



Struck by a cupid's arrow: The conjuring bliss and sinister shades of employee workplace romance

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ABSTRACT

Workplace romance (WR), a terminology used to describe romantic relations between individuals in an organization, represents a phenomenon that has attracted academic attention for decades. However, despite its lure, the sensitive nature of WR has resulted in a limited quantity of empirical investigations, fragmented literary results, and an elusive understanding of how organizations should approach workplace romances. This study performs a systematic assessment of the WR research and uses an integrated approach to identify the antecedents, outcomes, and gaps in the literature to address in future WR research. Based on this conceptual backdrop, a CUPID (considerate, uncharacteristic, pragmatic, informed, and diligence) framework is proposed that may provide guidance for human resource managers grappling with WR.

1. Introduction

Although romance between individuals is not new, studies on romantic relationships within the workplace began to emerge 50 years ago (Quinn, 1977; Sidhu et al., 2019; Chory & Hoke, 2019). As mixed-gender workplaces became more common in the 1960's, increases in romantic behaviors among coworkers were reported (Voza, 2017; Karl & Sutton, 2000). Employees' proximity, and interactions across long work hours, create the setting for workplace romance (WR) (i.e., office romance, organizational romance). Such opportunities for interaction provide employees with the chance to become acquainted with each other's personalities, abilities, interests, and sentiments resulting in feelings of attraction, mutual affection, and appreciation (Ha et al., 2020; Lickey et al., 2009; Pierce, Byrne, & Aguinis, 1996; Riach & Wilson, 2008).

Workplace romance research suggests that romantic relationships (e.g., between coworkers, supervisors, subordinates, or between group members) seem to be on the rise, with nearly one-third to half of romantic relationships commencing on the job (Biggs et al., 2012; Rabin-Margalioth, 2006; Karl & Sutton, 2000; Riach & Wilson, 2007).

The percentage of people in WR even continued to rise during the pandemic, despite more people working remotely (Milligan, 2022). Researchers from several disciplines, including law, sociology, psychology, history, and economics (Boyd, 2010), have been drawn to the subject as organizations are becoming a recognized space in which romantic relationships to occur (Quinn & Lees, 1984; Morgan & Davidson, 2008; Mainiero, 2020).

Since the beginning of WR's emergence in scholarly literature, few studies have examined the key advantages, or consequences, of WR on employees and organizations, leading to contradicting discoveries about the effects of WR (Wilson, 2015; Sidhu et al., 2020). Contextually, WR studies have used the terms 'sexual-attraction' (Pierce et al., 1996) or sexual relationships (Khan et al., 2017) between individuals working in the same firm. For instance, Pierce and Aguinis (2001, p. 206) defined WR as 'mutually desired relationships involving sexual attraction between two employees of the same organization'. While sexual attraction is the defining feature of WR (Wilson, 2015), WR relationships are consensual (Paul & Townsend, 1998; Pierce & Aguinis, 2003, 2009; Barratt & Nordstrom, 2011), thus differentiating WR from sexual harassment (Sidhu et al., 2020).

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Several studies suggest that employees are increasingly compelled to seek love and engage in romantic relationships with their coworkers (Anderson & Hunsaker, 1985), with interactions such as flirting and dating leading to an increase in overall work productivity (Khan et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2017; Riach & Wilson, 2007). Other studies suggest that WR may negatively impact an organization through decreased employee productivity, low remuneration, and low retention (Gillen-Hoke & Chory, 2015; Lickey et al., 2009; Dilliard & Miller, 1988; Powell, 2001). Additionally, WR's potential spillover consequences, such as sexual harassment complaints as evidenced by the #MeToo movement and top management scandals, could threaten organizational trust (Cavico and Mujtaba, 2021; Khan et al., 2017; Brown and Allgeier, 1995; Dillard, 1989).

Theoretically, literature has struggled to distinguish between different types of romance (e.g., a romance between single people, a romance between a single person and one who is already in a relationship, a romance between two married people, etc.); however, the unifying factor in WR theory is that there must be a consensual agreement between two individuals. Further, the quality of WRs in the literature is also varied. For example, WRs between workers could be flings, or the start of deep, long-term connections. Hence, the WR literature has primarily focused on lateral relationships (i.e., relations between employees and co-workers of the same rank and status) and hierarchal relationships (i.e., relations between a manager/supervisor and subordinate). Hierarchal romances have typically been associated with more negative consequences than lateral romances (Wilson, 2015).

Despite academic interest in WR, the literature remains largely elusive, fragmented, among the least studied, and researched in organizational studies (Riach & Wilson, 2008; Sias, 2015; Sidhu et al., 2020). WR, for example, has received insufficient attention in the fields of managerial research and HR interventions. Methodologically WR has been primarily examined via quantitative methods (Khan et al. 2019), and yet there is a lack of theoretical and qualitative depth that may help researchers to understand the underlying patterns and motives behind WRs (Sidhu et al., 2020). However, the implications of WR may be relevant to each of the preceding fields by shedding light on socio-sexual, interpersonal, and social-professional relationships, all of which directly or indirectly impact organizational performance (Brown & Allgeier, 1995; Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 2004; Riach & Wilson, 2007; Briggs et al., 2012).

Due to the sensitive nature of WR, multiple researchers have identified repercussions for WR management and debates over whether WR should be allowed or forbidden in organizations is still an ongoing debate (e.g., Adikaram & Weerakotuwa, 2022; Kolesnikova & Analoui, 2013; Pierce & Aguinis, 2009; Sidhu et al., 2020; Wilson, 2015). Thus, the current paper reviews the extant, yet dispersed, literature on WR and presents the findings using the following research questions:

- 1) What antecedents predict engagement in romantic relationships in organizational environments?
- 2) What are the outcomes of WR on employees, teams, and organizations?
- 3) What existing gaps in WR literature need future attention?
- 4) How should human resource managers approach WR within their organizations?

Based on the preceding questions, the current study offers recommendations for organizations and firm managers to help anticipate and manage WR, identifies gaps in the literature to help managers and academics advance the debate on WR, and offers implications for HR practitioners seeking to better address WR through a proposed CUPID theoretical model.

2. Methodology

The current study employed a systematic literature review (SLR), as

suggested by Tranfield et al. (2003) and Snyder (2019). SLR studies seek to discover, examine, and summarize the contents of all important pieces of information on a specific topic, thereby making the available evidence more approachable for scholarly interpretation (Tranfield et al., 2003; Dixon-Woods et al., 2005). The SLR method was adopted for the current study to explore the body of literature on WR and identify the antecedents, consequences, and implications for future scholars. Within this review, the connections, paradoxes, and gaps within all available literature is presented. Thus, this study makes recommendations for future research and supports rational decision-making based on the data collected (Tranfield et al., 2003). The current study complements and extends review studies by Wilson (2015) and Pierce and Aguinis (2009) by answering the proposed research questions. This study is also unique in its contribution in that it focuses on the various levels of WR that occur in the organization.

The material search method was influenced by the guidelines put forth and followed by Jain et al. (2022) and Bhel et al. (2022) consisting of a) database choice, b) keyword identification, c) search string construction, and d) data extraction. First, as the data on WR is relatively sparse and dispersed, major databases were selected to search for literature (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Scopus, Google Scholar, Proquest, and EBSCO were used. This review did not include Web of Science (WoS) because the percentage of articles indexed primarily in WoS is minimal (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016), and approximately 97 percent of WoS journals are included in Scopus.

Second, this study employed the term "workplace romance" as its primary keyword as it's been well-established in the literature (e.g., Wilson, 2015; Khan et al. 2017; Sidhu et al., 2020), yet related keywords were included to ensure more data on the topic was captured. The final set of keywords were based on two approaches: synonym combinations and peer recommendations (e.g., Chabowski et al., 2013). Thus, the keywords "Organization* Romance*" OR "Office Romance*" OR "Workplace Romance*" OR "employee Romanc*" OR "Staff Romanc*" OR "Co-worker Romanc*" OR "Organization* intimacy" OR "Office intimacy" OR "Workplace intimacy" were used. Third, data extraction was carried out using a search string [i.e., the search used an asterisk (*) that replaced the absence of a character, a single character, or multiple characters anywhere in a phrase (e.g., ethic, ethics, ethical, ethicality, and so on)] that was applied in the title-abstract-keyword section of Scopus database. The data were retrieved in June 2022. Subsequently, all publications such as conference papers, journal articles, book chapters, and online news articles were included (c.f., Wilson, 2015). After relevant publications were selected, a reverse search was performed to find papers cited in the obtained publications that may not have been found in the keyword search.

2.1. Inclusion and exclusion of studies

Following the suggestion of Jain et al. (2022), selected articles were examined to determine whether terms such as office romance, workplace romance, employee romance, employee love, employee attraction, and sexual relationships in the workplace were explicitly addressed in the title, abstract, and keyword section of the documents. Second, whether these keywords were addressed from the context of organizations, between employees, between employees and managers, or between groups were identified. Third, whether the keywords were addressed from a conceptual, philosophical, and theoretical/empirical standpoint were checked. After this preselection process, relevant publications that met the selection criteria requirements were retained, while those that did not meet such criteria were removed. Other inclusion criteria involved English-language publications of peer-reviewed journals, conference papers, and media articles. This procedure yielded an initial sample of 151 articles.

2.2. Analyzing and synthesizing the data

Cortez et al.'s (2021) recommendations were followed to determine WR antecedents, outcomes, and to propose a future agenda for research. An Excel spreadsheet was generated in which articles were classified based on study context (e.g., industry, country, etc.), variables/antecedents (individual, dyadic, group, organizational, etc.), the methodology adopted (e.g., conceptual, qualitative, quantitative case study, etc.), study implications (e.g., individual, organizational, societal, etc.) and outcomes (e.g., positive/negative consequences, effects, etc.). Data was then analyzed by the qualitative synthesis method (Bosma et al., 2019). Qualitative synthesis helps in organizing literature in distinct categories and allows a better conceptual understanding of a phenomenon (Bosma et al., 2020). After a continuous and iterative process, qualitative synthesis data helped to identify various themes related to the antecedents and the outcomes of WR. Furthermore, this assisted in identifying gaps in the literature, which provided the basis for identifying and proposing frameworks and future research directions.¹

3. Findings

3.1. Antecedents of WR

3.1.1. Physiological and emotional values

Romance includes an emotional and physiological dimension that engages the human mind (Lickey et al., 2009). Emotional (e.g., love, romance, and affection) and physiological components (e.g., arousal) can trigger people to develop affection for the person they desire which often results in difficult-to-control emotions and physiological changes. These emotions and psychological changes can lead people to be happy and show caring, desire sexual relations, and increase the likelihood of falling in love (Morgan & Davidson, 2008; Pierce et al., 1996).

Sternberg's (1986) Triangular Theory of Love articulates the physical and emotional components of love. For instance, three key factors constitute love: intimacy (i.e., the degree of closeness, connectedness, and bonding); passion (i.e., the desire that results in romance, physical attraction, and sexual fulfillment); and decision/commitment (i.e., the choice to love another in the short-run, and commitment to sustaining that love in the long run). The abovementioned factors often encourage individuals to participate in romantic relationships unrelated to context. For example, romances could occur in online settings, schools, and/or workplaces. As a result, research implies that emotional and physiological factors can motivate people to engage in WR (Sias, 2015). Based on this assumption, the current study proposes that physiological and emotional components are intrinsically motive individuals to engage in WR.

3.1.2. Humor

Men often employ humor to charm women (Hall, 2017; Greengross, 2018). As a result, empirical research indicates that individuals seeking romantic connections desire companions that have a positive sense of humor (DiDonato & Jakubiak, 2016). As a result, a woman is more likely to select a man who can make her laugh, while a man is more likely to

choose a woman who appreciates his sense of humor (Hone et al., 2015; Bressler et al., 2006). Therefore, humor can be used as a technique to detect whether a romantic attraction is reciprocal (Li et al., 2009).

In addition, studies have revealed that when women find their partners entertaining, physical pleasure, stimulation, and attraction to the partner increases (Greengross, 2011). This may help explain why women are twice as likely as men to pursue partners with a sense of humor (Wilbur & Campbell, 2011) and why men may use humor as a relationship-building strategy to attract partners (Hall, 2015). Thus, humor may act as an antecedent of WR.

3.1.3. Interpersonal attraction

The workplace has been known as the space that "fosters interpersonal attraction" (Riach & Wilson, 2007, p.80) and nurtures affection between employees (Crary, 1987). As interdependence develops between individuals at work, such as having shared work goals, shared feelings of achievement, and motives at work (Pierce et al., 1996; Hoffman et al., 1997; Riach & Wilson, 2007; Eastwick et al., 2011), it can increase mutual attraction — the foundation for WR (Bowes-Sperry & Powell, 1999).

Additional types of attraction, like physical (i.e., being attracted to an individual's appearance), social attraction (i.e., being attracted to one's personality), and task attraction (i.e., being attracted to an individual's ability and performance) (McCroskey & McCain, 1974) may also motivate individuals to pursue WRs (Khalilzadeh & Pizam, 2021; Aurora & Venkatachari, 2014; Sidhu et al., 2020). For example, individuals who are viewed as kind or honest are often perceived as socially attractive (Zhang et al., 2014). Vozza (2017) asserts that at the beginning of WRs employees try to please and impress their potential partners to increase attraction. This scenario may result in interested parties engaging in specific tasks to impress their partners (Ináncsi et al., 2016). Additionally, Grant-Jacob's (2016) review finds that individuals are attracted to others with similar physical and personality characteristics. This can also be described by the theory of homophily (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 1954), which describes the ability to attract people who share similar beliefs, attitudes, and personal attributes. Finally, some individuals may be more likely to engage in WRs due to their individual traits. For example, Doll and Rosopa (2015) found that individuals low in conscientiousness were more likely to engage in WRs than were individuals high in conscientiousness.

3.1.4. Employee proximity

According to Sias (2015), proximity positively influences WR (See also, Salvaggio, 2011a; Pierce, 1996; Quinn, 1977; Festinger et al., 1950) This includes geographical proximity (i.e., how closely people work near each other in space), work demand proximity (e.g., shared work responsibilities, traveling together for work, or participating in work gatherings), or work occasional interactions (e.g., participating in work gatherings or stumbling into one another within the office).

As determinants of interpersonal attraction and physical attraction, romance literature emphasizes the significance of propinquity (i.e., physical proximity) and repeated exposure (Pierce et al., 1996). Regarding propinquity, both physical proximity (i.e., the physical distance connecting two persons) and functional proximity (i.e., the extent to which the physical space and its layout facilitates interaction) enable individuals to engage with one another and can foster attraction (Pierce et al., 1996; Salvaggio et al., 2011a). Individuals who work together on job-related tasks are more inclined to be physically close, spend more time communicating with one another, and may develop a fondness for each other as a consequence (Mainiero, 1986; Quinn, 1977). For instance, Anderson and Hunsaker (1985) surveyed couples in workplace relationships and observe that 94 % of respondents indicated working in the same facility as their partner, while 68 % reported working in the immediate vicinity. This is not so surprising as working long hours similar tasks creates high levels of proximity and similarity.

¹ Qualitative synthesis was performed based on the guidelines of Saini and Shlonsky (2012) Bosma et al., (2019); Gupta et al. (2019); Qualitative synthesis analyses the literature retrieved various texts and gathers many pieces of information together into a readable format (Anand et al. 2022). To do so, our process involved developing an excel spreadsheet and coding of the qualitative literature data. The coding was driven by the research questions developed – which is one of the supporting factors for qualitative synthesis approach (Gupta et al. 2019). After coding the data, we synthesized the finding into a meaningful interpretation based on the patterns observed (which is often developed by the support of coded literature and by authors own interpretation) in the literature – that also helped us to derive gaps and future directions.

3.1.5. Organization culture and climate

Organizational culture (i.e., the collection of values, beliefs, and practices that guide employee behavior within an organization) may also play a role in WR (Salvaggio et al., 2011a). For example, organizational structures with higher degrees of perceived organizational support, power, and politics (Aquino et al., 2014; Clegg et al., 2015) may support WR. In 1989, Mainiero writes that large differences across industries exist regarding their tolerance of WR. For instance, in the conservative banking industry, “affairs go on all the time, but are widely discouraged” (Mainiero, 1989, p.109).

A few organizations, including Netflix, have proposed restrictions limiting the amount of time employees can keep eye contact, while NBC Universal Media, LLC reportedly prevented coworkers from taking a cab home together alone (DeLoatch, 2020). However, other sectors have a more liberal approach to dating at workplace. Specifically, innovative, creative, and action-orientated have often report that their employer neither supported nor discouraged WR.

Research continues to document that specific industries experience higher levels of WR (Aurora & Venkatachari, 2014; Chory, Mainiero, & Horan, 2022; Jung & Yoon, 2020; Loftus, 1995; Mano & Gabriel, 2006). According to the Approved-Index Survey (2015), the industries with the highest levels of WR, include fashion, followed by transportation/logistics, construction, banking/finance, and public firms. The sectors of industry with the lowest WR levels, are publishing, security, insurance, and manufacturing. In a recent study, Chory et al. (2022) report that the most conservative WR industries include healthcare, education, administration while finance, trade, sales, STEM, and manual labor fields were the most liberal in their views of WRs.

Amongst the industries mentioned above, the service sector is notorious for WR, with CareerBuilder (2011) reporting that 47 % of employees in the hospitality sector have dated a coworker. In these industries, employees likely to spend several hours in close proximity to each other (the mere exposure factor) and depend on one another for work input–output (creating interdependence), which can lead to reciprocal relations’ and WR. In such contexts, where colleagues may spend long hours around each other, and are able to get to know each other, WR is more likely to occur (Khalilzadeh & Pizam, 2021). Additionally, factors external to organizations like, national culture, may also influence the likelihood of WR. For example, an enterprise in France was reluctant to limit WRs as it could have been characterized as the invasion of workers’ private lives and a denial of their privacy rights (Middlemiss, 2019). Some firms forbid dating between managers and employees (Zipkin, 2018). For instance, due to more restrictions for women, conservative cultures may have less WR than liberal cultures (Mano & Gabriel, 2006).

In addition to organizational culture, organizational climate (i.e., the attitudes, behaviors, and feelings of an organization, usually discussed at the work group or department level) may also affect the likelihood of WR (Mainiero, 1989; Salvaggio et al., 2011a). For example, a sexually-charged and WR-permissive organizational climate may set the stage for triggering and acting on attraction among individuals. Conversely, if work environments do not welcome romantic behavior many employees would decline engaging in WRs to avoid jeopardizing their careers (e.g., such as being compelled to shift to a different department) (Mainiero, 1989). Furthermore, Salvaggio et al. (2011a) discover that employees collaborating in groups with a high level of sexualization were more inclined to disclose engaging in and/or perceiving workplace romances than employees working in firms with low levels of sexualization. Similarly, Mano and Gabriel (2006) reveal that romance amongst hotel spa workers is more visible in “hot” organizational climates — defined as those with less official performance rules.

In sum, scholars have emphasized the importance of psychological and organizational climate in fostering worker intimacy and romance. Additionally, organizational climate is determined by attitudes (e.g., Syaebani et al., 2021), which are formed from individual climate perceptions (Quinn, 1977; Mainiero, 1989; Mano and Gabriel, 2006; Kuenzi

& Schminke, 2009). According to empirical studies, the climate in which employees work plays a core role in stimulating WR, with most employees generally open to dating a colleague (Totaljobs, 2018).

3.1.6. Relationship type: hierarchical vs lateral

Workplace romances are typically classified as either lateral or hierarchical (Pierce & Aguinis 1997; Karl & Sutton, 2000). A lateral romance involves employees of equal status, while a hierarchical romance involves employees at different levels in the organization (e.g., a manager in a romance with a direct report) (Pierce et al., 2000). Typically, hierarchical romances are viewed more negatively than lateral romances by peers and organizations, so consequently an employee’s position or status within an organization affects the likelihood of WR (Cole, 2009; Wilson, 2015). While Dillard (1987) finds that females prefer to engage in romances with males that have a higher job status, the power imbalance in the relationship is problematic. Hierarchical WRs, while common, are generally regarded as taboo (Pierce et al., 2000; Pierce et al., 2004; Chan-Serafin et al., 2017) because it is difficult to determine the degree of consensualness (Berdahl & Aquino, 2009), thus raising concerns about sexual harassment (Jones, 1999).

3.1.7. Technological influence

In a recent research, nearly 32 % of partnered adults say they met through friends and family, 18 % say they met through work, and 12 % say they met online (Brown, 2020). Technology within the workplace (e.g., computers, smartphones, chat apps, social networking sites, intranets, etc.) is now ubiquitous and plans for increased information technology spending across organizations continues to grow (Cowan & Horan, 2021). Over 85 % of employees utilize more than one device to communicate during working hours and with 45 % of employees in the United States working from home at least part-time (1), WR continues to adapt.

Caughlin & Sharabi (2013) suggest that digitalization has played a key role in communication between people involved in romance. The way different digital tools connect people matters. For instance, individuals in relationships frequently communicate through various channels (e.g., cellphones, text messages, emails, and social networks). Technology provides individuals with various advantages for WRs (Mainiero, 2013; Cowan & Horan, 2017). For instance, through using a text message, prospective partners can construct a clear, charming messages to attract and interact with potential partners.

Additionally, technology can facilitate interactions among employees that are not always work related (e.g., flirting, displaying intimacy, beginning a relationship, resolving conflicts, etc.) (Cowan & Rowan, 2017). For example, Hovick et al. (2003) find that participants in WRs text each other an average of four times a day. Using in-depth interviews, Cowan and Horan (2021) find that information and communication technologies (ICTs) are used in WRs to escalate relationships (e.g., participants exchange contact information, covertly gather information about the other person, etc.), maintain relationships (e.g., participants discuss via ICT whether to disclose the relationship, keep in touch with each other during work hours, etc.), and dissolve relationships (e.g., participants contact each other less frequently, communicate the desire to end the relationship, etc.). The results of the study demonstrate that ICTs often facilitate and support WRs.

3.2. The outcomes of WR

3.2.1. Positive outcomes

Both conceptually and empirically, scholars conclude that in some contexts WRs may have a beneficial effect on employee performance (Ariani et al., 2011; Dechamplain, 2021; Khan et al., 2017) by increasing concentration on work, work satisfaction, effort, punctuality, productivity, and job involvement while lowering turnover intentions (Ariani et al., 2011; Baker 2016; Chory & Hoke, 2019; Dillard 1987; Dillard et al., 1994; Khan et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2019; Quinn 1977).

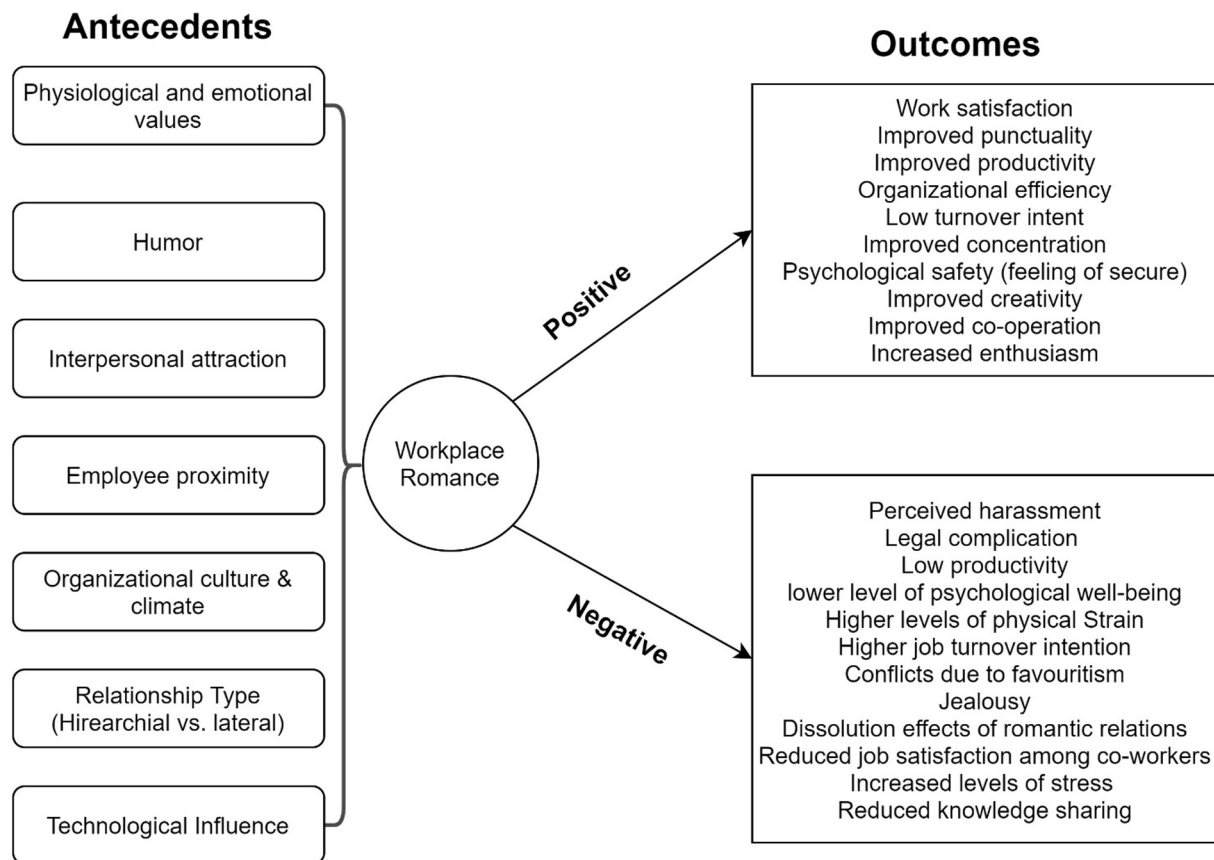


Fig. 1. Summary of findings on WR.

Substantiating the preceding assertions, Dillard's (1987) empirical evidence suggests that 21 % of documented WR instances resulted in organizational gains and performance benefits.

The positive effects of WRs may arise from an increased sense of psychological comfort and security for WR participants at work, leading to superior workplace performance and organizational commitment (Ariani et al., 2011). WRs may also increase employee morale, creating an exciting organizational climate (Horn & Horn, 1982). Finally, research suggests that WR's are positively related to job performance (e.g., Quinn, 1977; Dillard et al., 1994). In sum, there is evidence that WR-supportive organizational cultures can result in employees that are happier and more productive at work (Pierce et al., 1996; Riach & Wilson, 2007; Barsade & O'Neill, 2014). However, the positive effects of WRs may also be driven by WR participant's desire to mitigate negative judgments about their romantic involvement from co-workers (Chory & Hoke, 2022; Cowan & Horan, 2014).

3.2.2. Negative outcomes

Impacts on Organizations. According to Vozza (2017), at the work group level, WRs can contribute to impressions of unfairness and increase conflicts of interest within work groups (See also Ariani et al., 2011). When hierarchical romances occur, co-worker anxiety may increase and team morale decrease if co-workers believe that a supervisor is making managerial decisions in favor of his/her romantic partner (Balaban, 2019; Dechamplain, 2021; Summers & Myklebust, 1992). Additionally, coworkers are more likely to distrust co-workers, and are less receptive to co-workers engaged in a hierarchical (as opposed to lateral) WR (Horan & Chory, 2009). Relationships between managers and their employees can negatively affect productivity and foster feelings of envy and suspicion of prejudice (e.g., Sias, 2015). Those participating in WRs may directly experience criticism, jealousy, and hostility from coworkers (Balaban, 2019) and reduced morale.

Companies also struggle with how to respond to sexualized behavior at work at the organizational level (Gutek, 1985). For example, Pierce and Aguinis (1997) report that if WRs end unsuccessfully, they can generate negative affect which, in turn, may have negative outcomes for the organization (e.g., damaging professional relationships to threats of violence). Additionally, hierarchical WRs may become the target of media scrutiny, especially if the WRs end with sexual harassment claims or other scandals (Lieber, 2008). Consequently, hierarchical WRs can negatively impact organizational reputations, shareholder reactions, and stock values (Baker et al., 2021).

Impacts on Employees. According to the preceding discussion, WR can have a significant influence on the employee performance (Dillard, 1987; Riach & Wilson, 2007; Mishra & Mitra, 2021) and may result in disengagement, decreased psychological well-being, increased physical strain, and work turnover intentions (Baker, 2016; Berdahl & Aquino, 2009; Salvaggio et al., 2011a). Results also indicate that WR may negatively impact the performance of employees (Bhebhe & Hove, 2016; Khan et al., 2017), create conflicts between employees (Murray, 2022), result in unfair interventions (Ariani et al., 2011) and negatively impact WR participants' careers (Dias & Duzert, 2019). Verhoef and Terblanche (2015) report that the dissolution of any WR affects employees' psychosocial health and productivity, including difficulties with concentration, anxiety, distress, a lack of motivation, increased addictions, workplace gossip, and retaliatory behavior. Workplace romances may also result in administrative action. A survey by Chan-Serafin et al. (2017) finds that one-third of WRs result in at least one terminated individual while 17 % of managers are likely to transfer one employee to another department. Five percent of WRs led to lawsuits (Passy, 2018).

Furthermore, co-worker observation of WRs results in decreased employee satisfaction at the workplace (Salvaggio et al., 2011b). Dillard et al. (1994) indicate that co-workers who perceived WRs to be driven by job motives also report those romances negatively impact employees'

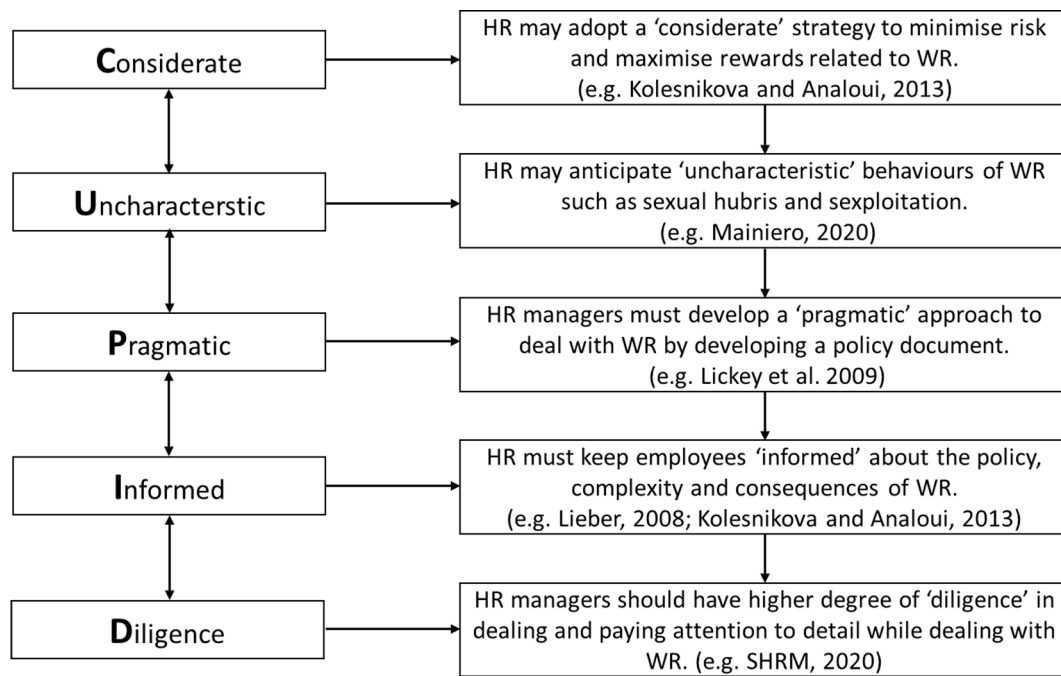


Fig. 2. The C.U.P.I.D framework for managing WR.

social climate and work performance. Additionally, co-workers may falsify information shared with those engaged in WRs due to a lack of trust (Horan & Chory, 2009). Thus, keeping WRs discreet may avoid possible negative consequences on others (Tengberg & Tidefors, 2016).

Influence of Gender. Gender differences may also affect the perceived negative consequences of WR. For example, females appeared more likely than males to find WRs disadvantageous (Chory & Hoke, 2019). Additionally, women are more likely to be engaged in WRs to advance their careers than are males, while males are more likely to engage in WR to gratify ego motives (Anderson & Fisher, 1991). Additionally, men demonstrate a more favorable attitude toward and incentive to engage in office romance than women do (Khan et al., 2022; Quinn, 1977; Wilson, 2015). Additionally, recent research suggests that coworker attitudes of and conduct against those engaged in WR were more harmful than previously believed, particularly for women (Chory & Hoke, 2020).

Individual Motives. Love motives exist when partners exhibit actual love for each other. Ego motives exist when partners exhibit gratification for their egos or sexual interactions (e.g., Khan et al., 2022). Cowan and Horan (2014), for example, found that most modern employees are involved in WR solely for sexual purposes, and Vault Careers (2018) reports that 24 % of WRs have been spontaneous hook-ups and 16 % have been ongoing informal relationships, making it difficult to determine the motive for the romance. Job, or utilitarian, motives exist when a lower-level worker is driven by work-related considerations like advancement, security, authority, financial benefits (Foley & Powell, 1999; Powell & Foley, 1998). Similarly, the desire to be in a relationship with a co-worker may be fueled by things such as boosting one's status or power (a bad, unhealthy motive) (Shuck et al., 2016). It seems that the motive for the relationship may also affect how they are perceived by others. Quinn (1977) observed that onlookers frequently supported relationships perceived to stem from love motives, as opposed to job or ego motives. Co-workers may be more accepting of workplace romances based on love motives because those in the WR tend to show an increase in job performance (Dillard, 1987; Dillard & Broetzmann, 1989). Couples engaging in workplace romances based on love motives were also more likely to show enthusiasm for work than couples who were together based on job motives (Dillard & Broetzmann, 1989).

While Quinn's motive typology is still the commonly cited, two more

recent examinations of WR motives attempt to update them. Cowan and Horan (2014) used semi-structured interviews with 17 people and identified four motives for engagement in WRs (i.e., time spent with each other, the ease of opportunity via proximity, similarity, and hook-ups — to have sex). In 2016, Azeez also re-examined Quinn's typology and identified six types of motives for WRs (i.e., love, emotional support, pleasure, job, ego, and convenience). Of note is that Quinn's "ego" motive was divided into two motives, pleasure and ego, and two new motives, emotional support and convenience, were added.

3.3. Using a C.U.P.I.D framework to manage WR

Despite identifying the antecedents, outcomes, and future directions of WR literature, managing WR, and constructing WR policies, has been a challenge for HR managers (Pierce & Aguinis, 2009; Sidhu et al., 2020). Many organizations lack a WR policy and those that exist may be unclear to employees (Bilyk, 2021), resulting in perceptions of unfairness, confusion about differences between WR and sexual harassment, and backlash if the WR ends on a sour note (Chory & Hoke, 2019; Cole, 2009; SHRM, 2013; Vault Careers, 2018). Hence, derived from the insights of the literature reviewed in the current article a CUPID framework is proposed (Fig. 2). Although this framework is not 'one size fits all', as context like organization size, type, cultures, policies, etc. may affect WR management, however it may serve as a strategic framework for HR managers to better address WR.

1) **Considerate:** A considerate approach is defined as a strategic approach that addresses WR within an organization's business strategy (Kolesnikova & Alanoui, 2013). Workplace romances may be misrepresented due to charges of bad judgment, violations of ethics, favoritism, reduced productivity, and reduced employee morale in organizations (SHRM, 2017). However, when managers interfere in WRs, they risk being accused of mistreating employees (Pierce & Aguinis, 2009), so they should avoid interfering unless the WR may have damaging effects employee job performance (Karl & Sutton, 2000; Pierce & Aguinis, 2009).

Thus, to avoid such perception, Kolesnikova and Analoui (2013) explain that a considerate approach involves counseling, prohibiting specific actions (e.g., displays of public affection in the workspace to reduce discomfort for others and to reduce inaccurate perceptions about

the relationship), and using additional managerial actions as needed. For example, counseling interventions for WR participants were perceived to most fair by participants and co-workers (Karl & Sutton, 2000; Pierce & Aguinis, 2009). Evidence also shows that a thoughtful approach increases employee commitment and satisfaction (Ariani et al., 2011; Khan et al., 2019).

2) **Uncharacteristic:** Managers may attempt to deter intimate interactions between employees through policies such as having to disclose relations that may involve possible conflicts of interest (e.g., Williams et al., 1999; Lickey et al., 2009), even though it may be difficult to predict the motivations of individuals who engage in romance (Sidhu et al., 2019). Mainiero (2020) describes two constructs related to WR that are “uncharacteristic”. First, *sexual hubris* is an unscrupulous attitude that enables influential individuals to misuse positions to obtain sexual favors. Sexual hubris could increase the likelihood of sexual harassment, and exploitation may be used to generate a relationship that excludes others from the power (Mainiero, 2020). Often, managers who have romantic connections with their direct reports may be accused of harassment or misusing their position and power (Adikaram & Weerakotuwa, 2022).

Second, *sexploitation* refers to lower-level employees utilizing sexual initiatives to obtain benefits and favors from higher-level employees. Moreover, romance can be used to attain sex, power, or favoritism, which often results in negative impacts on co-workers or work groups. Staff members reported that those co-workers engaging in a hierarchical or lateral WR were more likely to seek privileges or favors in the organization (Chory & Hoke, 2019). Thus, HR managers are encouraged to more actively regulate WRs that involve uncharacteristic elements.

3) **Pragmatic:** Human resource managers may find it difficult to stop romantic interactions between employees, but they should develop a pragmatic approach to WR policies (Bilyk, 2021). Workplace romance policies should not be centered on the flawed belief that WRs result in reduced work performance (Pierce, 1998), but policies may be necessary to mitigate the negative outcomes of WRs. Therefore, when determining the organization’s role in managing WRs, HR managers should consider the context (e.g., their organization’s culture, tolerance for risk, industry, etc.).

While some organizations have adopted zero-tolerance policies for WRs, some HR managers have adopted more middling approaches. For example, organizations using love agreements (i.e., love contracts), could signal to employees that disclosed WRs are acceptable, as long as work processes are not disrupted (Lickey et al., 2009). A pragmatic policy should explicitly state what romantic relationships are allowed within the organization, what behaviors the organization deems unacceptable, the ramifications for engaging in inappropriate behavior (Lickey et al., 2009), and at what point individuals are responsible for revealing romantic relationships to the organization.

4) **Informed:** According to the findings of Kolesnikova and Analoui (2010), the most suitable response to WR is to inform the WR participants of the complexities and possible repercussions of WRs. While organizations may have well-drafted and widely implemented WR policies, it is likely that some employees remain unaware of WR consequences (Lieber, 2008). The organization is responsible for notifying employees about the potential negative outcomes connected with WRs (Pierce et al., 2000). For example, many managers are unaware of — or prefer to overlook — the dangers associated with dating direct report (Lieber, 2008).

Moreover, though human resource managers may recognize the positive effects of WR (SHRM, 2006), they should advise employees that conflicts emerging from WRs (e.g., heated disputes, negative emotional displays, and demonstrations of aggression at work) should be avoided in the workspace as they could negatively affect the work environment (Pierce & Aguinis, 2009). Furthermore, WR participants expect to be informed about the decisions that affect them (Foley & Powell, 1999). However, in recent years the romances and sexual behavior between leaders and subordinates have sparked controversies, as some scholars

believe that this type of relationship may result in favoritism. Thus, managers must be informed about the issues that may arise due to such actions. Furthermore, in the wake of the #MeToo movement, firms are making every attempt to keep employees informed about the potential consequences of hierarchical relationships (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2021).

5) **Diligence:** The line between sexual harassment and romantic behavior is often gray, and it may be challenging to distinguish between mutually agreed upon romantic relations and sexual exploitation (Wilson, 2015). “While sexual harassment and workplace romances are fundamentally distinct concerns, lines may blur if the attention is unwelcome, if one party terminates the romance but the other party continues, or if the romance ends tragically and a sexual harassment claim is brought in retribution” (Hoffman et al., 1997, p. 268).

Thus, managers must be diligent, fair (Lickey et al., 2009), and communicate distinctions between WR and forms of sexual harassment. For example, when dealing with a sexual harassment claim that stems from a WR, human resource managers should emphasize the allegedly inappropriate behavior and not previous romance (Dillard et al., 1994; Summers & Myklebust, 1992). Nonetheless, human resource leaders should be appropriately qualified and trained to deal with WR (Ariani et al., 2011; Bhebhe & Hove, 2016; SHRM, 2013). Through diligence, HR managers can proactively defuse issues arising from WR that may negatively affect organizations (SHRM, 2006, 2020).

3.4. Theoretical implications

Workplace romance involves individuals in a workplace that acknowledge their mutual attraction by meeting and/or having intimate relationships, dating, etc. (Biggs et al., 2012; Khan et al., 2022). Unlike workplace flirting, WR extends beyond the workplace and typically results in sexual behavior and regular interactions outside the workplace (Watkins et al., 2013). While organizations were not designed as spaces for individuals to find love, WRs are common and it is clear that they affect organizational outcomes (Biggs et al., 2012; Jones, 1999). The current study has implications for advancing, and complimenting, the current body of WR literature (e.g., Pierce & Aguinis, 2009; Sidhu et al., 2020; Wilson, 2015) by outlining key insights and identifying areas for future research. For example, the current analysis supports the fact that although WR is viewed favorably by a few researchers, the potential negative impacts of WR surpass the potential positive impacts (see Fig. 1).

Additionally, this paper enables scholars to explore, and test experimentally, the relations established in Fig. 2. The CUPID framework may also pave the way for scholars to develop new theories about WRs (e.g., is the model equally applicable across institutional contexts — developed economies vs frontier economies and developing markets, etc.?). The current study also contributes a comprehensive review of the antecedents and outcomes of WR on employees and organizations. The current review also suggests a theoretical perspective for the benefits and consequences WR and its impact on employee productivity, performance, and overall organizational performance (Baker et al., 2021; Mishra & Mitra, 2021).

3.5. Managerial implications

This study provides guidance for HR managers considering WR management. Although some scholars suggest that HR is not concerned with WRs (e.g., Michelson et al., 2010), and that HR often takes no action (Pierce et al., 1996). Scholars assert that HR managers should be at the center of determining WR policy (Ariani et al., 2011; Bhebhe & Hove, 2016; Cicek, 2014; Pierce & Aguinis, 2009) as they should promote and maintain ethical organizational practices (Mainiero & Jones, 2013b). Thus, HR managers may use the CUPID model to consider and evaluate WR policy options within their own organizations.

This review also offers direction for both HR managers and top management in designing WR policies (e.g., Mainiero & Jones, 2013b)

(e.g., considerate and pragmatic approaches) and provides practitioners with insights about implications about the future of WRs in new work environments (e.g., WRs in virtual environments may require new contextual considerations when developing WR policies). In this context, policy-makers may utilize the CUPID framework to determine its effectiveness for employees working in virtual settings. Also, the degree to which managers and decision-makers understand WR is critical for developing effective organizational policies (Sidhu et al., 2019; Sidhu et al., 2020; Wilson, 2015).

This review demonstrates that HR managers can mitigate the risk of negative organizational outcomes by strategically considering WR management and policies. This study will assist human resource professionals in developing well-informed WR policies that differentiate it from sexual harassment and inappropriate workplace sexual behaviors. While a the ability to deter all workplace romance is unfeasible, HR managers can establish employment processes that foster respect amongst all employees. In this regard, the CUPID framework provides a way for HR managers to connect, anticipate, and keep employees informed about the ramifications of WR.

3.6. Practical implications

Workplace romances are prevalent in many businesses and managers that overlook them face considerable implications. To avoid reputational implications, many organizations are reviewing their codes of conduct and anti-harassment policies, and adding consensual relationships to the list of forbidden behaviors (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2021). In recent years, a series of high-ranking CEO's were fired despite "consensual" relationships with their employees. For example, the CEO of McDonald's was fired because he violated organizational policies that forbade hierarchical relationships (Lublin, 2019). Jeff Zucker, the head of CNN and the chairman of Warner-Media's news and sports division, resigned in early February 2022 after his long-hidden workplace romance was revealed. Zucker, had a consensual relationship with another senior executive at CNN; however, Zucker neglected to disclose it to the organization thereby violating CNN's WR policy (Elsesser, 2022).

As WR policies are reviewed, referring to the CUPID framework may be useful. For example, WR's involving an executive and a direct report can result in high-profile negative press. Referring to the CUPID framework, relationships between executives and lower-level employees may have clearly 'uncharacteristic' elements. Thus, organizations may choose to more actively prohibit such relationships to maintain a reputable brand and image.

Similarly, as high-level employees may be unaware of the power they exert on others, it may be difficult for them to discern when a lower-level employee feels obliged to comply with their requests. Thus, WR policies that guide managers considering, or engaging in, WRs with lower-level employees may serve several goals (e.g., preventing sexual harassment, protecting employees from retribution, and mitigating questions regarding favoritism). Additionally, as people in power may also believe they can demand sexual favors from lower-level employees, identifying risks of future sexual harassment in these types of relationships may help HR managers to establish 'pragmatic' policies to assist both the victim and the perpetrator. The CUPID framework of this paper may inform HR managers in policy creation and evaluation.

3.7. Directions for future research

The interest in WR by scholars from many disciplines, such as business (Mainiero, 1986), psychology (Brown and Allgeier, 1995; Khan et al., 2017), law (Wilson et al., 2003), the popular press (Khan et al., 2017), and clinical psychologists exploring the impact of WR on occupational behaviors (Wilson, 2015; Biggs et al., 2012) has grown in recent years. Although Mainiero and Jones (2013b) suggested that WR belongs to the organizational behavior area, it is essential to consider and

conceptualize WR as it intersects psychology and sociology. In the future, scholars should consider how WR relates to other similar constructs, such as workplace sexuality, workplace attraction, and workplace intimacy.

Furthermore, understanding the nuance of how related, and sometimes, overlapping constructs interact with WR should be considered. For example, employees may engage in sexual behavior at work, but it may not be considered romantic (Wilson, 2015). Many research organizations are engaging in surveys to analyze the effects of both sexual behavior and WR in organizational settings.

In agreement with Wilson (2015), future studies should converge from different geographical perspectives or diverse cultural settings to look more deeply at the influence on WR at both the employee and organizational level. Moreover, from this review it is clear that scholars from the U.S. have dominated the WR literature. The future of WR research relies on studying it from multidisciplinary, multi-author collaboration, and multi-national perspectives. For instance, there has been little progress in understanding WR from different contextual perspectives, such as WR in Zimbabwe (Bhebhe & Hove, 2016) or Pakistan (Khan et al., 2017). Thus, future studies should review and demonstrate how WR is perceived and managed in other cultures (e.g., how does WR look a conservative, religiously dominated, or emerging economy context and what policies about WR exist in other regions of the world?). Research offering different perspectives on WR may provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of WR. This knowledge may also help create new arguments for, add fresh ideas to, and increase the generalizability of the WR literature.

Additional research is also required to fully understand relation between WR and gender. For example, men experience more positive outcomes from engagement in WR, such as increasing effort at work and reporting to work more consistently than women, whereas women experience more negative outcomes in WR than men (Chory et al., 2019). Thus, studies exploring the relation between gender and WR are needed to see who is more affected and who is highly productive in the future. As almost all WR studies have been examined from the perspective of opposite-sex, cross-gender pairings (Sias, 2015; Wilson, 2015), studies are also needed to understand the individual and organizational outcomes of WR for same-sex, same gender, and non-binary couples (Horan & Chory, 2013, pg.181). According to one study, gay coworkers who engage in WRs are perceived more positively than lesbian coworkers (Sias, 2015). This further supports Wilson's (2015) statement that WR should be studied from different gender perspectives. Additional research is also needed to understand whether coworkers misperceive interactions from individuals who identify as asexual (Rothblum et al., 2019).

Studies investigating whether people engage in WR based on a prospective partner's social status (e.g., money, materials, family background, etc.) and/or education level (e.g., high school diploma vs graduate degree) are also sparse. For example, Dillard and Witteman (1985) find females are more attracted to males with higher levels of education; however, female education level is not a criterion for romance for males. Further investigation is necessary to understand how individual differences affect WR and whether relationships evolve differently within different levels of organizations within different groups of people (Riach & Wilson, 2007). For example, whether a person's social status effects the likelihood of engaging in romance is lacking in the literature. For instance, Ha et al.'s (2010) research identified that social status was a relatively unimpactful predictor of dating among WR relationships. Similarly, WR differences across generations (e.g., millennial, Generation X, and baby boomer) should be investigated further. For example, millennial employees (i.e., those born between 1981 and 1996) are more inclined to contemplate office romance (Lesonsky, 2012) than the Gen X. Dillard and Witteman (1985) report that young female employees are more interested in romance than others; however, it is unknown whether age affects the likelihood of

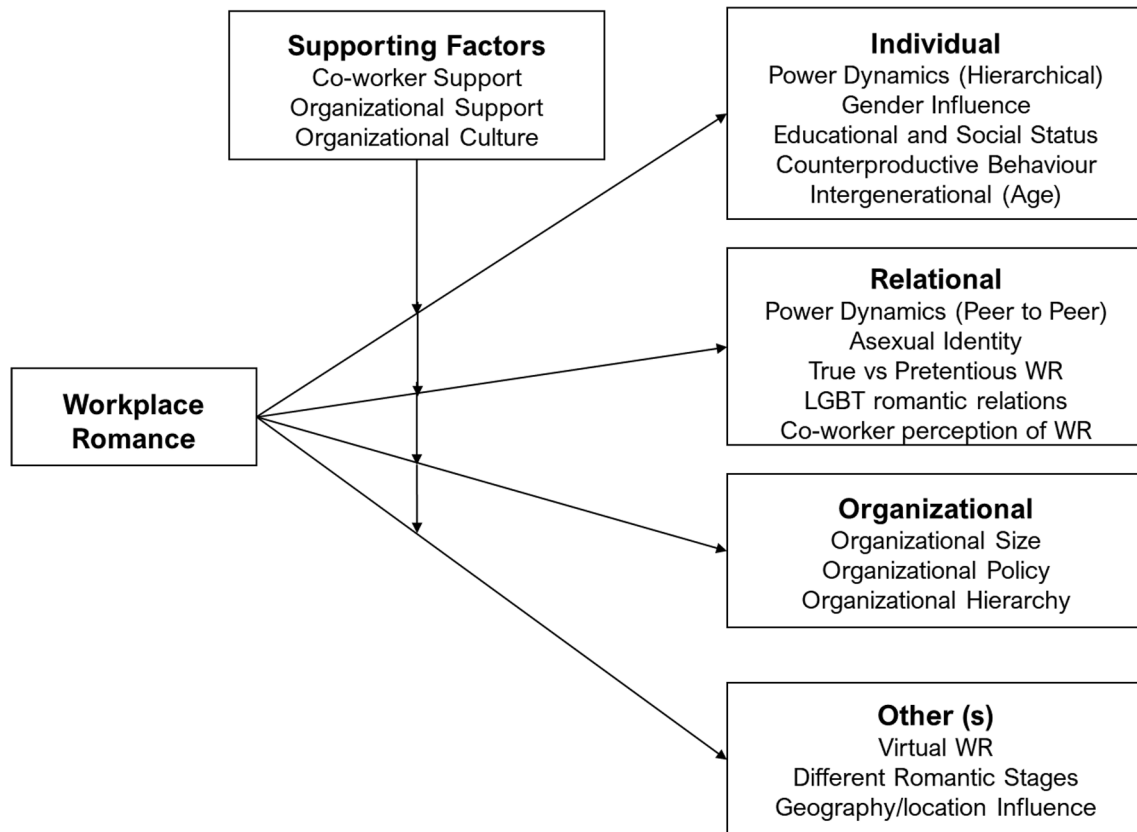


Fig. 3. Conceptual framework of established themes for future research on WR.

engagement in WR.

More studies in the future are also needed to understand both the positive and negative effects of coworkers' reactions to observing WR (Crary, 1987; Gallo, 2019; Malachowski et al., 2012). For example, Cowan and Horan (2014) find that if coworkers learn about a WR via a participant's disclosure instead of from another co-worker or third party report, the response to the WR and its participants are far more positive. Although some employees enjoy witnessing WRs, others may not (Chory et al., 2019). Future studies should investigate whether co-worker observation of WRs have implications for organizations that have not yet been considered (e.g., aggression, manipulation, blackmail, etc.).

Moreover, additional studies on power dynamics within WRs (e.g., hierarchical vs lateral) may help to confirm the frequency with which high-level individuals initiate WRs to seek favors (e.g., sexual) and the efficacy with which low-level individuals can use WRs to advance their careers. Additionally, Brown and Allgeier (1995) discovered that hierarchical romances may be viewed as more egoistic than lateral romances (e.g., the Clinton-Lewinsky affair). Future research should also study WR motives vis-à-vis both positive and negative influences on employee work performance. Additionally, WR is typically addressed from an individual and relational perspective. Thus, consequences of WRs are primarily documented at the individual, rather than organizational, level (Mano & Gabriel, 2006) and future studies explicating organizational outcomes are needed. Furthermore, research has investigated types of organizations where WR is prevalent, yet other organizational characteristics, like size and stage of organizational life cycle remain unexplored.

Additionally, four out of ten employees in the U.S. report that their employers have WR policies (Wilkie, 2018). Although WR policies may help prevent organizational liability for relationships that go wrong (Lickey et al., 2009; Lieber, 2008), it is still unknown whether WR policies effectively prevent WRs. Doll and Rosopa (2015) find that strict WR policies are more effective at dissuading individuals high in

conscientiousness from engaging in WR than lenient policies. However, organizations with strict WR policies are perceived as less desirable places to work than companies with lenient WR policies (Pierce et al., 2012; Chory et al., 2019). Furthermore, employees may not disclose their WR to HR, because they are not sure if the information would be kept confidential within the organization (Wilkie, 2018). Thus, future research and HR managers should investigate the effectiveness of strict vs lenient WR policies and how WR confidentiality can be maintained.

Human resource practitioners may find it difficult to achieve a balanced approach to managing WRs (i.e., a policy that simultaneously minimizes negatives outcomes and maximizes positive outcomes within their organizations) (Arian et al., 2011; Sidhu et al., 2020). Thus, love contracts can also be used as legal instruments that acknowledge WRs within organizations. Such contracts may help HR mitigate organizational liability against future legal claims of wrongdoing. As a result of the empirical evidence gathered from WR research in the current study, best-practice suggestions for WR management are provided within the CUPID framework. However, more studies on the role and effectiveness of contractual arrangements (e.g., love contracts) to manage WRs effectively are needed (Mainiero & Jones, 2013a). Additionally, while technology facilitates WRs (Maniero & Jones, 2013), understanding the way in which it can also be used to document WRs via applications like ConsentAmour, LegalFling, and YesMeansYes is needed.

Gupta and Pallekonda (2016) also call for WR sensitivity training among managers and staff members. For instance, as organizations adopt strict sexual harassment policies, efforts by male counterparts to approach women have been reduced due to fears about perceived sexual harassment (Sidhu et al., 2020; Wilson, 2015). Unfounded fears may reduce positive workplace interactions and communication, both of which may be crucial for achieving organizational goals. Future research should focus on WR management (e.g., through training, awareness, and how managers can handle dysfunctional WR, etc.), rather than eliminating it (Alder & Quist, 2014). Additionally, training should clearly

Table 1
Summary of key questions on WR.

Organizational Specificities	
Theme	Key questions
Organizational size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does WR differ based on the industry's size (e.g., is WR more prevalent in large firms or start-ups?) How do entrepreneurial firms deal with WR?
Organizational Hierarchy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can WR be perceived to be an economic transaction (e.g., career advancement, work favors etc.) between people working in the different hierarchies with power?
Organizational policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A systematic analysis of existing strict and lenient WR policies and their impact on employees. What should WR policies look in virtual workspaces? Can an organization encourage virtual WR Policy?
Organizational support and coworker support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can adverse effects of WR be moderated or mediated through organizational support or co-worker support? Does WR have a positive effect on employee performance or coping?
Individual Specificities	
Theme	Key propositions for future research
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who initiates and engages in WR more frequently? Who is more productive and more affected by WR?
Educational and social status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does a person's educational background or social position predict engagement in WR? Does WR vary by education level (e.g., Masters, Ph.D., university graduation), social status (e.g., money, material, etc.), and social group (e.g., religious affiliation)?
Intergenerational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the differences in WR between Generation X, Y, and Z? Do the implications of WR in the workplace vary between generations?
Counterproductive work behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does observation of WR by co-workers predict counterproductive work behavior? Does counterproductive work behavior increase for those involved in a love triangle? Do coworkers conceal information/knowledge from, influence work processes for, and/or distort information/knowledge directed to participants in WRs?
Organizational commitment (OC) and Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the outcome of OC and OCB among those engaged in WR and those who observe WR?
Relational Specificities	
Theme	Key propositions for future research
Organizational support and coworker support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can the negative consequences of WR be alleviated or mediated by organizational or coworker support, and is it effective in improving employee performance or coping?
True WR and/or pretentious WR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can you tell if a WR is based on true love or being pretentious or manipulative (e.g., love motive vs job motive; healthy and unhealthy relationships)
LGBT WR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does WR frequently occur among LGBT+ communities? What are the implications of employees that identify as LGBT+ engaging in WR that may be unique to these communities?
Other Emerging Specificities	
Theme	Key propositions for future research
Virtual WR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do emerging technologies or virtual work teams increase the likelihood of WR among employees in the organization?
¹ Romantic stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can the various stages of romance based on Mainiero's (1994) classification: Fantasy, honeymoon, renewal, and climax, be extended in the WR context?
Geography/Location Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do WR differ in context and consequence between a developed and emerging economies?

¹Fantasy: You have a sudden romantic interest in a coworker, which may lead to you dressing up, imagining, and trying tirelessly to please the future partner. Honeymoon: The employees understand and act on their genuine affection. They go on a date, start dating, but maybe preoccupied at work because they only have an eye for each other. Renewal: The connection becomes routine, and the focus shifts back to the workplace. Climax: The duo must decide whether to pursue a serious relationship, such as marrying, or to end their connection.

distinguish WR from sexual harassment.

In summary, based on the findings of this study, multiple avenues emerge for future research in WR. Based on the synthesis of the literature presented in the current paper, an outline of the vital areas for future research through a proposed conceptual framework of established themes and their linkages (Fig. 3) and proposed questions (see Table 1) is provided.

4. Limitations

It is quite evident that the topic of WR remains challenging to organizations and may impact individuals who work, and it necessitates more contemporary academic research (Bilyk, 2021), hence the CUPID framework is proposed for HR managers as one way to address WRs. Despite the contributions made, this study has few limitations. Although the current review was detailed, it did not include keywords of some related constructs. For example, terms such as "workplace sexuality" or "socio-sexual behavior" were not included in the search which may have reduced the number of reviewed articles. The current paper also uses a qualitative synthesis which may have restricted analyzing the literature

from other perspectives (critical, contextual driven, theory driven etc.). Thus, future studies should categorize the WR literature using a TCCM (theory, characteristic, context, and method) framework to specifically explore the context and theory debates within the WR literature.

The current study also uses several publications from online news sources, which may not be as rigorously vetted as peer-reviewed journal articles. This may create the impression that all research presented within this review was of equal quality. While most of the works cited in this paper are peer-reviewed journal articles, some come from popular news sites. However, as the WR literature is continuing to grow, it seems important to include information from additional relevant outlets. For these inclusions, more reputable sources were sought where possible (e.g., using a report from the Pew Research Center). Finally, as the WR literature is starting to grow quickly, it is likely that at the time of publication, there may be new articles that were not included within this review.

5. Conclusion

In sum, as WRs continue to be prevalent in organizations, the debate

on whether WR should be prohibited or allowed within organizations continues (Boyd, 2010). Thus, top managers and HR professionals in organizations play a central role in determining organizational approaches to WRs. The current paper reviews the extant literature on WR and presents the antecedents and outcomes of WR to help inform and guide HR practitioners and organizations as they grapple with how to manage WRs. Furthermore, a framework for future WR research is proposed to help direct the efforts of both scholars and practitioners.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Amitabh Anand: Writing – review & editing, Methodology, Formal analysis, Conceptualization, Investigation, Visualization, Writing – original draft. **Jessica L. Doll:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Investigation, Writing – original draft. **Piera Centobelli:** Visualization, Data curation, Investigation, Validation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Sanjay Kumar:** Investigation, Writing – original draft. **Roberto Cerchione:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Investigation, Validation, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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