adrenalin level rises and there is heightened awareness. He claimed that the body was nonspecific, that it reacted to all stressors in the same way.

Selye's model is called the **general adaption syndrome or GAS**. It is split into three stages. The first stage is the alarm stage, where a stressor sets off the body's alarm so the body prepares for action. The second stage is the resistance stage where the body focuses its resources to battle the stressor. During this stage the body gets weakened as it loses its resources. The final stage is the exhaustion stage, where the body can no longer resist the stressor. \[^4\]

\[\text{Stressor} \rightarrow \text{Alarm} \rightarrow \text{Resistance} \rightarrow \text{Exhaustion}\]

**Fig.1: Stages of General adaptation syndrome**

**Lazarus's Model**: This differed slightly from Selye's model. By working more with humans, he concluded that neither the stressor, nor the response could define stress; rather it was the individual's perception and appraisal of the stressor that would determine if it would create stress. He realized that different individuals would look at an event, such as skydiving, and have different kinds of stress, positive or negative. The appraisal of stress is at the cognitive level.

The first stage in his model is the primary appraisal where the subject analyzes the stressor and determines if it will be positive or negative, exciting or harmful, etc. The second stage is the secondary appraisal, where the subject determines if he or she can cope with the given stressor. Even if the stressor is determined as harmful in the first stage, if the subject decides that he or she can cope with it in the second stage, then the stress will be kept at a minimum.\[^5\]

\[\text{Stressor} \rightarrow \text{Primary appraisal} \rightarrow \text{Secondary appraisal} \rightarrow \text{Can cope(minimum stress)} \]

\[\text{Cannot cope (lot of stress)}\]

**Fig: 2 Stages in Lazarus’s Model of stress.**

A study by Katherine Tennes and Maria Kreye (1985) found that intelligent schoolchildren experienced more stress on the day of an exam than unintelligent schoolchildren. Cortisol
levels were measured in urine samples taken on regular school days and on days when tests were given. Intelligence test scores were obtained from school records. The results suggest that brighter children are more concerned about academic achievement. According to Franken, (1994) stress has generally been viewed as a set of neurological and physiological reactions that serves an adaptive function.

Cohen (1980) stated that noise can be a stressor, for example when people live next to a busy railway or motorway. People cope with this situation by ‘tuning out’ the noise. He has proposed that children who tried to tune out chronic noise may develop generalized cognitive deficits because they have difficulty in knowing which sounds to attend to and which to tune out. In a study conducted by Cohen et al (1986) reported that a high level of stress impairs people's memory and attention during cognitive activities, such as when appearing for examinations.

**Physiological Toughening:** Richard Dienstbier (1989) questions the emphasis the GAS places on the role of chronic stress and proposes another model of stress, “Physiological Toughening”, which focuses on the duration of stressful events. He points out that stressors vary in their durations. Acute stressors are the briefest and they often involve a tangible threat that is readily identified as a stressor. Chronic stressors are those of a longer duration and are not readily identified as stressors because they are often ambiguous and intangible. Because chronic stressors have become such a part of modern life, they are often taken for granted and can therefore pose a serious health risk if they are not recognized and properly managed. Physiological Toughening is concerned with the third category of stressors, viz. intermittent stressors. Intermittent stressors are the most variable in duration, alternating between periods of stress and calm. If an intermittent stressor is viewed as a challenge, it may improve one's physiological resistance to stress by causing repeated, periodic increases in sympathetic arousal, which conditions the body to better withstand subsequent stressors. This can be seen from research indicating that experienced subjects show few or none of the deleterious effects of environmental stressors.

Dienstbier's characterizations of the positive emotions present in events are appraised as challenging. It’s noted that distress without effort leads to increased cortisol secretion but not necessarily to catecholamine secretion. This is the pattern often found in depressed individuals.
According Bernard & Krupat, (1994), the Bio psychosocial Model of Stress, involves three components: an external component, an internal component, and the interaction between the external and internal components. The “bio psychosocial model” of stress incorporates a variety of social factors into its model that influence stress reaction and perception. However, research into the cultural differences that may exist in stress reactions are also needed to examine how various social and cultural structures influence the individual's experience of stress.

Culture and society may shape what events are perceived as stressful, what coping strategies are acceptable to use in a particular society, and what institutional mechanisms we may turn to for assistance.⁹

Merton (1957) suggests that society can elicit stress by promoting values that conflict with the structures in which they are acted upon. Merton argues that the system of values in the United States promotes the attainment of monetary and honorable success among more people than could be accommodated by the opportunity structures available. Therefore, as a consequence, many of those individuals who internalize these culturally prized goals are doomed to failure.¹⁰

Pearlin (1982) suggests that society, its value systems, the stratified ordering of its populations, the organization of its institutions, and the rapidity and extent of changes in these elements can be sources of stress.¹¹

1.1.4 Effect of stress: Stress is a leading cause of illness. Its signs may be cognitive, emotional, physical or behavioral. Anger, anxiety, digestive disorders, dizziness, headaches, hyperventilation, irritability, mood swings nausea and panic attacks are all by products of stress which cause mental and physical fatigue. As a result, the body and its immune system become exhausted leaving an individual more susceptible to illness.

When identifying stress, most people only consider the demands placed upon them by work, individuals, their relationship or adverse circumstances as stress causing factors. These external influences are the leading causes of stress; however, it’s usually forgotten that similar struggles also occur within the individual.
Internal causes of stress are a result of the individual’s inability to think deeply and lovingly about themselves, others and their circumstances. Throughout their lives, their perception tends to inflect the thoughts and beliefs of those around them. Such beliefs or motives may conflict with their own but they follow them in an attempt to obtain comfort in what seems familiar. As a result, they begin to dishonor themselves and thus cause inner stress. Stress affects us all in multiple ways and for different reasons throughout our lives.\[11\]

1.1.5 Stress related to work:

The nature of work and the work culture has been changing with whirlwind speed. Perhaps now more than ever before, job stress poses a threat to the health of workers and, in turn, to the health organizations. It’s observed that workers/employees are being plagued by aching muscles, loss of appetite, restless sleep, mental pressure and a complete sense of exhaustion.

‘What Workers Say About Stress on the Job’ in a survey by northwestern national life, 40% of workers report their job to be very or extremely stressful, that is one-fourth of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives.\[12\]

Another survey conducted by the families and work institute report 26% of workers who report they are “often” or “very often burned out” or stressed by their work.\[13\] Similarly a survey conducted by Yale’s University reports 29% of worker’s stating they feel “quite a bit or extremely stressed at work.\[14\] According to the finding of ‘Princeton Survey Research Associates’ three-fourths of the employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress than a generation ago.\[15\] Problems at work are more strongly associated with health complaints than are, any other life stressor even more than financial problems or family problems. This was reported by ‘St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Co.’\[16\]

1.1.6 What Is Job Stress? Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. The concept of job stress is often confused with challenge, but these concepts are not the same. Challenge energizes us psychologically and physically, and it motivates us to learn new skills and master our jobs. When a challenge is met, we feel relaxed and satisfied. Thus, challenge is an important
ingredient for healthy and productive work. The importance of challenge in our work lives is probably what people are referring to when they say “a little bit of stress is good for you”. [17]

1.1.7 What are the Causes of Job Stress? Nearly everyone would agree that job stress results from the interaction of the worker and the conditions of work. Views differ, however, on the importance of **worker characteristics** versus **working conditions** as the primary cause of job stress. These differing viewpoints are important because they help in suggesting different ways to prevent stress at work. According to one school of thought, differences in individual characteristics such as personality and coping style are most important in predicting whether certain job conditions will result in stress; in other words, what is stressful for one person may not be a problem for someone else. This viewpoint leads to prevention strategies that focus on workers and ways to help them cope with demanding job conditions.

Although the importance of ‘individual differences’ cannot be ignored, scientific evidence suggests that certain working conditions are stressful to most people. That is excessive workload demands and conflicting expectations. Health care expenditures are nearly 50% greater for workers who report high levels of stress. [18]

1.2 Perception:
Perception is the process or the capability to attain awareness and understand the environment surrounding us by interpreting, selecting and organizing different type of information. All perceptions involve stimuli in the central nervous system. These stimuli result from the stimulation of our sense organs such as auditory stimuli when one hears a sound or a taste when someone eats something. [19] Or one may state that perception is the complicated process of interaction of selection, organization, and interpretation of stimuli. Although, perception depends upon the senses for raw data, the cognitive process may filter, modify, or completely change these data.

According to Kendra Cherry ‘Perception’ is our sensory experience of the world around us and involves both the recognition of environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli. Through the perceptual process, we gain information about properties and elements of the environment that are critical to our survival. Perception not only creates our experience of the world around us; it allows us to act within our environment. Perception includes the five senses. It also includes what is known as proprioception, a set of senses involving the ability to detect
changes in body positions and movements. It also involves the cognitive processes required to process information, such as recognizing the face of a friend or detecting a familiar scent.

The perceptual process is a sequence of steps that begins with the environment and leads to our perception of a stimulus and an action in response to the stimulus. This process is continual, but one does not spend a great deal of time thinking about the actual process that occurs when one perceives the many stimuli that surround one at any given moment.\[20\]

Perceptions vary from person to person. Different people perceive different things about the same situation. Nevertheless, more than that, we assign different meanings to what we perceive. Moreover, the meanings might change for a certain person. One might change one's perspective or simply make things mean something else.\[21\]

1.2.1 How does perception work?
According to Joseph A.De Vito, ‘Perception’ is the process by which you become aware of objects and events in the external world. Perception occurs in five stages: (1) Stimulation,(2) Organization, (3) Interpretation-evaluation, (4) Memory, and (5) Recall.\[22\]

1.2.2. The 8 Steps in the Perceptual Process:

![Fig: 3 Steps in the perceptual process.]

The ‘environmental stimulus’ is everything in our environment that has the potential to be perceived. The ‘attended stimulus’ is the specific object in the environment on which our attention is focused. In many cases, we might focus on stimuli that are familiar to us, in other instances; we are likely to attend to stimuli that have some degree of novelty. Next, the attended stimulus is formed as an ‘image on the retina’.
The first part of this process involves the light actually passing through the cornea and pupil and onto the lens of the eye. The cornea helps focus the light as it enters the eye, and the iris of the eye controls the size of the pupils in order to determine how much light to let in. The cornea and lens act together to project an inverted image on the retina. The image on the retina is actually upside down from the actual image in the environment, as the image is yet not perceived.

Image on the retina is then transformed into electrical signals in a process known as ‘transduction’. This allows the visual messages to be transmitted to the brain to be interpreted. The retina contains many photoreceptor cells, which is responsible for transducing the light into visual signals that are then transmitted via nerve impulses. The electrical signals then undergo ‘neural processing’. The path followed by a particular signal depends on what type of signal it is (i.e. an auditory signal or a visual signal).

Through the series of interconnect neurons located throughout the body, electrical signals are propagated from the receptors cells to the brain; and then processed through the neurons in the visual network. In the next step of the ‘perception’ process, the individual actually perceives the stimulus object in the environment. It is at this point that one becomes consciously aware of the stimulus.

It is one thing to be aware of stimuli in the environment, and quite another to actually become fully and consciously aware of what we have perceived. In the next stage of the perceptual process, there is sorting of the perceived information into meaningful categories. Moreover, the individual’s ability to interpret and give meaning to the object is the next step, known as ‘recognition’. The final step of the perceptual process involves some sort of ‘action’ in response to the environmental stimulus.

This could involve a variety of actions, such as turning ones head for a closer look or turning away to look at something else. The action phase of perceptual development involves some type of motor action that occurs in response to the perceived and recognized stimulus. This might involve a major action, like running toward a person in distress, or something as subtle as blinking your eyes in response to a puff of dust blowing through the air.\textsuperscript{23}
1.2.3 Perceptual selectivity:
Numerous stimuli constantly confront everyone, and we hear many other sounds every minute. However, why and how do people select a specific stimulus or a few stimuli at a given time? The answers can be found in the ‘principles of perceptual selectivity’.

Perceptual selectivity involves: - a) External attention factorsb) Internal set factors

1.2.4 Many external factors affect perceptual selectivity:
1. **Intensity**: The intensity principle states that the more intense the external stimulus, the more likely it is to be perceived e.g. loud noise, strong odor, will be noticed more than a soft voice, weak odor.
2. **Size**: It says that the larger the object, the more likely it will be perceived.
3. **Contrast**: This principle states that a stimulus that stands out against the background gets more attention. Therefore, safety signs have black lettering on a yellow background.
4. **Repetition**: It means that a repeated object is more attention getting, than a single one. Therefore, better to give directions more than once for a dull or difficult job.
5. **Motion**: The motion principle states that a moving object gets more and more attention than a stationary one.
6. **Novelty and familiarity**: Novelty means something new and fresh and familiarity means something known and experienced. Therefore, the principle of novelty and familiarity states that new objects in familiar settings and familiar objects in new settings get more attention.

1.2.5 Internal set factors:
1. **Learning and perception**: Learning may play the most important role in developing perceptual set. From prior learning, the person is perceptually set to read and see what they expect to see and hear.

2. **Perceptual set in workplace**: In organization life, some employees have learned to perceive the world around them in the same way.

3. **Motivation and perception**: Motivation also plays an important role in perceptual selectivity. E.g., a person who has a relatively high need for power, affiliation, or achievement will be more attentive to the relevant situation.

4. **Personality and perception**: Personality of the perceiver also affects what is attended to in confronting situations. E.g., senior managers often complain that the younger managers have trouble making tough decisions like firing and hiring of personnel; whereas young managers on the other hand, state that the old managers resist the change in rules. [24]

1.2.6 Influences on interpersonal perceptions, according to Joseph A.DeVito:

- Implicit personality theory allows one to conclude that certain characteristics go with certain other characteristics.
- Individual’s self-fulfilling prophecy may influence the behaviors of others.
- Perceptual accentuation may lead an individual to perceive what one expects to perceive instead of what is really there.
- Perceptions may be affected by primacy-recency. An individual’s tendency to give extra importance to what occurs first (a primacy effect) may lead them to see what conforms to this judgment and distort it or otherwise misperceive what contradicts it. First impressions often serve as filters, as schemata, for more recent information. In some cases, one may give extra weight to what occurs last (a recency effect).
- The tendency to seek and expect consistency may influence an individual to see what is consistent and to not see what is inconsistent.
- A stereotype, a fixed impression about a group, may influence ones perceptions of individual members; you may see individuals only as members of the group instead of as unique individuals.
- Judgments of attribution, the process through which an individual tries to understand the behaviors of others (and your own behaviors, in self-attribution), particularly the reasons or motivations for these behaviors, are made based on consensus, consistency, distinctiveness, and controllability. Errors of attribution include the self-serving bias, over attribution, and the fundamental attribution error.

1.2.7 Increasing Accuracy in Interpersonal Perception:

1. **Perceive critically:** For example, recognize your role in perception, avoid early conclusions, and avoid mind reading.

2. **Check your perceptions:** describe what you see or hear and ask for confirmation.

3. **Reduce uncertainty:** For example, by lurking before actively participating in an Internet chat group, collecting information about the person or situation, interacting and observing the situation.

4. **Be culturally sensitive:** recognize the differences between you and others and also the differences among people from another culture.[22]

The meaning of something will change when you look at it differently. You can look at anything differently and it will have a different meaning. There is no fixed meaning to anything. You can always change perspectives and change meanings.

According to Jeff Thompson "Perception" here is used in the most general sense as anything that registers in the mind. In general, the mind perceives something if it can distinguish whether it is there or not. So how does it make this distinction? By making predictions and testing. In perception, the mind is experiencing a process that in itself is generating, and a theory of perception has to be about that process.[25]

In perceiving a shape, for example a square, detecting an edge triggers a hypothesis that it has that shape."Having that shape" is a set of predictions such as “edges will go in a straight line," "following any edge will come to a corner," "following all the edges and corners will connect around a perimeter where there are two pairs of corners,” etc. The action in each of these predictions causes a test, which can fail. The eye actually moves around the shape performing the tests. If it does not fail then that is the perception, which prevails.
1.2.8 How does perception affect communication?

According to a vote posted by Hub Pages, there exists some form or way of an "objective" way of communication, without any trace of personal perception. Since it is the nature of our conscious to perceive, thus all communication must be colored by its perception. The question then is, are we capable of being aware enough of our own perceptions? If we are able to notice our own projections, ideas, concepts and prejudices about ourselves, others and the world, and not let them interfere in what we wish to communicate. In other words, the level of our self knowledge, awareness and inner freedom of these images, in the form of (amongst others) our habits and conditionings, is directly linked towards the quality of our communication.

Perception can come from how a person grows up, and the likes and dislikes that they experience within their lives. Once they decide upon their views of life, then people are influenced by their life positions, in how they think, feel, act, perceive, communicate and relate to others.

Perceptions and Cognitions develop in sequential stages throughout Childhood and Adolescence to Adulthood. Communication skills are important in any relationship. Whether it is a business relationship, husband and wife, or parent and child, it is always good to be able to see how a different perception affects our communication with each other. Perception effects communication by dominating conversations and opening the door for the opinion and thoughts of others and putting one’s perception in a conversation can take that conversation to a whole new level or even start a new conversation or possibly even an argument.[26]

People perceives him/herself, as well as how the same person perceives others, substantially influences the communication between the individual and other persons, in every aspect of communications. When communicating with other people, an individual evaluates the manner of dress, eye contact, vocal tone posture, emphasis and flow of verbiage from and with the other involved persons, causing the individual to interact with one person differently from another. Age, sex and familiarity with other people also affects how an individual communicates, since individuals often defer from each other in the manner they show, they respect or speak to gain knowledge on a specific topic. Perception is developed in early youth, as an individual’s experience, events that influence their likes and dislikes. These early experiences mold how an individual feels, acts and thinks. This also affects how that person
communicates with others. This development occurs in early childhood and lasts throughout adolescence. How a person acts, thinks and believes, as established in their youth, causes the individual to determine first impressions and perceptions of other people that may influence the communication between each party for the entire duration of their relationship. Perception of the self and others is instrumental in developing relationships and communicating with other people. The personality that has shaped persons in their early youth influences their perceptions and relationships with other people throughout their life. \[27\]

Our perception of the world and ourselves in general is partly linked to our personality. Now, this does not mean that because it is our personality and perception that we cannot learn alternative ways of dealing with our difficulties. It is possible to change our perception from an unrealistic, inaccurate one, to a more realistic and accurate assessment.

1.2.9 Choices: Choice and life are intimately intertwined. Life presents us with choices, and the way we make those choices determines how we experience life. Some high-level choices seem big and in the foreground, like choosing a career, or a mate, or where to live. Other lower level choices lie more in the background and further from consciousness, like the choice of which muscle fibers to contract, how strongly, and in what sequence, as you walk across a room, pick up a glass of water, swing a golf club, or take part in a conversation. Nevertheless, how you make those choices, and how well you do so, play a major role in whether your actions are fluid or stiff, graceful or clumsy, in whether you experience yourself as empowered and competent, or bumbling and incompetent.

Yet other choices seem of a lower level still. They are so deeply grounded that we hardly register making them. Many choices one makes in composing one’s experience of one’s self and one’s environment depend upon how much available information one actually takes in (awareness), for example, or what parts of that information one notices and incorporates in ones decision making (attention). These things may appear to “just happen” on their own without explicit choice on our part, but that appearance is illusory. One does choose, though one may do so automatically and unconsciously. The unconscious choices one make at very low levels may ultimately have greater influence on the direction and quality of one’s life than do the more obvious higher level choices of which one is more consciously aware. \[28\]

Individuals compose experiences on an ongoing, moment to moment basis. One filters and selects bits and pieces of information from the much richer stream of information in which
one is constantly immersed. Those bits and pieces are combined with information and structure from past experiences to create current experiences. The kind of life one has—whether happy or sad, secure or fear-filled, mundane or exciting, meaningless or rewarding—may ultimately be determined more by the way one manages that creative process than by the external circumstances one encounters.

Better understanding of the mechanisms used to compose one’s experience is an important first step to managing those mechanisms so as to improve the quality of the experience that is compose.[28]

The meaning given to a stimulus perceived will fundamentally shape the choices an individual makes and will indicate his/her perception and behavior which in turn will contribute to decision making. How an individual makes decisions is based on the human instinct of self-preservation. We’re always trying to maximize our chances of survival and preserve ourselves. However, the similarity ends there; because we are greatly different in our actions/choices made to achieve self-preservation. It is in one’s actions that one’s individuality is reflected, since individuals assign different meanings to what they perceive.

Many people have the perception that stress is an “all or nothing” phenomenon and they think that no matter what they do, they will always feel stressed. Well this is not true, the journey of stress relief begins with changing one’s perception of the world; specifically one’s perception of the environment around and one’s interactions.

1.2.10 Perception and stress: "Our perceptions and not any objective reality govern our emotional response and resulting behaviour. Perceptions are based on beliefs, assumptions, values and conditioning. We can dramatically reduce our stress by changing our distorted perceptions. Our distorted thinking can exaggerate our perceived shortcomings. We often paint events much worse, than they actually are by our distorted thinking; this greatly increases our stress . . . Changing distorted perceptions . . . is an essential stress management tool." according to Dr Valerie O'Hara PhD, Clinical Psychologist.

Major Life Event stressors are relatively rare; most of the stressors we encounter occur on a daily basis and are known as daily hassles. Our perception of these every day, non-life event stressors, depends very much on our individual perception of those particular stressors.
1.3 COPING WITH STRESS:

1.3.1 WHAT IS COPING?
Coping means trying to reduce the consequences of stress, which are often unpleasant. There are several different ways in which coping is applied.

Susan Folkman and Richard Lazarus have defined coping in psychological terms as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing"[29] or “exceeding the resources of the person”.[30]

According to Weiten& Lloyd, Snyder, Zeidner & Endler, Coping is expending conscious effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking to master, minimize or tolerate stress or conflict. [31, 32, 33]

Psychological coping mechanisms are commonly termed coping strategies or coping skills. Unconscious or non-conscious strategies like defense mechanisms are generally excluded. The term coping generally refers to adaptive or constructive coping strategies, i.e., the strategies reduce stress levels. However, some coping strategies can be considered maladaptive, i.e., stress levels increase. Maladaptive coping can thus be described, in effect, as non-coping. Furthermore, the term coping generally refers to reactive coping, i.e., the coping response follows the stressor. This contrasts with proactive coping, in which a coping response aims to head off a future stressor.

Coping responses are partly controlled by personality (habitual traits), and also partly controlled by the social context, particularly the nature of the stressful environment, according to Carver, Connor-Smith. [34]

According to Clari Ng “Coping” is a series of transactions between a person who has a set of resources, values, and commitments and a particular environment with its own resources, demands, and constraints. Thus, coping is not a onetime action that someone takes, rather, it is a set of responses, occurring over time, by which the environment and the person influence each other.[35]
1.3.2 Types of coping strategies: The different styles of coping can be aimed at solving the problem and thus eliminating the stressor, or at decreasing the negative consequences, that stress sometimes has. People will try to reduce the negative feeling, one way or another.

According to Weiten there are three broad types of coping strategies: [31]

1. Appraisal-focused (adaptive cognitive)
2. Problem-focused (adaptive behavioral)
3. Emotion- focused.

Appraisal-focused strategies occur when the person modifies the way they think, for example: employing denial or distancing oneself from the problem. People may alter the way they think about a problem by altering their goals and values, such as by seeing the humour in a situation: "some have suggested that humor may play a greater role as a stress moderator among women than men."[36]

Emotion focused coping is aimed at reducing the emotional consequences of stress that is involved in releasing pent-up emotions. Managing the emotions that accompany the perception of stress is oriented to emotion–focused coping. [37] People can do this for instance by trying to numb themselves through taking substances, because they do not want to feel the negative emotions or the problem for a while. Of course, it does not solve the problem, and they will probably feel worse the next morning. People who use ‘emotion focused coping’ also try to change their view of the problem or stressor. When a problem is looked upon in a different way, its emotional effect will also change.

Problem focused coping is aimed at the problem that is they try to deal with the cause of their problem by changing or eliminating the source of the stress. People who use ‘problem focused coping’ try to lower the demands of the surroundings or enhance their resources, thus making the stressor weaker.

Typically, people use a mixture of all three types of coping strategies simultaneously, and the coping skills will usually change over time. Whilst working on the solution of a problem, people often try to decrease the emotional burden. Not everybody uses the proper coping style with a right problem. All these methods can prove useful, but some claim that those using problem-focused coping strategies will adjust better to life.[37]
mechanisms may allow an individual greater perceived control over their problem, whereas ‘emotion-focused coping’ may sometimes lead to a reduction in perceived control (maladaptive coping).

Folkman and Lazarus identified six emotion-focused coping strategies:
1. Disclaiming,
2. Escape-avoidance,
3. Accepting responsibility or blame,
4. Exercising self-control,
5. Seeking social support,
6. Positive reappraisal.

Two problem-focused coping strategies identified were “taking action to try to get rid of the problem” is a problem-focused strategy, but so is “making a list of the steps to take" to deal with problem. [30,37,38]

1.3.3 Historical Psychoanalytic theories:-
Otto Fenichel summarized early psychoanalytic studies of coping mechanisms in children as "a gradual substitution of actions for mere discharge of reactions... &the development of the function of judgment noting however "behind all active types of mastery of external and internal tasks, a readiness remains to fall back on passive-receptive types of mastery."

Fenichel stressed that in coping or in carrying out a 'work of learning' or 'work of adjustment'. They must acknowledge the new and less comfortable reality and fight tendencies towards regression, towards the misinterpretation of reality. However, such rational strategies may be mixed with relative allowances for rest and for small regressions and compensatory wish fulfillment, which are recuperative in effect. [39]

In the 1940s, the German Freudian psychoanalyst Karen Horney "developed her mature theory in which individuals ‘cope’ with the anxiety produced, by feeling unsafe, unloved, and undervalued by disowning their spontaneous feelings and developing elaborate strategies of defense”[40] She defined four so-called coping strategies to define interpersonal relations, one describing psychologically healthy individuals, and the others describing neurotic states.
The healthy strategy, which she termed “Moving with”, is that with which psychologically healthy people develop relationships. It involves compromise. In order to ‘move with’, there must be communication, agreement, disagreement, compromise, and decisions. The three other strategies she described - "Moving towards", "Moving against" and "Moving away" - represented neurotic, unhealthy strategies people utilize in order to protect themselves.

Horney investigated these patterns of neurotic needs i.e. compulsive attachments. Everyone needs these things, but the neurotics' need them more than the normal person. The neurotics' might need these more because of difficulties within their lives. If the neurotic does not experience these needs, he or she will experience anxiety.

The ten needs are:

1. Affection and approval, the need to please others and be liked.
2. A partner who will take over one's life, based on the idea that love will solve all of one's problems.
3. Restriction of one's life to narrow borders, to be undemanding, satisfied with little, inconspicuous; to simplify one's life.
4. Power for control over others, for a facade of omnipotence, caused by a desperate desire for strength and dominance.
5. Exploitation of others; to get the better of them.
6. Social recognition or prestige, caused by an abnormal concern for appearances and popularity.
7. Personal admiration.
8. Personal achievement.
10. Perfection and unassailability, a desire to be perfect and a fear of being flawed.

‘Compliance’, also known as "Moving toward" or the "Self-effacing solution", the individual moves towards those perceived as a threat to avoid retribution and getting hurt, "making any sacrifice”, no matter how detrimental. The argument is, "If I give in, I won't get hurt." This means that: if I give everyone I see as a potential threat whatever they want, I won't be injured (physically or emotionally). This strategy includes neurotic needs one, two, and three. In ‘withdrawal’, also known as "Moving away" or the "Resigning solution", individuals distance themselves from anyone perceived as a threat to avoid getting hurt - "the 'mouse-hole' attitude...the security of unobtrusiveness." The argument is, "If I do not let
anyone come close to me, I won't get hurt." A neurotic, according to Horney desires to be distant because of being abused. If they can be the extreme introvert, then no one will ever develop a relationship with them. If there is no one around, nobody can hurt them. These "moving away" people fight personality, often come across as cold or shallow. That is their strategy. They emotionally remove themselves from society. Included in this strategy are the neurotic needs three, nine, and ten.[42]

Aggression, also known as the "Moving against" or the "Expansive solution", the individual threatens those perceived as a threat to avoid getting hurt. Children might react to parental in-differences by displaying anger or hostility. This strategy includes neurotic needs four, five, six, seven, and eight.[42]

In 1937, the psychoanalyst (as well as a physician, psychologist, and psychiatrist) Heinz Hartmann marked it as the evolution of ego psychology by publishing his paper, "Me" (which was later translated into English in 1958, titled, "The Ego and the Problem of Adaptation").[45]Hartmann focused on the adaptive progression of the ego "through the mastery of new demands and tasks."[46]In fact, according to his 'adaptive point of view', once infants are born they have the ability to be able to cope with the demands of their surroundings.

1.4 Gender differences: according to Davis, Matthews and Twamley coping strategies are the ways in which men and women differ in managing psychological stress. There is evidence that males often develop stress due to their careers, whereas females often encounter stress due to issues in interpersonal relationships.[47]Both men and women sometimes employ maladaptive mechanisms, such as avoidance& self-punishment, to handle daily hassles.[48]

Coping styles can change during a lifetime. Once you've successfully applied a style or strategy for the first time, you can from then on use it.

Hence it’s said that “Coping is a dynamic process” that changes in response to the ongoing demands of the stressor. The construct of coping has been subcategorized in a variety of ways. Compas, Connor-Smith, and Saltzman (2001) proposed that coping responses can be depicted along two broad dimensions: Voluntary versus involuntary and engagement versus disengagement. Voluntary responses involve motivational, goal-directed behaviors, whereas involuntary responses involve reactions that are not directed by intention (e.g., increased
heart rate). Engagement refers to approach strategies, whereas disengagement refers to avoidance behaviors.[40]

1.5 Lifestyle Changes to cope with stress:
A healthy lifestyle is an essential companion to any stress-reduction program. Studies have shown that environment, overall health, and emotional state, all are leading contributors to the physical duress caused by stress. By adjusting one’s lifestyle, an individual can create natural defenses against stress-related backache, headache, irritability, tiredness, and general malaise that will improve one’s mood and ability to cope with day-to-day annoyances. Generally, people think of lifestyle changes as major undertakings that one may not have the energy or time in the schedule to focus on; however, there are easy ways to improve one’s stress-busting abilities that won’t interfere with the busy day.

It’s important that one’s lifestyle offers release from the pressures at work. It may seem impossibly difficult to adjust the stress-causing aspects of one’s lifestyle. However, a practical evaluation of the situation may show that improving one’s ability to cope with stress takes less effort than one might have thought. General health and stress resistance can be enhanced by regular exercise, eating healthy i.e. a diet rich in a variety of whole grains, vegetables, fruits. And by getting rid of addictions / avoiding excessive alcohol, caffeine, and tobacco, getting enough sleep; numerous studies have shown a direct correlation between rest and one’s ability to fight stress, use of relaxation techniques, building a circle of friends for social support, manage one’s time etc.[50,51]

1.5.1 Exercise: in combination with stress management techniques is extremely important for many reasons, as exercise is an effective distraction from stressful events. Exercise may directly blunt the harmful effects of stress on blood pressure and the heart, exercise protects the heart in any case. A varied exercise regime is more interesting, and thus easier to stick to, half of all people who begin a vigorous training regime drop out within a year. The key is to find activities that are exciting, challenging, and satisfying, like aerobics, brisk walking, and even short brisk walks can relieve bouts of stress. Swimming, Yoga or Tai Chi can be very effective, including the combination of many of the benefits of breathing, muscle relaxation, and meditation while toning and stretching the muscles. Numerous studies have found it beneficial for the many conditions in which stress is an important factor, such as anxiety,
headaches, high blood pressure, and asthma. It also elevates the mood and improves concentration and the ability to focus. [51]

1.5.2 Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT): is among the most effective ways of reducing stress, both when the source of stress is a chronic pain or a chronic disease. In fact, in the study of patients with HIV, CBT was more helpful than support groups for improving the well-being and quality-of-life. A typical CBT approach includes identifying sources of stress, restructuring priorities, changing one's response to stress, and finding methods for managing and reducing stress.

1.5.3 Identifying sources of stress: One key component in CBT approaches is a diary that keeps an informal inventory of daily events and activities. While this exercise might seem stress producing as one more chores, it need not be done in painstaking detail. A few words accompanying a time and date are usually enough to serve as reminders of significant events or activities. The first step is to note activities that put a strain on energy and time, trigger anger or anxiety, or precipitate a negative physical response such as a sour stomach or a headache.

1.5.4 Questioning the Sources of Stress: Individuals should then ask themselves the following questions: Do these stressful activities meet my goals or someone else's? Have I taken on tasks that I can reasonably accomplish? Which tasks are under my control and which ones aren't?

1.5.5 Restructuring Priorities: Adding Stress Reducing Activities: The next step is to attempt to shift the balance from stress producing to stress-reducing activities. Consider as many relief options as possible. Examples include, listen to music. Music is an effective stress reducer in both healthy individuals and people with health problems. In one study, for example, students who listened to a well-known gentle classical piece of music during a stressful task had reduced feelings of anxiety, heart rate, and blood pressure.

Owning a pet: In studyof people with high blood pressure pet owners had much lower blood pressure in response to stress than non-owners. Note that owning a pet was beneficial only for people who like animals to begin with. [52]

Use Humor: Research has shown that humor is a very effective mechanism for coping with acute stress. Laughter not only releases the tension of pent-up feelings and helps keep
perspective, but it appears to have actual physical effects that reduce stress hormone levels.[52]

1.5.6 Relaxation and Other Alternative Techniques:-

Relaxation Methods: Since stress is here to stay, everyone needs to develop methods to promote the relaxation response, the natural unwinding of the stress response. Relaxation lowers blood pressure, respiration, and pulse rates, releases muscle tension, and eases emotional strains. This response is highly individualized, but there are certain approaches that seem to work. Combinations are probably best. For example, in a study of ‘children and adolescents with adjustment disorder and depression’, a combination of yoga, a brief massage, and progressive muscle relaxation effectively reduced both feelings of anxiety and stress hormone levels. [53]

Acupuncture: Some evidence suggests that acupuncture may also be helpful. It might even improve some physical factors associated with stress and health problems. In a study of heart failure patients, acupuncture improved stress-related heart muscle activity, which could be an important benefit in these patients. However, acupuncture had no effect on stress-related blood pressure or heart rate. [51]

Hypnosis: may also benefit some people with severe stress. In one study of patients with irritable bowel, stress reduction by hypnosis correlated with improvement in many bowel symptoms. [51]

Meditation: used for many years in Eastern cultures, is now widely accepted in many country as a relaxation technique. The goal of all meditative procedures, both religious and therapeutic, quieting the mind (essentially, to relax thought). Small studies have suggested that regular meditation can benefit the heart and help reduce blood pressure. Better research is needed however, to confirm such claims. [54]

Massage Therapy: A review of data from multiple studies showed that massage therapy decreases cortisol levels. Interestingly, massage was more beneficial than receiving social support from the partner, indicating the power of physical touch in managing stress. Several massage therapies are available: Swedish massage, Shiatsu, and Reflexology. [55]
**Herbal and Natural Remedies:** Some people who experience chronic stress seek herbal or natural remedies. It should be strongly noted, however, that just as with standard drugs, so-called natural remedies could cause problems, sometimes-serious ones.

**Aromatherapy:** The smell of lavender has long been associated with a calming effect; several other aromatherapies are now used for relaxation.

**Valerian:** is an herb that has sedative qualities, may reduce stress, and associated physical effects. This herb is on the FDA's list of generally safe products. Of note, however, the herb's effects could be dangerously increased if it is used with standard sedatives. Other interactions and long-term side effects are unknown. Side effects include vivid dreams. High doses of valerian can cause blurred vision, excitability, and changes in heart rhythm. [56]

Stress management therapies can be differentiated based on their approach and delivery, single or multi-component approach and individualized or group delivery. Certain therapeutic approaches have been efficacious for reducing BP in subjects with hypertension: transcendental meditation (TM) (a single-component, individualized therapy), cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) (a multi-component, individualized therapy) and, more recently, contemplative meditation (a multi-component, group therapy). [57]

**1.6 Need of the study:**
We live in a society plagued by stress and there is no escape. Stress has become an essential part of an individual’s success, and is seen as modern society’s illness by professionals from different sectors. It has an effect on people’s behavior, communication and efficiency. Stress was described as a relationship between individuals and their environment that is appraised as dangerous and evaluated as beyond their ability to deal with stress. If properly handled both challenge and excitement keep us alive and alert. If allowed to get out of control it can become a killer resulting in debility and low performance in all areas of life. Individuals are integrated with the environment they come from as the world shapes the self and the Self-shapes the world. Stress is based on what the individual perceives as stressful, meaning attached to stress, the individual’s experience of stress, his /her experience is unique. The choices made to take an action to relieve the self of stress in terms of change in one’s life style. We also need to understand stress and whether there is diversity in stress.
It is important to understand stress experienced by the patients as a nurse. What stress means to the patient and how it is affecting his/her health. As nursing looks to provide a healthy way of life for the client, where by he/she can function to the optimum capacity. The individual may take action in reducing the adverse effects that would hinder his/her functioning. If stress affects the individual’s health it is because we invite eighty percent of stress while twenty percent of the stress could be genuine, due to suffering from an incurable disease, pain or trauma… Stress is not always bad, in fact; minimum level of stress is required to lead a productive and creative life, which can contribute, to a healthy life. Therefore, it is important to recognize stressors so that one can cope, up with and or modify one’s life style either to deal with the stressors or adapt positive coping strategies.

Stress and coping are often studied in tandem. They can be considered from a risk and resiliency framework, with stress increasing risk for adverse outcomes, and effective coping behaviors providing resiliency to mitigate the likelihood of adverse outcomes and potentially enhance growth, Blount, Bunke, & Zaff, 2000a,b[58,59]; Carrey & Ungar, 2007[60]; Kazdin, Kraemer, Kessler, Kupfer, & Offord, 1997,[61]. Events that are perceived as stressful are antecedents to coping. Stress can be defined as an event or experience that expends the resources of an individual. In general, greater stress is associated with poorer outcomes [e.g., health/immune functioning, Kiecolt-Glaser, McGuire, Robles, & Glaser, 2002[62]; psychosocial functioning, Kanner, Feldman, Weinberger, & Ford, 1987[63]; Santa Lucia et al., 2000,]; Stress encompasses both objective (e.g., an observable distressing event, such as chronic illness or divorce) and subjective dimensions (e.g., perceived threat). Some measures of stress focus only on the objective stress experience (e.g., Coddington Life Events Scales; Coddington, 1972)[65], whereas others incorporate the stressful event and the perceptions of the impact of the event (e.g., Children's Hassles and Uplifts Scale; Kanner et al., 1987)[63]. It is noteworthy that ineffective reactions to stressful events may compound the potentially deleterious effects of those events.

Re-defining of stress, within the Indian culture and more specifically keeping in mind the culture of Mumbai where constant reference has been made in the media that Mumbaikars bounce back after stressful situations in their need for survival. This is because most of the Mumbaikars who live here have adopted this city and made it their home, as they have come here to earn a livelihood from different states. This study would then probably reflect the cultural mediation in the experience of stress, which might be that stress is a set of
neurological and physiological reactions that serves as an adaptive function in the environmental, social, and cultural values and structures within which the individual acts upon.

1.7 Problem statement:
Effect of stress on life style of individuals and measures adopted to reduce stress.

1.8 Objectives of the study:
1. To identify the concept of stress among adult individuals living in Mumbai.
2. To identify the factors associated to stress among the individuals living in Mumbai.
3. To identify the perceived effect of stress on selected aspects of individuals life.
4. To find the measures adopted to cope with factors contributing to stress.
5. To establish the relationship between perceived effects of stress and changes in life style.

1.9 Operational Definition:-
The Concept of Stress:
Concept: According to the Thesaurus Dictionary ‘Concept’ means an idea, notion, abstract, view.
Stress: According to Thesaurus Dictionary ‘Stress’ means strain, pressure, tension, worry, anxiety.
Concept of Stress: In this study ‘concept of stress’ is the meaning awarded to a situation that causes the individual to strain or go under pressure that would interfere with his /her functioning.

The Perceived Effect:
Perceived: According to the Oxford Dictionary ’Perceived effect’ is to apprehend especially through sight or observe or apprehend with the mind, understand or regard mentally in a specific manner.
Effect: According to the Thesaurus Dictionary ‘effect’ is, to bring about, carry out, cause, produce, create, gives rise to...
Perceived Effect: In this study ‘perceived effect’ means the mentally understood situation as being stressful and which bring about a change that could be positive or negative as expressed by the individuals.
**Cope:** According to the Thesaurus Dictionary ‘cope’ means succeed, survive, carry on, get through, and come through.

**Cope:** In this study ‘cope’ means to satisfactorily deal with situation causing stress.

**The Change in life style:**

**Life style** According to the Thesaurus Dictionary ‘life style’ means way of life, way of living, and manner of living.

**Change:** Means variation, alteration, substitution one for another, alter.

**Change in life style:** In this study, ‘change in life style’ means to alter the perceived effect of stress to be able to function efficiently.

**Selected aspects:** In this study selected aspects means family relationship, occupation/career, emotional, spiritual, health, social and physical wellbeing.

**Selected variables.** In this study selected variables mean age, gender, education, occupation, position in family.

**1.10 Assumptions:**

- Individual experience stress when they are not able to keep up with the expectations.
- Individuals experience stress when their ability does not match the demands placed by their jobs, family, relationships...
- The level of stress will vary from individual to individual and will also be influenced by the individual’s own personality.
- Lack of information, inadequate support system, failure to seek timely help when faced with crises causes stress in individuals.
- Positive living helps individuals to cope with stress.

**1.11 Delimitation:** The study is based on verbal responses of individuals living in Mumbai.

**1.12 Limitation:** The Perception of stress is subjective in nature.
1.13 Conceptual Framework:

Concept is defined as complex mental formulation of an object, property or event that is derived from individual perception and experience. Concepts are critical to knowledge development in that they describe structure and provide building blocks of conceptual framework. These concepts are linked together to express the relationship between them. A model is used to denote the symbolic representation of concepts.

A conceptual framework or a model is made up of concepts, which are the mental images of the phenomena. Conceptual framework is interrelated concepts or abstractions that are assembled together in some rational scheme by virtue of their relevance to a common theme. Conceptual framework, conceptual models or conceptual schemes represent a less formal attempt at organizing phenomena than theories. As the name implies, conceptual framework deal with abstractions (concepts) that are assembled by virtue of their relevance to a common theme. Both conceptual schemes and theories use concepts as building blocks, however, conceptual frameworks can serve as a springboard for the generation of research hypothesis and can provide an important context for scientific research. [66]

"Parse's model views a human being as an open system freely able to choose from among a series of options in giving meaning to a situation." (Polit & Henderson p.103)

1.13.1 Theoretical concept: Human Becoming Theory-‘Rosemarie Rizzo Parse’.


About the man:

- The human is coexisting while co-constituting rhythmical patterns with the universe.
- The human is open, freely choosing meaning in situation, bearing responsibility for decisions.
- The human is unitary, continuously co-constituting patterns of relating.
- The human is transcending multi-dimensionally with the possible.
About Becoming:

- Becoming is unitary human living health.
- Becoming is a rhythmically co-constituting human-universe process.
- Becoming is the human’s patterns of relating to value priorities.
- Becoming is an inter-subjective process of transcending with the possible.
- Becoming is unitary human’s emerging.

Three Major Assumptions of Human Becoming or the three abiding themes: meaning, rhythmicity, and transcendence

**Meaning:** Human Becoming is freely choosing personal meaning in situations in the inter-subjective process of living value priorities. **Man’s reality is given meaning through lived experiences.** Man and environment co-create.

**Rhythmicity**

Human Becoming is co-creating rhythmical patterns of relating in mutual process with the universe. Man and environment co-create (imaging, valuing, and language) in rhythmical patterns

**Transcendence**

Human Becoming is co-transcending multi-dimensionally with emerging possibilities’. It refers to reaching out and beyond the limits that a person sets. One constantly transforms, ‘Human Becoming Theory’, which includes Totality Paradigm: Man is a combination of biological, psychological, sociological and spiritual factors.

**Simultaneity Paradigm:** Man is a unitary being in continuous, mutual interaction with the environment.

**Nursing paradigms and Parse's theory:**

**Person:** Open being who is more than and different from the sum of the parts

**Environment:** Everything in the person and his experiences. Inseparable, complimentary to and evolving with

**Health:** Open process of being and becoming. Involves synthesis of values
Nursing: A human science and art that uses an abstract body of knowledge to serve people

Nursing Practice: A transformative approach to all levels of nursing differs from the traditional nursing process, particularly in that it does not seek to “fix” problems. Ability to see patient’s perspective allows nurse to “be with” patient and guide them toward desired health outcomes. Nurse-person relationship co-creates changing health patterns

1.13.2 Conceptual frame work for the study:
Researchers have directed attention towards stress which results from the occupation, relationships etc. Jobs and interpersonal relationships to a large extent is important to individuals providing a sense of satisfaction, self esteem and status, yet at the same time both can lead to dissatisfaction and undermine an individual’s physical and mental well-being.

Stressors are situations or events with a potential for taxing a person’s pattern of daily functioning. Hence, the investigator felt it would be best to base this study on the theoretical framework of ‘Rosemarie Rizzo Parse. This theory focuses on the life of the individual as lived by using various options and giving meaning to situations and experiences. The individual is seen freely moving with the universal rhythmic patterns and tries to maintain a state of health and quality of life.

Therefore, the investigator attempts to understand the lived experiences of the people of Mumbai, identifying the issues, situations and events that cause stress, be it on work front, in social life or at home. The coping used and lifestyle modifications made to overcome the effect of stress on themselves. The researcher felt it would be most appropriate to base the study on the theoretical concept, “Theory of Man-Living-Healthy (1981) developed by Parse. As her theory focuses on the quality of life as it is described and lived, through the understanding of the three themes meaning, rhythmicity and transcendence. In this study the participants are, individuals who freely choose to provide ‘meaning’ from a personal frame of reference to the situations or events from his/her own experiences of stress. Reality is given meaning through lived experiences by the individual /People co-participating in creating what is real for them and living their values in a given way.

Individuals try to control the effects of their experiences, by creating a conducive environment for their existence. Flowing process of cadence that changes with new experiences the individual co-creates rhythmical patterns as they are relating to the
‘environment’, in which they live by assigning value, and developing a language to communicate with those around them and creating an image to support their survival.

This would be unique to the individuals living in Mumbai as majority of the individuals are not the original descendants of this land, but have come to the city for the purpose of earning a livelihood. They have come from different cultural backgrounds, speak different languages, have their own specific values; yet they are bonded with a bond, which crosses the individual’s differences. They have developed a culture, language and value system, which is very Indian, yet stands out as a unique style ‘Bambai / Mumbai style’ that takes with it all and blends tolerance and support to those who come to the ‘City of their dreams’. Shifting views from the familiar to the unfamiliar, viewing ideas, objects, and situations in a new light.

The individuals of Mumbai constantly reach out beyond themselves in enhancing their potential in a bid to constantly improve their life style and bearing responsibility for their decisions. The individuals are constantly ‘transforming’ themselves socially, psychologically and spiritually to fit into an environment away from home and by making a new home; hence reflects what Parse states, “that man is a unitary being constantly, in mutual interaction with the environment.”

The ‘nursing paradigms’ for this study provides the nurse with an understanding of the ‘person’ coming to the health care sector as an open being, who takes in every experience into his/her system. The experience of stressors which contributes to the growth of the individual is inseparable and compliments the changes and decisions made for de-stressing themselves. Health refers to the values that the individual adopts and the changes made to deal with the stressors to remain healthy through various measures. Nursing is the art of understand the individuals living in Mumbai and the stress that affects their health and allows seeing patient in Mumbai from their perspective so that the nurses can help guide patients to a desired outcome of good health.

1.14 Scope of the study:

The findings of the study may help to identify the conditions precipitated by stress. The study may also help the community nurses to provide /teach patients in the community to identify
factors contributing to stress and help them to make the necessary changes in their life style so as to prevent the adverse effects of stress and burn out which results in a failure to live a productive life.

The Research would enhance the understanding of the human lived experience, health, quality of life and quality of nursing practice with a frame of reference to people in Mumbai. This study would expand the theory of human becoming. Build new nursing knowledge about universal (Mumbai) lived experiences which may ultimately contribute to health and quality of life.

1.14.1 Congruence with personal values: Nurses in Mumbai would probably be able to subscribe to this worldview to truly use it to help their patients look into themselves for inner strength or provide the required support.

1.14.2 Congruence with other professional values: Complements and competes with other health care professionals’ values, exoteric foundations, esoteric utility.

1.14.3 Congruence with social values: As nurses fulfill the society’s expectations of nursing role, it will provide social significance to the profession of nursing and makes a substantial difference in the lives of the clients and nurses.
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