DISCUSSION

Since women' entry in different job sectors is increasing steadily, it is a matter of concern for HRM to create appropriate work conditions that will enable the organizations to manage and retain their female talent. The present study was therefore conducted with the aim of determining the extent to which gendered perception of factors at the workplace influence male and female estimation of career outcomes for women in the Indian job sectors. Hence, the study examined the effects of gendered perception of certain organizational factors and certain job related individual human resource characteristics of women as determinants of the career outcomes for women professionals in the various organized job sectors in India. The study also examined the effects of gender on the nature of the relationship between perceived organizational factors, on-the-job HR characteristics of women and work-based esteem for women professionals. Further, the study examined the differential effects of gender in determining the mediating role of work-based esteem for working women in the prediction of career outcomes for women by organizational factor and on-the-job individual HR characteristics.

I.   Thus, an important issue addressed by the study was: **to what extent are gendered perceptions of organization and individual-related antecedent factors, work-based esteem for women, and career outcomes of women professionals, contingent upon the nature of the job in the organized sector in India?**

Results largely supported the hypothesised gender differences in male and female professionals' perceptions of most of the variables in the different job sectors. Men and women professionals of all the four sectors differed in their perceptions of organizational work conditions such as, organizational communication,

transformational leadership, and POS, and HR characteristics of women such as work engagement, intra-role conflict and career commitment. Researchers have shown that differences in behavior and thinking patterns of men and women are attributed to their stereotyped gender characteristics, as women are expected to hold communal thinking, and men to exhibit agentic attitude (Sikdar & Mitra, 2012; Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Researches show that male and female managers hold different views about communication in organization. Male managers perceive some communication strategies as more effective for women managers, such as taking credit for one's accomplishments (Barrett, 2011), and women managers are found to give naturally more value to information sharing and relationship building in organization (Applebaum et al, 2013). In the present study, significant differences were reported in perception of two out of four dimensions of *organizational communication*, by women and men in IT sector, and in all the four dimensions by women and men in education sector. There were significant differences between female and male officers' perceptions of communication of organizational practices, and job related information exchanges with women in organizations. Women officers, as compared to men, reported less exchanges of job related information and less communication of organizational practices with women in organizations. An important reason behind this difference in perception could be exclusion of women from informal networks in organizations. Gender differences in education sector were reported in the perceptions of transparency, and motivational communication with women in organizations, also. Women, as compared to men, reported lesser transparency in communication with women and a lower degree of motivational communication for increasing morale and motivation level of women in organizations. Transparency or disclosing information

to employees is considered important to make employees better understand the rules, policies, decisions and directions of the organization (Lenaghan & Seirup, 2007).

Gender differences were evident in ***perceptions of transformational leadership for women*** subordinates in organizations. Two dimensions of leadership, namely feedback and reliability were perceived differently by women and men officers in banking sector. Women, in comparison to men, perceived lesser degree of feedback provided by immediate superiors to women subordinates, in banking sector. Also, women reported lesser amount of reliable behavior exhibited by immediate managers to their women subordinates. Women and men officers in education, IT and insurance sectors differed in their perceptions of helping attitude of immediate managers toward women subordinates. Women perceived less helping behavior in immediate managers for women subordinates when required, as compared to perception of men, in the three sectors. In comparison to men, women reported lesser degree of motivating behavior by immediate managers to their female subordinates in the insurance sector. Previous studies have shown that male and female employees differ in their perceptions of effective leadership, where male emphasised fairness, equality and honesty, developing staff, fostering workplace harmony, and a trustworthy leader, female emphasised interpersonal communication between leader and group members, decision-making ability, and leader being important for how a work unit could contribute to organizational leadership effectiveness (Muchiri etal, 2011).

Men and women professionals differed in ***their perception of organizational support for women*** in education, IT and insurance sectors. Studies report that POS at the workplace may be received either from the supervisor (perceived supervisor support) or peers or organizational authorities (Ballout, 2007). Further, Muse and

Stamper (2007) suggested that perception of employees about the support given by the organization is effected by two aspects of perceived organizational support i.e., care about employees' outcomes and performance, and, care about employees' wellbeing and respect. Absence of any of these aspects negatively effects employees' perception of overall support given by the organization.

On the dimension of concern for women, female officers of all the three sectors, in comparison to their male counterparts, perceived lesser amount of concern shown by organizations towards their women employees. For the dimension of consideration also, women and men professionals of both education and insurance sectors differed in their perceptions. As compared to men, women perceived lesser consideration shown by organizations toward issues related to women. For the dimension of lack of support, women professionals of education sector, as compared to their male counterparts, perceived lesser lack of support from their organizations. Overall, it suggests that male officers in organized sector are not completely aware about the ignoring attitude of organization towards women professionals. The root causes of such discrimination with women are sex-typed stereotypes of women and negative attitudes toward them in the workplace (Cleveland, Stockdale & Murphy, 2000; Simpson, Sturges, Woods & Altman, 2004).

Results show that women and men differed significantly on their *perceptions of HR characteristics of women* in organized sector. Gender differences were reported in the *perception of intra-role conflict* in women professionals in banking and IT sectors. Men officers, in comparison to women officers, perceived higher degree of intra-role conflict among women professionals. There are many coping strategies that can be designed by management to reduce job stressors, such as creation of a supportive organizational climate, enriching the design of tasks, reducing

conflict, clarity of organizational roles, and planning career paths and providing counselling since individuals are left to decide career moves and strategies on their own or get advice once in a while from a supervisor (Luthans, 1989).

Schuler (1975) suggested that participative decision making reduces role conflict. Social support from co-workers and from the supervisor has been directly linked to role conflict, because it reflects one's influence over peers and superiors, and consequently the ability to reconcile and negotiate their role demands (Jackson, 1983). Parasuraman and Alutto (1984), among others, have asserted that job pressures such as role overload increase experienced distress as well as role conflict.

Women and men officers in banking sector differed in their ***perceptions of work engagement of women professionals,*** where female officers perceived higher amount of work engagement in women in banking sector. Researchers have suggested that high work engagement is linked to high levels of work demand, time pressures, and control (Mauno, Pykko & Hakanen, 2005; Demerouti, Bakker, de Jonge, Janssen et al, 2001). Work life experiences such as control, rewards and recognition and value fit, are found as positive predictor of the work engagement of women managers (Koyuncu, Burke & Fiksenbaum, 2006). Here, differences in perceptions of male and female officers about work engagement of women professionals suggest again the stereotyped attitude of men towards women.

Banihani, Lewis and Syed (2013) suggested that work engagement is a gendered phenomenon and it is easier for men, than for women, to exhibit work engagement in organizations. On the other hand, a study done by Smith, Crittenden and Caputi (2012) concluded that women professionals' perception of their work engagement is influenced by their perception of glass ceiling in their organization. Results of that study show that women's denial and resilience to glass ceiling are

positively associated to their work engagement. Thus, high level of denial and resilience to glass ceiling by female professionals, leads to high level of their perception of work engagement of women in organized sector. However, acceptance of glass ceiling is negatively related to work engagement. Denial is defined as the belief that men and women face the same issues and problems in seeking leadership. Resilience is defined as the belief that women are able to break glass ceilings. Acceptance is the belief that women prefer other life goals, such as family involvement, over developing a career. Therefore, Acceptance is summed up as a pro-family/anti-career advancement set of beliefs. Differences in male and female managers' perceptions of work engagement of women professionals in organization have been attributed to assumptions of psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability (Kahn, 1990). That means, more value is given to characteristics of men, and dedication of women is ignored.

However, gender differences were not found in *perception of career commitment of women* professionals in all the four sectors. Researches suggest that career commitment indicates the individual's motivation for her or his career life. People with high career commitment in their life are expected to possess high motivation to overcome difficulties in workplace (Lin & Li, 2013). Ellemers, de Gilder and van den Heuvel (1998) found career committed employees to be more focused on their own work (rather than on helping others) and to report more voluntary job changes, either inside or outside the organization. Singh, Finn and Goulet (2004) found that career commitment of employees is not influenced by gender effect. Men and women have equivalent career commitment.

There was significant difference in the extent of *work-based esteem for women professionals* reported by men and women officers in banking and insurance

sectors. Women, as compared to men, reported higher degree of esteem for other women in their organizations. Respecting women professionals in organizations on the basis of their work attitude, abilities and performance is has been a very rare finding. Literature has shown that gender stereotypes have restricted the executive positions to be held by men only. Women are not considered fit for such positions in any profession. Thus, when women reach the managerial positions, they are perceived to lack the appropriate managerial attitude i.e. achievement-oriented aggressiveness and an emotional toughness, which are considered to be male traits; and when they adopt such attitude, they are not appreciated for displaying managerial behavior which are in conflict with the prescribed passive behaviors for women (Schein & Mueller, 1992; Schein et al., 1996; Powell, Butterfield & Parent, 2002).

In the world's largest demographically representative sample from 140 countries, women consistently reported feeling statistically comparable levels of respect at work compared to their male counterparts (The Gallup Organization, 2010).The present finding is supported by the findings of a study in Sweden (Kusterer etal, 2013), where it was found that women, to a greater extent than men, believed that female managers encounter more difficulties than male managers do. Women also denounced that women are worse managers than men to a greater extent than men did. The results indicated that while women in the Swedish banking sector may be biased in favour of their own gender, men may fail to see the difficulties that female managers encounter.

Results showed that there were significant gender differences in the *perception of career progression of women professionals* in the banking, education and insurance sectors. Women professionals in education and insurance sector, as compared to their male counterparts, perceived lower degree of career progression of

women in their organizations. On the opposite, women, than men, in banking sector reported higher degree of women's career progression in their organization. It was proposed by Astin (1984) in his socio-psychological model of career development that men and women differed in their perception of structure of opportunities because of the difference in their socialization experiences which were completely influenced by the gender role stereotypes for men and women. These socialization experiences narrowed the options for women for developing their career. But, changes in the socialization experiences in turn were found to leading to expansion of opportunities to women for advancing their career.

No significant gender differences were reported in **perception of career satisfaction** of women professionals in all the four sectors. This suggests that men and women do not differ in their beliefs about what women professionals are achieving in their career and what they actually deserve, expect, and aspire to (Campbell, 1981).

However, significant gender differences were reported in the **perception of turnover intention of women** professionals in the banking and IT sectors. Women, as compared to men, in IT sector reported higher degree of turnover intention of women in their organization, whereas, women in banking sector reported lower degree of women's turnover intention as compared to their male counterparts.

Women and men professionals in banking and IT sector significantly differed in their average age, where average age of male participants was more than the average age of female participants. Also, male participants of IT sector served their organization for more years as compared to female participants.

The increasing demands of services and products are exerting high pressure on the organizations in all the sectors to ensure the availability of all the necessary resources, especially human resource, for meeting the increased demands. Further, it

is important to develop the human resource not just for the present time needs but for future requirements also. Thus, the organizations try to create their own talent pool of personnel in the organization who have the required skills for meeting the current demands of their job positions and have the abilities to learn new skills for fulfilling the future demands of the higher managerial positions. In addition to this, it is important for the top management people to stop the attrition of its talented professionals and make them stay in the organization in order to avoid the cost incurred in the recruitment of new personnel. For ensuring their stay, management needs to give them the best chance for progressing in their career. This is equally essential for women and men professionals. Both need the opportunities for development and advancement.

Women are equally talented and qualified as men and thus, are as important a resource as men. Organizations need to ensure that women professionals make progress in their career on an equal plane with their male counterparts. But the unequal privilege given to female professionals' talent and efforts is found to cause negative effects on career progression of women in the organization, which can lead them to even quit the job. This causes loss of potential human resource in the organization. On the other hand, career progression is the responsibility of the organization as well as the individual. Individual characteristics such as dedication, commitment and abilities to deal with work pressures very much define individuals' potential to move up in the managerial hierarchy.

An important aspect of women professionals' career is the respect given to them in recognition of their worth in the organization. The career of an individual in organization is influenced by the recognition of her effort by the peers, superiors and subordinates as well as the value given to her by these people at the workplace. The

evaluation of an individual by others at the workplace directly influence the managerial decisions related to her job and career.

II.   Another important issue therefore addressed by this study was: **is work-based esteem for women professionals in the organized sectors differentially related to the perception of antecedent factors by women professionals and their male counterparts irrespective of the nature of the job in different sectors?**

Findings largely supported the hypothesized differences. Female and male professionals' perception of a number of organizational and individual characteristics differentially predicted their work-based esteem for women in their organizations. Findings indicated that gendered perceptions of antecedent variables emerged as differential predictors of work-based esteem for women professionals across the various job sectors.

Among the *dimensions of organizational communication* as they exist for women in organizations, perception of 'job-related information exchange' emerged as a strong positive predictor of female professionals' work-based esteem for women in the organized sectors whereas perception of 'transparency' emerged as a strong predictor of male professionals' work-based esteem for women. Organizations must recognize the importance of transparency or disclosing the information to employees in an effort to allow them to better understand the rationale for the change and provide sample data to make educated decisions, both for themselves and the organization (Lenaghan & Seirup, 2007)**.** The notion of corporate transparency needs to extend beyond financial data and embrace a stakeholder view. All stakeholders deserve the respect of shared information and open communication to better understand the decisions and direction of the organization (Lenaghan & Seirup, 2007). Thus, it is

more important to provide accurate, clear information in a supportive and open environment where a free flow of information and dialogue are valued. When this occurs, employees can and will make informed career decisions that fit their individual life circumstances.

Among the ***dimensions of transformational leadership***, perception of 'helping' and 'reliability' emerged as a strong positive predictor of female professionals' work-based esteem for women in their organization. Whereas, perception of 'feedback' emerged as a strong negative predictor of their esteem for working women. In the case of male professionals', perceived dimension 'helping' emerged as a strong positive predictor, whereas, perception of 'motivating' emerged as a strong negative predictor of their esteem for women in organizations.

Among the ***dimensions of POS***, perception of 'concern' emerged as a strong positive predictor of female as well as male professionals' work-based esteem for women in their organization. It appears that high levels of concern shown by the organization for women in their job-related activities is indicative of the support women receive from their organization and hence will lead to higher levels of work-based esteem for women across all job sectors.

Among the ***HR characteristics of women***, perception of career commitment emerged as a strong positive predictor of female professionals' work-based esteem for other women in their organization. For male professionals' work-based esteem for women, perception of work engagement emerged as a strong positive predictor, and perception of intra-role conflict emerged as a strong negative predictor. These findings are indicative of the role of gender stereotypes operating across all job sectors among male professional towards their female counterparts. While perceptions of involvement in their job activities can earn women the respect of their male

colleagues, perception of women as not being able to manage the contradictory expectations of the seniors/department that may be inherent in performing their organizational roles appears to have a negative impact on male professionals work-based esteem for their women colleagues

Literature on stereotypes against women professionals in organization shows that evaluation of women in different professions has been influenced by the societies' stereotypes about role of women due to which women are evaluated as lacking in the competencies and drive that are considered vital to be effective leaders or managers (Mihail, 2006; Catalyst, 2002). In a survey of nearly 300 business leaders from Fortune 500 and smaller businesses nationwide, including 100 chief executives (Catalyst, 2005), most of the respondents judged women more negatively than equally skilled men, particularly in male-dominated professions regardless of actual results verified by more than 40 different studies. This study demonstrates how senior executives often use gender-based stereotyping rather than facts to judge managers. In a study on male subordinates, it was found that women in management are often evaluated more harshly than men and they are highly vulnerable to gender biases (Ayman, Korabik & Morris, 2009). Among the ***demographic variables***, job sector of both female and male participants positively predicted their work-based esteem for women in their organization.

III.   Another very significant issue addressed by this study was: **to what extent does gender play a role in determining the mediating effects of work-based esteem for women on the nature of the relationships between gendered perceptions of the antecedent organization/individual-related factors and career outcomes of women professionals in the organized sector?**

Findings from this study indicated that when the variance accounted for by the demographic variables, namely, industry, age, monthly salary, time spent at current position, number of promotions received, and time served in the organization were controlled, the differential mediating effects of work-based esteem on the nature of the relationships between gendered perceptions of the antecedent organization-related factors and career outcomes of women professionals in the organized sector were clearly pronounced.

Results indicated that the mediating effect of work-based esteem for women professionals in organized sector on the prediction of career progression, career satisfaction and turnover intention of women professionals by different dimensions of organizational communication, leadership and perceived organizational support, and by the perceived HR characteristics were more pronounced for the men officers as compared to women officers.

I. Career progression

Motivational communication, a dimension of *organizational communication*, strongly predicted women's career progression in organized sector perceived by female officers, i.e. women in organized sector believed that motivation provided by the senior authorities through recognition and appreciation of women's efforts would help them progressing in their career. Job related information exchange was a strong predictor of women's career progression perceived by male professionals, i.e., men believed that exchanging job related information with women peers and subordinates would help in their career progression. Transparency or disclosing information, sharing of information and open communication among organizational members at all levels has been found to help individuals in making appropriate career decisions (Lenaghan & Seirup, 2007).

Communication between superiors and subordinates help the employees in better understanding the rationale of organizational policies and practices, and in communicating their abilities, accomplishments and career goals to superiors (Greenhaus, Callanan & Godschalk, 2000) which help the individual to enhance their careers by obtaining desired work assignments from superiors, gaining more positive affect and favourable performance evaluations from managers by communicating a desire for development, and achieving personal career goals (Aryee & Debrah, 1993; Noe, 1996).

Among the ***dimensions of transformational leadership***, motivating strongly predicted women's career progression in organized sector perceived by female professionals, i.e., women in organized sector believed that motivation provided by their immediate managers or supervisors could help them in their career progression. On the other hand, work-based esteem for women was found to suppress the effect of feedback on career progression of women perceived by female officers. This indicated that women having respect for other women in their organization did not think that feedback given by the immediate manager could have any effect on women's career progression. On the other hand, men's perception of helping strongly predicted their perception of women professionals' career progression, showing men's belief that helping advices given by immediate managers to their women subordinates for doing their work and on improving their performance could help women in their career progression. Transformational leadership is part of "the New Leadership" paradigm (Bryman, 1992) and concerned with values, ethics, standards and long-term goals (Trope & Liberman, 2000; Harvey, Martinko & Gardner, 2006; Moss, Dowling & Callanan, 2009). Transformational leadership involves appraising followers'

motivation, realizing their desires and needs (Chan & Chan, 2005) and acting them as full human beings.

Transformational leader encourages subordinates to put in extra effort and to go beyond what the subordinates expected before (Burns, 1978). The subordinates of transformational leaders feel trust, admiration, loyalty and respect toward leaders and are motivated to perform extra-role behaviours (Bass, 1985; Katz & Kahn, 1978). Transformational leaders motivate their followers to perform beyond expectations by evoking followers' higher order needs (Bass, 1998). "Perceived as trustworthy, respected and admirable role models, leaders who exhibit idealized influence may enhance their subordinates' ability to undertake calculated risks to advance their careers" (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Thus, it can be said that effective transformational leadership behavior is expected to enhance the followers' career progression (Vincent-Hoper etal, 2012).

Prediction of women's career progression by consideration, a *dimension of POS*, perceived by men had suppressor effect of men's work-based esteem for women. Thus, men having respect for their women counterparts did not think that consideration expressed by organization could help women in progressing in their career. Similarly, the effect of lack of support on women's career progression perceived by male professionals was suppressed by their work-based esteem for women professionals i.e., men having respect for their women counterparts did not think that lack of support to women from organization could negatively influence women's career progression. Literature on POS supports the present finding to a great extent. Although, several studies have reported the efforts of leading organizations in supporting women's advancement (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1994; Singh et al., 2006), many continue to reveal that nothing has really changed (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Negative

attitudes toward and sex-typed stereotypes of women in the workplace continue to be reflected in discriminatory organizational practices through discriminatory managerial recruitment and selection processes, training and development opportunities, performance evaluation procedures, and promotions (Kottke & Agars, 2005; Schein, 2007).

Prediction of women's career progression by *career commitment*, an HR characteristic of women, perceived by female officers was partially mediated by their work-based esteem, i.e., women having respect for other women at workplace more strongly believed that women's high career commitment could help them in progressing in their career. Perrow (1986) suggested that career commitment is important for the development of ability, because commitment to a career helps one persist long enough to develop specialised skills and also provides the staying power to cultivate business and professional relationships. Therefore, career commitment would seem to be essential for career progression (Noordin, Williams & Zimmer, 2002). On the other hand, the positive prediction of women's career progression by their *work engagement* perceived by men was fully mediated by men's work-based esteem for women, i.e., men having respect for women, believed that high level of work engagement of women could cause their progress in career. Study done by Albrecht (2012) suggested that career development was positively associated with engagement.

II. Career satisfaction

Prediction of women's career satisfaction by job related information exchange, an *organizational communication* dimension, perceived by female professionals was partially mediated by their work-based esteem for women, i.e., women having respect for other women believed that exchanging job related information with women could

make them satisfied with their career. Further, the results suggested that motivational communication strongly predicted women's career satisfaction perceived by men, i.e. men believed that increased motivational communication with women in organization could increase women's satisfaction with their career.

Also, leader's reliability, as a *leadership dimension*, strongly predicted women's career satisfaction perceived by female professionals due to full mediator effect of their work-based esteem for other women at workplace, showing that only those women, who have respect for other women at workplace, believed that highly reliable attitude of immediate manager could make the women subordinates feel satisfied with their career. Perceived reliability strongly predicted women's career satisfaction perceived by men, showing that most men thought that the reliable attitude of immediate manager could cause career satisfaction in women.

Concern, as a dimension of *perceived organizational support*, strongly predicted women's career satisfaction perceived by female and male professionals both, showing that women and men both strongly believed that concern for women employees shown by organization could make women satisfied with their career. POS develops through multiple exchanges between employees and their employers over time, and reflects the degree to which employees perceive that their organization values their contributions, respects them and genuinely cares about their personal well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS for women's advancement is a specific construct that captures employees' perceptions of the extent to which the organization, through its policies, practices and programmes, is supportive and helpful of creating opportunities for women to advance into the senior ranks of management (Jawahar & Hemmasi, 2006). Further, positive prediction of women's career satisfaction by lack of support perceived by male professionals was partially mediated by their work-

based esteem for women, i.e., men having respect for women more strongly believed that low level of support from the organization could make women more satisfied with their career.

Women's ***career commitment***, as an HR characteristic of women, positively predicted their career satisfaction perceived by female and male professionals both, i.e., both women and men believed that high career commitment of women could make them feel more satisfied with their career. In different studies (Lee, Carswell & Allen, 2000; Poon, 2004), it was found that career commitment is a positive predictor of subjective career success i.e. career satisfaction as well as of objective career success in the form of salary level. It appears that people who are committed to their career will experience satisfaction.

III. Turnover intentions

Job related information exchange, as an ***organizational communication*** dimension, positively predicted turnover intention of women perceived by female professionals, i.e., women believed that exchanging more information with women about their job at the workplace could increase their intention to leave their current organization. Also, the negative prediction by organizational practice about women's turnover intention perceived by female professionals was suppressed by their esteem for other women at workplace, i.e., women having respect for other women in organization less strongly believed that communication of organizational practice with women could decrease their intentions to leave the organization. The present finding indicates that exchanging information about job and organizational practices could not be enough for making women stay in the organization. A bigger source of varieties of information is the informal network present inside the organization.

Claes and Ruiz-Quintanilla (1998) found that networking behaviours enhance subjective career success because they enable managers to gain access to relevant information, resources and individuals and as a result make better career choices leading to greater career satisfaction. Female managers may be disadvantaged in the external labour market due to less effective connections to networks that will provide access to career information and opportunities (Brett & Stroh, 1997). A survey of senior-level women in Fortune 1000 companies (vice-president level and above), for example, shows that women who feel excluded from informal networks of communication or report that their behavioral style is different from the organization's norm, and feel that gender precludes their access to work opportunities are less satisfied with their jobs and intend to stay for a shorter length of time with their current employers (Welle, 2004).

Prediction of women's turnover intention by feedback, as a *transformational leadership dimension*, perceived by female professionals was suppressed by effect of their work-based esteem for women in organization, i.e., women having respect for other women at workplace believed that feedbacks given by immediate manager or supervisor could not change the turnover intentions of women. However, motivating positively predicted women's turnover intention perceived by female professionals i.e., women believed that enough motivating behavior of immediate manager could not decrease their intention to leave the present organization.

There were significant mediating effects of work-based esteem on the predictions of male professionals' perceptions of women's turnover intention, by three dimensions of transformational leadership, namely, reliability, helping, and motivating. Prediction of perceived turnover intention of women by reliability of immediate leader was suppressed by men's esteem for women professionals in their

organization, i.e., men having respect for women at their workplace believed that highly reliable behavior of immediate manager could not change women's intention to leave their organization. The strong negative effect of helping was found to be partially mediated by men's work-based esteem for women, i.e. men having respect for women more strongly believed that more helping behavior of immediate manager could decrease the turnover intention of women. The full mediating effect of men's esteem for women was observed on the prediction of perceived turnover intention by perception of motivating, i.e., mostly those men who had respect for women at their workplace believed that high motivating behavior of immediate manager toward female subordinates could increase the turnover intention of women.

Lack of support, as a ***POS dimension***, negatively predicted women's turnover intention perceived by female and male professionals both, i.e. both women and men believed that less amount of support or interference in women's work by their organization could decrease their intention to leave the organization. The extent to which employees feel that they have autonomy and control in their jobs is significantly related to their job satisfaction, personal accomplishment, job-related strain, and turnover intentions (Knudsen, Johnson & Roman, 2003; Langfred, 2000; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003). Further, prediction of women's turnover intention by concern for women perceived by men was suppressed by the effect of their esteem for women professionals in their organization, i.e., men having respect for women at their workplace believed that concern for women shown by organization could not change women's intention to leave it.

Women's turnover intention was strongly predicted by ***work engagement*** and ***intra-role conflict*** as HR characteristics of women perceived by female professionals, i.e. women believed that their high level of work engagement and intra-role conflict at

the job could increase their intention to leave the present organization. Results suggested a partial mediation of work-based esteem, on prediction of male professionals' perception of women's turnover intention by their perception of intra-role conflict of women. Thus, men having respect for women more strongly believed that high intra-role conflict at their job could increase women's turnover intention. Engaged employees are thought to be more focused on their own work (rather than on helping others) and thus can be expected to report more voluntary job changes, either inside or outside the organization. Previous research has shown that role conflict also, tend to be associated positively with turnover intention (Chung & Schneider, 2002).

Implications of the present study

The findings are highly relevant for HRM specialists in different job sectors. Based on the results related to the role of gender in determining the extent of work-based esteem accorded to women across all four sectors, organizations are suggested to take necessary measures for improving the work-based esteem or respect for women in the mind of people at officers' or managerial level, as work-based esteem is found to have significant mediating effects on the relationship between organizational factors and career outcomes of women.

- This study indicates that work-based esteem for women can be enhanced by encouraging transparency and sharing of information with women professionals, encouraging leaders or managers to develop helping attitude towards women and to exhibit a reliable behavior and provide feedback as much as necessary, and by increasing the organizational concern for women such as recognition of their efforts, contributions and accomplishments by organizational authorities, giving attention to their opinions, grievances etc.

- The present study shows that male members in the Indian organized sectors feel that sharing of job related information with women and helping attitude of immediate manager towards women subordinates are the most important organizational facilitators of women's career progression, but women give most importance to motivation provided by the organizational authorities and their immediate manager for progressing in their career.

  Studies have shown that women always receive lesser recognition for their accomplishments and lower motivation from their superiors in comparison to their male counterparts (Mihail, 2006). The reason for this differentiation has been identified as the gender stereotypes prevailing at the management level (Schein et al., 1996, 2001).The findings of the present study indicate that men's perception of immediate manager's motivating behavior for women is a negative indicator of their respect for women. This implies that managers in organized sector should focus on encouraging the attitude of providing equal recognition and motivation to women professionals, as their male counterparts in the organization. Studies have shown that lack of motivation and recognition from superiors negatively influence women's performance and their appraisal also, which is a barrier in their career progression (Mihail, 2006). Such barriers keep the career progression of women up to a low level which is an indicator of glass ceiling effect in the organization.

- The present study suggests the measures which HRM professionals should consider in order to increase women professionals' satisfaction with their career. The present findings indicate that male professionals consider motivational communication in the organization, reliability/trustworthiness of

immediate leader or manager, and concern expressed by organization towards women professionals as the most important organizational factors influencing women's career satisfaction. Women, on the other hand, believe that concern shown by the organization is the strongest organizational influencer for their career satisfaction. Organization's concern towards women's work conditions, their requirements and grievances at workplace, etc is given most importance by women to have satisfaction with what they have achieved in their career.

- This study shows that men consider the amount of support provided by the organization as the only factor which influences turnover intentions of women. They believe that low amount of support provided to women professional keeps their intention to leave their organization at a low level. It means, men consider that their female colleagues prefer a moderate level of support from their organization and not too much interference in their efforts at work and their personal problems. But women believe that there are a number of factors which strongly influence their intention to leave the organization. Exchange of job related information with women professionals, motivating behavior of immediate manager or leader, amount of support from organization, women's engagement in her work, and amount of intra-role conflict experienced by women at workplace are very strong factors which positively influence women's intention to leave.

Career progression is related to long-term career effectiveness and success of employees. Thus, a successful career program, in attempting to match individual abilities and aspirations with the needs of the organization, should develop people for the long term needs of the organization and acquaint them with the dynamic changes that will take place over time. A well-designed

career development program can lead to many favourable results for the organization such as availability of right people to meet the organization's changing staffing requirements in the intermediate and long term, enhanced ability of organization to attract and retain talented employees, increased loyalty and commitment of employees to the organization, less turnover, reduced frustration, and increased career satisfaction. Also, it contributes towards increasing the goodwill of the organization (DeCenzo & Robbins, 2008). The HRM professionals in these job sectors can be advised to control and direct the effect of these factors for increasing the efficiency of women professionals along with adapting necessary mechanisms such as developing opportunities for women to progress in their own organization.

Limitations and Suggestions for future research

The present study made an attempt to investigate the role of gendered perception of issues related to women professionals in determining career outcomes for women in Indian organizations. Certain limitations in the present research have been identified which can help the future research in this area.

- To study the differences in perceptions of career outcomes of women professionals and the factors responsible for them in the Indian organized sector, *the present study focuses on the effect of gender only*. Further research can be done to analyze the differences in perception of female and male professionals of each sector individually. The gender differences in perception of all the variables in different sectors show that women and men professionals in the four sectors do not differ similarly in their perception of a factor or variable. This shows that effect of differences in sectors on perception of these variables can also be studied.

- The present study focused on examining the role of factors related to the organization and individual in determining career outcomes such as career progression of women. Further research can be conducted to examine the nature of the job in determining the existence of glass ceiling in different sectors so as to establish the industries which offer larger opportunities for career progression of women. Glass ceiling in organizations appears to be the strongest barrier in career progression of women professionals in organizations. Thus, it is important to investigate its existence in different organized sectors. *The present study did not investigate the existence of glass ceiling in the different sectors.*

- Further research can also aim to identify the managerial interventions which can break the glass ceiling for women professionals in organizations. Glass ceiling for women is the result of gender stereotypes present in the organizations (Catalyst, 2002, 2005). These gender stereotypes are prevalent in Indian societies from ages, and hence it is not easy to demolish it. Thus, it is important to look for ways which can help the HR experts in diminishing the negative effect of these stereotypes on the decisions related with women professionals. The present study investigated the role of gendered perception of different factors in determining career outcomes of women. However, *further research in this area can also investigate the perception of factors which can reduce the gender stereotypes in organizations.*

- Due to research constraints, the present study included the four largest sectors where women professionals are hired most. However, there are several other sectors wherein women are also hired but they are in a minority for their voice to be heard. The present study therefore cannot present a complete account of

the factors affecting women's career in the entire Indian organized sector. Thus, the issue needs to be examined in other sectors also for a more precise analysis.

- As direct questions were used for maintaining objectivity in the responses of participants, a more comprehensive analysis of the perception of glass ceiling for women requires the utilization of subjective measures such as interview and narrative data which can supplement the conclusions derived from the present study.

Conclusion

The exclusion of women from top levels of management in most organizations reflects the existence of glass-ceiling in organizations. Glass ceilings exclude, from top leadership of corporations, able people of diverse backgrounds that business organizations need in order to compete successfully. Glass ceiling research conducted by Federal Glass Ceiling Commission in USA has revealed three levels of artificial barriers to the career progression of minorities and women in the private sector: *societal barriers* which may be outside the direct control of business (the supply barrier related to educational opportunity and attainment, the difference barrier as manifested in conscious and unconscious stereotyping, prejudice, and bias related to gender, race, and ethnicity); *internal structural barriers* within the direct control of business (outreach and recruitment practices that do not seek out or reach or recruit minorities and women, corporate climates that alienate and isolate minorities and women, pipeline barriers that directly affect opportunity for advancement, initial placement and clustering in staff jobs or in highly technical and professional jobs that are not on the career track to the top, lack of mentoring, lack of management training, lack of opportunities for career development, tailored training, and rotational job

assignments that are on the revenue-producing side of the business, little or no access to critical develop- mental assignments such as memberships on highly visible task forces and committees, special or different standards for performance evaluation, biased rating and testing systems, little or no access to informal networks of communication, and, counterproductive behaviour and harassment by colleagues); *governmental barriers* (lack of vigorous, consistent monitoring and law enforcement, weaknesses in the formulation and collection of employment-related data which makes it difficult to ascertain the status of groups at the managerial level and to disaggregate the data, inadequate reporting and dissemination of information relevant to glass ceiling issues).

Furthermore, studies have shown that women's career progression is more dependent on their organization's career management system than their male counterparts' (Cannings & Montmarquette, 1991; Pazy, 1987). Researchers have suggested that in order to advance, women must somehow overcome the reluctance of organizational decision makers to take risks on women- for example by gaining a powerful sponsor (Burt 1992), becoming personally known to organizational decision makers (Hurley & Sonnenfeld, 1998; Powell & Butterfield, 1994), or meeting a higher standard for promotions than their male counterparts (Cannings & Montmarquette, 1991; Gerhart & Milkovich, 1989). HR specialists in the organization play an important role in supporting women professionals by putting stress on adapting gender diversity at different job positions and providing equal value to women's and men's effort.

In conclusion, it can be reiterated that career outcomes for women depend upon gendered perceptions of factors responsible for career progression, career satisfaction and turnover intention of women professionals in their organization.

Work-based esteem for women held by other women and, their male colleagues in organizations play a significant role in determining perceptions of factors which positively or negatively influence career outcomes of women professionals.

Since most of the higher management positions are male dominated, decisions regarding career related issues of women professionals in their organization are taken largely by their male professionals. Hence it has become a significant issue for HRM specialists to take measures for increasing the work-based esteem for women in organization, and to create awareness of the various organizational factors that actually affect and promote the career outcomes of women in organizations which will enable the organizations to retain the professional talent of their female members.