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**Interrupted Careers and Women's Health in Later Life: A Relationship That Wary with Working/Employment Conditions? Findings from the Constances Cohort**

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**ABSTRACT**

Most previous research has shown that continuous employment benefits women's health in later life. Nevertheless, it has not examined the implications of employment interruptions on women's health taking into account their past working and employment conditions. We assume that withdrawals from the labour market could protect women from a detrimental work environment and from the risks associated with job insecurity. To explore this hypothesis, we draw on data from the French CONSTANCES cohort, that includes long-term detailed retrospective information on employment history, on employment/working conditions history, as well as information on current and past health. We apply sequence analysis to identify dominant patterns of discontinuous careers for 35639 women. We test their association with self-rated health, depressive mood, and limitation of activity. We include interaction terms to examine the variation of these associations by past working and employment conditions, which are measured by the number of past work exposures, and the experience of temporary contracts. Overall, the results do not support the hypothesis that employment interruptions protect women's perceived and mental health from detrimental working conditions. The risks associated with labour market withdrawals seem to cumulate with the work exposures ones. By contrast, interruptions' implications on later life are not significant for women who have had more precarious employment conditions. This suggests that interruptions are balanced with detrimental employment conditions. Further analysis should be made to understand what underpins the variation of these results depending on the outcome considered.

**KEYWORDS: -**

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