7.1 Background

Stress at work is a major problem; daily it negatively affects the lives of millions of workers. In terms of its effect on the economy of the nation, it seems to play an important role. Nationally, for example, the results of stress might be seen in overuse of medical and mental health facilities, or from reduced Gross National Product due to increased illnesses. Another indication of the importance placed upon stress is that some worker compensation laws now make an employing organisation liable for employee's mental as well as physical illnesses if they are due to or made more severe by any aspect of employment. Thus, the legal machinery of the nation may force even those organisations that would rather ignore the problem to see it as important.

The term 'Stress' has been used variously to refer to (i) stimulus (external force acting on the organism), (ii) response (changes in physiological functions), (iii) interaction (between an external force and the resistance opposed to it as in Biology), and, (iv) more comprehensive combinations of the above factors (Mason, 1975). Beehr & Bhagat (1985) defined stress as
a cognitive state in which an individual confronts a decision-making or problem-solving situation characterised by high levels of uncertainty, associated with obtaining important (i.e. positively valent) outcomes and, in which existence of such uncertainties are long in their duration.

Job Stress has been defined as a condition where in job related factors interact with the worker to change (disrupt or enhance) his/her Psychological or Physiological condition such that the Person (mind and body) is forced to deviate from normal functioning (Beehr & Newman, 1978). Kahn et al. (1964) were the earliest to draw attention to Organisational Stress in general and Role Stress in particular. Pareek's (1978) definition of 'Role' as a position occupied by a person as defined by the expectations of significant persons, including the role occupant, indicates that there are inherent problems in the performance of a Role and therefore, Stress is inevitable. It is through the Role that the individual and the organisation interact with each other (Pareek, 1979). Since the Concept of 'Role' is inextricably linked with 'expectations', the organisational factors and context assume importance due to their influence on the moulding of prescriptive and proscriptions associated with a particular position. In
this concept of role, several variables are involved - The self, the other roles, the expectations held by the self. It is difficult to imagine a situation in which there is no conflict among these variables. Several systems of classification have been used to categorise Organisational Role Stresses (Kahn & Quinn, 1970; Marshal & Cooper, 1979; Pareek, 1983).

The last decade's literature has revealed an increasing interest in understanding work stresses, particularly in their relationships with Psychological, Physiological and behavioral indices of employee strain. Research with different occupational groups has indicated relationships between Role Conflict/Ambiguity and such outcomes as low self-esteem, depression, job related tension or anxiety, dissatisfaction with job, productivity and various withdrawal behaviour (e.g. Agarwala & Malhan, 1981; Cooper & Arbose, 1984; Campbell, 1984; Ganster, Fusilier & Mayer, 1986; Jagdish, 1987; Mishra, 1987; Schuler, 1982; Sharma, 1987a). The association of Organisational Stress has been found with the characteristics of the interpersonal relations (e.g. Das, 1982; Fimian, 1986; Kaufman & Beehr, 1986; Leiter & Meechan, 1986; May & Revicki, 1985; and Scherry, 1981). The relationships between job characteristics such as autonomy, supervisory span, span of subordination and formalisation and Role Conflict have been observed (e.g. Albrecht,
Researchers have determined correlations between Role Conflict/Ambiguity and enduring properties of the person (e.g. Abdel Halim, 1980; Evans Palsane & Carrere, 1987; Glogow, 1986; Harigopal & Mavi Kumar, 1987; Marino & White, 1985). Researchers have not only demonstrated relationships between measures of job stress and job strain but have underscored the need to examine variables that may moderate stress-strain associations. The relationship of Role Conflict/Ambiguity to effective role responses has been shown to be moderated by certain personality characteristics and situational or job variables (e.g. Brief & Aldag, 1976; Beehr Walsh & Taber, 1976; Etzion, 1984; Harigopal, 1980; Srivastava, 1985; Abdel Halim, 1978; Marino & White, 1985; Schuler, 1975). These two sets of moderator variables have largely been treated as independent of each other and very few attempts have been made to investigate their joint and interactive effects even in the western countries.

The present study addressed itself to the following research questions:

(i) Do the marketing executives differing on Extraversion and Neuroticism dimensions of personality, perceive the Role Stress differently? Are the differences similar with all the different types of Role Stress?
(ii) Do the executives with different levels (higher vs lower) of Managerial Talent differ in their perception of different types of Role Stress? Are the differences similar for all types of Role Stress?

(iii) Do the executives with different levels (higher vs lower) of Perceived Motivational Climate differ in their perception of Role Stress? Are the differences similar for all the types of Role Stress?

(iv) Do the age and Work Experience lead to difference in the perception of different types of Role Stress?

(v) What is the nature of the relationship of the different types of Role Stress with Extraversion, Neuroticism, Managerial Talent, Dimensions of Motivational Climate and Demographic Variables.

(vi) What is the relative contribution of Extraversion, Neuroticism, Managerial Talent Motivational Climate and Demographic Variables in the prediction of various types of Role Stress.

It was hoped that specific sample of lower management level marketing executives and the use of standardized culturally specific measuring instruments in the present study would help in filling the obvious research gaps for providing a better understanding of
Organisational Role Stress in a cross-cultural perspective. In the backdrop of the review of the related literature, the following hypotheses were framed and tested in the present study.

7.2. Hypotheses

I. Executives with different levels of Extraversion and Neuroticism will differ in their perception of the different types of Role Stress.

II. Executives with different levels of Managerial Talent will differ in their perception of the different types of Role Stress.

III. Executives with different levels of perceived Motivational Climate in the organisation will differ in their perception of the different types of Role Stress.

IV. Executives with different levels of Age and Work Experience will differ in their perception of the different types of Role Stress.

V. There will be significant relationships between Extraversion and Neuroticism and the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

VI. There will be significant relationships between Managerial Talent and the perception of the different types of Role Stress.
VII. There will be significant relationships between Perceived Motivational Climate and the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

VIII. There will be significant relationships between Age/Work Experience and the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

IX. Extraversion and Neuroticism will be the significant predictors of the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

X. Managerial Talent will be a significant predictor of the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

XI. Perceived Motivational Climate will be a significant predictor of the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

XII. Age and Work Experience will be the significant predictors of the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

XIII. Extraversion and Neuroticism, Managerial Talent, Motivational Climate and demographic variables taken together will explain a larger proportion of variance in the perception of the different types of Role Stress.

XIV. Extraversion and Neuroticism, Managerial Talent, Motivational Climate and Demographic Variables will make differential contribution towards different types of Role Stress.
7.3. **Sample**

The sample comprised 115 lower managerial level marketing executives belonging to four units of tractor industry in India i.e. Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., Hindustan Machine Tools Ltd., Escorts Ltd. and Escorts Tractors Ltd.

7.4. **Tools Used**

(i) Eyesenck Personality Inventory (EPI, 1963).

(ii) Self Description Inventory (SDI, Chiselli, 1971).

(iii) Motivational Analysis of Organisations (Climate) Questionnaire (MAO(c), Pareek, 1975).

(iv) Organisational Role Stress Scale (ORS, Pareek, 1983).

7.5. **Procedure**

All the measuring instruments were mailed to all the respondents through their area office under standard instructions in the following order: The Self Description Inventory, Eyesenck Personality Inventory, ORS Scale and MAO(C). All the respondents were assured that the data will be used for research purpose only and shall be kept confidential. The scoring of each measure was carried out with the help of standard scoring keys.
7.6. **Statistical Techniques used**

(i) The whole of the data were normalised by converting the raw scores into standard T-Scores.

(ii) For the purpose of comparing the perception of different types of Role Stress of the executives differing on various independent variables, two groups (higher vs lower) were created. The mean scores obtained by each group on various types of Role Stress were compared and tested for their significance of difference by two-tail 't' test.

(iii) Bivariate relationships with the help of first order correlations between various independent and dependent variables were analysed through correlation matrices for total sample of 115 executives.

(iv) Factor analysis was carried out to find out the best combination of different independent variables for the purpose of regression analyses and to explore the factorial independence of the various measures used in this study.

(v) Multiple regression analysis was performed to confirm the cause and effect relationship and to find out the relative contribution of each of the independent variables in explaining the variance in the perception of various types of Role Stress as well as the Total Role Stress.
7.7. Findings

7.7.1. Descriptive Analyses:

(i) Extraverts and Introverts differed significantly in their perception of Resource Inadequacy, Role Expectation Conflict, Role Overload, Inter Role Distance, Role Isolation, Personal Inadequacy, Role Ambiguity and Total Role Stress. Extraverts tended to score lower on these types of Role Stress as compared to Introverts i.e. Extraverts perceived different types of Role Stress to be of lower degree as compared to their Introverted counterparts.

(ii) Extraverts and Introverts did not differ significantly in their perception of Role Stagnation, Role Erosion and Self Role Distance.

(iii) Neurotics and Stables differed significantly from one another in their perception all the types of Role Stress as well as Total Role Stress. Neurotics perceived these Role Stresses to be of higher degree than their Stable counterparts.

(iv) The executives with higher or lower level of Managerial Talent differed significantly in their perception of Personal Inadequacy, Role Overload, Role Expectation Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Role Isolation, Resource Inadequacy, Inter Role Distance, Self Role Distance, Role Stagnation and Total Role Stress. The
executives with higher Managerial Talent tended to perceive these Role Stresses to be of lesser degree as compared to their counterparts with lower Managerial Talent. However, these two groups did not differ significantly in their perception of Role Erosion.

(v) The Executives (higher or lower) in respect of Achievement, Expert Power and Affiliation dimensions of Motivational Climate differed significantly in their perception of all the types of Role Stress. The executives who perceived climate to be highly Achievement, Expert Power and Affiliation-oriented, tended to perceive all the types of Role Stress as well as Total Role Stress to be of lower degree as compared to their counterparts who perceived climate to be less Achievement, Expert Power and Affiliation-oriented.

(vi) The executives (higher or lower) in respect of Control and Dependency dimensions of Motivational Climate differed significantly in their perception of all the types of Role Stress as well as Total Role Stress. The executives who perceived climate to be highly Control and Dependency-oriented, tended to perceive all the types of Role Stress as well as Total Role Stress to be of higher degree as compared to their counterparts who perceived climate to be less Control and Dependency-oriented.
(vii) The two groups (higher vs lower) in respect of Extension dimension of Motivational Climate differed significantly in their perception of only Role Overload, Role Isolation, Role Expectation Conflict, Role Ambiguity, Inter Role Distance and Total Role Stress. The executives who perceived the Motivational Climate to be highly Extension-oriented perceived these Role Stresses to be of lower degree than their counterparts who perceived Motivational Climate to be less Extension-oriented. However, the two groups did not differ significantly in their perception of Resource Inadequacy, Role Stagnation, Role Erosion and Personal Inadequacy.

(viii) The executives in the two Age groups (higher vs lower) differed significantly in their perception of Role Stagnation, Inter Role Distance, Role Erosion and Total Role Stress. The group with higher Age perceived all these Stresses to be of higher degree than the group with lower Age. However, these groups did not differ significantly in their perception of Self Role Distance, Role Expectation Conflict, Personal Inadequacy, Role Overload, Role Ambiguity, Resource Inadequacy and Role Isolation.

(ix) The executives with two categories of Work Experience (higher vs lower) differed significantly in their perception of Role Stagnation, Inter Role Distance, Self Role Distance and Total Role Stress. The group with
longer work experience perceived these role stresses to be of higher degree than their counterparts who were lower in their work experience. However, in these two groups the differences in respect of role expectation conflict, role ambiguity, personal inadequacy, resource inadequacy, role overload, role isolation and role erosion.

7.7.2. Correlation Analyses:

(i) Significant, negative relationships emerged between extraversion on the one hand and resource inadequacy, role expectation conflict, role overload, inter role distance, role isolation, role ambiguity and total role stress, on the other. But extraversion did not relate significantly with role stagnation and self role distance.

(ii) There was no significant relationship between neuroticism and any of the types of role stress as well as between neuroticism and total role stress.

(iii) There were significant, negative relationships between all the dimensions of managerial talent and all the types of role stress as well as total role stress except for role stagnation role erosion and self role distance.

(iv) Only the intelligence and achievement motivation dimensions of managerial talent had significant, negative
relationship with Role Stagnation, the other dimensions had non-significant relationship with Role Stagnation.

(v) There were non-significant relationships between Role Erosion and all the dimensions of Managerial Talent.

(vi) Self Role Distance had a significant, negative relationship only with Supervisory Ability dimension of Managerial Talent. The relationships were non-significant with all the other dimensions of Managerial Talent.

(vii) The overall index of Managerial Talent had significant, negative relationships with all the types of Role Stress and with Total Role Stress except for Role Stagnation, Role Erosion and Self Role Distance.

(viii) There were significant, positive relationships between Affiliation and Expert Power dimensions of Motivational Climate and all the types of Role Stress as well as Total Stress.

(ix) There were significant, positive relationships between Achievement dimension of Motivational Climate and all the types of Role Stress except for Self Role Distance.

(x) There were significant, inverse relationships between Control and Dependency dimensions of Motivational Climate and all the types of Role Stress as well as Total Role Stress.
(xi) Extension dimension of Motivational Climate had no significant relationship with any type of Role Stress and Total Role Stress.

(xii) There was a significant, positive relationship between age and Role Stagnation only.

(xiii) All the other relationships were non-significant.

(xiv) There were significant, positive relationships between Work Experience and Role Stagnation, Inter Role Distance and Total Role Stress. All the other relationships were non-significant.

7.7.3. Factor Analysis:

(i) There was a complete factorial independence of all the tools used in this study.

(ii) Managerial Talent emerged as a unidimensional concept.

(iii) Motivational Climate turned out to be bidimensional Concept.

(iv) Different types of Role Stress were unique in their nature as they did not form a cluster anywhere.

(v) Managerial Talent, Motivational Climate and Demographic Variables loaded differently on different types of Role Stress.
(vi) Role Erosion and Self Role Distance formed a cluster and they had inverse relationship with one another.

(vii) 82.61 per cent of the total variance in the data was explained by personality, situational and demographic variables when taken together.

(viii) Motivational Climate factor explained 27.43 per cent of the variance, Managerial Talent factor explained 26.93 per cent, Demographic Variables explained 11.00 per cent and Extraversion and Neuroticism explained 7.95 per cent of the variance.

(ix) Extension dimension of Motivational Climate turned out to be a unique variable as it did not form a cluster with any one.

7.7.4. Regression Analyses:

(i) Extraversion was a significant predictor of Resource Inadequacy, Role Expectation Conflict, Role Overload, Inter Role Distance, Role Isolation and Total Role Stress. But it was not a significant predictor of Role Stagnation, Role Erosion and Self Role Distance. Extraverts perceived all these Role Stresses to be of lesser degree as compared to their Introverted counterparts.
(ii) Neuroticism was not a significant predictor of any of the types of Role Stress as well as Total Role Stress.

(iii) Managerial Talent was a significant predictor of Personal Inadequacy, Role Overload, Role Ambiguity, Resource Inadequacy, Role Isolation, Role Expectation Conflict, Self Role Distance, Role Stagnation and Total Role Stress. But it was not a significant predictor of Self Role Distance and Role Erosion. The executives who were higher on Supervisory Ability, Intelligence, Self Assurance, Decisiveness, Achievement Motivation and Self Actualization, perceived the different types of Role Stress to be of lower degree as compared to their counterparts who were lower on these dimensions of Managerial Talent.

(iv) Motivational Climate (six dimensions together) was a significant predictor of all the types of Role Stress except for Self Role Distance and Role Erosion.

(v) Extension dimensions of Motivational Climate was a non-significant predictor of all the types of Role Stress.

(vi) The executives who perceived Motivational Climate to be dominated by Achievement, Expert Power and Affiliation Motivations, experienced different types of Role Stress to be of lower degree as compared to their
counterparts who perceived Motivational Climate to be less Achievement, Expert Power and Affiliation-oriented. The executives who perceived climate to be dominated by Control and Dependency dimensions, perceived different types of Role Stress to be of higher degree as compared to their counterparts who perceived Motivational Climate to be less Control and Dependency Oriented.

(vii) Executives perceived climate to be dominated more by Control and Dependency than the Achievement, Affiliation and Expert Power dimensions of Motivational Climate.

(viii) Age and Work Experience were the significant predictors of Role Stagnation, Inter Role Distance and Total Role Stress only. These were non-significant predictors of Role Expectation Conflict, Role Overload, Role Erosion, Role Isolation, Self Role Distance and Resource Inadequacy. The executives who were higher in Age and Work Experience perceived Role Stagnation, Inter Role Distance and Total Role Stress to be of higher degree as compared to their counterparts who were lower in Age and Work Experience.

(ix) Extraversion, Managerial Talent, Dimensions of Motivational Climate and Age/Work Experience were significant joint predictors of All the types of Role Stress except for Self Role Distance and Role Erosion.
81 per cent of the variance in Total Role Stress was explained by these independent variables jointly. They explained 79 per cent of the variance in Role Overload, 77 per cent in Role Stagnation, 70 per cent in Role Expectation Conflict, 70 per cent in Role Isolation; 69 per cent in Role Ambiguity, 67 per cent in Inter Role Distance; 65 per cent in Resource Inadequacy and 59 per cent in Personal Inadequacy.

The order of importance in respect of their relative contribution in explaining variance in the perception of Inter Role Distance was (i) Motivational Climate, (ii) Managerial Talent, (iii) Extraversion, and, (iv) Demographic Variables.

Role Stagnation was best predicted by the Demographic Variables. Managerial Talent and Motivational Climate were the second and third best predictors whereas Extraversion was non-significant predictor.

The comparative strength of various independent variables in predicting Role Expectation Conflict was in the following order: Motivational Climate, Managerial Talent and Extraversion. Demographic Variables were not significant predictors in this case.

None of the predictor variables emerged significant in explaining variance in Role Erosion.

The rank of various variables in predicting Role Overload was: (i) Motivational Climate, (ii) Managerial
Talent, (iii) Extraversion with Demographic Variables as non-significant predictors.

(xvi) Motivational Climate, Managerial Talent and Extraversion respectively were the significant predictors of Role Isolation. Once again, the Demographic Variables turned out to be non-significant.

(xvii) Managerial Talent, Motivational Climate and Extraversion respectively were the significant predictors of Personal Inadequacy. Here too, the Demographic Variables were non-significant.

(xviii) None of the predictor variables were significant as far as Self Role Distance was concerned.

(xix) Managerial Talent, Motivational Climate and Extraversion were the significant predictors of Role Ambiguity in the order given. Demographic Variables were non-significant in this case also.

(xx) Motivational Climate, Managerial Talent and Extraversion respectively were the significant predictors of Resource Inadequacy. Once again the Demographic Variables were non-significant.

(xxi) In case of Total Role Stress, Motivational Climate was the best predictor followed by Managerial Talent, Extraversion and Demographic Variables.
The observed findings in this study have been interpreted in the light of related empirical studies. Lastly, the limitations, implications and suggestions for future research have been put forth.