**Effects of Multiple Roles on Women's Health - Evidence from a National Longitudinal Study**

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**Abstract**

This study analyzes longitudinal data for a national sample of older middle-aged women in order to assess the health effects of three roles-labor force participant, spouse and arent. Women who held more roles had better health trends. The effect of each specific role varied, depending on race and the other roles a woman held. For example, our evidence indicates that labor force participation had beneficial effects on health for white women who were not married and for black women who had children at home, but not for other women. The findings of this study do not support the hypothesis that involvement in multiple roles contributes to role overload and role conflict with consequent harmful effects on women's health. Rather, it appears that involvement in multiple roles enerally contributed to better health, due to the beneficial effects of labor force participation and marriage for some women.