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# REASONS FOR DISCONTINUING STUDY IN MATURE AGE FEMALE STUDENTS WITH CHILDREN IN SRI LANKA

## CASE STUDY OF ABC BANK PLC

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The ABC bank made significant progress on the concept of "Banking on women" while increasing women's engagement to respecting the gender priority in the bank. But the bank is facing a lack of qualified women workforce in many branches and departments. Hence reasons for discontinuing study in mature age female students with children in Sri Lanka, is taken as a business research project as a case study of ABC bank plc. The main aim of the research was to determine the reasons for discontinuing study in mature age female students with children specifically at ABC Bank Plc. Correspondingly, the research also had several objectives to necessary recommendations for the ABC bank to take necessary corrective actions to put a stop to discontinuing studies by the mature age female students with children. The research was undertaken with four independent variables such as, Socioeconomic class influences, Academic support, Work-life balance, Age barriers and the dependent variable in study discounting by the mature age female. Similarly, the research was conducted in positivism philosophical stand with deductive research approach. Hence, existing theories related to the thematic area of the research was tested based on built hypotheses. Accordingly, based on variables, four hypotheses were deducted to test them statistically to understand their influence on Study

discontinuation. Moreover, the researcher has distributed a questionnaire and analyzed the data and presents the analyzed data in a structural way. Further, this research was given utmost priority on ethics. According to the data analysis, out of four hypotheses, null hypotheses were rejected. However, the research has not contained any null hypotheses. Finally, the conclusion of the research has included limitations of the research and suggestion for future research and based on key findings derived through the critical analysis the researcher has provided recommendations to increase the study continuation level of female mature employees at ABC Bank PLC.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Research Problem Outline**

Wanniarachchige and Suzuki (2010) stated in Sri Lankan banks play a major role in the process of economic development and improving the social welfare through funds mobilizing and investing savings of the majority of the population in Sri Lanka. In addition, there are many banks operating in Sri Lanka under several categories. Those banks can be segregate under Private Banks, Government Banks and foreign banks. Banks are considering gender while recruiting new employees, where female recruitment should equal to male in order to respect gender equality. For this reason,

McCrary and Royer (2011) stated, females are leading in the facilities of education and the admission to education available comparing to males for many occasions due to the high level of commitment. Daraz (2012) mentioned female faces many barriers to continue their higher studies comparing to male. Not only barriers in the society but also they are suffering from many discriminations in economic and social.

Alternatively, most of the household mother's education effect on their children's education. For this reason, Susen (2013) stated Female education play a major role in the family while creating many opportunities to the family. Society grants priority on male comparing to female where there is generally accepted gender inequality in society. Correspondingly. Shaukat, Siddiquah and Pell (2014) also mentioned most of the Women tend to continue their studies since they can make their own opinion in socio-economic and higher studies help to become more confident about themselves consequently assist them to enhance the leadership skill in future. According to Loganathan and Poongodi (2015), Modern-day women play a vital role in private and public banks. Global Partnership for Education (2016) illustrated many circumstances which stop women from higher education while continuing working where the most of the factors are derives from social and cultural background, in the same way, working women are responsible to take care of their children and equally responsible for doing household works. As a result, many mature female students with children tend to discontinue their higher studies while working in the banking sector. Samman et al. (2016) stated developing countries are facing a hidden crisis of women in balancing their work-life. It clearly showoff that there is not enough support is done from families to women to balance

their work-life, family commitments and studies continuation.

Nevertheless, banks also introduced several large measures in order to develop and retain female employees. There are many females in Sri Lanka passionate about their higher studies. According to Somani (2017) stated female education contributes to economic development, cultural development and the improvement of society in all aspects. Moreover, the author stressed out, working women tend to discontinue higher studies due to many other commitments. Where the higher management of the banks should follow a fruitful way to decrease the number of females who are discontinue their higher studies, in the same way, to motivate the remaining female to continue their higher studies while ensuring females contentment. Similarly, the researcher emphasized there are limited surveys have been conducted to emphasize this point. By considering the mentioned statement of Samman et al. the author has motivated to conduct the research to bridge the prevailing research gap. Where the study offers a glimpse into the agonizing choice women faces in balancing their study continuation with domestic responsibilities.

### **Significance of the Research**

According to Patel (2010) Education is known as a human right as well as it is one of the basic need of a human. Hence it is identified how important to complete higher studies to develop and to enhance skills without prioritizing other factors. On the other hand, Swain and Hammond (2011) mentioned mature students are performing exceptionally while they are studying due to they are mostly self-motivated. Alternatively, Bachar (2012) stated parents and seniors in the family assume that the educated female will argue with the family hence neither of parties in the family does not like a female to continue studies. Bhagavatheeswaran et

al. (2016) proved that Female education directly linked with sustainable development. Similarly, Santos et al., (2016) state, there are many proofs of increasing enrollment of mature students worldwide. Therefore, it has become an accepted fact that a considerable amount of matured women trying to continue higher studies. However as mentioned by Nielsen (2016) there various reasons to discontinue the studies and some of them are lack of support granted from the education institution, weight on domestic responsibilities and other personal factors can be considered as general reasons. Moreover, Somani (2017) stated, there are several reasons for discontinuing the higher studies by female students.

ABC Bank becomes the first local bank to obtain the EDGN certification for Gender Equality, demonstrating to support the empowerment. (Economic Dividends for Gender Equality) Following extracts figures from ABC Bank annual report will further elaborate the gender quality,

### New Recruits by Gender

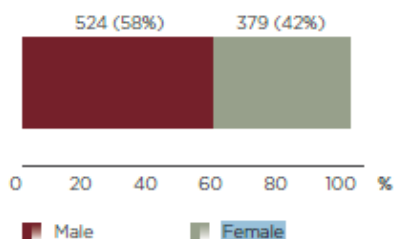


Figure 1 - Female representation in the bank, Source – (ABC Bank Plc. - Annual Report, 2019)

To retain the existing employees, ABC bank has taken several measurements. As a result, the bank has launched a Flexi hour's option for women to balance their work life. Correspondingly, though 42% represents the female population in the bank. Similarly, the annual report tinted the female staff turnover rate is high compared to the male staff turnover rate

Where to overcome the prevailing matter the bank has launched a Flexi hours option for women to balance their work life with a high range of a salary. Correspondingly, the following table illustrates the allocation of salaries according to the designation. Following table illustrates the allocation of salaries according to the designation

Table 1- The ratio of basic salary between men and women

Designation	Average basic salary - Designation	
	Male	Female
Senior management staff	1	0.84
Management staff	1	1.05
Executive staff Total	1	0.90
Non-executive staff	1	0.94
Specialised sales force	1	0.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.84</b>

Source – (ABC Bank Plc. - Annual Report, 2019)

The bank rewards recognitions facilitate a performance-driven culture which will drive attractive and equitable compensation to all male and female employees in the bank. The below table elaborates the employee who received the regular performance and career development reviews,

Table 2-Percentage of employee receiving regular performance review

	Female	Male
Senior management	35	65
Management	33	67
Executive	34	66
Non-executive	48	52
Specialised sales force	22	78

Similarly, there are less number of researches have been executed under discontinuation studies by mature age female with children in the banking sector. To summarize, not only by properly addressed research gap is very much

useful for the higher management of the banking sector to enhance the level of productivity by preventing the mature women discontinuing higher studies but also the bank may also enable to earn the benefits from qualified, knowledgeable women who can commit with higher efficiency and also as an alternative advantage is knowledgeable women able to develop their self while adding the values to the organization and the community.

### Background of the Organization

ABC Bank Plc. is a licensed commercial bank in Sri Lanka which was established in 1979 and also known as the largest private-sector commercial bank in Sri Lanka. ABC Bank has 113 branches and 104 ATMs Island wide. Beyond retail banking service, ABC customers can experience a wide range of financial services. ABC initially started as a wholly state-own bank in 1979 and the bank categorizes under Development finance institution in 1993. In related to the changes in ownership structure bank converted to a private bank and listed in the Colombo stock exchange. ABC Bank acquires the business on 29 July 2005 and converted banking category from licensed specialized bank to licensed commercial bank.

### Self-location with the Research Process

According to the Census and Statistics (2019), the mid-year, the highest female population recorded in Colombo district. Further, below figure indicates the female population in Colombo district according to the report of department of census and statistics.

Table 3– Female population in western province

Province and district	Both sexes ('000)	Female ('000)
Sri Lanka	21,803	11,247
<b>Western Province</b>	<b>6,149</b>	<b>3,156</b>
Colombo	2,448	1,247
Gampaha	2,417	1,246
Kaluthara	1,284	663

Source – (Department of Census and Statistics, 2019)

Moreover, Census and Statistics (2014) stated the highest female labour force participation district as Colombo district. Hence following figure 1.5 represent the female labour force population in Colombo district.

Table 4 – Labour force participation by district as a percentage

District	Total	Men	Women
Total	53.3	74.6	34.7
Colombo	50.9	71.8	37.2
Gampaha	50.5	73.5	30.1

Source – (Department of Census and Statistics, 2014)

Similarly, Labour force survey in 2015 also indicated the highest female employed population in Colombo district as below,

Table 5- Employed population by district

District	Men		Women	
	No	Employment Rate %	No	Employment Rate %
Colombo	568698	96.7	285087	95.7
Gampaha	600563	97.0	301231	93.0
Kaluthara	316554	97.0	167388	92.8
Kandy	309424	95.9	171949	92.6
Mathale	116260	97.2	72258	90.8

Source – (Sri Lanka labour force survey, 2015)

Correspondingly, according to the female statistics mentioned in the ABC Bank annual report, the highest number of females reported from Colombo District. As described above, as result of the above

findings the author has selected Colombo District to execute the research.

### **Aim and Objectives**

#### **Main aim**

The main aim of the research was to determine the reasons for discontinuing study in mature age female students with children specifically at ABC Bank Plc.

#### **Specific objectives**

Thomas and Hodges (2010) and Timmins (2011) also stated the importance and relevance of listing and numbering the objective of the research for easy reference.

Specific objectives are as follows,

a) To investigate the relationship between Socio-economic class influence

and discontinuing studies by mature age female students with children.

b) To investigate the relationship between Academic support and discontinuing studies by mature age female students with children.

c) To investigate the relationship between Work life balance and discontinuing studies by mature age female students with children.

d) To investigate the relationship between Age barriers and discontinuing studies by mature age female students with children.

### **Chapter Profiles**

*Table 6- Chapter profiles*

CHAPTER	CONTENT
Introduction	Outline description of the study with the introduction to the industry, organization & the research problems are included in introduction part as a case study of ABC bank plc. Equally, chapter 1 contained with aims and objectives of the research study.
Literature Review	Existing findings related to the independent, dependent variables & the knowledge gaps of the research was discussed under the literature review section. Reference to the existing studies this chapter discussed the factors that has significant impact on the study discontinued by the mature age female students. Researcher has referred literature from both industrial & non-industrial researchers which are relevant to the particular study. Thus the literature reviews section as part 1 and 2. Under Literature Review part 1 – Industry/Sector overview and part 2 – Area of Business and Management theory. Further the knowledge gap in existing studies was discussed under the specific section; chapter was concluded with the discussion of research problems & research objectives.
Research Methodology	Research model was explained according to the research onion in this section. Therefore it's explained the philosophical stand, research approach, strategy chosen, research choice, time horizon and data analysis techniques and it was dispensed in a sampling framework. Nevertheless, the data collected by all the mature age female with children working in the ABC bank's branches and departments.

	Further this chapter justifies the generalizability, ethical consideration, validity & the reliability of the study.
Empirical Findings & Analysis	Primary data collected through a questionnaire presented at this chapter & the significance of independent variables towards dependent variable discussed by using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics analysis and inferential statistics analysis were used to analyze the collected data. Alternatively, Descriptive statistics analysis contained with frequency, mean and standard deviation of responds and inferential statistics analysis presented in a histogram. On the other hand, Pearson coefficient test was used to analyze the correlation between dependent and independent variables. Chi-square test was used to test hypotheses and null hypothesis by utilizing the test results.
Conclusion and Recommendations	Final results & the benefits of the research were explained in this last chapter. Similarly, Generalized the recommendations to continue the higher studies by female mature students at ABC Bank PLC according to the research findings. Correspondingly, research limitations were analyzed and finally, management recommendation based on the findings of the research project.

## ***LITERATURE REVIEW***

### **Industry/Sector Overview (Literature Review Part 1)**

#### Industry/Sector overview introduction

This chapter consist existing literature that has discussed on the factors that affect the study discontinuation by the female mature students with children. Then author has elongated the research towards an introduction of the banking sector that has been selected to conduct the research. Banking Industry and the company overview provide factual information about the selected economy. Therefore, first it was discussed about current status of the banking sector in Sri Lanka. Similarly, it has been stressed out the available existing literature researchers that may affect the study discontinuation by the mature age female at selected organization as well. Researcher has referred literature from both industrial & non-industrial researchers which are relevant to the particular study. Further the knowledge gap in existing studies was discussed under the specific section. Correspondingly, it has been reviewed the

importance of the study continuation especially to the female students in the aspect of employee and the employer. Alternatively, the chapter included the current process which the bank is practicing to enhance the literacy level of the employees in the ABC Bank. On the other hand to instigate the research, author has done an industry overview to observe the banking industry in Sri Lankan economy. To conclude, author has mentioned the challenges that have been faced while conducting the research and the banking sector overview which is relevant to the study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children in Sri Lanka.

#### **Banking sector in Sri Lanka**

Banking sector remains to be a vital component of the economy in providing liquidity and relief to all businesses and individuals. Equally, the banking sector absorbing multiple financial shocks to aid the country economically. Sri Lankan banking culture also has metamorphosed from transactional-based banking to customer service-oriented banking due to the high competition with the rapid

changes in the global economy. Hence, the banks are more concerned about the knowledge level and the employee's literacy level in order to deliver remarkable service to the customers and to overcome the industrial competition. As illustrated by Suganya and Kengatharan (2013), It is important to operate banks in a country with efficiency and effectively. Since commercial banks in a country energized to an economic development which will lead to bringing rapid growth in various sectors. Moreover, various factors

are effecting of commercial banks profitability. Bank internal factors and the bank external factors are the primarily categorization which may effect on banks profit earnings. Capital adequacy, liquidity, operating expenses, assents quality, managerial efficiency, and bank size are identified as an internal factor. Similarly, Weerasainghe and Perera (2013), stated favorable macroeconomic environment stimulate to earn higher gains in the banking sector.

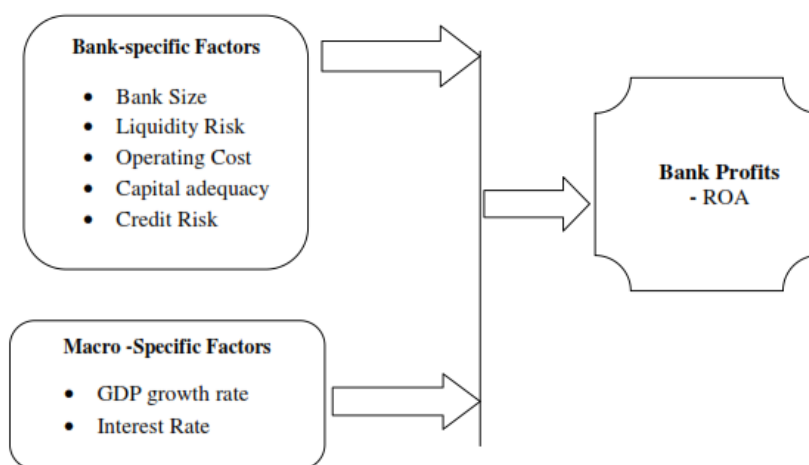


Figure 2– Relationship between variables, Source: (Weerasinghe and Perera, 2013)

The main characteristic of the internal factor is which can be controlled by bank management. Where the external factors are identified as factors which cannot control by the bank management such as, inflation rate, interest rate, gross domestic product and money supply. Alternatively, Bank size is evaluated by the bank total assets. Hence it is expected to earn the benefits on economic of scale. Correspondingly, large banks are enjoying the utmost benefits of the economics of scale. Nonetheless, due to cumbersome bureaucracy bank profits can also reduce with enlargement of the bank size.

According to the Perea (2016), the key function of the banking sector is to carry out the vital financial intermediation function as a borrower from the surplus unit and lend it to the deficit unit. Hence the banking sector identified as a dominant service providing sector which helps to drive the economy smoothly in a country. Samarathunga and Madurapperuma (2016) also mentioned well-structured bank management and execution of favorable economic policies are tremendously help to uplift the Sri Lankan banking industry performance. Hence the



management of banks will have an uphill task in this aspect.

### Banking Industry competitors

The sector is conquered by the 3 giant state-owned banks which account for over 42% of the sector's asset base. Annual license fee for the licensed banks for the calendar year is determined based on the year-end total assets of the licensed banks in the previous year-end. During the year 2017, licensed banks were required to enhance the minimum capital requirement in order to strengthen the resilience of the banking sector and support the

implementation of Basel III framework in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, at the end of 2020, existing locally incorporated licensed commercial banks are required to maintain Rs.20 billion, banks incorporated outside Sri Lanka worth assets up to Rs.100 billion are required to maintain Rs.5 billion and banks with assets over Rs.100 billion are required to maintain Rs.10 billion respectively. LSBs are required to maintain Rs.7.5 billion (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017). Below table shows the highlights of the banking sector which includes sector indicators, bank branches and other service outlets as well as prudential ratios.

Table 7- Banking Sector Highlights

Item	As at end			Change (%)	
	2015 <sup>(a)</sup>	2016 <sup>(a)</sup>	2017 <sup>(a)</sup>	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Sector Indicator (Rs. Bn)</b>					
Total Assets	8,077	9,047	10,293	12.0	13.8
Total Loans and Advances	4,715	5,541	6,431	17.5	16.1
Total Investments	2,348	2,271	2,554	(3.3)	12.5
Total Deposits	5,403	6,296	7,399	16.5	17.5
Total Borrowings	1,758	1,696	1,607	(3.5)	(5.3)
Total Capital	661	790	871	19.5	10.2
Net Profit (After Tax)	97	116	139	19.9	19.2
<b>Bank Branches and Other Service Outlets</b>					
Number of Branches	3,452	3,524	3,560	n/a	n/a
Number of ATMs	3,535	3,851	4,416	n/a	n/a
<b>Prudential Ratios (in percentage)</b>					
Capital Adequacy Ratio	15.4	15.6	15.2	n/a	n/a
Statutory Liquid Assets Ratio	33.9	29.9	31.3	n/a	n/a
Non-Performing Loans Ratio	3.2	2.6	2.5	n/a	n/a
Return on Equity	16.2	17.3	17.6	n/a	n/a
Return on Assets	1.9	1.9	2.0	n/a	n/a

(a) Revised  
(b) Provisional

Source: (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017)

### Banking industry overview in Sri Lanka

The regulation and supervision of banks are governed by the Banking Act and the Monetary Law Act by the Central bank of Sri Lanka. The CBSL is issuing licenses under two categories namely, Licensed Commercial Banks and Licensed Specialized Banks (which are savings and development banks). Moreover, the Sri Lankan banking system includes CBSL,

two large state-owned commercial banks, ten private domestic commercial banks, twelve foreign banks, a national savings bank, a regional development bank, two long-term lending institutions, two housing banks, two private savings banks, and 12 merchant banks. As stated by Angeles (2019), defined banking as a collected funds from the public as savings are loaned out against liabilities issues by borrowers. Conversely, banks act as a financial intermediary thus become a

debtor to the first one and creditor to the latter ones. KPMG (2020), Sri Lanka banking report stated, the banking sector in Sri Lanka is facing various challenges continually due to the COVID 19 pandemic situation in the country. However, all the banks are playing a major role since banks have to provide liquidity to the economy in order to support the business and individuals. Conversely, banks have to remodel operations due to a pandemic situation in the county. Hence most of the banks work remotely while converting the traditional banking into the digital platform. Besides, the digital transformation has been accelerated to the more service and adding values towards

the customer service rather dealing with the deposits and withdrawals. Within this context the change it has adopted enormously is the adoption of internet technology but parallel to this it has faced many challenges such as Significant high cost of installing and maintenance of IT and its infrastructure. Similarly, Sri Lankan banks asset base is under enormous pressure due to the pandemic situation across the worldwide. Alternatively, the banking sector of Sri Lanka contains with a total asset base of LKR 12,522.7 Bn (USD 69.2 Bn2) and a net loan portfolio of LKR 7,922.9 Bn (USD 43.7 Bn2) as at 31st December 2019.

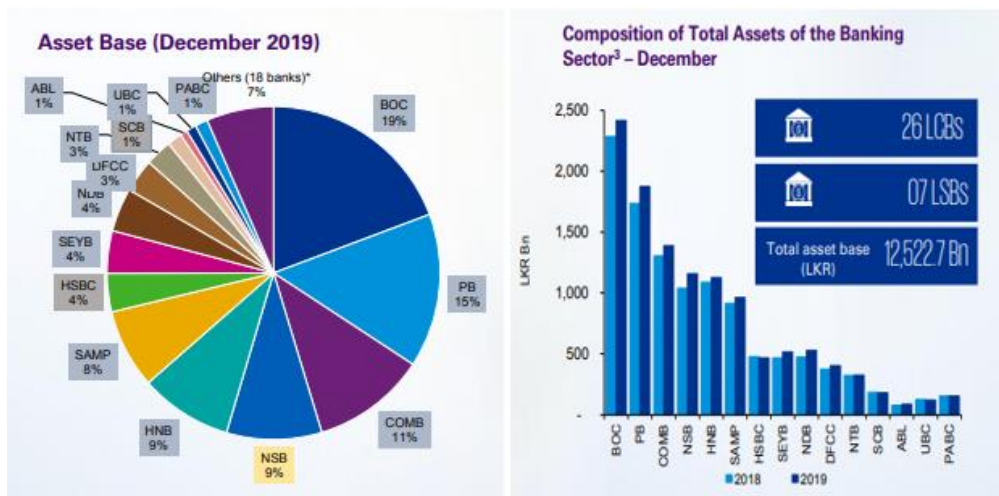


Figure 3– Sri Lankan banks assets base, Source: (KPMG, 2020)

The banking sector in Sri Lanka drifted into a positive outlook due to the recent tax reforms in the form of removal of the DRL (7%), NBT (2%) and reduction in the corporate tax rate (to 24%) coupled with a

50bps policy rate cut. For this reason, a positive impact on profitability was transferred to higher ROE. However, as per the CBSL guidelines these benefits likely to be offset by the COVID 19 relief measures to the bank borrowers.

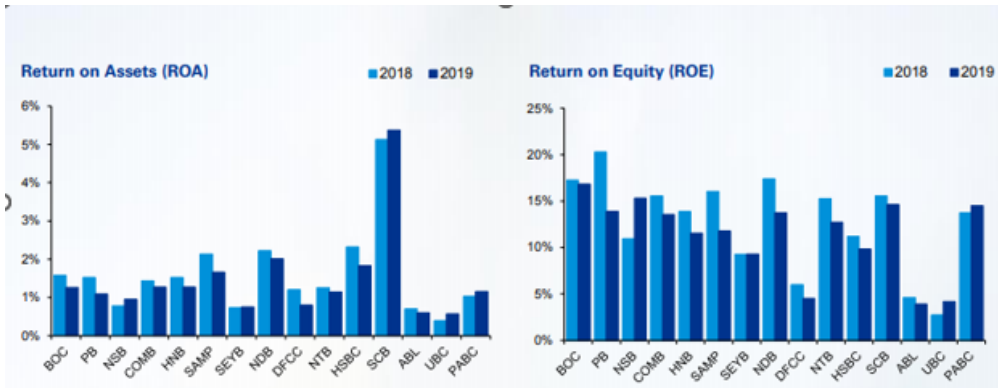


Figure 4 – Sri Lankan Banks Return on Assets and Return on Equity, Source: (KPMG, 2020)

### Current status of banking sector in Sri Lanka

The modern-day banking sector is undergoing a phase of digital transformation while understanding the customer requirement to reduce the operating cost and to enhance the profit margin. Hence most of the banks are providing solutions to the customers with remote operations. Thus it creates an opportunity to convert the customer into modern banking practice from traditional banking practices. Kahandawa and Wijeyanayake (2014), Illustrated, in the current context of Sri Lanka, the mobile phone numbers exceed the country population. Hence the banks also introduced a wide range of product and services which customer can perform in a fingertip using a mobile device without wasting time in the bank branches. Within this context the change has adopted internet technology but parallel to this it has faced numerous challenges such as Significant high cost of installing and maintenance of IT and its infrastructure skilled workforce, issues of increasing demand to meet customer expectation for service quality, the trustworthiness of the information system and ability to achieve economies of scale within IT structure. The Banking and Financial Industry has encountered three significant changes;

the Combined strength of the industry, the diffusion of internet banking and the increased freedom to combine banking with other financial services especially through internet. Within this context the change it has adopted enormously is the adoption of internet technology but parallel to this it has faced many challenges such as Significant high cost of installing and maintenance of IT and its infrastructure.

As stated by Paina and Bucur (2019), long times back, banking employees have not adopted the transformation in banking industry & they resist changing with the current scenario. Hence banks are now very much focused on recruiting & promoting energetic employees and encourage them to educate and qualified. As a result employee gets various opportunities to continue higher studies. As can be seen, ABC bank also provide several benefits to their staff to continue the study. Such as discount on higher education programs and waive off on professional institution membership fees. Previously most of the time the competition between banks are always to hire the top performing key employees from their competitors but modern day banks are more concern about the retention of employees in every carder rather recruiting new staff member.

Especially key staff members such as managers have a huge potential on customer retention hence loss of a manager can be a great loss for the bank. According to the Singh Bist and Srivastava (2019), it is accepted norm of any industry an employee is required to develop set of skills & talents to be success & also to move forward in the career such as conducting training and development programs by the organization. But in practical situation there are several obstacles that the employees might face when they are gaining skills especially to the mature female students with children. There may be various personal, organizational & other factors that slow down the development of employee study continuation. Every organization is required to groom set of employees for their next positions. It will benefit the organization in fulfilling their internal vacancies at a minimum cost. In the view of employee, grooming of employees to the next level will increase the employee work standards & also it would provide career development opportunities for the employees.

### **Current trends and development**

Interview with Mr. Sivakrishnarajah Renganathan, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC

According to Renganathan (2019), nonetheless, the bank recorded a remarkable growth in the last financial year. Equally, the Bank has to born the TAX Increase amount and the non-performing advances. Correspondingly Mr Renganathan illustrated though the entire industry faced the negative drawback of tax and NPL increment, the bank stood steady due to the commercial bank overseas branch. Where the overseas bank is a fully owned subsidiary which operation growth tremendously was directly contributed to the group profit. Further, Mr Renganathan highlighted the increased of NPL ratio is an issue of the

entire banking industry which was happed due to rapid credit sector growth experienced by the banking industry due to stagnated economy. Although, the bank has taken proper measurements to overcome the current situation even the political issues are existing on the customers.

Similarly, the CEO has highlighted the rising NPL ratio as the key challenge for the banking sector in the coming years. On the other hand, proper managing of the factors such as positive economic condition, stable political environment and balance inflation rate will keep the NPL challenge under control. Secondly, Mr Renganathan stated the challenges of entering the advanced technology such as blockchain and artificial intelligence (AI). Although as described the technological revolution may create opportunities and challenges to the banking industry.

Interview with Mr. Jagath Gamanayake Senior Deputy General Manager at a leading State Bank, Vice President of the APB and a Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Bankers of Sri Lanka.

Gamanayake (2020) stated in the interview with the Daily FT, narrating the consequences of the COVID 19 Global Pandemic situation. However, the COVID 19 pandemic situation has been affecting globally while carry out negative impact on the Sri Lankan financial Sector especially the credit businesses have enforced to the visible and invisible challenges. Moreover, the Sri Lankan banks profitability portfolio domain by the total amount of Loan and advances which is approximately Rs 9.8 trillion out of the total assets base of Rs 14.5 trillion. Similarly, it has observed that the growth of the loan segment has decreased remarkably from 2019 onwards. Simultaneously, banks are focusing on multiple sources to generate profit with the COVID19 outbreak. Initiation of debt moratoriums may reduce stress on business considering to current scenario

but the individual banks are expecting a loss with respect to debt moratoriums. The pressure on Net interest margin is high due to expectation of the lending rate decline in to single digit. Equally, Banks are refraining from charging for cheque returns, stop payments, late payment fees on all credit cards and other credit facilities during the period. Likewise, the transaction cost of the foreign remittances also waived off for the given period. It follows that the bank fee-based income trashed by the current pandemic situation. Further, the enormous challenges born by the banks are provide moratoriums while with the other programs. For this reason, banks have to ended up with the giant operational complexity.

With the current situations banks are providing numerous flexibilities to enhance the customer service. Conversely, banks staff also work from home hence the treats of cybercrimes have gone up due to open of new treats vectors. Alternatively, debt moratoriums have an impact on banks liquidity where the reduction of Statutory Reserve Ratio in the aspect of increasing the lending capacity of the bank. Further, Lower capital conservation buffer requirements, reduction of Liquidity Coverage Ratio, Net Stable Funding Ratio to 90% and other directions resulting in enhancing the liquidity amount of the market. However, due to the country restrictions which are enforcing time to time has encouraged online market. Conversely, it has unbarred the digital platforms especially digital payments. Alternatively, bankers also encourage the digital platforms hence it increases the internal efficiency and effective customer service. As described by Mr. Gamanayaka finally, all the banks should act reactive and proactively to respond to the pandemic situation and the banks should adopt flexibility in order to enhance the trust among customers.

**Industry creditworthiness** **competitor's**

According to the Fitch ratings (2020), the Sri Lankan banking industry downgrades the rating to 'B-/Negative from 'B'/Negative on 24 April 2020. Further, the Fitch rating indicates the creditworthiness of each bank which attracts customers and investors based on the rating granted by the Fitch Ratings. Following are the financial institutions which have recently changed the Fitch ratings.

### **Banks**

Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC (CB) to 'AA+(lka)' from 'AA(lka)'

Hatton National Bank PLC (HNB) to 'AA+(lka)' from 'AA-(lka)'

Sampath Bank PLC to 'AA-(lka)' from 'A+(lka)'

Seylan Bank PLC to 'A(lka)' from 'A-(lka)'

Cargills Bank Limited to 'A+(lka)' from 'A-(lka)'

Amana Bank PLC to 'BB+(lka)' from 'BB(lka)'

### **Non-Bank Financial Institutions**

Serendib Finance Limited to 'AA-(lka)' from 'A+(lka)'

HNB Finance Limited to 'AA-(lka)' from 'A(lka)'

Siyapatha Finance PLC to 'A(lka)' from 'A-(lka)'

Richard Pieris Finance Limited to 'A-(lka)' from 'BBB+(lka)'

Fintrex Finance Limited to 'B+(lka)' from 'B(lka)'

Further, the National Ratings of Bank of Ceylon (BOC) and People's Bank (PB) have been affirmed at 'AA+(lka)' although the outlook remains Negative. Similarly, The National Ratings of CB and HNB are also negative even so, the above four banks reflect the Sri Lankan sovereign. Moreover, The Outlook on Sampath Bank, Seylan Bank, Cargills Bank, Amana Bank, Siyapatha Finance, Richard Pieris Finance and Fintrex Finance is Stable. DFCC Bank PLC's National Long-Term Rating was

downgraded to 'A+(lka)' from 'AA-(lka)'. While the National Development Bank PLC's National Long-Term Rating of 'A+(lka)' was revised to Stable from Negative. The National Ratings are frequently change based on the creditworthiness and other relevant factors. Similarly, the negative outlook of the parent company provides assistance to lead to a negative outlook on subsidiaries.

As described in the above industry overview it can be concluded that the study about the industry overview predominant to mature female students since under current status of banking sector encounter a digital transformation which enables mature women to continue higher studies with fewer barriers such as decrease of the manual workload. Similarly, aligned with the digital transformation not only mature women able to select the higher education sector which aids mature women to escalate the career progression but also it helps to balance the work life. In addition, current trends and developments assist to serve customers with knowledge base confident. This built trust among the customer and the employee.

### **Area of Business and Management Theory (Literature Review Part 2)**

#### **Area of business and management theory introduction**

The determination of this chapter is to inspect and recognize the published literature which related to the research subject. Furthermore, suggestions made by the previous publications also considered under this chapter. Moreover, this study has further simplified a base to identify the constructs of each variable, their operational definitions, theoretical definitions, and accepted scales of measures. These inputs with regards to variables and their interactions have been used to develop the hypotheses of the study and the literature reviews analyzes

and determine the factors which effect on study discontinuation.

#### **Discontinuing studies by mature female students**

Reportedly, in line with the personal background and circumstances of each matured women students tend to discontinue their study due to influences of various factors. Furthermore, Ersek et al. (2010) stated though the mature women continue studying with many other commitments where the discontinuation decision also can make at any given time of this extended process. Typically, in most intense many of the after school leaver students are fitting to the university but mature students with children face difficulty in fitting to the university culture due to higher life loads (Eidimtas and Juceviciene, 2014). The life circumstances of the school leaver and discontinuation of higher study mostly vary with the mature student study discontinuation. However, Channawar (2016) also stated by completing the qualifications while managing financial and domestic affairs may earn personal advantages on the other hand organization also earn many benefits, however, women need to overcome the common barriers and fitting to the studies while working. Somani (2017) stated that many researchers have proved completion of the study benefits are not confined to the student mother but also their families itself enjoy the benefits such as financial gain, occupational security According to the Ali et al. (2019), there are several reasons to discontinue the studies under the perception of the university lecturers. The reasons are financial difficulties, shortage of academic staff and lack of communication between the students and the teachers. Stone and O'Shea (2019) illustrated further the common reasons behind the study discontinuations as family problems, peers and the influence of the society. While referring to the above researchers, the author has observed that

the mature candidates' enrollment on basic skill or hobby style courses are often discontinuing comparing to the candidates' enrollment on the professional university degree.

The author has found different contradictory views on to the fact of discontinuing studies by mature female students. To summarize, most of the time women tend to discontinue their studies due to lack of academic support, socio-economic class influences, unable to balance the work-life and age barriers. If women are able to continue the studies with many other commitments, not only they are able to become more efficient and effective to the organization as but also it helps to develop their own carrier. Because of the opposing views of the different researchers especially due to fewer researchers execute to the topic of discontinuing studies by female mature students selected under the dependent variable in this research by the author.

### **Socio-economic class influence**

According to Zarra-Nezhad et al. (2010) the strong socio-economic class influence was found as a reason for discontinuing studies by, mature female students, where the main fact is lack of support from family to mother's study, on the other hand, monetary difficulties born by the family. Not only monetary difficulties but also there is a lot more weight on domestic responsibilities hold by the mature women where the women are bound by the social and family responsibilities more than her self-development.

Furthermore, discontinuing in university studies also heavily depend on the age of the youngest child of the family as well as own husband's level of education and employment where the women need to manage the mentioned types of socio-economic demands in an additional burden of the study. The support extends from family, faculty and students may also affect to continue women studies where

the failure of each may cause to persistence. Similarly, according to, Lowe, Chan and Rhodes (2010), it is necessary to gain social support as a human being to accomplish everything set out to complete thus human being tends to live with mutual interaction with other humans where family support and social support highly expected especially to women in order to continue their regular and extra activities. Equally, Masui et al. (2012), mentioned a lack of social support to the studies associated an aggressive behavior to continue the studies. Accordingly, the author has observed a high number of psychopathy students have recorded when the low family support extends family or social background and more punishments have recorded compared to the high family support students. Likewise, Saleem and Mahmood (2013) stated most of the socio-economic factor may affect students mentally and while remaining the matters for a long time eventually converted into psychological problems where there is much evidence most of the students with psychological problems are attempts to commit suicide in Sri Lankan universities.

Traditional beliefs and traditional practices, especially in Asian countries, have a negative impact on reinforcing the aspect of women. Goonesekere (n.d.), stated according to the data issued by the Social Development Division of ESCAP proved the educational rights are not receiving for both genders equally. Hence most instances women are facing difficulties of enhancing their prospects of occupational mobility. Though the government enforces different strategies to balance the study continuation, women in some areas or families with minimal resources are constrained to discontinue the studies. thus it has been identified traditional beliefs of society and the family are directly effecting on education and employment opportunities for women which may decrease occupational mobility

and promotion of women's. According to the above references, the author has argued discontinue higher studies in mature age female highly affected through socio-economic class influences. Such as lack of support extends from husband to continue studies, monetary difficulties and pressure on family responsibilities can be mainly identified. Moreover. According to the author's point of view, the entire family should support the mother to continue higher studies where the mother is the only person in the entire family who works for unpaid works than paid works.

As described above, there is a positive relationship between discontinuing studies by mature female and the socio-economic class influences. There is not much researchers' context previously in Sri Lankan. Hence socio-economic class influence selected as a one of the independent variables for the research.

### **Academic Support**

Al-Dabal et al. (2010) illustrated there are many cases exist which explain difficulty faced by the university students to complete their studies. Namely inability to work with the environment, lack of continuous effort, lack of perseverance. Further, Gordon (2011) and Scott & Lewis (2016) elaborate non-tradition students are having more advantages than other students hence this segment is more motivated and assertive. Correspondingly, Forbus et al. (2011) stated this is mainly due to the mature students evaluate stressors as challenges to be overcome. The author also has stressed out many of the non-traditional students are self-motivated since the study continuation decision made with many other personal commitments which may be caused either financially or non-financially. Adult students known in different names in the academic ground and some of these are known as "nontraditional students", "re-entry students" and "returning students".

Similarly, Perera (2013) stated many female students discontinue higher studies due to lack of academic support and namely: inadequate space, lack of facilities and equipment, lack of time due to higher workload, academic institute's location, lack of proper guidance and leadership, Negative attitudes. In the same way Barrett, Davies, Zhang and Barrett (2015) stated the negative effects of physical classroom features dishearten on the academic progress, Equally, Gilavand (2016), proved that the environment of the educational institutions is dramatically affecting the learning outcome of the students. Namely, noise and the open space, unfitting temperature, overcrowded classes and inappropriate classrooms have been identified as a distracting factor to continue the studies to the students. The author has stressed out especially women continue higher studies with various other commitments. Hence the adequate academic facilities and the equipment have become an influential factor which is enhancing the effective in internal efficiency of students. Similarly, Scott and Lewis (2016) highlighted the academic system has failed to identify multifaceted problems born by the mature students since many of the mature students are enrolling to continue the higher studies from the different socio-cultural background with many other personal commitments. on the other hand, students have to undergo different problems due to the unfavorable environment created in the academic background. Hence the author highlighted it is more straightforward continuing studies with other commitments discourage students due to the bad image has been improving about Sri Lankan universities subsequently continuing studies become a burden to students rather than a valuable resource. Not only local university students but also foreign university students also facing similar difficulties to continue higher studies some reasons are due to lack of



support extended by the university. Further, Walker (2016) stated the main character of the education is human flourishing while educational institutions involved deliberating to influence the human lives and future. The author has observed that the educational institutions are acting as a role model which deliver and sharp various skills. Such as accountability, integrity and corporate while strengthen the students to achieve career goals and objectives. Especially institutes help to develop various modern ethical values. Also, most importantly educational institutions aid mature women to fix the mentality to continue the higher studies. Daiva (2017) mentioned if an adult return to higher education for full-time or part-time while maintaining other commitments such as employment, family and other responsibility also known as return students. Furthermore, the author has stressed-out nontraditional female students have become the fastest-growing category in college and universities where it indicates highest percentage of the total adult students' population. Further, U.S. Financial Literacy and Education Commission (2019), discovered the best practices for effective financial programs. Consequently, it has identified the relationship between completing the higher study program and failing to repay students program fees. Hence education institutes have a responsible task to arrange comfortable payments schemes for students. Alternatively, women funding for higher studies while devoting for other necessary obligations. Therefore, the author has stressed the importance of offering a comfortable payment plan which motivates women to continue studies despite dropping off from higher studies

From the above-described author has derived to conclusion that there are many reasons effects to extend academic support. As a result, if the academic

support less it is effective negatively and vice versa. Likewise, the author has selected Academic support by referring to many of researchers an independent variable to test the hypothesis and to identify the relationship between academic support discontinuing studies by mature female students.

### Work Life Balance

Reddy et al. (2010) stated no matter how wider other responsibilities are, mature women lifestyle heavier than with traditional counterparts. Moreover, Mehta (2012) stated working women tend to continually juggling to balance personal life and career expectation. The author has argued according to the Metha's statement while referring to the Sri Lankan context women known as a role model of the family were committing herself to work while admiring to all the other family responsibilities. According to Barbulescu and Bidwell (2013) employment, family and financial responsibilities should balance by a nontraditional female though it leads to more time constraints. Singh et al. (2014) executes the correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction as below table

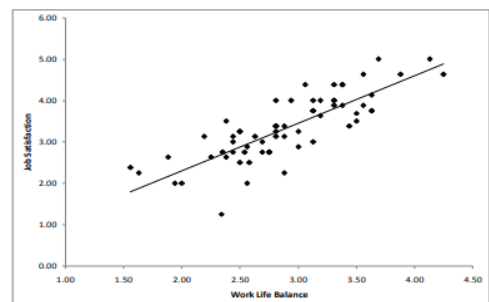


Figure 5 – Correlation between work life balance and job satisfaction, Source - (Singhet al., 2014)

As can be seen, the author has concluded by referring to the above references, by nature mature women born with many social responsibilities and many other commitments in order to balance academic life. Hence Sax`erg (2015) stated to continue the academic success in studies women need to overcome many challenges and barriers while fulfilling the domestic responsibilities Osborne and Hammoud (2017) illustrated important of having intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Hence the motivation identified as a psychological related factor. Similarly, the motivating employee behavior essential for psychological health and well-being of an individual and satisfied employee engaged with optimal efficiency which may benefit to the employee and the employer. The author has observed while referring to the related studies it is necessary to guide and proper communication to the employee about the goal and objectives. Further, the organizations' ability to providing clear and strategic guidance pertaining to the job role is necessary for women to calibrate the future. According to the career requirement, women tend to accomplish the various qualifications. Hence employer should guide properly the aspect of an organization in order to elevate the career path. Moreover, Moghadam et al. (2017) stated though both sexes have the equal responsibilities and difficulties as a student, worker and as a family member, female mature students are well able to balance multiple roles with the role of a student effectively. Typically, Asian women are granting more priorities to the characters such as mother, partner and community member.

Correspondingly, the author has observed a correlation between work-life balance and job satisfaction. It has been proved by many researchers if the employees are satisfied through the assigned duty and task at the work-place

will bring employees to satisfied employees similarly satisfied employees ended up with balancing work life effectively. It can be concluded that proper work-life balance may help to continue studies for women. From the above statement, the author can be seen that there is a co-relationship between work-life balance and the discontinuing higher studies by mature women. However, because of this work-life balance was selected as one of the independent variables in this research.

### **Age Barriers**

According to Fragoso et al. (2013) stated student's age has identified as the main factor of discontinuing studies by mature students. For instance, younger mature women who are having a younger child were frequently discontinuing studies due to weigh and responsibilities held by the family, financial difficulties and child care related matters. Not only younger mother's but also many older women likely to discontinue higher studies due to dissatisfaction of the course or because of the other practical issues. As described above that the author has observed the mother's age and the youngest child age correlated with the fact of discontinuing studies. Further, Haar et al. (2014) stated mature students with children play multiple roles such as spouse, parents, employees and extraordinary commitments comparing to men. Namely pressure of child care, financial and school responsibilities. Moreover, illustrate Ferrer et al. (2014) described by taking a large sample while identifying the reason behind the huge time gap between studies discontinuation was most of the mature young women tend to discontinue higher study to have children and some younger mothers continue the studies often after raising children to complete the discontinued studies. Wu, Odden, Fisher and Stawski (2016), illustrated Retirement as one of the

dominant transitional processes in later life. It has huge impacts on individuals' financial resources, daily activities, family relations, and social network. Hence in a context of Sri Lanka, spouse request to quit the career after having a first child to the family. Where most instances young mothers tend to give priority to family responsibilities hence women do not continue the higher studies in early retirement. Therefore, it is timely and critical to developing a better understanding of the importance of continuing higher studies irrespective of the retirement age. Thus, the author has pointed the women lives in Asian countries are connected with family. Hence frequently women decide the continuation of the higher studies with the retirement age. According to Lin (2016) if working women fail to balance work-life, according to many researchers most commonly ended up with psychological issues such as anxiety, depression and along with others. It can be concluded that the main reason behind discontinuing studies is the family responsibilities born by mature women Lin (2016). However, the author has identified the relationship between discontinuing study by mature women and age barriers of the women in the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, the author provided the relationship between age barriers and discontinuing studies by mature women. Hence the author has been selected age barriers as an independent variable for this research to identify the relationship between in Sri Lankan context.

### **Conceptual Development**

#### Literature summary

Mature age female study discontinuation has been identified as a dominant factor which helps the organization to groom talented and skillful employees. Hence the above-mentioned factors in the literature review section have been identified as key factors which influence the study discontinuation of

mature age female students. As a result, socioeconomic class influences Academic support, Work-life balance and Age barriers identified as key influencing factors. Moreover, the below stated conceptual framework build while considering the mentioned reviewed factors in the literature review. Hence mentioned four factors were chosen to further analyze the study discontinuation by the mature age female student.

### **Formulation of Research Questions**

Following research questions are built based on the industrial overview and the literature review of the research topic of reasons for study discontinuing by the mature age female with children.

- a) What is the relationship between Socio-economic class influence and discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank PLC?
- b) What is the relationship between academic support and discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank PLC?
- c) What is the relationship between work life balance and discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank PLC?
- d) What is the relationship between age barriers and discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank PLC?

### **Conceptual Framework**

Based on the research questions built in the previous section, the author has listed the independent and dependent variables under the conceptual framework. Correspondingly, the author has clarified some factors which may affect on female study discontinuation. This was known as independent variables. Namely, socioeconomic class influences, Academic support, Work-life balance and Age barriers. Similarly, discontinuing studies by mature female students was the

dependent variable. Independent and dependent variables are listed below,

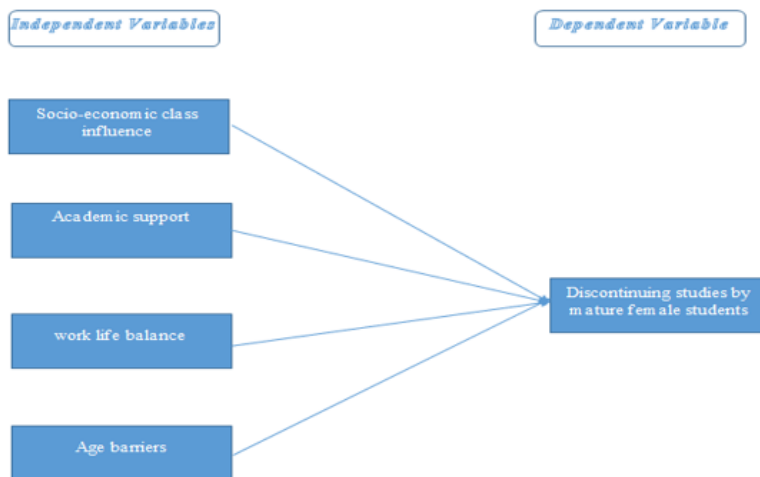


Figure 6– Conceptual Framework, Source – (Developed by the author)

### Hypotheses

Based on the conceptual framework built in the previous section, the author has listed the following hypothesis based on the research aim, objective and research question as below in order to test the validity on study discontinuation by the mature age female students.

#### Hypothesis 1

HO = Socio-economic class influence has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

Ha = Socio-economic class influence has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

#### Hypothesis 2

HO = Academic support has no relationship to discontinuing studies by

mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

Ha = Academic support has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

#### Hypothesis 3

HO = Work life balance has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

Ha = Work life balance has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

#### Hypothesis 4

HO = Age barrier has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

Ha = Age barrier has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the ABC Bank Plc.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Theoretical Stance

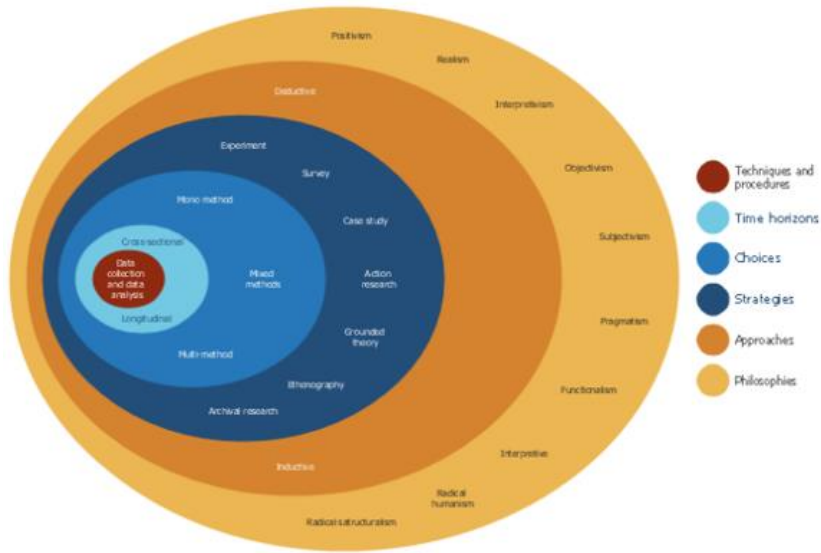


Figure 7– Research onion and use for the research, Source: (Saunders et al., 2012)

The researcher will research according to the;

Table 8-Research Process

<b>Techniques and Procedures</b>	<b>Data collection &amp; data analysis</b>
<b>Time Horizon</b>	<b>Cross-sectional</b>
<b>Methodological Choice</b>	<b>Mono method</b>
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Case study</b>
<b>Approach</b>	<b>Deductive</b>
<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>Positivism</b>

Source – (Developed by the Author)

### Research Methods

The research method is the most important part of the research since the study was elaborate on diversified information. Therefore, the research method interprets an overall process of collecting information appraise the decision (Stapleton, West, Marsden & Hall, 2012). Similarly, the research is segregate under two main categories as quantitative and qualitative. Equally both methods are prominent for organizations to overcome any apprehensive research problem (Ashley & Boyd, 2006). According to Connolly (2007) data

analysis in qualitative research is more time-consuming comparing to qualitative research. Blaikie (2007) and Rahman (2016) justify the disadvantages of the quantitative method as the method is does not accountable for the shaping and maintaining of social reality and it is proved that there is lack of direct connection in data collection between researcher and the participants. Where Burney (2008) stated deductive approach utilized existing theories using hypothesis. According to Saunders et al. (2009) positivism philosophy the hypothesis is developing based on the existing theories and these hypotheses will be tested and

confirm. Similarly, Soiferman (2010) also state deductive approach allows using testing hypothesis where the approach basically explains the relationship between two variables. The research was categorized under the quantitative method, deductive approach and Positivism philosophy. Soiferman (2010), also confirmed that the deductive approach generally combines with the positivism philosophy. The Case study was done using a questionnaire and the Data was collected by using a Mono method. Furthermore, Printed questionnaires were distributed among the selected sample for the data collection. In the same way, the author has selected a questionnaire because it is less expensive. Cross-sectional time horizon is used to plan and record the time frame of the research. Correspondingly, Edirisinghe (2012) sated

that the positivism philosophy creates a distance between them and the participant.

### Sampling Framework

Usually, a case study selects a very limited number of participants thus sampling is not required. However, the target population for this research was massive as all female supervisory and above grade were considered. Accordingly, the target population is 1174 which is massive and complicated when distributing the questionnaire. Further, the prevailing situation of the country due to virus pandemic will cause practical difficulties. Hence, considering above reasons only a representative sample of 291 was selected using non random sampling in the form of purposive. Etiken et al. (2015) stated Non-random purposive sampling reached to the population who willing to provide information.

Table 9- Sample Size

Gender	Target Population	Sample Size
Female	1174	291
Sample Size (As the Morgan Table)		<b>291</b>

Source – (Developed by the Author)

### Data Collection Method

To fulfill the research, aim and objectives, the researcher was utilizing the primary source of data and the Secondary source of data, by executing a questioner to collect the information regarding the reasons for discontinuing studies by mature female students with children. Alternatively, Lee (2017), stated Primary data consumed more time and the cost comparing to the secondary data. However, Primary data high in accuracy and the validity comparing to secondary data though the secondary data save the time and the cost. The questionnaire was consisting of a variety of questions in order to obtain more relevant information. Further, Five point Likert scale has been identified and used obtained responds from the participants. The secondary data

was collected through ABC Bank annual report, Central bank annual report, textbooks, published academic articles and other relevant.

### Data collection instrument

The author has used a questionnaire in order to collect the primary data. The questionnaire was distributed to supervisory and above grade through email. As stated by Ajayi (2017), Primary data can be obtained through the source of Survey, observations, questionnaires and interviews while secondary data can be obtained through various publications, internal records, journals and articles. Correspondingly, Greenhoot and Dowsett (2012), mentioned Primary data can be used utilized to solve the basic conflict where the secondary data utilized to support the mechanism while using a

different source. Potter, Sharpe, Handee and Clark (1972), stated questionnaire is a data collecting method from employees in an effective way. The questionnaire contains close ended questions and five-point likert scale matrix designed using a. Similarly, responds included five preferences in order to make the responds. Such as, Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The close ended questions will be covered all the four independent variables.

### **Reliability, Validity and Generalizability**

#### **Reliability**

Reliability basically refers to If the data collection procedure and the analytic procedure reduce consisting findings similarly if it is being repeated on another occasion or if the mentioned procedure previously tested by any other researcher. Correspondingly the questionnaire was not complicating the participant hence questionnaire has carried out straightforward questions by the author. Since the author has created a questionnaire which included sixteen straightforward questions to covered each independent variable. The author has created the questionnaire in English language and the main purpose of to communicate in English languages is to communicate clearly to the responder to make sure that responder will understand the questionnaire clearly where the location of the research conducting consists of numerous languages of the population and the author has discovered the English language as a generally uncomplicated language which is easy to understand as general in the organization. As well as author avoided using jargon to make the questionnaire understandable.

The research is in related to the financial institutions hence the author is accountable for confidentiality since the author has protected all relevant documents and data, privacy of the participants and their information from

unauthorized access, disclose, utilize , disclosure, modification, theft and loss while conducting the research study as well as the author ensured not to harm any person. Moreover, the author justified the questionnaire was not added precedence due to the secrecy and confidentiality of the research. Furthermore, a brief description of the purpose of the study was delivered to the respondents prior to answering the questionnaire. All respondents will be treated due to respect and courtesy. Differently abled persons and minors were avoided when collecting data. Besides, Robson (2002) states four threats to reliability,

participant error – The researcher should ensure to collect the data without participant errors. Such as the data collection should be at a natural time else it might produce different data on different days at the same time.

participant bias - The researcher should ensure that the answers are unbiased. Since the research is conducting for an organization at any time employer able to manipulate employee to answers for research questions.

observer error - Observer ensured that the questions are error-free where the questions should ask clear get to elicit answers.

observer bias - Observer ensured that the questions are unbiased.

Thus, Carmines and Zeller (2008) sated reliability provide to concern the scope of measurements which phenomenon interpret steady results. It follows with repeatability. Despite, repeatability should occur under continuous condition (Moser and Kalton, 1989). Nevertheless (Robinson, 2009) elaborate there is no fixed rule exists for internal uniformity even it argued so.

#### **Validity**

Validity was ensured whether the findings are really about what they appear

to be about. Similarly, variables and research tools will be properly addressed in the research question. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005) described the validity as a level of ability to cover the actual investigation area through collected data. Likewise, to avoid the respondent bias the author has built the trust on the research study while enhancing the confident level among the participants to collect the accurate findings. Hence the questionnaire was developed by equally covering all four hypotheses since it is a requirement of the research study. Similarly, the questions were designed to cover the factors which effected to influence the study discontinuation of mature age female students. Further, for the industrial overview and to the literature review utilized the publications which have been published within last the ten years.

### **Generalizability**

To generalize the research result, the researcher should more concern about the design of the research. According to Saunders et al. (2012) generalizability also known as external validity. Where the findings of the research may equally applicable to other organizations as well. Moreover, Yin (2003) states in qualitative research using semi-structured or in-depth-interviews cannot use the statistical generalization about the population but the statistical generalization is often used for the situation when adopting a case study. A valid sample for a data collection has been drawn to have 95% of the confident level with 5% of margin of error. Nonetheless, the author could not consider the entire population of the research study since the population was comparatively large. Hence, the author has taken a sample size from the entire population. However, the author has extended the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the research study from the sample population to the entire population. As a result, it can be concluded

that the author has generalized the findings of the research study implemented from the sample population to the entire population.

### **Constraints and Ethical Considerations**

#### **Time Constraints**

The author has conducted the research within a very shorter time period to adhere to the deadline for submitting the research study which is identified as a major drawback of this study. Similarly, the author has observed the time constraint as a negative impact which prevents the author from conducting a longitudinal research study to address the research problem. Further, the author has been observed it is necessary to avoid procrastination while being multitasking to fulfill the perfect research study. Moreover, the author has found insufficient planning task. However, when the author dealt with the time constraints, the author has observed the development of other constraints such as financial and data access. Hence it was difficult on occasions to gain the optimal level of all activity's pursuits.

#### **Finance Constraints**

Financial constraint is a significant element which may heavily impact on the continuation of the higher studies. Moreover, the financial assistance derived frequently when the information is asymmetries and lack of support to collect the data. Further, regularly most of the students have to face the financial constraint primordial while continuing the studies. Similarly, the author has identified the financial constraint and properly addressed the matter by distributing the research questionnaire via email as it involves minimum cost. Alternatively, the author has observed while in the process of a finding a solution to serve the financial constraint, parallel the author has experienced an efficiency improvement of collecting data via email. Therefore, the author has observed that the



theory of the fanatical constraint is easy to apply practically which may attain with added advantages.

### **Data Access Constraints**

The author has selected the ABC Bank Plc. to conduct the case study to identify the factors which may affect to discontinue the higher studies by mature age female students. Further, the author has faced various complications due to the limited access to the organization and to the respondents due to the research study was conducted in a bank which adheres to the confidentiality of divulging data. Moreover, Due to the prevailing situation of the country (COVID 19) author has face complications as it was not easy to access to get internal details of the organization and some policy restriction. Further, there are a low number of previous studies hence it was defaulted to gather the secondary data.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Anonymity of the research and the confidentiality

The anonymity and confidentiality protected by the author by avoiding disclosing the name and the identity of participants and all the related parties. Hence author did not mention any direct or indirect identifiable information such as name or indirect identifiable information namely place of work, place of residence or unique traits. Equally, all the findings and the reports were kept under high level of confidentiality. On the other hand, the questionnaire also designed accordingly. Aim and objectives of research were provided to the participants in the questionnaire. Most importantly, the research was conducted in an independent and unbiased manner in all aspect. Anonymity and dignity was assured as confidential information research was conducted in a professional, legal and ethical framework.

Security of the data storage

All the collected data were stored in an encrypted device with a password. Hence, the strong password required to start up the author's personal computer. Alternatively, author protects the data with AppLock which disable unprotected data sharing and unauthorized attempt. Nonetheless, to keep all the files and data safe author has stored the data in Google drive. Conversely, the author avoided the cloud upgrade in order to keep away from sensitive data. Since the author's personal computer was to store the data and permanently deleted after completion the dissertation. No any hard copies were printed in order to maintain the security.

### **Participants Consent**

The author has obtained consent from participants confirming all participants are volunteers. Research Aim and objectives were provided thus participants have the right to participate or avoid the questionnaire.

### **Risk of psychological harm/hurt**

The questionnaire has served to different types of people who arrived from the different cultures and background. Hence, any inappropriate questions which hurt or insult anyone has avoided confirming psychological harm was avoided. Similarly, the author avoided emotionally distress questions such as sexual abuse history and painful experiences.

### **Academic Integrity**

Data collection process has in line with the university expectation while being Honest, Trustworthy, Fair, Respect and Responsible. Fabricating data was avoided in questionnaire by the author. Similarly, the author clarified unclear areas by referring to the assigned lecturer. As can be seen in the list of references, the author has mentioned the citation while enclose the learning sources.

### **Data collection and access**

Everyone who take part the questionnaire has the freedom to choose

answers as per their wish since the questionnaire has in five-point likert scale matrix.

## ***EMPIRICAL FINDINGS & ANALYSIS***

### **Introduction**

The researcher analyses the collected data through a questionnaire. According to the annual report of the ABC bank the total numbers of female employees are working in the ABC bank is 1174. Similarly, the sample size was 291 female staff members. Correspondingly, the questionnaire has been given to the

selected sample and the collected data analyzed with the use of data analysis tools. Out of 291 female staff members 212 has responded to the questioner. The data analyzed was completed by using IBM SPSS Statistics software. Significantly, different techniques used to express findings such as in pie charts, graphs in order to define the data more comprehensively. Furthermore, the hypotheses were tested and decided on whether to accept or reject on each independent variable chosen for this research. The data analysis was used following “value labels” given in Table 4.1 to represent responders’ selections in SPSS Data View plane.

*Table 10– SPSS Value Labels*

Value	Label
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

*Source – (Developed by the Author)*

### **Analysis of First Independent Variable – Socio-Economic Class Influence**

The level of family support and motivation

Question 01 - The level of family support and motivation towards education has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

**Table 11– Statistics Table of Question 1 - The level of family support and motivation**

#### **Statistics**

Family Support_Motivation		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.24
Median		4.00
Mode		4
Std. Deviation		.793

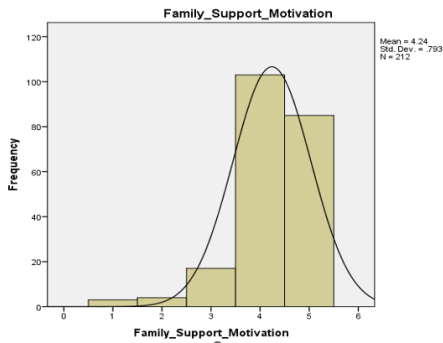


Figure 8– Histogram of Question 1 -

*The level of family support and motivation*

Respondents have chosen from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree for the first statement. Majority of the participants have chosen the respond as Agree. The percentage for agree is 48.6%. Similarly, 40.1% Percentage selected the respond as strongly agreed. Furthermore, the average answer for the question is Agree since the mean value of the data set is 4.24. The standard deviation of the respond is 0.79 due to the 3.4%

respondents on strongly disagree to disagree. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the family support and motivation hence it affects discontinuing higher studies by mature female students.

The individual monetary difficulties

Question 2 - The individual monetary difficulties have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 12– Statistics Table of Question 2 -

*The individual monetary difficulties*

### Statistics

Monetary Difficulties		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.36
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.857

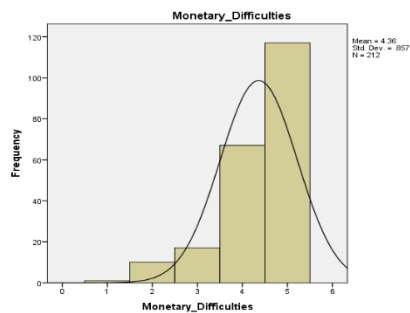


Figure 9– Histogram of Question 2-

*The individual monetary difficulties*

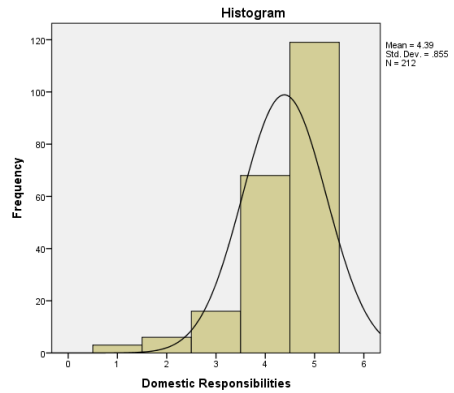
For question no 02, Participants have responded from strongly disagree to strongly agree. As can be seen in the diagram majority of the participants have selected the respond as strongly agree and the percentage is 55.2%. Further 31.6% percentage responds as agree. In addition, the minimum level of response is 0.5% for strongly disagree. Similarly, 4.7% have disagreed with the statement. Mean value of the data set is mentioned as 4.36 which are close to 4. Correspondingly, the average answer can be identified as Agree. The standard deviation is 0.857 which is slight deviation from the mean and it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback on the individual monetary difficulties have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

**A woman’s domestic responsibilities**

Question 3 - A woman’s domestic responsibilities have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature students.

*Table 13 – Statistics Table of Question 3 - A woman’s domestic responsibilities*

Statistics		
Domestic Responsibilities		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.39
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.855



*Figure 10– Histogram of Question 3 - A woman’s domestic responsibilities*

The major parts of the participants have responded Strongly Agree for question number 3 similarly, others responded from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Total is 56.1% from the total responds Strongly Agreed for the statement. Accordingly, another 32.1% agree for the statement. 7.5% responds as a neutral for the statement and total of the strongly disagree and disagree are 4.2%. Mean value for the set of data is close to 4 which are 4.39 and the average answer is identified as Agree for the question number 3. Further, standard deviation for the question number 3 is 0.855 which is slight deviation from the mean. Hence it can be concluded that the most participants have given a positive respond towards a woman’s domestic responsibilities have an effect on discontinuing higher studies by mature female students.

**The traditional beliefs**

Question 4 - Traditional believes towards women have an effect on discontinuing studies by female mature students.

*Table 14– Statistics Table of Question 4 - The traditional beliefs*

### Statistics

#### Traditional Beliefs

N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.24
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.959

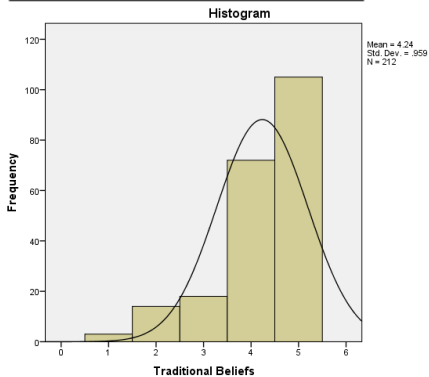


Figure 11– Histogram of Question 4 - The traditional beliefs

For the question number 4, participants have selected the responds from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The percentage values are from strongly agree to disagree is 49.5% and 34%. Most of the respondents have selected strongly agree where the total of the strongly agree and agree is 83.5%. Furthermore, 8.5% responds as neutral and the total of the strongly disagree and agree is 8%. Mean value for the data set is 4.24 which is close to 4 and the average answer for the question is agree. Similarly, standard deviation for the responds is 0.959 which is close to SD 1 which is a considerable deviation from the mean. Hence it can be conclude that the respondents have given only an average positive feedback towards traditional beliefs towards women have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Analysis of second independent variable – Academic Support

Academic support from the educational providers

Question 5 - Adequate academic support providing by educational institute have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 15– Statistics Table of Question 5 - Academic supports from the educational providers

### Statistics

#### Academic\_Support\_from\_educational providers

N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.25
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.882

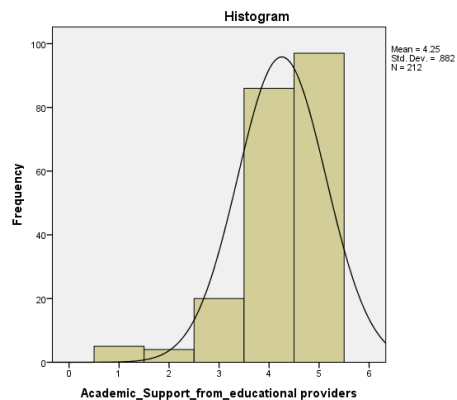


Figure 12– Histogram of Question 5 – Academic Supports from Educational Providers

Participants have chosen from strongly agree to strongly disagree for the question number 5. Highest number of respondents selected Agree as a respond. Correspondingly, 45.8% selected Strongly Agree and 40.6% selected Agree and the total Agree and strongly agree for the statement is 86.4%. Furthermore, another 9.4% respondents choose the answer as a

Neutral and only 4.3% have Strongly disagree and Disagree for the statement. Mean value for the data set is 4.25 which are close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer is for the question is Agree. Similarly, standard deviation for the responds is 0.882 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that participants have given only average positive feedback towards adequate academic support providing by educational institutes have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

#### Academic facilities and Equipment

Question 6 - Adequate academic facilities and equipment provided by the higher educational institutes have an impact on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 16– Statistics Table of Question 6 - Academic facilities and Equipment

#### Statistics

Academic_facilities_and equipments		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.32
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.914

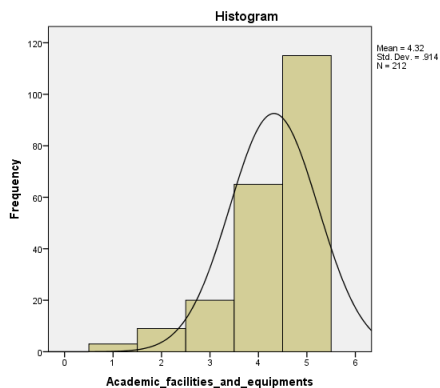


Figure 13– Histogram of Question 6 – Academic facilities and Equipment

Highest number of responds is for question is Strongly agree for the statement number 6, Correspondingly, Participants have responded from Strongly agree to Strongly Disagree. This is 54.2% and 30.7% responded as Agree. Hence, 84.9% participants have responded Agree and above respond for the question. In addition, another 9.4% participants chosen with the respond Neutral and only 1.4% have strongly disagree with the statement. Furthermore, Mean value of the data set is 4.32 which is close to 4. Similarly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further, standard deviation for the question is 0.914 which is close to SD 1 this is considerable deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that respondents have given only an average positive feedback towards adequate academic facilities and equipment provided by educational institutes have an impact on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

The ability of developing student’s values and capabilities

Question 7 - The ability of developing student’s values and capabilities by the educational institute has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 17– Statistics Table of Question 7 - The ability of developing student’s values and capabilities

#### Statistics

Student's_values_and_capabilities		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.29
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.932

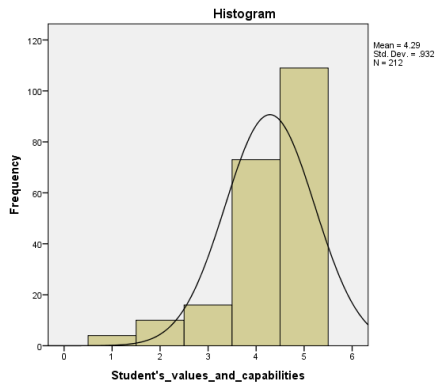


Figure 14– Histogram of Question 7 – Student’s values and capabilities

For the question number 7, participants have responded from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Majority of the respondents have chosen the respond as Strongly Agree. This is 51.4% and another 34.4% responded as Agree. Where the total of 85.8% responded as Agree and Strongly Agree to the question. In addition, only 1.9% stands with Strongly Disagree and 4.7% have Disagree with the statement. Mean value of the data set is 4.29. This is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further, standard deviation of the responds is 0.932 which is close to SD 1 this is considerable deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the ability of developing student’s values and capabilities by the educational institutes have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

#### Comfortable Payment Structure

Question 8 - The comfortable payment structures of educational institutes have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 18– Statistics Table of Question 8 - Comfortable Payment Structure

#### Statistics

Comfortable_payments_structure		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.32
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.897

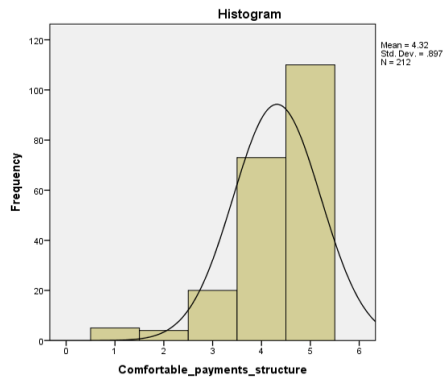


Figure 15– Histogram of Question 8 – Comfortable Payment Structure

Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree for the question number 8, Participants have responded from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree for the question. Majority of the participants have chosen the respond as Strongly Agree which is 51.9% and 34.4% responded as Agree. Similarly, the total 86.3% participants have chosen Agree and above responds for the statement. Mean value for the data set is 4.32 which is close to 4. Further, the standard deviation for the responds is 0.897. This is slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that the comfortable payment structure of educational institutes have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature age female students.

Analysis of Third Independent Variable  
– Work Life Balance

Balance between personal and professional commitments

Question 9 - Women's ability of striking the balance between personal and professional commitments has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 19– Statistics Table of Question 9 - Balance between personal and professional commitments

**Statistics**

Balance\_Between Personal\_Professional Commitments

N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.31
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.795

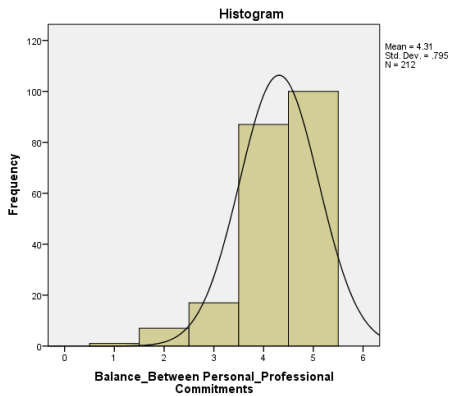


Figure 16– Histogram of Question 9 – Balance between personal and professional commitments

Participants have responded from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree for the question number 9. Majority of the participants selected the responded as Strongly Agree which is 47.2%. And another 41% responded as agree. Correspondingly, total 88.2% participants have chosen agree and above to the

question. Mean value is for the data set is 4.31 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further the standard deviation for the question is 0.795 which is slight deviation from the mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards women's ability of striking the balance between personal and professional commitments has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Strategic Guidance

Question 10 - The organizations' ability to providing clear and strategic guidance pertaining to the job role has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 20– Statistics Table of Question 10 - Strategic Guidance

**Statistics**

Strategic Guidance

N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.29
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.896

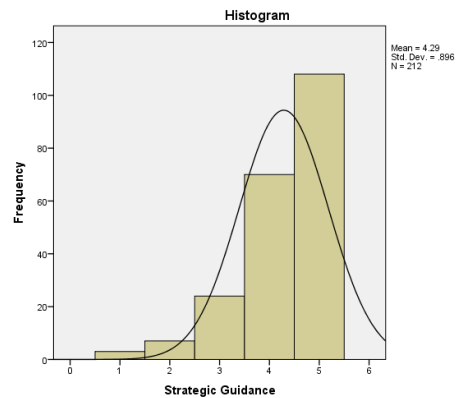


Figure 17– Histogram of Question 10 – Strategic Guidance



For the question number 10, participants have responded from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Highest number of responds for the question is Strongly Agree. Which is 50.9% and another 33% responded as Agree. Where the total 83.9% participants have chosen Agree and above responds to the question. Mean value for the data set is 4.29 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further standard deviation for the question is 0.896 which is slight deviation from the mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the organization ability to provide clear and strategic guidance pertaining to the job role has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

#### The Involvement of Superiors

Question 11 - The involvement of supervisors and their guidance have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 21 – Statistics Table of Question 11 - The Involvement of Superiors

#### Statistics

The Involvement of Supervisors		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.37
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.875

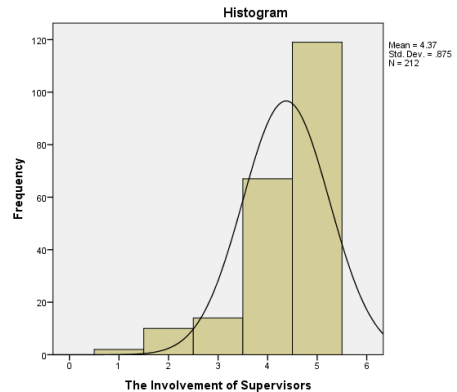


Figure 18– Histogram of Question 11 – The involvement of Superiors

For the question number 11, Participants have responded from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree and the highest number of responds for the question is Strongly Agree. This is 56.1% and 31.6% responded as Agree. Similarly, total of 87.7% respondents have chosen Agree and above respond to the question. Mean value for the set of data is 4.29 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further standard deviation for the respond is 0.896 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the involvement of their supervisors and guidance have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature age female.

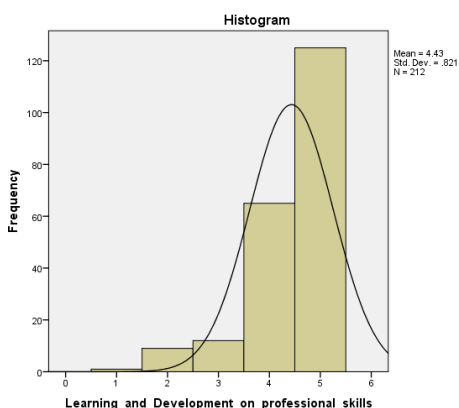
#### Learning and Development on Professional Skills

Question 12 - The adequate learning and development on professional skills provided by the organization have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

*Table 22– Statistics Table of Question 12 - Learning and Development on Professional Skills*

**Statistics**

Learning_and_Development_on_professional_skills		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.43
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.821



*Figure 19– Histogram of Question 12 – Learning and Development on Professional Skills*

For the question number 12, participants have responded from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree and the highest number of responds from Strongly Agree which is 59% and 30.7% responded as Agree. Correspondingly, 89.7% participants have chosen agree and above respond to the question. Mean value for the data set is 4.43 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further standard deviation for the respond is 0.821 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the adequate learning and development on professional skills provided by the organization has an effect on

discontinuing studies by mature female students.

**Analysis of Fourth Independent Variable – Age Barriers**

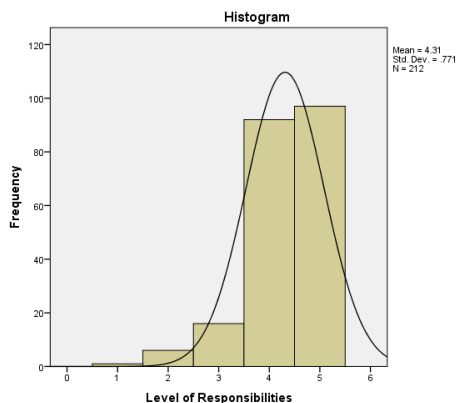
**Level of Responsibilities**

Question 13 - Matured women's higher level of responsibilities has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

*Table 23– Statistics Table of Question 13 - Level of Responsibilities*

**Statistics**

Level of Responsibilities		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.31
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.771



*Figure 20– Histogram of Question 13 – Levels of Responsibilities*

For the question number 13, participants have responded from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree and the highest number of responds from Strongly Agree which is 45.8% and 43.4%

responded as Agree. Correspondingly, 89.2% participants have chosen agree and above respond to the question. Mean value for the data set is 4.31 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further standard deviation for the respond is 0.771 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards matured women's higher level of responsibilities have an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

### Early Retirement

Question 14 - Early retirement of women has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 24– Statistics Table of Question 14 - Early Retirement

#### Statistics

Early_Retirement		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.33
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.839

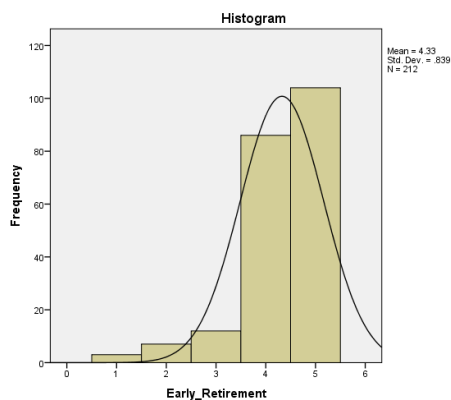


Figure 21– Histogram of Question 14 – Early Retirement

For the question number 14, participants have responded from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree and the highest number of responds from Strongly Agree which is 49.1% and 40.6% responded as Agree. Correspondingly, 89.7% participants have chosen agree and above respond to the question. Mean value for the data set is 4.33 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further standard deviation for the respond is 0.839 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards early retirement of women has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

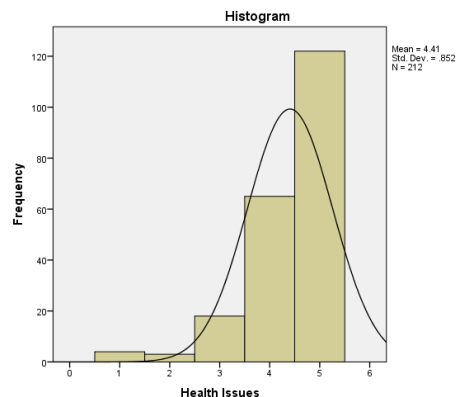
### Health Issues

Question 15 - The health-related issues due to mature age women has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

Table 25– Statistics Table of Question 15 - Health Issues

#### Statistics

Health Issues		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.41
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.852



*Figure 22– Histogram of Question 15 – Health Issues*

Participants have responded from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree for the statement 15 and the highest number of responds from Strongly Agree which is 57.5% and 30.7% responded as Agree. Correspondingly, 88.2% participants have chosen agree and above respond to the question. Mean value for the data set is 4.41 which is close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further standard deviation for the respond is 0.852 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the health-related issues due to mature age women has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

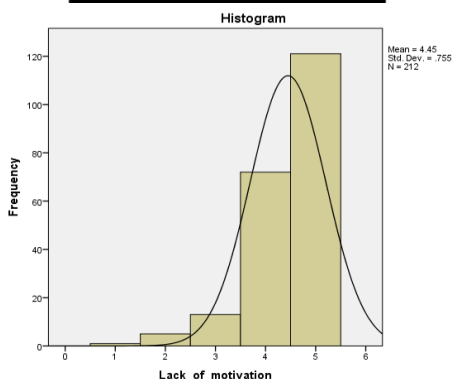
**Lack of Motivation**

Question 16 - The less motivational level of women has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

*Table 26– Statistics Table of Question 16 - Lack of Motivation*

**Statistics**

Lack_of_motivation		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.45
Median		5.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.755



*Figure 23– Histogram of Question 16 – Lack of Motivation*

For the Question 16, participants have responded from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Highest number of responds for the question is Strongly Agree, which is 57.1% while 34% have agreed with the statement. In addition, another 2.4% have stand with the respond Disagree. Mean value of the data set is 4.45 which are close to 4. Accordingly, the average answer for the question is Agree. Further, standard deviation of the responds is 0.755 which is a slight deviation from mean. Hence it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards the less motivational level of women has an effect on discontinuing studies by mature female students.

**Analysis Dependent Variable – Discontinuing Studies by the Mature Female Students**

Question 17 - Do you think there are barriers towards discontinuing studies by mature female students?

*Table 27– Statistics Table of Question 17 - Barriers towards higher studies*

**Statistics**

Barriers_towards_higher_studies		
N	Valid	212
	Missing	0
Mean		4.27
Median		4.00
Mode		5
Std. Deviation		.844

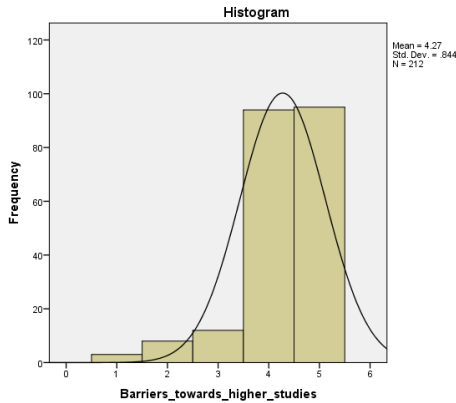


Figure 24– Histogram of Question 17 – Barriers towards higher studies

According to the above details, the average answer for the question is Agree. Participants have responded from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree for the question number 17. Highest number of responds for the question is Strongly Agree, which is 44.8%. And another 44.3% responded as Agree. Then, totally only 89.1% participants have chosen Agree and above respond for the question. Mean value of the data set is 4.27 which is slightly close to 4. Further, standard deviation of the responds is 0.844 which is a slight deviation from the mean. Hence, it can be concluded that most respondents have given positive feedback towards discontinuing studies by mature female students.

#### Pearson Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis between socio economic class influences and barriers towards female higher studies

Table 28– Pearson correlation between Socio economic class influences and Barriers towards female higher studies

Correlations			
		Socio_economic_class_influence	Barriers_towards_higher_studies
Socio_economic_class_influence	Pearson Correlation	1	.648**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	212	212
Barriers_towards_higher_studies	Pearson Correlation	.648**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	212	212

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Above table describes the two tailed Bivariate Person Correlation between Socio economic class influences and Barriers towards female higher studies. The test flagged has indicated a positive linear relationship since the test output was indicated that Person Correlation (r) is 0.648 in between Socio economic class influences and Barriers towards female higher studies at the level in 0.01 levels in 2-tailed test with single asterisk. According to the standard Pearson Correlation values, it was observed that Pearson Correlation (r) lies between  $0.5 < |r| < 0.7$ . As a result, a Strong uphill (Positive) linear relationship was identified in between independent variable Socio-economic class influences and dependent variable Barriers towards female higher studies.

Correlation analysis between academic support and barriers towards female higher studies

Table 29– Pearson correlation between Academic support and Barriers towards female higher studies

Correlations			
		Academic_Support_from_educational_providers	Barriers_towards_higher_studies
Academic_Support_from_educational_providers	Pearson Correlation	1	.517**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	212	212
Barriers_towards_higher_studies	Pearson Correlation	.517**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	212	212

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen in the test output has indicated a positive relationship in between the independent and the dependent variable. Similarly, it was observed that Pearson Correlation (r) is 0.517 at the 0.01 level in 2-tailed test with double asterisk. Furthermore, when consider the strength of the relationship as per the standard Pearson correlation values, it was observed that Pearson Correlation (r) lies in the segment where  $0.5 < |r|$ . Hence, as described the correlation between Academic support

and Barriers towards female higher studies has observed as a Moderate Uphill (Positive) Correlation.

Correlation analysis between Work life balance and Barriers towards female higher studies

*Table 30– Pearson correlation between Work life balance and Barriers towards female higher studies*

Correlations			
		Work_Life_Balance	Barriers_towards_higher_studies
Work_Life_Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.680**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	212	212
Barriers_towards_higher_studies	Pearson Correlation	.680**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	212	212

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Given the above, the test flagged has indicated a positive linear relationship since the test output was indicated that the Person Correlation (r) is 0.680 in between Work life balance and Barriers towards female higher studies at the level in 0.01 levels in 2-tailed test with single asterisk. According to the standard Pearson Correlation values, it was observed that Pearson Correlation (r) lies between  $0.5 < |r| < 0.7$ . As a result, a Strong uphill (Positive) linear relationship was identified in between independent variable Work life balance and dependent variable Barriers towards female higher studies.

Correlation analysis between Age barriers and Barriers towards female higher studies

*Table 31– Pearson correlation between Age barriers and Barriers towards female higher studies*

Correlations			
		Age_Barriers	Barriers_towards_higher_studies
Age_Barriers	Pearson Correlation	1	.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	212	212
Barriers_towards_higher_studies	Pearson Correlation	.707**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	212	212

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the test output, it was observed that Pearson Correlation (r) is 0.707. Further, the test flagged has indicated a positive linear significant in between variables Age barriers and Barriers towards female higher studies at the 0.01 level in 2-tailed test with double asterisk. Further, when consider the strength of the relationship as per the standard Pearson correlation values, it was observed that Pearson Correlation (r) lies in  $0.7 < |r| < 0.9$ . Hence, correlation between independent variable Age barriers and dependent variable Barriers towards female higher studies has identified as a Strong uphill (positive) correlation

#### Hypotheses Testing By Chi-Square Analysis

Testing Hypothesis 1 by Chi-square analysis

Chi-square analysis was run in SPSS by testing the validity of Null hypothesis stated below in order to test validity of Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 1

HO = Socio-economic class influence has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Ha = Socio-economic class influence has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

*Table 32– Hypothesis 1 – Case Processing Summary*

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Socio_economic_class_influence* Barriers_towards_higher_studies	212	100.0%	0	0.0%	212	100.0%

Table 33– Hypothesis 1 – Chi-Square Test Results

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	393.968 <sup>a</sup>	56	.000
Likelihood Ratio	138.692	56	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	88.468	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	212		

a. 65 cells (86.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

As can be seen in the above, tested carried out for 212 valid cases and no missing cases have been recorded out of total responds. Similarly, the null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (H2) of the Chi-Square Test of Independence are interpreted based on the Pearson Chi-square value for Asymptotic Significance (2-sided). Accordingly, as per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square value (p) is 0.000 for rounded three decimal points. Then mathematically the value can be represented as  $p < 0.001$ . Since the p-value is less than the chosen significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the Null Hypothesis (H0) was rejected, and concluded that there is a relationship between socio economic class influence and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. Hence can be concluded that there was a significant association between socio economic class influence and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. [ $\chi^2 (1) = 393.968, p < 0.001$ ].

Testing Hypothesis 2 by Chi-square analysis

Chi-square analysis was run in SPSS by testing the validity of Null hypothesis stated below in order to test validity of Hypothesis 2.

## Hypothesis 2

HO = Academic support has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Ha = Academic support has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Table 34– Hypothesis 2 – Case Processing Summary

Case Processing Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Academic_Support* Barriers_towards_higher_studies	212	100.0%	0	0.0%	212	100.0%

Table 35– Hypothesis 2 – Chi-Square Test Results

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	388.932 <sup>a</sup>	56	.000
Likelihood Ratio	152.649	56	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	92.013	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	212		

a. 65 cells (86.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

To summarize the tested carried out of 212 valid cases and no missing cases have been recorded out of total responds. Similarly, the null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (H2) of the Chi-Square Test of Independence are interpreted based on the Pearson Chi-square value for Asymptotic Significance (2-sided). Accordingly, as per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square value (p) is 0.000 for rounded three decimal points. Then mathematically the value can be represented as  $p < 0.001$ . Since the p-value is less than the chosen significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$  (Kent University, 2020), the Null Hypothesis (H0) was rejected, and concluded that there is a relationship between Academic support and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. Hence it can be

concluded that there was a significant association between academic support and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. [ $\chi^2(1) = 388.932, p < 0.001$ ].

Testing Hypothesis 3 by Chi-square analysis

Chi-square analysis was run in SPSS by testing the validity of Null hypothesis stated below in order to test validity of Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 3

HO = Work life balance has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Ha = Work life balance has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Table 36– Hypothesis 3 – Case Processing Summary

	Case Processing Summary					
	Cases				Total	
	Valid		Missing		N	Percent
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Work_Life_Balance * Barriers_towards_higher_studies	212	100.0%	0	0.0%	212	100.0%

Table 37– Hypothesis 3 – Chi-Square Test Results

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	324.723 <sup>a</sup>	56	.000
Likelihood Ratio	148.504	56	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	97.458	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	212		

a. 65 cells (86.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

As can be seen in the above, tested carried out for 212 valid cases and no missing cases have been recorded out of total responds. Similarly, the null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (H2) of the Chi-Square Test of Independence are interpreted based on the Pearson Chi-square value for Asymptotic

Significance (2-sided). Accordingly, as per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square value (p) is 0.000 for rounded three decimal points. Then mathematically the value can be represented as  $p < 0.001$  (Kent University, 2020). Since the p-value is less than the chosen significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the Null Hypothesis (H0) was rejected, and concluded that there is a relationship between work life balance and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. Hence it can be concluded that there was a significant association between work life balance and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. [ $\chi^2(1) = 324.723, p < 0.001$ ].

Testing Hypothesis 4 by Chi-square analysis

Chi-square analysis was run in SPSS by testing the validity of Null hypothesis stated below in order to test validity of Hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 4

HO = Age barrier has no relationship to discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Ha = Age barrier has relationship on the discontinuing studies by mature female students at the National Development Bank Plc.

Table 38– Hypothesis 4 – Case Processing Summary

	Case Processing Summary					
	Cases				Total	
	Valid		Missing		N	Percent
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Age_Barriers * Barriers_towards_higher_studies	212	100.0%	0	0.0%	212	100.0%

Table 39– Hypothesis 4 – Chi-Square Test Results

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	388.786 <sup>a</sup>	60	.000
Likelihood Ratio	158.072	60	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	105.587	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	212		

a. 68 cells (95.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.



As described the above, tested carried out for 212 valid cases and no missing cases have been recorded out of total responds. Similarly, the null hypothesis (H0) and alternative hypothesis (H2) of the Chi-Square Test of Independence are interpreted based on the Pearson Chi-square value for Asymptotic Significance (2-sided). Accordingly, as per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square value (p) is 0.000 for rounded three decimal points. Then mathematically the value can be represented as  $p < 0.001$ . Since the p-value is less than the chosen significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ , the Null Hypothesis (H0) was rejected, and concluded that there is a relationship between age barriers and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. Hence it can be concluded that there was a significant association between age barriers and discontinuing studies by mature age female students. [ $\chi^2 (1) = 388.786, p < 0.001$ ].

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Summary of the research and key findings

Relationship between socio economic class influences and study discontinuation by the mature age female students

The author has mentioned the first independent variable as Socio class economic influences to identify the relationship to the study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children. Hence the author has been created four questions while considering the factors included in the Socio class economic influences. Such as, level of family support and motivation, monetary difficulties, domestic responsibilities and traditional beliefs. Further, the questions were flourished in the questionnaire to cover the first independent factors which identified and elaborate through the

literature review. According to the chosen statistical data which were analyzed by using SPSS software, the collected data was analyzed in descriptive and inferential statistics. Thus, the statistical data proved a positive impact of the independent variable. Finally, the Bivariate Person Correlation between Socioeconomic class influences and Barriers towards female higher studies analysis indicated a strong positive relationship.

Moreover, Majority of the respondents have selected the response as Strongly Agree for the descriptive statistics analysis questions which were a link to the first independent variable of Socioeconomic class influences but the average response for the questions were Agree. To further illustrate, the Majority of the participants concurred the relationship between socio-economic class influence and the study discontinuation by the mature female students as a positive impact. The average answer of the first independent variable has derived as Agree since the Mean value of the first independent variable questions in between 4.24 to 4.29. Further, the Mode value of the respondents confirmed the majority of the response as Agree since the value occurred most often. The standard deviation is a statistic that measured the dispersion of a dataset relative to the mean. Despite the socio-economy class influences other questions derived with the high standard deviation value which showed the factors were influenced to study discontinuation of the matured female students. The test flagged has designated a positive linear relationship since the test output was designated that Person Correlation (r) is 0.648 in between socioeconomic class influences and Barriers towards female higher studies at the level in 0.01 levels in the 2-tailed test with a single asterisk where the test flagged has stipulated a positive relationship. Since the Pearson Correlation (r) lies between  $0.5 < |r| < 0.7$ . Moreover, as per the output of the test, the

Pearson Chi-square null hypothesis was rejected while accepted the alternative hypothesis. Similarly, the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) and the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) of the Chi-Square Test of Independence are interpreted based on the Pearson Chi-square value for Asymptotic Significance (2-sided). According to the Chi-Square test, rounded Pearson Chi-square value (p) is 0.000 where it has proved mathematically the consequential relationship between socio-economic class influence and discontinuing studies by mature age female students.

Literature review part two of the research study found the various identical researchers which have been proved the relationship in between the socio-economic class influences and the study discontinuing by the mature age female students. Correspondingly, Zarra-Nezhad et al. (2010), stated the main factors included in the socioeconomic class influences are Monetary difficulties, lack of support from the family to continue the study, social and family responsibilities and mainly the domestic responsibilities hold by the mature age female especially in Asian countries. Further, it has been stressed out women tend to give priority to the family mostly after having a kid to the family. Therefore, women's study continuation depends on the child age and the spouse education level thus women consider the mentioned commitments as an additional burden. It follows that the failure of continuation the traditional routing of women may be ended up with psychological problems. Lowe, Chan and Rhodes (2010) also stated the consequence of interact with others to get social support. Therefore, failure of support will convert the women into mentally ill health and additional pressure. Similarly, Saleem and Mahmood (2013) stated that even in the context of the Sri Lankan University students are attempting to commit suicide while keeping the matters in long term. Consequently, if the

traditional beliefs and social background resist women from study continuation, society always measures in high status on men who have full access and freedom to the educational system. Similarly, if a mother continued higher studies, there is a high opportunity of the children of that family will attend to the higher education either male or female. Hence the author has stressed out the impact of the study discontinuation considering the traditional beliefs of the society. As described in the literature review above, it can be seen the socioeconomic class influences have an impact on study discontinuation by the mature age female students.

Relationship between Academic support and Study discontinuation by the mature age female students

The second objective of the research is to identify the relationship between the academic support and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children. Accordingly, the questionnaire contained four questions which covered the factors which have been identified through the literature review of the research study. Alternatively, the literature part of the academic support contained the level of academic support extended from education institutions, adequacy of the academic facilities and the equipment provided by the educational institutions, the ability to develop student's values from the educational institution and the comfortable payment structure offered by the educational institutes. The chosen statistical data were analyzed by using SPSS software. Accordingly, the collected data has analyzed in descriptive and inferential statistics. Thus, the statistical data proved a positive impact of the study discontinuation to the mature age female student. Further, the Bivariate Person Correlation between academic support and Barriers towards female higher studies analysis indicated a positive relationship

between the independent and the dependent variable.

Moreover, according to the descriptive statistics analysis of questions relevant to the second independent variable participants have responded from strongly disagree to strongly agree by the majority of the response to Strongly Agree while the average answer for the second independent variable was agreed. Thus, the academic support has a positive impact on study discontinuation by the mature age female students. As illustrated above the average answer for the questions were agreed since it has derived from the mean value which has recorded in between 4.25 to 4.29. Further, based on the mode value also it has been confirmed that the majority have agreed with the question statements. Nonetheless, aside from the first question, all the other three questions were scored above 50% with the response of strongly agreed. Hence it can be identified for the second independent variable have heavily influenced by the factors of academic facilities provided by the educational institutions, development of student's values and comfortable payment structure. Equally, the SD indicated deviation from the mean except for the question raised on academic facilities provided by the institution and the development of student's values. In the same way, the test flagged has designated a positive linear relationship since the test output was designated that Person Correlation has been caused to build a moderate uphill correlation between selected independent and dependent variables. Since the Pearson Correlation ( $r$ ) lies in the segment of  $0.5 < |r|$ . Similarly, 2-tailed significance test has given a moderate positive significance between them at 0.01 level of significance. Further, the Chi-Square test rounded Pearson Chi-square value ( $p$ ) is 0.000. Moreover, as per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square null hypothesis was rejected while accepted the alternative

hypothesis. As a result, it has proved mathematically the positive relationship between academic support and discontinuing studies by mature age female students.

However, the similar studies have found from the literature part two which has proven the relationship between the academic support and the discontinuation by the mature age female student. Accordingly, Perera (2013), the research study found that the importance of academic support to continue higher studies, especially for the mature age female students. Similarly, the research has identified the key academic factors for discontinuation such as inadequate space, lack of facilities and equipment and lack of proper guidance. Equally, Gilavand (2016), proved an education institution should pay proper attention to academic facilities and the equipment, such as adequate temperature in the classroom, avoid noise and the open space and inappropriate classroom to continue studies effectively. Further, the researchers have stressed out the women's commitments in the previous reviews Hence educational institutes should extend excessive support to continue studies exceptionally to the mature women. A study conducted by Scott and Lewis (2016) mentioned the educational institutes have failed to understand the socio-cultural environment of the students. For this reason, mature women fail to continue higher studies. Since, mature students encounter different environment and different family devotions. Furthermore, Walker (2016) study stated the proper educational institutions have an ability to develop student's values and capabilities. Thus the author has identified the value of creating and enhancing the capabilities. Especially mature women required to develop capabilities in order to continue higher studies. As stated by Daiva (2017), most of the instances adults not only returned to

continue higher studies due to various personal commitments but also the institutes have clarified fastest-growing segment as students who return to institutions to continue the study which has discontinued due to various reasons. On the contrary, the author has observed a mass number of students are discontinuing the Sri Lankan university education basically due to the bad image has been improved about the Sri Lankan universities. Nonetheless, mature students also not getting proper support and guidance to continue the study with obligations. Moreover, U.S. Financial Literacy and Education Commission (2019), stated the consequences of having payments plans to continue the higher studies. Usually, mature women grant priority to personal life obligations rather than self-development. Hence generally in Asian countries, there is less number of women will continue the studies after getting married. Thus the education institution should introduce a payment plan which encourages and attract women to continue studies with other burdens. Therefore, it has found that most of the students in Asian countries are tend to continue higher studies with proper financial support granted by the educational institutions. To summarize, based on the above literature review it has confessed the positive relationship between the academic support and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Besides the finding also reflected the relationship between the second independent variable and the dependent variable. Hence it can be concluded that the academic support is an influencing factor of study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children.

Relationship between Work life balance and Study discontinuation by the mature age female students

The third independent variable of Work-life balance has been identified by the author to determine the relationship between the work life balance and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children. Equally, the author has created four questions to cover the areas of work life balance. Namely Women's ability to strike the balance between personal and professional commitments, The organizations' ability to providing clear and strategic guidance pertaining to the job role, The involvement of supervisors and guidance and the adequate learning and development on professional skills provided by the organization. Accordingly, the mentioned areas have included in the questionnaire and further elaborate through the literature review to cover the third independent variable. Collected data from the questionnaire has analyzed by using SPSS software in descriptive and inferential statistics. Conversely, the Bivariate Person Correlation between work life balance and Barriers towards female higher studies analysis indicated a strong positive relationship. Therefore the statistical data proved a positive impact of the independent variable. Alternatively, the average answers for the work-life balance were recorded as Agreed but the majority of the participants have responded as strongly agree to the third independent variable. Since, despite the first question, the balance of the three questions has scored above 50% with the strongly agreed answer. The average answer of the third independent variable has derived as Agree since the Mean value of the first independent variable questions in between 4.29 to 4.43. Thus, the majority of the participants have accepted the positive relationship between work-life balance and the study discontinuation by the mature female students. Nonetheless, the Mode value of the respondents confirmed the majority of the response as Agree since the value occurred most often.

Nonetheless, the score for agree and the above responses were 83% and above. It follows that the strong relationship between the work-life balance and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Moreover, the standard deviation indicated deviation from the mean. Only three questions have exhibited low deviation from the mean. Due to that all four questions were recorded a slight deviation from the mean. Further apart from the balance between personal and professional life question other questions were indicated slightly SD value. However, the author has found a strong positive correlation between the independent and the dependent variable. In the same way, a Strong uphill (Positive) linear relationship was identified in between independent variable Work life balance and dependent variable Barriers towards female higher studies. Similarly, 2-tailed significance test has given a strong positive significance between them at 0.01 level of significance. As per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square null hypothesis was rejected while accepted the alternative hypothesis. As a result, it can be summarized mathematically the positive relationship between work life balance and discontinuing studies by mature age female students.

Literature review in chapter two has further illustrated the relationship between work-life balance and the study discontinuing by the mature age female students by utilizing different objectives related to various studies. Sandberg (2015) mentioned various barriers which women to overcome to continue higher studies. As illustrated by Moghadam et al. (2017), irrespective of gender all students have equal responsibilities and difficulties to complete the higher studies. On the contrary, the author has stressed out the responsibilities build with the character of a mother in an Asian country. Hence it is accepted women tend to balance many

other commitments comparing to men and it is been recorded though women have to commit for various personal priorities comparing to men nonetheless mature female students are well balanced and working hard to continue higher studies comparing to men. Moreover, Mehta (2012) stated there are much few factors existing in the workplace to continue the higher studies. Frequently working women juggling to balance personal and personal life comparing to men. Correspondingly, the author has argued the family expectation from a working mother. In the context of Sri Lanka, mother identified as a role model in a family. Even with career development, women tend to bond with the family to accomplish the responsibilities. Barbulescu and further, Bidwell (2013) highlighted the importance of managing the equal responsibilities between family, employment and studies. Osborne and Hammoud (2017) mentioned the organizations' ability to providing clear and strategic guidance pertaining to the job role and it is essential for an employee in order to tailor the career path. Alternatively, women able to calibrate the study continuation decision according to the organizational perspective. Hence it has been clarified the multiple characters born by the women as a spouse, parents and employees. Finally, based on the literature reviewed above, it is recognized that there is a positive relationship between work-life balance and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Equally, the above findings related to the work-life balance proved the relationship to the female study discontinuation. Hence it can be concluded, that the work-life balance is an influencing factor to the study discontinuation by the mature age female students.

Relationship between Age barriers and Study discontinuation by the mature age female students

The research study was found the relationship between the age barriers and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students as a fourth objective of the research study. Similarly, four questions were developed in to the questionnaire in order to identify the relationship between the fourth independent variable and the dependent variable. Equally, the questions were developed in a view of literature review and considering all the other related factors. The chosen statistical data were analyzed by using SPSS software. Accordingly, the statistical data proved a positive impact of the study discontinuation to the mature age female student. Since the collected data were analyzed in descriptive and inferential statistics. Moreover, the Bivariate Person Correlation between Age barriers and Barriers towards female higher studies analysis indicated a positive relationship between the independent and the dependent variable. Furthermore, according to the descriptive statistics analysis of questions relevant to the independent variable of age barriers were strongly agreed by the majority of the response for the effect of the age barriers to study continuation by the mature age female students. Moreover, the questions were recorded the Mean value in between 4.31 to 4.45. As a result, the average answer for the fourth independent was greed. Further, based on the mode value also it has been confirmed that the majority have agreed with the question statements. However, the standard deviation indicated deviation from the mean. Similarly, the test flagged has designated a positive linear relationship since the test output was designated that Person Correlation ( $r$ ) is 0.707 in-between age barriers towards female higher studies at the level in 0.01 levels in the 2-tailed

test with a single asterisk where the test flagged has stipulated a strong positive relationship. Moreover, as per the output of the test, the Pearson Chi-square null hypothesis was rejected while accepted the alternative hypothesis. As a result, it has proved mathematically the positive relationship between age barriers and discontinuing studies by mature age female students.

Alternatively, as discussed in the literature review part two the author has found similar studies which are derived with a similar relationship to the research study. Correspondingly, the author has observed the higher level of responsibilities born by the mature female students, age of retirement, health issues and the less motivational factors towards the age barriers to continuing the higher studies. However, Frago et al. (2013) stated the age as a dominant factor for study discontinuation. It has proved that the mature hold a higher level of responsibilities compared to other segments. The author has stressed out, young mothers with a young child are routinely discontinuing the higher studies since the priority granted to the child and to the family responsibilities. Most often Asian women are facing child caring and raising concerns while continuing an occupation. Hence younger mothers tend to discontinue higher studies with the additional responsibilities. Vice versa Elder mother discontinue the higher studies due to dissatisfaction of continuing studies. Conversely, the researcher spotted the domestic responsibilities born by the women. Equally in a failure of balance the work-life according to the research study commonly ended up with psychological issues (Lin, 2016). Hence imbalance Work-life leads to many health issues which may affect short term as well as long term. On the other hand, Wu, Odden, Fisher and Stawski (2016) illustrated the impact of the retirement age to study discontinuation. Thus, generally Asian

women decide the retirement age once they get into marrying. If the retirement age is after marring of after having first kid, more often women not continue career where study discontinuation decision also made at that point. Hence frequently women decide the continuation of the higher studies with the retirement age. Hence, as per the research findings statistical analysis, it can be concluded that the age barrier is an influencing factor of study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children.

### **Limitations of the research**

This chapter included the constraints of conducting the research study of discontinuation study by the mature age female students with children. Therefore, the author has attentively selected the constraints for future recommendation. Due to snowballing condition in banking industry competition of the banking sector in Sri Lanka is developing drastically every day. Similarly, every bank in the country is having a considerable amount of stress on business development which has affected the industry in both positive & negative aspects. Hence the research has been conducted in a form of a case study at ABC Bank Plc. Hence the population of the sample did not adequately represent the opinions of the entire population. Further, regularly sampling is not required for a case study since case study contains a very limited number of participants. Conversely, the target population of the selected organization is massive hence from 1174 population by utilizing sampling method author conclude the same size into 291. Although the sample size is relatively low in order to represent the mature female students study discontinuation in Sri Lanka. Similarly, due to the pandemic situation exist in the country the data collection method was distributing a questionnaire to the target population. Hence, the data collecting via interview were impracticable.

Nonetheless, the author argued the data collection through an interview can be focused clearly since it is conducting as a one on one conversation which can help to understand the objective of the research study easily. Correspondingly, available time was the major limitation that was faced by the author when conducting the research study. As a result of the same researcher couldn't approach to a larger sample for the data collection. On the other hand, the author also failed to follow up & collect the data from several participants also due to the limited time and prevailing country situation. Hence the total responses were 212 from the total sample size of 291. Further, the research study has been conducted in one selected organization hence the industrial analysis was not tender properly with regards to the research problem. Hence it may impact the perfection of the research outcome and the research interpretation. Further, the author stressed out the cross-sectional time horizon is as the main concern where the research study requires a measurement over an extended period to provide information. Similarly longitudinal time horizon increase confidence in end result while generating more detailed information.

The research study was carried out by the deductive approach with a theory-driven hypothesis which guides data collection and analysis. Since the research main objective was to determine the reasons for discontinuing study in mature age female students with children specifically at ABC Bank Plc., the conclusion should provide actual factors which identifying similarities and differences rather utilizing existing theories using hypothesis. Hence the author highlighted the advantage of conducting an inductive approach which is collecting the data first and next to analyze the theoretical formulation to identify the reasons for discontinuing study in mature

age female students with children it Contribution to knowledge.

Further, the research study examines the female lifestyle, work-life and family and social beliefs. Hence it is more appropriate to make use of an according to the research arena. Therefore, qualitative research is a process of naturalistic inquiry that seeks an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting. Similarly, the author has identified while fitting the qualitative approach subject materials can be evaluated with greater details since the qualitative research operates within fluid structures. Moreover, absence of mix method derived with a disadvantage of inquiry of the combination of qualitative and quantitative approach which provides more understanding of a research problem than either approach alone. Finally, the research was conducted as a case study of ABC Bank Plc. but it is relevant to adopt survey study method since it is relatively easy to administer and numerous questions can be asked about a subject, giving an extensive flexibility in data analysis. As described above, given concerns can identified as research limitations.

### **Contribution to knowledge**

"Reasons for discontinuing study in mature age female students with children in Sri Lanka case study of ABC Bank Plc." unfolded my knowledge in an enormous zone. Since the study was carried out about the sector which I work for. Similarly, the industry knowledge and exposure which I gained throughout the research tremendously necessary for my career development. Throughout the literature review analyzed the variables which affect the research study gap of study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Hence, I enhanced my knowledge in socioeconomic class influences, academic support, and work-

life balance and age barriers. Equally, writing this research helped me to identify organizational problems and critically examine the same to provide practical recommendations. Thus, it aided to look at the organizational problems in different perspectives to justify the same. Similarly, the research study helped me to develop the ability to research up to the internationally accepted standard Including the supervisor administrations and guidance while it was able to enhance the academic writing abilities. Similarly, the second part of the research study enable to expertise in industry overview. Under industrial overview, I educate about the banking sector recent overview, opinions from the banking sector expertise and the banking sector behavioral. Equally the literature part three, grant me an opportunity to study various articles which relevant to the banking sector and different factors which effected study continuation by the mature age female students with children. Correspondingly, I gained knowledge in thesis writing techniques and foremost I developed my own research framework while taking referring the various other literature reviews.

Further, Chapter three which was included with research methodology helps me to understand the conceptual and theoretical ideas in different ways. Similarly, I study the process of data collection since the questionnaire was distributed and the data collected while the pandemic situation exists in the country. Moreover, the fourth chapter included the empirical findings which consisted of the collection and analysis of primary data to answer a research question. Equally, the chapter opened me an opportunity to learn the SPSS Software which is a computerized statistical analysis. Therefore, I studied to describe the data using descriptive statistics and also allowed me to examine the relationship between the variables. Finally, the research study enhances my ability to



work on the given time limit. However, by the time of the research submission, the author well furnished with academically and professionally on writing a research paper up to the expected standards with comprehension. Further, the author was able to experience in adhering to firm deadlines and to carry out extensive statistical analysis with the collected data set. In summarize, writing this report enhanced the critical thinking skills, analytical skills, academic writing skills, presentation skills as well as exhaustive reading skills of the researcher. Accordingly, it can be concluded that I studied to conclude previous studies while providing necessary recommendation to the bank and to all related parties in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

#### Suggestions for Future Research

The author has conducted a research study at ABC Bank Plc to identify Reasons for discontinuing study in mature age female students with children in Sri Lanka. Under the mentioned chapter the author will be discussing the areas that could be addressed further in the study which have omitted by the author due to various reasons. Further, study discontinuation by mature age female students have identified as a vast topic which has numerous areas to elaborate. Moreover, the author has observed referring existing literature researcher that there were various researches & articles related to the topic in opposed angles. Hence, the author has identified various independent variables which have a substantial impact on the chosen dependent variable while scrutinizing for academic papers to gather existing work done on a particular topic. However, considering the banking industry, community & other factors the author has only selected four independent variables for the existing literature namely, socio-economic class influences, academic support, work-life balance and age barriers. Nonetheless, the scope of the

particular research could have been widespread if the researcher focused on more aspects when developing the conceptual framework such as Level of nutrition, Self-regulating capacity, extended banking hours and Lack of practical relevance of major.

Besides, the banking sector has recognized as an industry which includes high rivalry. Hence as a solution to the industry rivalry, the banks are decided to moving forward with extended working hours to operate their branches for customer transactions to serve the industry competition with. Thus, the practicality and the efficiency will enhance, if the author could survey on “The impact of extended working hours on study continuation and the employee performance”. Further, as described in the limitations of the research, the research study on the mentioned topic is more furnishing with the inductive approach with qualitative methods. In-depth interviews with the focus group will be provided with an opportunity to understand the beliefs, attitude and opinions of the respondents which is required to analyze the consequences of the study discontinuation. Hence, qualitative methods will be provided actual illustrations of study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children. Similarly, the author is suggesting the inductive approach for future researchers with the longitudinal time horizon. Since comparing to the theory-driven hypothesis, in inductive approach analyze the theoretical formulation to identify the reasons will be more fitting to the research topic of study discontinuation by the mature age female students.

The author has perused the existing academic papers, other relevant documents and journals to develop particular research. Hence it was observed that the limited number of researches done concerning to the banking sector.

Therefore, the author had to examine research articles which have been conducted in general which enfold the chosen dependent and independent variables. Nevertheless, this particular research would have been reinforced with other literature reviews. Hence the banking industry overview related articles are recommended for future studies.

The study carried out as a case study of ABC Bank Plc but if the research is conducted as a survey with a sample of the entire population, the research findings can more reliably generalize to the selected Sri Lankan banking industry. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct a survey study on the same topic which will be more productively generalizing findings to the banking industry in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, according to the sample size, the research sample population was 291 out of that the author managed to collect the data from 212 participants at the ABC Bank Plc which is fairly sufficient for the research study. Although the collected responses were sufficient for the analysis of the research but if the author manages to collect more responses from the target population the research would be improved further. Moreover, the researcher only considered the Female employees in the Colombo district when investigating the factors that affect study discontinuation. Thus the researcher could enhance the value to the research study by adding other districts in Sri Lanka. Also, it will be more effective if the research carries a data comparison on the feedbacks collected from both private and state banks in the Sri Lankan banking industry. Hence the author suggesting for future researchers to conduct the research study under the same topic while considering the entire districts in Sri Lanka.

### **Recommendations**

This research will conclude with the fifth chapter which contained the overall

outcome of the data analyzed with envisioned recommendations for the further refinement. Further, the research study of study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children has been identified as a predominant area. Thus the recommendation under the final chapter will contain suggestions to increase the study continuation especially to the mature age female students with children. Accordingly, the author has authenticated the expectations of the organization from the mature age female students for continuing higher studies while expecting career advancement in order to strengthen employee performance.

Recommendations to endorse positive socioeconomic class influences

Socio-economic class influences have been identified as an influencing factor for study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Hence, by managing socio-economic class influences the organization can enhance the number of mature age female students who continue the higher studies without any interruptions. Further, while carrying out the research study the author has observed a lack of support from the family to the mother's study and the monetary difficulties born by the family as fundamental factors which included in the socio-economic class influences. Hence, appropriate supervision on the mentioned characteristics is necessary to conquer. Besides, the domestic and social responsibilities, the literacy level of the spouse also have given a considerable paramount weight under socio-economic class factors.

It is being accepted; the prosperity of the marriage life significantly impacted by the individuals who ended up with the marriage. According to Medina (2001), the marital relationship defined as a most intimate bond which relished in the entire lifespan. Similarly, the value of the

relationship protects since the partners work as a single person not because of the low, society or the culture. Hence, the above fact is understandable that the quality of the marriage life has a significant effect on each of the individual's life. Correspondingly, women have bound with child-raising responsibilities and household chores, where the help of the spouse is heavily important to fulfill the responsibilities bond with the women lifecycle. Thus, at the present, women's thinking pattern have switched from the traditional. Therefore, the modern-day women willing to build strong career advancement for themselves and to the family. Hence the women actively contribute to the family in order to family to success. Typically, spouse supports are an essential factor in pursuing women's career objectives and materialize the satisfaction of life.

Moreover, women expected extra support from spouse and the family to improve herself to a qualified worker. Hence, in most instances, women tend to concentrate on equipped with the proper qualification while leaving aside the family responsibilities. Especially, the mother experiences stressful events while concerning the career advancement from their marital with the child raising matters. As mentioned by Psychol (2012), the strong relationship may have a negative impact on career advancement between the child and the mother especially in the context of Sri Lanka, as per the below illustration, it is identified that the parental efficacy, the experience of a stressful life, and child behavior to parental conflict.

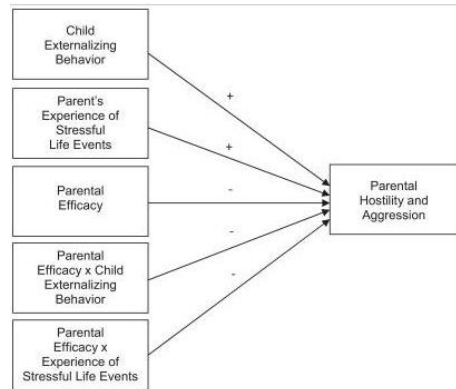


Figure 25– Factors for parent's hostility and aggression, Source: (Psychol, 2012)

Hence, it is necessary to mentoring to make the spouse aware that the importance of husband and family support to achieve the wife's higher education in order to reach the career advancement. Equally, it is important to convey that the positive attitude of the husband and the family to encourage and motivate with a peace of mind to accomplish education desire with various commitments. Such as listing attentively to her work and education-related matters daily, supporting wife to child care matters and guide children and other family members to help the mother to continue studies, motivate to complete the studies while aiding to achieve the objectives mentally, helping with children while doing household chores, manage expenses in order to financially support spouse for educational expenses and most importantly to accept the fact the contribution from wife to family income and strengthen positively to underpinning the support especially for the period of higher studies.

#### Recommendations to improve Academic Support

Academic support is a dominant element for study continuation. According

to the statistical data analysis, the author has identified a positive relationship between academic support and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children. Further, the educational institutions should identify education as an essential element which is required to narrow down poverty while the benefits are giving out not only for individuals but also for the entire nation. Hence the education designates under the essential need for human, it has class been giving appropriate recognition even for the higher studies. Thus, higher education is providing by the government and private institutions, colleges, technical training institutions in the purpose of boosting the affluence. Similarly, qualified employees with a solid post-secondary education make higher remuneration and the ruling characteristic of prerequisite. It has further identified by the author, that 'student outcomes' would mean the effect of academic development and institutional support practices on retention, persistence and achievement since the academic support crystalline with the students who successfully accomplished the higher education desire. Correspondingly, Canton and Blom (2010) suggested the term "debt aversion" which explained the occasions where the students fail to accommodate the entire cost of the higher education. Hence it is important to have a proper financial support to continue higher studies. Equally, Faulk, Srinivasan and Bingham (2010) highlighted the importance of providing an installment plan to students from the educational institution since the student loans contained an additional cost to the students. As described above the author has recommended offering an installments plan for the mature female student for the period of course duration.

Further, Irfan et al., (2012) stated educational institutions are more concerned on factors which affected on female students such as to conduct

effective teaching and learning process, institute learning environment, distance to the educational institute, model female teachers and sexual harassments. Female study discontinuation of secondary education level has become an ordinary complication which may be derived with much other cognition. Similarly, mature women made herself indispensable to the family hence institute location concerned as a salient fact to continue higher studies since most of the secondary educational institutes are located in urban areas but the highest percentage of female students are joining from suburban areas. This hinted to walk or to use transport for long distances for the educational institutions. Thus, this situation is more vulnerable to women comparing to men. Wakgari et al., (2012), stated the important of investing on female education since the factors such as better health, managed population growth and productive labor. Alternatively, creating access to education in rural people identified as a critically important factor while segregating under the fundamental human right. Therefore, the author recommended locating educational institutions with trouble-free access areas with diversified educational programs. Further, academic institutes are the elementary stage in the process of socialization values and capabilities. Similarly, educational institutes occupied a dominant position to transmit the values and capabilities especially to mature woman who continues the higher studies to strengthen the family earnings. Conversely, it is identified that the values are unable to tough as a subject. Hence while conducting the lectures deliberately lecturers can build the values and capabilities in starting of lectures in each month. Therefore, academic institutes also can design few weeks' orientation programs for teachers with respect to code of conducts to develop the student's inner values. However, mature women also contribute to the family income while

contemplating a trouble-free lifestyle. Hence to continue higher studies may discourage mature women because of the supplementary expenditure. Consequently, the academic payment method could be self-financing through savings or earnings, some instances the employer may reimburse the full amount or the partial amount, Scholarship or financial aid such as students' loans. In most instances, mature women fail to finance the entire academic fee with numerous commitments. Likewise, bank loans also contained a cost of interest which is an additional burden to the students. Similarly, to obtain a bank loan most instances banks request for capital collateral since the banks are unwilling to fund based on the human capital. Nonetheless, recommended providing installment plan for the students which is comparatively lower cost comparing to the bank loans.

#### Recommendations to manage Work life Balance

Work-life balance has been identified as an influencing factor for study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Hence, by managing work-life the organization can enhance the number of mature age female students who continue the higher studies. Similarly, the statistical analysis of research data has identified a significant positive relationship between the mentioned independent variable and the dependent variable. Conversely, Work-life balance has been identified as a most influencing factor to the study discontinuation by the mature age female students with children. Nevertheless, the women ability between striking the balance between personal and professional life, organizational ability provides strategic guidance, superior guidance and the learning skills provided by the organization have highlighted as a predominant factor. Hence it has been identified the importance of proper

balanced work-life in order to complete higher studies.

Employee and the employer relationship are identified as a salient factor to drive the organization to accomplish being competitive in the market. Therefore, the proper laid plans also can be ruined due to not by not having a properly trained employee. Thus, is an essential organization to understand the employee's talent while retaining the talented employees to the organization. Learning and Development programs help employees to work efficiently while enabling them to get promoted by enhancing their skills in a vital area. Similarly, it can be identifying a gap between the organization expectation and the employee's skill level. Hence it is recommended to outline specialized quarterly training programs to upgrade the employee's skills to the next level and escalate and encourage developing further by adding further qualifications. Alternatively, the bank can conduct planned training programs in quarterly while conveying the importance of higher education in order to elevate themselves to the next level.

Further, women are making unbelievable strive in the various occasion of the life span. Once graduated from university women find more success than men since women willing to take place an incredible success in a particular profession in a particular sector such as education, banking, retail and services. But as observed where women tend to be marginalized by many professions namely in surgery, science, police force and arm force. Similarly, women tend to be underrepresented by some roles such as senior and executive management. However, it has been argued, underrepresent of women is about the choices women made about themselves especially women think of not to go for a particular sector and often of these choices because of the hours of the dedication and

sacrifices required to succeed in mentioned sectors. On the other hand, many researchers have argued that women required to work-life balance than men. Therefore, women do not prepare for as ambitious to make those sacrifices. Thus, mature women believe rather than conquer the world women find happiness while engaging personal life commitment such as child raising. However, it is an incredibly important look at the decisions how women make according to the priority women own. Therefore, the author suggests not making the decision on personal and professional life based on the face value where women might be ignoring the consistency of social barriers such as the glass ceiling. Since the women required analyzing the circumstances and context under which women made these decisions such as why the women are less ambitious and less willing to make the sector sacrifices. Moreover, the author stressed out the factor of systematic exposure rather male-dominated environment such as in arm forces, the women ambition dropping off as women in to believe the opportunity of women to get to success is getting the minimum level. Equally, the traditional definition for the work life balance arises with the time women spent at work and time women spent at home with friends and family. But the author has identified despite of time it is important to identify how women feels about the work place in order to proper balance in work life. Hence it is recommended to imply to the women regularly till women pursuing the career path especially the sacrifices made towards career are rewarded as a motivational factor to balance women work life successfully.

Rana and Gandhi (2013) stated the women benchmarked the victory in various circumstances on education, skills and confident over the male counterparts in a higher management sector. Even so, women tend to struggle themselves than

male due to the glass ceiling. However, glass ceiling has become an invisible barrier which prevents women from upward carrier mobility similarly which may impact on women work life balance steadily. Hence the author recommended employer to provide a compatible organizational culture which ensured impartiality on achievements annually, promotions and appraisals in mid-year and annually. Correspondingly, to appreciate the women achievements, line managers should motivate the employees to move forward especially in the monthly morning meetings. Furthermore, the organization and the superiors can educate the employees on organization's goals with related to the requirement of contribution to achieve the set goals from the employee while conducting the staff meeting to the employees quarterly. Therefore, management can convey in the quarterly staff meeting how education contributes to the organization goals. Further supervisor can appreciate and highlight the educational achievers while mentioning in the middle of the meeting where the employee could empower themselves and other staff also perceived the desire naturally. Hence, the author recommended executing a better communication daily in between the women and the superiors in order to encourage them to achieve the educational goal.

#### Recommendations on impact of Age barriers

Age barriers influence the study discontinuation by the mature age of female students. Hence, Age barrier has been identified as an influencing factor for study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Similarly, according to the statistical analysis of data, a significant positive relationship has identified between the independent variable of age barriers and the study discontinuation by the mature age female students. Further, the author has identified the fundamental

factors which influenced the age barriers such as the higher level of responsibility hold by the mature women while growing old, retirement age, health-related matters and less motivation. Moreover, the findings of the research study have confirmed the mentioned factors in various perspectives.

Besides, Female commences higher studies in line with expecting various personal and professional advancements. Although it has identified the majority of the women started doing higher studies when females are young and with fewer commitments thus while getting matured women tend to discontinue the completion of the educational qualification because mature women fail to motivate themselves to complete the studies with the factors which have given priority such as, permanent job, spouse and children. Admittedly, not because of the other related factor but the key reason for the less motivation is the mature female students unable to allocate the time for concentrating to study. Similarly, the author has pointed out the fact of when the female in young age the higher education qualifications attract and motivate to study but in maturity, women required supplement factor to motivate to achieve the education qualification. Hence it is recommended to mature women to reinstate the study in a way that excites the mature women to complete the study. Especially with the inner self-stimulation.

The relationship between education and mature age women health is identified as complicated. Typically, Poor health not only results from lower educational attainment but also it can cause educational setbacks and interfere with studying. Hence in most instances, mature age female students are with difficulties with the health issues since it is difficult to concentrate on studies. Similarly, Health conditions, disabilities, and unhealthy behaviors can all affect educational outcomes. Such as Illness, poor nutrition,

substance use and smoking, obesity, sleep disorders, mental health, asthma, poor vision, and inattention thus the health condition arrived with elder age such as back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes and depression may directly affect to continue the higher studies.

Pellizzari and Billari (2011), mentioned the age of the student affects education. Thus, it is argued that the younger student's manifest higher performances collate to the elder students. Nonetheless, younger students are contained with psychological effects such as devoting less time on social activities hence students able to allocate considerable time for studying and better performance. As can be seen, the author has recommended to work under Flexi hours or a roster basis for the period of the academic program while understanding the responsibilities in line with the mature women age. Similarly, the researcher has argued that when the student grows older the comfort over the time machine will be a fact of out of control due to numerous responsibilities. Hence it is accepted the younger age students gain the entire benefits over the study continuation where the mature women should accomplish the paper qualification while understanding the fact of disturbances with a self-motivation. However, it is recommended to conduct an E-Learning portal for the employees accompany with the designation, age and the job role. As a result, women are liable to complete the online learning courses bi-annually. Equally, it allows women to gain industrial knowledge and the product knowledge which may aid to escalate the career objectives. Despite, management of the organization can be sponsored for online lecturers on each weekend because women discover the comfortable of attending on online lectures while it is trouble-free to balance the work-life and women only have to take the exam fee which motives women with financial

benefits and easy, comfortable access on lectures on every weekend.

Conversely, the author has identified the requirement of proper self-awareness programs. Which may include the areas such as, time management, Leadership program and motivation speaks. However, the awareness programs can be conducted by the organization itself on annually which boost the level of motivation and it creates a desire to achieve the goal irrespective of the age barrier.

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