Chapter I

Introduction

There has been an enormous change in social roles in the last 50 years. This has created new problems and necessitated innovative ways for coping them. The ways by which individuals cope with stress largely depend on social norms. In human society social norms largely specify the socially acceptable ways of coping. But with social change, the old social norms are proving ineffective in dealing with the new problems. There are vast changes in every sphere of human life like changes in family structure, entrance of women in to the labour force, social mobility and racial integration, etc., which have led to the new challenges. To meet them there have been no socially prescribed ways. Moreover, old ways of coping are not suitable for the rapidly changing scenario (Aldwin, 2007).

Modernization and globalisation have led to changes in life style and nature of work and thus there is an increase in stress in general and stress in employment in particular. Convergence of globalized economy, political and socio-cultural services and rapid technological expansion have an impact on our contemporary work arrangements (Dollard, 2003). This new trend has led to a great makeover of the job market and has also affected the nature of employment and employees’ health. Generally, it’s been observed that as a result there has been decentralization, flexible work environment, outsourcing and a range of variations in the nature and condition of work on the one hand. Whereas on the other side employees have been exposed to occupational hazards (Rantanen, 1999) linked to poor working conditions followed by high incidence of occupational diseases and accidents.

Due to rapid scientific and technological advancement, modern working style changes frequently and puts extra demand on workers to adjust to new ways of working, to learn new skills and to meet the increasing demand in the forms of quality of work and higher productivity (Leka, Griffiths and Cox, 2004). Moreover, modern life style in developing countries leads to job insecurity, competition for employment, less co-operation from colleagues and shorter time to socialize which put people under constant worries. Though the theme of work related stress has been popular among academicians and practitioners for many years, rapid changes due to innovations and advancement have made it even more popular (Irene and Karin, 2007).
I. Components of work/occupational stress

According to World Health Organization (Leka, et al., 2004) people may feel stressed when their resources in the form of their comprehension and capabilities about the situation are found to be inadequate to cope with the hassles and difficulties in environment.

Similarly, Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) opine that the reaction of an individual can be considered as stressful when he perceives demand from his environment difficult to meet with the available resources. It is the situation where his ‘self’ is destructively affected. As far as occupational stress is concerned, it can be defined as an inability of an individual to meet the demands from job due to the imbalance in the ‘person-environment’ perceptions. It is the situation where individuals’ job performance, both physical and mental health, is affected poorly (Holmlund-Rytkonen and Strandvik, 2005). Thus, one can summarise that work related stress is a reaction at physical, emotional and behavioral level when people feel that the demands on job become challenging and cannot be convened by their available recourses.

Further, according to Dollar et al., 2001 work stress is transitional arousal state between objective stressors and strain where strain is reaction to the condition of stress. Similarly, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress is a situation of mismatch between primary appraisal (perceived demand) and secondary appraisal (perceived ability to cope in relation to available resources).

Based on an exploration of the above stated descriptions of stress, the following can be the component of stress process. For any individual to be in a stress situation there should be possible sources/ factors of stress (called as stressors). These factors are found to be strenuous in relation to available resources (which can act as mediating or moderating factors as well as can be different for different individuals) to an individual. Because of these stressors, an individual experiences a stress situation of which strain is a consequence.

Figure 1.1 shows that when environmental factors (stressors related to work context) are inferred (through primary and secondary appraisal) by an individual (cognitive interpretation), they may lead to stress. Through all this process of inference of assessing the stressful situation coping starts. Additionally, in the process moderator variable may deliberate either risk or protection to
individuals facing a high level of stress. A mediator functions as an intermediate factor between stress and well-being.

Figure 1.1 *Components of Stress Process*

This chapter deals with the main components of stress process (stressors, stress theories and coping). Moreover, there is an account of the changing nature of work stressors in contemporary work arrangement, comprehensive comparison of all stress theories/models, emphasis on individual variations in the experience of occupational stress and its coping.

**II. Stressors**

Work or occupational stressors can be explained as the circumstances which are possibly capable of generating the state of stress in an individual. These stressors can be physical or psychological in nature or can interact with each other and can affect physical and mental health of an individual. Physical stressors may contain biological, chemical and radiological factors, whereas psycho-social stressors may include such features of work context that can possibly produce psychological, social or physical harm (Dollard, 2003). Cooper and Davidson, 1987 (cited in Miller, 2000) developed a model of occupational stress wherein they identified five key sources of stress at work place. They are represented in Figure 1.2.
In the model of occupational stress proposed by Cooper and Davidson, 1987 (cited in Miller, D., 2000) these five key sources of stress form a work context embedded in to the hassles from home, social norms and individual context, which result in stress when the coping responses of an individual fails. Further, Cooper and Davidson, 1987 (cited in Miller, 2000), explain each stressors category as follows:

**Factors intrinsic to the job:** They constitute the degree of acceptance of job by a person and job satisfaction felt by him. It is affected by factors like work load, issues related to autonomy at work, monotonous work, shift work and utilization of skills and training at work place.

**Relationships at work place:** They constitute overall social relation in the work place, for instance, relations with workmates, supervisors and junior staff.

**Career development:** It is mainly concerned with the feelings of job security, promotion and contentment with the salary.

**Role in organization:** It includes factors like role ambiguity and role conflict, organizational restrictions and accountability for persons.

**Organisational structure and climate:** Organisational structure includes matters related to intricacy, hierarchy, complexity, rigidity, and the roles played by other workmates in an
organization. Poor communications, lack of group work at work place, political grouping and
dearth of cooperation at work place are included under organisational nature.

Later Cox et al., 2000 (cited in Dollard, 2003) suggested ten different categories related to
stressful characteristics of nature of work under three comprehensive titles, namely, job
characteristics and nature of work, social and organizational context of work and individual risk
factors. These categories are further explained by citing particular circumstances under each of
them (Figure 1.3).

Continued…
### Job characteristics and nature of work

**Job Contents/demands** - all sorts of demands (physical, emotional) from the job, monotonous nature of work, or uncertainty, lack of opportunities to utilise skills and knowledge.

**Physical environment and equipment issues** - poor environmental conditions (space, light, thermal, etc.) or inadequate or faulty work equipment.

**Work schedule** - shift working, inflexible work schedules, unpredictable hours, long or unsocial hours.

**Workload/workplace** - work overload or underload, machine pacing, time pressure, deadlines.

**Job control** - low participation in decision-making, lack of control over workloads.

### Social and organisational context of work

**Organisational culture and function** - poor communication, low levels of support for problem-solving and personal development, lack of definition on organizational objectives.

**Interpersonal relationships at work** - social or physical isolation, poor relationships with superiors, interpersonal conflict, lack of social support.

**Role in organisation** - role ambiguity, role conflict, responsibility.

**Career development** - career stagnation and uncertainty, underpromotion or overpromotion, poor pay, job insecurity, low social value of work.

### Individual risk factors

**Individual differences** - coping styles, personality, hardiness.

**Home-work interface** - conflicting demands of work and home, low support at home, dual career problems.
II. A Changing work/occupational stressors- Move from safety and hygienic hazards to psycho-social factors

Traditionally occupational stress was generally associated with physical and chemical stressors at work. Major occupational health problems were related to physical, chemical and biological hazards to the employees. In today’s world, the need to be global as a strategic solution for cost cutting has created new forms of employment, management systems and modern work time arrangements with an increased pressure to deliver best for higher productivity (Harma, and Ilmarinen, 1999). As a result, there is a shift from material to mental and emotional environment. New challenges like flexible employment and psycho-social factors affecting the physical, mental and emotional health of the employees have surfaced. There are variations in these new challenges due to increasing social inequalities (Joan, Carles, Benavides, Amable, and Perejodar, 2002)

In view of the changing social, economic and political circumstances, it is essential to accept that features and frontiers of these contemporary work demands (stressors) are going to change and advance continuously. It also necessitates our own preparation to understand work environment and issues of individuals who have to cope with it (Dewe, O’Driscoll, and Cooper, 2010).

These changes are leading to increased workload, longer working hours and demand for high organisational performance. Moreover, employees in full-time jobs experience increased pressure and faster pace (Dollard, 2003).

As reported by Dollard, (2003), there is a beginning of over-employment in the form of multiple tasking, pressures to learn new skills and update oneself to compete with increasing work demands. There is also an increasing number of precarious jobs. This has resulted in role ambiguity and role conflict, leading in turn to work stress and illness.

Along with time, overload includes not only quantity and its time magnitudes but also counts for proficiency of work with decreasing autonomy and absence of suitable resources to accomplish the given work task. Quality dimension of work overload means more demands in terms of skill refining, constant learning to meet intricacies of growing technology and cognitive
demands of job for professional growth (O’ Driscoll and O’ Driscoll, 2008 cited in Dewe, et al., 2010).

There are reports of changes in work arrangements in the form of organisational streamlining by downsizing as result of recession. But it gives rise to issues of more work competence (Dollard, 2003), less work autonomy and rigid work arrangements leading work-home life conflict. Moreover, ambiguous organizational hierarchies and delineation of job boundaries are in the form of work intensification (Burchell et al., 1999 cited in Dewe, et al., 2010) leading to both deteriorating physical and mental health (Dollard, 2003).

According to Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2005 (cited in Dewe, et al., 2010) violence at work is also increasing and is common across all types of work force. Relationships within organization are becoming multi-faceted, sometimes leading to troublesome, anxious and violent behaviour which includes verbal violence and harassment at work. Moreover, there is decreasing demarcation between applicable forms of management and inappropriate inter-personal styles. Eighty per cent of jobs where ‘clients contacts’ are the core of the work, violence has reached high prevalence. These kinds of work harassments may lead to high levels of occupational stress (UNISON 2005, cited in Dewe, et. al., 2010).

III. Work/Occupational stress models and theories

Work stress theories/models are essential to discuss as they attempt to describe the stress process through the comprehensible propositions (Cooper, 1998 cited in Miller, 2000). The earlier models of stress, either in the context of work stress or embedded in universal context, failed to explain the complexities of stress process. More specifically, they were unable to integrate cognitive fundamentals of the process which intermediate perception of stressors and consequently responses to specific stressors (Miller, 2000). At the same time, there were unclear classifications of work stress as there were numerous work stress theories (major ones are discussed further in the chapter). All these theories mainly differ in their focus in regard to work stress, but overall composition is overlapping (Dollard, 2000).

Cox et al., 2000 (cited in Dollard, 2000), classified progressing work stress theories into two categories, viz., interactional theories of stress and transactional theories of stress. The former are concerned about the structural aspect of the person-environment equation in a stress process,
whereas the latter focus on the cognitive process of a person-environment equation where appraisal of demands as stressors to produce stress and coping responses is central to the equation. Transactional theories are taken into account individual differences in the overall appraisal of stress and coping.

The stress theories are presented in tabular form and discussed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Stress theories under each category</th>
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</table>
| III.A | Stimulus/Response models | III.A. 1) Stimulus-based models of stress  
|      |            | III.A. 2) Response-based models of stress |
| III.B | Interactional models of work stress | III.B. 1) Demand Control Support Model |
| III.C | Transactional models of work stress | III.C. 1) Effort-Reward Imbalance Model  
|      |            | III.C. 2) The Cognitive Theory of Psychological Stress and Coping  
|      |            | III.C. 3) Cox’s Transactional Model of Occupational Stress |

**III. A Stimulus/Response models**

**III. A.1 Stimulus-based models of stress**

As described by Cox, (1981) (cited in Miller, 2000), stimulus-based models of stress postulate that stress reaction or strain occur when external stresses have their action on individuals. Further, he explains that certain a degree of stress is tolerated by every individual because of the development of resistance through learning from such situations and from genetic makeup of the individual for stress. Being neutral to individual difference in the form of cognitive appraisal of the stress situation (i.e., psychological medication process in the person-environment situation), Cox, 1981 (cited in Miller, 2000) termed these stimulus-based models as engineering models of stress. Stimulus-based models assume that after a certain point, there is tolerance to the stress surface which can results in physical and mental damage to a person.

**III. A.2 Response-based model of stress**

Selye (1956) (cited in Miller, 2000) proposed the concept of General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) for a stress reaction. He describes that a source of stress does not hold importance as the biological response induced by it should universally be the same for all living animals. On the basis of such a proposition, Selye (1956) (cited in Miller, 2000) describes stress as the
physiological response of the body to the demand (stressor) made up on it. Further, he explains this response in terms of GAS as steps/sequence of the reactions taken together. This progression of reaction/response to the stress is presented in diagrammatic from in Figure 1.4:

**Figure 1.4 Stages of General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)**

**Stage 1 Alarm reaction**

In this stage stressors are recognised and body goes to an alarm stage, where body gets ready to face the stressors by the ‘adrenaline rush’, i.e, the release of adrenaline hormone through adrenal glands. It happens as the hypothalamus triggers the production of this hormone after recognition of the stressor. It is the stage where body gets ready for ‘fight or flight’ i.e. ‘Fight, to defend one’s self -or flight, to run and get away’.

**Stage 2 Resistance**

In this stage stress hormone levels may return to normal. But the body focuses its resources to battle the stressor and tries to cope with continuous exposure to the stressors. It starts adapting to the needs of environment but with the depleting resources, it gets weakened.

**Stage 3 Exhaustion**

Finally, due to continues exposure of the stressor, adaptation energy of the of the body gets drained. It may return to symptoms of alarm stage, but the overuse of the adrenaline hormone leads to adrenal failure. This can result into stress-related illness.

Miller (2000) expanded the model given by Selye by including the psychological factors as mediators in stress response. According to Kagan and Levi (1971) (cited in Miller, 2000), repeated that the exposure to stressors may interact with genetic makeup of an individual and with his experiences of such situations. These repeated exposures prepare an individual for adaptations in stress situations. Further, Miller, (2000) evaluated the model and stated two gaps: (a) the model did not consider the variability in stress responses (any stressor can evoke a particular stress response), and (b) the model is not able to differentiate between the stressors and stress responses as physical and mental illness produced through stressors can itself act as a stressor for an individual.
III.B Interactional models of work stress

III.B.1 Demand Control Support (DCS) Model

The demand/control model of work stress was proposed by Karasek and his colleagues during 1980s. According to this model stress occurs by the joint effect of two factors of job context, viz., one, the demands posed by the job/occupation and second, the decision latitude, i.e., decision-making freedom (control over the job) by the particular individual who is facing the job demands (Dollard, 2000). On the basis of different permutations of these two factors of job context (job demand and job decision latitude), the model predicts physical and mental health risks related to job stress (i.e., job strain proposition) and active/passive job performance (i.e., active learning proposition) (Karasek, n.d.).

This model interprets job demands as the initiators of normal arousal in an individual, i.e., these demands place an individual in a motivated or energized state. It postulates job decision latitude as constraint from job environment which can be mediated to release this energy or restrict it. High decision latitude allows using effective coping responses, whereas low decision latitude leads to accumulation of unresolved strain which further results in to job related physical and mental ill-health (Karasek, 1979; Dollard, 2000).

Figure 1.5 depicted represents various types of job stress by different permutations of job demands and job decision latitudes. Depicted diagonals ‘A’ and ‘B’ represent situations where the aspects of job diverge and match respectively.

Figure 1.5 Demand Control Support (DCS) Model

Job strain hypothesis and Active learning hypothesis as depicted in Figure 1.5 when job demands are high and job decision latitude is low (i.e., upper right cell marked as ‘high strain job’) then there occurs undesirable stress responses in the form of anxiety, depression and other physical and mental health ill effects. When control on job is high along with high demand (i.e., lower right cell marked as ‘active job’), then one can predict active learning and effective coping by individuals, probably with an assumption that high freedom to take decisions in the given task allows them to take demand as a challenge and thus energy is aroused and utilized for the effective problem solving (Karasek, n.d.). The model also predicts the situation where an individual can have low demand and low decision latitude (i.e., upper left cell marked as ‘passive job’) which create passive and low strain jobs. This situation may lead to disuse/loss of learned skills. Under such jobs, social detachment increases gradually.

**Expansion of Demand control model to demand control support model**

Later Johnson (1986) added social support hypothesis to the demand control model. Addition of this third dimension initiated a need to evaluate support received by the individuals from colleagues and supervisors to be able to manage work stress (Karasek and Theorell 1990; Johnson and Hall 1988 cited in Karasek, R., n.d.). According to Johnson (1986), jobs having high demand, low decision latitude and low social support, can be a big risk to the health of employees. Hence, the aspect of social support at work becomes important in redesigning of the jobs to be conducive for employees. Moreover, demand control support model examines structural aspect of interaction of a person with his/her work environment. This evaluation puts it under psychological interaction model of stress (Dollard, 2000).

**III. C Transactional models of work stress**

**III. C.1 Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) Model**

Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) model is useful for predicting the ill-effects of work stress on employees’ health. It originated from medical sociology (Marmot, Siegrist, and Theorell, 2006 cited in Jonge, 2012). It is considered to be one of the transactional models of stress in the sense that it evaluates interaction between individuals coping resources and environmental limitations or risk (Dollard, 2000). It was developed by Siegrist and his colleagues (Siegrist, and Weber, 1986; Siegrist, 1996 cited in Jonge, 2012).
ERI model predicts that work related stress or work related profits may depend on the mutual relationship between efforts (i.e., job demands faced by the employee or hard work he/she puts in to the job) and rewards (i.e., money, esteem and job security/career opportunities) given by the organisation (or society at large) to the employee (Jonge, 2012). ERI model focuses on rewards rather job control. It predicts stress when there is imbalance between the efforts put by the employee and the rewards he/she received. Imbalance can be measured as a ratio of efforts/rewards (Dollard, 2000). Figure 1.6 depicts the ERI model.

Figure 1.6 Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) Model


ERI Model further includes extrinsic and intrinsic efforts. Extrinsic efforts are situational that are similar to job demands of DCS model, whereas intrinsic efforts refer to motivational instinct present in the employee in the form of his/her excessive commitment to job and the high need for approval, along with his/her coping characteristics (this pattern is referred as over-commitment). This over-commitment can mediate or moderate the imbalance between demands and rewards (Dollard, 2000). This consideration of individual characteristics (over-commitment) of an employee brings individual difference in the experiences of said imbalance and here ERI model differs from DCS model of stress. According to the model, those employees who are over committed may respond with high stress reaction to this imbalance as compared with others (Jonge, 2012).
III. C.2 Cognitive appraisal of psychological stress and coping

Cognitive theory of stress (and coping) focuses on the imbalance between perceived demands placed on the individual and her/his coping resources. This model is developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), where stress is seen as the mismatch between primary appraisal (perceived demand) and secondary appraisal (perceived ability to cope). More precisely, it is a mismatch between the primary appraisals and secondary appraisal. They further explain that there should be some antecedents for the evaluation of this person-environment equation which can be understood through the environmental and personal variables. Environmental variables constitute demands, constraints, opportunities and culture, whereas the personal variables include goals and goal hierarchies, beliefs about self and the world and availability of personal resources.

III. C.3 Transactional Model of occupational stress by Cox

This model (Cox, 1978 cited in Mark, and Smith, 2008) is similar to that of cognitive appraisal of stress and coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman. Transactional model of occupational stress comprises of five stages of stress process. It also conceptualises stress as a mismatch of perceptions of demands with that of coping ability in relation to the available resources.

In the model the first stage indicates the presence of environmental demands, whereas in the second stage the individuals start perceiving these very demands. In the third stage mental and physical changes starts occurring due to these perceived stressors. This stage also involves the secondary appraisal of the situation to cope with it with the help from available resources. The fourth stage sees the outcome of the stress and coping process undertaken by individuals. At last in the fifth stage one sees the feedback of all the stages. Though the model is similar to that of Lazarus and Folkman’s cognitive appraisal of stress, it differs in having a clearer structure, ability to predict well about occupational health and individual difference in the process. But like cognitive-relational approach transactional model proposed by Cox it is tough to apprehend empirically (Mark and Smith, 2008)

IV. Review of presented work stress models and theories

As per the review of literature (Mark and Smith, 2008), limitations and comparisons of the above discussed theories are presented in Figure 1.7.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Stress theories and models under each category</th>
<th>Comparison of stress models and theories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stimulus/Response models</td>
<td>Stimulus-based models of stress (developed by Cox, 1981 cited in Miller, 2000)</td>
<td>▪ Purely objective measures of environment conditions are inadequate. Moreover, same reaction can be produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response-based models of stress (developed by Selye, 1956)</td>
<td>▪ No difference between stressors and stress response.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Interactional models of work stress | Demand Control Support Model (developed by Karasek, 1979 and extended by Johnson, 1986)                           | ▪ Do not consider dynamic nature of present day work place (multiple stressors).  
  ▪ Do not consider individual difference in the response to job demands and health outcomes.  
  ▪ Assumptions in regard to stress process are oversimplified.  
  ▪ Definition of job demands considers only workloads.  
  ▪ Conceptualisation of job control is narrow, as high control is desirable but it may not be desirable for the individuals who are depended and having low sense of self-efficacy. |
| Transactional models of work stress | Effort-Reward Imbalance Model (developed by Siegrist, 1996 cited in Jonge, 2012)                              | ▪ Unlike DSC model, ERI considers individual difference in the form of intrinsic factors (i.e., over-commitment) in the way it focuses on the perception of the environment. But consideration to individual difference is not highly developed as compare with other transactional models.  
  ▪ ERI is not able to produce in detail job redesign but DSC model is able to give sketch of it.  
  ▪ Both the models DCS and ERI do not take into consideration cognitive mediation in a stress process, nor do they consider contextual factors in overall stress process. |
| Cognitive Theory of Psychological Stress and Coping (developed by Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) | ▪ Very complex and hard to considered all aspects empirically.  
  ▪ Moreover, by considering the stress as perceptual phenomenon reduces the possibility to redesign work environment.  
  ▪ With this notion of subjective perception of demands as stressors, problem lies with the individual and thus reorganization of the work processes can be avoided and all approaches can be directed to adapt the worker to the present work conditions which is practically immoral. |
V. Coping

After looking at the various stress theories, it is essential to discuss an important component of the stress process, i.e., coping. First, there is an attempt to understand construct of coping which includes person-based approaches to describe coping (psycho-analytic, coping styles/traits) and coping as a process.

Coping is concerned with the process by which individual manage their situations of stressful life. To a larger extent, coping can be understood in relation to stress. Moreover, coping can be considered as an indispensable feature of stress and emotional reactions. When an individual copes well, he/she may have low levels of stress or vice versa. So we need to understand the construct of coping and its process so as to understand the efforts for adaptation of chronic stress and to produce changing life situations (Lazarus, 1999).

V. A Person-based approach to define coping

The approach is composed of three schools, namely, psycho-analytic, personality trait and perceptual styles (Aldwin, 2007).

Psycho-analytic approach to understand coping

According to this approach, the construct of coping has its roots in the analysis of defence mechanisms. Defence mechanisms are the ways to resolve internal conflicts which arise due to conflict between the ‘Id’ and the ‘superego’. Through these defence mechanisms ego resolves the conflict in a socially acceptable way and gets control over the situation. Ego mediates the environmental and internal demands by either distorting the reality or by transforming the primitive demands (Freud, A., 1966 cited in Aldwin, 2007).

Coping as personality traits/style

This approach, in an attempt to understand coping, characterises the various coping styles/traits. This kind of characterisation or grouping of individuals under coping styles is clinically useful. But such personality approaches do not consider the environmental demands that may influence an individual’s behaviour. Personality does affect the perception of stress process and the use of coping, but simply dropping down the whole multi-faceted concept of stress and coping to personality trait would not be desirable (Aldwin, 2007).
V. B Coping as a process (cognitive approach for coping)

As a process coping has three main features. First, unlike trait approach coping is understood as what individual thinks or does. Moreover, whatever an individual thinks or does should be understood in his/her environmental context. Thus, in view of the cognitive approach coping is a conscious act on the part of an individual. He/she appraises the problem and then takes a decision about the ways to cope with it. Secondly, the more specifically is the defined context, the easier would be to link particular coping to that specific contextual demand (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Thirdly, in the coping process, it puts emphasis on ‘change’ according to which coping becomes a continuous process of change, both in judgments and activities, as the stressful encounter keeps unfolding. So it is a constantly changing process in which individuals experiment with different ways of coping at different times as per the changing status of person-environment relationships. This process of change is difficult to capture through static measure of a general trait or personality character (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

VI. Types of coping

There is an important difference between the coping styles and coping behaviours (strategies). Coping styles are steady or characteristic ways of dealing with the stress situations, whereas the coping behaviours (strategies) are directed to deal with specific stressors or stress situations (Dewe, Cox and Ferguson., 1993 as cites in Dewe, et al., 2010).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) in their model identify two types of coping strategies, viz., one, problem focused coping and second emotional focused coping. The primary distinction between the two is that the problem focused coping puts emphasis on actions/activities which would bring change in the situation. But emotion focused coping focuses more on a change in an individual’s perception and emotion in the context of person-environment situation. Further, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) subdivided emotion focused coping into sub-types as self-blame, wishful thinking, distancing (mentally isolating oneself from the stressor), focusing on positive aspects of the situation and use of tension reduction to relieve stress. Moreover various types of problem focused coping have also been identified as confrontive coping and problem solving through proper planning, seeking social support.
Skinner, Edge, Altman, and Sherwood (2003) also developed typologies of coping in their systematic review of literature. They analysed 400 different coping behaviours and came up with the hierarchical system of groups of coping which constitute 13 higher order groups or families of coping. They were problem-solving, support seeking, escape, distraction, cognitive restructuring, rumination, helplessness, social withdrawal, emotional regulation, information-seeking, negotiation, opposition and delegation.

VII. Significance of individual variances in stress and coping process

In the literature related to stress and coping (Mark and Smith, 2008), significance of individual difference is acknowledged. Factors of individual difference may act as mediators or moderators in the stress process. Mediators are the variables that only convey an effect, but do not change the effects qualitatively. An example of this is the primary appraisal which recognises stressors. Moderators may change the direction or strength of relationship between the other variables or can predict responses to stress. They affect secondary appraisal and coping processes (Cox and Ferguson, 1991 cited in Mark, and Smith, 2008).

According to Paye (1988) and Parkes (1994) (both cited in Mark and Smith, 2008), there are a number of variables which can be considered as factors of individual differences. They include personality, self-esteem, locus of control, coping style, trait anxiety, hardiness, type A, attribution style, demographics, expectations, preferences, commitment, health-related factors and abilities and skills. Further, it is necessary to study these individual differences in relation to stress and coping process. This would assist in developing person and environment focused interventions and in gaining more clarity about the effect of stress (Parkes, 1994, cited in Mark and Smith, 2008).

VIII. Theoretical framework for present research

After discussing the major constructs of present research (stressors, stress and coping), cognitive appraisal of psychological stress and coping given by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) was adopted to have a theoretical framework for the present research and to develop a conceptual understanding on its basis. This is discussed in Section II of Chapter III (Page 48-51).
IX. Management of occupational stress

Irene and Karin (2007) proposed five-step process for preventing work stress. These five steps are as follows:

In the first step, they suggested identification of signs of work stress and proposed to have preliminary action for those signs. In the second step, they carried out an analysis of risk factors and proposed risk groups. Next, on the basis of the above identifications, action plan should be prepared. In the fourth step, strategies to implement the action plan need to be developed. In the fifth phase of prevention of work stress, they suggested evaluation of the implemented plan. They further added that all the while during the process of managing work stress, involvement of workers should be ensured, as they could give correct and specific information about their work and difficulties related to it. Moreover, it is desirable to include family support in the process to address conflicting demands between work and family.

Irene and Karin (2007) emphasised that solutions and action related to prevention of work stress should aim to bring in necessary changes in the organisational culture and environment along with the individual (worker) focused interventions. However, the results of individual/worker focused programmes could be short-lived and even fail if organisational environment or culture is not rectified accordingly.

Wooten, Kim and Fakunmohu (2011) point out that in the management of work stress there should be greater emphasis on supportive work environment which could be sought from colleagues and supervisors and in having financial gains during employment. Further, the literature hints at the same point in the case of social workers, pointing out that the assistance from co-workers is indeed helpful to social workers in managing their work stress. However, in addition to it, they are found coping much better when they receive support from their supervisors than from their colleagues (Hopkins, 2002 cited by Wooten, et al., 2011)

Wooten et al. (2011) firstly indicated the shortage of literature, particularly on the management of work stress of the social workers. However, they made a point that social workers should keep enhancing their knowledge about their working environment, work ethics and related laws. They should be also disciplined in recoding their work and conducting evidence-based practices.
X. Chapter Scheme

- **Chapter I Introduction** gives information on contemporary occupational scenario in globalized world, stressors, changing nature of occupational stressors, sources of stress in an occupation, stress and coping theories/models, individual differences in the process of coping and need of the study. Thereafter the following chapters are presented in the thesis.

- **Chapter II Social work profession in India** is specifically related to social work profession and impact of globalisation on it, implications for Indian social work practice, professional status of social work in India, occupational stress in social work profession, sources of stress in it, coping of professional social workers, individual differences on the basis of age, work experience and work settings, and role of social support in the process of occupational stress.

- **Chapter III Research methodology** elaborates on the rationale for the present study. It explains the theoretical framework and conceptual map as well as details about research design, research paradigm, operational definition of key concepts, objectives, research questions, along with the area of study tools and plan of analysis.

- **Analysis of chapters**- There are four analytical chapters (Chapters IV, V, VI and VII)
  - Chapter IV contains a profile of the trained social workers.
  - Chapter V covers stressors as perceived by trained social workers (along with individual variation in the perception of stressors)
  - Chapter VI deals with occupational stress among trained social workers (along with individual variations in experiencing this stress).
  - Chapter VII discusses the ways of coping used by trained social workers (along with individual variation in use in these ways of coping). This chapter further explores the relation of occupational stress and coping.

These chapters contain analysis of data to achieve the objectives of the study. This chapter includes analysis of tables and their explanation. Each chapter is summarized at the end.

- **Chapter VIII** contains results and discussion in the light of empirical research and relevant literature. It also presents the suggestions given by trained social workers at training and organisational levels.
Chapter IX has conclusion and recommendations. Besides, it recommends areas for future research.

The progress of research is also presented in Figure 1.8.
Chapter I - Introduction
Concepts of the research were understood in the light of existing relevant literature, models and theories. Major concepts of research identified and discussed were
* Stressors
* Stress
* Coping
* Individual difference in the experiencing these phenomena.

Chapter II - Review of Literature (i.e. Social Work Profession in India).
The concepts were further described and identified specifically in relation to social work profession and occupation in the Indian context.

Chapter III - Research methodology
On the basis of the literature discussed under introduction and review of literature, the concepts were operationalized and were inter-related with the help of theoretical framework based on the theory given by Lazarus and Folkman (1984).
Once the concepts were operationalized they were developed further as variable in a conceptual map, where the line of enquiry was presented for the present research.
Further, research paradigm and design were developed for the present research which lead to objective and research questions of the present analysis.
At later stages relevant tools for data collection and analysis were planned on the basis of the type of data collected.

Analysis chapters
These chapters were presented keeping in view the main variable of the study
Chapter IV - Profile of the trained social workers (TSWs)
Chapter V - Analysis pertaining to stressors
Chapter VI - Analysis pertaining to occupational stress among TSWs
Chapter VII - Analysis pertaining to ways of coping. Further relation between stress and coping was also explored in the context of trained social workers.
All these variables were analysed for individual difference due to socio-demographic and occupational details of TSWs.

Chapter VIII - Major findings were discussed with the help of other available relevant research and literature. Here the views of trained social workers in the form of suggestions which should be taken care at training level and organisational levels to manage occupational stress are also presented.

Chapter IX - Conclusion and Recommendations.

Figure 1.8 Progress of research
XI. Conclusion

In this chapter an attempt been made to discuss the basic construct of the proposed research. This basic construct is conceptualised by keeping in view the process of stress and coping in relation to work. So the first concept is of factors acting as stressors that would instigate the process of stress (second construct) and coping (third construct). The discussion around stressors is been attempted through the logical framing of the points starting with the changing nature of contemporary work place, then proceeding towards the changing nature of work-related stressors. Further, the chapter moves to the intricacies of phenomenon of stress and coping through the constant descriptions and comparison of various theories and models of stress and coping. Additionally, research portraits about management of work stress. Lastly, the chapter highlights the progress of research in the diagrammatic form to make a precise presentation of the steps followed in the conceptualisation of the entire research. The next chapter is about the review of literature.