CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENTATION

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CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents a brief summary of the study and its significant findings. It also includes the implications, limitations of the study, personal experience and suggestions for improvement of the study and recommendations for further study.

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Stress is everywhere. Whatever stress is, it has grown immensely in recent years, which brings us to question, what is happening in society that is causing stress? Whilst it is arguable that the term ‘stress’ is so ubiquitous that it has been entirely cut adrift from both professional discourse and real life experience, it still retains a profoundly serious currency. Real or imagined, misunderstood or misused, rare or widespread, the problem of stress cannot be ignored. The wider the usage of the term ‘stress’ the more elusive its meaning. Modern definitions of stress all recognize that it is a personal experience caused by pressure or demands on an individual, and impacts upon the individual’s ability to cope or rather, his/her perception of that ability. Work-related stress occurs when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands. Subjective and self-reported evaluations of stress are just as valid as ‘objective’ data, such as statistics on accidents or absenteeism. The word ‘stress’ now forms part of most people’s daily vocabulary but its reach and meaning remain unclear.

There are many events in the individual’s life that can be seen to contribute to stress; any one event cannot be viewed as the sole cause. An increase in illness attributed to stress may be due to a raised awareness of stress. Often stress is referred to as having greatest effect in workplace on those at the very top and those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Stress is such a language and its emergence and growing use both ‘makes’ and ‘discovers’ its object. Whether real or imagined, stress feels real, and can be measured and is a significant cause of unhappiness among individuals. Researchers have given different models to explain /understand stress; they have also highlighted the effects of stress as
manifestations. Many researchers have studies work related stress. Have looked at how people perceive stress and choice’s made to deal with stress. Many people have perceived stress as an all or nothing phenomena as they feel no matter what they do, they will always feel stressed.

To deal with stress people use different strategies, learn from them and may reapply to obtain satisfaction or relief from the issue or event causing them stress. This may also result in modification of lifestyle.

Review of studies have pointed that stress and coping have been studied in tandem. As stress increases the risk for adverse outcomes while effective, coping behaviors provide the resiliency to mitigate the possibility of adverse outcome and potentially enhance growth.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Effect of stress on life style of individuals and measures adopted to reduce stress.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

6. To identify the concept of stress among adult individuals living in Mumbai.
7. To identify the factors associated to stress among the individuals living in Mumbai.
8. To identify the perceived effect of stress on selected aspects of individuals life.
9. To find the measures adopted to cope with factors contributing to stress.
10. To establish the relationship between perceived effects of stress and changes in life style.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Individual experience stress when they are not able to keep up with the expectations.
2. Individuals experience stress when their ability does not match the demands places by their job, family, relationships etc.
3. The level of stress will vary from individual to individual and will be influenced by the individuals own personality.
4. Lack of information, inadequate support system, failure to seek timely help when faced with crises causes stress in individuals.
5. Positive living helps individuals to cope with stress.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative methodology that incorporated the principals of ‘Ethnography’ embedded with ‘Grounded theory’.

**RESEARCH APPROACH**

The nature of the research problem and the objectives of the study required, that a descriptive explorative approach would best suit to explore stress perceived by the individuals living in Mumbai.

**RESEARCH DESIGN**

In the present study the research design used was ‘Ethnographic’ was considered as appropriate to use. A group or the human culture can be described and systematically recorded.

**SETTING**

In the present study, the setting was western suburb of Mumbai.

**POPULATION**

The population in this study comprised of individuals residing in Mumbai.

**TARGET POPULATION**

Individuals residing in the western suburbs of Mumbai.

**SAMPLE**

In this study the sample selected were individual residing in western suburb of Mumbai who fulfilled the selection criteria.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

The samples for this study consisted of fifty-one individual for in-depth interview, which included both genders and three focus groups of fifteen each in the three categories i.e. only males, only females and a mixed group of males and females.
SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In the present study Random, purposive sampling for individuals, followed by snowball, method was used to until the required the sample size was obtained for the in-depth interview and focus group.

SAMPLING CRITERIA

Are those characteristics of the sample that delimit the population of interest.

Inclusion Criteria

➢ Individuals willing to participate in the study.
➢ Participants able to speak English, Hindi, Marathi.
➢ Participants who do not have a history of any illness in their families.

Exclusion Criteria

➢ Individual who have Mental illnesses.
➢ Individual who have physical debility or illness.
➢ Individual who is in financial debt.
➢ Individual who has cognitive disorders.
➢ Individuals living in disaster prone area.

TOOL AND TECHNIQUE

Part-I deal with the demographic data of the participants.

Part-II was a Semi-Structured ‘Topic Guide’.

Question in the topic guide was decided based on the objectives of the study.

Interview technique was considered best in this study to probe in a natural manner. The investigator also felt it would best elicit the understanding of ‘stress’ by the participants.

PILOT STUDY

Pilot study was conducted in the suburban Mumbai, five samples that consented and fulfilled sampling criteria were included for in-depth interviews, and focus groups consisting of five women who consented and fulfilled the selection criteria were included for pilot study. Data was analyzed there was no changes made in the tool.
DATA GATHERING PROCESS

The data was collected from individuals residing in Mumbai. In order to collect information from individuals the researcher contacted some prospective participants who would be willing to participate and fulfilled the selection criteria. Through them, other individual participants were contacted. The purpose of the study was explained verbally and a written consent was obtained prior to the interview. Privacy was ensured by selecting a place where the respondents would be comfortable. Each in-depth individual interview took approximately 45 minutes to 60 minutes.

The interviews were recorded by placing the A.V. recorder in place that would not distract the participants. The participants who had stated that their interview should not be recorded for them notes were made during the interview and validated by the samples. In-depth Individual interviews were conducted until the required sample size was achieved.

Three focus group interviews were conducted which comprised of only females, only males and a mixed group of males and females. After taking an appointment to ensure that, the time was convenient for those willing to participate in the study. Similarly, consent was obtained from the members of focus groups. Privacy was ensured by selecting a place convenient to all and which would ensure no interference from those outside the group. Each of the focus group interviews took approximately two hours to two and a half hours. The focus group interviews where video recorded after obtaining their permission. The data gathered was transcript for analysis and interpretation were verified.

The interview was conducted in an informal style to help the participants to relax and respond and to prevent them from feel as if they were being interrogated. Conversation began casually inspite of having a semi-structure topic guide.

PLAN FOR DATA ANALYSIS

It was planned that the collected data would be analyzed as follows: Demographic data would be presented using frequency and percentage. The following steps would be undertaken to analyze data from the focus group and in-depth individual interviews.
Immediate debriefing notes would be made after interviews. This would include comments about the focus group process and individual interviews and the significance of data.

Listening to the Video tape and transcribing the content of the tape

Checking the content of the tape and noting any non-verbal behavior, pick up parts of words, nonverbal communication, gesture and behavior that would indicate the intensity of perceived stress affecting the individual.

Coding the transcript by going through the transcript line by line; and paragraph by paragraph, for significant statements and codes according to the topics addressed.

Compare the various codes based on differences and similarities and sort them into categories so that themes and words frequently used could be linked to the final theme.

6.2 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

6.2.1 Findings related to the demographic profile of the samples:

Age

In the in-depth interview, 26 participants were females and 25 participants were males. Of the 26 females majority of them i.e. (11) 42.30% were from the age group of 20-30yrs,(8)30.76% from the age group of 31-40yrs,(5) 19.2% and (2) 7.68% were from the age group of 41-50 yrs and above 50yrs respectively. Whereas of the 25 male participants interviewed majority i.e.(16)64% were from the age group of 31-40yrs,(7) 28% were from the age group of 41-50 yrs and (1) 4% were from the age group of 20-30yrs and above 50yrs respectively.

Participants from the two focus groups comprised of 15 participants in each. With regards to the age of the participants females were 20 % (3) and(2) 13.32% were males who belonged to the age group of 20-30yrs. In the age group of 31-40yrs majority of them were females i.e.(11)73.26% where as only(2)13.32% were male, majority of the male i.e.(8)53.28% belonged to the age group of 41-50yrs whereas only one female i.e. 6.66% belonged to this age group. Three i.e.20 % of the males belonged to the age group above 50yrs.
Participants of the **mixed focus group** composed of (7) 46.6% females and (8) 53.33% male participants. Majority of the female participants i.e. (3) 19.98% belonged to the age group of 20-30yrs and 31-40yrs respectively and one participant i.e. 6.66% belonged to the age group of 41-50yrs. Whereas (2) 13.32% of the male participants belonged to the age group of 31-40yrs and above 50yrs, (3) 19.98% of the male participants were from the age group of 20-30yrs and only one (6.66%) male participant belonged to the age group of 41-50yrs.

**Religion**

Among participants of the **in-depth interview**, of the 26 female participants 42.30% (11) were Hindus, 38.4% (10) were Christian and a small percentage i.e. 19.2% (5) were Muslims. Whereas of the 25 male participants, 64% (16) were Hindus, 32% (8) were Christian and 4% (1) was a Muslim.

In the **focus group** of the fifteen female and fifteen males participants, indicated that (10) 66.6% females and (14) 93.24% males were Hindus, (3) 20% females and (1) 6.66% males were Christians whereas (1) 6.66% of the females belonged to the Muslim and Buddhist religion respectively.

Among the **mixed focus group** (3) 19.98% females and (6) 39.96% males participants were Hindus, (1) 6.66% females and (2) 13.32% males belonged to the Muslim religion only (3) 19.98% females were Christian where as none of the males were Christians.

**Education**

Among the female samples of females from the **in-depth interview** it was noted that only one female did not have formal education. (3) 11.52% had completed their S.S.C and (4) 15.36% completed up to H.S.C. as they got married early Only one female (3.38%) had done a diploma in computers after H.S.C. It was interesting to note that (13) 50% had done their graduation and (4) 15.38% had completed their post graduation of which one each was a Muslim and Hindu and two where Christian who opined that we too need to do our higher education like anyone else. As compared to the females, 60% (15) males had completed their graduation and 36% (9) had completed their post graduation only one (4%) male had completed H.S.C.
Among the participants from the **female and male focus group** (7)46.62% males had completed their post graduation. (7)46.62% males and (3) 20% females had completed their graduation. (4)26.64% females and one i.e.6.66% males had studied up to H.S.C. and (7)46.62% and (1)6.66% females had studied up to S.S.C and primary level respectively.

Among the participants of the **mixed focus group** (5)33.3% of the males and female participants respectively had completed their graduation, (3)19.98% males and one (6.66%) female had completed their H.S.C, only one (6.66%) female had completed her education up to S.S.C.

**Occupation**

Among the females and male participants from the **in-depth interview group** (16) 61.53% female participants were employed in skilled and unskilled professions, i.e. as a maid, secretary, teacher, and in offices. One (3.84%) female participant had her own business; where as 34.61 % (9) of the female participants had not taken up any employment, and they were homemakers. Whereas 80 % (20) of the male participants were in service some holding good positions, which were highly, demanding and (5)20% had their own business.

Of the participants from **female and male focus group** (13)86.58% of females were unemployed i.e. they were homemakers, only two i.e. 13.32% were employed, whereas (9)59.94% males were employed in various professions, like banks, IT industry and multinational companies as computer software or hard ware engineer’s, (5)33.3% of the males ran their own business and only one i.e.6.66% of male was not employed as he had left job in hope of better employment.

In the **mixed focus group** two (13.32%) female participants were unemployed as they were housewives and only one male was, unemployed. Whereas (5)33.3% females were employed in the office as secretary, multinational companies or in the IT industry. Among the male participants  (6)39.96% were employed , as bar tender, as a purser in jet air ways, bank and in clerical positions only one (6.66%) male had his own business.

**Type of family**

The participants of the **in-depth interview** came from both nuclear and joint families. Seventeen i.e. 65.38% female and 68% male participants belonged to nuclear families whereas (9)34.61% female and (8)32% males participants came from joint families.
Among the participants from the **female and male focus group**, (8)53.28% of females lived in nuclear families and (7)46.62% lived in joint families. Similarly (11)73.26% of the males lived in nuclear families; and (4)26.64% of the males lived in joint families where the head was the parent.

In the **mixed focus group** four i.e.26.64% of female and (5)33.3% of male participants were from nuclear families, whereas (3) 19.98% of female and male participants came from joint families respectively.

**Marital status**

Among the participants of the **in-depth interview**, (4)15.38% females and (4)16% males were unmarried. 80.64 % (21) females and 84 % (21) males were married only one (3.84%) of the female participant was widowed and had opted not to remarry. In the **female and male focus group**, all i.e.100%female participants and (14)93.34% of the male participant were married and only one male (6.66%) was unmarried. The data from the **mixed focus group** indicated that (4)26.64%females and male were married and (3)19.98% females and (4)26.64% males were unmarried.

**Position in the family**

In the **in-depth interview** group (3)11.52% females were the head of their households in the absences of their spouse either because their spouse worked abroad or loss of spouse, where as for (23) 88.32% female participants the head of the family was husband, father-in-law or mother-in-law in the absence of the father-in-law. Most of the female participants i.e. eight were eldest daughter-in-law, three were the only daughter-in-laws and the rest were either second or the youngest daughter-in-law respectively. Whereas (15) 60% of the males were the head of the family i.e. of the nuclear family except one was the head of a joint family. Among the remaining (10)40%males the head of the family were the parents, where the participants came from either joint or nuclear families.

Among the **female and male focus group** participants only one i.e.6.66% female was the head of the family as her husband worked in the army, six(39.96%) of the females stated they were the eldest daughter-in-laws, three(20%) said they were the only daughters-in-laws and the other six(39.96%) stated they were either second, third or youngest
daughters-in-law. Whereas (9)59.94% of the males were head of the family even though (11)73.26% lived in nuclear family, two of them reported to have their widow mother living with them and considered them as head of their household. Most of the males (9)59.94% were the only earning members, of which (4)26.64% who lived in joint family had their siblings also earning, whereas of the 11 living in nuclear families (2)13.32% had their wives also working.

In the mixed focus group (6)39.96% of males were head of the family of which two males belonged to joint families who lived with their siblings and four from nuclear families of which two were married and two where unmarried they headed the family being the eldest. Two (13.32%) of the female participants were the eldest daughter-in-law’s and had to take major responsibilities as they lived in joint families. Two female participants living in nuclear family also had to support the families of their parent-in-law’s living separate. One i.e.6.66% female participant was the only earning member as her husband had lost the job and (3)19.98% male participants were the only earning members, of which one was unmarried and head of the nuclear family. The other two were married living in nuclear families.

**Income**

Among the participants of the in-depth interview all (100%) the male participants of the study had a monthly family income above Rs 10,000/- i.e. their income ranged anywhere between 50,000 to 1lakh specially those who worked in multinational corporate companies. Males had their own business and some because their spouses too were employed and some stated their income was between 45,000 to 60,000/-. Whereas, (23)88.46% of the females belonged to the income group of above 10,000. Only 11.52 % (3) females reported their family income ranged from 5,000-10,000/-.

Among the participants of the female and male focus group (11)78.26% of the females and (14)93.34% of males stated their monthly family income was above 10,000/- they reported it to be between 60,000/- to 1lakh. (3)20% and (1)6.66% of females participants reported their monthly family income to be 5001-10,000/- and up to 5000/- respectively.

Monthly family income of the participants from the mixed focus group indicated that (3)19.98% females and (5)33.3%males participants had income above 10,000/-.
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(4) 26.64% females and (2) 13.32% male participants stated that their monthly family income was between Rs. 5001-10,000/- and only one i.e. 6.66% male reported that the family income was up to 5000/-.

6.2.2 Findings related to the concept of stress among adult individuals living in Mumbai:

All the (26) 100% female participants from the in-depth interview group said that they had gone through stress on many occasions and were still going through stress. When the female participants in the in-depth interview were asked what the word ‘STRESS’ meant to them they expresses it was when they experienced, inability to balance income and expenditure, fear of acceptance related to their inter caste marriage, unable to deliver according to expectation, fast life, difficult to handle work and home. When things become too much then can’t deal with it, not getting married on time, Illness in family, inability to handle new parenthood, and raising children.

The words used by them to express stress was Tension, Tanav, Tan, Khichav, Painful experience was referred by couple of participants and Sahanshakti by 40% of the female participants repeatedly. Couple of the females used the word “Painful experience” when referring to stressful experience. While other female participants in the course of narrating their experience of stress used the words indicating manifestation like “getting irritated” “when I am very upset I know I am stressed”, “feel fed up with things”, “Pachhtana pade”, “feel I am going to have a break down”, “can’t take it anymore, want to drop and go type of situation” these were used to express stress according to them. Only two females said stress means a challenge to perform, an opportunity to grow, stress according to them was positive experience. One of the young females in the age group of 20-30yrs said that too much importance has been given to the word stress, there is no such thing as stress there are difficulties that come along which one need to deal with.

Stress was expressed by the female participants in various contexts i.e. “their inability to balance between work and home”, this was with reference to not getting help at home when they got back from work, “when things become too much, can’t deal with it or can’t take any more of it” was in terms of expectation from in-laws, superiors at work, troubling children or comments made by relatives. Similarly the unmarried females reported the same when they were constantly nagged by people for not being married, while almost all females...
reported that the period soon after getting married was stressful as they didn’t know how to deal with married life.

One of the females reported stress related to loneliness. As she came from a joint family and now lived alone with her spouse. While another female participant reported related to acceptance of inter caste marriage, this type of scenario is found to be very common cause of stress in female marrying outside their community. One of the females participant attributed cause of stress to childbirth and the period of new motherhood, whereas another female participant expressed stress in context to delivering successively two premature babies and having to care for them without her spouse’s help. Motherhood itself calls for adaptation to a new role which itself is stressful. All of these situations perceived as causing stress were those where adaptation to change was required. To meet the change probably they may have felt inadequately equipped or were not ready to deal with new situations. The investigator noted that their body language during the interview depicted uncertainty and low self-confidence, as they appeared tightly coiled like a string.

It was interesting to note that the male participants from the individual interview group expressed their stress differently than the female participants. Of the 25 males interviewed (7) i.e.28% said they did not have stress, of which two i.e. 8% said they never experienced stress. The reason being they did meditation, yoga 2-3 times a day” another male participant stated being his policy of life was be happy do not worry tension will come and go. While another male participant attributed not experiencing stress since he lived in joint family. Three (12%) of the male participants said that stress was good, as it helps to achieve.

The male participants from the in-depth group i.e. (18)72% said they have experienced stress used five words more dominantly i.e. Painful experience (3)12%, Lot of tension (6)24%, Pressure (3) 12% constantly thinking of the same issue, (3) 12%. Dependency (2)8%, two male participants used them to express cause of stress, as well as express stress. The male participants also used more of phrases to express stress like “on the edge of the seat kind of situation”, negative feeling, “unable to think”, drained off, put my hands up cannot take it anymore and strained.

Stress was expressed in context to work, ability, i.e. inability to manage work and family issues alone without any one to help, trying to balance everything in short time,
inability to meet financial needs of the family, mind keeps diverting to issues, inability to cope, responsibilities, negative attitude.

All the participants i.e. (15) 100% from the female focus group had experienced stress of various intensity from mild to severe. Like the female participants from the in-depth individual interview group the most common word used was “tension zala”, ‘Tanav’ ‘Tan’ and one new word used by Hindi speaking female participants of the focus group was ‘Takalif’ to express their stress experience. In the course of narrating their experience, they said they were “fed up” their tone of voice and body language expressed extreme intensity and painful experience of stress related to relationships. Four (24.64%) of the female participants from the female focus group expressed stress in their relationship. While two (8%) of the female participant reported stress as mental abuse, because of mother-in-law, sister-in-law and others experienced stress due to gender discrimination.

Another female from the group expressed she experienced stress as her mother had forced her to work as a maid at the age of 13yrs as a resulted she hated her mother. While another female participant from the focus group expressed her stress in context to her spouse’s health, suspicious nature and alcoholism.

It could be concluded from the experiences shared by the female focus group participants that the stress in their context meant painful disturbing experiences that probably hurt their inner core and forced them to question their role as women.

All the participants of the male focus group i.e. (15) 100% expressed they had experienced stress at some point of life or were still experiencing stress. Unlike the participants in the other groups, they used the word ‘stress’ very frequently as they communicated in English or in Hindi. According to them stress was ‘when they kept thinking on the same issue’, ‘when under pressure’, ‘feel different from normal’, focus was always on wanting to solve problems, desperate to get something and two of them had reported stress was ‘Pain’. The feeling of stress was similar to those expressed by others.

Their interaction and discussion highlighted the ‘context of stress’ experienced by them as ‘at the end of the day one feelsthat they haven’t achieved anything’, ‘struggle to meet
expectations’, ‘trying to sort things’, over ambitious, greed, unhealthy competition, inability to deal with changes.

All the participants from the mixed focus group predominantly used the word “tension” to express their stress. Stress was experienced in the “context” to their inability to acquire good jobs resulting in poor salary. Inability to meet their desire was expressed by 50% of the participants from the mixed focus group. Inability to always meet families needs, inability to fulfill their ambition was stated by i.e.(5)33.3% of the participants in the age group of 20 to 30yrs and few(3) 20% from the 31 to 40yrs as they had to take up jobs early in life to support their families, as well by those, who were married(3)20% and were the sole bread winners of the family.

6.2.3 Findings related to the factors associated to stress among the individuals living in Mumbai:

The participants of the study mainly attributed the following factors to stress i.e. factors related to work stress, family stressors, daily hassles, financial stress, gender discrimination, factors related to the person, factors related to self.

Factors at work related to stress

Sixteen i.e. 61.53% female participants from the in-depth interview group referred to performing “error free work on time and under pressure”, having to complete work at “short notice”, with in “deadlines” and under pressure from the boss. Short staff and too much “work load”, getting work related calls at home felt she was being harassed. (3)11.52%Females reported experienced high job stress because of performance pressure, unsure of performance related to assigned job i.e. questioned one’s own potential and long working hours. Female participants who worked as teachers (7)26.88% said they experienced stress because of student’s parents, students academic performance, correction of papers, when they were not punctual or due to incomplete assignment. Female participants working in the aviation department said dealing with difficult customers and passengers on the phone who spoke rudely; deadlines, assignments like dispatching reports to head office/superior or circular to agents, competition in the market caused them stress.
The participants from the **male focus group** brought out similar factors related to work stress as those who were interviewed individually i.e. work load, work pressure, deadlines, and questioning their ability i.e. were they doing the work wrong, having to constantly prove themselves right, this was expressed by (11)73.26% of the males in the focus group. One of the participant said inspite of working hard there was still pressure from customer/ colleagues to meet target. One of the participant said that the work pressure in his last office was so high; it took him 4 ½ yrs to get out of it, which became possible only with change of job. Similar factors causing stress was reported by few of the participants from the **male in-depth interview** group.

Both the male and female participants of the **mixed focus group** who were employed, expressed that they had experienced similar stresses as the other participants, in relation to work load, time pressure, deadline, inadequate salary for the amount of work done, long duty hours therefore no time to socializes, raising cost in the market for commodities and poor salary. Since majority of the females in the **female focus group** were homemakers who did not bring out any work related stress.

**Factors related to the person**

Some of the participants brought out factors related to the person at work place causing them stress. Quite a few of the **female** participants from the **in-depth interview group** reported the difficulty with colleagues, cheating behavior, casual and indifferent attitude of their colleagues was a source of stress. Majority of the females expressed misunderstanding created at work place. Few of them reported they were upset or disturbed when they were called to work on their off days or holidays as they had to make changes in their plan at a given short notice.

Whereas two of the participants from the **male focus group** brought out that fear of being insulted by the boss in front of colleagues. Few others said that office politics; gossiping and comments made by colleagues were a cause of stress. In the **mixed focus group** most of the working females (4)26.64% and two (13.32%) males reported difficulty with a demanding boss. One (6.66%) of the female participant also reported having problems with a boss that was a cause of stress.
Factor related to self

Some of the females from the in-depth interview group feared falling ill and not being able to get to work as causing stress similarly at time were not sure of their own potential. They also reported high expectation from self, unable to get work done according to their own expectation or standard, not willing to share responsibilities as they felt their children or spouse may not do the job properly and similarly at work did not trust their subordinates to do a good job. Hence, did all the work themselves and got irritated seeing other relaxed. Felt it was their personality or attitude of perfectionism, or getting easily upset for silly reason, getting hyper/worked up in tight knot, which cause them stress.

While from the in-depth interview group few of the male participants (9)36% said that at times they were the cause of their own stress, as they had made decision to be the sole breadwinners. Wanting to do things perfectly, their own behavior i.e. rash decision or reactions in situations ended up becoming cause for stress, excessive fear of their own health. Their belief system that destiny/ luck one has to handle it there is no choice. All the participants from male focus group expressed it was their high expectation from self, wanting to maintain standard of their choice, and one of the participant reported that focusing too much on improving our life style rather than on life was the cause of their stress. Female participants of the focus group attributed inadequacy in themselves as a cause of stress.

The participants from the mixed focus group i.e. (4)26.64% of the male as well as female participants expressed that they did not have adequate ability/skill required. The males said their inadequate education was responsible for their stress because otherwise they would have good jobs. One of the graduate male working as a purser for an airline said that he neither had the time to search for a better job nor had an opportunity to do any course, as he could not get leave. One of the unemployed males and some i.e. (3)19.98% of the employed females blamed themselves for their lack of ability.

Family Stressors

The family stressors focused on three main areas i.e. children, spouse and household chores. All female participants among the in-depth interview group who were married (21)80.64% i.e. homemakers as well as those employed, experienced family stressors. Their
stressors included worry about their children’s education, too much portion to study, not kept their room tidy, refusal to help with the household chores, poor eating habits of their children, fear of children falling sick, and anxiety regarding the influences of T.V./media. The participants who had female children feared regarding their daughters safety. Ill-health of a spouse or an argument on issues like household chores also caused stress for some women. Difference of opinion or an alcoholic spouse caused stress. Husband’s refusal to work in India and dating someone else was reported by one female participant. Few of the female participants reported not getting any support from their spouses while others said that their husbands were a big support when they experienced stress at home, issues related to children or office. Nine (34.61%) female participants who lived in joint families reported their source of stress was ill treatment, poor co-operation from their mother-in-law, rude and nasty behavior on the other hand few (3) i.e.12% said their mother-in-law were a big support while raising their kids.

One of the female in the age group of 20-30 years said she did not get support from her husband inspite of managing the house within limited resources, and failed to understand his expectations as he reported she was not perfect. She on the other hand was bothered by his habit of wasting money. Two (7.68%) of the unmarried females reported going through high stress because of their parents, one participant had lost her father. While other participant’s father had been admitted in the ICU followed by her mother developing non-healing wound, they also expressed feeling stressed due to difference of opinion or argument with their parents. One of the participant who lost her father reported that soon after the death of their father her brother got married; there were unexplained problems in the family. If she and her mother tried to find the reason, they received no response from her sister-in-law instead her brother would answer in a way that upset them. The unmarried female participants from the in-depth interview group were vexed by people asking them when or why they were not getting married.

Similarly the male participants from the in-depth interview group experienced stress related to three main areas, namely parents health, children and inability to give adequate time to family which was expressed by almost all the married male participants (21)84%. Children’s health, poor performance in studies, spending excessive time playing computer games and chatting with friends on the mobile were a source of stress expressed by (5)20% of the male participants. One male participant’s eyes were filled with tears when he recalled
problems in the life of his grown up daughter. Ten (40%) males reported that their long working hours and travelling resulted in their inability to give adequate time to their family and children. Sudden change of plan at work resulting in them reaching home late, which resulted in cancellation of plans of visiting relatives /or taking wife & children for an outing, inability to meet needs of the family or wife’s expectations also caused them stress. Some male participants (5) 20% reported that when at home sometimes they were preoccupied with their work and when children did something very innocent or acted silly, they would flare up on them and would later feel bad when others pointed. Four (16%) of the males said family life was disturbed because of their 24×7 job, as they had to attend to calls even at home or on holiday. Participants who headed operations/infrastructure and projects reported this, as work could not be stalled which upset their wife’s as they felt neglected. While another four (16%) of the males reported their parents specially fathers hospitalization, was a stressful period as their father was their big support system. (3)12% male participants said death of their father was stressful to them as it was a “big blow”, as they did not know what to do.

All male participants of the focus group having children except two-expressed family stress. One of the male participant newly married and the other who was unmarried. Few of them said their children caused them stress, as they did not listen, had their own way of doing things, going their own way, didn’t match up to their expectation. On probing, one of the male participant did say it bother him, though he tried to ignore. Three others commented that stress in the family was because of their wife’s expectations, as they expected them to run errands, which they did not like. The other male participant commented he was glad his wife allowed him to continue playing badminton, hence looked at the wife’s demand as sacrifice, and then did not experienced stress. Another participant said the best way to reduce family stress was to involve in the families hobbies. This allowed spending time with family as well reduced their stress. One of the male participants said that, there is family stress as wives were also changing; they were not like their mothers who took care of all. On probing, reported his mother, looked after the full family, and did not think only of her maternal family. However, he felt his wife thought only of her family, while he gave equal attention to both families, this according to him was another reason for tension in the family. While among the female focus group, stress in the family was reported related to poor relationship with in-laws, alcoholic husband, suspicious husband, being beaten up or getting into an argument with the spouse.
Family stress was also expressed by majority of the samples from the mixed focus group whether they lived in nuclear family or in joint family. 19.98% i.e. three males and one female they were the only earning members hence had to meet the expense of the family and siblings who were studying. Their stress increased if anyone was sick, as finance became tight. Two (13.32%) of the female participants who had small children were worried regarding the safety of their children. One of the female participants, whose husband had lost his job, said this was a cause of tension in the family which triggered arguments.

**Daily hassles**

The participants of the female and male in-depth interview group mainly reported daily hassles. Majority (20) 80% of the female participants from in-depth interview referred to it as “rojka kit-kit” i.e. day to day hassles giving them more stress than the major ones as it snapped their energy, whereas big stressors came once in a while. The female participants indicated daily hassles were like “what to cook?, shopping, pollution, noise, fear of getting robbed, travelling, difficult neighbors, inconsiderate people, traffic jam, crowded transport i.e. trains and buses”. Whereas, nine i.e. 36% of the males from the in-depth interview attributed travelling as a cause of stress. Those travelling by their own vehicle said, traffic jam and futilely blowing horn in traffic caused stress, especially when getting back from work or when already running late for meetings. (4) 16% participants said the duration of travelling hour that is almost 4-6 hours of journey to work bothered them a lot. Boarding crowded local trains and buses, not getting auto rickshaw, in short the transport system caused stress. (2) 8% said that the thought of travelling itself causes them stress. Few of the male participants i.e. (5) 20% said they were stressed by the rising cost of housing, commodities, the infrastructure of the city i.e. meager roads, pollution, noise and dirt.

**Financial stress**

None of the females from the in-depth interview expressed stress due to finance. This may be because most of them reported their spouses doing well and those employed added to the kitty of the family. Except one of the female participant had to support her husband’s family, as well she had to contribute to the expenses in her parents house which increased her financial stress further, it was even more difficult when her younger brother too demanded for money.
Whereas, among the male participants of the in-depth interview group; of the five (20%) participants having their own business. Two i.e. 8% said they experienced stress due to financial losses in business because of others whereas, one lost money invested in the share market thus, due to wrong decision. Three (12%) of the male participants went through financial stress during different period of time for various reason, one had quit the job, to look after his sick grandmother. which subsequently reduced after taking up the job at her death. The other male participant reported that soon after getting a job and getting married he had the responsibility of his brother-in-law’s operation and within three months major heart surgery of his mother. Problem was solved by taking loan from friends and relatives and then repaying them by taking loan from the company, which was deducted from his salary(period 2-3yrs) as the loan cleared his stress was reduced. The third participant had reported that he had taken loan for a relative to purchase a house, for which they promised to pay the EMI but when the relative lost the job; the burden of the loan was his task. He could have sold the house to reduce the stress but looked at it as an investment and knew that it was time bound, as the loan cleared, he became stress free; felt the short stress was worth it as he gained property in turn. All three male participants alleged that though they had experienced financial stress they did not mind that stress as it was for a worthy cause and looked at it as a sacrifice.

Over all the male participants believed that they did not experience financial stress even when they had to support their parents economically because they planned well. Avoided unwanted expense, lived within their own means, and did not take unnecessary risk or loan just to fulfill their desires. The demographic attribute also indicated that since most of them being well educated had good jobs and stable businesses, were financially stable. Hence, this area was not very stressful to the male participants. Whereas one participant reported a short period of financial stress from the male focus group due to unplanned investment in property, while others like in the in-depth interview group experienced stress due to ups and downs in business. As compared to the other participants all the participants from the female focus group expressed extreme stress due to finance as their spouses did not have very good salary and they expressed their struggle to meet their basic requirements.

Financial stress was experienced by all the participants in the mixed focus group even by those participants who had business as their business was unsuccessful. The participants felt inadequate salary, a large family with too many needs was difficult; they
were only able to meet the most essential needs. They also felt that their earning was just enough to run the household and was not enough to fulfill their desires. Nevertheless, none of them had taken any loan, as it would further increase their stress.

**Gender related issue**

One of the female from the in-depth interview group, between the age group of 20-30yrs reported that the cause of her stress were parents. She felt they neglected her as she was a girl child and the third daughter. She had to fight with her parents to pursue her education as her community did not believe in educating girls. She thought that if she worked and brought a salary home her parent’s attitude would change which unfortunately did not. If she said anything to her husband her parents would scold her. Physically her husband would force himself on her. She felt all her stress and trouble was because she was born a female. Most (13) i.e. 86.58% of the females from the female focus group attributed the cause of stress to themselves, as they were not very assertive. They attributed gender discrimination which was aggravated due to uneducated parents who in turn, forced them into child labour, ill-treated by employees, also pointed to the status of women.

The investigator had also noticed that some of the females had no eye contact while relating their issues. They often gazed downwards or their eyes were poignant or fixed on some object, this may indicate low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence and depression.

6.2.4. **Findings related to the perceived effect of stress on selected aspects of individuals life:**

The effect of stress was experienced by the participants of the study in four main areas as expressed by them. Effect of stress was found to have an impact on their health, work/job, in their behaviour and on their relationship.

**Impact of stress on their Health**

The female participants from the in-depth interviewed group expressed that, stress affected their physical/mental health as a result they experienced fatigue, anger, doldrums, dejected, crying spells, withdrawn syndrome or kept sullen silence. Other reported not taking care of their appearance, they dressed shabbily, did not feel like talking to anyone, sleepless nights and, mentally disturbed. Other symptoms that they manifested were irritation, often
took out work pressure on others especially on family, poor concentration, acidity, hardened stomach, excess perspiration, palpitation, uneasy bowels, inferiority complex, uncontrolled tempered many took out their frustration by beating or screaming at their kids which they often regretted. Three (11.52%) of the females from the in-depth interview group assumed they lost weight due to lack of appetite which was a cause of stress. It was observed from the data that the expression of severe stress was reported by (11) 42.30% of females from the age group of 20-30yrs.

Male participants from the in-depth interview group experienced physical and psychological symptoms (5)20% male participants experienced headache and sleeplessness (6)24% felt the pressure building up. They reported that they did not eat on time, stumpy mood, restlessness; anger was experienced by (8)32%. (4)16% experienced irritation. Two (8%) male participants reported fatigue, lethargy and were disturbed. Two others reported that they were at risk of developing diabetes. One of the male participants had developed acidity the other had begun getting asthmatic attacks.

The participants from the Male focus group (8)53.28% reported they got headaches, three (20%) experienced heaviness in their head, lethargy, or felt helpless. One of the male participants reported high cholesterol, another reported he too fears that if his stress levels were not dealt with he would suffer from hypertension. The participants from the female focus group brought out similar manifestations of stress. Majority of them reported having headaches and lack of sleep due to stress. (7)46.62%, other (4)26.64% felt their BP going high /low and experienced dizziness. From the mixed focus group two, (13.32%) of the males and three (19.98%) females reported frequent ill-health due to stress. The reason specified was poor immunity system, inadequate rest or proper meal time. Few of the participants complained of headache like the other participants of the study. Constant tiredness, lethargy was reported by (7)46.62% of the participants due, to long working hours.

Impact of stress on their behaviour

Thirteen i.e.50% of the females from the in-depth interview group reported that their tone of voice changed i.e. got loud, as if they were screaming their head off, got impatient with colleagues, wanted to be left alone, often in an unfriendly mood, got ratty, unable to gel with others, sullen silence. Some reported that even if there was a change in behaviour, they had not realized or noticed. Among the male participants from the in-depth
Interview group (15)60% found their “behavior” got affected when they were stressed (5)20% got easily irritated. Six i.e. 24% reported losing their temper, being rude, flaring at the wrong person, aggressive, agitated, unfriendly mood, immobile, sullen or sat and did nothing or were uncommunicative. Few i.e. (2)8% got into fights and when they cooled down were uncomfortable. Few experienced excess stress as a result did not answer phone calls. Only (2)8% found that stress brought the best out of them and it helped them become indomitable, strong minded and better focused.

Most of the participants from the male focus group reported being irritable and angry. Almost (6)40% end up displacing anger on their kids or other family members. Some said they did not enjoy their food, as mostly didn’t realize what they were eating. The participants from the female focus group reported getting angry with themselves for not dealing with stressful situations. They too experienced change in their choice of word, tone of voice, they too got angry with the kids, removed their frustration on the husband, had a fight or got in to an argument. At times became withdrawn or quite, no other change in behavior was noticed by them. As they narrated their experiences, the investigator observed their body language, which indicated psychological and emotional disturbance. Participants from the mixed focus group expressed similar impact on behavior like other participants of the study i.e. getting angry, irritated when stressed out, staying quite or withdrawing.

Impact of stress on their work

Only five i.e. 19.2% female participants complained that stress affected their work, they made mistakes, unable to complete work on time as they were disturbed thus, took extensive time as a result, ended taking wrong decisions, inadequate quality of work. Some felt they had learnt to disconnect work and home affairs, when at work they shut their mind to household issues and when at home, left office outside their door.

Whereas two male participants from in-depth interview group, reported their work was affected due to stress i.e. they were unable to concentrate on work, couldn’t think as their mind got flustered due to multiple things crossing the mind. Others did not let stress affect their work, as they were able to detach work and home, which was also similarly voiced by the female participants of the in-depth interview group.
The two females from the female focus group had similar experience like the other participants. The rest of the participants in this group were unemployed, i.e. or homemakers.

The few participants from the mixed focus group felt that their work did get affected due to stress, often made mistakes, unable to complete work on time. While other participants reported, they could not afford to let stress affect their work, as they needed their job.

**Impact of stress on their relationship**

The participants from the female in-depth interview group i.e. (5) 19.2% expressed that stress brought about constant argument with their spouse, and they worried about its effect on their kids as this often got displaced on kids. Some reported their relationship with relatives got affected when they criticized or found fault with them. The female participants reported their change in behaviour often ended affecting their relationship with their children and spouse. Whereas (5) 20% male participant from the in-depth interview group, mostly ended up hurting and upsetting their spouses or displacing their frustration on their children. Some reported they got annoyed with subordinate’s though they later apologies.

None of the participants of the male focus group felt that relationship with friends, colleague or family members was drastically affected. They believed if there was difference of opinion or argument, it generally lasted for a short period of time, as they did not mull over issues. They gave priority to family, spouse and good friends which according to them were far more valuable than trivial problems. The participants of the female focus group felt that due to fights/arguments in the family, or spouse brought about strain in relationships. The female participants who were being mistreated by their in-law maintained a reserved attitude and distance.

Where 59.94% (9) participants of the mixed focus group reported similarly like the other participants of the study, that they too ended displacing their frustration on family members or getting into argument at home. Hence, broken relationship affected the family relationship. One bachelor male participant reported his girlfriend walked out on him due to lack of proper accommodation and low salary. Another bachelor male was unable to settle down due to long working hours as a result ended in a broken relationship.
6.2.5. Findings related to the measures adopted to cope with factors contributing to stress:

The participants used different types of coping strategies to deal with factors contributing to stress namely appraisal coping strategy, emotional coping strategy, problem solving coping strategy and spiritual strategy.

Appraisal strategy

Seventeen i.e. 65.38% female participants from the in-depth interview said they appraised the situation and tried to remain cool and calm, the housewives tried to take a short nap. (10)38.4% listened to music, watched a movie which helped to calm their nerves, read a good book, block their mind when at work so that they do not have to deal with the situation. Four (15.38%) of the females participants, i.e. two(7.68%) each from the age group of 31-40yrs and above 50yrs reported that when they had a bad day at work and were frazzled out, they would walk home from work as it gave them the space to unwind, think and sort problems before reaching home. Five (19.2%) of the females i.e. three housewives and two working females tried changing their way of looking at the situation in a more positive manner and find alternatives to the situation. They tried minimizing the problem by look at others who had huge problems; this resulted in their stress reduction.

On the other hand the male participants from the in-depth interview group reported they took a quick walk to the washroom/garden of the office/cafeteria, chat with a friend either on phone or have a conversation for few minutes. Other said they switch off for few minutes and close their eyes or get off the computer. Avoid looking at the negative side of things thus, maintain a positive outlook. (4)16% of the male participants said that exercise, meditation and yoga helped them to distress and energies. (5) 20% of the males when under stress ate and slept well, and took care of themselves. One of the male participants reported he laughed and joked a lot, which helped to ease stress.

Those male participants who found travelling stressful avoided travelling alone, they started travelling with friends, got their mind diverted by reading books, or listening to music. Few (5)20% others shared their problem with their family/ wife/ a trust worthy friend. One of the older male participants often stayed calm, remained polite to avoid blurting useless words.
Few of the participants from the male focus group i.e. (3)20% reported ‘drawing a line of control’, other participants of the study also listened to music, read book, watched a good movie. Some played badminton for 3 to 4 hrs which helped to de-stress. Two (13.32%) of the participants; preferred to negate out when unable to cope with stress. Two i.e. 13.32% of them felt like dropping everything and going away alone, to stay quietly by themselves for some time. The participants from the mixed focus group both the males and females especially the working participants used appraisal coping strategy. They often tried to change their focus and mood, concentrated on positive experiences, distracted themselves by looking at the pictures on their mobile at work or took a look at a family album. One of them said when they had a bad day at work instead of thinking what happened they consciously look forward for a wonderful time with family this often lowered the stress. Few (2) 13.32% of them took a stroll in the lobby, cracked jokes, read the news paper, when relaxed they returned to their desk. None of the participants from the female focus group reported using appraisal coping strategy.

**Emotional strategy**

Emotional coping strategy was largely adopted by the female participants from both in-depth interview and focus group. Three females, from the in-depth interview accepted the blame for what had gone wrong; and were first to always apologize. Another felt it was better to keep it in the heart, as nothing can be done. While, another commented that, keeping a distance from relatives or those people who were cause of their tension was the best alternative. The female focus group also felt helpless and had self-pity they preferred to blame their destiny and for tears was the only way. From the mixed focus group (3)19.98% of the females ended up crying, blaming themselves, or feeling sorry for themselves. Two (13.32%) of the males from the mixed focus group chose alcohol, to chill out or take a puff of nicotine. They did agree it was an inappropriate solution but felt it was ok for sometime during stress.
Problem solving strategy

Only five (19.2%) of the females from the in-depth interview group used problem solving strategy when they experienced stress. They analyzed the situation, thought about the alternatives and chose the best option. They felt one must do what one can, or let it resolve on its own. Some preferred to share the issue with friends or family members, hoping their advice or guidance would help find consolation and solution. Two (7.68%) preferred to handle the issues on day to day basis rather than accumulate. Of the two female participants who had reported undergoing severe stress, one took VRS from a Bank job and took up the job as an assistant teacher in a primary school. Another female after her brother’s wedding; chose to live with her mother separately this reduced stress and gave her space. Another female participant reported she would have no relief until her husband took a job and changed his conduct she reported that work place was the only time she enjoyed peace.

The male participant from the in-depth interview group reported using problem solving strategy, (3)12% of the participants reported “keep a backup plan if one option fail’s, other options are available and they have time to think”, (4)16% of participants look at the problems and sort according to priorities and deal accordingly. Three (12%) of the male participants “focused on the problem and tried to find solution.” (2) 8% of the male participants said they box the issue that causes stress. When stress strikes them they try to focus on the work/ issue and not on the person. (4)16% “Step back and look at the situation, sort it out and solve them one by one. The best way of dealing with stress by (4)16% of male participants were to analyze the situations, list options and alternatives and choose the best solution. Stress reduced if work was shared this was, remarked by two (8%). Do not carry tension, was expressed by another two male participants. It was interesting to note that (10)40% male participants had reported that they needed to look after themselves, were within the age group of 31-40yrs and 41-50yrs. One had attended a workshop on stress management and the other received stress tips from a choirmaster. Few (6)24% had learnt it over the years when their health began getting affected due to stress.

The participants of male focus group only in reference to work place i.e. like other male and female working participants reported that they used problem-solving strategy if there were any issue. They analyzed the situation, and chose the best options and made alternative activity plans. The male participants from the focus group reported they had built
a strong support system and shared their problems with their friends. Some dealt with problems on the spot.

Two of the participants from the female focus group moved out from their in-law’s household and one planned to move as soon as arrangements were made. The participants from the female focus group during the session decided they need to be assertive and financial independent. Problem solving strategy was used by very few i.e. 19.98 % (3) of the participants from the mixed focus group, especially those working in multinational companies. They said that they looked at the issue, analyzed their error, looked at the option, applied one, if it failed, chose other. If when at work something upset them they analyzed the reason for it, to help themselves to calm down and tried sorting it out. Problem solving strategy had been used by working individuals more due to their education, training, and interaction with others who had similar problems and shared their solution with them.

**Spiritual coping**

Among the female participants of the in-depth interview (15) 60% of the females prayed, a few reported going to the temple or church which helped to calm themselves. One participant initially had blamed God but later due to her mother-in-law’s explanation accepted it as God’s will. The other (11) 42.30% participants prayed routinely or said their daily family prayers thus, fulfilled their religious obligations. Three (11.52%) of the females started daily yoga/meditation which helped to deal better with daily stressors.

Fourteen i.e. 56% of the male participants from the in-depth interview group felt that praying did help them. One of the male participant sort advice from a priest, to do a pooja which also helped. They said one must have faith, only if you believes and trust in God; one will find solution and relief. Reading religious books and visiting temples was of much help. From the male focus group, few of the participants prayed, and preferred to leave certain issues to God, they put their trust in God and felt the divine power would help but when there was no relief they preferred to be atheist.

Similarly, the participants from the mixed focus group i.e. the females observed fast to solve their problems and made vows. The males visited holy shrines like Sai baba temple in Shirdi or went to the darga. They felt God was the only one who would help in times of
difficulties, and help find answers to their problems. One of the participants practiced Reiki when he had any health issues.

All participants expressed spirituality as a strong strategy in which they believed that when everything had failed God would remain steadfast and not let them down. The divine power in which all believed without questioning also gave them a sense of security and peace. Spiritual strength can be attributed to the participants religious upbringing and religious teaching.

**Other strategies** reported by the participants i.e. four (15.38%) of the female participants from in-depth interview had begun counseling sessions. Most of the married (male and female) participant had found support to deal with stress from their spouse.

### 6.2.6. Findings related to the relationship between perceived effects of stress and changes in life style:

The investigator observed that the participants did not make any conscious effort to bring change in their lifestyle. Many did not realize that changing their lifestyle could alleviate their stress levels.

Most of the female participants form the **in-depth interview group** did not think that they could make any modifications in their lives to reduce stress, especially some of the housewives felt they had no choice but live with it till death, which only indicated their state of vulnerability. Some of them did not realize that they could do something to reduce stressor that was within their ability. Two of the female participants were taught to believe that God would take care of all their problems. One of the female participants had changed her job due to stress. Many female participants (21)80.64% never shared their problems with any one before, except sometimes only with those who were close as it helped feeling better.

The male participants from the **in-depth interview group** had attempted to bring about a change in their life style to reduce the effect of perceived stress. One of the male participants changed his work style since past 2yrs, stopped taking assignment orders at the last minute. Two(8%) of the male participants who had their own business reported that even
if the payment was good but if it had excess work pressure that would affect health and family he often did not take up the job instead planned family outing for a couple of days. Eating and resting consciously was followed by three (12%) of the young male participants. Two (8%) of the male participants had stopped eating oily food, started exercise and regular walks. (4) 16% of the male participants started travelling early to avoid traffic while commuting to work. (2) 8% began taking short naps while travelling to avoid tiredness. One of the male participants joined a gym and would do workouts before going home as a result it helped him unwind his frustrations. Three of the male participants had chose hobbies to unwind stress.

The participants from the male focus group had not made any major life style change except since last one and a half years many had taken up playing badminton or cricket with people in their colony, a couple of them had started regular walks as advised by their physician. Similarly, the female participants from the female focus group did not make any major changes in their life style except two of the females moved out from their in-laws household; one began working from home to add to the inadequate family income. None of the participants from the mixed focus group had made any special change in life style. Two (8%) of them said when the stress at work was too much they stayed at home (absent). One of the male participants had begun long walks, due to a friend’s valuable advice and not because of stress. While others felt they had absolutely no time for extra activities. Perhaps according to many a change of lifestyle was not their priority, a modification of lifestyle was usually done only because of the advice of their physician when stress took toil on their health.

6.2.7 Conceptualization from findings:

From the study the “Proposition Emerged” is that the impact of environment on individual is mutual and thus his perception of stress. Seeking help in coping is individual’s choice. Counseling helps in verbalization and in turn adopting appropriate coping strategy. Modification of Lifestyle to positive approach depends on the quality of coping. All these are interrelated parts of all human psyche’ and move to and fro in a continuous cycle, influencing the health-illness continuum.

This research study brings awareness of this fact and orients nursing profession towards a road map to need-based care process. This will help in creating a nurse patient relationship, which will co-create changing health patterns for individual entering the health system to find relief from stress induced health problems / disease.
6.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The Perception of stress is subjective in nature.
- The data collected depended on the frame of mind of the participants during the period of the study.

6.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study have several implications for the nursing profession.

6.4.1 NURSING PRACTICE

- Nurse administrators can utilize the findings of the study in planning workshops on stress management for nurses.
- The findings of the study can be used to plan regular workshops on stress management strategies, to understand the patho-physiology of stress and its impact on the hormonal cycle.
- The administrators can plan regular activities, which provide the nurses with an opportunity to de-stress themselves and provide opportunities to verbalize their voice experiences.
- In the planning of new hospital or modification of existing structure can include a cafeteria, relaxation room or recreational lounge for the nurses.
- If the nurses are not over stressed then they will have the stamina for a better optimum service.
- The findings of the study may encourage nursing administrators to develop public awareness strategies via videotapes on ‘stress management.’
- The findings of the study will help the clinical nurses to understand the importance of including assessment of stress levels of the patients. As most of the manifestations, diseases are known to be precipitated due to high stress levels.
- The staff can be trained to recognize stress and learn various strategies related to stress reduction so that they can teach their patients.
- The findings can help the community health nurses to bring about community awareness, and teach the effects of stress to the public - ‘stress management.’
The community health nurses could form support groups or self help groups to help people handle their stress and to share the issues causing stress so that they can be dealt with before having an impact on their health, relationships, work or behavior patterns.

The community health groups could teach the youth to deal with stress and enjoy a healthy lifestyle by curtailing negativity in behavior and relationships and learning to adopt positive strategies.

The community health nurses can organize discussions and provide a platform for people to voice out issues causing stress. As, women and children often are unable to recognize stress. On the other hand males feel that they need to be strong and thus tend to suppress their issues and resort to alcoholism or other consumption vices as stress busters.

The findings of the study can help the nurses to plan health education programs for patients on stress management in the hospitals.

Informational booklet can be published on stress management.

The public health nurses can develop programs on stress management for people working in various categories.

The public health nurses can teach people to make life style modification to reduce or deal with stress.

Patients could be taught to channelize their negative energy into constructive positive energy.

6.4.2 NURSING EDUCATION

The nursing educators in their teaching can incorporate the findings of this study.

The nursing educators can teach students to recognize causes of stress, the manifestations of stress and incorporate assessment of stress in their patient’s assessment sheet.

The nursing educators can teach the students various strategies to reduce stress, which they in turn can teach their patients.

It’s important for educators to teach nursing students also to handle their own stress and that of others and be more sensitive.
6.4.3 NURSING RESEARCH

- The study has helped to understand the importance of using different methodology to understand the cultural influence on stress.
- The findings of the study have highlighted areas of further research.
- The study can motivate nursing researchers to take up studies related to different aspects of stress management strategies.
- A tool can be generated from the findings of the study and used in survey method.
- The methodology may encourage other nurse researchers to take up qualitative researchers.
- The study has opened up newer avenues for studies in this area.

6.5 SUGGESTIONS

- Relaxation technique needs to be taught to all participants.
- May be counselling sessions could be planned for participants who require.
- Mass awareness in the society on importance of education of a girl child to be emphasized, prevention of child labor, abuse of women in the families.
- Self help groups need to be formed in order to help people combat with stress.
- Women should be encouraged to take up activities thus; become independent and self reliant by taking up jobs or working from their homes.
- Married couples should be helped by nurse counsellors through seminars and workshops to help identify various sources of stress to which families are susceptible. As well as coping and preventive strategies should be taught so as to make couples better equipped to face the stressors more effectively, concentrating especially on females who are often the targets of stress.
- Awareness campaigns for couples experiencing family stress to form pressure groups in order to share their personal experiences on the issues and find solutions to overcome family stress through planned picnics, holidays, etc.
- Stress should be included in the school curriculum so as to prepare young people for dealing with stress as they may encounter in life.
6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Similar study can be repeated using a mixed method.
2. A comparative study can be conducted between the different strategies used to reduce stress and measure their effectiveness.
3. The stress levels among different professional and the strategies used by them can be studied.
4. A comparative study can be conducted to identify the stressors in different groups.
5. A comparative study can be conducted between the perceived stressors and the coping strategy in the urban and rural setting.
6. Studies can be conducted to correlate perceived stress levels with high blood pressure/cholesterol or cardiac risk factors.
7. Studies can be conducted to correlate between perceived stress levels and infertility.
8. Studies can be conducted between perceived stress level and changes in the hormonal levels.
9. Studies can be conducted to understand the relationship between perceived stress and reduced immunity reported by individuals.
10. Studies could be conducted to measure the level of stress between males and females.
11. Studies could be conducted to compare married individuals stress levels with those unmarried.
12. A study can be conducted to assess the stressors faced by married couple and measures adopted by them.
13. Studies can be conducted to measure the effectiveness of massage on stress at work place.
14. Studies can be conducted to understand the effect of academic stress and performance of students (from schools, college, and professional courses etc.)
15. Studies can be conducted among youth on perceived stress related to interview or acquiring a job.
16. A quasi experimental study can be conducted at worksite to understand the effect of selected interventions on stress levels.
17. A comparative study could be conducted among S.S.C and H.S.C students stress level and the use of chewing gum to reduce stress.
18. A study could be conducted to understand the impact of chewing gum on stress levels on individuals using cigarettes/alcohol to alleviate stress.
19. Role stress of decision makers in the family can be studied.
20. A comparative study of the effects of mindful breathing and progressive muscle relaxation on stress can be studies among different groups of individuals.
21. Study can be conducted to assess the stress levels before and after counseling.

6.7 PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

It was an enriching learning experience for the researcher as she met people from all walks of life and from diverse cultural backgrounds. The researcher got an opportunity to appreciate the values and cultural influences on the individuals living in Mumbai. It was amazing to experience the resilience of the people in spite of the stressors they were experiencing. The faith and belief in a God and the divine power that would make things right and the philosophical belief that everything happens for a good reason; many who felt stress was an opportunity to grow and become stronger as a person. Listening to the experiences helped the investigator also to identify her coping style and make modifications in life style.

The study provided the opportunity and was a challenge to use a different research methodology i.e. qualitative. Having taught qualitative research the study provided the platform to implement and understand the methodology which enhanced and helped acquire confidence and develop clarity to use one of the qualitative research methods.

The process taught the researcher perseverance and patience during the data collection as often the data collection period became a platform to ventilate feelings for the participants and taught her to empathize with the participants. It also provided an opportunity to learn from the lives of the participants and never to quit as every journey although fruitful is not always smooth and easy.
6.8 CONCLUSION

The study highlighted that individuals give meaning to stress from the context of their experience of stress, and as they have perceived. Their perception is based on their experiences, belief system, environment, upbringing, past learned experiences, culture and religious teaching or doctrine. It also indicated that what is stressful to one might not be stressful to others. The study also brought out that in Mumbai family bonding forms a strong support system, for couples as their spouse provides the required support during the stress episode. The study highlighted that religious doctrines provides the needed spiritual strength to deal with stress and maintain a positive approach to life. The females mitigated the difficulties and coped with the stressors to ensure optimum quality of life was achieved within the limitations of financial or family stressors. Their positive attitude and strong belief that one day everything would be alright, and the ability to smile and be cheerful in the midst of extreme stress was incredible.