CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
To understand and measure occupational stress among the police officers, one needs to understand and define the meaning and content of the variables, as understood in psychology. Definitions given by different researchers about the conceptual meaning of the variables help in understanding and redefining of the concepts for the purpose of this research. The variables used in this research namely, role ambiguity, locus of control, quality of work life and occupational stress are analyzed in this chapter.

2.1 ROLE AMBIGUITY

Organisations are open and dynamic systems, characterized by a continuous process of input, transformation and output involving human relationships and patterns of interpersonal behaviour. Every member who sustains these processes has a set of activities or potential behaviours of a particular role in conforming to the roles.

A “role” can be defined as, “a set of norms or expectations applied to the incumbent of a particular position, by the role incumbent and the various other role players (role senders) with whom the incumbent must deal to fulfill the obligations of their position” (Banton, 1965).

When the individual is not clear about the expectations people have from his role, he faces conflict, leading to role ambiguity. Every individual and organization has a unique list of expectations. Successful assumption of a particular role in a formal organization depends on the extent to which, individuals expectations and organizational expectations match. The successful assumption of a role, within a formal organizational structure, is difficult to predict. There will always be some
information regarding expectations that is incomplete or left out completely. Poor role
definition or lack of clarity concerning one’s role is indicative of the existing
ambiguity. Thus, role ambiguity is the relationship of the discrepancy between the
information available to the individual and that which is required for adequate
performance of his role. An ambiguous work situation would exist when it cannot be
adequately structured by the individual because of the lack of sufficient cues.

2.1.1 DEFINITIONS OF ROLE AMBIGUITY

Role ambiguity is a multidimensional concept and various researchers have attempted
to define role ambiguity in different ways. Role ambiguity has been described by
Kahn et al., (1964) as, “the single or multiple roles that confront the role incumbent,
which may not be clearly articulated (communicated) in terms of behaviours (the role
activities or tasks/priorities) or performance levels (the criteria that the role
incumbent will be judged by)”.

Kahn and Quinn (1970) have suggested that, “role ambiguity may be in relation to the
activities, responsibilities, personal style and norms of an individual”. They have
suggested three foci of role ambiguity: the expectations the role sender holds for the
role occupant, the expectations sent by the role sender to the role occupant and the
expectations the role occupant receives and interprets in the light of prior information
and experience. They have also suggested four different kinds of roles likely to
experience ambiguity: roles new to the organizations, roles in expanding or
contracting organizations, roles in organizations exposed to frequent changes in
demand and roles on processes.
Marshall and Cooper (1979) have pointed out that role ambiguity exists when an individual has inadequate information about his work role, which is lack of clarity about the work objectives associated with the role, about work colleagues’ expectation of the work role and about the scope and responsibilities of the job. Role ambiguity will result from a lack of information about role tasks.

Thus, for the purpose and clarity of this research, role ambiguity can be understood as, “the extent to which clear information is lacking regarding the expectations associated with one’s role, the method for fulfilling known role expectations and the consequences of role performance”.

2.1.2 IMPACT OF ROLE AMBIGUITY ON INDIVIDUALS

In the present day complex work life, individuals are constantly taxed with pressures; on and off the job. Some people, regardless of intelligence or competence, seem to demand a high degree of structure in their lives, while others are very tolerant of and even thrive on ambiguity. The individual intolerant of ambiguity tends to resort to black and white solutions and tries to arrive at a premature closure of evaluation neglecting reality. Such an individual is disposed to think in rigid categories and use dichotomies rather than continue in his evaluation. The multiple complexities of strange situations are approached and comprehended with concepts of unqualified and unrealistic simplicity.

In addition to individual differences that determine the degree of stress caused by role ambiguity, there are factors in the job environment that make ambiguity more or less aversive. One of these is the general level of pressure induced by organizational demands. When the stakes or consequences associated with instrumental role
performance are very great, ambiguity is aversive. When the job climate is rendered more protective and supportive, ambiguity seems to be more tolerable and sometimes even preferable to highly structured roles. This is not surprising, since greater amounts of freedom, autonomy and discretion in one’s job inevitably means increase in role ambiguity as well. Role ambiguity is minimum in a situation where there is routine, certain tasks and detailed rules procedures and standards have been specified by the organization.

2.1.3 ROLE AMBIGUITY AND THE POLICE

An increase in role ambiguity can lead to a lot of problems like, psychological strain and dissatisfaction, under-utilization of human resources and a feeling of futility on how to cope with the organizational environment.

A police officer’s role on the street is fraught with contradictions and inconsistencies (Sklonick, 1966). Role ambiguity exists when a police officer has insufficient information about the expected role, that is, there is uncertainty about the scope and responsibilities of the job and the expectations of colleagues. Except for expectations like enforcing law and maintaining order, the nature of the duties of a police officer depend upon diverse factors as the oath to office, law, court decisions, departmental policy, informal quota system, political climate, community pressures, common sense and personality of the chief of police (Ward, 1971). Therefore, because of these uncertain factors many police personnel are genuinely confused about the nature of their job.

McGrath (1976) noted that a job may be stressful if there is ambiguity in terms of how the job is done. This is perhaps a very prevalent form of task based stress in
organizations because many organizational tasks are assigned in the form of general statements of goal, rather than in the form of operational procedures to be followed.

Kroes (1976) cited conflicts between the expectations of immediate supervisors, top brass, city hall and the line officer who are at the bottom of the chain of command. He noted that conflict may arise when officers must enforce laws that they may personally question or ones which they are required to enforce, but which the public wishes, that the police would discreetly ignore. A police officer's role in contemporary India is also paradoxical in nature. The law enforcement officer is called upon to act as a friend; helper and protector of life and property while at the same time wield a lathi or use a firearm at any moment, to control agitated demonstrators or dangerous criminals. Fulfilling the expectations of the public, demands of the family and obligation to his organization poses a very difficult situation causing stress to individual officer (Mathur, 1994).

Ambiguity leads to increased emotional tension and to decreased satisfaction with one's job. It also contributes significantly to a sense of futility and a loss of self-confidence. Kahn et al., (1964) points out, that the esteem with which one is viewed with by his co-workers, contributes to the sense of self-confidence

Role ambiguity has varying effects on personal relations. In general, maintaining close relations with co-workers in ambiguous situations is difficult. Thus, higher the ambiguity level, further the personal distance becomes, which makes communication harder (Van Sell et al, 1981) in turn, this leads to a spiraling increase in ambiguity.
2.2 LOcus of Control

Rotter (1966) formulated the concept of locus of control as a generalized belief about contingency between one’s action and actual outcomes brought about through social learning mechanisms. An individual can have either an internal locus of control which refers to the conviction that outcome of events in life are contingent upon own behavior, or an external locus of control which refers to the conviction that the outcome of events are not contingent upon one’s action, but upon luck, chance, fate or powerful others. Researchers have agreed that locus of control is an important factor in individual differences and can be regarded as a stable personality trait (Levenson, 1974; Paulhus, 1983).

Rotter (1966) initially named the construct as “Locus of Control of Reinforcement”, in giving it this name; he was bridging behavioural and cognitive psychology. Rotter’s view was that behaviour was largely guided by reinforcements and that through contingencies such as rewards and punishments. Individuals held beliefs about what caused their actions, these beliefs, in turn, guided the kinds of attitudes and behaviours people adopted. Thus, a locus of control orientation is a belief about whether the outcomes of actions are contingent on what is done (internal control orientation) or on events outside personal control (external control orientation) (Zimbardo, 1985)

2.2.1 External Locus of Control

An individual with an external locus of control attributes his success to luck or fate and is less likely to make the effort needed to learn. People with an external locus of control are more likely to experience anxiety since they believe that they are not in
control of their lives, such people do not learn from previous experience. Since they attribute both their success and failures to luck or chance, they tend to lack persistence and do not have very high levels of expectations. They believe that their own behavior does not matter much and that rewards in life are generally outside their control, either in the hands of powerful people or on fate or chance. Externals see themselves as relatively passive agents of their destiny.

2.2.2 INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

An individual with an internal locus of control attributes success to his own efforts and abilities. Such a person will expect to succeed and will be motivated and more likely to learn and will seek information. Individuals who tend to believe they can control external circumstances and their lives are referred to as internals. In other words, those oriented to an internal locus of control believe they control their own lives and their own destiny; or that their own experiences are controlled by their own skill or efforts. People with an internal locus of control see themselves as active agents in their destiny.

2.2.3 LOCUS OF CONTROL AND STRESS

The degree of stress faced by a particular individual will largely depend on his locus of control, thus making locus of control one of the most extensively researched variables (Cohen & Edwards, 1989) in the stress-distress area. Evidence concerning its relationship with various kinds of pathology is almost unequivocal. Research has generally suggested a linear relationship between locus of control and self-reported psychopathology (Joe, 1971; Levenson, 1973; Wallston & Wallston, 1982). Moderating effects of locus of control have also been reported; indicating that internal
locus of control moderated the relationship between stressful life events and illness among college students. Evidence also showed that internal locus of control alleviated emotional distress following a cancer diagnosis (Marks et al., 1986), and helped people to adapt successfully to stressful work settings (Parkes, 1986). Internal locus of control was strongly related to job performance (Peterson & Albrecht, 1996) and job satisfaction (Lu, 1997).

Locus of control as a personality factor has a moderating effect in alleviating harmful effects of stressful life events. Earlier research was in a quandary deriving from the un-productivity of its basic paradigm (Swindle et al., 1988), such as Lazarus' conceptualization of stress and coping process (Lazarus, 1966; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). However, after circumventing some of the theoretical and methodological pitfalls, recent evidence showed that internal locus of control was related to a lowered perception of work role stress (Spector, 1988) and general life stress (Lu, 1994). Emergent evidence from a well-controlled prospective longitudinal study demonstrated that locus of control was not related to the subsequent encountering of desirable or undesirable life events, further clarifying that the impact of locus of control was not on selective exposure to life events, rather on personal perception or interpretation of these events (Lu, 1999).

Thus, it can be concluded that, locus of control differentiates between individuals who believe that they themselves are primarily responsible for what happens to them from those who believe that major events in their lives are determined mainly by other individuals or forces beyond themselves. Individuals whose locus of control is primarily internal respond to stress differently from those whose locus of control is external. Those who are internally oriented are more likely to take action against the
source of the stress itself or to mitigate its effects in other ways. Those who are externally oriented are more likely to see effective actions as beyond their powers and thus endure rather than act.

2.2.4 LOCUS OF CONTROL AND THE POLICE

Police officers by their very nature of responsibilities are very often faced with critical situations of dilemma. How a police officer will deal with a crises situation and the impact it would have on his level of stress either immediately or at a later stage would depend on his locus of control. Those officers who have an external locus of control will face anxiety as they would often be unsure of the correctness or appropriateness of their conduct. They would rather like to blame the outcome on external factors like fate, chance or even on their superiors. This would certainly bring in stress in their employment.

Those police officers who have an internal locus of control tend to take responsibilities for their conduct and consequences of their conduct. As a result, they are in more control of the situation as they do not blame others or their fate. Their attitude will also help them to be more objective. An officer with an internal locus of control will be more confident and will suffer from less stress as compared to those with an external locus of control. Locus of control thus becomes a critical factor in the measurement of stress.
2.3 QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

According to Drucker (1977), "Work is both a burden and a need, both a curse and a blessing". Since individuals spend most of their time working, their satisfaction and development/progress in life largely depends on the kind of life they experience at work. The quality of life at work also has a bearing on the quality of life in general.

Quality of work life has become an important strategy for attracting and retaining highly qualified employees. Employee fulfillment and development depends to a large extent on the quality of work life.

In many ways, quality of work life represents a blending of the very real concern for human values in today's society with awareness that all individuals devote a greater part of their mature lives working, expending time, energy and physical and mental resources to this endeavor. It recognizes that work is the chief determinant of an individual's freedom, growth and self-respect, as well as his standard of living.

Since the dawn of human consciousness, humankind has been engaged in the pursuit of happiness, peace and stress-free life. In the process, human beings are caught in a dynamic technological whirlpool, which has spawned mega-bureaucracies, micro-task specialization and greater urbanization.

Phenomena like these are closely linked with work settings which have numerous systems such as production, finance, marketing, administration as well as macro-organisational sub-system like inter-organisational systems and organisational level goals, strategies, climate, structures, management styles and performance. These are accountable for the growth of the organisation and its role incumbents on the one hand and society at large on the other.
An organisation is meant to help and evolve independent work relationships in order to achieve a common goal. Every organisation has to find its own way of functioning effectively and must adopt whichever theoretical framework of organisational development suits it the best. The most important resource of any organisation is its human resource and ultimately depends on this particular resource to produce quantitative as well as qualitative work output.

Society has also begun to realize that human resource, represents the only remaining plentiful natural resource and that both the individual and society can clearly benefit from their full utilization. Finally and perhaps most importantly, is that production, industrial growth and technological advances are clearly not ends in themselves but simply a means to an end, that is, the improvement of quality of work life for all.

2.3.1 DEFINITIONS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

Work represents a role in life which has been designated by the person himself. On one hand, work is an earning of one’s living for the family; on the other hand it could be a self-realization providing enjoyment and satisfaction.

Defining quality of work life involves three major parts: occupational health care, suitable working time and appropriate salary. Safe work environment provides the basis for an individual to enjoy working. The work should not pose a health hazard for the individual. The standard limits on overtime, time of vacation and taking of free days before national holidays have been separately stipulated. The differences regarding working time have been established for individuals below 18 years of age, pregnant women, breast-feeding mothers and persons raising a disabled child. The
appropriate salary is agreed upon by the employee and the employer; the employer should not pay less than that to the employee.

Hackman and Lawler (1971) state that quality of work life refers to, "the overall climate of work and its impact on people". It is conceptualized as stemming from an interaction of personal and organisational factors. Its personal roots are found in values, aspirations, attitudes towards work and life, psychological needs and so on, whereas organisational roots are located in working conditions, various job characteristics, organisational mission, supervisory style and pay.

Walton (1973) defines quality of work life as, "a process by which an organisation responds to employees needs for developing mechanism to allow them to share fully in making the decisions that design their lives at work".

Katzell et al., (1975) defines quality of work life as, "the combination of a workers job satisfaction, motivation and balance of work life with other aspects of the workers life". A worker can be said to enjoy a high quality of work life when he has positive feelings towards his job and its future prospects, is motivated to stay on the job and perform well, and feels his working life fits well with his private life, to afford him a balance between the two in terms of his personal values.

Yousuf (1996) says that quality of work life is, "a generic phrase that covers a persons feeling about every dimension of work including economic rewards, benefits, security, working conditions, organisational and interpersonal relations and their intrinsic measurement".

From the above definitions, it is clear that there is a common understanding between different researchers as to what is meant by quality of work life. For the purpose of
this research and since the Marshall Sashkin and Joseph J. Lengermann scale is used, quality of work life can be defined for the purpose of this research as, “the extent of autonomy available to an employee, his work structure and routine, the interpersonal contact in the context of his work and his opportunity for personal growth along with the meaningfulness or importance of his work would constitute quality of work life”.

2.3.2 COMPONENTS OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE

A large number of organisational and job factors are relevant contributors to the emerging quality of work life in an organisation. Walton (1975) was the first to attempt a systematic identification of relevant components of quality of work life. The eight categories proposed by him are:

a) Adequate and fair compensation: Organizations elicit work from the employees and in turn pays back in the form of wages or salaries. Payment is made in different ways based on different methods of fixation of pay. Fair wages is defined as the wage, which is above minimum but below the living wage. Therefore, adequate and fair compensation ensures payment of wages above the minimum and takes into consideration aspects like cost-of-living index (based on nature of region), productivity and capacity to pay. It also includes other fringe benefits, like burnout, pension, transportation facility, social welfare programmes, canteen facility, hospital facility and group insurance programmes.

b) Safe and healthy working conditions: In India, the Factories Act provides the guidelines, norms and conditions to be observed by factories to provide safe and healthy working conditions to their workers. Unless the work place is ensured of physical safety and hygiene, a worker cannot concentrate on his work. Apart from
providing an accident and disease free environment for workers, safety and health education of the workers, especially illiterate workers, is of utmost importance.

c) **Opportunity to use and develop human capacities:** It is mostly lack of opportunity or neglect of opportunity, which hinders the development of full potential of an employee. Development is a continuous process that needs to be monitored on a regular basis by the management. Opportunities, when provided, bring out the latent and creative abilities of the employees. These can then be utilized to the best interest of both the employees and the organisation, by both training and reward systems. Thus, the provision of such opportunities leaves a happy employee with little interest to seek employment elsewhere.

d) **Opportunity for continued growth and security:** A sure indicator of an excellent organisation is one, which plans well in advance, both the expansion of the organisational activities and career growth of each of its employees. Career charts are chalked out and made known to the aspirant employees, giving them an ideal of their need to improve and to place themselves on higher echelons of career ladders.

e) **Social integration:** Unity of purpose in the work force is an essential and idealistic situation, where productivity will maximise. A spirit of oneness leads to unity of purpose in achieving common organisational goals and is an effort of both, the management and the workers. Social integration is the spirit of oneness achieved by the workforce leaving behind their racial, ethnic, social, financial, physical and mental make-up. Interpersonal relations can be shaped by human relation orientation. Concrete steps were taken in this direction by the Joint Management Councils set up in 1958 as per the provisions of the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 and secondly, by
work committees established with supportive work groups and interpersonal openness.

f) **Constitutionalism:** An employee is basically a human being with a need for privacy, decent and disciplined work place and unbiased superiors. Constitutionalism in an organisation ensures that the above mentioned factors do not creep into an employees work life.

g) **Work and total work space:** If the right work is given to the right person, the immediate effect is job satisfaction, leading to a high quality of work life. Another important aspect of work is the qualitative surroundings provided by the management. It includes physical standards like well-equipped and well-ventilated work places and organisational climate of trust, collaboration and mutual understanding.

h) **Social relevance of work life:** If the output of an organisation benefits directly the larger public, the employees feel more responsible and proud of their individual contributions. Employees, who feel that they are doing socially relevant work are usually self motivated.

2.3.3 QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND THE POLICE

The quality of work life of police officers in India has always been a matter of concern and a topic of discussion and debate, media attention and consequent public notice. Whenever there is a debate on the role of police in a particular situation, the analysis or conclusion always rests on the comparative element of the quality of work life of the police in India vis-à-vis that of a police officer else where in the world or vis-à-vis the quality of work life in other professions. A police officer’s inefficiency or inaction or incompetence is often at times blamed on the quality of their work life.
2.4 STRESS

Since the dawn of time, day to day living itself has been a cause of stress, caused either due to the environmental conditions, insecurity or concern for food and shelter. The word stress is derived from the Latin word “stringer”. It was popularly used in the 17th century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. In the 18th and 19th century, it was used to denote force, pressure, strain or strong effort with reference to an object or person. In engineering or physics, the term implies an external force or pressure exerted on something with the intention to distort the object on which it is exerted.

The concept of stress was introduced in life science by Hans Selye an Austrian-born physician in 1956. In his search for a new sex hormone, Selye discovered that tissue damage is a non-specific response to virtually all noxious stimuli. He called this phenomenon, the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) and later introduced the term stress and defined it as, “any external event or any internal drive which threatens to upset the organismic equilibrium”. Selye explained his choice of terminology as follows:

“I call this syndrome general because it is produced only by agents which have a general effect upon large portions of the body. I call it adaptive because it stimulates defense….I call it a syndrome because its individual manifestations are coordinated and even partly dependent upon each other”.

Selye (1956) thought that the General Adaptation Syndrome involved two major systems of the body, the nervous system and the endocrine (or hormonal) system. He then went on to outline what he considered as three distinctive stages in the syndrome’s evolution. He called these stages the alarm reaction (AR), the stage of resistance (SR), and the stage of exhaustion (SE).
Stage 1: Alarm reaction: The alarm reaction is the first stage of the general adaptation syndrome; this is the immediate reaction to a stressor. In the initial phase of stress, humans exhibit a fight or flight response, which prepares the body for physical activity. However, this initial response can also decrease the effectiveness of the immune system, making persons more susceptible to illness during this phase.

Stage 2: Stage of resistance: The stage of resistance is the second stage in the general adaptation syndrome. During this phase, if stress continues, the body adapts to the stressors it is exposed to. Changes at many levels take place in order to reduce the effect of the stressor.

Stage 3: Stage of exhaustion: If the stress continues for sometime, then it reaches the third stage, the stage of exhaustion. The body's resistance to the stress may gradually be reduced or may collapse quickly. Generally, this means the immune system and the body's ability to resist disease, may be almost totally eliminated. Individuals who experience long-term stress may succumb to heart attacks or severe infection due to their reduced immunity.

2.4.1 DEFINITIONS OF STRESS

There have been many different definitions of what stress is, whether used by psychologists, management consultants or others. Definitions of stress encompass a number of facets. In general, however, stress falls into a limited number of broad categories. One major category of stress is conceptualized as the occurrence of significant life events that are interpreted by the person as undesirable (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Luthar & Zigler, 1991; Monroe & Peterman, 1988; Monroe & Simons, 1991). The accumulation of minor events or hassles represents another kind
of stress (Lazarus, 1990). Socio-economic factors have also been implicated in stress, also variables such as low maternal educational status or membership in an ethnic minority group may reflect stressful living circumstances (Luthar & Zigler, 1991).

Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) define stress as, “the interaction of the individual with the environment”. Further, they elaborate it, “as an adaptive response mediated by the individual characteristics and/or psychological processes that is a consequence of any external (environmental) action, situation or event that places excessive psychological and/or physical demands on a person”.

To summarize, events that are negative, uncontrollable, ambiguous or overwhelming or those which involve central life tasks are perceived as more stressful than events perceived as positive, controllable, clear-cut or manageable or that involve peripheral life tasks.

2.4.2 OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Occupational stress can be considered as an accumulation of stressors, of job related situations that are considered stressful. Occupational stress is the interaction of work conditions with individual capabilities of the worker that the demands of work exceed the ability of the worker to cope with them. For example, a stressful work situation might be one with many demands placed upon the employee, with little time for meeting them and with increasing criticism from superiors. Alternatively, we could think about job stress as the stress experienced by a particular individual on a particular job. Such a consideration includes employees who have experience or are new to the job.
2.4.2.1 DEFINITIONS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Stress makes people deviate from normal functions. It may take the form of inspiration as well as degradation depending on how the stress achiever realizes the stress. Environment also plays a significant role in shaping the stress behaviour.

McGrath (1976) has noted that stress involves an interaction of people and environment; "there is potential for stress when an environmental situation is perceived as presenting a demand which threaten to exceed the person's capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he expects a substantial differential in the rewards and costs from meeting the demand versus not meeting it"

Ross and Alkmaier (1994) defined occupational stress as, "the interaction of work conditions with characteristics of the worker such that the demands of work exceed the ability of the worker to cope with them".

For the purpose of this research and authentications of findings with the use of the Occupational Stress Index by Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. A. P. Singh, occupational stress can be defined as, "the overall differential impact of role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressures, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working condition, and un-profitability on an individual".

2.4.2.2 CAUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

From the above definitions, it is clear that occupational stress is the resultant impact on the individual to many and varied factors related to his occupation. For the purpose
A. ORGANISATIONAL STRESSORS

Organizational stressors are various factors in the workplace that can cause stress. Three general sets of organizational stressors are task demands, interpersonal work relationships and organizational structure.

I) TASK DEMANDS: Task demands are stressors associated with specific job a person performs. Some occupations are by nature more stressful than others. Security is a task demand that can cause stress. An individual in a relatively secure job is not likely to worry unduly about losing his position. Threats to job security can increase stress dramatically. Another task demand stressor is work overload. Work overload can be either quantitative (too many tasks to perform or too little time to perform them) or qualitative (lack of the ability to do the job.) Low task demands can result in boredom and apathy. Thus, a moderate degree of workload-related stress is optimal, because it leads to high levels of energy and motivation. The following are the various demands on an individual.

a) Physical Demands: The physical demands of a job are its physical requirements on the worker. One important element is temperature. Working outdoors in extreme temperatures can result in stress, as can working in an improperly ventilated office. Too much interaction may distract an individual from his task, whereas too little may lead to boredom or loneliness. Likewise,
poor lighting, inadequate work surfaces and similar deficiencies can create stress.

b) Role Demands: Role demands can be stressful to individuals in organizations. In an organization or work group individuals are expected to act in certain ways, they transmit these expectations both formally and informally. Individuals perceive role expectations with varying degrees of accuracy and then attempt to enact that role. However, errors can creep into this process, resulting in stress-inducing problems called role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload.

c) Interpersonal demands: The final set of organizational stressors consists of three interpersonal demands. Group pressures, leadership and interpersonal conflict. Group pressures may include pressure to resist output, pressure to conform to the group’s norms and so forth. An individual who feels a strong need to vary from the group’s expectations will experience a great deal of stress, especially if acceptance by the group is also important to him. Leadership style may also cause stress. Finally, conflicting personalities and behaviours may also cause stress. Conflicts can occur when two or more people must work together even though their personalities, attitudes and behaviors differ.

II) INTERPERSONAL WORK RELATIONSHIPS: The quality of relationships that employees have at work has constantly been linked to job stress. There are at least three types of interpersonal relationships that have been studied: relationship with co-workers and within work groups, relationships with supervisors/leaders and relationship with customers/client.
a) Relationships with Co-Worker/Work Group Relationships: Poor relationships with co-workers are associated with feelings of threat for employees. In addition, poor co-worker relationships are associated with low trust, low supportiveness and low interest/willingness to listen and be empathic (French & Caplan, 1973).

b) Relationships with Supervisors: Just as the relationship with co-workers is important in determining the amount of stress an individual experiences at work, so is the relationship an employee has with a boss or supervisor. Several aspects of this relationship have been identified as potentially affecting work related stress. First, having inconsiderate leadership from supervisors leads employees to experience greater job stress as compared to a considerate leadership. An inconsiderate leadership style is characterized by not allowing employees to participate in decision making and not offering an avenue for good two-way communication.

c) Relationships with Client/Customer: Another potentially stressful relationship within the workplace is found in interactions with customers or clients. The potentially stressful nature of relationships with clients has been examined in the light of occupational burnout. The group of workers who have consistently been defined as being at risk of experiencing job stress and burnout are those involved in providing service to others.

III) ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE: The potential effects of the structure of an organization on individuals' performance have only recently been studied and more fully understood (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980). The extent to which individual employees are involved in direction and decision making in their work has led to the definition of two kinds of organizational structure: Centralized organizational
structure, in which a majority of the decision making power is placed with top-level managers and decentralized organizational structures in which employees have more direct control of their work no matter what level they occupy in the organization. It has been established that employees in tall organisations often tend to be more stressed than employees in flat organisations. Factors like role ambiguity and role conflict are contributors of such stress.

In general, structures, which allow individuals more decision-making power, produce less stress. For instance, Ivancevich and Donnelly (1974) studied the effects of tall, medium, and flat organizational structures on employee job satisfaction and stress levels. Their results indicated that employees in flat organizations reported more job satisfaction, less job stress and better work performance. These differential effects for various organizational structures might be linked to the fact that increased decision making enhances the meaningfulness an employee finds in work and provides the employee with a greater sense of autonomy, responsibility, certainty, control and ownership.

a) Position/Level within an Organization: A related organizational variable associated with job stress involves the position or level an individual occupies within the organization. Given the fact of participation in decision making, it is not be surprising that employees who hold jobs at the low end of the organizational hierarchy are more likely to experience stress. Ivancevich et al., (1990) compared low, middle and upper level employees on five stress variables: quantitative work overload, lack of carrier progression, poor supervisory relationships and role conflict. There were significant differences
for groups on all of the variables, with low-level employees reporting the most stress.

b) Organizational Culture: In addition to the structure of an organization, the culture and or climate has also been suggested to be a source of occupational stress. A particularly important stress that results from organizational culture is the existence of competition. Stress, due to organisational culture, becomes more manifested in which are on the decline, especially in situations like downsizing of workforce, budget cuts and so on.

Even if an organization is not experiencing cutbacks, job stress can still result from organizational culture. For instance, many workers report stress caused by power struggles or office politics. Office politics is said to be an important factor in a number of organizational practices: promotions or transfer, allocation of supplies or equipment, division of authority and coordination between high level managers. Managers who are engaged in power games and political alliances can place stressful expectations and demands on subordinates (Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987).

c) Organizational Territory: Organizational territory is defined as, “the personal space or arena of activities within which an employee works” (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980). Territoriality has been identified as a powerful stressor for workers (French & Caplan, 1973).

B. PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

I. TYPE A PERSONALITY PATTERN: Type A personality is characterized by several components. The first is a sense of time urgency. Since Type A’s are driven
to achieve more and more, the accomplishments must fit into less and less time. Thus, Type A’s often do more than one thing at a time, are impatient while wasting time in mundane activities such as waiting in line or sitting in a car and often speak at a rapid pace. The second component is aggressive, striving; a drive to achieve that ignores the feelings of others and high level of competitiveness. This drive to achieve is manifest in all of life’s activities, not just ones in which a competitor is usually a part. Type A individuals may be competitive in their work environment, in their family lives and even in their leisure time. Type A people may be resentful and suspicious of others and may be easily angered by people in their environment.

II. SENSE OF CONTROL: Workers who experience low control combined with a highly demanding job are particularly prone to occupational stress. Further, the lack of control that characterizes the lives of most workers in their jobs is the biggest contributor to occupational stress. Two aspects of control are important the control experienced by workers and the control that is exercised by workers over their jobs.

III. GENDER: The changing role of women in society and in the workforce has led to greater consideration of the influence of gender on occupational stress. Research suggests that women experience certain stressors to a greater degree and with different effects than do men, for example, conflict with home responsibilities and the experience of harassment on the job.

IV. COPING RESOURCES AND RESPONSES: An alternative way to view factors tied to the individual which influence the experience of occupational stress is to consider the individuals coping resources and responses. The perception of available coping resources and responses affect the individual’s appraisal of a situation as stressful or not. Such perceptions would also influence his or her coping response.
2.4.2.3 CONSEQUENCES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Stress as a major topic of concern arises mainly because of its harmful effect on individuals. The effect caused stress not only varies from individual to individual, but can often be very unpredictable. Many researchers, studying the effect of stress, have attempted to classify these effects. The most acceptable of these classifications is that of Beehr and Newman (1978) who outlined three categories of symptoms that occur under conditions of occupational stress: psychological, physical and behavior.

I. Psychological: Psychological symptoms are those emotional and cognitive problems that occur under conditions of job stress. Job dissatisfaction is the most likely consequence of occupational stress, when a worker is dissatisfied with his job, dislikes coming to work and finds little reason for doing well on the job. Additional psychological symptoms are depression, anxiety, boredom, frustration and isolation and resentment. Some of these symptoms are problems in themselves in that they can make job stress worse. For instance, a worker who finds himself increasingly frustrated by job condition may become depressed and withdrawn and therefore is less able to cope with job problems in ways that would improve his work conditions and enhance his mental outlook.

II. Physical: Physical symptoms are more difficult to define because, while particular work conditions have been linked to certain physical ailments and conditions, it is difficult to know how much these ailments are caused by the job itself versus other aspects of the worker’s life. However, there is research evidence that consistently links occupational stress with certain physical symptoms and disease. One of the most common physical health symptoms of job stress is cardio-vascular disease. There is significant research that links stressful work condition to the risk factors of
cardio-vascular disease (Sutherland & Cooper, 1990). There is also an established link between job stress and gastro-intestinal conditions, such as ulcers, sleep disturbances, headaches and respiratory disease.

III. Behavioural: Behavioral symptoms occur in two categories. The first are symptoms that can be said to belong to the worker. This includes such behaviors as avoidance of work, increased alcohol and drug use, over or undereating, aggression towards fellow workers or family members or interpersonal problems in general. Other behavioral symptoms belong to the organization: absenteeism, leaving the job, accident proneness and loss of productivity.