INTRODUCTION

Stress is derived from the Latin word *stringers*, meaning to draw tight and was used in the 17th century to describe hardships or affliction (*Cartwright & Cooper, 1997*). Work stress is recognized world-wide as a major challenge to workers' health and the healthiness of their organizations (*ILO 1986; 1992*). Work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. Workers who are stressed are also more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and less safe at work. Their organizations are less likely to be successful in a competitive market.

Stress can be brought about by pressures at home and at work. Employers cannot usually protect workers from stress arising outside of work, but they can protect them from stress that arises through work. Stress at work can be a real problem to the organization as well as for its workers.

Excessive and otherwise unmanageable demands and pressures can be caused by poor work design, poor management and unsatisfactory working conditions. Similarly, these things can result in workers not receiving sufficient support from others or not having enough control over their work and its pressures.

Previous researches revealed that the most stressful type of work is that which values excessive demands and pressures that are not matched to workers' knowledge and abilities, where there is little opportunity to exercise any choice or control, and where there is little support from others. When under stress, people find it difficult to maintain a healthy balance between work and non-work life. At the same time, they may engage in unhealthy activities, such as smoking drinking and abusing drugs. Stress may also affect the immune system, impairing people's ability to fight infections. A recent study at a manufacturing plant showed that *employees who reported high levels of role conflict, physical environment stress, and overall work stress had significantly higher physician-excused absences.*
This study is concerned largely with the every day stress of work and not specifically with the stress caused by sudden, traumatic events or with the management of post-traumatic stress disorder. The major goal of this study is to prevent stress happening or, where employees are already experiencing stress, to prevent it from causing serious damage to their health or to the healthiness of their organization.

Nevertheless, some concepts and provocative findings will emerge through this study that expands our understanding of the ways worker’s cope with life experiences. In the light of this information it becomes clear that India workers experience high levels of work stress as well as concomitant reactions and symptoms of stress. It appears that many Indian public and private companies do not realize the effect specifically chronic stress may have on their employees and it appears that very little is done by the employers to develop their employees' ability to deal effectively with their stress.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE- Facts about Workplace Stress

Review of literature helps us to distinguish between what has been done and what needs to be done and helps to know recommendations of previous researches listed in their studies for further research.

*Researchers of University of Western Australia (2011)* found that people can get stressed easily who have trouble in sleeping.

*Cristian Chelariu and Rodney Stump (2011)* concluded that WFC (work-family conflict) is strongly related to job stress, while FWC (family work conflict) is not.

*Mohd Awang Idris, Maureen F. Dollard, Anthony H. Winefield (2010)* studied that individual factors play an important role in work stress, organizational factors seemed to be the dominant factor identified that contributes to work stress. The individual as key to stress reduction rather than management interventions. A new concept emerged in this study that was related to external factors impinging on work (such as globalization).

*Louise Tourigny, Vishwanath V. Baba, Xiaoyun Wang (2010)* demonstrate that role overload and role conflict have significant positive effects on job stress. Furthermore, both shift work and its interference with non-work activities significantly elevated the impact of role overload on job stress. Findings also reveal that decision latitude mitigated the detrimental effect of role overload on job stress for employees working on fixed shift, but not for employees working on rotating shift.

*Ronald J. Burke, Parbudyal Singh, Lisa Fiksenbaum (2010)* found that respondents indicating higher levels of work intensity also reported working more hours, a higher workload, and greater job stress. Optimism and Proactive Behavior are significantly and positively correlated. Also work intensity is positively related to work engagement and negatively related to indicators or psychological well-being.
Grace Khoury, Farhad Analoui (2010), Employees in the private sector experience more stress than those in public or NGO sectors. Prevention strategies are needed to improve coping skills against the demanding conditions.

Chiara Panari, Dina Guglielmi, Silvia Simbula, Marco Depolo (2010) found that control and personal development perform a moderating role in the relationship between workload and the need for recovery by reducing exhaustion.

Mohd Dahlan A. Malek, Kathryn Mearns, Rhona Flin (2010) found that the sources of occupational stress have significant negative correlations with job satisfaction and psychological well-being.

George Halkos, Dimitrios Bousinakis (2010) examined that increased stress leads to reduced productivity and increased satisfaction leads to increased productivity. When work begins to overlap with workers' personal life this implies a negative effect on productivity. Quality work is more related to conscientiousness and personal satisfaction than work load. Energetic and active individuals affect productivity positively.

John J. De Nobile, John McCormick (2010) revealed that age, gender and position are found to be related to three out of the four identified domains of occupational stress as well as overall occupational stress. In addition, male staff experience higher levels of general occupational stress than their female colleague overall.

Orly Michael, Deborah Court, Pnina Petal (2009) examined that as the stress level rises, the coordinators' sense of belonging decreases. Another finding was that the stress in the coordinators' job does not influence their overall continuance commitment.

A.J. Noblet, J.J. Rodwell, A.F. Allisey (2009) reviewed that vast majority of explained variance in psychological distress and extra-role performance is attributed to the additive effects of demand, control, and support.
Ronald J. Burke, Lisa Fiksenbaum (2009) explained that females indicate more psychosomatic symptoms, higher levels of satisfaction with friends, and tended to report higher levels of perfectionism and job stress.

Ronald Burke, Mustafa Koyuncu, Lisa Fiksenbaum (2009) collected data from 237 male and 194 female and found that female and male physicians were similar on stable individual difference factors, job behaviors, work outcomes, extra-work satisfactions and psychological wellbeing, with a few exceptions. Female physicians reported more work-family conflict and more psychosomatic symptoms and tended to be absent more.

P. Rani Thanacoody, Timothy Bartram, Gian Casimir (2009) concluded that burnout mediates the relationship between work-family conflict (i.e. work-in-family conflict and family-in-work) and intention to leave the organisation and that the mediation framework is stronger in the presence of higher social supervisory support.

Osman M. Karatepe, Ilkay Yorganci, Mine Haktanir (2009) demonstrated that emotional dissonance amplified exhaustion. The results further revealed that customer verbal aggression and emotional dissonance intensified turnover intentions. As expected, emotional exhaustion reduced service recovery performance and job satisfaction and aggravated turnover intentions.

Zheng Gu, Ricardo Chi Sen Siu (2009) examined that mediocre interpersonal skills are the major weakness of the labor force and job satisfaction is significantly correlated with job performance. Training opportunities, salaries and benefits, and support from colleagues and superiors are significant drivers of job satisfaction.

Evangelia Demerouti, Pascale M. Le Blanc, Arnold B. Bakker, Wilmar B. Schaufeli, Joop Hox (2009) concluded that job demands caused more presenteeism, while depersonalization was an outcome of presenteeism over time. Exhaustion and
presenteeism were found to be reciprocal, suggesting that when employees experience exhaustion, they mobilize compensation strategies, which ultimately increases their exhaustion.

**B. Kroon, K. van de Voorde, M. van Veldhoven (2009)** revealed a slightly positive relationship between HPWPs (high-performance work practices) and burnout, which is completely mediated by job demands.

**Jui-Chen Chen, Colin Silverthorne (2008)** indicated that individuals with a higher internal locus of control are more likely to have lower levels of job stress and higher levels of job performance and satisfaction.

**Through an experiment done by Gail Kinman, Fiona Jones (2008),** strong main effects of job-related efforts, rewards and over-commitment on WLC (work-life conflict) are found.

**Ronald J. Burke, Mustafa Koyuncu, Lisa Fiksenbaum (2008)** found that the three workaholism components were unrelated to three blocks of antecedent predictor variables. Both feeling driven to work and work enjoyment generally predicted validating job behaviors while work enjoyment predicted work and extra-work satisfactions and psychological well-being.

Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury (**NIOSH 1999**).

Stress is the reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them (**HSC1999**). Insurance data indicates insurance claims for stress-related industrial accidents cost nearly twice as much as non-stress-related industrial accidents.

Forty percent of job turnover is due to stress. Experts estimate it costs approximately 150 percent of a position’s salary to replace a worker. The categories most often alluded
to include extraorganizational stressors, organizational stressors, group stressors, and individual stressors (Luthans, 2002). Role conflict and ambiguity develops when an individual is uncertain about his or her job definition, work objectives, co-workers' expectations, and responsibilities of his or her job (Cartwright & Cooper, 1997 and Luthans 2002). Role conflict and ambiguity may result in lowered self-esteem, depressed mood, life dissatisfaction, low motivation to work, and job turnover.

Men with demanding jobs that give them little control have three times the risk of hypertension as their co-workers. Men with demanding jobs with control, however, show no ill effects. Yandrick, Rudy and Freeman, Michael (General Editor) (1996). In firms with strong work performance norms conflict due to family-work demands led to job stress (Hammer et al, 2004).

Cartwright and Cooper (1997), Luthans (2002), Moorhead and Griffin (1989), Quick et al, (1997), Sutherland & Cooper, (2000) focus on a number of factors within the organization that may cause stress. These include task demands, physical demands, role demands, interpersonal demands, and career stress.

Workload can be perceived as either too much or too little, for example work-under load or work-overload. Work-under load often refers to routine jobs 'that demand too little in terms of demonstration of skills or use of knowledge and experience' and are as stressful as jobs with high role overload and that required high levels of responsibility (Quick et al, 1997). This is often associated with boredom, apathy and lack of motivation to work (Sutherland & Cooper, 2000).

Thus, the startling lack of researches makes the problem all the more significant for investigation. Hence, it will be fruitful and worthwhile to investigate cause, symptoms, coping with stress & adjustment.
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out how stress varies in meaningful ways in different contexts as sex and different areas of stress like physical environment of the work place, job uncertainty and ambiguity, job satisfaction, role conflict and ambiguity, job and role control, workload and social support.
- To compare employee’s stress between two groups - male & female.
- To determine the causes of stress that employees experience at the workplace.
- To find out psychological and physiological consequences of stress.
- To determine how employees cope with workplace stress.
- To study different types of coping strategies adopted by the employees in stressful conditions.
- To find out means/method of managing employee’s stress by employers.

The goals of these objectives with regard to stress management are to prevent stress happening or, where employees are already experiencing stress, to prevent it from causing serious damage to their health or to the healthiness of their organization.
Need and Significant of the study

In the light of present scenario job stress has become more visible than ever. Increasing modernization, urbanization, migration and dual career, diminishing supporting behavior and attitude of oneness due to disintegrating joint family and social change has made workers more problematic and stressed. Stress at work can be a real problem to the organization as well as for its workers. Good management and good work organization are the best forms of stress prevention. If employees are already stressed, their managers should be aware of it and know how to help.

In this project, it will be explained what stress is, what causes and how it effect workers which may guide to others to avoid those situations in the work-place and other environment which makes the workers more stressful. This study may be helpful in preventing delinquency and indiscipline among workers which is often common under stressed conditions. This study can provide useful information about characteristics and contemporary behavioral structure of workers, to those who want to help and guide them in their overall adjustment. It will also be helpful in identifying those negative psychological mechanism/behaviors adopted by them to overcome the stress which may be harmful to their mental health if persist for a long time and corrective measures may be developed to substitute these mechanism by positive mental health and appropriate behavior.

In view of this concept, it is the confidence of investigator that this study will bring into light and at the forefront some silent issues that will help to utilize the potentials of workers for the benefit of the society as well as our nation. Ultimately, the study will help to explore satisfactory support system that will help working person to live the every phase of their life with purpose, dignity and peace with a positive frame of mind.
METHODOLOGY

The methodology pertaining to present study constituted the following steps-

Methods of data collection

The data required for the purpose of study is collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire. The survey is conducted through the distribution of a structured questionnaire.

The secondary sources include both print media and electronic media. The print media includes journals, magazines, reports, working papers and research dissertations. The electronic media includes, search engines, websites, blogs, twitter, face book, my briefcase etc.

Selection of the locale

The area selected for the present study is Chennai city. This area is purposely selected by the researcher because of the following reasons.

Firstly, Chennai is a metropolitan city and all kind of industrial and business companies are present here. Secondly, population of all types is easily available here. Moreover, the investigator being resident of Chennai is facilitating easy accessibility.

Selection of the sample

For the purpose of survey, sample will be made through a convenient sample method. A total sample of about four hundred employees will be selected for the study. The sample for this research will be selected on the basis of random sampling method. The sample has to meet certain requirements considered under different categories of samples and they should belong to different socio-economic status. The present study will be conducted on two sample groups follows:

400 employees (200 men & 200 women)
Design of the study

The normative survey method will be used to collect information.

Selection and development of tool

The present investigation will be conducted on the lines of normative survey method of research, which is fact finding with adequate interpretation in the light of the norms. It is essentially a method of quantitative description of the general characteristics of a group. Under this method, the true meaning of the data collected will be reported from the point of view of the objectives and the basic assumptions of the project.

The techniques which will be generally employed to the normative survey are observations, questionnaires, rating scales and interview schedules etc. In the present study, the investigator will use self-constructed interview schedule, standardized psychological test and general information blank for the collection of relevant data as per the requirement of the objectives.

Conduct of the study

For this purpose investigator will visit some companies situated in Chennai city. Permission will be granted by the managers/ heads of the various institutions/ organizations in Chennai to conduct the study. The investigator will contact the employees personally or in a small group. For collecting of information, General information blank and other psychometric tests as mentioned above will be distributed and administrated to company employees to elicit their responses according to the instructions and conditions mentioned. Also the participants of the study will be shown copies of this consent before they answer the questionnaire.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the employees who are participating in the study, they were neither asked to divulge their names, surnames or any other information that would compromise their anonymity.
Scoring will be done with the help of scoring procedure prescribed in the manual, classification and tabulation, according to all necessary instructions and on the percentage bases.

**Statistical analysis**

The following statistical techniques will be used for analysis of data-

- Classification

- Tabulation

- Mean - measure of central tendency

- Standard Deviation (SD) - measure of dispersion

- Z-test

**Delimitation of the study**

The present investigation will be carried out under the following delimitations:

1. The study will be confined to workers of multinational companies of Chennai city of Tamilnadu state, India.
2. One most limitation of this study is sample size of 400 workers (200 men & 200 women).
3. As the study will be carried for 2 years (2010-2012) only, time is a limiting factor.
4. The findings of the study may be biased by the incorrect information given by the employees.
Statement of the problem (Title of the Project Work)

In the light of the introductory remarks above, the questions that arose in the mind of the researcher was "Which major stressors were impacting on these individuals?" "Were they to be found within or outside the organization?" "How did they react to these stressful situations?" Based on these questions the underlying research problem could be divided into four major areas:

- Causes of stress
- Consequences of stress
- Coping strategies
- Means/methods to manage stress by employer

Work stress is thought to affect individuals' psychological and physical health, as well as organization’s effectiveness, in an adverse manner. This research will provide practical advice on how to deal with work stress. To study the nature of stress at work, the causes and effects of stress, as well as preventive strategies, the problem is entitled as **Stressful Work Organization: a Systematic Study on Occupational Health.**

This project aims to increase employers’, employees’ and managers’ understanding and awareness of work-related stress, what causes or might cause it, and what should be in place to prevent and manage it. The project also aims to assist those with responsibility to meet their legal obligations within their organization.