



Digital Marketing Transformation and Marketing Team Cohesion: The Role of Work–Life Balance Mediation in Consumer Gender Perspectives – A Conceptual Analysis

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the influence of DMT (DMT) on sales team cohesion, with WLB (WLB) as a mediating variable and gender as a control variable. In the digital age, the use of digital tools in marketing improves communication and collaboration efficiency in sales teams, but also poses challenges related to WLB. A good WLB can minimize conflicts between work and personal life demands, which in turn strengthens team cohesion. However, the effect of this may vary by gender, such that women may be more negatively impacted in terms of combining work and personal responsibilities. This study advances a theoretical framework which connects DMT, WLB and sales team cohesion, along with examining the moderating role of gender on these relationships. Through a conceptual approach, this research provides new insights into the role of WLB in improving team cohesion in the midst of digitalization and how gender influences responses to these changes. The findings of this study are expected to provide guidance for organizations in designing digital strategies that support WLB and improve the effectiveness of sales teams.

Keywords: DMT, Sales Team Cohesion, WLB, Gender, Conceptual Analysis.

1 Introduction

The rapid development of technology has prompted organizations to adopt various digital tools to support communication, collaboration, and coordination in work teams. This is especially true for sales and marketing teams that have a crucial role in ensuring smooth business operations while achieving organizational targets. Digital technology not only provides a means to improve work efficiency, but also opens up new opportunities to create better team cohesion [1]. However, as this technology is adopted, a curious trend occurs in which there can be new challenges to the precise characteristics of work and personal life balance (WLB) generated by frequent use of utilizing digital devices. This has clear implications for team cohesion and productivity.

In many business organizations, work-life imbalance is one of the main problems that arise due to the massive adoption of digital technology. Digital tools,

while making communication easier and speeding up work processes, often exacerbate the need to remain connected, irrespective of working hours. This adds stress, and can contribute to the lack of comfort and efficiency among employees. In the sales and marketing world where interaction, collaboration determine success, this work-life imbalance could really affect the team bonding. Poor team cohesion often leads to a lack of coordination, increased internal conflicts, and a decline in overall performance [2].

In addition, demographic factors such as gender also affect how employees adapt and respond to the use of digital tools in their work. Previous research has revealed that there are significant differences in preferences, perceptions, and adaptability to digital technology between men and women [3]. For example, the study [4] indicates that women may experience more technological person WLB challenges than men and also show less readiness to adopt new technologies but are less attuned to their effects on WLB. These differences show that gender has an important role as a control variable that can affect the dynamics of digital tool use, WLB, and sales team cohesion.

Various studies have identified a number of factors that affect team cohesion. These factors include the effectiveness of digital tool use, WLB, and the role of demographic variables such as gender. Study by [5] Discovered that WLB plays a significant mediator role during the relationship of digital tool use with team cohesion. These results demonstrate how the use of cyber tools is not related to team communication only, but also to feelings and social processes in the team. Research [1] It also highlights the importance of gender in determining the effectiveness of digital tools in supporting team cohesion. In the context of a sales team, where interactions between team members are intense, the ineffective use of digital tools can increase the risk of misinformation and internal conflicts.

Although much research has been done, there are gaps in the literature that require further exploration. Study [6] noted that some of the associations are not statistically significant; For example, the association between digital transformation pace and team indicators (stability, cohesion) is not always significant depending on intermediate variables and organizational context. Then the research reference gap [7] Provides evidence that the direct relationship between digital transformation → cohesion → outcomes often does not arise without considering the mediator/moderator. Moreover, since the relationship between team dynamics and performance of team is not direct, digitalization doesn't seem to have a direct (positive) influence on teams' cohesiveness or dynamics as well [8]. Although the context is not directly about "digital transformation," [9] affirms that the influence of changes in the work system (including digitalization) on *collective processes* like *Trust, collaboration and task coordination* (the main component of team cohesion) is not always consistent or insignificant.

In addition, most previous studies have focused on the impact of digital technology on the productivity of individuals or organizations in general, without paying particular attention to the relationship between digital tools and sales team cohesion. The role of WLB as a mediating variable and gender as a control variable has not been explored in depth. This gap opens up opportunities to conduct more

comprehensive research with a focus on sales team dynamics in a digital context.

This research offers novelty by integrating the relationship between digital tool use, WLB, and sales team cohesion in one comprehensive mindset. By understanding the complex relationships between these variables, organizations can design more effective strategies to improve sales team cohesion through optimal use of digital technologies. In this study, the Theory of WLB is used as the main theoretical foundation to explain the importance of balancing work demands and personal life in creating a harmonious work environment. The combination of these two theories provides a solid foundation for understanding how digital tool use, WLB, and gender interact with each other in the context of sales team cohesion. Thus, this research is expected to make significant theoretical and practical contributions. From a theoretical perspective, this research can expand the literature on the use of digital technology in the context of teamwork and provide new insights into gender roles and WLB. From a practical perspective, the results of this research can help organizations in designing more effective policies and strategies to improve sales team cohesion through the use of the right digital tools and WLB-based approaches. This will not only improve team performance, but also create a healthier and more productive work environment.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

The framework of this research is based on Social Exchange Theory [11], [12] which emphasizes that social interaction in an organization occurs based on the principle of reciprocity, where individuals or groups will try to maintain mutually beneficial relationships. In the context of this study, the quality of digital marketing use can be seen as a form of organizational investment in providing technology support and resources for the sales team. This support encourages team members to respond by improving the cohesion of the sales team, through collaboration, coordination, and a spirit of teamwork. Furthermore, good quality digital marketing also provides work flexibility, thus affecting WLB, which in turn has a positive impact on team cohesion. Gender factors play a role as a moderation variable that can strengthen or weaken the relationship between variables, both in the path between the quality of digital marketing and team cohesion, as well as between the quality of digital marketing and WLB. This is based on the assumption that preferences, work styles, and perceptions of the benefits of technology may differ by gender [13]. In addition, WLB is also moderated by gender in relation to team cohesion, indicating that experiences and expectations related to WLB may differ between men and women. Thus, through the perspective of SET, these relationships are understood as a process of exchanging resources in the form of technological support, time, and social support that affects behavioral responses and team performance.

2.2 DMT (Transformasi Digital Marketing)

The use of digital tools in the workplace refers to the integration of information and communication technologies such as collaboration software, project management systems, internal communication platforms, as well as hardware such as computers, tablets, and smartphones into the entire business processes of an

organization [14]. This digital transformation not only aims to improve operational efficiency and productivity, but also fundamentally changes the way employees work, management models, and internal communication patterns. [15] revealed that the adoption of digital technology can increase employee participation in decision-making, strengthen a sense of belonging to work, and increase commitment to the organization as a whole. Thus, DMT is not only related to the use of digital tools, but also changes in mindsets, business models, and ways of interacting with consumers in a sustainable manner.

2.3 WLB

WLB is a complex construct that represents the degree to which employees can balance work and home life. This model highlights the need to achieve satisfaction and adjusted involvement of both aspects, in order for people to be able to lead a more harmonious existence while performing better [21] perspectives WLB as a balance of the time devoted to people's physical involvement and satisfaction between their two roles of professional or occupational work and whatever they do in other part of their lives [21]. When a balance is reached, employees can fulfill their professional obligations without sacrificing family, health, or recreational needs. On the contrary, imbalance can cause stress, burnout, and reduce life satisfaction and work productivity. Therefore, WLB is often associated with a person's level of well-being, happiness, and social identity, as well as affecting their behavior and social relationships [21].

2.4 Sales and Marketing Team Cohesion

Sales and Marketing Team Cohesion refers to the extent to which sales and marketing team members are bound together as a whole and committed to working towards a common goal. Experts define a cohesive working group as a group that "stays together" and is bound together into a single unit where its members experience a sense of togetherness [25]. In this context, cohesion not only includes interpersonal relationships, but also includes the integration of processes, communication, and strategic goals between sales and marketing teams. [26] emphasizes that effective collaboration between sales and marketing can improve overall business performance, by reducing conflicts between departments and improving coordination. The cohesion of the Sales and Marketing Teams is an important factor in the effectiveness of cross-functional relationships between marketing managers and sales managers. The high team cohesion between sales and marketing allows for better information exchange, a deeper understanding of customer needs, and faster response to market changes. Strong team cohesion also contributes to the development of interpersonal trust, both cognition-based and affectionate, which is critical in building effective cross-functional relationships [27]. This shows that team cohesion not only improves performance, but also contributes to the stability and sustainability of the sales and marketing teams. Thus, the cohesion of the sales and marketing teams not only affects the internal dynamics of the team, but also contributes to the overall competitive advantage of the organization.

2.5 Consumer Gender

Gender can be scientifically integrated through gender role theory, which states that social expectations and cultural norms related to gender influence individual behavior in an organizational context. For example, research shows that the majority of women have a tendency to exhibit higher communal (supportive, collaborative) behaviors that contribute to team cohesion while men tend to emphasize agentic roles (authority, autonomy) that can influence teamwork dynamics [29]. For example, female workers may be more cautious in balancing the demands of digital transformation (new technologies, flexible working) and their domestic responsibilities and social roles, so that the effects of digital transformation on WLB may be different than those of male workers. A study concluded that female workers experience greater work-family conflicts while working from home due to domestic roles that are still disproportionately assigned to them [30]. Gender is an important factor in consumer behavior, influencing preferences for products and services, as well as ethical considerations in consumption choices. This is because gender differences affect information search strategies on social media and decision-making paths [32]. For example, gender typicality that refers to traditionally masculine or feminine appearance can influence consumer spending, as seen in studies showing that consumers prefer female frontline staff who are considered "gender-typical" and Asian male employees who are "gender-atypical" in the context of services [33].

3 Methodology

This study uses a conceptual approach to clarify theoretical constructs and develop new interpretations based on existing literature [34]. According to [35], a conceptual review helps identify research gaps and formulate frameworks for future empirical studies. Relevant literature is integrated to align with the research objectives, allowing a comprehensive understanding of relationships among key concepts. The outcome of this approach is a conceptual framework that can be empirically tested in future research. This framework aims to address several key questions: (1) Does DMT have a significant positive effect on the cohesion of the sales team? (2) Does DMT have a significant positive effect on WLB? (3) Does WLB have a significant positive effect on the cohesion of the sales team? (4) Does WLB mediate the relationship between DMT and sales team cohesion? (5) Does consumer gender play a role as a control variable in the relationship between DMT, WLB, and sales team cohesion?

4. Results & Discussion

4.1 The Effect of DMT on Sales Team Cohesion

In the era of digital transformation, the use of digital tools such as collaboration and communication platforms has become an integral part of sales team operations [1], [36]. These tools facilitate more efficient coordination, enable real-time information exchange, and support cross-site collaboration [37]. Thus, it is expected that the integration of digital tools can improve the cohesion of the sales team through improved

communication and mutual understanding.

However, the adoption of digital tools also brings its own challenges. Study by [36] Shows that while digital tools can improve efficiency, they can also reduce the informal interactions that are essential for building strong interpersonal relationships within teams. A lack of face-to-face interaction can hinder the formation of trust and solidarity among team members, which can ultimately negatively affect team cohesion [38].

Therefore, it is important for organizations to not only adopt digital tools, but also develop strategies that support social interaction and team building [39]. This can include training on the effective use of digital tools, as well as initiatives to encourage informal communication and team-building activities, to ensure that the use of technology supports, rather than replaces, strong interpersonal relationships within the sales team.

4.2 DMT to Work Life Balance

The use of digital tools in the work environment has changed the way individuals interact with their work. While technology allows for greater flexibility and accessibility, it can also cause the boundaries between work and personal life to blur [40]. This phenomenon is known as "digital presenteeism," where employees feel compelled to always be available digitally, even outside of work hours, which can disrupt their WLB[41].

Study by [5] It found that the intensive use of digital tools can increase conflicts between work and family roles, ultimately negatively impacting employee well-being. The pressure to stay connected and responsive to work communication can lead to stress, burnout, and a decrease in overall life satisfaction [42]. To address these challenges, organizations need to develop policies that support WLB. This can include clear work time limits, training on time management and healthy use of technology, as well as the promotion of a work culture that values employees' personal time [43]. Thus, the use of digital tools can be optimized to support, rather than disrupt, WLB.

4.3 The Effect of Work Life Balance on Marketing Team Cohesion

A good WLB(WLB) is not only important for individual well-being, but it also contributes to healthy team dynamics [44]. Employees who feel WLBtend to be more satisfied, motivated, and able to contribute positively to the team [45]. In the context of sales teams, where effective collaboration and communication are essential, a good WLB can strengthen team cohesion through increased trust and support between team members.

Research [46] suggests that employees with a good WLB are more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviors, such as helping colleagues and sharing information, which are key elements in building team cohesion. Conversely, a work-life imbalance can lead to stress and conflict, which can damage interpersonal relationships and reduce the overall effectiveness of the team [47]. Therefore, organizations should prioritize initiatives that support WLB, such as work flexibility, mental health support, and recognition of individual needs. By creating a work environment that supports WLB, organizations can strengthen the cohesion of the sales team, which in turn can improve

team performance and productivity.

4.4 Work Life Balance mediates the influence of DMT on Marketing Team Cohesion

With a rapidly evolving marketing strategy, DMT is not only the adoption of new technologies, but also reconstructs workflows, interdepartmental coordination, and employee autonomy levels [5]. These changes often affect traditional work patterns, thus impacting the *work-life balance* (WLB) employees [48]. Recent research shows the role of WLB mediation in the relationship between digital change and team dynamics. For example, Oliveira and Costa (2024) found that flexibility in hybrid work models improves employee well-being, with WLB being an important pathway that links work flexibility to improved well-being [49].

On the other hand, team cohesion is a fundamental factor in the effectiveness of a marketing team, especially in virtual or hybrid work environments where a sense of psychological togetherness is prone to being disrupted by differences in location and working time [48]. The quality of digital collaboration and the ability to manage conflicts are significant predictors of team cohesion [50].

Combining these findings, it can be assumed that DMT affects team cohesion indirectly through its impact on employees' ability to manage the boundaries between work and personal life. In other words, *Work-Life Balance* mediates the relationship between *DMT* and *Marketing Team Cohesion*. This mediation effect confirms that in order for digital transformation to be able to produce stronger team cohesion, organizations need to build a work environment that supports WLB; Without this, the benefits of digital technology risk becoming superficial and even counterproductive.

4.5 Consumer Gender distinguishes the influence of DMT on Marketing Team Cohesion

In the context of digital work, the use of digital tools such as collaboration and communication platforms has become an integral part of the sales team's operations [51], [52] However, the influence of digital tools on sales team cohesion can vary by gender. Study by [53] shows that teams made up of women tend to have higher levels of team cohesion and satisfaction compared to teams made up of men. This indicates that women may be more responsive to the use of digital tools in building team cohesion.

This difference can be attributed to gender roles that influence behavior in teams. Women tend to exhibit communal behaviors, such as social support and cooperation, that can be strengthened through the use of digital tools [29], [52], [54]. In contrast, men may be more focused on tasks and results, so the use of digital tools may not significantly improve team cohesion for them. Therefore, it is important for organizations to consider gender differences in designing and implementing digital tools to support team cohesion. Tailored training and a gender-sensitive approach can increase the effectiveness of digital tools in building sales team cohesion.

4.6 Consumer Gender Distinguishes the Influence of DMT on Work Life Balance

The use of digital tools has changed the way individuals manage the boundaries between work and personal life [29], [55] However, the impact on WLB can differ between men and women. Study by [56] It shows that while the flexibility of work supported by technology can improve WLB, women often experience increased work pressure and dual roles, especially in the context of household responsibilities and childcare.

These differences are reinforced by social norms and gender expectations that place a greater domestic burden on women. For example, the [57] found that women were more likely than men to delay or decline promotions due to family responsibilities, as well as more often dealing with unexpected parenting issues. As such, organizations need to adopt an approach that considers gender differences in the implementation of work technologies. Policies that support true work flexibility, training on time management, and a work culture that values WLB can help reduce gender inequality in the impact of digital tools on WLB [58].

4.7 Consumer Gender distinguishes the Influence of Work Life Balance on Sales Team Cohesion

A good WLB contributes to individual well-being and healthy team dynamics [59], [60]. However, the influence of WLB on sales team cohesion can be moderated by gender. Study by [61] suggests that women are more likely to use work flexibility to meet domestic responsibilities, which can affect their participation in team activities and, ultimately, team cohesion.

In addition, research by [62] found that women are more prone to clashes between work and family life, negative workplace images, and suffer a reduction in group cooperation. Thus, organizations should establish a work environment conducive to WLB among all employees based on gender-specific circumstances. For example, efforts around fair work flexibility and parenting support Orsted has made strides to create an inclusive work culture can also add to the improvement of sales team cohesion by ensuring all members are supported during at-home times [63].

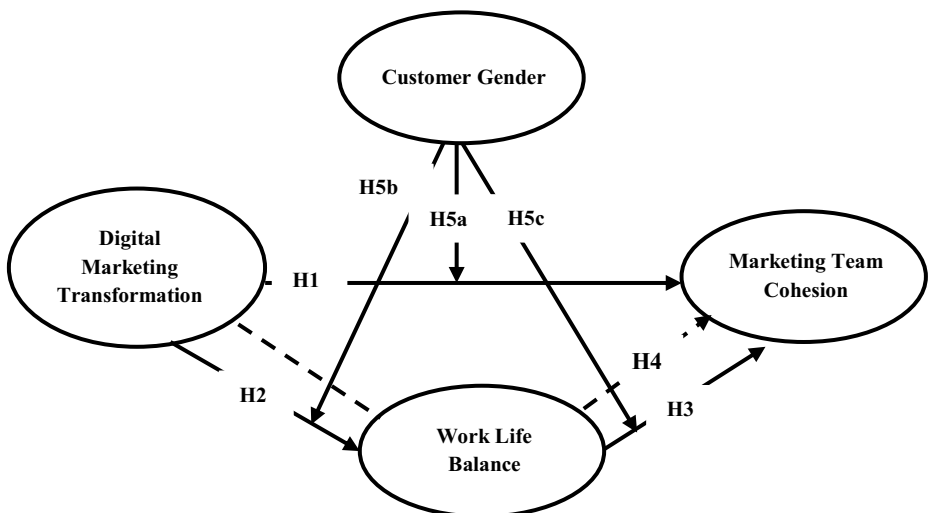


Fig. 1 Research Framework

5 Conclusion

This study shows that DMT has a significant impact on the cohesion of the sales team, with WLBacting as a mediator that connects the use of digital tools with the quality of relationships and collaboration in the team. The use of digital tools can improve communication and coordination efficiency in teams, but it can also pose challenges related to the imbalance between the demands of work and personal life. In this case, a healthy WLBcan strengthen team cohesion by increasing team member satisfaction and motivation. In addition, the findings of this study also highlight the importance of gender roles as a control variable that moderates the relationship between DMT, WLB, and team cohesion. The difference in response to the use of technology between men and women shows that digital strategies in organizations must pay attention to gender factors to maximize their effectiveness. Overall, the results of this study provide important insights for organizations to design digital policies and strategies that not only focus on technology efficiency, but also pay attention to WLBand gender differences, in order to create stronger and more productive sales team cohesion. With the right approach, digital transformation can contribute to the success of sales teams and the organization as a whole.

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