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INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Woman is a double personality, a personality at home and a personality at work. Woman by nature and tradition is a fond giver of service. Home, which is her primary career, is the place where she performs the task of cooking, cleaning, rearing, managing etc., multifarious activities each demanding constant, instant and careful tackling. Modernity has brought education to women and she changed or rather added another field of activity. She stepped out of the threshold for her second career, to join and help the man in his area of activity. With admiration, opportunity and equality, she is now also called as the earning member. This has brought self respect and her ego is flattered. She is willingly taking this additional load and no way ready to shrink her household work.

The development of a nation, a society as a whole and most importantly a house, depends not only on the economic growth or technical advances but on the quality of life of the people and in particular women. Women should be free to think on their own, be self reliant, and participate actively and contribute to the growth of mankind. There is a need to reduce the problems of women in order to enable them to work with concentration, efficiency, devotion and integrity. As the better half of man, the woman, if she is employed is not only an asset to him and to the family but to the society as a whole. The source of money is very significant in the present environment where money is the sole vital factor for competitive living. In today’s world, a man’s earning alone is not
enough and the wife’s income is a source for better maintenance and for a happy family.

Woman, in the words of Gandhi (1959) is the companion of man, gifted with equal capacities. She has the right to participate in minutest details of the activities of man and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own place of activity as man is. This ought to be natural condition of things and not a result only of learning to read and write. Man and woman are equal in status, but are not complementary to one another, so that without one the existence of the other cannot be conceived and therefore it follows as a necessary corollary from these facts that anything that will impair the status of either of them will involve the equal ruin of both.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (1951) had rightly stated: “the status of women indicates the character of the country”.

The Indian women, from time immemorial, have passed through many phases of slavery, predicament, and uncertainty to reach the present status. Women constitute almost fifty percent of the human resource of our country. The Indian Constitution guarantees formal equality to all citizens.

The status of women in India in the past has been presented below:

The Aryan period – There is not much of literature to give an insight as to how women were looked upon, their status and the kind of life they led during the Pre Aryan period. The excavations at the Indus valley have shown that women were treated with high respect. They wore similar attire like men and were treated with respect at social gatherings.

The Early Aryan Society as depicted in The Rig Veda portrays the glorious status of women and this period was called as the Golden age...
(Arora, 2003). Though it was patriarchal society, daughters and sons were treated equally with no discrimination regarding education. (Kapadia, 1947). India, through its Vedic period, as revealed by its literature, points out that women during those times were treated with grace and kindness. They had the freedom of thought and deed. The epics and puranas have treated women with grace, wisdom, heroism, love towards God and man. A mother held a very important and dignified position at home and in the society and was consulted by men in every sphere of life.

Slowly the status of women deteriorated during the post Vedic period as Manu promoted differently on women and their rights. He advocated that the rights of women depended entirely on their husband. Women were not allowed to participate in religious rites and functions. The post Vedic period witnessed the slow but steady eclipse of women’s importance both at home and in society.

The classic texts and folklore emphasize the dual character of a female as a wife and mother. The rules have been clearly laid down in Hindu law books, oral and written mythology which were hardened by social organizations and structure which set the rules for proper conduct of women (Wadley, 1976)

The male progressively become more powerful and as a consequence women were denied of their rightful place in society and restricted them to the four walls. It was also thought that mental activity declined with physical health and reproductive activity of women.

During Buddha’s period, women regained lost ground. Buddha’s teachings reflected during the rule of Chandra Gupta Maurya and during the rule of Ashoka. But as Buddhism gradually declined and brahminical society rose, the respect for women and equality also declined. The status
of women further degenerated during the medieval period when polygamy and mis-matched marriages were on the high and women were considered as objects of pleasure. Purdah, dowry, sati and child marriages surfaced with reprisal. Education became a thing of past. But there were instances where intellectual women were honoured. (Arora, 2003)

The wife’s role is most emphasized and pre-eminent in Hinduism. The wifely role is one of subordination, of devotion under any circumstances and of dutifulness. An ideology of feminity surfaced which justified women’s exclusion from workplace and dependency on men. As brought out in the western context, the cult of true womanhood glorified motherhood and designated the private world of home as the most suitable arena for the expression of female virtues of softness, passivity and altruism (Harris, 1978).

It was generalized that intellectual pursuits were only for men as it requires an expenditure of physical energy that women could ill afford due to their biological makeup. The institution of marriage became more and more rigid with time and there emerged in the identity of ideal Hindu woman (Arora, 2003). The economic position of woman was insecure and they were untrained for a living. They did not have the right to inherit property either from their father or from their husband.

The later part of the British rule brought with it some social reforms due to the efforts of our social reformers like abolishment of sati. The India that arose at this time was a fusion of western and eastern thought and practice. Women wanted to get back the lost dignity, status and freedom which they had enjoyed in the past. A totally new concept of themselves as person was brought to them. The concept of knowing themselves dawned
upon them to enable them to play a unique role in the changing socio-economic life of the country.

The rise of the industrial revolution allowed women to occupy independent jobs and permitted them to become independent of other family members. Men and women have always worked in all epochs of human history. However, historical and social factors have been responsible for variations in the nature of tasks, the location of work, the definite reasons for work, the nature of its execution and performance. This direct entry into the economic structure gives the impression of equality of women with men for economic role is believed to provide social pre-eminence automatically. (Gunther, 1999)

Many social thinkers have commented on the inequalities that women faced. Mahatma Gandhi (1959) referred to woman as a nobler sex. According to him “If she is weak in striking, she is strong in suffering.” He further adds “to call women the weaker sex is a libel, it is man’s injustice to women. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man’s superior. Without her man could not be. If non violence is the law of our being, the future is with women.”

Jawaharlal Nehru (1951) has remarked on women during his period that “the position of women in India during many hundred years was not a good one, neither according to law nor in public or social life. For twenty five centuries one half of the citizens of India kept the other half in virtual slavery”.

Swami Vivekananda (1900) has said that the country and the nation which does not respect women have never become great, nor will ever be in future. He opined “The best thermometer to the progress of a nation is its treatment of its women.” He also said that “It is impossible to think
about the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is impossible for a bird to fly on with only one wing.” Vinobha Bhave (1975) said “If I were a woman, I would rebel”

1.1 Gender Implication

During pre-historic times woman stayed at home to tend to the cattle, perform daily chores at home and men went out for hunting and this created a division in labour. It was thought that women are inferior to men in their biological and mental makeup. The home was considered a safe haven for her. Also, it was generalized that pregnancy and motherhood weakened her physically. In today’s world the law makes no difference between man and woman but the gender bias is still predominant as a global phenomenon.

A number of biological based researches stated that both man and woman began their life equally but with a few biological differences between them. But, because of conventional wisdom both are viewed as basically different. Woman’s physical structure was one big reason to call them the weaker sex, and this opinion was the cause for her to be confined to the domestic sphere of home and family. Her mental capacity was not taken into account and she was not given an opportunity to express herself. The institution of marriage and role of wife are closely connected with subordination of women in society in general. Firstly, Women find that adult status can often only be achieved through marriage. The social conditioning and imagery lead women to believe that women are entitled to their own homes, benefits of motherhood and some degree of control over matters falling into women’s domain only after marriage. Secondly many women seek social and financial security only after marriage.
Finally, women are motivated by a desire for emotional and sexual intimacy. They strive for a happy life and construct a domain for materializing their dreams and thoughts into action. For this women are prepared to make the required sacrifices and some perceive being a wife as pursuing a full time career, consistently and painstakingly. (Arora, 2003)

Among the various aspects of socialization, the division of labour strengthens the subordination of women. Tasks are divided between men and women in every society. All over, the two tasks that women are responsible for are the nourishment of newborn and the preparation of food for the family. Hence the gender based division of labour in most cases attributes domestic role as the primary career of women which includes personal services to the husband and his family and the care and proper socialization of the progeny. It has been observed that women have usually been socialized to view the attainment of this goal as an ideal (Lasch, 1977)

1.2 Women and motherhood

The greatest joy that women bring to the world is motherhood. Most cultures have regarded motherhood as a source of fulfillment and satisfaction for women and disapprove of any negative attitudes towards child bearing and child rearing (Murray, 1975). Though motherhood is a biological fact, it does have an influence on women’s feelings and attitudes. Motherhood is a great source of fulfillment and satisfaction for women. Motherhood is considered to be a full time job and women focus all their emotions, energy and hopes on bringing up a child, more than children actually need. Hence child rearing becomes a full time activity and when women go out for work, the feeling of guilt is predominant.
1.3. Indian Women today

During the course of twentieth century a new reconfiguration of the traditional family evolved parallel to the changing status of women in society. Changes in the social and economic circumstances had impacted on the traditional family structures, opinion on gender role and division of domestic labour. Rapid industrialization has been the cause for women to go out and obtain specific specialized skills in order to meet the demand at the labour market. Married women are getting engaged in paid employment outside the home. Restructuring of personal relationships has given rise to the emergence of dual career women, dual-earner couples and families. The traditional Indian family structure, still prevalent in the rural areas where most of India’s population resides and in India’s smaller towns, is male-dominant with a clear division of gender roles. The normative pattern is men working outside the home to provide livelihood and making the important decisions, and women taking care of the household, cooking and raising the children.

Even when women perform remunerative outside work, the home responsibilities are still entirely theirs. Multigenerational living is still common, the usual pattern being that the daughter-in-law comes to live with her husband’s family, and is expected to be subservient to her mother-in-law. The family model of woman has little autonomy or choice with regards to woman’s personal lives and aspirations, and no financial independence. A young woman moves from being a daughter in her parents’ home to being a wife in her husband’s home, and never has a period of time when she is independent and on her own.
At the other extreme of India’s social landscape, among the educated classes in the metro cities, one finds Indian families that are thoroughly modern and egalitarian after the manner of the contemporary West. The family is nuclear instead of multigenerational both the husband and wife are engaged in professional careers, and the wife has many choices available to her because of her earning capacity. One can even find a few young women living independently on their own prior to getting married — or not getting married. Women of India have slowly started recognizing their true potential. She has started questioning the rules laid down for her by the society. As a result, she has started breaking barriers and earned a respectable position in the world. There is no arena, which remains unconquered by Indian women. Whether it is politics, sports, entertainment, literature, technology everywhere, it is women power all along.

The modern Indian woman, does not let social constraints to keep her behind, but prioritizes her education or her career before anything else. The modern woman is so deft and self-sufficient that she can be easily called a superwoman, juggling many fronts single handedly. Women are now fiercely ambitious and are proving their metal not only on the home front, but also in their respective professions. They are joining the universities and colleges and entering into all kinds of professions like engineering, medicine, politics, teaching, etc.

A nation’s progress and prosperity can be judged by the way it treats its women folk. There is a slow and steady awareness regarding giving the women their dues, and not mistreating them, seeing them as objects of possession.
Despite progress, the very fact that women, along with being achievers, also are expected to fulfill their roles as wives or mothers, prioritizing home against anything else. This point of view hasn’t changed much. (Banerjee, 2012)

1.4 The Home maker woman

Women who wish to compete with men in the world of knowledge work are expected to meet the same standards as men. However, even as the norms for men and women are the same, the norms for men and women in the family are not. Women cannot ignore the time demands of family maintenance and given fixed resource of time and energy the distribution of time is balanced away from paid labour market work toward family maintenance activities. (Rothbard and Brett, 2000)

Home is the most important environment where we all spend most of our time from birth till death. About a third of one’s life is spent at home with family members. But the social status of woman is different from that of a man at home. Socially “house wife” is not considered a prestigious position in the society. There is very little regard for her work as she is considered an unproductive worker. For a woman, the division between home and work has resulted in the belief that “women’s place” is in the home rather than in a work place of production, despite the fact that many women are engaged outside home too.

The domestic slavery of women is a symbol of our barbarism. It is high time that our womankind was freed from this incubus. Domestic work ought not to take whole of woman’s time.” (Gandhi, 1959)

Though the huge technical advancement has brought a lot of labour saving devices in the home front, the time spent on house work does not
seem to have reduced, in most urban homes. Though it has eased the physical pain and strain, there have been no formidable structural changes. There is no day off as family members have to be fed, all 365 days. Atomization has given rise to new tasks, though not demanding physical energy and has increased the productivity of house work but are time consuming.

Today’s homemaker is a multi tasking specialist doing multifarious activities like cooking, child rearing, managing finances, shopping, entertaining, decorating the house, all activities rolled into one. The fact is, whether the wife is employed or not, the allocation of housework between men and women still remain the same. Though technology has decreased the time spent on domestic chores but the tasks at home have increased like cleaning and mopping the floor with vacuum cleaner, machine washing the clothes thus the time on cooking, shopping and childcare have increased. Also even if the woman engages a substitute for the domestic work, she still has to manage the workers. The woman now is also involved in teleshopping, telebanking and teleworking which in fact has increased woman’s work at home. Whether working or not, women provide the family members a home, a heaven, out of love for their family members.

Today’s working women give importance to orderliness at home, attention towards bill payments, cheques, deposits and have to manage servants and keep pace with kids. Working women are haunted by the feeling of guilt for not performing household activities in an organized manner and poor performance of children in school which in turn creates tension and prevents many women from feeling of fulfillment. (Sulleret, 1971).
1.5 The working woman

Work holds the central value in an adult life experience. The question of why do people work and what kind of satisfaction they derive from it, has assumed relevance or social psychologists and organizational behavior experts, alike. Since a substantial part of adult time effort and skills are utilized in carrying out work or job related functions, the question of its effect on family and personal lives is of immediate concern. (Arora, 2003)

One of the most significant and positive changes taking place all over the world is the increasing number of women in every type of profession. Women have entered the work force in leaps and bounds. Women, on par with men are now capable of doing all that men can do. Today there is no profession that a woman cannot pursue. The woman of today has opted for new horizons and paths to satisfy her quest for creativity and self expression. She wants to acquire everything that her male counterparts could think of achieving themselves and to be economically and psychologically independent. (Savarimuthu, 2009)

Women’s workforce participation has doubled in the last 25-30 years. This involvement of women among paid workforce has now drawn attention on the effects of employment on women’s well being. This development has also been responsible for social, psychological and individual changes at home and at the work place for career women. Careers are moving on the fast-track and consuming a major share of one’s prime life.

The Indian society is presently experiencing an accelerated change in economy, social structure, and family structure. The nature of work force is also changing rapidly. One major shift in work force is the
increasing presence of women in different occupations. There is a shift in the family structure from joint/extended and single earner family to nuclear and dual earner family. In this phase of transition, families where both the husband and the wife are working are likely to have mixed experiences. While their standard of living may improve, they are also likely to face greater demands from their roles. This may cause considerable amount of stress for them which, in turn, has implications for their psychological and physical well-being and also for relationships between spouses.

Business environment is more complex today than ever before with new paradigms of increased competition, speed and efficiency. The most noteworthy and optimistic changes taking place all over the world is the increasing number of women in every type of profession. More and more women today work in top positions in leading multinational companies.

1.6 The Professional Women

The dawn of the 20th century brought with it radical changes in the concept of work for women. Unlike in the past, when only a handful of women were in professional courses, now institutions started training women in new arenas and facilitating them to move away from traditional occupations. Women established an identity of their own and created a space for themselves in education and work sphere. Families began expecting women not only to continue with higher education and obtaining professional degrees, but also to pursue their interested profession. Women, after spending so many years in education and obtaining professional degrees, were interested to use the knowledge
productively, as a result of which, many Indian women have made inroads into different professions that were unimaginable to women in the past.

To be a professional woman in India today is to be at the forefront of historic social change. What has been happening with this demography over the past ten years is the start of a quiet revolution in gender relations at work and family relations at home, comparable to the social transformation that the United States experienced starting in the 1960s.

The obstacles to their success are many. Ceilings to their aspiration are made of more than glass. Traditional social attitudes and cultural patterns have not changed overnight. Overt discrimination may be receding, but the “old boys networks” may still be operational. The skills and confidence to push for career advancement are not instantly acquired. Practical infrastructural challenges can vex the most determined of women as they try to make lives that embrace both work and family. (Deloitte, 2012).

Against these odds, Indian women are making waves around the world in every sphere, as heads of big corporate, as aircraft controllers, in parliament, in judiciary, as police officers, doctors, engineers, teachers, nurses – the list is never ending. They have established independent identities and have moved beyond the identities of daughter, wife and mother. Contemporary professional women are confident about themselves and are assertive in the field they choose.

The last few decades has seen an increase in the levels of education, confidence and most importantly, ambition in women who are striving to claim their rightful place in the society. The professional women are no exception and they have set very high standards for themselves. They have
changed the way they look at themselves and that has changed the way the world looks at them (Thomas, 2007)

The momentum seems unstoppable. They are coming out of college with degrees in science and engineering, and opting for demanding and sometimes uncertain careers in private industry rather than the security of lower-paid jobs in education or government service. From being overwhelmingly concentrated in traditional “women’s jobs” in human resources, public relations and administration, women are moving into technical, finance, legal, marketing and other job functions. Many middle class families, especially in the large urban “metro” cities, are coming to link their aspirations to a higher standard of living to having daughters and daughters-in-law who are educated and can contribute significantly to the family income.

Despite such progress, women professionals are under-represented in higher level jobs. Though a handful of them are making headlines here and there, they represent only a very small ratio. Sen, (2001) has opined that in terms of employment as well as that of promotion in work and occupation, women often face greater handicap than men which he terms as “professional inequality”, where progress to elevated levels of employment and occupation is much more difficult for women than men. It is still “the higher the organization hierarchy, the fewer the women”

India has one of the lowest percentage of female professional and technical workers at 20.5 per cent as compared to several Asian and African countries, according to the E-commerce and Development Report (2002) released by UNCTAD. While China has 45.1 per cent of women as professional and technical workers as a percentage of total, Philippines has
65.1 per cent in the Asian region and on a global scale, Lithuania has the maximum of 67.5 per cent, says the report.

The number of educated Indian women pursuing professional careers is still very small in comparison with the 62% of women in the country who are illiterate and the low 42% female participation in the workforce. Only 18% of women are part of the organized labor sector, and only 20% of these are employed in urban areas. Despite their small numbers in the overall picture, however, the Indian women professionals of today are and see themselves as the trend-setters of the future.

All working women whether they are professional women or non-professional women face the same problems managing their two careers, one at home and one outside home. But professional women differ in particular ways from non-professional women such as long and rigorous hours at professional work, enhanced self esteem, sense of security, sense of achievement, job satisfaction, occupational success and improvement of standard of living. As professionals, women are expected to do exactly the same work as men and carry the responsibility and accountability of that is expected of professional work.

1.7 Work Family interface

Defining the Domain of Work-Family Interaction

Broadly speaking, work-family interface refers to experiences in the family (work) domain that impact experiences in the work (family) domain and vice versa.

Women face different problems at different stages of age. Working women's problems are of three types viz., environmental, social and psychological. In each of them the problems emerge due to the stained
situations at home and work place. In turn they are due to two factors, one is the inner conflict due to dual commitment and concern, and the other is the practical difficulty of combing the dual commitment. Problems of Work-home interface occur when incompatible expectations, demands, and pressures are experienced by an individual. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) proposed that pressures from work or family can heighten conflict between work and family roles. There are three ways in which roles can be incompatible: (a) time spent in one role may leave little time for other roles; (b) strain within one role domain may spill over into another one; and, (c) behaviour appropriate to one role domain may be dysfunctional in another. The dynamics of work-home interface problems may be different for men and women. Problems at home are more likely to affect the work life of women as compared to men. They face additional pressures both at home and at work as compared to their male counterparts. These pressures affect their behaviour, performance, and mental and physical well-being. Hall (1972) stated that the multifarious roles of a woman present a clear example of chronic role conflict as mutually competing demands by different role senders. According to him, conflicts arising from multiple roles are a woman's major role problem, rather than conflicting expectations within a particular role. Further, conflicts are more due to role overload and time conflicts rather than role incompatibility. Hall and Gordon (1973) reported that home related activities are of prime concern to married women, regardless of their personal orientations (career versus traditional role). A typical working woman is often caught in a double bind. She is unable to fulfill the role requirements of 'an ideal woman'—being an efficient home maker and an effective career person. This conflict would be much stronger, if she feels that she is not endowed
with the competencies that are ascribed to men, and would consequently suffer from a lack of confidence. On the other hand, if she feels that she has masculine traits, she may believe that she is "less feminine" and may thereby suppress her striving for achievement. Jick and Mitz (1985) reviewed the empirical evidence of sex differences in stress dynamics and concluded that women tend to report higher rates of psychological distress while men are more prone to severe physical illness.

Switching from her conventional traditional family role to that of a professional on and off is the greatest challenge that most women face in today’s world because both the careers are dear to her.

As women increasingly gain occupational mobility, they are not only exposed to some physical hazards of work environment as men but also exposed to the pressures created by multiple role demands and conflicting expectations. By fulfilling their economic needs, employment has no doubt made women independent with an identifiable social status but it has also made them to juggle into two main domains of life—work and family. They have stepped into work place but the role responsibilities of women still remain the same, i.e., women may be a top executive, still the “nurturing” or “care giving” roles are considered much a part of feminine roles (Malhotra and Sachdeva, 2005)

Unlike men, the work–family relationship for women is different. Females reported greater perfectionism heightened by the need to prove themselves than did men both at home and at work. (Burke, 2000)

In the words of Shobhaa De (2011) “Women in work force are getting it bad from both sides and they don’t know how to react. If they give their all to their career, they are damned for being too “hardcore”. If they ask for flexi time once they get married, bosses accuse them of
demanding too much down time. And if they give up totally and focus on the family, husbands who once cribbed about their wives’ careers getting top priority, feel resentful about the woman “hanging around” and enjoying all the perks while contributing zero to the kitty. A man wants a super Woman: Someone who works hard and parties even harder. A woman he could flaunt, but also the perfect homemaker”.

Family environment and work environment are the two factors that contribute to the enhancement of complications or problems for employed women, and between the two, the non job factors or family- related factors weigh more importantly for women (Joshi, 1990).

In today’s world, work and family domains influence each other greatly. In case of female professionals, this is even truer, as the pressure of meeting societal expectations is more for them. There is indeed a critical linkage between career and family of the female executives. It is found that women managers’ involvements, demands, and accomplishments in the employment and family domains are mutually interdependent (Gutek, Repetti and Silver, 1988).

For the great majority of Indian women professionals, family patterns and gender roles are somewhere between the two extremes of the traditional and the ultra-modern, in a fluid state of transition as the Indian family reinvents itself for the new circumstances of the global world. In some cases, the three-generational family continues and is an asset. In-laws take on some of the housework and childrearing responsibilities, freeing women to concentrate more on their work. In other cases, in a nuclear family situation, the professional couple may negotiate a division of home responsibilities and find outside help for childcare when they are both at work. But there are also situations where, with the birth of children, the
husband and the in-laws may put pressure on the woman to stop working in order to devote herself full-time to the family.

A very recent study by Warren, Fox and Pascall (2009) reveals that combining paid-work and motherhood remains a major source of difficulties for women. It is the mothers, rather than the fathers, who bend their jobs to meet family needs. O’ Brien, (2005) has opined that though there are signs of growing gender convergence but equality status in their contribution to childcare. Women managers consistently report significantly higher job/ family role conflict, which may be accompanied by higher mental and physiological strains than men managers. The more job-family conflicts women managers report, the greater their irritation, anxiety and depression. (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985).

Some studies even show that women experience extensive work-family conflict. Even though they contribute equally or at times more, they are often reprimanded and blamed for not taking enough personal care of the children and spouse, if they stay late in the office due to pressure of work, undertake frequent travels, or attend late night office parties, etc. Their efforts to excel in their jobs are hardly appreciated by the family members or by the society at large. They are pejoratively called too much “career-minded’ and ‘unwoman-like’ in their behaviour. Therefore, women professionals, who are themselves worked up about multiple issues, naturally find it difficult to utilize their full potential. (Buddhapriya, 2009)

The derivatives is that women continue to be more involved in caring for the children and the home, feel guilty when they are unable to tend to the needs of their children and men continue to have more flexibility when it comes to staying out late and favoring work
requirements over home responsibilities. And though some of the housework responsibilities are lessened by the availability of domestic help, women do tend to have a “second shift” of work at home that is not shared by their husbands as a primary responsibility. The work-life balance issue is therefore particularly serious for Indian women.

1.8 Stress

Stress is derived from the Latin word “stringere” meaning to draw tight and was used in the 17th Century to describe hardships and strain.

Stress is a word which is seldom correctly understood and there is no single definition for the term. It means different things to different people. Stress can be defined in many ways as under:

- Any influence that disturbs the natural equilibrium of the living body.
- Stress can be any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person
- The common response to attack. (Seyle, 1936)
- A state of imbalance within an organism that is elicited by an actual/perceived disparity between environmental demands and the organism’s capacity to cope with these demands; and is manifested through variety of physiological, emotional and behavioural responses. (Lazarus, 1966)
- McGrath (1970) views stress as a perceived substantial imbalance between demand and response capability under condition when failure to meet demand has important (perceived) consequences
- Another interesting view on stress that the concept lacks precision in that it has been both broadly and narrowly defined, and treated as a
stimulus, a response, an environmental characteristic, an individual attribute, and an interaction between an individual and his or her environment (Beehr & Newman, 1978).

- The result of imbalance between a person’s perceptions and the demand made on him and his ability to cope with it, is what is experienced as stress. This type of imbalance gives rise to stress (Cox & Mackey, 1979).

- Stress is also defined as any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demand upon a person. (Douglas, 1980).

- Stress is phenomena which taxes an organism beyond its coping capacity (Cooper and Appley, 1980).

- Stress may be viewed as our mental, emotional, physical and behavioural response to anxiety producing events (Warrick, 1981).

- Stress is caused when a person is subjected to unusual situations, demands, extreme expectations or pressures that are difficult to handle. (Van Fleet, 1988)

- Stress is the reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. (Managing stress at work: Discussion document, United Kingdom Health and Safety Commission, London, 1999).

- In Encyclopedia of Stress, Fink (2000) defines stress as “real or an interpreted threat to physiological or psychological integrity of an individual that results in physiological and/or behavioral response.” It is a response to challenging events, as an event that places demand on the individual, an environmental characteristic which poses a threat to the individual, and a realization by the
individual that he/she is unable to deal adequately with the demands placed upon him/her.

From the above definitions a comprehension of the concept of stress can be understood as “a response in an individual to an action or situation depending on the perception and demands. The response can be emotional physical or behavioural”

Stress results from a mismatch between the demands and pressures on the person on the one hand, and their knowledge and abilities on the other. Keeping in view that stress is a personal response to certain variations in the environment, Pestonjee (1973) has attempted to identify three important sectors of life in which stress originate namely, job and organization, social sector and the intra psychic sector. Job and organizational sector refers to the totality of the work environment; the social sector refers to the social/cultural context of one’s life, and intra psychic sector encompasses those things which are intimate and personal, like temperament, values, and abilities.

On the basis of these three sectors, two types of stressors emerged. One of them is conceptualized as organizational source of stressor or on the job stressors whereas the second is conceived as extra organizational sources or off the job stressors. Job stress is usually conceptualized as a condition wherein job related factors interact with the individual to change (disrupt or enhance) his/her psychological or physical condition. In this condition, a person (mind and/or body) is forced to deviate from normal functioning (Beehr and Newman, 1978)

Stress is associated with how well people cope with changes in their lives – at home, within the family, at work or in social situations. The causes include
- Environmental Stressors – arising out of extreme temperature, humidity, inadequate lighting, noise, dust, fumes etc..
- Occupational Stressors – associated with too much or too little work

1.9 Organizational/Job Stress

Work stress or job stress or organizational stress as it is differently called has been defined as early as 1975 when Harrion and Pinneau mentioned that job stress is any characteristic of the job environment which possesses a threat to the individual. Later in 1978, after a review of research on stress Beehr and Newman define job stress as a condition wherein job related factors interact with the worker to change (disrupt or enhance) his/her psychological or psychological condition.

Organizational stress is an increasingly important occupational health problem and a significant cause of economic loss. Occupational stress may produce both overt psychological and physiologic disabilities. However it may also cause subtle manifestation of morbidity that can affect personal well-being and productivity (Quick et al, 1992). A job stressed individual is likely to have greater job dissatisfaction, increased absenteeism, increased frequency of drinking and smoking, increase in negative psychological symptoms and reduced aspirations and self esteem (Jick and Payne, 1980). The use of role concepts suggests that occupational stress is associated with individual, interpersonal and structural variables (Katz and Kahn, 1978).

Organizational stress as defined by Beehr and Newman (1978), is "a condition arising out of interaction of people with their jobs and characterizes by changes within people that forces them to drift apart from normal functioning".
Cobb (1975) has the opinion that, “The responsibility load creates severe stress among workers and managers.”

Studies on burnout found that, it is related to exhaustion and work over load factors in various organizations (Green and Walkey, 1988; Chermiss, 1980; Freudenberger, 1977, 1980). Stress on the job is costly for employers, reflected in lower productivity, reduced motivation and job skills, and increased and accidents.

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. (United States National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 1999).

The emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological reaction to aversive and noxious aspects of work, work environments and work organizations. It is a state characterised by high levels of arousal and distress and often by feelings of not coping. (European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, 1999).

The following are recent estimates which related to the cost of work-related stress:

- in the United Kingdom, it has been suggested that over 40 million working days are lost each year due to stress-related disorders.
- in Australia, the Federal Assistant Minister for Industrial relations estimated the cost of occupational stress to be around A$30 million.
- in the United States, over half of the 550 million working days lost each year due to absenteeism are stress-related. (Cox Tom et al, 2000)
1.10 Professional Women and Stress

Women sometimes have a reputation for being worriers. According to Gallup poll (2005), women are more worried about a range of social issues than men. Significantly more women than men answered that they worried "a great deal" about seven of the 12 issues in the survey.

Studies show that, in addition to worrying more often, women may be physiologically prone to experiencing more stress. For example, the amygdala of the brain processes emotions like fear and anxiety. In men, the amygdala communicates with organs that take in and process visual information, like the visual cortex. In women, though, it communicates with parts of the brain that regulate hormones and digestion. This may mean that stress responses are more likely to cause physical symptoms in women than in men. (Wilson, 2011).

In addition, Wilson (2011) opines that women's bodies produce more stress hormones than men's bodies do. Once a stressful event is over, women's bodies also take longer to stop producing the hormones. This may be a cause or an effect of women's tendency to replay stressful events in their minds and think about upsetting situations.
A professional woman pursues a career that (a) demands a high level of personal commitment, (b) requires a constant updating of knowledge, and (c) has a component of upward mobility. However, in addition to the stresses of developing and maintaining her career path, a wife is also faced with nurturing her marriage and her family life.

Career women face more work-related stressors than men, which has a detrimental effect on their physical and mental health — and which, in turn, deters them from performing at their best or aspiring to high managerial positions. (Cooper, 1978).

1.11 Family responsibilities as a source of stress

Though women take up professional career and are highly placed in their profession, their responsibilities at home cannot be forsaken. They have to be involved in their primary career - their home responsibilities like child care, family welfare, care of the aged etc.. Even while pursuing a professional career they are expected to give the highest priority to family. The professional women are brought up through the stereotyped traditional roles to be primarily homemakers, and hence give top priority to the roles of wife and mother.

But family expectations and responsibilities in the family can give rise to stress. The pressures of traditional expectations force them to identify strongly with their family role, which demands time and personal involvement. Though hired domestic help reduces the pressure of physical work, still the mental pressure of managing such help is stressful and the women professionals have to oversee that things are well taken care of in their absence. Some women face the added complexity of managing household supports such as housekeepers and daycare providers. It seems
that even in homes that are financially positioned to pay for the extra help they need, managing a support team adds another role to the many that women are already juggling. Further, the academic pursuits of their off-springs cause mental agony as professional women want to see their children also take up professions like theirs.

1.12 Professional Factors as a source of stress

Like any other working woman, professional women face the same stressors at work place. In addition to this, they also face some unique stressors due to their nature of profession. Most professionals do not have a 9 to 5 job. As professionals, they are subjected to prolonged working hours and sometimes irregular working hours. Apart from this, they also are responsible for some important decision making, involving the future of their organization as well as the employees. Holding a middle or senior management position, calls for authority, responsibility and accountability. Many times they are forced to carry home their work. Besides, employers expect employees to invest themselves fully in their profession. Hence, long hours of work, after office hour’s socialization, out station visits and training sessions have become the norm of the day.

In any profession, adjustment to this is easy for a man as this is what the society expects out of him. But for a woman, this is not what the society expects of her and so it will be difficult for her which results in mental stress and finally lead to role conflict. The other causes of stress for professional women include performance related pressure, lack of encouragement from superiors, authority and responsibility, career related dilemmas, support from subordinates.
Professional women, like any other working women, also experience the stressors like discrimination, stereotyping, social isolation, work-home conflicts and taking care of children and the aged. Apart from this, they also face gender discrimination and struggle to get through the “glass ceiling” which keeps them away from top-level professional positions.

Women professionals are forced to reconcile their career aspirations and are forced to curtail their pursuit of career advancement and limit their career aspirations for the sake of their families.

1.13 Dual Career of women

A woman’s first career is her home, the place where she performs the task of cooking, cleaning, rearing managing etc, multifarious activities each demanding constant, instant and careful tackling, Modernity has brought education to women and she added another arena of activity. She stepped out of the threshold, for her second career, to join and help the man in his area of activity.


Women are generally engaged in home making, bringing up children and also in production of goods and services which are not sold in the market but are consumed at the household level. Thus, the work of women mostly goes unrecognized and they are never valued. (Singhvi, 2010)

Dual career status of professional women has not been widely researched around the globe and especially in India, the term is still not
much in use. Among a couple of research conducted on dual career women, a significant study titled “Correlates of Daily Hassles Among Dual Career Women” by Thakur, Gauri and Mishra, Girishwar, 1995, mentions working women as dual career women and considers housewives as single career women. More recently, the same has been emphasized by Sheema Aleem and Lubna Danish, (2008), from Jamia Millia Islamia University, Delhi, in their study titled “Marital Satisfaction and Anxiety among Single and Dual Career Women” wherein they have reflected home makers as single career women and women who also work out side home as dual career women.

Traditional and dual career women think and behave differently, and the differences impact the workplace. The woman with a career has two commitments, two priorities 1) Home and job or 2) Job and Home. The traditional wife on the other hand has single priority: her home. Within the home of both the traditional and career women are husbands and sometimes children. A traditional woman can devote completely to them. A career woman must divide her time among them. Neither the career wife nor the traditional wife loves the family more or less. Rather the career wife tries hard to be a “superwoman”. She expects herself to meet job demands with the same competence as that of her male peers, while meeting the family demands with the same skill and energies as that of her stay at home. In trying to preserve a traditional domestic culture, dual career women are like women in all types of relationships. In trying to establish and maintain a career they are pioneers. (Bruce and Reed, 1991).

Dual Career status of women is still unexplored. In the recent past, studies have been conducted related to dual earner families where the
careers of the man and the women, as a whole were considered as dual career.

This study considers the two domains of the women’s life as the two careers which is relatively a new way of thinking taking into consideration that both the roles require proper planning, direction and execution as the woman is equally responsible for both. Hochschild (1989) coined this phenomenon as “second shift”. In her book of the same name “The Second Shift”, she believes that the housewife and the working woman live in different cultures. “Working mothers” she says “often feel poised between the cultures of the housewife and the working man.” Dual career women also value their children and husbands and, in most cases, their love for them far exceeds their love for their career. They too want children and their husband cared for and supported. They, however, want a cooperative arrangement with a spouse that ensures care and nurturing for every member of the family, including themselves.

Women go to work like men, however, and then they also come back home and do the primary role at home, so face double pressure from taking up these two roles. Notwithstanding this change in status, the primary responsibility for managing the home and family activities continues to rest with the woman in dual-career relationships, even when she is employed full-time outside of the home (Fox, 1975).

In effect, Aldous (1981) avers that outside employment for a woman results in two careers or a double shift for her; a paid one in the labour force and the other in the equally demanding unpaid work role as housewife. Because women's unpaid work has no money value attached to it, it took many years for governments to even measure the hours dedicated to unpaid work. Due to this, much of women's activities were
not taken into account in the development of laws and policies. This omission exacerbated existing inequalities. Measuring unpaid work was one of the major challenges to governments and “The Platform for Action” that developed out of UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 calls for national and international statistical organizations to measure unpaid work and reflect its value in satellite accounts to the GDP. (Sharma, 2011)

The beneficiaries of the services of the housewife are not merely her husband and the family, though they immediately benefit from it. The family is enmeshed in other social institutions. It has been argued that the husband or the male head of the house hold has a vested interest in maintaining her in this occupation. So do the children, the husband’s employer and the major economic institutions of the society. Due to the unpaid services of the housewife, the employers save expenses to provide food, clothing for their employees. (Arora, 2003)

Suppose a family hires a cook, a person for washing linen, cleaning the house and tutoring children, this work becomes a career for the one who does it. When it is a career for others why not it be termed as a career for the home maker when she is indirectly earning for the family by doing the same? If these professional service-providers are included in the computation of the Gross National Product, why not homemakers engaged in these same tasks? (Savarimuthu , 2012).

1.14 Personality and Stress

Personality is defined as the relatively stable behavioural patterns and attitudes of a given individual (Costa and McCrae, 1985). A person’s personality determines the reaction of the person to different situations.
Personality factors are extremely important in organizational as well as home settings. Often the ‘wrong’ kind of personality proves disastrous and is the cause of undesirable tensions and worries at home and in organizations. The costs of such tensions and worries are enormous when we interpret them from the point of view of employee-employer relations, peer relations and superior-subordinate relations as well as social relations. Sometimes, the personality traits are the root cause of organizational conflicts and often lead to turnover and job dissatisfaction and attrition.

A consideration of personality differences of focal persons is important since some people arouse hostility and aggression with their associates, while others invoke sympathy and supportive responses because of their personality features. Likewise, some people encourage and others discourage free and open communication in view of their personality traits as perceived by their subordinates and associates; Personality characteristics tend to produce differential emotional reactions to stress. Some people tolerate severely stressful situations, while tensions and anxieties and similar circumstances swamp others.

Various types and traits of personality have been established by psychological researchers over the last 30 years. Research also indicates that most people combine traits of more than one of these types and so the definitions above can only be used as a guide.

Classification of personality types

**Type A**: Ambitious Active and energetic, impatient if he has to wait in a queue, conscientious, maintains high standards, time is a problem—there is never enough—often intolerant of other who may be slower.
Type B : Placid Quiet, very little worries them, often uncompetitive, put their worries into things they can alter and leave other to worry about the rest.

Type C : Worrying Nervous, highly strung, not very confident of self ability, anxious about the future and of being able to cope.

Type D : Carefree Love variety, often athletic and daring, very little worries them, not concerned about the future.

Type E : Suspicious Dedicated and serious, very concerned with others’ opinions of them, do not criticisms kindly and remember such criticisms for a long time, distrust most people.

Type F : Dependent Bored with their own company, sensitive to their surroundings, rely on others a great deal, people who interest them most are oddly unreliable, do not respond easily to change.

Type G : Fussy Punctilious, conscientious and like a set routine, do not like change, any new problems throws them because there are no rules to follow, conventional and predictable, collect stamps and coins and keep them in beautifully ordered state, great believers in authority.

The type most at risk to stress is Type A and the characteristics can be summarized as follows:

- Excessive competitiveness and striving towards advancement and achievement
- Accentuating various key words in ordinary speech without real need and tending to utter the last few words of a sentence more rapidly than the opening part.
- Continual drive towards ill defined goal
- Preoccupation with deadlines for all sorts of task
- Intolerance of delays and postponement in arrangements
- A level of mental alertness which can easily progress to aggressive behavior
- Permanent impatience with people and situations
- Feelings of guilt when having a rest or relaxing (Stranks, 2005)

Type A behaviour is characterized by a chronic sense of time urgency and an excessive competitive drive (Friedman & Rosenman, 1974). There is an established link between the Type A behaviour pattern and both perceptions of stress and stress-related outcomes. Froggatt and Cotton (1987) found that Type As created significantly more stress than Type Bs by increasing the volume of workload imposed on themselves when completing a fairly simple task. Zylanski and Jenkins (1970) showed that Type A placed themselves in more stressful work environments. Type A employees also work longer hours, take on more overtime, report higher levels of workload, greater supervisory responsibilities, and more role conflict than Type B individuals (Ganster, Sime & Mayes, 1989). Cumulatively, the research on Type A behaviour suggests that Type A individuals experience time pressures because they underestimate the time that is required to accomplish tasks; tend to work quickly and to show impatience and decreased work performance if forced to work slowly;
ignore, suppress or deny physical or psychological symptoms while working under pressure, and report such symptoms only when the work is finished; work harder and experience physiological arousal when a task is perceived as challenging; express hostility and irritation in response to a challenge or threat; and need to be in control of the immediate environment to such an extent that a lack of control may elicit a hostile competitive response (Chesney & Rosenman, 1980). Furthermore, these studies have found that Type A behaviour, and specifically the hostility and anger that is associated with Type A behaviour, has been found to be related to heart disease.

The manner in which occupational stress affects the individual has been related to the personality type of the individual. More attention needs to be given to the types of personality dispositions that make some people more vulnerable to certain stressors and others less so. Personality is a wide-reaching concept and it is possible that only some dimensions are likely to be relevant.

Not many studies reflect personality of professional women and hence this study analyzes specifically, which category of Type A personality trait the professional women belong.

1.15 Ego and Stress

The ego state model was developed in 1964 by Eric Berne, the founder of transactional analysis. It is one of the core models we use to make sense of people's psychological behaviour. The ego state model says that we can understand our inside world as consisting of three different areas which are called the parent ego state, the adult ego state and the child ego state. Each ego state is consistent within itself, so thinking,
feeling and behaviour make sense and fit together within each ego state. In Transactional theory, ego states are used to conceptualize both the structure and function of personality. The child ego-state is associated with sentiment, enjoyment free and easy relationships, conformity and manipulation.

There has been a growing trend recently to examine individual-level values in order to better understand the attitudes and behaviours of employees in the workplace (Aaron Cohen and Orit Shamai, 2010). Transactional analysis (Berne, 1964; Harris, 1973) alleges the existence within a person of an "ego" that helps co-ordinate perceptions, integrate behaviour, and generally cope with the outside world.

Research study conducted by Parekh et al (2010), found that there was a significant association between stress levels and ego state, summarizing the characteristics of various ego states and appropriate measures for dealing with stress. Under the rapid worldwide expansion and the women advancement in the commercial world, it is speculated that women professionals should have high levels of job stress and characteristic ego states. However, the preceding studies have not examined job stress and ego states for women professionals. In this study, the ego states of professional women are analyzed.

1.16 Conclusion

Thus in chapter 1, women’s growth over the years, working and professional women and various types of stress faced by professional women has been presented. The conceptual framework for this study has also been presented to help readers to get a good idea on the basics and concepts of professional women and their stress. The next chapter deals
with various related previous studies in the field of working women, especially professional women and stress which has been collected from different sources in the past 3 years and has been compiled for this particular study.