

## Balancing Roles: The Impact of Multitasking, Work and Social Adjustment on Decision Making among Married Working Women


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ARTICLE INFO			ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article History:</b></p> <p>Received: May 04, 2025</p> <p>Revised: June 14, 2025</p> <p>Accepted: June 20, 2025</p> <p>Available Online: July 03, 2025</p>			<p><i>This study conducted to investigate the relationship and explores how multitasking and ability to adjust to work and social environment impact the decision making among married working women in Pakistan. A cross sectional correlational design is used and collection of data is accomplished through a structured-questionnaires including Everyday Multitasking Scale (EMS), Work and Social Adjustment (WSAS) and Decision Style Scale (DSS) which measure both intuitive and rational decision styles. Questionnaire were distributed by using a purposive sampling among 500 married working women from different job sectors including educational sector that encompassing teachers, lecturers and from medical profession that include nurses, lady health workers, bankers and from women who are in business profession. This study provide insight on women who married more than ten years and their work experience more than eleven years are better in multitasking and performance and their rational decision making strong who have work experience from six to ten year and have less than two years of marriage and work experience from 0-2 years showed better adjustment also strong rational decision making. This study give insight to monitor development over time and investigated how decision making quality of married working women is affected by multitasking and adjustment skills.</i></p>
<p><b>Keywords:</b></p> <p><i>Multitasking, Work and Social Adjustment, Rational Decision Making and Intuitive Decision Making.</i></p>			
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### Introduction

Doing just one task is not necessarily sufficient for people. They frequently involved in multitasking, which mean they handle multiple goal to achieve multiple objective at once. Multitaskers are able to engage in various task and accomplish additional task (Sanbonmatsu et al., 2013). Multitasking is progressively prevalent in modern workplace due to persistent stress of familial and professional obligations, people use multitasking at their professional lives, in their

homes as well as institutions (Halim & Halim, 2023). In real world situations, individual frequently change between primary and secondary task in order to figure out workload efficiently and understand the cost of collective task switching (Ahmad et al., 2021).

In today's fast paced world, multitasking has become an indispensable component of daily life, particularly for married working women who are responsible for managing both personal and household responsibilities. For them, multitasking is not just a choice it is a daily need as they attempt to meet with the demand of home and work environment. The process through which individual operate productively in work and social environment is work and social adjustment. Understanding this adjustment is important in evaluating employee ability to handle increased responsibilities and adapt to changing expectation without a decline in performance (Rehatta, 2023). For married working women, the ability to adjust with the demand of their job, social expectations and family obligations is influence their decision making abilities.

Decision making require choosing one or more desired option from greater number of possibilities such as events, tactics and demands (Jonassen, 2012). Multitasking enhance performance in work environment and requiring balance management. According to Lee & Harris (2018) there are three primary steps of decision making: "generating predictions" "analyzing the result of decision" and "learning from the result to make predictions". Social decision making is complicated and involve both conventional process like "reward evaluation" and "valuation" as well as mental inferences regarding the mental state of others. Married working women decisions are influenced by complex interaction between their emotional commitments, social expectations, financial obligations and personal ideals. They frequently have to make decision about their own well-being, childcare, professional progress and household management, all of which have impact on their families and themselves and married women who have greater ability to solve problem are more capable to handle work family issues, which ultimately result in healthier family environment and improved well- being (Abid et al., 2023). The demand of contemporary work environment often-require from people to perform multiple task in parallel or series, meaning some task are inaugurated and completed whereas other are remains in process or a waiting for executions. This behavior referred as "multitasking behavior" which involve a way to cope with multitasking requirement which is probably most common cause of stress in contemporary workplace (Peifer & Zipp, 2019). According to Crews & Russ (2020) individual are involved in multitasking because of three main reason: "the changing nature of work", "the enablement of information and communication technologies (ICT)" and "time demand". In 21<sup>st</sup> century multitasking considered as essential component and workplace enhanced by ICT require careful evaluation of employee capacity to avoid performance decline and guide effective management decision (Otto et al, 2012).

The primary objective of this study is to explore the relationship between multitasking and work and social adjustment on decision making among married working women in Pakistan and to explore how these women manage multiple responsibilities across personal, professional and social domains while making effective decision. Previous studies examine that how multitasking influence gender role attitude and work life balance and also indicate that multitasking preference have significant effect on marriage contentment and improved marital adjustment (Kalsoom & Kamal, 2020). This study aims to understand the extent to which multitasking abilities influence their efficiency and well-being, how they adjust to the demand of work and social life and how these factor effect their decision making process. By examining these elements, the study seeks to identify the challenges faced by married working women and provide insights that can help in developing supportive strategies and policies to enhance their work-life balance and decision making effectiveness.

## Methods

This study adopted a cross sectional correlational research design to examine the multitasking, work and social adjustment on decision making of married working women in Pakistan. The sample consisted of 500 married working women between the age of 20 to 51 year or older, selected through a purposive sampling from various sector including education, healthcare and business across urban, rural and suburban area. Participant were required to currently employed and living with their spouse to ensure relevance to the study's focus on marital and work roles.

Data were collected through using a structured questionnaire composed of three standardized scales. The Everyday Multitasking Scale (EMS) was used to access the multitasking ability of participants, the Work and Social Adjustment Scale (WSAS) measured the level of adaptation in work and social domain and Decision Style Scale (DSS) was employed to evaluate the rational and intuitive decision making style of married working women. All scales demonstrated acceptable reliability and were tested for internal consistency within the current test using Cronbach's alpha.

Questionnaire were distributed in person, ensuring person anonymity and confidentiality. Ethical approval was obtained from Departmental Research Review Committee (DRRC), of XXX department via letter (Approval number: PSY/UOG/1942-A), from XXX university. The participant was informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality and gave their informed consent. Data were analyzed using SPSS (Version 24), employing descriptive statistics as well as inferential test analysis to examine the relationship among variables.

## Results

The present study explored the relationship between multitasking ability, work and social adjustment and decision making. It also examined how these variables working on married working women in the context of managing their household and professional responsibilities. The initial data screening was carried out before conducting any statistical test which involve checking for outliers, checking accuracy of data entry and accessing missing values. frequencies and descriptive statistics were examined to detect anomalies including extreme scores and patterns of non-response. Reverse coded items were adjusted accordingly, and composite scores for each variable were computed. Once the data set was cleaned and organized, the next step involved conducting reliability analyses to ensure internal consistency of each scale. This process confirmed that the instrument used were suitable for further statistical testing with reliable data in place, the analysis proceeded to examine the relationship between multitasking, work and social adjustment and decision making.

### Reliability Analysis

The Cronbach's alpha of the scale (EMS), (WSAS) and (DSS)Rational, (DSS)Intuitive were included in reliability study.

**Table 1: Psychometric Properties for Scale**

Scales	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Cronbach's alpha
Everyday Multitasking Scale	48.4	6.51	39	.70
Work And Social Adjustment Scale	20.6	8.27	40	.83
Decision Style Scale (Rational)	19.1	3.37	17	.73
Decision Style Scale (Intuitive)	15.6	3.89	19	.73

Table 1 showed that the psychometric properties of the scale used in current study. the Everyday multitasking scale acceptable reliability ( $\alpha = .70$ ) suggesting it is a reliable tool for accessing multitasking behavior, while work and social adjustment scale had good reliability ( $\alpha = .83$ ) with lower score indicating better functioning. Both subscale of Decision style scale: rational and intuitive showed satisfactory internal consistency ( $\alpha = .73$ ). these result support the suitability of the measure for accessing multitasking ability, adjustment and decision making style.

### **Correlational Analysis**

A correlational analysis on (EMS) and on its (performance EMS) and (preference EMS), work and social adjustment and decision making was carried out to examine how these variables relate to one another.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlation between study variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
Performance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Preference	.382**	-	-	-	-	-
Everyday Multitasking Scale	.880**	.775**	-	-	-	-
Work And Social Adjustment Scale	-.112*	-.120**	-.139**	-	-	-
Decision Style Scale(Rational)	.047	.173**	.121**	.121**	-	-
Decision Style Scale (Intuitive)	-.152**	.042	-.082	-.073	.141**	-

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

Table 2 revealed that the performance and preference were moderately correlated ( $r = .382^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ) suggesting that participant who showed a stronger preference for multitasking also tended to perform better. However, performance and preference show significant and strong positive correlation with everyday multitasking scale (EMS) performance ( $r = .880^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and preference ( $r = .775^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ) indicating that EMS total score demonstrate the tendency and ability to multitask efficiently.

While, the score of everyday multitasking scale is significant and negatively correlated with the work and social adjustment scale (WSAS) ( $r = -.139^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and both performance ( $r = -.112^{*}$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and preference ( $r = -.120^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ). given that low score indicate better functioning. These findings indicate that higher multitasking ability and preference associated with better work and social adjustment.

In term of decision making style, preference is positively correlated with rational decision making ( $r = .173^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and total EMS is also show a small and significant correlation with decision style ( $r = .121^{*}$ ,  $p < .01$ ), implying that those who prefer and perform well in multitasking tend to adopt more rational decision strategies.

Performance is negatively correlated with intuitive decision making ( $r = .152^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ) indicating that individual who rely more on intuition may perform less effectively in multitasking context. Overall, these results suggest that effective multitasking is associated with better functioning and rational decision making, whereas, intuitive style hinder work performance.

# One- Way ANOVA

**Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and One-Way Analysis of Variance in study variable across work experience**

Variable	0-2 years		3-5 years		6-10 years		11 years >		F(3,496)	$\eta^2$	Post-hoc
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Performance(EMS)	27.39	4.72	27.90	4.44	29.18	3.90	30.45	4.56	10.55***	0.06	4>3>2,1
Preference (EMS)	18.29	3.31	18.87	3.41	19.17	2.88	19.77	3.70	3.20*	0.01	4>3>2>1
EMS	45.68	6.55	46.77	6.71	48.36	5.50	50.23	6.87	9.83***	0.05	4>3>2>1
WSAS	17.52	7.36	21.78	8.45	21.54	8.22	19.98	8.21	4.06**	0.02	2>3>4>1
Rational (DSS)	18.12	3.63	19.21	3.07	19.67	3.09	18.73	3.66	3.82**	0.02	3>2>1>4
Intuitive(DSS)	15.08	4.27	16.10	3.94	15.78	3.77	15.42	3.85	1.07	0.006	2>3>4>1

\*p< .05, \*\*p< .01, \*\*\*p<.001. DSS; Decision Style Scale, WSAS; Work and Social Adjustment Scale, EMS; Everyday Multitasking Scale

Table 3 represent a highly significant difference in performance (F=10.55, p<. 001,  $\eta^2$ =0.06), indicating performance score increase progressively with work experience and everyday multitasking ability showed a strong and significant difference (F=9.83, p<0.001,  $\eta^2$ =0.05) with individual work from 11 year or more report highest multitasking score. work and social adjustment report highest adjustment (F=4.06, p< .01,  $\eta^2$ =0.02) with those who work from 3-5 years and 6-10 years. For preference, a small but significant difference observed (F=3.20, p<.05,  $\eta^2$ =0.01), indicating individual have work experience more than 11 year report highest preference. the highest score observed in rational decision making (F=3.82, p< .01,  $\eta^2$ =0.02) among those who have work experience among 6-10 years.

**Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and One-Way Analysis of Variance in study variable across duration of marriage**

Variables	Less than 2 years		2-5 years		6-10 years		10 or more years		F(3,496)	$\eta^2$	Post-hoc
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Performance(EMS)	28.44	3.09	28.32	4.41	28.68	3.95	30.79	4.77	9.62***	0.05	4>3>2>1
Preference (EMS)	19.67	2.29	18.95	3.36	19.06	3.02	19.74	3.75	1.68	0.01	4>1>3>2
EMS	48.1	4.80	47.27	6.33	47.74	5.81	50.5	7.19	7.65***	0.04	4>3>2>1
WSAS	13.2	9.77	20.78	8.48	22.01	7.75	19.28	8.21	5.62***	0.03	3>2>4>1
Rational (DSS)	20.1	3.29	18.6	3.40	19.71	2.95	18.84	3.76	3.81*	0.02	1>3>2>1
Intuitive(DSS)	15.0	6.63	15.5	3.86	15.5	3.69	16.0	3.96	.70	0.004	4>3>2>1

\*P< .05, \*\*\*p< .001. DSS; Decision Style Scale, WSAS; Work and Social Adjustment Scale, EMS; Everyday Multitasking Scale

Table 4 shows mean, standard deviation and F-values for performance, preference, everyday multitasking, work and social adjustment and decision style including both rational and intuitive

across different level of duration of marriage, categorized as less than 2 years, 2-5 years, 6-10 years and more than 10 years.

Result indicate the highly significant mean differences across marriage duration on performance which tended to increase with the duration of marriage with highest score among those who married for over 10 years ( $F=9.62$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=0.05$ ) indicating a moderate effect. Similarly, everyday multitasking ability also varied significantly ( $F=7.65$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=0.04$ ) increasing slightly with year of marriage.

The Work and Social Adjustment showed a significant difference as well ( $F=5.62$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2=0.03$ ) with individual married 6-10 years reporting the highest adjustment, possibly due to increase responsibility during mid-career. while those married less than 2 year has low adjustment, indicating early marital years are more challenging for social and work adjustment. There is a smaller but significant difference observed in rational decision style ( $F=3.81$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $\eta^2=0.02$ ), which slightly decline as marriage duration increase. Finding reveal that as marital duration increases, individual tend to report higher performance better multitasking and improved work and social adjustment while decision making remain relatively stable.

### Path Analysis

**Figure 1:**

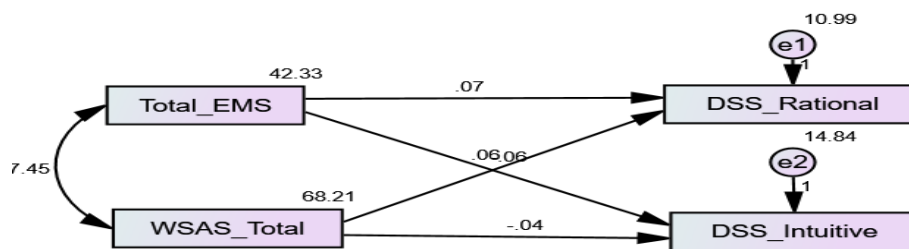


Figure 1 showed path diagram illustrates the relationship between everyday multitasking scale (EMS), work and social adjustment scales (WSAS) and decision style scale rational and intuitive. The analysis show that WSAS has a strong positive effect on DSS (intuitive ( $\beta= 68.21$ ) suggesting that individual experiencing greater difficulties in work and social functioning are more likely to rely on intuitive decision making. In contrast, (EMS) everyday multitasking ability show a very small negative effect on DSS-intuitive ( $\beta= -0.04$ ) and a small positive effect on DSS-rational ( $\beta=0.07$ ), indicating limited direct influence. WSAS also expert a minor positive effect on DSS-Rational ( $\beta=0.06$ ). a moderate positive correlation ( $r=7.45$ ) is observed between EMS and WSAS, indicating that increased multitasking is somewhat associated with greater multitasking ability.

### Discussion

The primary goal of the study was to explore the connection between multitasking, work and social adjustment and decision making among married working women in Pakistan. Firstly, the study explored the strong positive relationship between multitasking ability and performance, suggesting that those who think themselves are better multitaskers typically perform better all around. This confirm earlier research that stronger multitasker tend to have more attentional control and cognitive flexibility (Himi et al. 2023). The present study also explored the significant and positive association between multitasking and decision making competencies, suggesting that individual who effectively manage multiple activities tend to make more accurate and efficient decision. This is consistent with research by Sanbonmatsu et al. (2013) who showed that effective

executive control mechanism that also regulate decision making behavior frequently support improved multitasking performance. Moreover, the study showed that the multitasking ability and preference show weak negative correlation with work and social adjustment, suggesting that although multitaskers could perform very well they could also face difficulties in managing social expectations. This contradiction is consistent with research by Raharjanti et al. (2022) indicating that multitasking result in decrease social awareness, especially in high pressure situations.

The one-way analysis of variance across work experience of married working women indicating that married working women with more work experience especially those who work from 11 year or more reports significantly high score. Prolonged exposure to complex responsibilities foster multitasking abilities. Butt and Warraich (2022) found that workplace multitasking depend on task demand and individual cognitive capacity. Frequent multitaskers show adaptability but risk cognitive if unmanaged married working women with 0-2 year of work experience showed better adjustment, likely due to fewer duties and early career optimism. In contrast, those with 6-10 year of experience scored highest in rational decision making, aligning with Parker et al. (2015) who linked analytical thinking with positive decision outcomes.

The analysis of variables across duration of marriage among married working women indicate that women who are married for more than 10 years showed the highest performance score with significant effect of marital duration on performance. This implies that stable marriages over time improve cognitive functioning. According to systematic study by Haghighi et al. (2024), Higher marital quality linked with improved cognitive functioning, including memory and executive functioning which are essential for performance in various activities and women who are married more than 10 have greater ability of multitasking, this may be result of accumulation of responsibilities over time which require for multitasking skill. It was found that geographical location also played a role in shaping behavioral outcomes. Urban participant consistently scored higher on performance, preference and everyday multitasking while intuitive decision making varied significantly across location. The fast and changing nature of working environment most likely demand cognitive flexibility and decision making ability. This is consistent with the work of Park et al. (2010) suggesting that in urban setting people exhibit improved executive functioning as well as processing efficiency due to stimulation from the environment and higher cognitive demand. This study also indicates the substantial variation in intuitive decision making especially lower score among rural participants may indicate limited exposure to unclear circumstances that frequently develop intuitive reasoning. According to Kahneman & Klein (2009) intuitive thinking developed with experience in complex and unpredictable environment.

The finding from path analysis indicate that higher multitasking ability may have marginally favorable impact on both decision style. The finding is consistent with other studies showing that multitasking might foster a flexible cognitive orientation. According to sanbonmatsu et al. (2013) those who believe that they are strong at multitasking are more likely to show confidence when faced with difficult decision making situation especially when juggling multiple sources of information. The correlation between multitasking and work and social adjustment, indicate positive association suggesting that married working women who do multitask frequently could also have greater issue with social and professional adjustment. This support the idea that as previous studies shown persistent multitasking lead to role conflict or overburden (Mark et al. 2014).

## **Conclusion**

This study provides a valuable insight into multitasking ability, work and social adjustment and decision making style among married working women. According to this study, multitasking skill

and preference have negative association with work and social adjustment but multitasking ability have favorable relationship with decision making style, that suggest that people who proficiently handle multiple task tend to make more precise and accurate decision. And the women who are married for less than two years showed better adjustment and women who have 0-2 year of work experience indicate better adjustment. This study also demonstrates that women who have been married more than ten years and have work experience from eleven year or more have outstanding performance and multitasking skill. This study also revealed that women with 6-10 year of work experience make considerable rational decision making but those who married for less than two years make rational decision with small but meaningful influence.

## **Limitations**

The study not have been taken properly consideration of long-standing cultural norms that impact women autonomy particularly in joint family system or conservative areas these norms can have impact on women freedom of choice and degree of adjustment. the exclusion of male partner or family member in the study limit understanding of how shared responsibilities or their impact on women ability to multitask and adjust socially. The study cross-sectional nature limits the conclusion about long term trends or Casual relationship. When self-reported data is used, social desirability bias may be introduced, leading individual to minimize their difficulties and exaggerate their coping skill. the study didn't go into extensive detail of emotional impact that juggling family and professional relationship, which is important part of married working women.

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