4.1 Introduction

An individual is composed of body and mind. The human takes in various stimuli with the help of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, which are the sensory organs. On the other hand, Mind feels various emotions, good or bad. Technically mind is a current of thoughts. According to philosophers like Aristotle, Socrates there is two types of mind:

1. Subjective Mind
2. Objective Mind

Subjective mind gives our thoughts a definite dimension, direction, an aspiration, aim, ambition while objective mind is without aim. When subjective mind governs objective mind, it always leads to good things, good happenings. For example, Let us consider an example of a diabetic patient. Whenever some sweet is served in front of him, his objective mind will tell him to eat it because he likes it, while subjective mind will remind him not to eat, since it is harmful to your health. In simple words, stress management is the management of the subjective and objective minds.

4.2 Objectives

For the research purpose, the following objectives were to be set-

1) To study the demographic profile of software employees in Pune region.
2) To measure stress and study the nature of the life style lived by software employees in Pune region.
3) To assess the stress level of software employees, using the occupational stress index.
4) To assess components of the job life which cause stress in some way or the other, such as role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, group and political pressure, responsibility for subordinates, poor participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability of software employees in Pune region.
5) To assess the nature of symptoms of stress of software employees in Pune region.
6) To assess the stress management techniques used by software employees.
7) To study the relationship between demographic profile of software employees and use of stress management techniques.

4.3 Theoretical outlines

4.3.1 Stress

Stress is a mental disturbance. Stress is the state when one gets disturbed due to happenings of world; perceptions, emotions and thoughts. Stress is simply the body’s non-specific response to any demand made on it. Stress is something that happens to your body whenever you deal with any situation. Stress is defined as a feeling of emotional or physical tension. Emotional stress usually occurs when situations are considered difficult or unmanageable. Stress is always internal never external. It does not depend on external circumstances. It is just an individual’s attitude.

Stress may be defined as "A state of psychological and / or physiological imbalance resulting from the disparity between situational demand and the individual's ability and / or motivation to meet those demands." Dr. Hans Selye, one of the leading authorities on the concept of stress, described stress as "The rate of all wear and tear caused by life." Stress can be positive or negative. Stress can be positive when the situation offers an opportunity for a person to gain something. It acts as a motivator for peak performance. Stress can be negative when a person faces social, physical, organizational, and emotional problems.

There have been many different definitions of what stress is, whether used by psychologists, medicine, management consultants, or others. There seems to have been something approaching an open warfare between competing definitions: Views have been passionately held and aggressively defended. What complicates this is that intuitively we all feel that we know what stress is, as it is something we have all experienced. A definition should therefore be obvious except that it is not.
One problem with a single definition is that stress is made up of many things: It is a family of related experiences, pathways, responses, and outcomes caused by a range of different events or circumstances. Different people experience different aspects and identify with different definitions.

Hans Selye (one of the founding fathers of stress research) identified another part of this problem when he saw that different types of definition operate in different areas of knowledge. To a lawyer or a linguist, words have very precise, definite, and fixed meanings. In other fields, ideas and definitions continue evolving as research and knowledge expands.

Selye’s view in 1956 was that “Stress is not necessarily something bad – it all depends on how you take it. The stress of exhilarating, creative successful work is beneficial, while that of failure, humiliation, or infection is detrimental.” Selye believed that the biochemical effects of stress would be experienced irrespective of whether the situation was positive or negative. Since then, ideas have moved on. In particular, the harmful biochemical and long-term effects of stress have rarely been observed in positive situations.

4.3.2 Causes of Stress

In our daily life, stress is bound to come. Now a day’s life is very fast and stressful. People from all walks of life, all age groups face stress. So why do we find that people from software industry are more stressed out? Why can’t they cope up with their stress?

The cause behind workplace stress is the quality of work, not the time spent working. So it is possible to work like that and still retain your enthusiasm and energy. It is all a matter of correct attitude and having the right support system and the deserved incentives. Workplace stress is not linked to clocking in more hours. Rather, the culprit for stress in the office is workplace climate.

According to Prevention of Crime branch (PCB) as many as 529 people committed suicide in the city in 2007. Comparatively, 582 and 506 cases were reported in 2006 and 2005 respectively. Annual survey for 2007 says that around 161 took the extreme step due to family problems, 116 due to prolonged illness, 33 due to mental disturbance, 25 due to drug addiction, 16 due to unemployment
and 14 following failed love relationship. Meanwhile, reasons like sudden change in economic conditions, marital problems and children related problems too played a role in certain cases. The incidents of suicides were due to drug addiction, unemployment, job pressure, and inferiority complex. Now even educated youngsters are taking the last recourse. The recent deaths of two software employees are an indicator of the changing trend. Mr. X a techie with Software Company ended his life by jumping from the seventh floor of the office building citing his inability to cope with work pressure. After gathering information, neither did he have any problem with one nor did he have any quarrel with any of his superiors but probably, he was bored with the mechanical life he was leading. He was unable to spare quality time for himself due to the work pressure. Niranjan Phadake, an IT professional and a social activist, feels that stress is the single most important factor behind suicides among techies.

Employees are promoted to middle and higher-level management position on the strength of their technical background. They may be technically sound, but are not necessarily good at managing people. This leads to undue stress which at times results in them taking the extreme step. Proper training in inter-personal relationship management is necessary.

Assistant commissioner of police crime Sangramsingh Nishandar believes work pressure is a major cause. Sometimes pressure coupled with family problems leads to suicidal tendencies among the youth. But apart from work pressure, at times the inability to do the things which one actually wants to also leads to frustration. This is observed in Mr. X case. Sometimes, personality traits and mood swings could drive an individual to end his life.

Mr. Y another software employee who hanged himself. The police have been recording the statement of his friend, who says he was a reserved person. He hardly spoke to people and had only two friends in the city. Even with them, he interacted only regarding work. Investigation has revealed that there was no apparent work pressure.

Mr. Z software employee was facing depression, inferiority complex, a negative thinking inabilities at work, anxiety, boredom, fear, not enjoying life,
and high level of stress due to pressure from the boss, dislike of job-role and not feeling satisfied not receiving proper salary and no job satisfaction according to his abilities.

Mr. M a software engineer in his mid thirty’s was quite happy with his job in a well-known software company. After working for a year, he landed in a mental health institute for drugs-induced psychosis problem. Mr. A another software employee working in a company did not take to drugs. However, he had to take the Electro Convulsive Therapy for treating his severe form of depression.

According to Mental Health Experts in the city, both are among the highly educated employees whose lives have been adversely affected due to high stress at work. According to Chahitanya Mental Health Care Center ,Pune(CMHC) the number of patients from the Software Industry sectors have been rising. Anxiety-struck, depressed, drug addicts and psychotic are some common forms of illnesses software employees are suffering from and the only answer to save oneself from these illnesses is serious lifestyle change, feels Sushupti Rony programme coordinator of CMHC. The new health policy needs to consider a serious lifestyle change. Most of the times, it is the sedentary lifestyle that leads to physical ailments first and then to mental illnesses. A careful study has shown that there is no single cause for this. Many factors play a key role in this matter.

a) **Time**

We often find that people from Software Industry have long working hours. They work for as many as 12 hours a day. There is no fixed time of returning home. Due to high competitive nature of this industry, they always try to put in their best at work. They always want to excel at work. Due to this, the body’s basic physical requirements are not fulfilled. That causes stress among these Software Employees.

b) **Lack of rest and lack of nutritious food**

Due to erratic working hours, people do not get enough rest. Late nights at work and reduction of their sleeping time are the grounds because of which the body is already fatigued. To top it, the software employees are in the habit of eating fast and junk food frequently. Taking coffee/tea repeatedly further reduces
their appetite. As a result, the body does not get its requirement of food. To overcome the long working hours, these software industry employees attend parties on weekends, instead of relaxing and resting. They think that partying is a way to make up for their time loss. This however has an opposite effect on the functioning of both body and mind. A healthy body houses a healthy mind. So if one’s body is not fit enough to take pressures, how will the mind work efficiently?

c) **A highly competitive work environment and over ambitious workers**

Software employees get very fat pay packages in software industries in particular and in outsourcing companies and at call centers. Therefore, the job demands a lot of work. One has to constantly deliver in order to stay on top. They have to constantly meet deadlines. One sees co-workers as competitors. Therefore, there is no friendliness at work. There is always a cutthroat competition. This makes them more and more ambitious to attain high goals at a very young age.

d) **Materialistic**

Software employees in software industry seldom stick to one job. They are constantly on the lookout for better jobs and better payments. Therefore, they are not grounded. They are financially paid well. You can see these people living in luxurious houses, having fancy cars, wearing only branded stuff and so on. Financial freedom has given them access to many high profile things that a common person cannot have. So they are always thinking in terms of material gain. They tend to became highly materialistic which makes them to be always “on the more” from one to another job. This means loss of stability and steadiness, which makes them stressed.

e) **Working Women**

As in any other field, working women are more stressed out than their male counterparts as they have to balance both work and home.

These are just few of the causes of stress. After going deeper into this subject, it will be realized that there is more to it. Finally, it depends on an
individual’s response to situations. Different people deal in different ways to the
same situations, so the level of stress is different.

The disadvantages of stress in our daily life are because of stress body
uses its reserves. There is feeling of fatigue and anxiety of being pressurized. If no
corrective action is taken one undergoes various disease manifestations. For
example Hypertension, Ischemic heart disease, Stomach ulcers, Personality
Change.

4.3.3 Stress Management

It may be understood, that there is nothing you can do about stress. The
bills will not stop coming, there will never be more hours in the day and your
career, and family responsibilities will always be demanding. You have of course
more capacity to control than you might think. In fact, the simple realization that
you are in control of your life is the foundation of stress management. Managing
stress is all about taking charge: of your thoughts, emotions, schedule, and the
way you deal with problems.

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life.
This is not as easy as it sounds. Your true sources of stress are not always
obvious, and it is all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts,
feelings, and behaviors. Sure, you may know that you are constantly worried
about work deadlines. However, maybe it is your procrastination, rather than the
actual job demands, that leads to deadline stress.

To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits,
attitudes, and excuses. Until you accept responsibility for the role, you play in
creating or maintaining it, your stress level will remain outside your control.

The scope of the present research study is aiming specially at studying
stress management and getting into a spiritual life. In order to work efficiently,
management of stress in a proper way is very important. Stress management
refers to a set of programs or techniques intended to help people deal more
efficiently with stress. There are two types of stress management
a) Short term stress management   b) Long term stress management
In short-term stress management, you just have to use your intellectual capacity to manage stress. Here it is assumed that stress will be there any time, you accept it and manage your subjective and objective mind to come out of it.

In long-term stress management, you will keep yourself away from stress. In the worst circumstances, you will always be calm and will look for solutions to every problem. This will be possible by Yoga, Pranayam, and /or Meditation.

Sometimes stress can be very useful because it encourages us to learn new and effective ways of dealing with change.

Various measures of stress management are as follows:

i) Eat nutritious food.

ii) Sleep at least 7-8 hours every day.

iii) Exercise at least 3-4 times a week.

iv) Do not smoke or drink.

v) Organize time efficiently.

vi) Contact family members about domestic problem.

vii) Spend time to talk to friends.

viii) Listen to music.

ix) Watch spiritual movies silently.

x) At least once a week go out and have a fun.

xi) Enjoy an outings, Have a party with a lot of fun at least once in a month.

xii) Keep some private time, at least 15 minutes for your own self every day.

xiii) Open up and talk about your feelings such as anger, sorrow, and frustration.

xiv) Practice extra relaxation technique, for example Yoga, Pranayam, and Meditation.

xv) Cultivate hobbies – schedule joy.

xvi) Lastly more important is to focus on a spiritual plane; you will find the results beneficial.

According to Mukta Puntambekar, deputy director of the Muktangan de-addiction center, “Not only should a time compulsion be laid out in the new
health policy, but the proposed IT health policy also makes compulsory, the appointments of counselors and dieticians in companies.”

A recent study conducted by psychologist at the Health and Safety Laboratory in Stockport, UK says people who are spiritual have a positive outlook in life and experience less workplace stress. People who are spiritual are less anxious at work, healthier, and less likely to take sick leave. They feel that their life has more meaning, thus making them feel good about themselves.

Psychologist Dr. Minnu Bhonsale said that the newspaper TODAY, has quoted a lot of people are thinking of workplace spirituality, as the office is where we spend most of waking hours. It is a place where we eat, nap, make friends, and also work out, with a lot of offices offering gymnasium for their employees.

Spirituality is different for different people; it arises from your connection to yourself and with others, your personal value system, and your search for meaning in life. Fashion Choreographer Achal Sachdev said that to her spirituality was being in touch with her divine self and being in a state where she has aware of her thoughts and actions. Whenever she was going off track, it instantly helped her to regain control. Daily meditation and living in the present moment releases day-to-day stress and make her a happier person. She often stressed herself by over-analyzing a work situation and later introspect what caused it. However, spirituality has helped her believe that everything happened for the greater good.

Routine stress could affect your career. The newspaper Pune Times tells you to deal with it by keeping the talk simple, take a break, and help others to help yourself.

Therefore, importance of the study is if software employees implement the efforts they have taken to manage their stress, they would live a happy life. They would know the real meaning of life and would give time to their family. They would even work better and make more profits. Most important of all is that their soul will be free and in peace. Then the organization would have the best software workers.
4.3.4 Software Industry

Software Industry has become one of the most significant growth catalysts for the Indian economy. In addition to fuelling India’s economy, this industry is also positively influencing the lives of its people through an active direct and indirect contribution to the various socio-economic parameters such as employment, standard of living, and diversity among others. The industry has played a significant role in transforming India’s image from a slow moving bureaucratic economy to a land of innovative entrepreneurs and a global player in providing excellent technology solution and business services. The Industry has helped India to transform from a rural and agricultural based economy to a knowledge-based economy. The efforts of the Industry towards the holistic development of the Indian economy and society will continue making a positive impact and changing lives as it has done so far. Further, the industry has acted as a socially responsible corporation playing and active role in regional technology and innovation to transform client business and enhancing the overall brand image of India (Strategic Review 2011, National Association of Software, and Services Companies (NASSCOM)).

Software technology is an emerging industry in Pune. Several software industry giants such as Wipro Ltd, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Cognizant Technology Solutions, Symantec, and Oracle have made large investments in Pune and are hiring employees on a large scale.

One of the biggest challenges that software industry have been facing over recent years is the inability to attract and retain quality human resources. Several surveys have been showing high staff turnover rates in the software industry. One of the practical solutions to overcome this problem is to create job satisfaction and organizational commitment among the employees committed and that satisfied employees are normally high performers and contribute towards organizational productivity. The rapid changes in the software industry compelled modern organization to focus on employee’s satisfaction of their work force to perform better, reduce employee turnover and derive competitive advantages.
Software employees are predominately considered highly qualified and relatively young individuals and are engaged in highly demanding and open-ended work. Barrett (2001) has expressed them as “knowledge workers”, “Symbolic analysts,” and “new employees.” These terms quite literally reflect the nature of their work. According to Aleenson (1995), distinguishing the concept of “knowledge work” on the basis of particular companies or group of workers is problematic. However, the pattern of organization of work and the management connected with software employees can identify their work as being “knowledge intensive.” The major job tasks of these employees are system analysis, software design, programming, and testing. In addition, they may also be required to get into direct contact with the user’s problems. Since the majority of the work done by them is performed in teams, they have to be decent communicators and need to cooperate well (for example, Bernie et al., 1998). Thus, the work cannot be cast as being high status as it ranges from routine to cutting edge (Barrett, 2001). Nevertheless, a high level of occupational identification was found among software employees (Bernie et al., 1998).

Software employees are thought to have high qualification. They deemed to be engaged in demanding and open-ended work that is carried out in low bureaucratic working environment (Kunda, 1992 and Alvesson, 1995), Drucker (2001) validated that due to intrinsic job satisfaction and commitment which are characteristics of software work and its work force, lenient forms of its management trust have been advocated for ‘knowledge work’ in general.

Research conducted by Deetz states that software workers require a very low degree of supervision as they partly derive identity from their profession. This sense of identity in turn may motivate them to perform better in their work and act as a kind of normative control *(Kunda, 199; and Knippenberg, 2000). Furthermore, unlike other traditional occupation, they do not need a single qualification route of entry which enforces the sense of employees identification. A study conducted by *Kunda (1992) said that engineers of high-tech companies reported the presence of a high commitment among them. However, this commitment is not likely to extend to loyalty for the organization even more due
to the presence of tight labor markets. Similarly, the practice of having project-based teams also leads to a situation in which many employees identify more with their teams rather than with their employers *(Mark and Lockyer, 2004).