How Workplace Compassion, Social Support, and Altruism in Predicting Retention among Employees in the Highly Competitive Businesses

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A R T I C L E I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Employee retention plays a very important role for companies because the decreasing number of employees who want to leave a job may have a good impact on the companies to achieve their organizational goals. The purpose of this study is to investigate the link between workplace compassion, social support, and altruism on employee retention in the context of highly competitive business sector. The respondents in this research include employees in competitive companies with a total of 250 respondents. The data were collected using paper-based questionnaires. Drawing on multiple linear regression analysis, validity testing, reliability testing and hypothesis testing (T Test), this research found that workplace compassion, social support, and altruism predict employee retention. This reseacrh provides strategic insight for companies in improving compassion, social support, and altruism to strengthen overall employees' sense of home.

INTRODUCTION

In the knowledge economy, one of the main challenges companies face today is managing and retaining their key employees in order to survive and increase their competitive advantage (Cegarra-Leiva, Sánchez-Vidal, & Cegarra-Navarro, 2012). Employee retention is a key factor as well as a challenge for organizations to facilitate and retain their employees (Khan, 2021). Employee retention continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing organizations and managers today (Bussin., Pregnoloto., Schlechter., 2017). Losing valuable employees is a major loss for any organization as it can disrupt programs and increase spending on recruitment and training (Mesch., Tschirhart., Perry., & Lee., 1998). In addition, there are many costs that incur the organizations due to the loss of their employees such as retraining and recruiting new employees and other administrative costs (Wöcke & Heymann, 2012). Because retaining talent employees is the most important concern for many organizations, retention of key personnel may be great importance in the success, survival and sustainability of an organization.

Employee retention is "the entire HRM policy in order to retain current or expected high performing employees in the organization, enabling the organization to train or develop their abilities" (Pham., Tuan., Le., Nguyen., Usman., & Ferreira., 2023). Retention is an important element of a more general organizational approach to talent management, namely the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by improving processes for attracting, developing, retaining, and utilizing people with the necessary skills and talents to meet current and future business needs (Hausknecht, Rodda, & Howard, 2009). Retention refers to purposeful organizational behaviors designed to create an atmosphere in which personnel may be retained for an extended period of time. Retention is also defined as an endeavor performed by a business to prevent talented, competent, and prospective people from leaving, which might result in a drop in corporate production (Gan & Yusof, 2019).

Previous research suggests that retention can be predicted by several variables. Even though there has been a lot of previous research investigating employee turnover, little is known about the factors that can retain employees or the causes that make employees stay (Sinha & Sinha, 2012). Research shows that compassionate actions lead to positive work outcomes (Nazir & Islam, 2020), has the potential to increase employees reasons for remaining at the company. DePanfilis (2006) highlighted that access to social support and opportunities to overcome traumatic aspects of daily work are important factors in helping workers overcome stressful aspects of work. DePanfilis (2006) further stated that levels of satisfaction due to compassion perceived by employees are associated with lower levels of burnout. Other research also explains that both altruistic motivation and instrumental motivation predict employees' reasons for staying (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991). Some people classify altruistic motivations as moral motives (Mesch et al., 1998), such as self-sacrifice, compassion, social justice, and civic duty (Perry, 1996) which bring employees to stay in the company. Of all the existing research, the study

discussing how compassion, social support, and altruism in the workplace predict employee survival in a highly competitive business sector has not yet been conducted.

This research seeks to fill the research gap related to predictors of employees staying at the company by examining the role of perceptions of compassion, social support, altruism as the antecedents. Using a quantitative approach, this research analyzed survey data from 250 employee respondents from several companies operating in relatively competitive sectors, namely the digital printing sector. This research has several contributions. *First*, this paper tries to predict employee retention from employees' perceptions of compassion, social support, and altruism received from their fellow employees in the workplace. With a quantitative approach, this study was carried out to accurately measure the interactions between several variables, i.e. compassion, social support, and altruism to explain their level of influence on the outcome variable, i.e employee retention. Second, this study was carried out within the setting of a highly competitive market, namely the digital printing business. The digital printing is a business sector that is quite competitive in Indonesia as the competition among companies is very tight. This high competition makes employees often get more burden to provide a more on time service. Hence, compassion, social support and helpful behaviour among fellow colleagues is necessary to moderate the level of employee perceived pressures. *Finally*, the findings from this paper are quite relevant to serve as guidelines for similar companies, i.e. companies that compete in a fairly high level of competition. In general, this research may contribute to knowledge development and managerial practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Employee Retention

Employee retention is the most critical issue facing managers as a result of a lack of skilled human resources, economic growth and employee turnover. Retention is defined as the ability to retain employees who want to be retained longer than competitors with the consequence that if the retention strategy fail to fit the business process, all human resource efforts may ultimately be in vain (Khan, 2021). Retention is a voluntary action organizations take to establish an atmosphere that engages employees for the long term (Sabbagha., Ledimo., & Martins., 2018). Sabbagha et al., (2018) define Employers need to use employee retention as a strategy to keep competent and talented workers by reducing needless employee turnover by studying the elements that affect retention.

Compassion

As a heart response to the suffering of others, compassion at the workplace is described as seeing the suffering of organizational members, experiencing empathy for their suffering, and trying to behave in a way that demonstrates love, kindness, and warmth to lessen their suffering (Dutton., Worline., Frost., Lilius., 2006; Kanov., Maitlis., Worline., Dutton., Frost., Lilius., 2004). The urge to invest time, effort, and financial resources in assisting others

is referred to as compassion in the workplace (Nazir & Islam, 2020). Social behavior known as compassion at work is what enables workers to cope with frightful circumstances in both their personal and professional life (Subba & Rao, 2016). Since it encourages workers to socially coordinate behaviors that lessen the pain of teammates and customers, cultivating compassion is a highly regarded organizational goal (Nazir & Islam, 2020). Subba & Rao, (2016) said employees show compassion for others through behavior and interactions within an organization. Compassion in the workplace can change the perceived relationships between individuals and enable those who are suffering to cope with their circumstances more effectively (Nolan., Diefendorff., Erickson., & Lee., 2022).

Organizational scholars began to focus on the magnitude of human suffering in the workplace and the capacity for compassion to increase a sense of belonging in the organization they work for(Worline., Dutton., & Sisodia., 2017). In fact, some research suggests that human resources (HR) engagement that reinforces meaningfulness and compassion may have additional benefits at the individual level related to employee performance (Nazir & Islam, 2020). Compassion consists of relational processes that include giving, receiving, demonstrating empathy among organizational employees, and comforting employees in pain (Choi., Lee., & No., 2015). Nisar., Abid., Elahi., Athar., & Farooqi., (2020) said that when employees feel and receive compassion at work, they feel respected which encourages them to form a positive image of the organization and stay employed with the organization. Thus, this research develops the first hypothesis.

H1: Compassion is predicted to have a positive and significant relationship with stay employed with the company.

Social Support

The idea that one is liked, valued, and that someone is looking out for him as part of a social network inside an organization is known as social support (Kossek, Ellen, Shaun, Todd., & Leslie., 2011). Social support refers to the feeling that one is cared for, can get help from others, and more importantly, is a member of a supportive network (Guruge., Thomson., George., & Chaze., 2015). Social support is also defined as the extent to which individual workers feel that their well-being is valued by organizational resources like by their immediate supervisors and the wider organizational structures (Kossek et al., 2011).

Social support involves the perception that one has access to helping relationships of varying quality or strength, which provides resources such as information communication, emotional empathy, and tangible assistance (Viswesvaran., Sanchez., & Fisher., 1999). Kossek et al (2011) highlights social support as the individuals' perception that they have access to various helps from others and relationships with various qualities or strengths that provide resources such as information communication, emotional empathy, or real help. Cobbmd (1976) classifies social support into three types, namely (1) information that includes the knowledge that someone is cared for and loved (emotional

support), (2) information that causes individuals to feel they are appreciated (valued support), and (3) information that individuals are included in a network of mutual obligations that are common and shared together.

In a company context, when employees receive social support, it is very likely that they will have a high level of satisfaction. With high satisfaction, employees may stay in the company. Thus, social support may be closely related to employee retention. Thus, this research develops the next hypothesis. **H2**: Social support is predicted to have a positive and significant relationship with stay employed with the company.

Altruism

Altruism is behavior that leads to action, either directly or indirectly, to help other colleagues in overcoming problems and completing tasks (Emilisa, 2019). A deliberate and voluntary effort to better the circumstances, abilities, or knowledge of one's colleagues without anticipating recompense or personal advantage is referred to as employee altruism (Obrenovic B., Jianguo., Tsoy., Obrenovic., Khan., & Anwar., 2020). Friendly relationships are one of the factors that can support altruism (Sanderson, 2010).

Altruism falls into the category of pro-social behavior which is considered intentional behavior to help others (Mete, 2019). This altruistic prosocial behavior is stimulated by internalized norms and is based on sympathy to improve the welfare of others (Carlo & Randall, 2002). Adhiatma and Fachrunnisa (2021) stated that altruistic behavior is usually considered pro-social behaviour that is motivated by a sincere desire to benefit others, without expecting benefits for oneself. Altruism exists because each individual has a sense of concern for each other. Emilisa (2019) revealed that the feeling of wanting to help and wanting to help colleagues or strangers who really need help is a characteristic of altruism.

One facet of conformity known as altruism is the propensity for others to trust, feel empathy, feel that justice is being served, be socially conscious, and be good to others (Obrenovic et al., 2020). Bkeikher., Ageeva., Brazovskaya., Bykov., (2016) imply that there are three main ways that the idea of altruism is interpreted: as a way for a person to survive in the evolutionary process, as a way to fulfill their psychological need to do good, and as a way for society to adhere to a common moral code Furthermore, Obrenovic et al (2020) show more components of altruism, namely *first*, sharing. Individuals who often behave altruistically usually provide assistance to other people who need it more than themselves. *Second*, cooperative. Individuals who have an altruistic nature prefer to do work together, because according to them, by working together they can be more social with fellow humans and can speed up work. *Third*, donating. Individuals who have an altruistic nature like to give something or help to other people without expecting anything in return from that person. Fourth, help. Individuals who have an altruistic nature like to help other people and provide what is useful when other people are in trouble because it can create positive feelings in the helper. *Fifth*, honesty. Individuals who have an altruistic nature are honest, sincere, ethical and uphold the value

of honesty within themselves. *Sixth*, generosity. Individuals who have an altruistic nature show the behavior of giving charity, or being merciful to other people who need their help without expecting anything in return from the person they are helping. *Seventh*, pay attention to the rights and welfare of other people. Individuals who have an altruistic nature always try to pay attention to the rights and welfare of other people, always try to ensure that other people do not experience difficulties.

In the corporate context, altruistic behaviour can emerge from employees in the form of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Organ, 1988) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) altruism -the helping behavior demonstrated by owner-managers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to employees (Siddiq, 2022; Siddiq & Muhidin, 2019). When employees find that their co-workers and owner-managers are quite altruistic, it is very likely that employees will feel satisfied at work and feel at home to remain in the company. Thus, this research develops the next hypothesis.

H3: Altruism is thought to have a positive and significant relationship with stay employed with the company.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical review and results of previous research described, the research conceptual framework can be seen in the following picture:
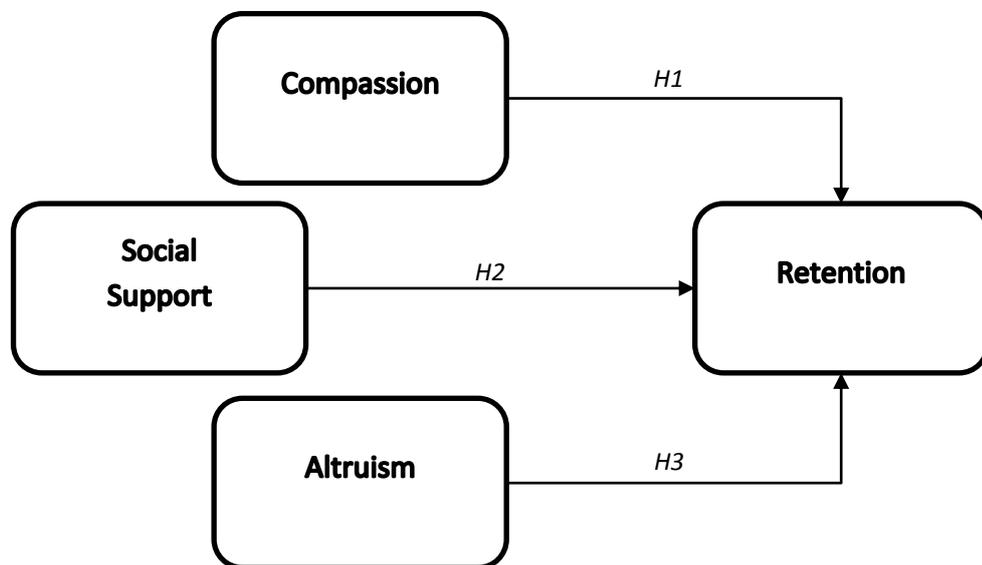
METHODOLOGY

In this study, surveys and quantitative methodologies are used distribution as a data collection technique. The quantitative method was taken because of considerations of accuracy in determining how the independent and dependent variables relate to one another. The context of this research is companies operating in the digital printing sector in one city in Indonesia. This sector in Indonesia is experiencing rapid growth but has a very tight competition. The survey was conducted in January and February of 2024. A

total of 250 paper-based questionnaires were given to 250 workers at various businesses in the industry. With a total of twenty-seven question items that included compassion, each statement was evaluated on a five-point Likert scale that went from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) (6 items), social support (7 items), altruism (5 items), and employee retention (9 items).

Table 1 Questionnaire Collection Results

No	Description	Total	Percentage
1	Number of questionnaires distributed	250	100
2	Number of returned questionnaires	250	100
3	Number of unreturned questionnaires	0	0
4	Number of damaged/incomplete questionnaires	0	0
5	Number of questionnaires processed	250	100

Table 1 outlines the detailed procedure of collecting quantitative data, which reveals that 250 questionnaires (100 %) were collected and then being processed for this research.

RESEARCH RESULT

Table 2 Respondent Demographics

Demographics	Total	Percentage
Gender		
Man	163	65.2
Woman	87	34.8
Age		
17-30	172	68.8
31-45	62	24.8
46-60	16	6.4
Education		
Elementary School	10	4
Junior High School	21	8.4
Senior High School	180	72
Bachelor and Diploma	39	15.6
Length of work		
< 2 Years	60	24
3-5 Years	71	28.4
6-9 Years	87	34.80
> 9 Years	32	12.8
The type of company		
Private		
Total	**250**	**100**

Male respondents, numbering 163 out of all, or 65.2 percent, dominated the characteristics of those who answered the questionnaire based on Table 2, while female respondents, numbering 87 out of all, or 34.8 percent, were less numerous. Seventy-one persons, or 72 percent, had completed high school and were among the responders who were under 31. Each respondent's average length of service was 6–9 years, or 34.80% of all respondents.

Multiple Correlation Analysis Test

Table 3 Multiple Correlation Analysis Test Results

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.673a	.453	.446	.436	.453	67.943	3	246	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Altrusim, Compassion, Social support
Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

Whether or not the research results live up to expectations is explained in the discussion section. The summary table presented in Table 3 indicates that the strength of the correlation between compassion, social support, and altruism as the predictors of employee retention is calculated with a correlation coefficient of 0.673. It demonstrates a mild influence. While other factors account for 55% of the influence, compassion, social support, and altruism all have a simultaneous predictive effect on employee retention of 45%.

Validity Test

To determine whether the study instrument is actually capable of assessing the constructs used, validity tests are conducted. The goal is to achieve content validity in order to acquire the validity of the questionnaire. The degree to which the differences found using the measuring tool accurately represent the differences among the respondents under investigation is demonstrated by this validity.

The r table value and the computed r (r x - y) were compared at a significance level of 5% in order to conduct this validity test using the SPSS software. The data and findings from the research are presented in the research results in a direct manner. Before the hypothesis was tested, a validity test was conducted to determine the degree to which employee retention and compassion, social support, and altruism are positively correlated (r = 0.124), with compassion, social support, and retention serving as predictor variants of employee retention (r = 0.124). With 250 responders overall, the F table value came out to be 0.124. When T count > T table, the value of an instrument is considered legitimate. Below are tables 4, 5, 6, and 7 that display the validity test findings.

Table 4 Compassion Variable Validity Test Results (X1)

Item	Corrected Item Value Total Correlation/r Calculate	Sig	r Table	Criteria
1	1	0.000	0.124	Valid
2	0.654	0.000	0.124	Valid
3	0.553	0.000	0.124	Valid
4	0.441	0.000	0.124	Valid
5	0.421	0.000	0.124	Valid
6	0.353	0.000	0.124	Valid

Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

Table 5 Social Support Variable Validity Test Results (X2)

Item	Corrected Item Value Total Correlation/r Calculate	Sig	r Table	Criteria
1	1	0.000	0.124	Valid
2	0.339	0.000	0.124	Valid
3	0.393	0.000	0.124	Valid
4	0.191	0.000	0.124	Valid
5	0.197	0.000	0.124	Valid
6	0.314	0.000	0.124	Valid
7	0.122	0.000	0.124	Valid

Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

Table 6 Altruism Variable Validity Test Results (X3)

Item	Corrected Item Value Total Correlation/r Calculate	Sig	r Table	Criteria
1	1	0.000	0.124	Valid
2	0.541	0.000	0.124	Valid
3	0.450	0.000	0.124	Valid
4	0.360	0.000	0.124	Valid
5	0.216	0.000	0.124	Valid

Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

Table 7 Retention Variable Validity Test Results (Y)

Item	Corrected Item Value Total Correlation/r Calculate	Sig	r Table	Criteria
1	1	0.000	0.124	Valid
2	0.628	0.000	0.124	Valid
3	0.565	0.000	0.124	Valid
4	0.374	0.000	0.124	Valid
5	0.362	0.000	0.124	Valid
6	0.389	0.000	0.124	Valid
7	0.191	0.000	0.124	Valid
8	0.380	0.000	0.124	Valid
9	0.331	0.000	0.124	Valid

Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

Reliability Test

The goal of reliability testing is to assess how consistent the tools used to measure ideas are. To achieve the validity of a questionnaire with specific goals, reliability is necessary. Cronbach Alpha is used to assess the dependability of measuring devices. The items are deemed credible if the Cronbach Alpha score is higher than 0.6. The items are deemed unreliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value is less than 0.6.

Table 8 Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach Alpha Value	Perception Cronbach Alpha Value	Conclusion
Compassion	0.637	0.726	Reliable
Social Support	0.622	0.741	Reliable
Altruism	0.524	0.781	Reliable
Retention	0.663	0.720	Reliable

Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

The Cronbach Alpha value for every variable is more than 0.6, according to the summary of reliability test findings shown in Table 8 above. Since only one variable is unreliable, it is possible to draw the conclusion from these data that while not all research instruments can be deemed dependable, this study can still be used for additional analysis. This indicates that answers from this questionnaire are consistent even when measurements are made in various models and at various times.

Hypothesis Test (T Test)

Table 9 Hypothesis Test Results

Variable	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Hypothectical Results
C→R	0.050	0.386	6.680	0.000	H1: Supported
SS→R	0.045	0.185	3.127	0.002	H2: Supported
A→R	0.053	0.261	4.887	0.000	H3: Supported

Source: Results of data processing and SPSS Program

DISCUSSION
The Relationship of Compassion with Retention

0.000 <0.05 indicates that the first hypothesis is supported, as indicated by the p-value between the retention and compassion variables. Put differently, compassion plays a major and beneficial role in employee retention. Suffering is an inevitable part of life, yet kindness can lead to better connections, an open mind, a greater sense of appreciation, personal development, adult happiness, and a more profound spiritual awakening (Nolan et al., 2022). As compassion inspires and enables others to collaborate, grow and thrive (Anstiss, 2016; Elahi., Abid., Arya., Farooqi., 2020). Therefore, affectionate relationships need to be developed in organizations. This compassion must be socialized by managers to their employees so that they understand the concept of compassion. The importance of compassion among employees can minimize turnover and make employees feel at home in the organization.

The Relationship of Social Support with Retention

The findings show that social support has a positive and significant relationship with employee retention, with a p value of 0.002 < 0.05. In other words, the second hypothesis that social support is thought to have a positive and significant relationship with employee retention can be accepted social support is negatively related to burnout, which means that when employees feel cared for, or part of a mutually supportive network, the impact of workplace issues is less likely to cause burnout because social support employees receive may reduce the negative impact (Ezekwueme, 2021). If employees receive poor social support, employees may feel disinterested in working and may easily experience burnout (Khan., Yusoff., Ahmad., 2015). Therefore, the role of social support in organizations is important. Social support can improve the emotional aspects of employees who feel that they are not doing well or are experiencing fatigue. When the employees' emotional aspects improve, it is possible that their performance may increase as well. So, the role of social support can indirectly increase work productivity and increase the employees' feeling of comfort.

The Relationship of Altruism with Retention

The results show that altruism has a positive and significant relationship with employee retention because the p value is 0.000 (< 0.05). This means that the third hypothesis that altruism predicts employee retention in competitive businesses is supported. In this context, managers need to show altruistic behavior towards their co-workers which aims to create a good work environment so that employees can feel at home with their work (Mete, 2019). Therefore, the role of altruism is no less important in making employees feel at home in the organization. Altruism is considered an action that is beneficial for work-related matters (Adhiatma & Fachrunnisa, 2021). The behavior of helping or sacrificing oneself to help co-workers who are tired due to a heavy workload without expecting anything in return can create a good working environment and good working relationships can create a natural feeling of comfort that arises in employees, thereby preventing employees from leaving the organization.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, researchers concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between compassion, social support, and altruism and employee retention. This means that the higher the level of compassion, social support, and altruism in the workplace, the higher the possibility of employees remaining in the organization. This is because they feel valued, supported, and considered part of a community which in turn can increase employee satisfaction and well-being, so that they are more likely to choose to remain working at the company. Therefore, it is important for organizations or groups to pay attention to and develop these three aspects to increase the retention and welfare of their employees.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Although previous research shows that compassion, social support, and altruism contribute to employee retention, other factors such as internal communication and organizational culture can also play an important role. This research aims to explore how effective internal communication and a supportive organizational culture can strengthen the relationship between compassion, social support, and altruism on employee retention.

It is hoped that this research will provide insight for managers and organizational leaders about the importance of creating a supportive work environment through good communication and a positive organizational culture, so as to increase employee retention.

With this research, it is hoped that it can make a greater contribution to the understanding of the factors that influence employee retention in the context of developing a competitive business, as well as provide practical recommendations for improving employee welfare and organizational performance.

With this approach, continued research can provide more comprehensive insight into the factors that influence employee retention and how organizations can optimize their strategies to retain valuable employees.

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