit, division or department. Therefore the group can be a potential source of stressor. The various group stressors can be:
  
  - Lack of group cohesiveness: (Mayo 1933)\(^{40}\) through his famous Hawthorne Experiments established that togetherness or cohesiveness provides satisfaction to employees. Lack of cohesiveness builds up an atmosphere of distrust, conflict and anxiety which serves as potential stressor for the employees. Adjusting oneself with other people in a work setting is one of the most stressful aspects of life. An employee has to maintain three crucial relationships at work and they are relations with superiors, subordinates and peers.

  - Lack of social support system: Every human being seeks support in times of need or difficulty. In an organization also, the employees look for support from other colleagues in times of stress or difficulty. If he gets this social support he feels much better and relieved. If such support is lacking for an individual employee, the same can cause stress to the employee.

  - Interpersonal and inter group conflict: Lack of understanding, mutual trust and incompatibility in terms of needs and values between co-workers and colleagues usually creates interpersonal conflicts. Moreover, whenever the
objectives and goals of different groups in an organization coincide it results in inter group conflict. Researches indicate that such dysfunctional conflicts can lead to considerable stress for employees.

- **Individual Stressors:** Apart from the environmental, organizational and group stressors, there are individual factors causing stress which are completely subjective and vary from person to person. These are discussed below:

  - **Role conflict:** Every person is playing varied roles in their day-to-day life. Similarly, people play various roles in organizations. When people face conflicting demands in discharging their roles, it is called role conflict. For example, an employee has to play the role of a sincere employee, a good supervisor, a husband at home, a doting father, an understanding friend etc. Role conflict also arises when an employee receives contradictory messages from different people about how to perform a job well. It is called intrarole conflict.

  - **Role ambiguity:** Role ambiguity occurs when employees are uncertain about various aspects of their jobs. Such ambiguity tends to be experienced by employees when they enter new job areas or taking a foreign assignment because they are uncertain about task and social expectations. (Chand and Sethi 1997)\(^{41}\) observed significant positive correlation between job related strain and work overload and role conflict.

  - **Workload:** In today’s competitive work environment where downsizing is common, fewer employees are often required to work even more than ever before. This causes stress. Work overload is quite a common problem in Japan that death from overwork has its own name Karoshi (Efron 2000)\(^{42}\). Just like over work under work can also be quite stressful. Work under
load is a situation of receiving too little work or performing tasks that
donot sufficiently require employee’s talent.

- Life events: Life events such as death of spouse, family, friend divorce,
injury to one’s family members, unwanted frequency etc. have dramatic
event on people. (Holmes and Rahe 1967)\(^{43}\) reported that more the person
experiences sudden life events like death and divorce of spouse, the more
is stress experienced and in turn, the poorer will be his consequent health.

- Personality traits: Personality affects behaviour. Individual characteristics
of personality moderate the extent to which people experience stress. That
is the reason different people experience different levels of stress for the
same stressors. There can be three reasons attributing to the causes: they
are perception of the employees towards the problem, personal resistance
of the employee and the various strategies adopted. (Aditya and Sen
1993)\(^{44}\) noted that in an organization, women cope up with stress better
than their male counterparts.

_Other Sources of Occupational Stress_

(McGrath 1976)\(^{45}\) has suggested the following six sources of occupational stress:

- Task-based stress (difficulty, ambiguity, load, etc.)
- Role-based stress (conflict, ambiguity, load, etc.)
- Stress intrinsic to behaviour setting (e.g., effect of crowding or
undermanning etc.)
- Stress arising from the physical environment itself (e.g., extreme hot/cold,
hostile forces etc.)
- Stress arising from social environment in sense of interpersonal relations
(e.g., interpersonal disagreement, privacy, isolation, etc.)
• Stress within the person system which the focal person brings with him to the situation (e.g., anxiety, perceptual style, motivation, experience etc.)

(Cooper and Marshall 1976) have described following seven categories of the sources of managerial stress:

• Factors intrinsic to the job: Work overload under load, poor physical working conditions, time pressure, having too many decisions to make.
• Career development: Over promotion, under promotion, lack of job security, fear of redundancy, thwarted ambition.
• Role in the organization: Role ambiguity, role conflict, responsibility for people.
• Relationship at work: Poor relations with boss, colleagues and subordinates, lack of trust and supportiveness, difficulties in delegating responsibilities.
• Organizational structure and climate: Lack of effective consultation, restrictions on behaviour, poor communication, no sense of belonging and little or no participation in decision making.
• Extra-organizational sources: Family problems, conflict of personal belief with that of company, conflict of company with family demands, marriage patterns, relocation and mobility.
• Characteristics of the individual: Type A personality, extremes of competitiveness, striving for achievement, impatience, haste, hyper-alertness, low self-esteem, lack of ability to cope or adapt to stress situation etc.

(Srivastava and Singh 1981) identified twelve factors which cause occupational stress such as role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, group pressures, low profitability, under participation, low status, responsibility for people, intrinsic impoverishment, strenuous working conditions, poor relations and powerlessness.
All the occupational stressors identified by stress researchers have been summarized under two major categories, i.e., objectively defined and subjectively defined job stressors:

**Objective Job Stressors**
- Physical hazards
- Pollution
- Noise
- Inadequate man-machine design
- Unusual/non standard working hours
- Technical limitations
- Change in shift pattern
- Deadlines
- Time pressure

**Properties of Work and Work-Setting**
- New work setting
- Machine pacing
- Work overload
- Lack of training
- Inadequate intrinsic rewards
- Inadequate extrinsic rewards
- Poor management-labour relations
- Job insecurity
- Territoriality (alienation, isolation)
- Organizational structure
- Poor organizational Climate and negative organizational attitude
- Inter group and intra group competitions
- Job complexity
- Autocratic leadership
Changes in Job
- Loss of job/employment
- Qualitative changes in job
- Overpromotion
- Transfer of job locus
- Job/Career transition

Subjective Job Stressors

Occupational Role
- Role ambiguity
- Role conflict
- Less control over work processes
- Responsibility for people
- Responsibility for things
- Low participation
- Feedback and communication problems
- Role stagnation
- Resource inadequacy
- Role erosion
- Role isolation

Miscellaneous
- Strained relationship with supervisor
- Inadequate support from supervisor
- Strained relationship with coworkers
- Conflict with subordinates
- Ambiguity about future
- Inequality of pay
- Building and maintaining career
- Less opportunity for advancement
**Off-The Job Stressors**

- Stressful life events
- Demands of husband and children
- Work-family conflicts
- Spillover effect of non-work stressors

The most common event producing stress is pressure to work harder. The next common stressful event is major festivals like Diwali / Pongol / Onem / Christmas. Next, most commonly felt stressor is ‘change in responsibility at work.’ Arguing with spouse is another common registered stressor. Interestingly, vacation is also experienced as a stressful event. The other role stressors experienced by the executives in order of priority are listed below:

**Exhibit 3.a Daily stressors in modern life**

- Loudspeakers in the neighbourhood blaring loudly, change in social activities
- Wife constantly comparing with neighbours
- Son or daughter fairing poorly in schools/ colleges
- Change in sleeping habits
- Change in family reunions/ get togethers
- Death of a close family member
- Business readjustment
- New positions
- Mergers
- Change in financial state
- Change to different lines of work
- Trouble with in-laws

[75]
- Change in residence
- Traffic noise
- Change in eating habits
- Outstanding personal achievement
- Change in living conditions
- Personal injury or illness
- Reviving personal habits
- Change in work hours and conditions
- Arranging admission to school for children
- Marriage
- Retirement
- Trouble with boss
- Arranging dowry for daughter
- Pregnancy
- Sex difficulties
- Transfer to other state
- Son or daughter leaving home
- Mortgage or loan
- Change in religious activities
- Death of spouse
- Divorce
- Gain of new family member
- Wife begins or drop work
- Change of schools
- Minor violation of the law

3.6 CONSEQUENCES OF STRESS

Stress has been generally denoted as undesirable and a negative force causing disruption in psychological and physiological homeostasis of a person. In a situation of severe stress, human constitution and capabilities are taxed severely and his overall effectiveness is distorted. Stress, according to majority of researchers results in ill health, individual adaptability and behavioural effectiveness. Severe and prolonged stress affects a person psychologically and physiologically. (Hart 1982)\(^\text{49}\) mentioned and presented the detailed list of stress consequences. He categorized them as strains and illnesses.

*Strains*

*Psychological Effect*
- Job dissatisfaction
- Boredom, anxiety, fatigue, depression, irritation
- Low occupational and self-esteem
- Alienation from the organization
- Tension, experienced conflict, sexual maladjustment
- Low satisfaction with life

*Behavioural and Social Effects*
- Strikes
- Early retirement
- High rate of smoking and caffeine intake
- Use of drugs or alcohol on the job, burnout
- Absenteeism, accidents and errors
- Disrupted performance of social roles
- Distortion in interpersonal relations

*Illness*

*Somatic-Physiological Effects*
- Heart disease, hyper-tension
- Cerebral accident
Various consequences of occupational stress can be classified into two categories, namely, job behavioural outcomes i.e., job dissatisfaction, disruption in performance, high rate of absenteeism and low level of job involvement and health outcomes.

**Job Behavioural Outcomes of Occupational Stress**

- Job dissatisfaction: Job dissatisfaction is the most common and obvious outcome of occupational stress. Severe or acute occupational stress builds up a negative attitude about various aspects of the job which create the feeling of job dissatisfaction among the employees. (Kahn 1973)\(^{50}\) reported that occupational stress arising from role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload result in a significant deterioration in the job satisfaction of the employees. Later (Rizzo, House and Lirtzman 1970)\(^{51}\) observed similar relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. Hence, it can be established that more stress at job place distorts the general mental equilibrium of the employees and they develop dissatisfaction towards their work and responsibilities at job.
• Occupational stress and performance: This is a general assumption that there exists a negative or adverse relationship between job stress and performance of employees. However, this is a subjective issue as it depends upon degree of stress and the personality type of the employees. This is because stress is not always undesirable or harmful. It is argued that stress creates as well as promotes employee’s inclination towards jobs, thus enhances his capacity to work. (Hall and Lawler 1971)\textsuperscript{52} found that job pressures involving time, financial responsibility and quality factors were related to positive organizational outcomes. (Srivastava & Krishna 1997)\textsuperscript{53} reported that excess stress places unattainable demand or constraints on a person, which results in lower performance. Even moderate level of stress can have negative influence on performance in the long run as the continued intensity of stress bears down the individual and saps his energy resources. However, the nature of job is an important aspect that has a strong bearing on the level of stress experienced by the employees.

• Occupational Stress and Absenteeism and Turnover: Occupational stress is also seen to have a close association with the degree of absenteeism and turnover of employees in an office or industry. (Schuler 1980)\textsuperscript{54} observed that absenteeism and turnover are job related behaviours which are an outcome of excessive stress. However, very few researches have been reported establishing the relationship between job stress and such job behaviours. Both absenteeism and turnover are costly for the organization in terms of reduced loyalty, recruitment and training time for new employees, less experience, less productivity and the like.
• Occupational Stress and Accidents: Occupational stress is assumed to be associated with accident and mortality rates. There is no definite evidence or demonstration that accidents in organization are outcomes of occupational stress. As such, this aspect of the study demands detailed investigation as to whether accidents at work place are resultants of stressful conditions impinging upon dissatisfied employees. Stress results in chances of accidents causing self harm and injury. This view was supported by (Colquhoum 1976) who reported that occupational stress also may result in accidents and breakdowns causing harm to others. Studies of suicide rates by occupation and other demographic classifications have found that stress-like or strain-like inferred variables of job life are weaknesses of social organizations and are significantly associated with self-destructive acts or attempts.

• Occupational Stress and Job Involvement: Job involvement is a new concept and many researchers viewed it to be a part of job satisfaction. That is whenever the employees are motivated and satisfied in their jobs, they tend to be more and more involved in their responsibilities and work. (Hargopal 1980) found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and job involvement. (Madhu and Hargopal 1980; Hargopal & Ravikumar 1979) examined the relationship of stress stemming from role conflict and role ambiguity with job involvement. The study showed significant negative relationship between role stress and job involvement. (Srivastava 1990) studied on the nature of relationship between job stress and job involvement with the help of Occupational Stress Index of designed by (Srivastava & Singh 1981) and Job Involvement Scale by (Agarwala 1978). The results indicated negative correlation between occupational stress and job involvement of employees both in public sector and private sector organizations.
• Occupational stress and organizational effectiveness: Occupational stress results in a noticeable deterioration in overall effectiveness of the organization. (Allen, Hitt and Greer 1982)\textsuperscript{61} in their study found a negative relationship between stress and perceived organizational effectiveness. The results suggest that type of stress moderates the stress effectiveness relationship. (Banerjee 1990)\textsuperscript{62} found negative significant relationship between role stress and various dimensions of perceived organizational effectiveness. The results were assessed by adopting (Organizational Effectiveness Scale of Srivastava 1997)\textsuperscript{63}.

• Occupational Stress and Physical Health: It has been studied and observed by stress researchers time and again that severe and consistent stress is unpleasant and dysfunctional, and causes significant deterioration in physical and social well-being of employees. (Rahe and his associates 1964)\textsuperscript{64} investigated the effects of stress; changes in an individual’s life and behavioural patterns on the health of a person. The studies reported that stress evokes significant alterations in the functioning of most bodily tissues, organs and systems. These changes reduce the resistance of the body to fight against diseases thereby reducing the efficiency of the immune system. (Rahe 1968\textsuperscript{65}; Insel & Moss 1974\textsuperscript{66}; Lai 1995\textsuperscript{67}) observed that greater is the magnitude of major life events, higher is the risk of acquiring illness of a serious nature.

Reviewing various studies, (Hart 1982) has enlisted following strains and illnesses and mortality observed correlated with occupational stress.

**Physiological Strains**
- High pulse rate and blood pressure (Caplan 1971)\textsuperscript{68}
- High serum cholesterol, high and low density leprotiens
- High serum cholesterol, thyroid hormones, serum uric acid (Caplan et al. 1975)\textsuperscript{69}
- Catacholamine excretion (Frankenhaeuser and Gardell 1976)\textsuperscript{70}
- High electrocardiogram (Sherom et al. 1973)\textsuperscript{71}
- Disrupted sleep, bowel function, eating habits (Mott 1976)\textsuperscript{72}

\textit{Illnesses and Mortality}
- Heart disease (Glass 1977)\textsuperscript{73}
- Hypertension (Cobb and Rose 1973)\textsuperscript{74}
- Peptic ulcer (Cobb and Rose 1973\textsuperscript{75}; House et al. 1979\textsuperscript{76})
- Arthritis (Cobb 1971)\textsuperscript{77}
- Headache (Kimball 1979)\textsuperscript{78}
- Respiratory illness (Caplan et al. 1975)\textsuperscript{69}
- Dermatitis, other skin afflictions (House et al. 1979)\textsuperscript{76}
- Diabetes mellitus (Kisch 1985)\textsuperscript{75}
- Mortality rates (Colligan et al. 1977)\textsuperscript{79}

One of the most common and fatal resultants of occupational stress are coronary heart diseases. In organizations, the relationship between stresses of job life and coronary heart disease was initiated by (Caplan 1971)\textsuperscript{68}. According to (French and Caplan 1972\textsuperscript{80}; House 1972\textsuperscript{81}; Sherom et al. 1973\textsuperscript{71}; Eden et al. 1977\textsuperscript{82}), there exist a positive relationship between severe occupational stress and coronary heart disease. It was also revealed that the relationship between stress and risk for coronary heart disease is moderated by personality type, work motivation of the focal person and the social support perceived by him while in the situation of stress.

In a study (Srivastava 1997)\textsuperscript{83} noted that job stress was significantly associated with psychosomatic health complaints and pathogenic health habits. Even cancer has been reported to be associated with stress. Literature on stress and cancer
provides evidence suggesting that stressful events are associated with appearance of a variety of cancers, including breast cancer, uterus cancer and lung cancer (Tache et al. 1979; Cooper 1984). Stress appears to have a direct effect on decreasing the immune response which might otherwise control a small cancer.

- Occupational Stress and Mortality: Voluminous researches indicate towards various consequences of stress and different researchers have associated work overload, job dissatisfaction, job insecurity, role conflict, interpersonal strains and variety of other work stresses with physical and psychological symptoms of stress such as headache, heart-burn and generalized fatigue (Quick and Quick 1984). There is a growing body of empirical findings suggesting that job stress plays a role in hardening the appearance of diseases. A table is presented below which is a summary of the information on top leading causes of mortality in USA in a year.

**Table- 3.2 Top Leading Cases of Mortality in USA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes of Death</th>
<th>Number of Deaths</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>9,75,660</td>
<td>Frasure-Swith &amp; Prince 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>4,59200</td>
<td>Fanch &amp; Marshall 1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>1,53,330</td>
<td>Julius 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accidents and Adverse Effects</td>
<td>91,690</td>
<td>Jones 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic obstructive lung disease</td>
<td>73,430</td>
<td>Schilling et al. 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia and influenza</td>
<td>65,230</td>
<td>Locke et al. 1984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>Source</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>27,350</td>
<td>Kisch 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>27,350</td>
<td>Karcher &amp; Linden 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver Cirrhosis</td>
<td>26,740</td>
<td>Trell et al. 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>19310</td>
<td>Steadmon and Ribner 1982</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- Occupational Stress and Mental Health: Health is undoubtedly the greatest wealth for a human being. Therefore, neglecting one’s health for other virtues in life is said to be the greatest of follies. Social contexts such as low social and occupational status have long been associated with increased risk of nearly all disease conditions and with shorter life expectancy. Specific conditions such as personal loss, bereavement, job loss and conditions of marital status and mobility are similarly associates with risk of illness. (Kornhauser 1965) drew attention of psychologists towards the stress prevailing in work environment and its impairing effect on mental health of the employees. He reported that unpleasant work conditions, necessity to work fast, expenditure of large physical efforts, and excessive and inconvenient hours of work lead to poor mental health of the employees. In another study, role conflict was observed to be positively correlated with threat, high anxiety, tension and fatigue (Tosi & Tosi 1970).

(Margolis et al. 1974) reported that role ambiguity significantly correlates with various indicators of physical and mental ill-health. (Christopher 1982) out of his study on middle managers noted a significant positive correlation between role conflict and physical and psychological strains leading to deterioration in psychological health. In a study (Arther and Gunderson 1965) found that stress resulted from
promotional lag relate to psychiatric disorders. (Brook 1973) reported that both over promotion and under promotion were associated with mental illness. (Quinn et al. 1971) reported that close supervision and lack of autonomy at work was positively correlated with employees’ poor mental health. (Gavin and Axelrod 1977) reported that employees who perceived the work environment as having well defined organizational structure, minimal interference in work procedure, equitable reward system, and an atmosphere of trust and consideration scored higher on the measures of sound mental health.

- Occupational Stress and Burnout: The term burnout is sometimes confused with occupational stress. (Pines and Aronson 1981) opined that burnout occurs as a result of chronic job stress. It is one of the extreme consequences of consistent job stress. Physical exhaustion is one part of burnout. Sleeplessness, weakness, chronic fatigue, low energy and intense weariness are symptoms of burnout. Apart of physical exhaustion, mental exhaustion and emotional torn out is also a part of burnout. In this stage, the burnout employee manifests feelings of depression, helplessness and hopelessness. In mental exhaustion, the employee may develop and express negative attitude towards work, clients and fellow workers. Burnout has severe long term and short term consequences. The burnout employees may not only leave their jobs but also their professions. (Sarason and Johnson 1979) reported that the negative attitude and dehumanizing tendency may spillover to family, and friends.

**Stress and task performance**

It is pertinent to know the impact of stress on employee’s task performance and, in turn, organizational performance. A number of studies (Dua 1990; Rajeshwari
199299) have been undertaken to examine the impact of stress on employees’ task performance. The research shows that stress is both helpful and harmful to task performance. Stress is both a friend and a foe (Batliwala 1990)100. Absence and too low level of stress does not stimulate the employee to work more and perform better. Instead, increasing research evidences show that increase in stress level till its mild level serves as a stimulus to activate employee to respond to the challenges of task and, in turn, facilitates employee’s task performance. Such mild level of stress can be called Eustress. People in certain jobs such as journalists, sales executives, television announcers, who work under time pressures, would seem to benefit from a mild level of stress. The mild level of stress will vary from individual to individual depending on how long it continues, how much complex the task is, and how strong the individual’s resilience power is. However, if the stress level continues beyond the employee’s resilience capacity, it causes emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion, also called ‘job burnout’ to the employee exposed to stress. Such exhaustion distracts and interferes with the employee’s task performance.

(Newstrom & Devis 1998)101 have compared the relationship between stress and performance with of strings and music on a violin. Just as either too little or too much tension on the strings does not produce suitable music and the violin strings need to be readjusted to accommodate the changing conditions such as increased humidity, either too low or too high stress level interferes with employees’ performance and therefore, stress levels need to be periodically adjusted and moderated. Generally, the relationship between stress and performance on many tasks is believed to be curvilinear.
The figure 3 (i) show such curvilinear relationship between employee stress and employee’s task performance. However, there are exceptions to this curvilinear hypothesis of stress and task performance. While even relatively mild or moderate stress level can interfere with task performance, because prolonged or repeated exposure to mild stress may have harmful effects on employee’s health, too high level of stress can produce better performance by making the person rise to the occasion. Both types of examples abound in the organizations.

It may be concluded that impact of stress on performance depends on different factors, such as duration of stress continues, the complexity of the task performed, the resilience power of the person exposed to stress and one’s previous experience with the task. Therefore, in view of such complexities, generalization about the impact of stress on task performance should be made with considerable caution.
Positive consequences of job stress

It is generally believed that job stress is extremely harmful and is associated with deterioration in employees’ efficiency level and organizational productivity. However, stress is not always harmful. It has positive value as well. It is argued that stress creates as well as promotes employee’s inclination towards job, thus enhances his capacity to work. (Hinkle 1973) has accordingly stated that ‘to be alive is to be under stress’. (Kearns 1973) has noted that each individual needs a moderate amount of stress to be alert and capable of functioning effectively in the organization. (Anderson 1976) observed inverted ‘U’ -shaped relationship between stress and performance, which indicates that a moderate level of stress is optimal for performance, whereas low and high degree of stress cause deterioration in performance level.

Besides the magnitude of stress, sources and imagined outcomes of the stress determine the effect of stress. The stress arising from certain job factors have been observed to put positive effect on job behaviour and well being of the employees. (Hall 1986) found that job pressures involving time, financial responsibility and quality factors were related to positive organizational outcomes. (Srivastava and Krishna 1991) in their measure of ‘functional role stress’ have included five role stressors having positive value viz., responsibility for persons, excessive responsibility (with authority), taking decisions that affect others, strenuous tasks that bring recognition and facilitate personal growth, and perceiving oneself not fully competent. (Srivastava and Sinha 1983) noted positive relationship between stress arising from ‘responsibility for persons’ and psychological well being in a sample of banking and insurance supervisors.

Health Benefits of Stress

Though occupational stress has been labeled as harmful causing a variety of somatic disorders, certain components of stress have been found to be beneficial
to the health of people. (Milsum 1984)\textsuperscript{108} has explored positive aspects of optimal or well-balanced stress. Recent evidences indicate that stress can markedly increase blood level endorphins, naturally occurring morphine-like hormones associated with pain relief and feelings of well-being (McCubin, Surwit & Williams 1985)\textsuperscript{109}. Increased secretion of pineal, in stress situation “melatonin”, has been noted to play a role in promoting homeostasis and adaptation under adverse environmental conditions. It is also a possibility that melatonin secretion may modulate the effect of stress on other glands such as the adrenal gland (Johnson 1981)\textsuperscript{110}. It inhibits tumerogenesis and tumor growth (Tamarkin et al. 1985)\textsuperscript{111}. Melatonin may offer protection against mammary cancer through a suppressive effect on prolaction secretion or an action on oestrogen receptors.
3.7 MANAGEMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Though stress is unavoidable and is considered to be a part of people’s life in today’s complex and hectic schedule, it is not completely unmanageable. In present days of stress and anxiety, when the cost of stress has markedly increased, the stress researchers and practitioners have concentrated on evolving systematic techniques for the management of stresses of life in general and of job place in particular. The situations which cause or are likely to cause stress to the employees can also be prevented by adopting certain precautionary and corrective interventions at organizational level. The probable sources or causes of stress should be identified and necessary precautionary corrective interventions should be adapted to the feasible extent at organizational level.

- At initial organizational level, selection of suitable personnel and their proper timing in the framework of the job requirements can largely help in preventing or mitigating the job stress likely to be caused by a misfit between employee and his job demands and from job difficulty. While selecting employees, their needs, values and attitudes should also be assessed besides the assessment of their skills and aptitudes. The job design approach attempts at linking the individual to the job characteristics with expected outcomes of the high intrinsic motivation, high performance and job satisfaction and low absenteeism. The job factors and job environment which could create stress may also be prevented by the manager in collaboration with that of the technical experts. Job design and job enrichment can also prevent job stress or keep its level within desirable limits.

- Proper orientation of new employees and training to existing employees can also prevent the experience of stress in work setting. Training has
been identified as an important component of interventions to deal with occupational stress. Several areas of training should be pursued with regard to stress management ie., helping individual’s cope, teaching managers about the importance of job design, and inform workers about the job factors that increase the risk of psychological disorders.

- Another way of managing job stress is to first identify the potential sources of stress in work environment and efforts should be made to remove, correct and control them to the maximum possible extent through corrective interventions. At this level, job roles can be clearly defined and allocated in order to prevent or minimize the stress likely to arise from role ambiguities and role conflicts. Stress of role overload can be dealt with by reducing role demands and job rotation.

- Improvement in interpersonal relations at work affords the greatest difficulty. However, interpersonal compatibility should be a consideration in assignments and promotions of employees in order to avoid socio psychological stress in work environment. Management may foresee the potential conflicts and pressures and adopt necessary measures to avoid them. Supportive supervision and interpersonal relations at work can prevent the occurrence of the situations of interpersonal stress.

- Organizational role is a prominent and frequent cause of stress experienced by most of the employees. Various types of inadequacies, ambiguities and conflicts in job role result in severe stress to its occupants. (Pestonjee 1989)\textsuperscript{112} has suggested specific functional strategies to prevent the occurrence of different types of role stress. These strategies are mentioned below:
## Table 3.3 Preventive strategies for role stress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Stressors</th>
<th>Preventive Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-role distance</td>
<td>Role integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-role distance</td>
<td>Role negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role stagnation</td>
<td>Role transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role isolation</td>
<td>Role linkage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role ambiguity</td>
<td>Role clarification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role expectation conflicts</td>
<td>Role making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role overload</td>
<td>Role slimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role erosion</td>
<td>Role development/enrichment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource inadequacy</td>
<td>Role generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal inadequacy</td>
<td>Role linkage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


- Structure and climate of the organization largely influence job behaviour of its members as well as its overall effectiveness. A variety of job stress can be easily prevented or mitigated by improving organizational structure and creating a congenial climate in the organization. (Ross and Altmair 1994)\(^\text{14}\) have mentioned three intervention strategies for dealing with stress arising from inadequate organization structure and climate: decentralization, participative decision making and climate survey.

- Many employees experience pressure and stress when they join a new organization or need to socialize with the work environment. The period of employee orientation and socialization have great potential stress. (Matteson and Ivancevich 1987)\(^\text{37}\) noted three stages through which employees must pass as they enter the organization: getting in, breaking in

[92]
and settling in. Human resource practitioners should plan and facilitate orientation programmes aimed at ensuring successful socialization into organizations.

- It has been well recognized that feedback on performance affects motivation and satisfaction. Lack of feedback, lack of transparency in evaluation system leads to stress. Not only are these systems linked to stress, but they are closely associated with burnout. (Jackson 1984)\textsuperscript{113}. Interventions should be evolved to give proper feedback to the workers. The supervisors must be trained for performance appraisal and to communicate employees about their performance in behaviourally specific terms. The supervisor must obtain rating information about the employees’ performance from different and objective sources. Employees and workers may also be allowed to give feedback to each other.

- (Pierce and Newstrom 1983)\textsuperscript{114} suggested that occupational stress can be moderated by improving job characteristics through job redesign technique. Job redesign involves changing certain aspects of the task which might lead to improved efficiency in work. Beginning of this intervention may be a complete and thorough understanding of the job, creativity of the supervisor, employee and consultant. These strategies are described as restructuring of a job to make it more meaningful, challenging and intrinsically rewarding. ((Kopleman 1986)\textsuperscript{115} found in his study that job enrichment programmes significantly reduced workers stress and improved the quantity of the product.
3.8 MODERATING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND STRAINS

Moderating the severity of evitable stress and consequent stress is another way of managing stress. Stress of certain type sometimes become unavoidable or beyond control. In such situations, the severity of stress and its impairing effect on employees should be moderated to the extent possible through the effect of some other variables. The moderators may be antecedent, coexistent and subsequent to the incidence of stress. They may be broadly classified as personal and environmental variables. These variables moderate or buffer the severity of stress at three levels, i.e., cognitive (perception and appraisal of stress), response (actual experience of an immediate reactions to stress) and ultimate effect (consequent psychological, behavioural and physical strains).

**Table-3.4 Psychological moderators of stress-strain relationship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological variables</th>
<th>Investigators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type A behaviour pattern</td>
<td>Pestonjee &amp; Singh 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High need for self-actualisation</td>
<td>Srivastava 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal locus of control</td>
<td>Beehr et al. 1976; Lefcourt 1976; Morris and Snyderman 1979; Pestonjee &amp; Singh 1981; Srivastava &amp; Krishna 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound mental health</td>
<td>Srivastava and Jagadish 1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort and outcome orientation</td>
<td>Pandey and Naidu 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in others</td>
<td>Tiwari 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive control</td>
<td>Dogrenwend &amp; Dogrenwend 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational/ Social variables</td>
<td>Investigators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congenial and motivating organizational-    -nal climate</td>
<td>Singh 1988;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>James &amp; Jones 1974</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive job attitudes</td>
<td>Srivastava and Jagdish 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job involvement</td>
<td>Innes &amp; Addreimne 1985; Srivastava 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
<td>Pinneau 1976; Cobb 1976; House &amp; Wells 1977; LaRacco &amp; Jones 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive colleagues and boss</td>
<td>Caplan 1971; Gore 1973, 1978; LaRacco &amp; Jones 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership style (considerate, consistent, employee-oriented and supportive)</td>
<td>Fleishman, Harris &amp; Burtt 1955; Fieldler 1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job enrichment</td>
<td>Abel-Halim 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy on job</td>
<td>Beehr 1976</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Besides the above mentioned variables, several other personal (such as self-confidence, optimism, high ego-strength, sociability, job experience and competence, high tolerance etc.) and organizational (such as high or extra rewards or returns, high job level, group cohesiveness and high industrial morale, participative management, etc) are also likely to alleviate the impairing effects of experienced job stress. The negative or undesirable feeling aroused by the stressors are buffered or compensated by the effect of positive feeling generated by the moderator-variables.

- Social support as stress buffer:

Social relations and support have been a great source of relief from stresses of life since the origin of structured society and social groups. The sense of social support provides a feeling of security and psychological energy to deal with stress and face undesirable consequences. Low level of stress and anxiety among people in India in general may be attributed, to a large extend, to their sense of high social support.

Social support can be referred to as perception of their social network as containing individuals in whom they can confide, on whom to rely, and from whom they expect help, if needed. Three groups of people may be considered like supervisors, other people at work; friends and relatives. Social support reduces the
consequent strains, such as dissatisfaction, depression and anxiety (Cobb 1976). (Pinneau 1976) has suggested that process of social support or informal and congenial relationships has three potential effects: directly on the source of stress (preventive), directly on strains or well-being (therapeutic) and moderating effect on stress-strain relationship (buffering).

- **Job involvement as a moderator**
  Job involvement also buffers the relationship of occupational stress and consequent job and health related strains. In an extensive study, (Srivastava 1983) examined the moderating effect of job involvement on the relationship of occupational stress and mental ill-health in two samples of the employees operating in public and private sector organizations. The results indicated that job involvement of the public sector employees significantly moderated the relationship of their perceived occupational stress and mental ill-health. However, the opposite results were found with private sector employees. Job efficiency and high self esteem associated with high job involvement make the employees confident of their caliber to effectively cope with stressful job situations. (Srivastava and Singh 1988) have noted in their study that approach mode of coping moderates the intensity of inverse relationships between organizational role stress and mental health. (Innes and Addreinne 1985) concluded that relationship between life stress and psychological symptoms of illness are moderated by the extent to which a person is involved in his/her job.

- **Personality traits and attributions as moderator**
  Personal characteristics of the employees are important mediators of their stress as well as consequent strains. These personality attributes such as self-esteem, flexibility, locus of control, resistance have also been noted to markedly moderate the relationship between occupational stress and consequent job and health strains. (Srivastava and Veena 2009) observed that personality traits of
emotional stability, independence and practicality buffered the inverse relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction and the positive relationship between occupational stress and psychosomatic symptoms. Locus of control of the employees also has been found to influence their perception of stressors and reactions to feel stress. It has been suggested by some researchers that locus of control may be used as moderator; affording some predictions of how an individual copes with stress (Sandler et al. 1983\textsuperscript{122}; Lefcourt 1976\textsuperscript{123}).

- Stress management through music therapy
Music is integral to daily life. Apart from its aesthetic and entertainment values, there are repeated and consistent descriptions of its uses. (Maranto 1989)\textsuperscript{124} had extensively discussed the use of music in the management of stress and strains. The close association between music and medicine can be traced to ancient cultures, where music was closely allied with medical practice. Empirical studies on psychological and physiological responses to music started by the end of the nineteenth century. These studies noted the effect of music on neurosis, insomnia and fevers (Devison 1899)\textsuperscript{125}, and blood pressure, circulation, cardiac contraction and respiration. Responses to music are multidimensional which occurs at physiological, psychological and cognitive levels simultaneously. (Thaut 1989)\textsuperscript{126} observed that physiological responses to music are the product of individual’s unique physiological and psychological makeup, which is further influenced by individualized psychological experience of music.

- Self-talk therapy of stress and anxiety
The self-talk therapy proposed by (Girodo 1977)\textsuperscript{127} is based on cognitive restructuring. A popular trend in behaviour therapy centres on cognitive factors that mediate behaviour change. It focuses on client’s perceptions, attributions and self-evaluations or the kinds of statements the client makes to himself in appraising the significance of his behaviour. Semantic therapists such as (Frank
1961)\textsuperscript{128} and (Beck 1970)\textsuperscript{129} considered maladaptive behaviour and emotional upset as a result of faulty belief systems and faulty cognitive patterns. In this therapy, focus on influencing the irrational premises and assumptions that underlie the client’s images, cognitive and self-evaluations. Beck in his study tried to change the client’s thinking style in the hope of inducing less anxiety-provoking resolutions of stressful situations. (Meichenbaum 1975)\textsuperscript{130} attempted to convince the client to self-instruct himself and to emit self statements that could serve to guide new thoughts or prompt coping behaviour. Positive, optimistic and logical self-talking brings desirable change in individual’s beliefs and attitudes and so in the appraisals about the situation, others and own self.
3.9 BENEFITS OF LEARNING STRESS MANAGEMENT

Research has shown that an individual who learns stress management gains tremendous benefits when compared to people who haven’t learned stress management techniques like exercise, improved nutrition, relaxation, stress resistant thinking etc. There are both psychological and physiological benefits of stress which are listed below:

Exhibit 3.b Psychological benefits

- Reduces risk of panic attacks
- Less reliance on alcohol
- Improves coping skills
- Reduces anger levels
- Improves self esteem
- Improves self-confidence
- Reduces anxiety levels
- Reduces risk of depression
- Reduces relationships
- Improves quality of life
- Greater optimism
- Greater efficiency at work
- Improves concentration
- Improves memory
- Reduces anxious thinking
- Reduces feelings of frustration
- Increases feelings of control
- Improves decision making
- Makes less mistakes
- Reduction in mood swings
- Less sensitive to criticism
- Improves interaction with others


Exhibit- 3.c Physiological Benefits

- Lower blood pressure
- Reduces heart attack risk
- Reduces stroke risk
- Lowers risk of developing certain cancers
- Boosts immune system
- Suffer less colds and flu
- Reduces constipation
- Reduces risk of gall bladder disease
- Reduces risk of diverticulitis
- Boosts energy levels
- Improves sleep patterns
- Keeps arteries more flexible
- Improves cholesterol profile
- Reduces back pain
- Reduces risk of impotence
- Lowers stress hormone levels
- Improves sex life
- Reduces muscle tension
- Reduces heart attack risk
- Reduces stroke risk
- Lowers risk of developing certain cancers
- Boosts immune system
- Suffer less colds and flu
- Reduces constipation
- Reduces risk of gall bladder disease
- Reduces risk of diverticulitis
- Boosts energy levels
- Improves sleep patterns
- Keeps arteries more flexible
- Improves cholesterol profile
- Reduces back pain
- Reduces risk of impotence
- Lowers stress hormone levels
- Improves sex life
- Reduces muscle tension

3.10 NEGATIVE COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED

- **ALCOHOLISM:** Many employees, particularly young ones who cannot manage or mitigate job stress, resort to alcohol consumption for stress relief. Drinking alcoholic beverages is a poor way of stress management. For the average person, having difficulty in managing to drink only one glass of wine. And, of course, even one glass of wine can affect some people negatively by giving them a false sense of security. Alcohol interferes with one’s ability to handle both physical and psychological stressors. Even in small doses, it destroys brain and liver cells, causes irreversible heart muscle damage and interferes with the body’s immune system (Holt 1974)\(^{132}\). Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, and if it is mixed with other depressant drugs such as barbiturates (or other sleeping pills) and narcotics (e.g., morphine, codeine), the results can be fatal (Morse 1974)\(^{133}\).

- **OBESITY:** Aside from the satisfaction of nutritional needs and the pleasures derived from it, eating is a means of coping with stressors for many people. However, this is another negative coping method because obesity is the undesirable outcome of compulsive eating. According to field study, it has been reported by some psychiatrists that six of the risk factors for heart attacks are related to eating. Those factors are: excess fat ingestion; elevated blood cholesterol and low density lipoproteins; obesity; lack of exercise; high salt intake and high sugar consumption. Rather than eating to relieve stress, some people chew gum or tobacco as a stress relieving mechanism (Morse 1978)\(^{134}\). Even these practices are not without their negative aspects. Chewing sugar-containing gum can lead to dental decay.
• SMOKING: Many people smoke because of peer pressure. Although smoking can serve the purpose of stress relief, there is no doubt that it is detrimental to health. There is firm evidence of the strong association between smoking and lung cancer. Smoking is implicated in emphysema and heavy cigarette smoking is one of the important risk factors for coronary artery disease. Additionally women who smoke and take birth control pills have an increased risk of heart attack and brain hemorrhages. Smoking has also been reported to decrease an individual’s ability to cope with stressors. His is related to the finding that smoking reduces the body’s stores of vitamin C (Riccitelli 1975).

• CAFFEINISM: Drinking and eating stimulating beverages and snacks is pleasurable, but they are also ingested for stress release reasons. For example, a cup of coffee is most preferred by households either as a morning beverage or evening energy driver. Warm cup of cocoa is also loved by all irrespective of age or gender. However, the caffeine intake in all the above cases is not safe. Coffee drinking has been implicated in many diseases. One disease, though, is directly related to high coffee intake: caffeneism (Manber 1976). (Jick 1985) studying over 12,500 patients, found a significant statistical association between coffee drinking and heart attacks. However, other studies did not find significant correlations (Maugh 1973). Symptoms include irritability, headache, nervousness, dizziness and insomnia. Afflicted individuals tend to be extremely anxious and react poorly to stressors.

• DRUG ADDICTION: Leading prescription drug Valium has proved to be an effective, relatively safe, minor tranquilizer. But as it is the case with many drugs, it can be dangerous if its use become habitual or if it is mixed
with other drugs. Drugs such as valium are also excellent muscle relaxants, and that definitely are useful for the release of stress. However, dependency on drugs can be damaging to the mental and physical health of the user. When some people are under stress, instead of taking pills to relax themselves, they chose stimulants or ‘pep’ pills (known as uppers) such as Amphetamines, Dexedrine, Benzedrine and Methedrine. True addiction is unlikely, but psychologically dependency (habituation) can occur.

• ACCIDENTS: People who drive under acute stress and under the influence of alcohol or other drugs tend to cause accidents. They are accident-prone personality. These people are considered to be impulsive doers, those who take on challenges. They tend to be angry, hostile and aggressive. The accident prone may also have feelings of guilt and impulses towards self-punishment or even suicide. It has been reported that twenty percent of all fatal car accidents involve drivers who have had disturbing emotional experiences within the preceding six hours. Another finding indicates that one out of three accident victim is in a state of depression prior to the accident (McQuade and Aikman 1974)\textsuperscript{139}.

• DIVORCE AND BUSINESS BREAKUP: There are many reasons for unsuccessful marriages, but inability to manage the stressors of marital life is a key factor. Sometimes females who are actively involved in full time job and household chores often experience terrible stress and end up cutting on home responsibilities and resort to divorce and separations with spouses. Broken marriages are often related to drinking, smoking and drug problems, obesity in at least one of the partners and inability to manage anxiety, frustration, guilt and depression.
Business associations may break up for similar reasons. Mixing alcohol, drugs and work at office can contribute to both marital and business breakups.

• SUICIDE: When the stressors of life get to the point where they are perceived to be uncontrollable, then many people give up. Excessive stress at workplace sometimes takes a very ugly turn and employees tend to commit suicide. Apart from the psychological effects of the chemicals on the mind, the alcoholic, the drug addict, and the grossly overweight may all be tempted to take their own life. Those with a failing marriage or business venture may be similarly inclined. And many accidents may be disguised suicide attempts.
3.11 ANCIENT INDIAN CONCEPTS

Yoga and Meditation: Yoga and transcendental meditation are the systems of Indian philosophy and practice. These techniques have been in use in India since ancient times as the techniques of relief from stress and for improvement in physical and psychological health. It is used as both preventive and therapeutic technique. The word ‘Yoga’ means union of human being and universal energy. It teaches the means by which all the three sides of human life i.e., body, mind and soul can be brought within its perspective. (Patel 1993) established that yoga, by various values, techniques and disciplines, teaches ways of establishing harmony among various sides of life. Different types of yoga have been developed by Indian yogis, such as ‘Hatha Yoga’- the physical path for the development of the body; ‘Gyan Yoga’- the intellectual path; ‘Bhakti Yoga’- devotional path; ‘Karma Yoga’- the path of practical actions for the unfolding of the mind and the realization of the soul. The different paths for developing the mind are based on the fact that the mind has three different aspects, i.e., knowing, feeling and willing. In some people intellect dominates, in others emotion, and still in others action. For intellectuals, the yoga of Gyan is prescribed; devotional Bhakti yoga of love and faith is prescribed for emotional people, and Karma yoga is prescribed for people on daily action.

Hatha Yoga: In this yoga, the mind and body are regulated through different breathing exercises. It exercises every muscle in the body to prevent skeletal muscular deterioration, tone up all the organs in the body to ensure healthy functioning. Hatha Yoga is performed to awaken the hidden power which is supposed to rest at the base of the spinal cord and make this energy towards high power.

Gyan Yoga: According to this philosophy, ignorance is the cause of pain and misery in life. The lack of discrimination between temporary and permanent, real and unreal, truth and untruth, self and non-self is at the roots of illness and
diseases. Intellectual exercise involves learning to discriminate between each of these through the process of self-analysis. (Siddhantalankar & Taraporevala 1969) observed that when the knowledge of self is realized, the agitation and passion of mind subside and the mind rest in peace and harmony. Steadfastness, firmness of purpose, constancy, and resolution comprise a settled condition of the mind.

**Bhakti Yoga:** (Siddhantalankar & Taraporevala 1969) observed that the essence of Bhakti Yoga or devotional path is love and sacrifice. It is an emotion of heart. The devotional path involves concentration on the objects of devotion with constancy and faith. Concentration means that one is required to enter the cord of the object of devotion and love until one feels totally merged into it and feels one with it. This theme has been described in Bhagavad Gita as “Mayyev Mana Aaditswa, Mayi Buddhi Niveshaya” which means “Fix your mind on me and establish your intellect in me alone” (Bhagavad Gita-XII: 8). Constancy here means always, day and night and every single moment. The third element of devotion is faith. It is not blind faith, but the faith comes from factual and truthful experience. Surrenderance of one’s feelings, thoughts and actions to God bring an eternal feeling of relief and relaxation. This helps tremendously in reducing the feelings of stress and burnout and attaining peace at heart and mind.

**Karma Yoga:** The law of Karma is the spiritual counterpart of the physical law of the cause and effect. According to this law, there is no point accusing God or fate for the apparent injustice. Goods and evils acquired through deeds by the soul throughout many incarnations are manifested as enduring characteristics from one incarnation to another, being modified by further karmas. When human beings or say employees in particular develop control over mind and body by guarding their ill feelings or thoughts towards each other, they behave quite normally without feeling the burden of stress and misery. The law of Karma teaches one to share and care, be compassionate and kind and reach out to others for the ultimate good
of souls and destinies. By practicing Karma Yoga, employees can largely prevent, moderate or cope with their stresses at cognitive as well as behaviour level.

*Raja Yoga:* It is an integration of all systems of yoga and the exponent of this yoga is ‘Patanjali’. The most important ingredient in the practice of this yoga is faith. The physical postures in this yoga involve learning to control, regulate and become aware of one’s physical existence. During the various exercises, breathing bears a certain relationship to the sequence of the body movements. By regularly practicing concentration on body movements, the practitioner gradually strengthens his own personality and different body functions become more integrated with one another as well as with personality.

*Meditation:* Meditation has been part of eastern and western cultures and religions. It is probably the oldest method of yoga. Medical practitioners have realized that it can be used without any religious connotation in the promotion of health. The practical advantages of meditation are that one can function more efficiently, feel more complete and realize more of one’s potential. Employees, when adopt these techniques are in a better position to relate to each other and come closer. Personality structure is strengthened and become more integrated. The employees are able to express themselves with more clarity. As a result, work efficiency increases and better understanding of the company goals is studied. (Wallace & Benson 1972)\textsuperscript{142} observed that meditation has not only psychological benefits but also physiological advantages which include induction of oxygen consumption, respiratory rate and cardiac output, a marked decrease in blood lactate level (reduction in anxiety); increase in alpha brainwaves (indicating mental rest).
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