WORKPLACE ROMANCE: EXAMINING ROMANCE MOTIVES AND ORGANIZATION POLICIES IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to predict a person's intention to have a romantic relationship at work, seen from the motives (love and work) and types of policies (strict, warning, no policy) that existed in the company. Romance in the workplace was a common phenomenon in organizations, but this behavior was still considered sensitive to be investigated in Indonesia. In total, 268 Indonesian employees aged 20-40 years who worked at least six months in a company participated in the 2x3 factorial experimental vignette method, and for data analysis, it used repeated measured ANOVA. The research results have found that several types of company policies determine a person's intention to have romance at work. The stricter the rules and the heavier the punishment, the less likely a person will engage in romance at work. However, on the motive, it is found that there is no difference between the types of motives and one's intentions in a workplace romance. Finally, the interaction between motives and policies is not significant enough to predict a person's intention to engage in romance at work. Therefore, it can be concluded that in Indonesia, the implementation of policies still has an essential role in reducing the negative impact of romance in the workplace. Other variables can still be included for future research to see the factors influencing a person's intentions in workplace romance.

Keywords: workplace romance, romance motives, organizational policies

INTRODUCTION

Workplace romance literature can be traced back to four decades ago by Quinn (1977), who explained its development, consequences, and regulation of romance in the workplace. Workplace romance is defined as, "A mutually wanted romantic relationship based on physical attraction between employees of the same organization" (Lickey, Gregory, Whelan-Berry, 2009). It can take the form of homosexual, heterosexual, or other alternative lifestyles. Usually, someone who often spends time with other people, such as frequently interacting, sharing the same pleasures and hobbies, and having the same physical interest, can foster feelings of love in it. The feeling of liking someone can appear anywhere, including at work. One recent survey has found that half of the workers have dated a colleague — 70% mostly peers but also 18% their supervisors and 21% subordinates respectively (Sawhney, 2021). In modern that is already using technology, workplace romance behavior also uses technology as a communication medium. Nevertheless, today's technology has more negative effects because it is easier to spread and cause gossip, so the workplace romance policy is indeed an important thing (Cowan & Horan, 2021).

Three common motives for engaging in workplace romance are love, ego, and job-related (Dillard, 1987; Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996; Pierce, Karl, & Brey, 2012). Love motive involves a desire for genuine friendship and long-term relationships; ego motive pertains to individuals engaging in romantic relationships for excitement, adventure, and sexual experience; job-related motives are related to the desire to get ahead in the workplace, such as by gaining increased power and job security (Quinn,

1977). Someone involved in a workplace romance generally has one of the motives between love, job, or ego before deciding to continue the relationship. Based on previous research related to the relational and workplace implies amorous motives in the workplace. It is found that the love motive has positive relational implications.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, cases related to workplace romance are observed to be quite sloping and slightly increasing. A new survey from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) on 550 working Americans has found that 33% of U.S. workers report that they are currently involved or have been involved in a workplace romance. This is six percentage points higher than before the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, 50% of workers report they have had a crush on a co-worker. Furthermore, three-quarters of U.S. workers (75%) say they are comfortable with people at their workplace being involved in a workplace romance (SHRM, 2021). It is also expected that it will happen in Indonesia.

Organizations struggle to ensure the importance of policies regulating workplace romance and what provisions should be included from the Human Resource Management (HRM) perspective (Sidhu, Bhalla, & Naazneen, 2020). Workplace romance is unavoidable in today's workplaces, no matter how much management tries to avoid it (Lickey, Gregory, Whelan-Berry, 2009). Although the case of workplace romance is considered to have a significant impact on organizations, this research is still rarely carried out (Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996). Particularly in Indonesia, the issue of workplace romance is sometimes still considered sensitive or taboo to discuss. In dealing with workplace romance, company policies are essential to be formulated. This is intended to prevent the negative impact of workplace romance. In 2003, the Constitutional Court issued a regulation on Law no. 13 of 2003 concerning Manpower article 153 paragraph (1) point (f), where there is a prohibition on Termination of Employment (*PHK*) because workers have blood ties and or marital relations with other workers in the same company unless it has been stipulated in the work agreement, company policies or cooperation agreements (Law of the Republic of Indonesia no. 13 of 2003). The first author does a preliminary study by creating a short survey about company policies on LinkedIn for 358 employees in Indonesia. It is found that 44% of companies do not have written company policies, 56% have policies regarding workplace romance, and 23% are not allowed to have workplace romance (Amanda, 2021). Many organizations are still hesitant to formulate policies regarding workplace romance (Cowan & Horan, 2021). On the one hand, it is something personal, but on the other hand, this matter can affect the condition organization. Organizations need to ensure that policies protect both employees' privacy and the organization's welfare to get fair rules to apply. A transparent organizational policy can positively affect employee job satisfaction and help improve the company's work culture (Edward, Indrayani, & Yasa, 2021).

Based on several pieces of research, it is stated that workplace romance has a positive impact on companies, namely increasing work involvement, welfare, and even performance if the company can manage the existing company rules well (Jung & Yoon, 2020; Khan et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2022). In addition, based on research, it is explained that workplace romance can affect marital satisfaction (Tunnissa, Nugraha, & Kadiyono, 2020). However, research conducted by Riach and Wilson (2007) has explained that in addition to the positive impact, workplace romance can also create some adverse effects, such as lack of concentration at work because it is too focused on a partner, work motivation when there is a problem, even a bias in decision making when a partner is a boss at work. Also, sexual harassment in the workplace is the most important impact of workplace romance (Brown & Battle, 2020; Cortina & Areguin, 2020). This is supported by Lickey, Gregory, and Whelan-Berry (2009), who has stated that the risk of employee-partner relationships in a company allows the spread of sensitive data or company secrets. Workplace romance that involves hierarchies such as superiors and subordinates will lead to negative thoughts, distrust of people involved in workplace romances, and poor communication with coworkers (Chory & Hoke, 2020). Romantic relationships at work have more negative impacts, although positive effects arise (Chory & Hoke, 2019). This condition makes it essential for company policies that regulate romantic relationships to run well. The research results related to policies of relationships that affect employees' desire to be involved based on relationships in the workplace (Doll & Rosopa, 2015). Furthermore, policies related to workplace romance cannot be generalized to all industries but need to be adapted to each industry (Chory, Mainiero, & Horan, 2022).

Based on several positive and negative impacts that arise, the researchers are interested in seeing whether motives and company policies can influence a person's decision to have a romantic relationship at work. Also, workplace romance appears to be associated with important organizational outcomes is remains an understudied topic (Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996). Motive is one of the essential things that a person feels before having the intention to do workplace romance. The higher the motive in someone, the higher the person's intention to be involved in a workplace romance. However, the motive also has many forms, such as love, job, and ego (Quinn, 1977). The love motive tends to make someone intend for long-term workplace romance, while the job motive makes someone have a workplace romance intention because they think about the position or career benefits. This makes the type of motive affect a person's intentions in doing workplace romance.

This research is expected to assist companies in managing romantic conditions in the workplace

so that their impact can be anticipated through making policies that are required for companies and employees. Experimental studies are conducted to investigate the effect of love and job motives and policies on a person's intention to have workplace romance. Based on the presented literature review, the researchers suggest the hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant difference between the categories of workplace motives and intentions to engage in a workplace romance.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant difference between the categories of company policies and intentions to engage in a workplace romance.

Hypothesis 3: There is an interaction between the category of workplace romance motives and the type of company policy in the intention to engage in a workplace romance

METHODS

The researchers have conducted the research using a 2x3 factorial Experimental Vignette Method (EVM) with variable manipulation of workplace romance motives (job and love) from Quinn (1977) and organization policies (strict policy, verbal and written warning, and no policy). Strict policies are termination of employment, moderate policies are verbal and written warnings, and there are no policies in the company. Thus, six vignettes will be used as manipulations (see Appendix). Ethical clearance for the research is provided by the Faculty of Psychology Ethics Committee (No.103/ FPsi. Komite Etik/ PDP.04.00/ 2021).

The researchers have performed a repeated measured ANOVA to test the hypotheses using the Experimental Vignette Methodology (EVM). EVM is a methodology for assessing attitudes, intentions, and behaviors using a combination of surveys and scenarios. This method will also make it easier for researchers to provide manipulation in the form of sketches according to the hypotheses that have been made (Quigley, Michel, & Doyle, 2020). EVM enables researchers to use both vignettes as a stimulus and survey to obtain participants' attitudes, which in the research are their attitudes towards corporate motives and regulations and their intentions to engage in workplace romance (Quigley, Michel, & Doyle, 2020). Repeated measurement ANOVA can be used to test whether there is a significant mean difference based on more than three groups, and the researchers chose to measure intention to do workplace romance, which is seen based on several types of motives and company regulations.

The researchers have adapted the experimental sketch of Doll and Rosopa (2015), remade it in the

Indonesian version, and adapted it to the conditions of the company in Indonesia. There are six scenarios and one question at the end of the scenario to get answers from respondents regarding their desire to be involved in a workplace romance; the example of the scenario, "The company you work for has a policy that employees who date coworkers will be laid off. Recently, you have started to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. You and your coworkers are both single, have a physical attraction to each other, and are close and compatible in interacting. You know your coworkers are also interested in you. You feel like having a relationship is more than 'friending', and you believe that a relationship with him can be a meaningful and lasting relationship in your life." At the end of the scenario, there is one item to determine someone's intention to get involved in a workplace romance, "If you are in that condition, do you want to continue your relationship?"

To ensure the sketches' validity, the researchers have conducted a focus group discussion (FGD) before collecting the primary data on the online experiment (Muise & Pan, 2019). The researchers hold an FGD with six employees working as Human Resources employees in an Indonesian company for 60 minutes. The FGD is conducted using video conferencing, Zoom. Based on the results of the FGD, there are suggestions to change several statements, such as changing the moderate policy, which previously only consisted of verbal warnings, to verbal and written warnings.

After the sketch has passed external validation, the researchers create a survey using the Survey Monkey platform, an online survey software. Since our EVM is conducted using an online survey, there is no time limit for filling out the questionnaire. However, respondents can complete the survey within ten minutes. The researchers have manipulated independent variables and automatically randomized participants using Survey Monkey. The minimum number of samples in EVM within-subject is 50 participants (Brysbaert, 2019). Within five weeks, the researchers have conducted research by spreading research links through several social media platforms such as Instagram, LinkedIn, and Whatsapp Groups. All participants have received survey documentation in the same order: consent, manipulated advertisement (administered at random), manipulation check, questionnaire, and debriefing information. Participants in the research are employees aged 20-40 years (early adults) who have worked at least six months in a company. Early adulthood is chosen because human developmental tasks in early adulthood include getting a job and choosing a life partner (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2019). In early adulthood, a person tends to have started to think and choose a suitable partner with him/her, who can understand his/her thoughts and feelings, then proceed with the marriage. Participants will be recruited using the accidental sampling method. For data analysis, the researchers have used repeated measurable ANOVA in SPSS to test whether there is a

significant interaction between motives and company policies in predicting the intention to have a romantic relationship at work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The assumption test is performed on the repeated measured ANOVA analysis. Based on the results of normality, it is known that sig. 0,00 < 0,05. However, repeated-measures ANOVA that the assumption can be a little violated and still provide valid results (Field, 2018). Based on the results of Mauchly's test of sphericity assumption test, it is known that the significance value (Sig.) is 0,415 > 0,05. It can be concluded that the data is significant and H0 is accepted (the variance of the difference between all combinations of levels/groups being tested is the same), so the research fulfills the assumption test, and the existing data is homogeneous and can be continued for further analysis.

The total number of participants is 268 people, included in the criteria in the previous explanation. An examination of manipulation for linkage confirmed a difference, in the average score between the three types of policies, with a person's motives for engaging in romantic relationships. Table 1 shows that there is a difference in a person's intentions based on the type of policies, while for motives, there is only a difference, but the value is slight.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics (Mean, SD, N)

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*N*
SP x L	2,41	1,273	268
WP x L	3,34	1,060	268
NP x L	3,85	1,033	268
SP x J	2,43	1,275	268
WP x J	3,28	1,047	268
NP x J	3,69	1,103	268

Note: SP = Strict Policy; WP = Warning Policy; NP = No Policy; L = Love Motive; J = Job Motive

Based on the Test of Within-Subjects Effect output in Table 2, there are significant differences within the group for motives $F_{(1,267)}= 4,27$, $p= 0,04$, which indicates that manipulations for motives are successful. Value for the motive's variable has an effect size of 1,6% of the total variance and also Sig. of 0,04 < 0,05; it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the effect of love and job categories on motives for someone's intentions to do workplace romance. Therefore, H1 is supported. Furthermore, there are significant differences within the group for policies $F_{(2,534)}= 201,5$, $p= 0,00$, which indicates that manipulations for policies are successful. The value for policies has a large effect size of 43% of the total variance, and also Sig. of 0,00 < 0,05; it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the effect of the category no policies, warnings, and strict policies against someone's intention to have a workplace romance; therefore, H2 is significant. On the other hand, the interaction motives and policies variable is not significantly successful $F_{(2,534)}= 2,83$, $p=0,05$. There are no significant differences within the group for the interaction of both motives and policies. The Sphericity Assumed value for the interaction motives and policies variables has an effect size of only 1,1% of the total variance. Also, Sig. of 0,05 = 0,05 indicates that there is no interaction of motive categories with company policy categories in determining someone's intention to have a workplace romance. These results are not entirely significant and need further research and retesting to ensure the significance of the data and the possibility of other variances that affect a person's intentions in doing workplace romance. Therefore, H3 is not supported significantly.

Quinn (1977) has explained that individuals engage in romance to fulfill specific needs. He believes the three motives are work-related, ego, and love for coworkers who engage in a workplace romance. Based on the 2x3 repeated measurement design, different motives affect one's intentions, and it can be concluded that Hypothesis 1 is accepted. The research results have found that the love motive has more intentions to continue the relationship than the work motive, although the difference is meager. This result follows what is previously written that during COVID-19, someone is more likely to be involved in workplace romance because of love motives like empathy for coworkers who have the same burden during the pandemic (SHRM, 2021). Wilson (2015) has defined what each motive needs. A person with a love

Table 2 Tests of Within-Subjects Effects

Antecedent	Consequent				
	Intention				
	df	*M*Δ	F	*p*	η²
Motives	1	1,493	4,271	0,040	0,016
Policies	2	252,853	201,540	0,000	0,430
Motives x Policies	2	1,077	2,883	0,050	0,011

motive seeks long-term and committed friendship; an ego-motivated individual seeks the thrill, excitement, sexual experience, or satisfaction that workplace romance might bring; finally, someone with a work motive. Seek advancement, security, power, and financial rewards for their participation in a workplace romance. Based on research, most people prefer work motives over love (Belinda, 2017; Dillard, 1987). Research conducted by Chan-Serafin et al. (2017) and Bilyk (2021) have also stated that the hierarchical relationship between superiors and subordinates is primarily due to work. However, this difference may occur due to differences in the location and culture of the research participants. Organizational policies are also influential in determining a person's motive for engaging in a workplace romance. Organizational policies that are still low make someone get involved in workplace romance because of job and ego motives compared to love (Khalilzadeh & Pizam, 2021).

Hypothesis 2 is also accepted. The research results have found that the category of organization policies affects a person's intention to engage in romantic situations at work by 43% of the total variance. There are three types of rules used in the experiment: no policy, verbal and written warnings, and strict policies or layoffs. According to research, the stricter the rules, the less likely a person will engage in romantic relationships at work. Several other studies also support that workplace romance policies significantly predict willingness to engage in workplace romance (Doll & Rosopa, 2015). The type of organizational romance policy also affects individuals' perceptions of the fairness of procedures and how the company is a pleasant place to work. The type of consensual relationship agreement affects individuals' perceptions of the scope within which the organization treats its employees fairly (Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996). Companies can make rules based on the type of relationship that occurs; for example, if it is carried out by superiors and subordinates or by HR employees or confidential data holders, it is still necessary to have clear policies so that these conditions do not burden one company and employee. Especially in Law No. 13/2003 concerning Manpower, it is written that the rules of marriage between employees can be regulated by company policy (Law No. 13, 2003). Research shows about 35–42% of women have experienced sexual harassment and sex discrimination. Therefore, it is essential to make organizational policies related to workplace romance to prevent harmful behavior from the impact of workplace romance (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2021). On the other hand, transparent organizational policies can positively affect employee job satisfaction and help improve the company's work culture so that workplace romance can also be implemented better (Edward, Indrayani, & Yasa, 2021). It is also supported that technology also affects relationships in the workplace, so HR practitioners and managers would be wise to consult other studies on workplace romance policies and concerns about the management approach (Cowan & Horan, 2021). The key is that the company needs to have a policy of romance in the workplace to prevent dangerous situations if the relationship goes awry and harms both parties (Ceron, 2022).

Hypothesis 3 is not accepted. The interaction of motives and policies does not fully affect a person's intention to do workplace romance. This result indicates that even though someone has a strong motive, if the company regulations are strict in regulating workplace romance, then it could be that the intention to do workplace romance is reduced so that it can be said that the interaction between motives and regulations is not significant in determining one's intentions in undergoing workplace romance. Many other new variables influence a person's policies and decisions in engaging in a workplace romance, such as attachment style and psychological well-being (Sidhu, Bhalla, & Naazneen, 2020).

In general, romance at work is unavoidable because it is spontaneous and happens quite often in the workplace. Moreover, the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic is also the reason relationships between coworkers can be closed due to the same workload and the sense of empathy given. Although working from home conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic make it difficult for someone involved in workplace romance to meet, this does not make the relationship tenuous but can increase productivity when working and supporting each other. However, this still needs company policy to regulate workplace romance to avoid negative impacts (Mishra & Mitra, 2021). However, because of the pros and cons related to this condition, especially if the partner is a leader and other strategic areas such as top management and HR, there will be the possibility of leaking confidential data and non-objective assessments (Lickey, Gregory, Whelan-Berry, 2009; Riach & Wilson, 2007). Also, romantic intentions in the workplace due to work motives, especially with the leader, need further attention because it can interfere with the organization and careers of the people involved (Chan-Serafin et al., 2017). There are times when workplace romance is unavoidable; two individuals can be connected at different levels and maybe true love for each other, but because of the negative results and risks workplace romance creates, individuals should try and avoid workplace romance whenever possible (Dechamplain, 2021). A challenge for all human resource managers to regulate and control workplace romance is by implementing standard operating procedures and rationalizing a well-deserved new policy (Sidhu, Bhalla, & Naazneen, 2020). The consequences that exist because of the existence of workplace romance in an organization have indeed made many researchers conclude that there must be a policy made by management to handle relationships; if there are breakups or an uncomfortable environment, relationships can develop among other people and the feelings of coworkers (Wilson, 2015). In conclusion, workplace romance is a human right, but clear policies are still needed to prevent adverse impacts (Dewi & Utomo, 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

There are different motives for someone's intentions in doing workplace romance. The research shows that love influences a person to engage in workplace romance more than the work motive. However, the results are not wholly significant because only slight differences exist. When viewed based on company policies, the different categories of company policies have a significant effect on a person's intention to have romance at work. Tighter policies that threaten employees' jobs tend to be less intentional than lighter policies. The human resources department needs to develop a romantic policy that suits norms and values in the workplace. Furthermore, policies related to workplace romance cannot be generalized to all industries but need to be adapted to each industry. Uniquely, the interaction between motives and company policies has no significant effect on a person's intention to love at work. This means that other variables can influence a person's intention to engage in romance at work, and further research is needed to complete the research. Therefore, various new factors such as attachment style, psychological well-being, job aesthetics, employee attitudes about workplace romance, previous involvement in a workplace romance, and awareness are providing impetus for workplace romance in organizations compared to traditional such as closeness, the similarity of attitudes, romantic motives, and organizational climate.

Based on the results of the research, employees need to think further when deciding to have a romantic relationship with someone in the office environment, especially if it is related to a different level because there will be many risks in the future. On the other hand, companies need to think about the most appropriate policies to regulate romantic relationships in the workplace; this needs to be reviewed based on the organizational culture and existing company regulations. The guidelines are also expected to be a win-win solution between management and employees.

The researchers have identified some limitations of the research and provided suggestions for further research. First, the research is conducted in Indonesia, and the only collected data is in Indonesia, so the research results cannot be generalized to other populations. Therefore, the research needs to be duplicated in other countries to see if there are differences in policies and culture regarding a person's intention to have a romantic relationship at work. Second, the research only looks at motives based on love and work and ignores ego motives because sexual experiences are still taboo for respondents in Indonesia to share. Third, the research is limited to examining the motive and policy variables. Therefore, further research is needed to examine other variances, such as gender, marital status, and age, to obtain complete and in-depth data. On the other hand, other variables are needed to see the impact of workplace romance on work involvement, work effort, or productivity, especially when viewed based on hierarchical relationships. The researchers' last suggestion is that further research or experiment vignette method is needed in Indonesia because there is still not much research related to workplace romance in Indonesia.

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APPENDIX

Example of workplace romance scenario based on motives and policies.

1. The company you work for has a policy that employees who date coworkers will be laid off. Recently, you have started to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. You and your coworkers are both single, have a physical attraction to each other, and are close and compatible in interacting. You know your coworkers are also interested in you. You feel like having a relationship is more than "friending", and you believe that a relationship with him can be a meaningful and lasting relationship in your life.
2. The company you work for has a policy that employees who are dating coworkers will be given verbal and written warnings. Recently, you have started to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. You and your coworkers are both single, have a physical attraction to each other, and are close and compatible in interacting. You know your coworkers are also interested in you. You feel like having a relationship with more than "friends", and you believe that a relationship with him can be a meaningful and lasting relationship in your life.
3. The company you work for does not have a written policy regarding dating relationships among coworkers. Recently, you have started to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. You and your coworkers are both single, have a physical attraction to each other, and are close and compatible in interacting. You know your coworkers are also interested in you. You feel like having a relationship is more than "friending", and you believe that a relationship with him can be a meaningful and lasting relationship in your life.
4. The company you work for has a written policy that employees who date coworkers will be laid off. However, lately, you have started to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. You realize that building relationships with coworkers can help improve your career path. You also get more excellent opportunities and opportunities for promotion.
5. The company you work for has a policy that employees who are dating coworkers will be given verbal and written warnings. However, lately, you have started to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. In addition, you realize that building relationships with your coworkers can help to improve your career path. You also get more excellent opportunities and opportunities for promotion.
6. The company you work for does not have a policy regarding peer relations. However, recently you have begun to realize that you have feelings for one of your coworkers. You realize that building relationships with your coworkers can help to improve your career path. You also get more excellent opportunities and opportunities for promotion.