

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUTE STUDIES**

**PREDICTING ROLE CONFLICT AND OVERLOAD IN ADULT  
WOMEN STUDENTS IN AAU: THE CASE OF COLLEGE OF  
COMMERCE**

**BY**

**SISAY ABREHA**



**July, 2009  
Addis Ababa**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF  
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**ADULT AND LIFELONG LEARNING UNIT**

Abdulaziz Hussien (Ph.D)  
Chairperson, dep. Graduate Committee



21-7-09  
date

Getachew Adugna  
Advisor

11/07/09  
date

Lemna Setegn  
Examiner

11/07/09  
date

signature  
ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARIES  
P.O. BOX 1176  
ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to examine the amount or level of role conflict and overload in adult women students as well as to identify to what extent life situations and tangible supports predict role conflict and overload. The approaches used in this study were both quantitative and qualitative study design. To this end, the questionnaire was distributed among 130 adult women students who do have family and job responsibilities and interview was also held with 9 students. The study, found that more than half of adult women students have high level of role conflict and overload. It also showed that income was the only life situation predictor, with lower income increasing vulnerability to role overload. In addition, family support was found to be the strongest predictor of role conflict and thus availability of sufficient family support eased conflict. Adult educators should push for increased access to adequate financial support and distance education option that may increase support for adult women students with multiple roles. Furthermore, adult educators can help by pressing for a range of course schedule flexibility and student service offerings such as guidance and counseling services, while continuing to evaluate the usefulness of other support for different adult students.*

# Chapter One

## Introduction

### 1.1. Background

Higher education is often referred to as one of the fundamental social aspects for ensuring sustainable economic development. Developing countries like Ethiopia, therefore, give the recognition to the need of investing in higher institution in order to equip the younger generation with much needed professional skills. A World Bank report (2003) notes that investing in higher education is a key to economic growth and cutting poverty.

Over the last three decades, demographic shift of undergraduate students population have resulted in learning environment more inclusive of adult women, adult men, and older students who are enrolled in part-time. Adult students compose one of the fastest growing segments of higher education's student population (Elen, 2003).

Universities are experiencing increased number of students who manage concurrent roles in the family, the workplace and the university (Dill & Henley, 1998). Meanwhile, adult learners' life experience is colored with older age, full-time employment and the role of spouse as well as parent. On the other hand, the combination of life experience and family pattern are as plentiful and unusual as the number of adult themselves.

Adult women with family responsibilities are not only one of such group or category of adult learner populations but also one of the fastest growing groups of higher education students, whose needs differ markedly from regular young female students. Contrary to what was prevalent 30 years ago, adult women nowadays grace every campus (Rice & Mayer, 2002). As a result, the presence of returning or reentry adult women in higher education is now well established.

However, educational demands are found to be difficult for women to balance with other responsibilities they must stand such as family and job. Adult women with family responsibility, for example, often assume concurrently the roles of parent and employee. As the role of student added to this profile, there is no doubt that, adjustment can be a difficult one. Not only do these women retain primary responsibility for family, but many must also

continue their employment in time when public spending on higher education is decreasing (Napholz, 1995). Other responsibilities often conflict with class attendance, assignment completion, and persistence in College. These students frequently juggle homework and housework while trying to hold down a full-time job.

Problem of adult women with family responsibilities are more related to aspects of feminine sex role socialization. Because they are socialized to be primary responsibilities for family duties and child rearing, a return to school creates role conflict and overload, feeling of guilt, inadequacy, and self blame over difficulties in handling multiple roles (Rice & Mayer, 2002).

Campaiell (1998) reported that more than ever, women are combining professional roles with domestic obligation. Women returning to school are finding themselves in the simultaneous role of mother, employee, student and home maker. They may develop greater role strain than men, perhaps resulting from less support for their multiple roles and greater concerns about balancing academic and family demands (Mallinckrodt & Leong, 1992).

Role strain(role conflict and overload) can increase stress and lead to stop or drop studies, so it is not surprising that adult women drop out more frequently than adult men for non academic reasons (Merdinger, 1991). When they withdraw or fail from their education with out academic reasons, individual, families, children, as well as the societies in which they live, will suffer.

In most developing countries, this situation has become very serious. Adult women carry the main responsibility for children and household, in addition to their duties in the office. Despite they are substantial in household and at working; they are disadvantaged in terms of access to education and educational accomplishment.

Hence, enhancing adult women's access to higher education can be one of national interest as their education level determines their employability, income and well-being of the community at large. Women represent about half of the total population of Ethiopia (MOE, 2004). Yet, they are not significantly visible or proportionally represented in higher education, office employment, and administration. This condition relates to the gender gap that persist between boys and girls, men and women which have huge implication on women's participation and behavior in education, employment, and social life.

Although overall tertiary enrollment for women has increased over the last three decades, there are indications that, there is still a persistence gender disparity in higher education level in developing countries including Ethiopia. The five-year strategic framework for enhancing women's participation in higher education in Ethiopia indicated that the level of women's participation in public university is very low (MOE, 2004).

According to King and Hill (1993), the level of women education in developing countries including Ethiopia is low; though, currently, there are some improvements in their enrollment in higher education. Those women, who got the chance for higher education, are forced to discontinue their education or graduate with very poor academic performance (Piotti, 1988). Women usually withdraw from their school or graduate in lower result not because they are intellectually poor rather their poor academic performance is related to the cultural value and their social responsibilities. These problems are highly manifested among women who are married (Almaz, 1992).

Most women in Ethiopia are tied with multiple roles like child rearing, taking care of their family and domestic chores. Hence, an adult woman has to deal with the competing demands of her employer, her family and her academic. At this time, she feels stress because of conflicting demands and constant overload. For these reasons, adult women students with multiple roles are easily vulnerable to role conflict and overload and in turn these may lead them to stop or drop out from work or education. That is well reflected, for example in a study conducted in AAU which showed that married working women have low academic performance (Mekdes, 2005).

These adult women students with multiple roles are themselves a different group in their family responsibility, socioeconomic background, work status and marital status. Some may need special services to help them succeed in education as a result of such situations like low income, single parent or full-time work status. Developing appropriate response requires knowledge of which students are more vulnerable to role conflict and overload, and which kinds of support ease it.

In short, it seems to be the case that there is no sufficient or very little researches concerned with identifying which life situation (age, marital status, work status, having dependent person) and tangible supports (work, family, college) make a difference. All these suggest that any kind of support to women adult students should be based on an investigation of the

nature of the problem they have and factors contributing towards the increase of role conflict and overload. So that taking appropriate supportive measures accordingly would be possible.

It is, therefore, on the basis of this idea, that the present study focuses on examining role conflict and overload as well as identifying the specific life situation and tangible support predicting role conflict and overload in adult women students.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Women in Ethiopia comprise half of the total population (MOE, 2004). In this regard, their contribution to the development of the country is unquestionable. The traditional place for Ethiopian women has always been at home and they are expected to be good mothers. The other important things that are basic like education and job were taken as the duty of men (Almaz, 1992).

According to UNICEF (2003) report, Ethiopian women suffer from lack of education, training and employment opportunities. As a result, they were indirectly hampered being at equal position to men. They are also under represented at national level (Genet, 1998).

Despite the fact that a very small number of women remain concentrated in a limited occupation, many of which do not require highly technical qualification and are low paid. According to the study done by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in 1988, the number of women employed was about only 17.1 percent of the total work force (MOE, 2004). This shows that the number of women holding position, which require technical qualification, is negligibly low. That, of course, is a good indicator of the urgency and the seriousness of the situation of Ethiopian women.

In Ethiopia, it is only recently that women's participation in higher education is increasing in both evening and regular program. However, from those women who have got the chance, many are forced to drop without academic reason. When married women start education, for example, they seldom have regular class attendance, and hence they lack the necessary information. Moreover, they have no time to study in library and access different reference books that can not be used out of the library.

The academic problems are more sever among married women since after marriage, they would be burdened with huge household and social responsibilities, pregnancy and child

care, and additional workplace responsibilities. Thus, these students sometimes pulled apart from different responsibilities and also they feel overload due to multiple roles. These role conflict and overload can affect their success as they slow down their time for study and assignment.

Addis Ababa University, one of oldest government institutions which providing higher education for women and men, is not an exception in that, however, there is still higher dropout rate among adult women students compared to men students in extension program (AAU, 2001 E.C). On the other hand, data indicate that the enrollment of evening adult women students is increasing from 21% to 34% in 2003. Moreover, when we see from all faculties and colleges, in College of Commerce even if the participation of adult women student is increasing, the rate of dropout is higher than male dropout rate.

Furthermore, there is no much study showing that why these students dropout or withdraw from their education. This may be due to conflicting demands and overload as far as they have multiple roles. Besides, there is no research studying women with multiple role have feeling of role conflict and overload. This at least suggests that considerable attention should be given to adult women students to help them become successful in the academic endeavor.

Hence, this study will try to examine role conflict and overload in adult women students as well as to identify the extent to which specific life situations and tangible support (workplace, family and college) predict role conflict and overload in adult women students.

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

The objective of the study was to examine the level of role conflict and overload experienced by adult women students and to identify the specific life situations and tangible supports in predicting role conflict and overload. Specifically, the study intends:

1. to examine the amount or level of role conflict in adult women students;
2. to study the amount or level of role overload in adult women students;
3. to identify the predictor of role conflict from life situation variables;
4. to find out the most influential adult women students' life situation variable which predict role overload;
5. to identify which specific tangible support (workplace, family and college) predict role conflict ; and,

6. to examine the greatest predictor of role overload from tangible supports (workplace, family and college).

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

Considering the above statement of the problem and objectives as well as the specific objectives, the study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level or amount of role conflict experienced by adult women students?
2. What is the amount of role overload experienced by adult women students?
3. Which specific life situation variable has influential contribution for predicting role conflict?
4. What is the greatest predictor of role overload from life situation variables?
5. Which specific tangible support (family support, workplace support and college support) predicts role conflict?
6. Which specific tangible support have influential factor in predicting role overload?

#### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The result of this study may have the following significance:

- It may create awareness among the decision-makers in the Continuing and Distance Education Office of AAU to design and administer the program in a way better than it stands now. This finding may provide feedback for AAU, specially College of Commerce the need of scheduled flexibility like exam time according to women students life situation;
- It may serve as an additional information source and document base in the process of managing multiple roles for women students in AAU. The academic institution may assist women students by providing support in terms of flexible scheduling and counseling. This may decrease their role conflict or overload and allow them a better opportunity to study efficiently and retain the knowledge learned;
- It may raise educators' awareness of women's needs in educational policy and planning. We need to recognize the rights of women to participate fully in the life of society, through education, motherhood, and employment; and,
- It may add additional information for further study or may add to the body of knowledge pertaining to multiple roles and role conflict or overload of adult women students.

## **1.6. Delimitations of the Study**

This investigation was conducted to examine the level of role conflict and overload as well as to identify the specific life situations and tangible supports predicting role conflict and overload in adult women students studying College of Commerce in AAU. In order to have more comprehensive information, it would be good if the study could include all University Continuing Education Programs in Ethiopia. However, for the sake of in-depth and manageable study, it is delimited to College of Commerce in AAU continuing education program.

Moreover, out of all students in the college, only 3<sup>rd</sup> year and 4<sup>th</sup> year students were selected because of the experiences to provide relevant information to this study. Government University was selected for the purpose of tackling the problem with some pattern of uniformity regarding the distribution and facilities of the university. The aspects looked into were the role conflict, role overload, life situations and tangible supports of adult women students.

In addition to this, among multiple roles of women students, the study focused on three roles (family, work, education). Among the life situation variables of women students; particular attention was given to their age, work status, economic status, marital status, and dependant person live in their home. Finally, this study focused on specific tangible supports: family support, workplace support, and college support.

## **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

One of the limitations of the study was the timing of administering the questionnaire. Some factors that may have contributed to the variations in role conflict and overload scores would include personal factors such as fatigue (tiredness), level of health, or mood of the student. For this reason the researcher tried to administer the questionnaire during their free time and at their convenience before or after class.

Students from this college may not exactly represent the socioeconomic, or age profile of students at other programs. Thus, the ability to generalize findings from this study is limited. However, it is believed that the result somehow represent other women in other campuses in AAU for there is no as such difference in the life of many of the women.

## 1.8. Definition of Key Terms

**Adult women:** women students who do have family and job responsibilities.

**Traditional students:** adult learners who attend education in higher education in evening program.

**Life situation:** defined as situations concerned on students' age, marital status, work status, dependent person live in home, income, but are not used to explain the situation like the distance of workplace from college, number, sex, age of children, husband educational level, parenting status, etc.

**Tangible supports:** defined as supports needed by the students from workplace, family and college, but are not used to explain the lesson nor make the instruction clearer, examples are toilets or comfort rooms, electric fans, lounges and the like.

**Dependent person:** those people who need special treatment or care in their daily living.

**Having dependent person:** those adult women who provide care for those people who need special treatment or support.

**Stress:** a condition in which role obligation are vague, irritating, difficulty, conflicting, or impossible to meet.

**Role strain:** a felt difficulty in meeting role demands, is made up on role conflict (from simultaneous, incompatible demands), overload (insufficient time) and contagion (preoccupation with one role while performing another (Home, 1998). For purpose of this study, from three level of role strain, particular attention was given only to role conflict and overload.

**Role conflict:** it is competing demands arising from different parts, (Stryker & Macke, 1998). This paper focuses on that aspect of role conflict defined by convergence of competing demands arising from different roles: University, work and family. The definition of role conflict implies that competing demands arise during particular or overlapping point(s) in time. When this occurs, the individual often must choose which demand to satisfy, in effect privileging one role over the other, at least for the moment.

**Role overload:** This occurs when an individual has too many demands coming from the many life roles such as student, worker, and mother. When role expectations exceed the person's capacities to meet them, a condition of role overload exists.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

This chapter begins with a short description of adult student population in general and women students in particular in university setting. This is followed by a discussion of the literature on the determinants of success and failure of women students in higher education. Next to this, there is a description of the theoretical basis for this study. Finally, the actual role situation and the support systems for adult women students with families and jobs, and the strategies for balancing competing demands are mentioned.

#### **2.1 Adult Students at the University**

Universities are experiencing increased numbers of students who manage concurrent roles in the family, the workplace and the university (Dill & Henley, 1998). These students frequently juggle homework and housework while trying to hold down a full-time job. College experts group these students within the categorization of “adult students,” and they are becoming increasingly common on college campuses (Block, 1999). This implies that adult student as one who returns to school full-time or part-time while maintaining responsibilities such as employment, family, and other tasks of adult life.

These adult students face diverse obstacles in universities designed around a regular student role. In an exploration of stress in regular and non-regular students, Jacobi (1997) found that adult students had more time constraints and role conflicts than the non-regular students.

However, the adult students showed less academic stress, reported greater satisfaction in the school domain, and experienced fewer negative health problems. Linville (1997) posits that adult students probably have greater self-complexity with more varied roles than other student, and thus experience less anxiety related to the successful performance of the specific role of student. As such, the adult students reduce themselves from stressful academic events by gaining high self-appraisal in other roles, such as parent or employee.

Adult students' demands can add a level of stress to their already frenzied lives (Simons, et al 1993). Because many colleges and universities are still designed to serve a population of young persons between the ages of 18-22 who live on or near campus, and who are

supported by someone other than themselves, university culture is built upon the expectation that students have time to attend classes without other responsibilities (Dill & Henley, 1998).

Home (1998) asserts that while regular undergraduates are able to direct most of their energy toward studies, adult women students frequently have family and work responsibilities competing with school for their time, energy and financial resources. They, on the other hand, have numerous outside responsibilities, limited time, and financial instability. Some potential problems that they may encounter while attending college include unemployment, lack of childcare assistance, loneliness, lack of resources, poor or dearth of social support systems, and greater demands on time (Cain, 1993).

So long as the university assumes that students have few responsibilities except study, then programs and activities planned for regular students will not support the needs of non-regular students (Lewis, 1998). The university needs programs and services for adult students that provide a constructive foundation of support to facilitate their transition into the university setting. As Home (1998) said, many adult students think things will work out fine; they can just go to school and be with their family, only to discover they have bitten off more than they can chew.

In contrast to jobs with fixed hours and tasks, adult women students find that family and student work just never ends. The frequent coexistence of family responsibilities and commitments with the demands of academia can create additional challenges and barriers to academic success for them (Dill & Henley, 1998). The adult women student, who typically occupies these dual roles, often reports feeling role conflict and strain.

If adult women student enrollment continues, these students will soon make up the majority of the student population attending higher education institutions. Hammer, Grisby and Woods (1998) suggest that with the growing number of adult students in urban college and university settings, comes an increased need to determine ways of helping students manage the multiple roles of their hectic lives. Hence, knowing the determinants of success and failure for women students in higher education may help not only for women students with multiple roles but also for institution.

## **2.2 Determinants of Success and Failure for Women Students in Higher Education**

### **2.2.1. Persistence**

Studies (Bean & Metzner, 1995; Lambert, 1993) note that while the number of adult students entering higher education has increased by as much as 50%, the number of adult students leaving higher education without completing a degree is approaching 60%. In line with this, Cross (1991) finds that historically adult women students tend to have a highly disappointing student graduation rate. In order for an institution to be successful in retaining students, students must persist and choose to remain at the institution through the completion of their degree. Therefore, an inquiry into persistence seeks to explain what influences student departure from college.

Bean and Metzner (1995) developed a model of attrition (voluntarily leaving an institution) specifically applied to adult women students. Their model considers that the attrition of adult women students is affected more by situational factors (outside of the academic environment, including finances, hours of employment and family responsibilities) than by integration into the academic environment. Hence, alleviating environmental stress factors play a more important role in helping adult women students realize their educational goals than it does for young students.

Stone (1994) assesses issues of persistence for adult women college students and finds that participants indicate that support of peers is one of the most important factors to academic success and persistence. Thus, participants stressed the importance of their peers for help with tutoring, obtaining books and notes, and receiving emotional support. Adult women student's support may be largely from family, friends, and significant others.

In addition, according to Merriam (1999), lack of money is one of the two most cited reasons for women student attrition. Because of personal family resources, many of them must work part or full-time just to meet their expenses. Tinto (1993) proposes that the effect of finances on student attrition can be indirect and long-term as well as short-term. Thus, while adult women students are already operating on a fixed budget, any significant family event can prompt them to withdraw from college.

Moreover, another determinant of attrition is academic difficulty. Academic failure reflects a situation in which the academic demands of the university are incongruent with the academic abilities of the student (Tinto, 1993). In some cases, academic boredom results in student attrition. Thus, some academic dismissals are a result of a decision made by the student not to invest the time and energy needed to maintain minimum academic standards. Working takes crucial time away from study time of adult women students. A natural result is that grade point averages for working students, with family responsibilities will suffer.

In summary, adult women students often have obligations that hinder the devotion of time and effort to their studies. Self-supporting, the adult woman student does not have the luxury of being absorbed socially, academically, emotionally, or physically in the academic environment. With the numbers of such students increasing, the reality is that adult women students are far less likely to complete academic goals.

### **2.2.2. Barriers**

Success of higher education may well depend on its ability to understand and accommodate the unique dispositional, situational, and institutional. There are many factors that hinder the completion of academic goals of adult women students. Christie and Dinham (1991) note that many students face simultaneous multiple demands of working, attending school and rearing a family. These students may find it a challenge to stay enrolled. They present a new set of problems for institutions of higher education that want to attract and retain them until graduation. These problems are commonly called "barriers." Glass and Rose (1994) contend that these barriers challenge their ability to learn and complete their education.

Cross (1991) identified and listed three categories of barriers, which may hinder completion of academic goals. They are dispositional barriers, situational barriers and institutional barriers.

#### **2.2.2.1. Dispositional barriers**

Dispositional barriers are those related to attitudes and self-perceptions about oneself as a learner. These include: lack of confidence in one's academic ability, insufficient energy or stamina, and lack of scholastic enthusiasm (Cross 1991). The setting of long and short term goals, as well as mentoring by other adult students may be able to serve as solutions to these dispositional influences. Loeb and Magee (1992) imply that students with low self-esteem

who find it difficult to adjust to college academics may benefit from support (faculty, peers, family) that may lead to increased satisfaction with college and enhanced self-concept.

Marlow, C. (1993) investigated factors that affect the persistence of adult college students, and found that familial and institutional supports are crucial to the persistence and academic success of adult students. Adult women students who often attend class faithfully but have little time to initiate friendships may feel somewhat isolated from the institutional environment as a whole. Moen (1992) suggests that students persist in their education when they feel they are important to their institutions, and when they are satisfied with their educational experiences.

Accordingly, Long (1993) maintains that nontraditional students need the feeling that they “matter” to their colleges. “Mattering” is a belief people have that they matter to someone else, that they are the objects of someone else’s attention, and that others care about them and appreciate them. The presence of a strong support person has been entirely linked to academic success and retention for nontraditional students.

#### **2.2.2.2. Situational barriers**

Situational barriers are those arising from one’s situation in life at a given time. Home and family responsibilities, need for childcare, job responsibilities, commuting and time restraints impact on the learner’s total environment. For parents with at least one child, situational issues of inadequate childcare, transportation, and child illnesses were as much parts of the pressures of college as are final exams and final reports (Parker, 1998). Thus, competing roles and familial responsibilities must be realigned in order for adult women to focus on academic success.

With regard to the family, Home (1998) compares the family to a “greedy institution.” Greedy institutions are identified as those seeking exclusive and undivided loyalties that weaken ties with institutions or persons that might make claims that conflict with their own plan. As such, families can be considered greedy institutions, requiring constant commitment and availability. When the adult woman desires to participate in more than one greedy institution (e.g. family, work, and education), he or she may be busy with an overwhelming number of demands and obligations.

On the other hand, adult women students' ability to finance their college education may play an important role in attrition. Unmet financial aid need has been argued, and found to challenge a student's persistence (Moen, 1992). This need increases anxieties associated with securing resources to finance the education. Astin (1995) concludes that student persistence is positively affected by financial grants. Occasionally, students leave the university due to an inability to meet tuition payments. Thus, financial aid continues to be a major factor in the lack of student persistence.

Moreover, employment is a situational barrier that challenges the adult women student. Work is a very important factor in the life of most adult women students. Bean and Metzger (1995) and, Phillip A. (2000) assert that the number of hours a student is employed is related to his or her persistence. They agree that students who work more than twenty hours a week are less likely to persist than those who work fewer hours. Likewise, Astin (1995) concludes that students who work fewer than twenty hours a week are more likely to persist than even those who are unemployed.

Furthermore, Merdinger, J. (1991) includes other situational barriers such as time scarcity, child care availability, transportation availability, and inadequate space to study or practice. Adult women students facing such situational barriers need services to enhance their academic by allowing them to concentrate on the role of student. Services might include assistance with transportation and childcare, alternatives to interrupting their academic program such as independent study, contract learning, and creative financial aid package including flexible tuition payment plans.

### **2.2.2.3. Institutional barriers**

Institutional barriers (administrative and educational practices) consist of events and procedures that deter adult women students from participating in educational activities. Hammer, Grisby, and Woods (1998) includes the following events and procedures that influence their academic progress: inadequate academic counseling, strict attendance requirements, and availability of tutorial services.

Students who need access to tutorial services, career and personal counseling or access to academic advising may find that the services are offered only during weekdays and only during daytime hours. Thus, limited access to academic advisors, career counselors, and

tutorial services impact student success. Academic curriculums and class schedules may be established whereby only full-time students can successfully complete the academic requirements. Such programs are not matched with students who need part-time and evening programs to complete their academic degrees. The perception of these challenges may hinder the adult women student from returning the following semester in search of degree completion.

Institutional understandings of students are contrary to adult women students' experiences and needs. For instance, student affairs professionals learn early and often that by fostering student involvement, they foster student development. However, the dominant definition of student involvement—"the amount of physical and psychological time and energy that students invest in both out-of-class and in-class activities is focused on serving traditional-aged students" (Ellen, 2003:148). As I have discussed, adults typically are not involved in college in traditional ways. Yet, adult women develop and grow throughout their engagement in higher education. Adult women persist against difficult odds in an institutional system that does not recognize them for who they are and is not designed to meet their needs.

### **2.3. Role Theory: Accumulating and Changing Roles**

Individuals accumulate different roles at any given stage within the life course. Throughout life, individuals transfer into and out of different roles, keeping some, leaving others behind, and beginning new roles (Read, et al 1988). These role transitions accompany transitions through life stages and can be easy or difficult, depending on the timing and social context. In addition, the transition into one role can affect the transition into another.

Within each life stage, individuals also simultaneously hold many different roles. When a woman becomes a mother, she can also continue to have the roles of worker and student. A role cluster refers to the interconnection between roles that occur within the same social institution (Markel & Frone, 1998). A woman's roles within the family are related and often different in important ways from her roles in the workplace or in school as the student. Hence, adult women students may have constructive or distractive effect due to having more than one role.

### **2.3.1. Enrichment and Depletion Argument**

#### **a. Enrichment Argument**

The enrichment process takes a constructive view of multiple roles. It sees the available supply of energy as plentiful and expandable. Some roles may be performed without any net energy loss and some roles may even create additional energy use in that role or other roles (Goode, 1960). Marks (1977:421) said about the enrichment process, "it is a process as an individual increased his/her number of roles, and there was a gain or benefit from them through enrichment rather than a loss through reduction." Thus, having multiple roles may gratify since the benefits of multiple roles outweigh the costs. Supporting this, Barnett and Hyde (2001) presented the expansionist theory of this argument suggesting that the advantages of multiple roles far exceed the detrimental effects and yield an overall helpful influence on one's well-being.

At the same time, some evidence suggests that multiple roles provide opportunities and advantages. In their theory of role balance, Sieber (1994) found that people who are able to fully participate in and perform a number of different roles experience not only less role strain but also lower rates of depression and higher self-esteem and innovation. Thus, multiple roles are important for the development of personality and intellect. Women who hold the multiple roles of mother, student, and paid worker have better health than women holding none or one of these roles.

Role sharing is likely a means through which the constructive aspects of multiple roles can outweigh potential unconstructive consequences. Individuals with different social statuses and social positions, or even across social institutions, can share the same role. For example, the care of children is often considered to be the role of mothers; however, fathers, employers, and government can all adopt the care giving role (Dill and Henley (1998). When they do, women are better able to competently fill and benefit from roles as both workers and mothers and experience less role strain and stress.

In summary, studies have shown that multiple roles can provide multiple opportunities to experience success and an overall sense of personal well-being (Home, 1998; Johson, Schwarz & Bower, 2000).The adult women students showed less academic stress, reported greater satisfaction in the school domain, and experienced fewer negative health problems. Linville (1997) posits that adult students probably have greater self-complexity with more

varied roles than the traditional student, and thus experience less anxiety related to the successful performance of the specific role of student. As such, the adult women students moderate themselves from stressful academic events by gaining high self-appraisal in other roles, such as parent or employee.

#### **b. Depletion Argument**

According to Stone (1994:19), the depletion argument of inter-role conflict, is defined as the "simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with another." Opposing pressures arise from engaging in multiple roles, and these pressures can be incompatible by requiring different roles to compete for a person's limited time resources as well as the strains associated with one or more roles. This means multiple roles could compete for a person's time where time spent on activities within one role could not be devoted to activities within another role.

Similarly, as Lobel (1991:653) discussed, this practical view of role investment placed one role against another "... time invested in one role reduces time devoted to another." This could occur in two different ways. First, time pressures associated with one role may make it physically impossible to comply with expectations from another role. Second, time pressures may also produce a preoccupation with one role while attempting to meet the demands of another role.

Role demands would not be met if a person was physically absent from a role or was mentally preoccupied with another role (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1995). Therefore, the depletion argument was based on research that examined the conflict among work, school and family roles in an individual's life. Individuals' engagement in multiple roles in response to role demands caused strain and stress.

### **2.3.2. Role Theory and Role Strain: Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical foundations of this study come from the work of several authors in the area of role strain. Goode (1960:483), a major theorist in this field, defines role strain as "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations". This author viewed role conflict and role strain as being related. Goode (1960) believed that multiple role obligations can be a source of role strain. He further postulated that, even though the total set of role obligations is probably unique for every individual, the individual may face different types of role conflicts which

she feels as role strains. The individual is likely to face a wide, distracting, and sometimes conflicting array of role obligations and that if the individual conforms fully in one direction, fulfillment in another direction will be difficult.

Strain, often conceptualized as an unhelpful emotional response to stress, could result in depression or negative affect (Ellen, 2003). If one transferred the depletion argument to the work-student domain, then stressful experiences at work could suggest unconstructive affect that was then transported to the school setting. According to Edwards and Rothbard (2003), strain based conflict could occur when participation in a role produced strain that hindered role performance in another role. Strain based conflict exists when strain in one role affects performance in another role due to the incompatibility between the roles. Thus, any work or school role that produced strain contributes to a work-school conflict in college students.

Further more, the available research on role strain, a perceived difficulty in meeting role demands, while limited, concludes that it is very intense for women with three roles (Home, 1998). Some adult women students attempt to manage more than three roles: wife, mother, employee, daughter/caregiver to parents, and student. Managing these five roles is extremely demanding. Of all the competing requests for her time and energy, her family and her university, both “greedy institutions,” make the most intensely conflicting demands (Lewis, 1998). Both demand her constant availability, exclusive loyalty, and high flexibility.

Goode (1960) identified the following types or sources of role strain: First, role demands are required at particular times and places. Second, all individuals interact in many role relationships, with different obligations for each relationship. Third, each relationship demands several activities which may include inconsistencies. Lastly, many role relationships are role sets, meaning that in any one set, the individual engages in several role relationships. Because the individual is likely to face a wide array of role obligations, the individual’s total role obligations are over demanding.

In summary, understanding how people attempt to balance their many roles can be viewed through the lens of the role theory (Kahn et al., 1994). The theory postulates that each individual holds a certain position in an organization, which carries with it a number of duties, responsibilities, rules, regulations and generally expected behavioral patterns. This set of expected behaviors is defined as a role. Engaging in multiple incompatible roles often results in role conflict and role overload (Hammer, Grisby, & Woods, 1998). Role conflict

and Role overload are two of the most well-known role theory concepts. Role overload and conflict often lead to difficulties with meeting role expectations, known as role strain (Goode 1960).

Home (1998) reports three dimensions of role strain among women:

- Role conflict from simultaneous, incompatible demands;
- Role overload, or insufficient time to meet all demands; and,
- Role contagion or preoccupation with one role while performing another.

Increases in roles, demands, and time conflicts are associated with high stress, anxiety, and depression for adult female students (Carney-Crompton & Tan, 2002). Mothers of young children experience more role conflict and guilt over being unavailable to their children (Terrell, 1990). Women with low income report more role conflict (Home, 1998), perhaps because of the lack of funds to ease the multiple task assignments.

Full-time students report role overload, and student, family, and job demands all contribute to role contagion (Home, 1998). Many full-time students are unable to fully anticipate the effects of their combined role demands. In contrast to jobs with fixed hours, student and family demands never seem to end. Caregivers may be more vulnerable to role contagion because of the guilt associated with the demands of their other roles (Home, 1998). For the purpose of the researcher study, from three dimensions of role strain particular attention is given to role conflict and overload.

### **2.3.2.1. Role Conflict: Concepts, Causes and Consequences**

The combined role of simultaneously being a worker and a student reflects the multiple roles concept, with each role demanding different sets of obligations. Conflict arising from work/non work is characterized by the inability of an individual to successfully participate in two or more roles that are somehow mutually incompatible in some respects (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1995). Role conflict is the simultaneous occurrence of two or more sets of roles that are contradictory in nature. The zero-sum approach is one explanation for this mutual incompatibility. This approach suggests that given the limited time and energy available to people, the time and energy spent in one domain (e.g. paid work activity) is always unavailable for other domains such as school, social, or family responsibilities (Tinto, 1993). As adult women try to fulfill their roles as students, workers and other adult responsibilities,

they are at high risk of role conflict. School activities may conflict with other nonschool activities, and vice versa.

In addition, role conflict occurs when demands associated with one role interfere directly with one's ability to satisfy the demands of another role. Role conflict defined as convergences of competing demands arising from different roles (Stryker & Macke, 1998). The definition of role conflict implies that competing demands arise during particular point in time.

Role conflict describes an incongruity between the expectations of one role and those of another. Increases in roles, demands, and time conflicts are associated with high stress, anxiety, and depression for adult women students (Carney-Crompton & Tan, 2002). Mothers of young children experience more role conflict and guilt over being unavailable to their children, these may create high stress and depress while she attends her study.

Following the definitions of the role conflict concepts, those which impose limits on when particular types of activities may be undertaken will influence feelings of role conflict. As Coverman (1999) stated that there are "role context" variables which are factors which structure work and parent roles and role resources. First, factors which structure work and parent roles: as the degree of work flexibility decreases, feelings of role conflict will increase because of the limits on when activities may be undertaken. Second, role resources: access to particular kinds of resources may make it easier to satisfy role demands, as having these resources may allow some problematic tasks to be delegated. Those who have someone outside of the home to do emergency babysitting or to run emergency tasks are likely to report less frequent feelings of role conflict, since those resources help one to respond to demands that arise suddenly and unexpectedly, often when one is otherwise engaged.

The predicted consequences of role conflict on psychological well-being rest on the assumption that it is the meanings people assign to role experiences, and not the factors that influence exposure to role conflicts, that influence psychological well-being (Thoits, 1996). Thus, people who report greater feelings of role conflict should report significantly lower levels of psychological well-being compared to those who experience these feelings less frequently. Role conflict will have the greater effect on well-being. This is because role conflict, or direct interference between roles (i.e., work school, and family), is more difficult

to manage, because the demands occur (and need to be satisfied) simultaneously. Various psychological and physical problems can follow from role conflict.

#### **2.3.2.2. Role Overload: Concepts, Causes and Consequences**

Role overload occurs when an individual has too many role demands given the time available to satisfy them (Coverman, 1999; Pearlin 1999). Role overload refers to a process tied to a wider span of time-the volume of tasks is simply too heavy given the time available; however, the individual generally has wider opportunity in deciding which are tended to and which are forgone (or resolved unsatisfactorily).

The experience of lacking the resources, including time and energy, needed to meet the demands of all roles resulted in role overload. This may reflect the opportunity to satisfy the demands of some roles at the expense of other role expectations. Full-time students report role overload, and student, family, and job demands all contribute to role overload (Home, 1998). Many full-time students are unable to fully anticipate the effects of their combined role demands.

Those which simply describe the volume of activities (actual or potential) will tend to influence feelings of role overload. As Coverman (1999) stated that there are “role context” variables which include three sets of measures: time investments in role activities, factors which structure work and parent roles and role resources. First, time investments in role activities are the actual time spent in particular role activities increases, an indicator of the volume of role demands, feelings of role overload will increase.

Second, factors which structure work and parent roles and role resources include other structuring factors likely influence the volume, rather than the timing of role demands, including the number of hours usually worked per week, the number of children, and the age of the youngest child. Greater work hours should increase feelings of role overload, as should greater numbers of children and having younger children. Third, role resources, respondents who have paid household help are expected to report less frequent feelings of role overload, as some of the volume of their tasks is delegated.

## **2.4. Multiple Roles of Adult Women Students**

With the growing number of adult women students in higher education institutions comes an increased need to determine ways of helping these students manage the varied aspects of their lives. Work, school, and family role are a particular concern to universities with an increasing adult student population. Students are likely to maintain work and/or family responsibilities in addition to those responsibilities related to school (Hammer, Grisby and Woods, 1998). Any one of these roles is usually regarded as a full-time or primary role, and can result in stress and strain on the adult women student.

Furthermore, according to Cross (1991) in some instances, adult women students often experience stress trying to fulfill their multiples roles as student, as mother, and also as worker. They find it difficult to balance the demands outside of college, such as family and work, with the demands of academic life. Not only do these women retain primary responsibility for family work but many must also continue their employment in time (Lewis, 1998; Napholz, 1995). As a result, these students may be caring for young families or elderly relatives, while continuing to be sole providers or co-contributors to their families' well-being. It is not surprising that women drop out of university more often than men for non-academic reasons or that multiple role women are more vulnerable to role strain. Personal and institutional support can reduce role strain and make the difference between continuing participation and dropping out (Lewis, 1998; Mikolaj & Boggs, 1991).

Adult women have problem differ from those of younger students and male reentry students. Problem of reentry women typically are more related to aspect of feminine sex role socialization. Because women are socialized to bear primarily responsibility for family responsibilities, and child rearing a return to school often creates significant role strain and feeling of guilt, inadequacy, and self blame over difficulties in handling multiple roles (Lewis, 1998; Napholz, 1995).

However, Phillip (2000) has examined the potential constructive and unconstructive consequences for women of combining paid work and family roles. Whether multiple roles are constructive or unconstructive for women depends on many factors in women's lives, such as conditions of the work, condition of the school, conditions of their family roles, including the number and age of children, and socioeconomic background. Thus, life

situations and tangible supports have influential factors for adult women with family and job in constructive and unconstructive consequences.

#### **2.4.1. The Multiple Role Experience: Actual Role Situation**

Researchers have identified some life situations which may influence these women's vulnerability to stress and strain which might be the cause of drop out of college. Voydanoff (1993) notes that certain women may be more vulnerable to role strain because of their demanding life situations. Increased vulnerability can be related to demanding family situations, such as single parenting, having younger children.

Results of Glass and Rose (1994) study indicated that age had little to do with the role experiences of the women studied. Number of roles and life stage showed significant relationships with the role variables. Both were related positively to the presence of role conflict. In addition, there were generally constructive relationships between number of roles, life stage, satisfaction, and happiness. Similarly, Schmidt and Scott (1996) researched role strain experienced by mothers returning to work following the birth of their first child and found age to not be significantly correlated with the level of role strain experienced.

The literature reports have conflicting results when stress is studied in relation to age. Baruch et al (1983) studied women with various role combinations and found that women in their thirties have become a stress-vulnerable group due to the needs of young children and their own needs to advance their careers. Contrary to this, Hemmelgarn and Laing (1991) researched role strain experienced by mothers returning to work following the birth of their first child and found age to not be significantly correlated with the level of role strain experienced.

Single parents and mothers of younger children can experience higher overload and work-family conflict because of their life situation. Parents feel guilt about being unavailable when their children need them, with mothers of children younger than thirteen feeling the most conflict (Carney-Crompton & Tan, 2002). The age of the children may well determine the persistence of women in higher education. Those with older children may persist to graduation, whereas those with young children may interrupt or stop their education. Once children are over thirteen years of age, role strain decreases.

Further more, family role characteristics impacting family demand. Hours spent providing cares in the family have been shown to significantly affect FIW (family interferes with work). Carlson and Perrewe (1999) argue that number of children should directly affect demand. Being responsible for children in the home requires allocating time and energy in providing for their day-to-day needs. Nevertheless, Kossek and Ozeki (2001) found significant relationships between the number of children living at home and FIW, lending indirect support. Also, family should include dependent relationships (e.g. grandparents) that might directly affect family demand levels.

Married individuals should have more family demand in the form of obligations to a spouse than individuals who are not married (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 2000). In general, hours in care giving, number of children living at home, number of dependents (other than children) living at home and being married will be certainly related to family demand. According to Feldman (1993), the effects of marital status upon the student role depend upon the spouse role. Feldman also noted that there is a conflict between the role of wife and the role of student, thus marriage has a dramatic effect upon the role of women.

Berkove (1999) also studied husband support as a factor contributing to stress in women returning to college. The women who reported feeling the least stress were those who saw their husbands as holding more liberal attitudes regarding women's roles and capabilities, those who reported that their husbands were supportive of their schooling, those whose husbands supported them financially, and those whose husbands were involved in household tasks.

Women with low income report more role conflict, because of the lack of funds to ease the multiple task assignments (Home, 1998). The higher a woman's income is, the better able she is to replace herself at home, especially with tasks such as housekeeping. Finances play a significant role in the ability of adults to complete their academic goals. In addition to tuition and related expenses, parents with young children may have to pay for child care while at work and in class. Lower-income families cannot afford such services as child care or summer camp while school is out of session (Terrell, 1990).

Household income and the financial aid received by the student are all variables that determine the persistence rate of adult women students (Carney-Crompton & Tan, 2002). Although other variables can be negotiated, income levels cannot. The basic needs of the

family, like food and rent or mortgage, take priority over educational outlays. Women with low income report more role conflict perhaps because of the lack of funds to ease the multiple task assignments.

Schmidt and Scott (1996) cite other life situations such as full or part-time student and employee status as effects on role strain. Research has shown that people experience a great amount of stress in coping with the demands of work, resulting in unconstructive consequences both on and off the job (Frone & Cooper, 2000). These unsupportive consequences may also exist when people attempt to balance work, family and student roles simultaneously.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1995) define the conflict in which role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect as “inter role conflict.” The demands of one role are made more difficult by requirements of the other role. Smith (1991) implies that women must also cope with institutional obstacles such as inconvenient scheduling or locations, as well as procedural rigidity regarding degree completion. These include occupying a job with long, unpredictable or inflexible hours in an organization which is intolerant of interference from other roles.

Work characteristics impacting work demand. Working more hours means that the employee is at work for more hours and may have more work duties and has less time for other activities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1995). As hours increase, one should increase one's level of perceived work demand.

#### **2.4.2. Support System for Multiple Role Adult Women**

When an individual has high demands from different roles especially from family, work and school, these demands may increase role conflict and overload from incompatible and simultaneous demands. However, Affective and tangible support can reduce the impact of stressful life situations (Krahn, 1993). This strong and tangible supports can make strain less harmful or decrease its effects. Both received and perceived supports are important as tangible types of support. There are different sources of support for adult women students with family and job, but this researcher study focus on three sources: college, family and workplace supports.

& Boggs, 1991; Lewis, 1998). However, Very little has been documented in the area of adult women students with families and jobs returning to school and the subsequent role strain experienced. It is not clear to what extent university adaptations designed to ease the work-study interface are helpful to women seeking to accommodate family needs.

In addition, those women who do have multiple roles are themselves adverse group in their family responsibilities, socioeconomic background, age, work status, dependent person, and educational and career continuity. Rice and Meyer (2002) stated that some may need special services to help them succeed in spite of such situations as low income or single parent status. As there is little research indicating which life situations and institutional supports make a difference, it is difficult to adapt services to these students' need those who do have family, education and work responsibilities. Developing appropriate response requires knowledge of which a student is more vulnerable to role conflict and overload, and which kinds of support ease it.

As previous studies concerning multiple roles, role conflict and role overload have yielded insufficient results, more research needs to be done in this area. Specifically, there is a need to identify the importance of specific life situations and institutional supports in predicting role conflict and overload. Since this can ultimately affect the performance of the work following graduation and can contribute to the profession after graduation.

## Chapter Three

### Research Design and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the level or amount of role conflict and overload as well as to identify the importance of specific life situations and tangible supports in predicting role conflict and overload in adult women students in AAU, College of Commerce. The researcher of this study bases the inquiry on the assumption that collecting diverse types of data provides the best understanding of the research problem. Accordingly, in this study a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods were employed.

This chapter consists of the design, research setting, subjects, sampling methods, instruments, data gathering procedure, analysis of data, and pilot study.

#### 3.1. The Study Design

The researcher has employed a mixed methods design consists of quantitative and qualitative approaches .The quantitative study method focus on gathering, organizing, analyzing and interpreting the numerical data, with specific survey method of inquiry. Calderon and Gonzales (1993) said that descriptive survey research is the preferred type of data collection procedure because it uses formal instruments to study preferences, attitudes, or practices of a sample. It describes with emphasis what actually exists such as current condition, practice, situation, or any phenomena. Since the researcher's study was concerned with the present status of the role conflict and overload in adult women students in AAU, College of Commerce, the descriptive survey method of research was the most appropriate method to use. Hence, questionnaire was used to gather relevant data.

The qualitative method was utilized as supplementary method for collecting data in order to support the analysis and interpretation of the findings obtained through quantitative approach. Creswell (2005) said one can not progressively investigate one aspect after another of the independent variable to get closer to the real cause. The specific instrument of inquiry that was used in qualitative approach was interview. This enabled the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual and to be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants.

## **3.2. The Research Setting**

The study area for this research is Addis Ababa. The reason for the selection is that one of the Universities in Ethiopia started continuing education early. Research setting was AAU, Commerce College. Currently, there are 6 departments in the College of Commerce which present evening education for 1821 female part time learners (AAU, 2001 E.C). Those adult women students with family and job responsibilities in the college were first identified by using questionnaire prepared for this purpose. Both 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year extension adult women students were included.

## **3.3. The Sample and Sampling Technique**

### **3.3.1. The Sample Size**

The total sample size included in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year adult women students attending the extension program in the College was about 130. This was about thirty percent (30%) of the total target population. In addition, nine adult women students were randomly selected by using lottery method for interview.

### **3.3.2. Sampling Techniques**

Three different sampling techniques were employed in the study. These were purposive, stratified, systematic sampling techniques. Currently, there are 6 departments in the College of Commerce (AAU, 2001 E.C). To make the study manageable, the researcher focused on the target population of adult women students (706) who were pre-2007/08 entry students. It was believed that students with two or more years of study in the college would have sufficient experience to provide relevant information to this study.

Accordingly, those 433 women students were identified whether or not they have family and job responsibility through a questionnaire prepared for this purpose. Those 130 (30%) of adult women were selected from the group of students mentioned above using systematic random sampling technique. Concerning sample year, to ensure fair representative of adult women students from 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> students, stratified quota sampling technique was employed. Out of 225 3<sup>rd</sup> years and 208 4<sup>th</sup> years, 68 and 62 (30% from each group) students were selected respectively.

**Table 1:** Number of Adult Women Students

| Department | Women students |          | Women students with families and jobs |          |
|------------|----------------|----------|---------------------------------------|----------|
|            | 3rd year       | 4th year | 3rd year                              | 4th year |
| ACCT       | 102            | 96       | 87                                    | 70       |
| AMTS       | 95             | 91       | 61                                    | 76       |
| BAIS       | 83             | 46       | 45                                    | 21       |
| FNDE       | 13             | 33       | 6                                     | 12       |
| MM         | 45             | 59       | 18                                    | 17       |
| PSM        | 20             | 23       | 8                                     | 12       |
| Total      |                |          | 225                                   | 208      |

Concerning sample participants for interview, 9 adult women were also randomly selected by using lottery method.

### **3.4. Instruments**

To get adequate information for the study, two types of instruments namely, questionnaire and interview were used in this study.

#### **3.4.1. Questionnaire**

One of the forms of data collection instrument was questionnaire which enables one to gather information faster than any other method. The questionnaire was used to collect information about the role conflict, role overload, tangible support and demographic characteristics of adult women students. It contained open ended and closed questions to obtain background characteristics of the participants. Moreover, it was made up of several scales that assess role conflict, role overload, and tangible supports.

#### **Adult women students' role conflict scale**

This measure was composed of 15 items Likert-type scale designed to measure the role conflict. 9 items were constructed and developed by researcher from relevant and related literature in the fields. In addition, 6 standardized scales which were used by previous researchers (Coverman, 1989; Barnett & Baruch, 1985) were employed. Modifications were made to fit in to the selected participants.

Adult women students' role conflict was a five-point scales in which the participants were asked to mark each statement by choosing one of the five alternatives: strongly agree (SA) =

5, Agree (A) = 4, undecided (U) = 3, disagree (DA) = 2 and strongly disagree (SD) = 1. To determine the total score of an individual, the value of each item were added. An adult woman student is considered to have high role conflict, if she has got a mean role conflict score value of greater than 3.5 (greater than 52.5 in a 15 item of 5-point scale,  $3.5 \times 15 = 52.5$ ) and low role conflict if she has got role conflict scores of less than 2.5 (less than 37.5). In addition, Adult women students' role conflict scale demonstrated an internal consistency Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.79 (see Appendix G).

### **Adult Women Students' Role Overload Scale**

This measure was constructed and developed by the researcher from relevant and related literatures. This scale was a 10 item of 5-point scale specifically used to assess respondents' perceptions of having too much to do on five point scale (5=strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 2=Disagree and 1=strongly agree).

An adult woman is considered to have high role overload if she has got role overload mean score value of greater than 3.5 and low , having a mean value of less than 2.5. In other words, since there were 10 role overload items, role overload mean value of greater than 35 ( $10 \times 3.5 = 35$ ), was considered as having high role overload, less than 25, low role overload. Furthermore, the adult women students' role overload scale demonstrated Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.82 (see Appendix G).

### **Tangible supports scale**

This measure was a Likert-type designed to measure adult women students' tangible supports from workplace, family and college on a 5-point scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). This measure contained 15 items from which 5 items for measuring each tangible support (workplace, family, college). It was developed by the author from relevant literature in the fields. In addition, this scale had Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.81 (see Appendix G).

#### **3.4.2. Interview**

Interview was made to supplement, enrich and crosscheck the data obtained through the questionnaire. Face to face interview was conducted with nine adult women students. Interviewees were guided when they left the main themes during interview. The interviews

were conducted by researcher himself. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed precisely.

### 3.5. Pilot Study

The instrument was prepared for try out after passing many processes. The processes include collecting items and developing instruments, formulating in to scales and questions. Then, there were forward and backward translations before distributing. After preparing the instrument in English, it was translated in to Amharic by English Language postgraduate students for the ease of communication with the participants. The instrument was also translated back in to English by English Language post graduate students. Minor differences were observed and corrected through discussion held among these translators and the researcher. Before the actual data collection, the instruments were submitted to the advisor of the researcher for evaluation, and then the draft instruments were made ready for pilot test.

The main objective of the pilot study was to test and improve the instruments. Since most items of the measure were developed from literature, checking their reliability was necessary. In doing so, the questionnaire was distributed to twenty adult women students with families and jobs in College of Commerce. The data obtained were analyzed by using SPSS version 15.0 to see the reliability.

Reliabilities found from the pilot test were acceptable to conduct the study. This result is consistent with Brace, Kemp and Snelgar (2006) finding. The following table shows the Cronbach alpha reliability and the numbers of items improved in each scale (see Appendix G).

**Table 2:** Summary of Reliability of the Scales

| No | Scale            | Reliability (Cronbach alpha) | Number of items | improved Items    |
|----|------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1  | Role conflict    | 0.79                         | 15              | q2 and q15        |
| 2  | Role overload    | 0.82                         | 10              | q21 and q25       |
| 3  | Tangible support | 0.81                         | 15              | q29, q31, and q37 |

### **3.6. Data Gathering Procedure**

An official letter from the department of curriculum and instruction, "To whom it may concern" was taken. Academic dean of the College accepted this letter and addressed the letter to the respective individuals and departments. Participants were informed about the objective of the study and asked to participate in filling the questionnaire. Then, the questionnaire was distributed and participants agreed to fill and return within one week. They were made not to discuss on items as the responses of one student may be influenced by the other.

Though the questionnaire was administered to 130 adult women students, the analysis was made using 110 students, from 20 questionnaires, 12 questionnaires were discarded because the respondents gave inappropriate information, and the rest 8 were not returned from respondents. In addition, the interview was done with nine students by asking their permission. Then, the researcher recorded their response by using tape recorded.

### **3.7. Analysis of Data**

The researcher has attempted to analyze the data by breaking up the whole study into its constituent parts according to the specific questions under the statement of the problem. Based on the type of instrument employed and the nature of questions set, the following methods were used in the study. The data collected through the questionnaire were entered in to the computer using the SPSS 15.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science) software program to analyze the data. From descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviation, and percentage were computed to see the general pattern of the variables and demographic characteristics.

Moreover, from inferential statistics, univariant analyses were also utilized in order to examine the significant contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable. The obtained difference was tested for statistical significant at 0.05 levels. This level is conventionally used in social science researches. Then, step-wise multiple regressions were employed to assess the relative predictive power of independent variables to the dependant variables. The most important in this analysis is that different variables have significant influence on role conflict and overload. Furthermore, the data obtained through interview were presented verbatim (word for word) as direct quotation and analyzed qualitatively.

## Chapter Four

### Data Analysis, Presentation, and Interpretation

This section describes analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings as they relate to each research question in the different domains.

#### 4.1. Description of the Sample

**Table 3:** Characteristics of Respondents

| No | Variables      | Category     | Frequency | Percent |
|----|----------------|--------------|-----------|---------|
| 1  | Age            | Below 30     | 49        | 44.5    |
|    |                | 31 and above | 61        | 55.5    |
|    |                | Total        | 110       | 100.0   |
| 2  | Work Status    | Full-Time    | 84        | 76.4    |
|    |                | Part-Time    | 26        | 23.6    |
|    |                | Total        | 110       | 100.0   |
| 3  | Income         | 0-1000       | 39        | 35.5    |
|    |                | Above 1000   | 71        | 64.5    |
|    |                | Total        | 110       | 100.0   |
| 4  | Marital Status | Unmarried    | 25        | 22.7    |
|    |                | Married      | 85        | 77.3    |
|    |                | Total        | 110       | 100.0   |

As can be seen from Table 3, a total of 110 women students which almost more than half 61 (55.5%) of the respondents lies in the age range 31 and above. This age range seems to be within the normal evening college age. However, this is the age range when adult women manifest many social and psychological problems. This is more clarified in the study of one of the educators (Barnett and Baruch; 1987). The age above 30 is when women population supposed to learn with family and job responsibilities which adversely affect their academic progress. Therefore, it is time when adult women with family and job responsibilities need proper guidance and orientation to adjust themselves to their school, work and family environment.

Regarding marital status of adult women students, as shown in Table 3, the majority 85 (77.3%) of participants were married. For this, most of the participants of the study have at least two roles or responsibilities such as family and job.

Three-fourth 84 (76.4%) of these women wear employed full-time work status. Thus, adult women students who are working in full-time may not sufficient time to study in college compared to those who are working in part-time. More than half of the total participants 71 (64.5%) had a family gross income of over birr 1000 Ethiopian.

**Table 4:** Family Background

| No | Variables                                      | Category               | Frequency | Percent |
|----|--|------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 1  | Number of Children                             | No child               | 22        | 20.0    |
|    |  | One or two Child       | 72        | 65.5    |
|    |  | Three or more Children | 16        | 14.5    |
|    |  | Total                  | 110       | 100.0   |
| 2  | Having dependant person                        | Yes                    | 31        | 28.2    |
|    |  | No                     | 79        | 71.8    |
|    |  | Total                  | 110       | 100.0   |
| 3  | Have a Child with Special Need                 | Yes                    | 14        | 12.7    |
|    |  | No                     | 96        | 87.3    |
|    |  | Total                  | 110       | 100.0   |
| 4  | Provide Care for an old age Parent or Relative | Yes                    | 23        | 20.9    |
|    |  | No                     | 87        | 79.1    |
|    |  | Total                  | 110       | 100     |

About three fourth were caring for dependent person in home as indicated in Table 4. This means there is sufficient information from participant for the study concerning family demand. Most mothers 78(80%) had one or more children and almost more than 90% of the participant were not providing care for an adult or child with disabilities. There were large numbers of participants who do not have people with special need and dependent relative in their home.

#### **4.2. Adult Women Students' Role Conflict**

To examine the role conflict of adult women students, a role conflict scale containing 15 items with 5-point response was administered to adult women students. Based on the responses given for the role conflict items of the questionnaire, the individual mean scores were computed. To determine the total scores of an individual, the value of each item were added. A student is considered to have high role conflict, if she has got a mean role conflict score value greater than 3.5 (greater than 52.5 in a 15 item of 5-point scale,  $3.5 \times 15 = 52.5$ ) and low role conflict if she has got role conflict mean score of less than 2.5 (less than 37.5 in a 15 item of 5-pont scale,  $2.5 \times 15 = 37.5$ ).

The role conflict of adult women students were determined by mean score values. Accordingly, from the respondents to statements, individual mean score was computed. Those individual with mean score value greater than 52.5 were considered as having high role conflict, and those with the mean score values of less than 52.5 were considered as having low role conflict.

**Table 5:** Participants who have High and Low Role Conflict

| Role Conflict        | Number | Percent |
|----------------------|--------|---------|
| High Role Conflict   | 65     | 59.09   |
| Medium Role conflict | 28     | 25.5    |
| Low Role Conflict    | 17     | 15.5    |
| Total                | 110    | 100.0   |

As indicated in Table 5 from the total 110 participants, 65 (59.09%) have high role conflict and 17(15.5) have low role conflict, while the rest 28(25.5) have medium role conflict (see Appendix E). More than half of adult women students experienced high level of role conflict. This indicates that, multiple role obligations may be a source of role conflict. As adult women try to fulfill their roles as students, workers and other adult responsibilities, they are at high risk of role conflict. School activities may conflict with other nonschool activities, and vice versa.

In agreement with these, data obtained through interview indicated that the participants have various daily responsibilities: jobs, family and college. All participants from interview experienced demands on their time. They oftentimes find themselves in a double bind. Without a college education, they may find themselves unable to provide for themselves and their children; however, attending college may cause financial, emotional and personal difficulties by adding additional stress to their lives.

The possible reason for high role conflict may be the factors impeded the academic progress of the adult women participants as they attempted to keep up with the daily demands of their lives. This finding from interview indicates that there is a need for students to have assistance with management of family demands in order to alleviate some of the situational barriers as experienced daily by student participants. Whereas, situational factors such as finances, family, and lack of time interfere with persistence, it appears that the commitment

to the institution and determination of these adult women students superseded the external factors.

Adult women have problems different from those of younger students and male students. Problems of reentry women typically are more related to aspect of feminine sex role socialization. Because women are socialized to bear primarily responsibility for family responsibilities, and child rearing a return to school often creates significant role strain and feeling of guilt, inadequacy, and self blame over difficulties in handling multiple roles (Lewis, 1998; Napholz, 1995; Voydanoff, 1993).

Inconsistent results have been obtained by researchers studying multiple roles and role conflict. Through interview participants pointed out that they also attribute confidence in themselves as being beneficial to their success. Marta reports, "College is hard sometimes, but if you have the determination and mindset, you can do it. Being a parent will not stop me from completing college – it only slows me down." For the most part, these participants discussed their commitment to receive a degree as being important to their success.

In agreement with this, Susan (1998) stated that people who are able to fully participate in and perform a number of different roles experience not only less role conflict but also lower rates of depression and higher self esteem. This means multiple roles are important for the development of personality and intellectual. These discrepancies of present study and previous studies may be due to cultural, time, population, and methodological differences at least in part.

### **4.3. Adult Women Students' Role Overload**

To assess adult women students' role overload, a scale containing 10 items with 5-point response directed to participants. It measures students' role overload on a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=undecided, 4= agree, and 5= strongly agree). Based on the responses given for the role overload items of the questionnaire, the individual mean scores were computed. To determine the total scores of an individual, the value of each item were added.

A student is considered to be high role overload, if she has got role overload mean score value of greater than 3.5 and low, having a mean value of less than 2.5. In other words, since there are 10 role overload items, role overload mean value of greater 35 ( $10 \times 3.5 = 35$ ), was

considered as having high level of role overload and less than 25 ( $10 \times 2.5 = 25$ ), low role overload.

**Table 6:** Participants who have High and Low Role Overload

| Role Overload        | Number | Percent |
|----------------------|--------|---------|
| High Role Overload   | 58     | 52.73   |
| Medium Role overload | 22     | 20      |
| Low Role Overload    | 30     | 27.27   |
| Total                | 110    | 100.0   |

As indicated in Table 6 from the total 110 participants, 58 (52.72 %) have high role overload and 30 (27.27) have low role overload, while the rest 22 (20) have medium role overload (see appendix E). This means more than half of the total participants of the study have sense of having so many demands or obligations that they feel unable to perform them all or have high role overload.

In agreement with this, as adult women participants in the interview persisted toward completion of educational goals, some experienced difficulty moving forward. Lili explained, “Being a student is hard, but being a parent student is harder. There are times when you have to make decisions between staying home with your sick child and going to class, and you know the child has to come first.”

Other participant, Kale reported “My son has been sick and I have missed a lot of classes, but I have to take care of my son first.” Their experiences consisted of duties and responsibilities unlike those of traditional college students – those who are not parents. They were parents and employees as well as students. For some, matriculation has been lengthy, and they encountered barriers along the way. These barriers – time, finances, transportation, child care, home responsibilities, job responsibilities and housing are identified in the literature as situational barriers (Cross, 1991).

The possible reason may be demands are required at particular times and places and all individuals interact in many role relationships, with different obligations for each relationship. Each relationship demands several activities which may include inconsistencies. Because the individual is likely to face a wide array of role obligations, the individual's total role obligations are over demanding.

The result obtained through interview also confirms the above idea. Participants discussed time and roles concern as part of their experiences. These concerns correlate with situational barriers described by Cross (1991). She contends that situational barriers – those which arise from real life situations such as home and family responsibilities, need for childcare, job responsibilities and time constraints, all impact on the learner's environment.

Inconsistent results have been obtained by researchers studying multiple roles and role overload. As one participant, Hagu notes that college served as motivation for her by being the support system which was non-existent in her immediate family. Goode (1960) and Home (1998) argued that some roles may be performed with out any net energy loss and some roles may even create additional energy use in that role or other roles. The discrepancy between this research study and previous studies may be due to cultural, time, or methodological difference at least.

In general, as we can see from the above discussions, adult women students experienced high or low role conflict depending on life situations: their age, income, marital status, work status, age and number of children and dependent person live in their home. In addition, support system from family, college and workplace may also contribute to the amount and intensity of role conflict. Hence, the following analyses try to see the significant relationship between the dependent variable (role conflict and overload) and independent variable (life situation and tangible support).

#### **4.4. Impact of Life Situation and Tangible Supports**

The significant relationship between the independent variables( age, work status, income, marital status, number of dependants, workplace support, family support and university support) and dependent variables (role conflict and role overload) are presented and discussed below.

##### **4.4.1. Adult women students' life situations**

Table 7 and 8 report the mean scores and standard deviation of the role conflict and overload respectively according to age, work status, income, marital status, and number of dependant person live in home for adult women students. These two tables also show how each life situation variables are related (significant) to role conflict and overload.

### i. Life situation variables and role conflict

**Table 7:** Univariate Analysis of Variance of life situation and Role Conflict

| Variable                | category     | N   | Mean  | SD    | df | F    | Sig |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----|-------|-------|----|------|-----|
| Age                     | Below 30     | 49  | 50.24 | 10.62 | 1  | 4.05 | .06 |
|                         | 30 and above | 61  | 46.38 | 9.51  |    |      |     |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 48.10 | 10.16 |    |      |     |
| Work Status             | Full-Time    | 84  | 48.74 | 10.47 | 1  | 1.41 | .24 |
|                         | Part-Time    | 26  | 46.04 | 8.94  |    |      |     |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 48.11 | 10.16 |    |      |     |
| Income                  | 0-1000       | 39  | 51.51 | 9.25  | 1  | 7.21 | .01 |
|                         | Above 1000   | 71  | 46.22 | 10.21 |    |      |     |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 48.10 | 10.16 |    |      |     |
| Marital Status          | Married      | 25  | 50.92 | 10.64 | 1  | 2.53 | .12 |
|                         | Unmarried    | 85  | 47.27 | 9.92  |    |      |     |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 48.10 | 10.16 |    |      |     |
| Having Dependent person | Yes          | 31  | 51.36 | 10.27 | 1  | 4.58 | .04 |
|                         | No           | 79  | 46.82 | 9.88  |    |      |     |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 48.10 | 10.16 |    |      |     |

The role conflict mean score in the age group below 30 was higher than others. In examining work status, those who were full-time had a mean role conflict greater than those working part-time. Role conflict scores were also higher in the group of subjects with family income less than 1000 birr. Those subjects that were married scored higher on the role conflict than those never married. Finally, subjects who had dependant person in their home have a much lower role conflict mean score.

In addition, as seen in Table 7, the analysis of variance for adult women indicates no significant difference in the amount of role conflict experienced when analyzed by age, marital status and work status ( $P > 0.05$ ). However, there is significant difference in the amount of role conflict experienced by adult women students when compared by income level and the presence of dependent person living at home ( $P < 0.05$ ).

#### a. Age and role conflict

As shown in Table 7, for adult women students, the role conflict mean score of students whose age range below 30 were 50.24 with SD of 10.62 and those students whose age 30 and above were 46.38 with SD of 9.51. As result, the role conflict mean scores in the two groups of years did not differ significantly ( $F = 4.052$ ,  $DF = 1$ , two tailed,  $P > 0.05$ ). Hence,

there was no statistically significant difference between adult women students whose age below 30 and 30 and above.

Although the role conflict of adult women students increasing as their age decrease, there is no statistically significant difference between adult women students' age and role conflict. So, in the present study age does not have relationship with adult women students' role conflict. This may be related with the fact that once whether role conflict is established, it becomes consistent through-out life.

The researcher's finding is consistent with a study conducted by Glass and Rose (1994) indicating that age had little to do with the role experiences of the women students.

Contrary to this, the literature reports conflicting results when stress is studied in relation to age. Barnett and Baruch (1987) studied women with various role combinations and found that women in their thirties have become a stress-vulnerable group due to the needs of young children and their own needs to advance their careers. The discrepancy of the present study and literatures may be due to cultural, time, study site and methodology the researches that were carried out at least.

#### **b. Marital status and Role conflict**

As indicated in Table 7, the role conflict mean score of unmarried students ( $M=47.27$ ,  $SD=10.64$ ) and married students ( $M=50.92$ ,  $SD=9.92$ ) did not differ significantly ( $F=2.530$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P>0.05$ ). So, in the present study, marital status is not a variable that affect role conflict.

The possible explanation for this result may be both married and unmarried adult women students share the same college and workplace condition. Under such condition it might not be surprising if there is no significant difference between married and unmarried students about multiple role experiences.

Similarly, Berkove (1999) found that high husband support was found to be associated with fewer expressions of role conflict. Kahn, et al (1994) studied stress-related variables as predictors of role strain among married college women and found that unless the couple has a mutual agreement about roles in the marriage, the stress of unfulfilled expectations may

result. Thus, those who completed the role conflict scale in this study may have scored low or high depending on support received from their spouses.

### **c. Work status and role conflict**

As can be seen in Table 7, Univariate analysis of variance was used to measure the statistical significance of difference between the mean scores of adult women students working in full-time and part-time. As the result indicated, the role conflict mean score of these students working in full-time ( $M=48.74$ ,  $SD=10.47$ ) and those who are working in part-time ( $M=46.04$ ,  $SD=8.94$ ) did not differ significantly ( $F=1.408$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P>0.05$ ). Hence, there was no statistically significant difference in role conflict between two groups who are working in full-time and part-time work status. This indicates that status of work is not a variable that influences adult women students' role conflict.

This present study result is consistent with the findings which were conducted on women students with multiple roles. Feldman (1993) stated that job responsibilities are both a blessing and a course of women students. She said that the workplace is becoming more aware of the impact of role conflict.

The likely possible explanation is that the workplace may be supportive through encouragement, recognition and resource allocation whether an individual working in full timer or part timer employment status. This means, being supportive of employee may reduce work and study demand that decrease the possibility of engaging in role conflict. So, if the students have got support from workplace, employment statuses do not have an effect or relationship with role conflict.

On the other hand, this finding seems to contradict with a study by Greenhaus and Beutell (1995). They found that occupying a job with inflexible hours in an organization which is intolerant of interference from other roles has an impact for role conflict. Like wise, Astin (1995) concludes that students who work fewer hours than twenty hours a week are likely to persist than those who are part time or unemployed. This discrepancy of the present study and those reported above could be due to cultural and/or methodological difference at least in part.

#### **d. Income and role conflict**

In relation to income level, Table 7 showed that for both groups of adult women students, there was a significant difference between students who have got low income and those who have got high income. The role conflict mean score of these students who have got low income ( $M=51.51$ ,  $SD= 9.24$ ) was significantly higher ( $F=7.212$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P<0.05$ ) than those students who have got high income ( $M=46.23$ ,  $SD=10.21$ ). As this result indicates, participants with low income have higher level of role conflict score than those with high income.

In the present study, income level has significant relationship with role conflict for women students. This implies that income has substantial contribution for women students' role conflict. This may be due to the fact that the basic needs of family like food and house rent take priority over educational costs. Not only do low income women live in terror of having a broken employment, but they also have to expend enormous amount of energy. Without enough income, these women have to cut corners by decreasing such expenses servant (a childcare) or house rent or increasing time spent in their paid jobs. Both of these choices reduce time available for studies, which then seem to stretch for ever.

In agreement with this finding, Home (1998) stated that women with low income report more role conflict, because of the lack of funds to ease the multiple task assignments. The higher a woman's income is, the better she is to replace herself at home especially with tasks such as housekeeping. Finance plays a significant role in ability of women to complete their academic goals.

#### **e. Dependant person and role conflict**

As shown in Table 7, for adult women students, the mean score of those who have dependent in their home ( $M= 51.35$ ,  $SD=10.27$ ) was significantly higher ( $F=4.579$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed  $P < 0.05$ ) than those students who do not have in their home ( $M=46.82$ ,  $SD=9.88$ ). There were significant differences in the scores on role conflict depending upon whether the subjects did or did not have dependent person living at home. Those with dependent person scored significantly higher on the role conflict than those with no dependent person at home.

Results of this study were congruent with the theoretical framework used as the basis for this study. Goode (1960) defined role strain as "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations."

According to Goode, multiple role obligations can be sources of role strain. In this study, even though there was no significant difference in the amount of role strain experienced when looking at marital status, there was an increase in role conflict associated with having dependent person at home.

**ii. Life situation and role overload**

Table 8 depicts the mean scores and standard deviation of the role overload according to age, work status, income, marital status, and number of dependant person in home for adult women students. In addition, this table shows how each variable affect or related to role overload in adult women students.

**Table 8:** Univariant Analysis of Variance of Life situation and Role Overload

| variable                | category     | N   | Mean  | SD   | df | F    | Sig. |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----|-------|------|----|------|------|
| Age                     | Below 30     | 49  | 32.88 | 7.38 | 1  | .20  | 1.51 |
|                         | 30 and above | 61  | 31.08 | 7.06 |    |      |      |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |      |
| Work Status             | Full-Time    | 84  | 31.92 | 7.29 | 1  | .01  | .93  |
|                         | Part-Time    | 26  | 31.77 | 7.17 |    |      |      |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |      |
| Income                  | 0-1000       | 39  | 34.33 | 7.28 | 1  | 7.34 | .01  |
|                         | Above 1000   | 71  | 30.54 | 6.86 |    |      |      |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |      |
| Marital Status          | Married      | 25  | 32.88 | 8.05 | 1  | .62  | .43  |
|                         | Unmarried    | 85  | 31.59 | 6.99 |    |      |      |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |      |
| Having Dependent person | Yes          | 31  | 33.88 | 7.77 | 1  | 3.34 | .07  |
|                         | No           | 79  | 31.10 | 6.89 |    |      |      |
|                         | Total        | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |      |

Those subjects in the age group below 30 had the higher mean score compared to those in the age group 30 and above. The mean role overload scores were very similar between full and part time work status. Those subjects with family income up to 1000 birr had the highest mean score. Those subjects that were married scored higher on the role overload than those unmarried. Those subjects with dependant person in home had a lower mean role overload score than those who didn't have.

However, as seen in Table 8, the analysis of variance for adult women indicate no significant difference in the amount of role overload experienced when analyzed by age, work status, and marital status ( $P>0.05$ ). Moreover, there is significant difference in the amount of role

overload experienced by adult women students when compared by income level and having dependent person in home( $P < 0.05$ ).

**a. Age and Role Overload**

The role overload mean scores of adult women students with in the range below 30 and those whose age is 30 and above were 32.88 and 31.08 respectively with standard deviation of 7.38 and 7.06 respectively (see table 8). Table 8 indicates that there was no statistically significant difference between two groups ( $F = .20$ ,  $DF = 1$ , two tailed,  $P > 0.05$ ). Hence, age didn't have relation with role overload. This means age is not a variable that influence adult women students' role overload.

**b. Marital Status and Role Overload**

As indicated in Table 8, there was no statistically significant difference ( $P > 0.05$ ) between the role overload mean score of married ( $M = 32.88$  and  $SD = 8.05$ ) and unmarried students ( $M = 31.59$  and  $SD = 6.99$ ). This showed that marital status is not a variable that influence role overload for adult women students. It is difficult to determine whether this result is attributable to marital status or possibly related to the amount of support given the subjects by their spouses.

**c. Work Status and Role Overload**

As shown in Table 8, the role overload mean score of women students who are working in full-time ( $M = 31.92$ ,  $SD = 7.28$ ) was not statistically lower than ( $F = 0.01$ ,  $DF = 1$ , two tailed,  $P > 0.05$ ) than those students with part-time ( $M = 31.77$ ,  $SD = 7.17$ ). This indicates that work status and role overload has no relationship.

As opposed to the present study, some researchers found out that work characteristics impacting work demand, working more hours means that an employee is at work for more hours and have less time for other roles (Greenhaus, 1995). Other writer Coverman (1999) found that time investment in particular role affect the time of others, this is an indicator of the volume of role demands, and this result the feelings of overload will increase.

#### **d. Income and Role Overload**

As indicated in Table 8, Univariate analysis of variance was used to assess the statistical significance of difference between the mean scores of high and low family income. As the result indicated, the mean score of the women with low income ( $M=34.33$ ,  $SD=7.28$ ) and women students with high income ( $M=30.54$ ,  $SD=6.88$ ) was significantly different ( $F=7.37$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P<0.05$ ). Hence, in the present study, income has a significant relationship with students' role overload.

Supporting this finding, Terrell (1990) and Tinto (1993) stated that women students who have low income report high frequent feelings of role overload. The possible explanation is that students are likely to maintain work and/or family responsibilities in addition to school because they have to pay tuition fee, house rent, house servant etc. Any one of these roles is regarded as primary role and can result in role overload in women students.

#### **e. Dependent Person and Role Overload**

As presented on Table 8, the mean score of adult women student who did have dependent person in their home ( $M=33.87$ ,  $SD=7.77$ ) and those who did not have ( $M=31.10$ ,  $SD=6.89$ ) did differ significantly ( $F=3.34$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P>0.05$ ). From this result one can see that, as having dependent person in their home, there is an increase in role overload. This means that this study, having dependent person in home can be a variable that influence role overload. Number of dependants living at home will be positively related to family demand. As family demand increases, putting more pressure on the individual to attend to family related activities, school and workplace activities may suffer, causing overload from family, work and school responsibilities.

Supporting this, Kossek, and Ozeki (2001) found that role demands are the major obstacle for returning women and often impede their successful adaptation of additional role of student. This may be the demand of one role made more difficult and make role overload by requirements of other role.

#### 4.4.2. Adult Women Students' Tangible Support

##### i. Tangible Support and Role Conflict

**Table 9:** Univariant Analysis of Variance of Tangible Support and Role Conflict

| Variable          | Category | N   | Mean  | SD    | df | F    | Sig. |
|-------------------|----------|-----|-------|-------|----|------|------|
| Workplace Support | high     | 86  | 47.71 | 10.10 | 1  | .59  | .45  |
|                   | low      | 24  | 49.50 | 10.43 |    |      |      |
|                   | Total    | 110 | 48.10 | 10.16 |    |      |      |
| Family Support    | high     | 96  | 47.08 | 9.85  | 1  | 8.21 | .01  |
|                   | low      | 14  | 55.15 | 9.71  |    |      |      |
|                   | Total    | 110 | 48.11 | 10.16 |    |      |      |
| College Support   | high     | 16  | 47.19 | 9.91  | 1  | 5.51 | .03  |
|                   | low      | 94  | 53.51 | 10.20 |    |      |      |
|                   | Total    | 110 | 48.10 | 10.16 |    |      |      |

As can be seen the above Table 9 those who have low tangible support had highest role conflict than those who had high support. When we see analyses of variance for adult women, no significant difference in the amount of role conflict experienced when analyzed by workplace support level ( $P>0.05$ ). However, there is significant difference in the level of role conflict when analyzed by family and college support level ( $P<0.05$ ) for adult women students.

##### a. Workplace Support and Role Conflict

As can be seen in Table 9, for women students, the role conflict mean score of these women who have got high support from workplace ( $M=47.71, SD=10.10$ ) was not significantly different ( $F=5.81, DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P>0.05$ ) from those who have got low workplace support ( $M=49.50, SD=10.43$ ). In the researcher study, workplace support has no significant relation with role conflict for these women students. This implies that, receiving support from workplace has no substantial contribution for women students' role conflict. This may be the fact that workplace supports such as schedule flexibility, leave provisions, and financial support or covering educational costs may not help to decrease the demands of other role.

Inconsistence with this finding, Marlow (1993) reported that take a rational or optimistic attitude towards women who combine work, family and school responsibilities. This means recognizing these domains are not separate worlds and that smooth relationships between them are a joint responsibility. This in turn helps to balance work, education, and family. In other words, an employee experiences role conflict, the workplace does not recognize that

the employee needs help in balancing of family, work and school roles. This discrepancy between the present study and the previous one may be due to time, study site, cultural, population size and methodology difference at least in part.

#### **b. Family Support and Role Conflict**

As in Table 9, Univariate analysis of variance was used to assess the statistical significance of difference between the role conflict mean score of adult women students who have got family support and those who have not got. As the result indicates the mean score of those who have got high family support ( $M=47.07$   $SD=9.85$ ) and those have not ( $M=55.14$ ,  $SD=9.71$ ) did differ significantly ( $F=8.23$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P<0.05$ ). From this result one can see that a woman experience role conflict is closely related to the support she receives from her spouse and family members. The possible explanation for this may be family members may work to reduce family obligation that specifically free energy and time for school duties.

The result of researcher study is consistent with that of many studies such as Home (1998) and Lewis (1998). They argued that family and friends are a primary source of support and they can reduce role conflict. The support from family and friend or spouse is essential when adult women are making the decision to stay in college. There are moments when things are more difficult to control; it is at these times that having access to support can make all the difference. College instructors or advisors may help them in different ways. For example, encourage these women to use all existing services and options which could make multiple role management easier. Support from parents, family or friends may help lower role conflict and this can be done by suggesting college instructors suggest ways for increasing this support, for instance, students can try to ensure their families are realistic.

#### **c. College Support and Role Conflict**

As can be seen in Table 9, Univariate analysis of variance was used to assess the statistical significance of the difference between the role conflict mean scores of women students who have got low and high college support. The mean score of those who have got low college support ( $M=53.50$ ,  $SD=10.20$ ) was significantly higher ( $F=5.51$ ,  $Df=1$ , two tailed,  $P<0.05$ ) than those who have got high college support ( $M=47.18$ ,  $SD=9.91$ ). The finding indicates that college support is a variable that affect women students' role conflict.

Similarly, Krahn (1993) found that the instructor requesting the adult woman student homework, assigning her papers, and giving her exams is unknowingly contributing to her “feeling of being stretched too thin” . Because, she is employed without an undergraduate degree, she probably does not earn as much as her peers with degrees.

**ii. Tangible Support and Role Overload**

**Table 10:** Univariate Analysis of Variance of Tangible Support and Role Overload

| Variable           | Category | N   | Mean  | SD   | df | F    | Sig |
|--------------------|----------|-----|-------|------|----|------|-----|
| Workplace Support  | High     | 86  | 31.37 | 6.10 | 1  | 1.98 | .16 |
|                    | Low      | 24  | 33.71 | 7.91 |    |      |     |
|                    | Total    | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |     |
| Family Support     | High     | 14  | 31.54 | 7.07 | 1  | 1.68 | .20 |
|                    | Low      | 96  | 34.21 | 8.12 |    |      |     |
|                    | Total    | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |     |
| University Support | High     | 16  | 31.40 | 7.07 | 1  | 2.87 | .09 |
|                    | Low      | 94  | 34.67 | 7.70 |    |      |     |
|                    | Total    | 110 | 31.89 | 7.22 |    |      |     |

One can see that adult women students who have got low level of tangible support had higher role overload mean score than who have got high level of tangible support. As can be seen table 10, there is no significant difference in the amount of role overload experienced by adult women students when compared by workplace support, family support and college support ( $P>0.05$ ).

**a. Workplace Support and Role Overload**

As can be seen in Table 10, the role overload scores of those who have got low workplace support were not statistically different from those who have got high. Hence, in this study, workplace support has no significant relationship with students’ role overload. Meaning that being supportive by workplace contributes for once access to particular kinds of resources that may not allow some problematic tasks to be delegated. Thus, respondents who have paid household help are not expected to report less frequent feelings of role overload, as some of the volume of their tasks is delegated.

Inconsistent with the researcher’s finding, Frone, et al (2000) state that supervisors are often held accountable for the work of their employees and are given more responsibility to manage employees. Thus, one would expect supervisors to experience more work demand.

When an individual has high demands from different roles especially from work, these demands may increase the role overload from simultaneous demands.

In addition, Schmidt and Scott (1996) suggest other means of work place support, increasing number of workers are seeking credit for learning. However, the researcher study conflicts with these above Authors. This may not reduce the impact of work overload, and it may not also help to reduce the stress. Generally, as work support increases for the employee, level of work demand may decrease. Being supportive of employee family obligations and providing, for example, flexible work schedules may not reduce perceived family and study demand. This may also not decrease the possibility of engaging in role overload.

### **b. Family Support and Role Overload**

As indicated in Table 10, the role overload mean score of adult women students who have got high family support were 31.54 with SD of 7.07 and for those who have got low with the role overload mean score were 34.21 with SD of 8.12. Univariate analysis of variance showed that, there were not statistically significant difference between having family support and role overload ( $F=1.67$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P>0.05$ ).

In researcher's study, family support is not a variable that influence women students' role overload. Inconsistent with this idea, Berkove (1999) studied husband support as a factor contributing to stress in women returning to college. The women who reported feeling the least stress were those who saw their husbands as holding more liberal attitudes regarding women's roles and capabilities. The discrepancy between the present study and previous studies may be due to cultural and methodological difference at least in part.

### **c. College Support and Role Overload**

In relation to support from college, Table 10 showed that the role overload mean score was not statistically significant difference ( $F=2.88$ ,  $DF=1$ , two tailed,  $P>0.05$ ) between women students that have high ( $M=31.40$ ,  $SD=7.07$ ) and low ( $M=34.69$ ,  $SD=7.70$ ) college support. This result indicates that college support has no impact for feeling of role overload in women students. This result is inconsistent with the study conducted by Home (1998). As she reported that no university-provided support measures can overcome role overload, an insufficient amount of time to fulfill all of the demands by children, employer, spouse, extended family members, and the university, upon the student. The possible explanation for

the researcher study is office and class hours may match the needs of students who work and care for families. The possible reason for the discrepancy between the researcher study and the above study may be due to cultural, place, time and methodology difference.

In general, from the above life situation variable and tangible supports, income, dependent person living in home have an effect on the possibility of having feeling of role conflict and overload. However, age, work status, and marital status have no effect on students' role conflict and overload. In addition, the possible tangible support factors that affect the feeling of role conflict are family support and college support. On the other hand, no tangible support variables that did not have an effect on the existence of role overload.

Having these ideas in mind, it is not possible to say definitely this particular variable from the above have influential importance in predicting role conflict overload. Hence, the following statistics that is multiple regressions can be applied for determining which specific life situation and tangible support predict role conflict and/ or overload.

#### **4.5. The Predictive Power of Life Situation and Tangible Support on Role Conflict**

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to assess the relative power of the variables involved in this study in predicting students' role conflict. The results of multiple regression analysis of role conflict are reported in Table 11. Eight variables were submitted to stepwise selection for regression of dependent variable (role conflict). Four of the life situation variables (age, work status, marital status and dependent person live in home) did not meet the entry criteria for Table 11, but one variable (income) were accepted. In addition, from tangible supports two variables (workplace support and College support) did not meet the entry criteria for Table 11, however, family support were accepted and did meet the entry criteria.

**Table 11:** Predictive Power of Variables to Role Conflict

| Variable       | Multiple R | R square | B     | Standard error b | Beta   | t     | Sig.   |
|----------------|------------|----------|-------|------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Family support | 0.266      | 0.071    | 4.03  | 1.367            | 0.266  | 2.95  | P<0.05 |
| Income         | 3.365      | 0.133    | -5.28 | 1.902            | -0.250 | -2.77 | P<0.05 |

Table 11 presents the results for regression of role conflict. Six variables did not meet the entry criteria. Using the stepwise method, a significant model emerged:  $F(2,107) = 8.215$ ,  $P < 0.05$ . The model explains 13.3% of the variance (Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.133$ ). Table 11 gives information for the predictor variables that are included in the model. Table 11 shows that the two variables mentioned totally explain 13.3% of the variance in the criteria. Family support alone predicts the highest variance in the criterion which is about 7.1% of the variance and income also predicts the second variance in the criterion which explains 6.2% of the variance.

This result indicates that family support is an important variable, which affects students' role conflict. Meaning that low family support was the most important tangible support predictor of role conflict, women with lower family supports had significantly higher role conflict. Once family support was controlled, no other tangible support made a unique contribution to role conflict. With respect to the life situation variables, only income remained significant in the final model. Adult women with lower incomes were more likely to report role conflict, as were women with low family support.

This result is consistent with the result obtained through interview. Family was a major source of support for most of the participants. This confirms Jacobi's (1987) findings regarding the importance of nuclear and extended family as a source of support. Findings of this study illustrate how the parent role is dominant as participants contend with the issue of studies.

Some participants from interview convey that in order to complete assignments and study, the children had to be happy. In other words, the children had to be fed and in bed before the parents create an atmosphere to concentrate on their studies. Tigist reports, "After I take her home, feed her and bathe her, then I put her to bed. I actually get into bed myself for two hours. I wake up around 9:00 p.m. and study." Another interviewee, Elsa discloses, "After I feed my 2 month-old and put him into bed, I then feed my oldest son and get him ready for bed. Then, it is time for me to study and do homework. It all depends on if my 2 month-old is still asleep or not."

This study shows that adult women students were so engaged to interact in the college setting with other students is limited. College should be the foremost priority in a student's life. However, for these participants, family and, to a lesser extent work sometimes

overshadowed it. The support of family was found to be important to the persistence of adult women who participated in this study. Having low family support created conflict for women in this researcher's study. This finding indicates the need for adequate family support for women students who return to school is mandatory to persist in college.

Women, who combine school, work, and a family may have the social support necessary to be effective in these roles. The college can assist women students by providing support in terms of flexible scheduling and counseling, which may decrease their role conflict and allow them a better opportunity to study efficiently and retain the knowledge learned.

#### 4.6. The Predictive Power of Life Situation and Tangible Support on Role Overload

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to assess the relative power of the variables involved in this study in predicting students' role overload. The results of multiple regression analysis of role overload are presented in Table 12. Eight variables were submitted to stepwise selection for regression of dependent variable (role overload). From five life situation variable, only income was accepted due to the entry criterion, four of the life situation variables (age, work status, marital status and dependent person live in home) did not meet the entry criteria for Table 12. However, all tangible supports variables (workplace support, family and College support) did not meet the entry criteria.

**Table 12:** Predictive Power of Variables to Role Overload

| Variable | Multiple R | R square | B     | St. error b | Beta  | t    | Sig.   |
|----------|------------|----------|-------|-------------|-------|------|--------|
| Income   | 0.253      | 0.064    | -3.80 | 1.40        | -0.25 | -.71 | P<0.05 |

Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to assess the relative power of the variables involved in this study in predicting students' role overload. As shown in Table 12, all predictor variables taken together explained 6.4% of the proportion of variance in women students' role overload. However, in stepwise multiple regression, income was entered first and it was the only and the most important variable accounted for 6.4% ( $F_{(1,109)} = 7.34$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) of the variance in the criterion alone (adjusted  $R^2 = 0.064$ ).

Table 12 gives information for the predictor variables that are included in the model. Moreover, since there is only one predictor variable in this model, the value of Beta (-0.25) is equivalent to the correlation coefficient between the predictor (income) and the criterion

variable (role overload). This equivalence makes sense, as this situation is a correlation between two variables. Income and role overload highly correlated each other.

This result indicates that income is the only and an important predictor life situation variable which affects students' role overload. Women with lower income had significantly higher role overload. Once income was controlled, no other life situation and tangible support made a unique contribution to role overload. Hence, income is an important variable which influence adult women students' role overload. With respect to the tangible support variables, no variable remained significant in the final model.

In general, the findings of this researcher indicate that family support or family demand best predict role conflict. As Smith (1991) and Edwards (1993) point out, many women with multiple roles have difficulty anticipating the impact of family support. In contrast to jobs with fixed hours and task, students say family work "just never ends". Orientation led by experienced women with multiple roles may enable these kinds of women to develop both realistic expectations and negotiation strategies they need to ensure that family support or demand are manageable.

Once family support is taken in to account, most life situation variables are become less important. The one exception is low income, which increases conflict, since low income students must expend more energy "scraping money together" (Home, 1998). They are unable to pay services such as housekeeping, which would allow them to continue their academic work. It is possible that they are more disadvantaged to begin with or that existing income is inadequate.

## Chapter Five

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1. Summary

The purpose of the study was to describe the level of role conflict and overload experienced by adult women students and to identify the specific life situations and tangible supports in predicting role conflict and overload. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of the study were utilized. Two types of instruments (questionnaire and interview) were used to collect the necessary information. Analyses were carried out using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) for quantitative data. Based on the objectives and the research questions mentioned in statement of the problem the following summary of major findings is presented:

1. The majority of adult women students have high level of role conflict and the rest found to have feelings of low role conflict in College of Commerce. The interview made with them indicated that role conflict was pronounced between student and parenting roles, both of which demand constant availability and have uncontrollable schedule. From interview participants, majority of them experienced high level of role conflict;
2. The role overload, more than half of adult women students have high role overload, while the rest, have low role overload in College of Commerce. In addition, the majority of interview participants also indicated that they have high role overload;
3. Univariate analyses of variance showed that adult women students life situation variable like income and having dependent person in their home have significant relationship with role conflict ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, the rest life situation variables as age, marital status, and work status, did not have significant relationship with role conflict ( $p > 0.05$ );

For role overload, Univariate analyses of variance revealed only income has a significant relationship with women students role overload ( $p < 0.05$ ). But, other life situation variable, age, marital status, work status and dependent person live in home have no a significant relationship with role overload ( $P > 0.05$ ). Multiple regression

analysis was done separately for role conflict and overload with life situation variables;

- 3.1. Multiple regression analysis was done for estimating the influential life situation variables predicting role conflict.. Income was also the second greatest significant proportion of the variance in the criteria and explained a further 6.2% of the variance. Adult women with lower income were more likely to report role conflict in College of Commerce. However, the other life situation variables like age, marital status, and work status did not have the power for predicting role conflict. These variables did not have important influence like income;
- 3.2. Of all the variables included, only family income influences feelings of role overload. Only financial situation of women students made a unique contribution which accounted for about 6.4% of variance in role overload. Income is the only and important predictor life situation variable which affect adult women students' role overload in College of Commerce. The rest life situation variables such as age, work status, marital status and having dependent person live in home did not have the important influential contribution in predicting role overload;
4. For women students' tangible support variable, univariant analyses of variance showed a significant difference for family and college support with role conflict( $P < 0.05$ ) i.e. students from low family and college support have significantly higher role conflict score than those women students from high family and college support. But, there is no significant difference in the amount of role conflict experienced when analyzed by workplace support ( $p > 0.05$ );  
Multiple regressions were done separately for role conflict and overload. With respect to the tangible supports variables, some differences were found between predictors of role conflict and role overload;
- 4.1. Family support plays a great role in predicting role conflict of adult women students. Family support variables accounted for 7.1% of the variance in role conflict. Family support is an important variable, which affects students' role conflict in College Commerce. Other tangible support variables (workplace support and college support) did not have predictive power for predicting role conflict; and,

- 4.2. With respect to tangible support variables no variable remained significant in the final model. Surprisingly, these variables did not appear to increase or decrease students' level of role overload in College of Commerce.

## **5.2. Conclusions**

Based on the above summarized findings and the research questions of the study, the following conclusions are given:

1. The experiences of adult women students with multiple roles are juggling two or three roles. They have much responsibility - they were parents and employees as well as students. They continued toward completion of educational goals, some experienced difficulty moving forward. Their experiences consisted of duties and responsibilities unlike those of regular college students – those who are not parents. For some, their college year has been lengthy, and they encountered barriers along the way. They are learning in difficult circumstances and face many situational and institutional obstacles which lead to role conflict and overload. One of the challenges and sources of stress for adult women students comes from the multiple and sometimes conflicting roles;
2. The experiences of the participants have lack of resources, including time and energy, needed to meet the demands of family, student and job. These contribute to the existence of role overload. The volumes of activities they have with in fixed time contribute the feelings of role overload;
3. One of the challenges of attending college for these adult women student participants is that daily life situations hindered persistence of their educational goals. Having low family income created conflict for women in this researcher study. Adult women students with low income tend to experience high role conflict. Low income increase conflict, since low income students must expend more energy. They are unable to pay house keepers, which allow them to continue their academic work or enabling women to replace themselves temporarily in one role. Factors that did contribute to greater feelings of role conflict among the women in this sample appear to be those that low income, therefore, limit choices as to whether and when to undertake particular activities to satisfy role demands;
4. The only variable that predicted levels of role overload, family income, was one that might indicate increased burden in the total volume of responsibilities. The time investment in family role activities contributes the feeling of role overload. Other factors

likely influence the volume of role demands including the number hours worked in home per week, the number of children, and the age of the youngest child contribute. Because the volume of task in home contribute family demand. If the volume of house task increases, the feeling of role overload also will increase;

5. The support of family, friends, and other adult women was found to be important to the persistence of adult women who participated in the researcher's study, while workplace and college support do not have the same effect. It could, therefore, be concluded from this study that such support facilitated the progress of adult women students. A family support measure is the most important factor that could determine whether adult women students with families have high or low level of role conflict. Role conflict arises when women are forced to deal simultaneously with several urgent, incompatible demands such as family, college and workplace; and
6. Overload, a feeling of being spread to thin or always playing catch up was unaffected by any tangible support measures. Tangible supports had no impact on the vulnerability of overload. This suggests that even adequate support cannot make an unreasonable situation manageable.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

Recommendations are appeals to people or entities concerned to solve or help to solve the problem discovered in the inquiry. The following recommendations aimed help to solve problems discovered in the investigations, and which are based up on the findings and conclusions:

1. The unique characteristics and experiences of this adult women population result in supporting and counseling needs that differ from those young age college students. Increased awareness of the stresses, challenges, and additional responsibilities faced by adult women can be helpful to administrators and students services personnel interested in providing a supportive environment.
  - Consideration should be given to the process for transitioning adult women students to college when they initially make application to the institution so that students' expectations of the institution when they enroll may be closer to reality.

- Flexible orientation program for adult women is one way to introduce adult women to the campus and other similar students, as well as announce support services for this specific population.
2. Educational institutions and workplace should take the advantage of combining employment, family and education while limiting the problems. This study suggests that responsiveness is comprised of three key ingredients:
    - *Understanding* - universities and employers need to understand multiple role students' difficult situations, recognize their strengths and take their needs seriously;
    - *Flexibility* – they need to be flexible in interpreting regulations, planning policy and schedules and making exceptions for temporary crises; and,
    - *Commitments* – they need to express their commitment by developing adapted programs and policies, as well as providing adequate material support.
  3. Higher rates of student drop out lead to increased costs for every one concerned. However, the following suggestions may reduce this problem. Increase access to available resources. An adequate income helps to alleviate role conflict and overload. More flexible student financial assistance policies could make it easier for part time students to obtain loans and grants. This would open up options for students who have no choice but to take a job to make ends meet. Higher income decrease conflict by enabling women to replace themselves temporarily in one role;
  4. Distance education increase students' control of time, place, and pace of learning, while reducing costs for students and college. Distance education decrease conflict by enabling women to replace themselves temporarily in one role which can also lower role conflict and overload. This study suggests that starting or expanding the program of distance education which could help to minimize the possibility of having feelings of role conflict and overload;
  5. The college instructors or advisors make sure students are informed about available services. Encourage these women to use all existing services and options which could make multiple role management easier. Increased access to administrative and student services outside the regular hours would also help these busy multiple role students. There is a need for students to have assistance with management of family

demands in order to alleviate some of the situational barriers as experienced daily by student participants; and,

6. It is an employer's advantage to reduce employees' role conflict and overload and encourage them to continue their education. For instance allow employee to use office equipment that may help to reduce their costs. This study suggests that the workplace should be encouraged to have library. This can minimize the demands of time.

***Recommendation for further research***

- An improved theoretical understanding of role conflict and overload could provide insight in fostering the prevention and reduction of role conflict and overload. The current researcher recommends that this study would be replicated with a larger, more diverse sample. Comparisons of role conflict and overload between different programs need to be examined to see if the academic setting has an impact on role conflict and overload.
- Additional research is also needed to examine the area of marital status since divorced women may have increased role conflict or overload due to lack of support systems.

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**Appendix A**  
**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Education**  
**Department of Curriculum and Teacher Professional**  
**Development Studies**

**Adult Education and Life Long Learning Unit**

**Questionnaire to be filled by women students who fulfill family and  
work responsibility**

**Dear Student**

The purpose of this study is to examine role conflict and overload in women students with family and job and to identify the importance of women's specific life situations and tangible supports in predicting role conflict and overload. There by, to suggest some ways of reducing the difficulties or challenges experienced by women students. Therefore, your contribution is very essential in fulfilling the objectives of the study. You are, therefore, kindly requested to fill the questionnaire carefully. Honesty and frankness is highly appreciated.

***Thank you in advance for your cooperation***

**General Information:**

This questionnaire has four parts. The first one includes background information. The second part contains statements of role conflict about women students with more than two roles. Thirdly, overload items about women students with family and job. Finally, the fifth part contains items that measure the support system from university, workplace and family.

**N.B:**

1. The information obtained is going to be used only for the research purpose and will be kept confidential;
2. If you encounter any ambiguity it is necessary to ask the data collector for clarification;
3. Do not write your name on the questionnaire; and,
4. There is no right or wrong answer; the best answers are those that honestly describe your feeling.

**Part one: Background Information**

**Direction:** In this section, you are kindly requested to provide the required data from the given alternatives on the space provided. Please, use tick (“√”) mark when necessary.

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
2. The field you are studying \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your work status?  
Full-time employee  Part-time employee  Self-employed
4. Income:  
 <250 Birr       1001-1500 Birr  
 250- 500 Birr       1501-2000 Birr  
 501-1000 Birr       >2001 Birr
5. Present marital status :  
 Married       Divorced  
 Unmarried       Widowed
6. Number of children (if any) living at home in each age category, write the actual number of children in  
\_\_\_\_\_ 0 – 5 years old      \_\_\_\_\_ 12 – 18 years old  
\_\_\_\_\_ 6 – 11 years old      \_\_\_\_\_ 19+years old  
\_\_\_\_\_ Number not living at home
7. Do you have dependent person at home? Yes  No
8. Do you have a child with special need (e.g. physically impaired)?  
Yes  No
9. Do you provide care for an old age parent or relative in your home?  
Yes  No

## Part two: Role Conflict Scale

Listed below are situations that commonly occur in the lives of women with more than one role. Please read each item carefully and indicate your extent of agreement or disagreement for each item by putting a tick (“✓”) mark.

Strongly Agree= SA

Undecided = U

Agree = A

Disagree= D Strongly Disagree= SD

| No | Items  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1  | My work, school and family life frequently overlap each other.                           |    |   |   |   |    |
| 2  | I tend to leave ‘work stuff’ at work, ‘school stuff’ at school and ‘home stuff’ at home. |    |   |   |   |    |
| 3  | I try hard to prevent work, school and family from interfering with each other.          |    |   |   |   |    |
| 4  | I strive to give 100% to my family, 100% to my school and 100% to my job.                |    |   |   |   |    |
| 5  | My work takes up time that I would like to spend with family and friends.                |    |   |   |   |    |
| 6  | My school life takes up time that I like to spend at work.                               |    |   |   |   |    |
| 7  | My family responsibilities often interfere with my work responsibilities.                |    |   |   |   |    |
| 8  | My family responsibilities prevent me from effectively performing my job.                |    |   |   |   |    |
| 9  | My school life takes up time that I like to spend with my family.                        |    |   |   |   |    |
| 10 | My family demands are so great that it decreases my academic achievement.                |    |   |   |   |    |
| 11 | After work I come to my home too tired to do some of the things I like to do.            |    |   |   |   |    |
| 12 | I forced to be absent from workplace during exam time or group work.                     |    |   |   |   |    |
| 13 | My attendance in school decline as my family place additional demand on me.              |    |   |   |   |    |
| 14 | I am not very good at keeping the different parts of my life separate from one another.  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 15 | I have to work on things that should be done differently.                                |    |   |   |   |    |

**Part three: Role Overload Scale,**

The following items (16-25) assess respondents' perceptions of having too much to do. Please read each item carefully and indicate your extent of agreement or disagreement for each item by putting a tick ("✓") mark.

Strongly Agree= SA      Undecided = U

Agree = A                      Disagree= D      Strongly Disagree= SD

| No | Items  | SA | A | U | D | SD |
|----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 16 | It often seems like I have too much for one person to do.  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 17 | The amount of work I am asked to do is fair.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 18 | I never seem to have enough time to get everything done.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 19 | I have always too much demand coming from being a student, worker and mother.                                    |    |   |   |   |    |
| 20 | There are many important activities for me that I should do.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 21 | I spend too much time in unimportant activities that take me away from my work.                                  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 22 | I am responsible for a number of projects or assignments both in the University and work place at the same time. |    |   |   |   |    |
| 23 | I feel that I just don't have time to take an occasional break.  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 24 | I have too much work and too little time to do in it.  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 25 | I feel like I never have a day off.  |    |   |   |   |    |

**Part five: Tangible Supports**

From question 26-40, Please read each item carefully and indicate your extent of agreement or disagreement for each item by putting a tick (“√”) mark. Strongly Agree= SA Undecided = U Agree = A Disagree= D Strongly Disagree= SD

| No | Items  | SA | S | U | D | SD |
|----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 26 | I do have access to use work place equipment like computer.  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 27 | My family do not interfere my learning rather they encourage me.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 28 | I am able to get the access to the needed resources in the university.                                     |    |   |   |   |    |
| 29 | My organization refunds my educational expenses.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 30 | The supports I received from my family help me to continue my learning.                                    |    |   |   |   |    |
| 31 | I am able to renegotiate with my instructors concerning assignment submission date.                        |    |   |   |   |    |
| 32 | I can negotiate with my boss or colleagues in order to get extra time for study.                           |    |   |   |   |    |
| 33 | I have a person who protect my child or provide services in my home.                                       |    |   |   |   |    |
| 34 | The college’s administrative staff members provide the necessary services.                                 |    |   |   |   |    |
| 35 | I can change my working time that helps to continue my education.  |    |   |   |   |    |
| 36 | I able to negotiate with my partner about family responsibilities.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 37 | When I am late or absent from class due to family or workplace demand, I receive support from instructors. |    |   |   |   |    |
| 38 | My boss and colleagues have positive attitude towards my learning.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 39 | My partner encourages me to continue my education.   |    |   |   |   |    |
| 40 | There is orientation program for new extension students before starting class.                             |    |   |   |   |    |





**ክፍል ሁለት፡- የሥራ ሀላፊነት መጋጨት ወይም አለመጣጣም መለኪያ**

ከ1-15 ለተዘረዘሩ ሃላፊዎች በሚከተሉት የምላሽ ደረጃ መስፈርቶች ማለትም ፍብጣም እስማማለሁ፣ ፍእስማማለሁ፣ ፍመወሰን አልችልም፣ ፍአልስማማም እና ፍብጣም አልስማማም በሚሉት አማራጮች በተሰጠው ቦታ ላይ የ«✓» በማስቀመጥ ይመልሱ።

| ተ. ቁ. | አባባሎች  | ብጣም እስማማለሁ | እስማማለሁ | መወሰን አልችልም | አልስማማም | ብጣም አልስማማም |
|-------|--|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| 1.    | የቤት፣ የት/ቤት እና የመ/ቤት ስራዎች ብዙውን ጊዜ ይደራረቡብኛል።                   |            |        |            |        |            |
| 2.    | ከቤተሰቤ/ከስራ ባልደረቦቼ እና ከት/ቤት ከጓደኞቼ ጋር ለመገናኘት በቂ ጊዜ የለኝም።        |            |        |            |        |            |
| 3.    | የቤት፣ የት/ቤት እና የመ/ቤት ጉዳዮች አንዱ በአንዱ ላይ ጣልቃ እንዳይገባብኝ በጣም አጥራለሁ። |            |        |            |        |            |
| 4.    | ሙሉ በሙሉ የት/ቤት፣ የመ/ቤት እና የቤት ሥራዎችን ለመስራት ጥረት አደርጋለሁ።           |            |        |            |        |            |
| 5.    | የመ/ቤት ስራ ከጓደኞቼና ከቤተሰብ ጋር ለማሳለፍ የምፈልገውን ጊዜ ይሻማብኛል።            |            |        |            |        |            |
| 6.    | ት/ት በመ/ቤት ለምሰራው ስራ እንቅፋት ሆኖብኛል።                              |            |        |            |        |            |
| 7.    | የቤተሰብ ሀላፊነት የመ/ቤት ስራዎን በሚገባ እንዳልወጣ እንቅፋት ይሆንብኛል።             |            |        |            |        |            |
| 8.    | የመ/ቤት ሥራ ሁል ጊዜ ትምህርቴን ለማንበብ የምፈልገው ጊዜ ይወስድብኛል።               |            |        |            |        |            |
| 9.    | የት/ት ጊዜ ከቤተሰቤ ጋር ለማሳለፍ የምፈልገውን ጊዜ ይሻማብኛል።                    |            |        |            |        |            |
| 10.   | የቤተሰብ ሀላፊነት ከፍተኛ በመሆኑ በትምህርቴ ውጤታማ እንዳልሆን ምክንያት ሆኗል።          |            |        |            |        |            |
| 11.   | ከሥራ ስመለስ በጣም ስለሚደክመኝ የቤት ውስጥ ወይም የቤተሰብ ስራ ለመስራት አቸገራለሁ።      |            |        |            |        |            |
| 12.   | ፈተና ሲደርስ ወይም አሳይመት ሲበዛ ሥራ ቦታ ለመቅረት እገደዳለሁ።                   |            |        |            |        |            |
| 13.   | በቤት ወስጥ ያለኛ የስራ ድርሻ ከፍተኛ በመሆኑ ከት/ቤት ለምቀርባቸው ቀናት ምክንያት ሆኗል።   |            |        |            |        |            |
| 14.   | ያለብኝ የስራ ሀላፊነቶች ወይም የስራ ድርሻዎች አንዱን ከአንዱ ለያይቼ መስራት አልቻልኩም።    |            |        |            |        |            |
| 15.   | በአንድ ላይ (ጎን ለጎን) ሊሰሩ የማይገቡ ነገሮችን መስራት እንዳለብኝ አስባለሁ።          |            |        |            |        |            |

**ክፍል ሶስት፡- የስራ መደራረብ ወይም የሥራ መብዛት መለኪያ**

ይህ ክፍል በስራ አይነት መብዛት ምክንያት ሊከሰት የሚችለው የስራ መደራረብ ለመለካት ሀሳቦችን የያዘ ነው። ከ1-10 ለተዘረዘሩ ሃሳቦች በሚከተሉት የምላሽ ደረጃ መስፈርቶች ማለት ፍብጣም እስማማለሁ፣ ፍእስማማለሁ፣ ፍመወሰን አልችልም፣ ፍአልስማማም እና ፍብጣም አልስማማም በሚሉት አማራጮች በመጠቀም በተሰጠው ቦታ ላይ የ«✓» በማስቀመጥ ይመልሱ።

| ተ.ቁ | አባባሎች   | ብጣም እስማማለሁ | እስማማለሁ | መወሰን አልችልም | አልስማማም | ብጣም አልስማማም |
|-----|---|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
| 1.  | ሁልጊዜ አንድ ሰው ሊሰራ ከሚገባው በላይ እንደምሰራ ይሰማኛል።           |            |        |            |        |            |
| 2.  | የምሰራው ሥራ ተማጣጣኝ እና ተገቢ እንዳልሆነ ይሰማኛል።               |            |        |            |        |            |
| 3.  | ሁሉንም ስራ ለመስራት በቂ ጊዜ ያለኝ አይመስለኝም።                  |            |        |            |        |            |
| 4.  | ተማሪ፣ ሰራተኛ፣ እና የቤተሰብ ሃላፊ እንደመሆኔ የስራ ጫና አለብኝ።       |            |        |            |        |            |
| 5.  | በርካታ ልሰራቸው የሚገቡ አስፈላጊ ነገሮች አለብኝ።                  |            |        |            |        |            |
| 6.  | አብዛኛውን ጊዜ እኔን በማይመለከቱ ስብሰባዎች የመ/ቤት የስራ ሰዓት አጠፋለሁ። |            |        |            |        |            |
| 7.  | በት/ቤት እና በስራ ቦታ ለበርካታ የስራ ድርሻዎች ሐላፊነት አለብኝ።       |            |        |            |        |            |
| 8.  | ምንም በአረፍት ለማሳለፍ የምችልበት አጋጣሚ እንደሌለ ይሰማኛል።          |            |        |            |        |            |
| 9.  | ብጣም ብዙ ስራዎች ቢኖሩኝም ለመስራት ያለኝ ጊዜ ግን በጣም ትንሽ ነው።     |            |        |            |        |            |
| 10. | አንድም ቀን ሥራ ሳልሰራ ያሳለፍኩት ቀን የለም።                    |            |        |            |        |            |



**Appendix C**  
**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Education**  
**Department of Curriculum and Teacher Professional**  
**Development Studies**

**Adult Education and Life Long Learning Unit**

*Interview questions for female students*

1. Tell me about your experiences as a woman with family and jobs enrolled at the university?
  - 1.1. Did you ever feel role conflict? How do you see the sources and consequences of role conflict
  - 1.2. What about the feeling of overload? What is its cause and effects?
2. How has college members contributed to your success at university?
3. Estimate the amount support you received from various sources? Is support helpful?
4. What do you expect the supports from the University, family and workplace for female students with families and jobs?

## Appendix D

### አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ

#### ስነ-ትምህርት ኮሌጅ

የስርዓተ ትምህርት መምህራን ሙያ ልማት ትምህርት ክፍል

የጎልማሶች ትምህርት እና የተከታታይ ትምህርት ንዑስ ክፍል

ስራ ላላቸው እና ቤተሰብ ለመስራቱ ሴት ተማሪዎች የተዘጋጀ ቃለ መጠይቅ

1. የኮሌጁ ቆይታዎን በአጭሩ ይግለጹ (ለምሳሌ መቼ እንደገቡ እና በኮሌጁ ያሳለፉት ህይወት)
  - የስራ የቤተሰብ እና የት/ቤት ሃላፊነቶች እርስ በርስ አለመጣጣም (መጋጨት) ተከስቶበት ያውቃል እንዴት እንደሆነ ያብራሩ?
  - የሃላፊነቶች አለመጣጣም ምክንያት ወጥረት ወይም ጭንቀት ይሰማዎታል?
  - የስራ ቤት እና የት/ቤት የስራ ድርሻዎች ይደራረቡበታል እንዴት?
  - የስራ ሃላፊነቶች መደራረብ መከሰት ምክንያት ናቸው ብለው የሚያስቡትን ይግለጹ?
2. ከኮሌጁ ማህበረሰብ (መምህራን ሰራተኞች) ጋር ያለዎት ግንኙነት ለምሳሌ በትምህርትዎት ወጤታማ እንዲሆኑ ያደረጉልዎት አስተዋፅዖ ካለ ባጭሩ ያስረዱ?
3. ትምህርት በኮሌጅ ከጀመሩ በሁዋላ ያገኙዋቸውን እርዳታዎች እንዴት ይገልጻሉ?
  - የእነዚህ ወጥረቶች ወይም ጭንቀቶች መንስኤው ምን ይመስልዎታል?
  - ወጥረቶች ወይም ጭንቀቶች መጨረሻቸው ምን ሊሆን ይችላል (ምን አይነት ችግር ያስከትላሉ)?
4. ስራ ያላቸውና ቤተሰብ የመሰረቱ ሴት ተማሪዎች የስራ መደራረብ ወይም አለመጣጣም ሲያጋጥማቸው ምን አይነት እገዛ ወይም ድጋፍ ቢያገኙ ከችግሩ ሊላቀቁ ይችላሉ (ከቤተሰብ ወይም ጓደኛ ከመ/ቤት እና ኮሌጅ)?
  - ከቤተሰብ ወይም ጓደኛ
  - ከመ/ቤት
  - ኮሌጅ

## Appendix E

Distribution of responses in response options of role conflict, role overload and tangible supports.

### 1. Role conflict

|         | St. Agree |      | Agree |      | Undecided |      | Disagree |      | St. Disagree |      | M    | SD   |
|---------|-----------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|------|------|------|
|         | N         | %    | N     | %    | N         | %    | N        | %    | N            | %    |      |      |
| Item 1  | 1         | .9   | 23    | 20.9 | 12        | 10.9 | 29       | 26.4 | 45           | 40.9 | 3.80 | 1.21 |
| Item 2  | 2         | 1.8  | 26    | 23.6 | 3         | 2.7  | 40       | 36.4 | 39           | 35.5 | 4.25 | .71  |
| Item 3  | 1         | .9   | 1     | .9   | 8         | 7.3  | 59       | 53.6 | 41           | 37.3 | 4.34 | .67  |
| Item 4  | 0         | 0    | 3     | 2.7  | 3         | 2.7  | 58       | 52.7 | 46           | 41.8 | 3.20 | 1.45 |
| Item 5  | 13        | 11.8 | 35    | 31.8 | 11        | 10.0 | 19       | 17.3 | 32           | 29.1 | 2.28 | 1.12 |
| Item 6  | 22        | 20.0 | 62    | 56.4 | 7         | 6.4  | 11       | 10.0 | 8            | 7.3  | 2.05 | 1.00 |
| Item 7  | 31        | 28.2 | 59    | 53.6 | 7         | 6.4  | 9        | 8.2  | 4            | 3.6  | 2.90 | 1.45 |
| Item 8  | 19        | 17.3 | 41    | 37.3 | 4         | 3.6  | 24       | 21.8 | 22           | 20.0 | 3.75 | 1.29 |
| Item 9  | 11        | 10.0 | 12    | 10.9 | 5         | 4.5  | 47       | 42.7 | 35           | 31.8 | 2.73 | 1.41 |
| Item 10 | 23        | 20.9 | 41    | 37.3 | 7         | 6.4  | 21       | 19.1 | 18           | 16.4 | 3.67 | 1.3  |
| Item 11 | 9         | 8.2  | 19    | 17.3 | 6         | 5.5  | 42       | 38.2 | 34           | 30.9 | 3.75 | 1.25 |
| Item 12 | 3         | 2.7  | 26    | 23.6 | 7         | 6.4  | 34       | 30.9 | 40           | 36.4 | 2.22 | 1.11 |
| Item 13 | 28        | 25.5 | 55    | 50.0 | 7         | 6.4  | 15       | 13.6 | 5            | 4.5  | 2.15 | 1.12 |
| Item 14 | 34        | 30.9 | 50    | 45.5 | 6         | 5.5  | 16       | 14.5 | 4            | 3.6  | 3.06 | 1.33 |
| Item 15 | 16        | 14.5 | 27    | 24.5 | 21        | 19.1 | 27       | 24.5 | 19           | 17.3 | 3.85 | 1.20 |

### 2. Role overload

|         | St. Agree |      | Agree |      | Undecided |      | Disagree |      | St. Disagree |      | M    | SD   |
|---------|-----------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|------|------|------|
|         | N         | %    | N     | %    | N         | %    | N        | %    | N            | %    |      |      |
| Item 16 | 10        | 9.1  | 51    | 46.4 | 7         | 6.4  | 28       | 25.5 | 14           | 12.7 | 2.65 | 1.25 |
| Item 17 | 15        | 13.6 | 50    | 45.5 | 19        | 17.3 | 10       | 9.1  | 16           | 14.5 | 3.21 | 1.32 |
| Item 18 | 13        | 11.8 | 27    | 24.5 | 14        | 12.7 | 36       | 32.7 | 20           | 18.2 | 3.93 | 1.20 |
| Item 19 | 9         | 8.2  | 7     | 6.4  | 8         | 7.3  | 45       | 40.9 | 41           | 37.3 | 4.13 | .94  |
| Item 20 | 2         | 1.8  | 9     | 8.2  | 3         | 2.7  | 55       | 50.0 | 41           | 37.3 | 2.05 | 1.08 |
| Item 21 | 35        | 31.8 | 54    | 49.1 | 9         | 8.2  | 5        | 4.5  | 7            | 6.4  | 3.40 | 1.24 |
| Item 22 | 8         | 7.3  | 26    | 23.6 | 12        | 10.9 | 43       | 39.1 | 21           | 19.1 | 2.86 | 1.28 |
| Item 23 | 13        | 11.8 | 45    | 40.9 | 11        | 10.0 | 27       | 24.5 | 14           | 12.7 | 3.23 | 1.16 |
| Item 24 | 3         | 2.7  | 38    | 34.5 | 17        | 15.5 | 35       | 31.8 | 17           | 15.5 | 3.25 | 1.42 |
| Item 25 | 15        | 13.6 | 27    | 24.5 | 11        | 10.0 | 29       | 26.4 | 28           | 25.5 | 2.86 | 1.26 |

### 3. Tangible supports

|         | St. Agree |      | Agree |      | Undecided |      | Disagree |      | St. Disagree |      | M    | SD   |
|---------|-----------|------|-------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|--------------|------|------|------|
|         | N         | %    | N     | %    | N         | %    | N        | %    | N            | %    |      |      |
| Item 26 | 5         | 4.5  | 24    | 21.8 | 10        | 9.1  | 42       | 38.2 | 29           | 26.4 | 4.09 | 1.25 |
| Item 27 | 8         | 7.3  | 11    | 10.0 | 0         | 0    | 35       | 31.8 | 56           | 50.9 | 2.69 | 1.21 |
| Item 28 | 20        | 18.2 | 38    | 34.5 | 15        | 13.6 | 31       | 28.2 | 6            | 5.5  | 2.42 | 1.55 |
| Item 29 | 47        | 42.7 | 24    | 21.8 | 1         | .9   | 22       | 20.0 | 16           | 14.5 | 4.04 | 1.16 |
| Item 30 | 7         | 6.4  | 7     | 6.4  | 9         | 8.2  | 39       | 35.5 | 48           | 43.6 | 2.69 | 1.20 |
| Item 31 | 18        | 16.4 | 40    | 36.4 | 18        | 16.4 | 27       | 24.5 | 7            | 6.4  | 3.40 | 1.35 |
| Item 32 | 12        | 10.9 | 24    | 21.8 | 8         | 7.3  | 40       | 36.4 | 26           | 23.6 | 3.56 | 1.34 |
| Item 33 | 13        | 11.8 | 12    | 10.9 | 19        | 17.3 | 32       | 29.1 | 34           | 30.9 | 2.45 | 1.27 |
| Item 34 | 33        | 30.0 | 28    | 25.5 | 22        | 20.0 | 20       | 18.2 | 7            | 6.4  | 2.64 | 1.40 |
| Item 35 | 33        | 30.0 | 25    | 22.7 | 11        | 10.0 | 31       | 28.2 | 10           | 9.1  | 4.02 | 1.13 |
| Item 36 | 7         | 6.4  | 6     | 5.5  | 9         | 8.2  | 44       | 40.0 | 44           | 40.0 | 2.17 | 1.11 |
| Item 37 | 40        | 36.4 | 28    | 25.5 | 27        | 24.5 | 13       | 11.8 | 2            | 1.8  | 3.51 | 1.24 |
| Item 38 | 13        | 11.8 | 8     | 7.3  | 22        | 20.0 | 44       | 40.0 | 23           | 20.9 | 4.23 | 1.06 |
| Item 39 | 4         | 3.6  | 4     | 3.6  | 16        | 14.5 | 25       | 22.7 | 61           | 55.5 | 4.23 | .99  |
| Item 40 | 4         | 3.6  | 4     | 3.6  | 8         | 7.3  | 41       | 37.3 | 53           | 48.2 | 3.60 | 1.22 |

**Appendix F**  
**Addis Ababa University**  
**College of Education**  
**Department of Curriculum and Teacher**  
**Professional Development Studies**  
**Adult Education and Life Long Learning Unit**

**Questionnaire to be filled by women students**

**Dear Student**

The purpose of this study is to examine role conflict and overload in women students with family and job and to identify the importance of women's specific life situations and tangible supports in predicting role conflict and overload. Therefore, your contribution is very essential in fulfilling the objectives of the study. You are, therefore, kindly requested to fill the questionnaire carefully. Honesty and frankness is highly appreciated.

***Thank you in advance for your cooperation***

**Direction:** you are kindly requested to provide the required data from the given alternatives on the space provided. Please, use tick ("✓") mark when necessary.

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Id Number \_\_\_\_\_
3. The field you are studying \_\_\_\_\_
4. Year of study: 3<sup>rd</sup> year       4<sup>th</sup> year
5. Present marital status:  
Married       Divorced   
Unmarried       Widowed
6. Do you have a job?    Yes       No

## Appendix G

### Reliability of scales for the study

#### 1. *Role conflict scale Reliability Statistics*

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .789             | 15         |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|     | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| q1  | 46.8667                    | 59.124                         | .357                             | .782                             |
| q2  | 46.5333                    | 67.124                         | -.012                            | .806                             |
| q3  | 46.2667                    | 64.067                         | .249                             | .787                             |
| q4  | 47.0000                    | 63.286                         | .221                             | .790                             |
| q5  | 46.9333                    | 59.781                         | .405                             | .777                             |
| q6  | 48.2000                    | 57.886                         | .591                             | .763                             |
| q7  | 46.8000                    | 60.314                         | .431                             | .775                             |
| q8  | 47.2667                    | 50.924                         | .667                             | .749                             |
| q9  | 46.3333                    | 56.952                         | .499                             | .768                             |
| q10 | 47.4667                    | 56.981                         | .510                             | .768                             |
| q11 | 46.0000                    | 61.000                         | .456                             | .775                             |
| q12 | 46.5333                    | 57.410                         | .479                             | .770                             |
| q13 | 47.7333                    | 57.067                         | .525                             | .766                             |
| q14 | 46.2667                    | 61.638                         | .394                             | .778                             |
| q15 | 46.6000                    | 66.829                         | .043                             | .798                             |

#### 2. *Role overload scale reliability statistics*

|                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .826             | 10         |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|     | Scale Mean if Item Deleted | Scale Variance if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-Total Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| q16 | 29.2000                    | 55.743                         | .586                             | .802                             |
| q17 | 29.6667                    | 61.667                         | .580                             | .805                             |
| q18 | 28.5333                    | 60.838                         | .479                             | .813                             |
| q19 | 27.6667                    | 63.524                         | .504                             | .812                             |
| q20 | 27.7333                    | 60.352                         | .499                             | .811                             |
| q21 | 29.6667                    | 67.524                         | .172                             | .840                             |
| q22 | 28.3333                    | 56.381                         | .711                             | .789                             |
| q23 | 28.8000                    | 57.029                         | .552                             | .806                             |
| q24 | 28.4667                    | 55.838                         | .744                             | .785                             |
| q25 | 28.7333                    | 61.352                         | .367                             | .827                             |

### 3. *Tangible support scale reliability statistics*

|                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's<br>Alpha | N of Items |
| .812                | 15         |

#### Item-Total Statistics

|     | Scale Mean if<br>Item Deleted | Scale Variance<br>if Item Deleted | Corrected Item-<br>Total<br>Correlation | Cronbach's Alpha if<br>Item Deleted |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| q26 | 39.9444                       | 55.114                            | .608                                    | .786                                |
| q27 | 39.0000                       | 58.588                            | .534                                    | .794                                |
| q28 | 40.8333                       | 62.029                            | .467                                    | .801                                |
| q29 | 40.0556                       | 63.467                            | .204                                    | .815                                |
| q30 | 39.1667                       | 56.029                            | .546                                    | .791                                |
| q31 | 40.5000                       | 62.029                            | .225                                    | .816                                |
| q32 | 40.6667                       | 57.059                            | .466                                    | .798                                |
| q33 | 40.5556                       | 59.203                            | .444                                    | .800                                |
| q34 | 41.2778                       | 58.448                            | .461                                    | .798                                |
| q35 | 40.8333                       | 60.382                            | .447                                    | .800                                |
| q36 | 40.2778                       | 56.212                            | .646                                    | .785                                |
| q37 | 40.3333                       | 66.000                            | .024                                    | .827                                |
| q38 | 39.7222                       | 59.036                            | .492                                    | .797                                |
| q39 | 39.2778                       | 59.036                            | .375                                    | .806                                |
| q40 | 41.1111                       | 59.869                            | .525                                    | .796                                |

## Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Sisay Abreha

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as University advisor.

Name: Dr. Getachew Adugna

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 26/08/09

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
ADDIS ABABA 1178  
ADDIS ABABA ETHIOPIA