CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

“Stress is an ignorant state of mind that believes everything is an emergency”
-Dr. Evan Mladenoff

1.1 PREAMBLES TO THE CURRENT STUDY

As we all know, the Indian Economy is the seventh largest in the world by nominal GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and the third largest by PPP (purchasing power parity)\(^1\). The country is classified as a newly industrialized country, one of the G-20 major economies, a member of BRICS and a developing economy with approximately 7% average growth rate for the last two decades\(^2\). India’s economy became the world’s fastest growing major economy from the last quarter of 2014, replacing the People’s Republic of China\(^3\). The Indian Economy has the potential to become the world’s third largest economy by the next decade, and one of the largest economies by mid-century \(^4, 5, 6\).

India seems to be the fastest growing service sectors in the world with annual growth rate of over 9% since 2001, which has contributed 57% of GDP in 2012-13\(^7\). India has capitalized its economy based on its large educated English-speaking population to become a major exporter of IT services, BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) services, and software services with $167.0 billion worth of service exports in 2013-14. It is also one of the fastest-growing sectors of the economy\(^8\). The IT (Information Technology) industry continues to be the largest private sector employer in India\(^9, 10\). India is also the fourth largest start-up hub in the world with over 3,100 technology start-ups in 2014-15\(^11\). The agricultural sector is the largest employer in India’s economy but contributes to a declining share of its GDP (17% in 2013-14). India ranks second worldwide in farm output\(^12\) (Agriculture’s share in GDP declines to 13.7% in 2012-13). The Industry sector has held a constant share of its economic contribution (26% of GDP in 2013-14; Share of different sectors in Indian GDP). The Indian auto industry is one of the largest in the world with an annual production of 21.48 million vehicles in FY (Financial Year) 2013-14\(^13\). India has $600 billion worth of retail market in 2015 and one of world's fastest growing E-Commerce markets\(^14, 15\).
1.1 (a) SECTORS

Traditionally, the economy and GDP of India has been classified and tracked as three sectors namely agriculture, industry and service sectors. Agriculture sector includes Crops, horticulture, milk and animal husbandry, aquaculture, fishing, sericulture, aviculture, forestry and related activities. India's definition of Industry and services sector includes Automobiles, auto component, aviation, bio-technology, cement, consumer markets, financial services, food industry, gems and jewellery, health care, construction, retail, science and technology, software - IT & ITES industry (Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled services industry), infrastructure operations, education and training, banking and insurance, media and entertainment, oil and gas, pharmaceuticals, real estate, R&D (Research & Development), semi-conductor services, steel industry, telecommunications, textiles, tourism and hospitality, urban market, various manufacturing sub-sectors and many other economic activities16, 17, 18.

1.1 (a) (i) IT AND ITES SECTOR

IT is the application of computers and telecommunications equipment to store, retrieve, transmit and manipulate data19, often in the context of a business or other enterprise20. ITES is a form of outsource services which includes the contribution of IT in different fields like finance & banking, Insurance and telecommunication. Often the business processes are information technology-based, and are referred to as ITES-BPO.

BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) is a hiring venture to take responsibility for a business process. It includes office operations such as accounting, data processing, data mining, billing and collection, for example: Telephone bills. Internal audit and pay roll, for example: Salary bills on monthly basis. Cash and investment management, for example: Routine jobs given to a third party and giving importance to core business. KPO (Knowledge process outsourcing), LPO (legal process outsourcing) and MT (Medical Transcription) are some of the sub-segments of business process outsourcing industry.
1.1 (a) (ii) GROWTH OF IT AND ITES SECTOR

The Indian IT sector contributes to approximately 7.5% to the GDP of the country. The Indian economy has been one of the most significant growth contributors for IT industry. Recently, India has been placed as the IT hub and this sector has also created huge employment opportunities. India continues to be a leader in the global sourcing industry. The IT - business process management (BPM) sector in India is estimated to expand at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 9.5 per cent to US$ 300 billion by 2020\textsuperscript{21}. During FY08-15, the number of graduate’s addition to talent pool in India grew at a CAGR of 9.4 per cent. As shown in the below Figure 1.1, India added around 5.8 million graduates to the talent pool during FY15. Growing talent pool of India has the ability to drive the R&D and innovation business in the IT-BPM space.

**Figure: 1.1 Graduates addition to talent pool in India (in Millions)**

![Graduates addition to talent pool in India](image)

*Source: Nasscom, TechSci Research, December 2015*

As shown in the below Figure 1.2, India’s technology and BPM sector (including hardware) is estimated to have generated US$ 146 billion in revenue during FY15 compared to US$ 118 billion in FY14, which implies a growth rate of 23.72 per cent. The contribution of the IT sector to India’s GDP has rise to approximately 9.5 per cent in FY15 from 1.2 per cent in FY98. The top six firms namely (TCS, CTS, INFOSYS, WIPRO, HCL and TECH MAHINDRA) contribute around 36 per cent to the total industry revenue, indicating the market is fairly competitive, with TCS being the leader accounting for about 10.1 per cent.
IT firms in India have 580 delivery centres in 75 countries across the world. Top 5 Indian IT firms like TCS, CTS, INFOSYS, WIPRO and TECH MAHINDRA employs approximately 7 lakh people worldwide. These top firms may see a single-digit revenue growth in FY 2016. Therefore, the presence of Indian IT sector is felt across the globe. IT professionals are very screed because they are highly target driven and also aim on immediate results.

Though there are many fields of Industry and Services sector in the Indian Industry as seen earlier under the heading Sectors 1.1 (a), the researcher’s study specially focuses on IT & ITES Industry since it is the fastest-growing part of the economy which continues to be the largest private sector employer in India and to the fact that this industry is perpetually in the war for Talent. Moreover, the researcher’s area of the study includes the southern parts of India like Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pondicherry. The reason for selecting these places as the area of the study is because Bangalore seems to be the first IT hub in India followed by Hyderabad which is the second IT hub in India and the third place goes to Chennai.

The Indian IT & ITES industry has always been an equal opportunity employer that is strongly focused on hiring women. At the end of March 2013, there were around 800,000 women working in the industry, accounting for almost 30 per cent of the workforce. A research carried out by the Centre for Talent Innovation, was reported that 55% of female Indian employees routinely encounter severe stress in the workplace that they disengage from their work or consider dropping out altogether in IT industry.
In comparison with other sectors, IT organizations offers equal salaries to women and the density of women in technology companies are relatively high. In India, HR managers admit that women are discriminated against for senior Board positions and pregnant women are rarely given jobs but only in private. Even though, the number of women at the agent and middle management level is high, the numbers come down drastically in the top management level. Women seem to predominate in roles, which require customer support and in the training department\textsuperscript{25}.

As per National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) forecasted that there is an opportunity exist for Information Technology (IT) industry of India to earn nearly about US$ 225 billion industry by 2020. This could support to become a global leader in the near future. The success of this highly performance driven industry depends on how well their workforce performs and performance is related to the satisfaction of employees with their job. Job satisfaction of IT professionals not only depends on their technical or organizational knowledge but it also depends on the level of pressure they have to cope up with within and outside their organizations.

The workforce in IT sector faces its unique challenges. The technological advancements in this sector come up in short span of time with significantly high efficiencies, putting the IT professionals apart from technology previously/currently in use. The shift towards new technology puts a lot of pressure on employees, while organizations are demanded more immediate and direct changes across all functions. This sector is very volatile and faces the problem of lack of job security and constant up-gradation of skills to remain marketable. The working hours and conditions in the information technology industry have become very stressful with average working hours extended to 50 hours per week with working Saturdays and Sundays as well. Strict deadlines set by the customers, working in different time zones, interdependency in teams, multitasking and increased interaction with offshore clients. All this insight into the dynamics of job performance in IT companies motivated the researcher to investigate into the relationships of variables like job stress or organizational role stress, job satisfaction and coping strategies of menopause and non-menopause women (refers to women who are not facing the menopausal symptoms).
The above Table 1.1 shows the first top twenty companies of IT & ITES industry listed by NASSCOM in the year 2014. The highlighted portion enunciates the top ten companies selected for the researcher’s study. The sample respondents (Women Executives) are drawn from these selected top ten companies only. The population of the study is around 3 lakh and the sample size of the study is 379 which are based on the sample formulae. Multi-stage cluster sampling technique has been adopted to collect the data.

According to the recent report of Times of India, TCS in now top employer of women. The number of female employees at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has crossed the one-lakh mark, making it the country's biggest employer of women in the private sector. Women now comprise one-third of the IT major's 3.06 lakh workforce. This makes TCS, also the most valued company in India, one of the top employers of women in the technology sector globally. The top slot is held by IBM, which has an estimated 1.3 lakh women out of a workforce of 4.31 lakh. In terms of market cap, the
next two players in the domestic IT market are Infosys (54,537 women employees) and Wipro (45,276 women employees) but the female workforce of TCS is more than the two combined. The IT and BPO sector collectively employs about 3.1 million, of which nearly one million are women, according to industry body NASSCOM.

Figure: 1.3 Difference of Past and Present Classification of Men and Women Workers for Various Sectors (India)

Source: Ministry of statistics & programme implementation, central statistical organization.
The above Figure 1.3 depicts a clear picture of men and women classification in different sectors, before and after (i.e. 1972 and 2012). From the figure it is clear that women’s workforce participation has been in an increasing trend. Particularly, in the sectors like education and health services, business and professional services, financial activities, government and other services women has flourished a lot. Nowadays, women flourish in their education and career and show a lot of interest in their work. They take correct decisions at the right time and work with much responsibility. Studies are done a lot in women empowerment and gender equality in the recent past. When we closely watch the figure it is seen that there is a difference of 20.5 percent in “other services” followed by 14.10 percent in “Government” sector, 13.40 percent for “Leisure and hospitality” and 11.90 percent in “Professional and business services” sector infers that women has flourished a lot in these services at high level. When we say other services, professional and business services, IT/ITES sector is an also a part which plays a major role in it. And recently according to the reports of NASSCOM it is seen that especially in IT/ITES Sector there are equal amount of men and women working in the organization and majority of the women hold top position in their career. The reason that this sector booms higher is because it is one of the fastest growing sector and they are major contributor of GDP for the country.

1.1 (b) WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Currently, there are 634 million total women population in India. Out of it, 48% of them are working (age group from 18-55) remaining are non-working (As per the data of Trading Economics). Out of 48% of working women, 29% of women face stress in their workplace (As per the report of Kenexa High Performance Institute, KHIP). The increased life expectancy of women in India is the most remarkable demographic change observed in the new millennium. About 49% of India’s population in the working age group (18-55) is women which mean a large chunk of potential workforce is completely untapped, even by an industry considered to be one of the most preferred employers of women (www.dqindia.com)\textsuperscript{27}. The government mandates at least one woman director in listed companies like TCS by March 31, 2015. It is estimated that by 2022, there would be 80% of the working women participation from the age group of 25 to 54 years as per the source of data by U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics. As per the data of India stat it is estimated that by 2050, there would be higher women workforce participation from the age group of 25 to 54 years of age. It is seen that, in
the present day context women labour force participation booms up rapidly. So, finally when compared with foreign country and Indian country it is seen that the women’s workforce participation would be in an increasing trend. The study’s sample is also from the age group of 25 to 54 years only.

**Figure: 1.4 Classifications of Men and Women Workers for Various Sectors in United States (U.S.)**

![Graph showing classifications of men and women workers in various sectors in the United States.](http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat14.htm)


Note: Working Men and Women from 16 years to 64 years of age, Number in Thousands

From the above Figure 1.4 it is inferred that when compared with other sectors women has flourished a lot in services - oriented sectors like educational and health services, professional and business services, financial activities and other services. In other sectors it is seen that the men and women participation seems to be more or less equal.

**1.1 (c) WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN UNITED STATES**

Women’s participation in labour force activities has expanded to a great extent since the end of World War II. Immediately following the war, less than one-third of women were in the labour force. However, women soon began to participate in greater
numbers, and their labour force participation rose rapidly from 1960s and reached the peak in 2013 with a rate of 57.2 percent. In addition, a large share of women works full time and year round. By that time, women have increasingly attained higher levels of education among women ages 25 to 64 who are in the labour force, Women’s earnings as a proportion of men’s earnings also have grown over time. Presently in 2013 women’s earnings were rose up to 82 percent of men’s. Labour force participation varies by marital status and differs between women and men. Among women, divorced women had the highest labour force participation rate of 64.7 percent and moreover women accounted for 51 percent of all workers employed in management, professional, and related occupations. As per the records in 2013, 26 percent of employed women usually worked part time (i.e.) less than 35 hours per week. In comparison, 13 percent of employed men usually worked part time. In general, employed women work fewer hours per week than men. On average, women worked 36.0 hours per week compared with 40.9 hours for men and it also seems that 5.2 percent of employed women held more than one job. So women in U.S. have the opportunity of working in part time more than one job which shows a high labour force work participation.

**Figure: 1.5 Women Participation at work (U.S. and INDIA)**

Source: [http://www.genderwork.ca](http://www.genderwork.ca), 2016
1.1 (d) COMPARISON OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION AT WORK (UNITED STATES AND INDIA)

Comparison of women participation at work between the countries across the world is very much essential for the study to see the variation and also to pinpoint the uniqueness among them. Since the study concentrates on women executives let us closely watch the data of women in different countries across the world. From the Figure 1.5 it is seen that participation of women in United Kingdom seems to be the highest followed by United States of America, China, Germany and India. It goes and finally ends up in Italy and it seems to be the lowest participation of women at work. Since the study concentrates on IT/ITES sector comparison between United States and India is very essential because the head offices of IT/ITES sector are situated there. From the picture it is clear when compared with United States and India, women participation is high in United States and in the country of India it is low.

The reason behind this is because in United States part time job, work at home and various other facilities is allowed but in India only in IT and BPO companies work at home facility is slightly booming up. India’s gender gap in participation (between males and females) is the one of the widest among G-20 economies at 50 percent. Various studies have highlighted how lower female labour force participation or weak entrepreneurial activity drags down economic growth, and that empowering women has significant economic benefits in addition to promoting gender equality [Duflo (2005)28; World Bank (2012)29]. From the above Figure 1.4 it is inferred that gender gap is not high in United States but from the Figure 1.3 it is noticed that in India the gender gap is too high mostly in all the sectors. There are so many factors and reasons for it. Hence, women participation at work in India still needs to progress a lot.

1.1 (e) STRESS

In simple terms, STRESS is the tension or pressure we feel in our bodies as we respond to everyday events or events that make us feel uncomfortable. We are living in an era of growing complexities and pressures where human constitution and capacities are being taxed severely. The stressors relating to job have become predominant feature of modern life, exerting far reaching effects on focal employee’s behaviour and adjustments on as well as off-the-job. This is the reason that systematic studies of stress in organizational setting have increased dramatically over past on decade. Currently,
job stress has become a prominent work-related research topic. As work plays a central role in the lives of many people, the impact of job stress is an important issue both for individual employees and the organizations in which they work (Bradley & Sutherland, 1994; Le Fevre et.al., 2006).

Psychologists and management scientists have different views about potential psychological and situational conditions or job-related factors which cause job stress. The researchers engaged in analyzing the antecedents and consequences of job stress have reported different physical and psychological condition at work as potential occupational stressors. (Rahn.et.al., (1964); Kahn & Quinn, (1970); French & Caplan, (1972); Mc Grath, (1976); Cooper & Marshall, (1976); Eden, (1977); House et.al., (1979).

Job stress is generally defined in times of relationship between person and environment. Margolis and Kores (1974) has defined job stress as a condition worth interacting with worker characteristics to disrupt psychological and physiological homeostasis. The casual situation conditions are job stresses and the disrupted homeostasis is job related strain.

The researcher’s study mainly focuses on the term “STRESS” here is Job stress/Organizational role stress along with the biological stress (menopause) of women executives working in IT/ITES companies and the necessary coping strategies they adopt to reduce this stress with a satisfied job.

1.1 (e) (i) JOB STRESS

According to Hans Selye (father of stress research) (1956) note that "stress is not necessarily something bad – it all depends on how you take it. Cooper and Marshall (1976) state that organizational stress includes environmental factors or stressors such as work load, role conflict or ambiguity and poor working conditions associated with a particular job. According to Beehr and Newman (1978), “Stress is a condition where job-related factors interact with the worker to change his or her psychological or physiological condition so that the person’s mind and/or body is forced to deviate from its normal way of functioning”. Job stress is defined by the ILO as the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when the requirements of the job do not match the
capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker (ILO 2000). Job stress - an adverse
reaction to excessive pressures or other demands, thus covering both physical and
psychological reactions and placing the cause squarely within the workplace (HSE
2001). Job stress affects both mental and physical health of a human being in the form
of chronic stress and moreover it is considered as one of the major issue for the
researcher’s study. Chronic stress can have physical implications, of course, especially
if trouble at work leads to women clocking in more hours. Mental wellbeing comes
from having an ideal level of stress, which we can handle (Payne, 2005) and it is a
cause not an effect.

Most of the employers report business performance is being affected by the
stress of employees, might be working long hours in the office would be the reason.
Working long hours can result in poor mental performance, increased illness and
workplace injuries. Job stress can result from interactions between the worker and the
conditions of the work. This can include factors such as long work hours and an
employee's status in the organization. Work-related stress is a major cause of
occupational ill health, poor productivity and human error. It can result in sickness,
absence, high staff turnover and poor performance and a possible increase in accidents
due to human error. Women need to learn to set goals and take time for themselves if
they are to survive the stresses of juggling work and family (Sally Johnson, A lifestyle
editor). A number of studies show that women respond to work stress in very different
ways from men-and that their anxiety can affect the entire office.

1.1 (e) (ii) KINDS OF STRESS

There are three major kinds of Stress. They are: Acute Stress, Episodic Acute
Stress and Chronic Stress.

1.1 (e) (ii) (a) ACUTE STRESS

Of all forms of stress, acute stress is the most widely experienced one, since it
is typically caused by the daily demands and pressures encountered by each one of us.
While the word “stress” connotes a negative impression, acute stress is what actually
brings about excitement, joy and thrill in our lives. Riding a roller coaster in a theme
park, for instance, is a situation that brings about acute stress, yet brings excitement.
However, riding a higher and longer roller coaster can bring so much stress that you
wish it would end sooner, or that you should have not gone for the ride in the first place. When the long and windy ride is over, you might feel the effects of too much acute stress, such as vomiting, tension headaches, and other psychological and/or physiological symptoms. Because acute stress occurs only at a very short period of time, these symptoms might only come out when the stress has already accumulated: Emotional distress, such as anger, anxiety, irritability, and acute periods of depression and Physical problems, such as headache, pain, stomach upset, dizziness, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, hypertension and bowel disorders.

1.1 (e) (ii) (b) EPISODIC ACUTE STRESS

Acute stress that is suffered too frequently is called episodic stress. This type of stress is usually seen in people who make self-inflicted, unrealistic or unreasonable demands which get all clamoured up and bring too much stress in their attempt to accomplish these goals. Episodic stress is not like chronic stress, though, because this type of stress ceases from time to time yet not as frequently as acute stress does. Episodic stress is also typically observed in people with “Type A” personality, which involves being overly competitive, aggressive, demanding and sometimes tense and hostile. Because of this, the symptoms of episodic stress are found in “Type A” persons. These include: Longer periods of intermitted depression, anxiety disorders and emotional distress, Ceaseless worrying, Persistent physical symptoms similar to those found in acute stress, Coronary heart diseases, or other heart problems.

1.1 (e) (ii) (c) CHRONIC STRESS

Chronic stress is the total opposite of acute stress; it’s not exciting and thrilling, but dangerous and unhealthy. Chronic stress tears the life of a person apart his mind, body or spirit. This type of stress is brought about by long-term exposure to stressors, such as unhappy marriage, traumatic experiences, unwanted career or job, stress of poverty, chronic illnesses, relationship conflicts, political problems, and dysfunctional families. These stressful situations seem to be unending, and the accumulated stress that results from exposure to them can be life-threatening, and can even lead a person to resort to violence, suicide and self-harm. Serious illnesses like stroke, heart attack, cancer, and psychological problems such as clinical depression and post-traumatic disorder can originate from chronic stress. Common physical signs and symptoms of chronic stress are: Dry mouth, difficulty in breathing, pounding heart, stomach ache,
headache, diaphoresis, frequent urination, tightening of muscles and more and Mental signs and symptoms include: Sudden irritability, tension problems with concentration, difficulty in sleeping, narrowed perception, frequent feelings of fatigue.

A number of studies show that women respond to work stress in different ways from men and that their anxiety can affect the entire organization. Chronic stress can have physical implications, of course, especially if trouble at work leads to women clocking in more hours. Most women don't realise the importance of dealing with such issues before they could potentially ruin various relationships around them and most importantly, their mental & physical health (www.indiaprwire.com)⁴². Hence, the researcher’s study focuses on Job stress and biological stress of women executives in IT and ITES industry. Here, in this study, the term biological stress means the women who face certain hormonal changes in their body (affected through physical and mental health) i.e. the menopause symptoms and the problems faced due to hormonal changes from the age group of 40 to 55. Such women are referred to as Menopause women in the study. More or less the symptoms like headache, difficulty in concentrating, sleep disturbance, frequent urination etc. faced by menopause women would be the same as chronic stress. Hence, finally the researcher connects the term job stress and biological stress (menopause) in the study as the implication of chronic stress.

1.1 (e) (iii) CAUSES OF STRESS

The below figure depicts that though there are various causes of stress like social/cultural, rational, spiritual, experimental, psycho-dynamic and biological, the study has been concentrated on biological stress because compared to the above mentioned causes of stress the studies relating to biological stress was less. Under biological causes of stress there are various issues which leads to this stress but the study especially focus on changes in bodily functions E.g. Menopause. The other causes of stress are explained in detail on Chapter three.
Biological Stress- Biological stress or Physiological is an organism's response to a stressor such as an environmental condition or a stimulus. Stress is a body's method of reacting to a challenge. According to the stressful event, the body's way to respond to stress is by sympathetic nervous system activation which results in the fight-or-flight response. The cause of stress lie in the biological make up of your body or the interaction of your body with the food you eat or environment you live in some examples of the biological causes of stress include such as lack of fitness, poor diet (e.g. Deficiency of Vitamins), allergic reactions to chemicals in food, genetic disorder resulting in chemical imbalances in the body, changes in bodily functions such as pregnancy, puberty and menopause. Even though there are various biological stresses the study focuses on the hormonal changes (i.e., symptoms and problems) in bodily functions namely Menopause.

From the Figure 1.7, it depicts that when compared with men only 29 percentage of the women face a healthy stress level in the organization and the moderate stress level seems to be more or less equal and 23 percentage of the working women are low stressed than men. So, as per the data’s in the figure, it is inferred that women seems to face higher stress level in the organization and according to the reports of United Labour statistics (2012) women seems to face more stress than men. From the Figure 1.8, it is inferred that women seems to face high stress level than men among the
intervals of age classification. The above picture shows an increased stress level of women from the age group of 18 to 65 and over. Especially the stress is very much higher in the age groups of 45-64 and 18-44. Hence, it is noticed that though there is gender equality among working men and women in United States, women seems to face higher stress level than men in the organization.

**Figure: 1.9 Stress Levels of Indian Working Women (Age Classification)**

![Stress Levels of Indian Working Women](image)

Source: Kenexa High Performance Institute (KHIP Report 2012)

Figure 1.9 enunciates that as the age group of working women increases their stress level also increases according to the report of Kenexa High Performance Institute 2012. So, it is concluded that women in India are also stressed in the organization. The study also concentrates on working women from the age group of 20 to 54 years of age. In Chapter four the stress level of working women in selected companies of IT/ITES industry in the areas of Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pondicherry has been provided with the help of the study’s data and analysis.
1.1 (e) (iv) COMPARISON OF WOMEN IN STRESS LEVELS (U.S. and INDIA)

From the above figures (Fig 1.7, 1.8, 1.9) it is inferred that working women in United States and India are stressed due to workload in the organization but comparatively women in India are more stressed in the world. It is seen that according to the latest study done by Nielsen Survey (2014) Indian women are the most stressed in the world today. 87% of Indian women said they felt stressed most of the time, and 82% had no time to relax. The survey, conducted by Nielsen on 2014, depicts that the sample of 6,500 women from 21 developed and developing countries like Sweden, the US, the UK, France, the BRICS economies were taken to test the stress levels among them and it was an online based interview among women (over 18 years of age) and cut across social and income class. In his study he has pointed out that at very broad level Indian companies and workplaces have boomed, so 21st century for women was with all the challenges and opportunities.

He has identified that a prime stress is felt among women of 25-55 years of age, typically married where expectations from women have risen-and where conflicts between what all women must do too has surged, Perhaps this is the first time that a large number of first generation women are joining the workforce, and they are "neither societally trained nor individually prepared" to deal with the situation, a reason why they feel stressed. Moreover, women today have more expectations from themselves than they were ever in the past. Indian women have aspirations and ambitions, which their ancestors perhaps rarely had and hence more and more Indian working women participation in organizations are seen in the present day context and so women must work with all the compromises that society demands and despite the pressures they experience at work and home. Finally it is concluded that when compared with countries Indian women are more stressed in the world.

1.1 (f) MENOPAUSE – A Biological Perspective

Menopause is a natural and unavoidable event affecting all women at some stage in their life. Hormonal changes cause menopause naturally between the age of 40-50 & it is not a disease or an illness. It is one of the most hypercritical stages of life among women (Rossouw JE, 2002). The average age of menopausal for women is 51 but the exact age may vary from woman to woman. Women spend nearly half of their
age in menopause phase. Further, menopause is perceived, understood and defined largely as a negative experience filled with a variety of undesirable physical and emotional symptoms in terms of medical discipline (Winterich & Umberson, 1999). Menopausal symptoms can affect women's health and it differs from woman to woman and it is not possible to predict the severity and duration of these symptoms. Some symptoms can last for years and affect a woman's quality of life. The menopausal symptoms are hot flushes, night sweats, skin itching, tiredness, anxiety, depression, irritation, itching in private parts & infection, mood swings, heart palpitations, difficulty in concentrating, headaches, poor memory, sleeplessness, crying spells, painful periods, painful urination, bladder infection, joint pains, weight gain and lack of intimacy with their better half.

"Menopause, itself, is a stressful life event because of the various types of change that occur," says Dr. Jeff Brown, a professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School and author of Chicken Soup for the Soul: Think Positive for Great Health. Hot flashes are tightly linked with stress and anxiety, according to a six-year study published in Menopause. Researchers found that anxiety and stress preceded hot flashes among peri-menopausal and post-menopausal women. Women with the highest levels of stress were more than five times, more likely than normally stressed women to report hot flashes (www.huffingtonpost.com). By the year 2025, the number of postmenopausal women is expected to rise to 1.1 billion worldwide. Hence, the consciousness of menopause-related symptoms among women is essential. There are three stages of menopause – They are pre-menopause, peri-menopause, menopause and post menopause.

1.1 (g) CAUSES OF WOMEN’S HEALTH ISSUES AT WORKPLACE

Women tend to have different occupational hazards and health issues than men in the workplace. Women get carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, anxiety disorders, STRESS, respiratory diseases, osteoporosis, and infectious diseases due to their work and health at higher rates than men. The reasons for these differences may be differences in biological stress (menopause) or in the work that women are performing.
Women's higher rates of job-related stress may be due to the fact that women are often caregivers at home and do contingent work and contract work at a much higher rate than men. Another significant occupational hazard for women is homicide, which was the second most frequent cause of death on the job for women in 2011, making up 26% of workplace deaths in women (Swanson, Naomi et. al., May 2013 and NIOSH, June 2013). Immigrant women are at higher risk for occupational injury than native-born women in the United States, due to higher rates of employment in dangerous industries (NIOSH, June 2013). Women are at lower risk for work-related death than men. However, personal protective equipment is usually designed for typical male proportions, which can create hazards for women who have ill-fitting equipment (Swanson, Naomi et. al., May 2013 and NIOSH, June 2013). Women are less likely to report an occupational injury than men (NIOSH, June 2013).

Research is ongoing into occupational hazards that may be specific to women. Of particular interest are potential environmental causes of breast cancer and cervical cancer (Swanson, Naomi et. al., May 2013 and NIOSH, June 2013). Stress is an occupational hazard for many women, and can cause serious negative symptoms including anxiety, depression, nausea, headache, insomnia, and feelings of low self-esteem and alienation. Women are also at higher risk for biological stress, which can be cause by balancing roles as a parent or caregiver with work (NIOSH, June 2013).

1.1 (h) COPING STRATEGIES

Coping is defined as “the constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage the specific external or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person”. (Folkman S, Lazarus RS J Health Soc Behav. 1980). Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioural and cognitive, that people use to master, tolerate, reduce or minimise stressful events. (Affleck G, Tennen H, J Pers. 1996). Studies indicate that age and coping skills influenced job satisfaction positively. (Takashi Shimizu and Shoji Nagata, 2003)
1.1 (i) JOB SATISFACTION

There is a negative impact of job satisfaction due to work stress on mental and physical health of workers has been found to be a strong support by several researchers. Prior studies suggest that higher level of job stress causes less job satisfaction (K. Chandraiah, S.C. Agrawal, P. Marimuthu & N. Manoharan 2003)\(^{50}\). Organization factors such as workload and working condition are negatively related with job satisfaction (Vinokur-Kaplan1991)\(^{51}\). The lack of satisfaction can be a source of stress, while high satisfaction can lighten the effects of stress it means that both of job stress and job satisfaction are interrelated (Fletcher & Payne 1980)\(^{52}\). Previous studies also indicated that high levels of work stress were consistently associated with low job satisfaction (Blegen, 1993)\(^{53}\).

1.1 (j) FINAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE STUDY

During the menopause period women goes through certain biological changes. In general it leads to physical & mental stress. These biological changes in the body lead to higher level of stress among women in the organization. It is understood that women from the age group of (40 to 54) need to cope up in their job with lot of difficulty with both biological and workplace stress in the organization. Hence this study focuses on the biological and workplace stress of menopause and non-menopause women executives in IT and ITES industry.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- So far from the data it is clear that when compared with other sectors in India, majority of the women working in IT industry are stressed.
- Especially women above the age group of 38 and the biological factor called menopause (which is one major stage where women spend half of their age in lifetime) has been identified as key indicators of stress [Lokita pandit and G. Outslander joseph, Oct (1997); D.W. Sturder and N. Panay, December (2010)\(^{54}\)].
- Due to this stress job satisfaction has been reduced and women are neither aware nor adopt suitable coping strategies for it.
- So, the researcher has identified that menopause as a major health issue problem for women who work with stress and attain job satisfaction.
1.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

From the past studies around Two Hundred articles regarding Stress were reviewed. They were classified into various dimensions (Table – 1.2). After reviewing these articles study variables for this research work was derived. The researcher has divided the previous studies as five segments and they are listed below:

Table: 1.2 Reviewed Articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviews structure</th>
<th>No. of studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studies related to Job Stress</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies related to Stress and Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies related to Stress and Coping Strategies</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies related to Stress and IT/ITES industry</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies on Menopause (Biological stress)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Therefore there is a need for the study to gain a better understanding of the biological factor called menopause that contribute to stress coping strategies and job satisfaction experienced by the women executives in IT and ITES industries. Hence, this study focuses on the effect of menopause and non-menopause on job stress, job satisfaction and coping strategies of women executives in IT & ITES industries.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the factors that influence job stress and job satisfaction among women executives?
- What are the stress coping strategies adopted by women executives?
- What is the influence of stress coping strategies on job stress and job satisfaction?
- What are the menopause implications?
- How menopause influence on job stress and coping strategies which mediates job satisfaction?
1.6 RESEARCH GAP

Very few studies indicate the aspects of job stress and job satisfaction on women executives. The literatures reveals that there were no specific study on job stress in the biological perspective of women executives in Indian context especially in South India. Many of them were with respect to stress coping strategies and its implications on job satisfaction. So far no model exists on the effect of menopause on Job stress, job satisfaction and coping strategies. Therefore, this study makes an attempt to understand the effect of menopause on Job stress, job satisfaction and coping strategies of women executives in IT/ITES industry.

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the factors influencing the job stress and job satisfaction among women executives.
- To examine the menopause implications (symptoms and problems) faced by women executives.
- To understand different stress coping strategies adopted by women executives.
- To examine the influence of stress coping strategies on job stress and job satisfaction.
- To analyze how menopause influence on job stress and coping strategies which mediates job satisfaction

1.8 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

There are so many factors that cause stress, out of which the researcher’s study concentrates on the biological stress. Under biological stress also there are so many factors which cause this stress but in this study the researcher has concentrated on the changes in the bodily functions of women namely menopause. Hence, the researcher’s aim of the study is to focus on Menopause (Biological stress) of women in IT and ITES industry along with job stress, job satisfaction and the necessary coping strategies.
1.9 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The above Figure 1.11 depicts that woman executives in the study are categorised into two as menopause and non-menopause women. Here, in this study stress has been classified as job stress and biological stress in menopause women and for non-menopause women stress has been classified as job stress because they face only job stress and not biological stress. Job stress and biological stress in women can be reduced through certain coping strategies which will in-turn leads to job satisfaction in the organization.

1.10 VARIABLES USED FOR THE STUDY

Table: 1.3 Variables used for the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES</td>
<td>Age, marital status, educational qualification, family background, number of children, work experience, total monthly emoluments, type of organization, place of organization, shift arrangements, medical information, entertainment programs and work life policies and programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOB STRESS / ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS</td>
<td>Role overload, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressure, Responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, Poor peer relations, Intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOB SATISFACTION</td>
<td>Pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, co-workers, nature of work, communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.11 SCALES FOR THE STUDY

- Organizational Role stress or Job stress scale developed by Srivastava and singh (46 items)
- Job Satisfaction scale developed by Paul E. Spector in the year 1994 (36 items)
- Coping strategies scale developed by Lazurus and Folkman in the year 1981 (50 items)
- Menopause scale developed by North American Menopause Society for women (30 items)

The Questionnaire has been divided into two sections namely Section one and Section two. Section one deal with demographic information and Section two deals with variables like (Job stress/ Organizational role stress, Job satisfaction, Coping strategies and Menopause).

1.12 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.12 (a) Primary Source of the Study

- **Data:** Primary in Nature (cross-sectional)
- **Data Collection:** Interview schedule method has been designed, tested and applied
- **Data Collection Period:** April 2014 to August 2014
- **Sampling method:** Multi-stage cluster sampling
- **Population:** 3,00,000 (approx.) as on 2014
- **Sampling Formula:** $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$
- **Sample size**: 379
- **Tools used**: Descriptive statistics like Mean, Median, Frequencies and Ranking, Bar chart and Pie chart, Chi-square test, ANOVAs, OLS, MANOVA and Structural equation modelling
- **Software's used**: Microsoft Excel, SPSS version 19 and PLS

### Table: 1.4 Sample Size Determination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample size (Respondents)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Menopause women</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non- menopause women</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 1.12 (b) SECONDARY SOURCE OF THE STUDY

The secondary source of the data has been collected from the below reports and websites. Reports like Fundoodata.com, econstat.com, indiastat.com, NASSCOM, SFCCI, KHIP Report, corporate gender gap report, women’s experience of working through the menopause report for British Occupational Health Research Foundation (BOHRF), menopause awareness month and websites like www.huffingtonpost.com, www.menopausehealth.org.

#### 1.13 CHAPTERIZATION

- **CHAPTER ONE** enunciates a brief description about the Indian Economy and its role, various sectors in Indian Economy, Importance of IT/ITES industry, Selection of top twenty companies of IT/ITES for the study, Classification of men and women workers for various sectors, Workforce participation of women in India, Job stress, menopause, status of working women, job satisfaction and coping strategies. It also emphasize research gap, statement of the problem, scope of the study, objectives, methodology, determination of sample size, tools, and future agenda of research, limitations, suggestions and chapterization.
CHAPTER TWO has been divided into two parts namely Job or workplace stress of women executives and Biological (Menopause) stress of women executives. It provides an extensive study relating to stress, job satisfaction and strategies to cope up.

CHAPTER THREE entails an overview of stress management and menopausal phase.

CHAPTER FOUR has been divided into five parts based on the objectives. This chapter finally examines how menopause influence on job stress and coping strategies which mediates job satisfaction

CHAPTER FIVE deals with findings and suggestions and finally

CHAPTER SIX deals with the conclusion of the study.
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