

CARE AND COMPASSION
IN CAPITALISM

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INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EQUALITY,
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION VOLUME 10

CARE AND COMPASSION IN CAPITALISM

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Emerald Publishing, Floor 5, Northspring, 21-23 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 4DL.

First edition 2025

Editorial matter and selection © 2025 Cagri Yalkin and Mustafa F. Özbilgin.
Individual chapters © 2025 The authors.
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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-83549-149-2 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-83549-148-5 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-83549-150-8 (Epub)

ISSN: 2051-2333 (Series)

Erratum: It has come to the attention of the publisher that the chapter Toroghi, H.H., Denney, F. and Simpson, A.V. (2024), "A More Compassionate Mode of University Leadership", Yalkin, C. and Özbilgin, M.F. (Ed.) *Care and Compassion in Capitalism (International Perspectives on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Vol. 10)*, Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 57–74. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S2051-233320240000010005>, incorrectly listed the author Haleh Hashemi Toroghi's surname as Toroghi, H.H. in the citation information; the correct author information is as follows: Hashemi Toroghi, H. The publisher sincerely apologizes for this mistake.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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INTRODUCING CARE AND COMPASSION IN CAPITALISM

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Care and compassion are multifaceted concepts that have taken centre stage in social science studies in recent years. The main reason for the flurry of interest in these two concepts has been the way they are both exposed to market rationales. Care is traditionally defined as any provision of attention, concern or consideration for the well-being, health, welfare, maintenance and wellness of oneself, another person, community or life forms. Compassion is a term that is often used together with care to mean an awareness of another being's or groups' suffering with a view to alleviate that suffering. Care and compassion are highly relational and contextual terms which manifest across all sectors of work, employment and social, economic and political life. Capitalism and its many manifestations such as neoliberal expansion had a marked impact on the way care and compassion are redefined and experienced internationally. In this volume, we focus on what happens to care and compassion in capitalism. In particular, the volume takes a critical social science perspective in shifting responsibility of care and compassion, in line with the responsabilisation theory of Vincent et al. (2024), that capitalist conditions have pushed down responsibility from nation states to organisations and then to individuals to secure their well-being, wellness and maintenance. This shift, the chapters in this volume show, exposes individuals to precarity, lack of safety and security, essentially deteriorating possibilities of systems of caring and compassion.

Capitalism with its expansion mechanisms such as neoliberalism has diffused responsibility for care and compassion, centralising its focus away from interpersonal solidarity and institutional responsibility (Chatzidakis et al., 2020b; Sennett, 2007). Instead, market logics have started corroding what it means to have care and compassion (Chatzidakis et al., 2020a; Chatzidakis & Littler, 2022). Commercialisation and marketisation had a vast impact on how care and

Care and Compassion in Capitalism

International Perspectives on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Volume 10, 1–7

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Published under exclusive licence by Emerald Publishing Limited

ISSN: 2051-2333/doi:10.1108/S2051-233320240000010001

compassion are practiced, regulated and recrafted. This diversion and exposure of two of the most humanist of constructs to market rationales have rendered care and compassion being withdrawn from socio-political towards financial and economic domains. Neoliberal expansionism has discovered emotions and affect as marketable goods as we realise that belief and emotion drive social behaviour more than cognition. In this dubious context of moral corrosion, we suggest a revised need to regulate care and compassion as voluntary and coercive rules remain only alternatives to reversing the dangerous responsabilisation of market for care and compassion. We contend that social and political responsabilisation needs to be reinstated to curb the corrosive impact of the market.

Changes to care and compassion under capitalism are dangerous at a time when social welfare regimes which delivered state responsibility for care and compassion are under decline. Similarly, other social and moral mechanisms of care and compassion to deliver safety nets are thinning due to individualisation and emergence of self-interest as orienting rationales for carers, social and economic life. We contend that there should be a cascaded responsibility for care and compassion. This required prizing care and compassion from the monopoly of market rationales alone. Marketisation of care and compassion is responsible for collapse and corrosion of public and voluntary sector organisations. In line with [Polanyi \(1944/2001\)](#), we argue that whatever goods, services, emotions and ideas that come to the market lose its original value. Public sector, voluntary sector and social communities originally operate with human values rather than arbitrary market dynamics of supply and demand.

In line with Gramsci's stance ([Antonini, 2019](#)) 'pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will', we contend that the current situation could be remedied if we reconsider the responsabilisation of states and public institutions for reforming care and compassion as social good beyond marketable commodities. [Stiglitz \(1989\)](#) suggests that countries which rendered their institutions and markets responsible fared better in their human rights records in the process of neoliberal expansion. [Küskü et al. \(2021\)](#) show how untamed neoliberal system suffers greatest in terms of inequalities. In a world that is going through radical transformation, where market rationales and financialisation ([Levitt, 2013](#)) are affecting all facets of social life, we need new paradigms for regulating social policy to protect social, economic and political commons.

CHAPTERS IN THIS VOLUME

The volume has 11 chapters. We invited chapters in December 2021; the chapters arrived April 2022; and acceptance decisions were communicated August 2023 with some variations. Deniz Palalar Alkan and Rifat Kamasak provide Chapter 1, titled 'Parenthood in the Ivory Tower: Engulfed by Being a Female Parent in Academia'. The structural conditions and macro-level processes of capitalist societies result in inequalities between men and women and lead to the oppression of women through feeding the historically generated gendered roles. The diversity management approach considers family and parenthood a diversity

category and analyses it from a psychological attachment angle rather than biological connectedness. In this chapter, authors examine the diversity approach to parenting through adult autonomy and responsibility, that is, childrearing and domestic responsibilities as the basis of the family and the quality of relationships. Drawing on a qualitative study with 14 female academics, authors demonstrate how female faculty members struggle to execute their jobs and disadvantaged parenthood responsibilities due to their gendered social roles. The findings reveal that female academic parents face context-specific challenges under the working conditions characterised by capitalism and neoliberal policies in higher education. Therefore, the chapter shows that time constraints, role-based pressures and inadequate institutional support legitimise the challenges faced by female academic parents in the gendered context of academia, which is under the influence of capitalist and neoliberal conditions. Finally, authors suggest that creating a more compassionate and caring organisational culture can help female academic parents navigate their challenges more easily in higher education institutions.

Tobias Santosh Großmann presents Chapter 2, titled 'From Kerala to Germany: Imported Care Labour – Developments and Paradigmatic Changes (1960–Present)'. The chapter conducts a comparative analysis of care labour migration from the Indian state of Kerala to the German state of Baden-Württemberg, spanning from the 1960s to the present, both periods considered as times of a 'nursing crisis'. The study employs a qualitative approach, involving the examination of historical sources, interviews with contemporary witnesses and experts, and a comprehensive literature review. By exploring historical and current institutional structures, this research reveals a shift in paradigms while identifying elements of continuity. The inception of the migration flows was facilitated by the Catholic Church, acting as an intermediary structure, rooted in traditional religious reasoning contexts of care labour intertwined with gender dynamics. The system transformed into a neoliberal alignment within a global health economy. The export of care labour from Kerala has evolved into a business, involving several international actors. Gender still matters. In Germany, nursing as professional care work is still dominated by women. Domestic workforces prevent the healthcare sector, constituting an increasing demand of labour. Women from the Global South are taking up these vacancies by utilising various migration pathways. The migration flows expanded in the past 15 years incrementally. Implications and backfire effects on the sending region remain almost invisible. Consequently, it is imperative to address how receiving institutions in the Global North can respond effectively. The findings suggest an imminent expansion of the current trends, emphasising the urgency and significance of scholarly research.

Arzu Açar is the author of Chapter 3, titled 'An Evaluation on Compassion in Capitalism: The Case of Turkey'. Açar explains that the structure of capitalism fuelled by inequality causes suffering and creates situations that require compassion. There are negative consequences when people and societies suffer from pain. For this reason, the importance of compassion and care emerges. Essentially, capitalism is a major source of suffering in social and economic systems, and organisations are important actors in these systems. While organisations cause

negative situations through actions such as financial speculation, labour exploitation and nature destruction, the source of pain is seen as the individual and the responsibility of compassion is placed on the individual. In Turkey, organisations create situations that require compassion, with the favourable environment provided by capitalism. The most basic labour rights remain at a minimum level. Philanthropic activities that do not go beyond providing economic benefit seem to compensate for the negative consequences. For this reason, compassion cannot fully find a place within capitalism and creates a dilemma.

Haleh Hashemi Toroghi, Fiona Denney and Ace Volkmann Simpson co-authored Chapter 4, titled 'A More Compassionate Mode of University Leadership'. Authors note that the responsibility of university leadership to create positive teaching and working environments for students and staff has become increasingly challenging due to the global atmosphere of competitiveness, complexity, and uncertainty in the higher education landscape. Over the past several decades, universities have increasingly faced numerous challenges and pressures influenced by a capitalist neoliberal approach to higher education leadership. These include increasing managerialism, mounting workloads, frequent performance evaluations and instances of bullying and harassment, all of which have significantly contributed to the escalation of mental health concerns among academic staff. Moreover, these challenges have led to widespread perceptions of poor university leadership. To address these concerns, a shift towards compassionate leadership is necessary. Leaders play a crucial role in cultivating compassionate relationships within their organisations by demonstrating care and providing resources that facilitate the recognition, empathy, assessment and response to the suffering of those under their care. Authors explain that organisational compassion should not be viewed solely as an individual attribute but rather as something that leaders can instil in their organisational processes. The chapter focuses on the identification and expression of compassionate leadership and the factors that facilitate or impede its integration into university leadership, given the current state of higher education institutions.

Meltem Yavuz Sercekman and Gizem Çeviker's Chapter 5 is titled 'The New Brave World of the Neoliberal Market: Mindfulness as a VIP Product (or Not)?'. Authors explain that mindfulness and mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have become prevalent in various aspects of our lives, particularly in the past 20 years. Numerous studies in the scientific literature consistently demonstrate that mindfulness-based approaches have a positive impact on mental and physical health, as well as on different dimensions of well-being. These include stress and pain management, emotion regulation skills, resilience and self-parenting skills. Notably, mindfulness has gained recognition not only within the scientific community but also among the public, due to its popularity. However, from a critical standpoint, they argue that mindfulness, like many other popular concepts, may have become a marketable 'product' and the focus of a global marketing strategy. This chapter takes a critical perspective in examining the use of MBIs as a self-parenting tool, considering the inequalities that exist under capitalist conditions.

Yasemin Pacaci presents Chapter 6, titled 'Did Anyone Say Mindfulness and Self-Compassion in the Capitalist World? Oh No! Wait. Yes, Please!'. In recent decades, integrating mindfulness and self-compassion into capitalist work

environments and increasing academic studies have fostered mutual growth. The growing popularity in both fields has brought beneficial outcomes as well as many complexities (e.g. unwarranted criticisms towards concepts instead of addressing their misapplication and misunderstandings). This approach has hindered the unbiased exploration and experience of their true nature. The current chapter aims to clarify the complexity through a comprehensive literature review focusing on the concepts, their applications, existing criticisms, misunderstandings and dilemmas about their existence in capitalism's paradigm. It recommends the novel application of Kurt Lewin's three-step classical change management model (Lewin, 1947) in both science and practice fields. Considering mindfulness and self-compassion's empirically well-established role in collective well-being, the suggested model has an essential place to solve existing dilemmas and seeks to protect and foster their inherent essence and experiences within and beyond the capitalist context.

Kurt April's contribution in Chapter 7 is titled 'Self-Care and Compassion Enablers and Stumbling Blocks: The Personal Costs within the Context of Capitalism'. This chapter explores the complexities of self-care and compassion within the neoliberal capitalist framework, arguing that the prevailing economic ideologies exacerbate disconnection, loneliness and societal instability. It critiques the dominant managerial discourse that prioritises self-interest and enlightened self-interest, highlighting the detrimental effects on global stability and personal well-being. The text emphasises the importance of shifting towards self-love and compassion to foster a healthier, more collaborative society. Through qualitative research, it identifies enablers and stumbling blocks for practicing self-care and compassion, advocating for a balanced approach that integrates well-being with professional aspirations. The author underscores the need for a re-evaluation of values and behaviours that prioritise humanity and interconnectedness over economic gain.

Cihat Erbil and Aybegüm Güngördü Belbağ's Chapter 8 is titled 'Questioning Animal Care and Compassion Under Neoliberal Market Conditions Through a Posthumanist Lens'. The chapter investigates the dynamics between humanism and neoliberalism in the context of animal welfare and labour, promoting a posthumanist approach to extend beyond conventional perspectives. Authors critically examine the historical development of human-animal relationships, focusing on the varied nature of animal labour from initial domestication to its present state within neoliberal market conditions. The chapter discusses the contrast between exploitation and respect for animals, revealing how contemporary discourses of care and compassion often obscure more profound exploitative practices. Integrating posthumanism, authors aim to enhance the understanding of human-animal interactions, advocating for balanced strategies in future animal care and compassionate involvement.

Benan Kurt Yılmaz, Ela Burcu Uçel and Olca Sürgevil Dalkılıç authored Chapter 9 titled 'New Mothers of the Covid-19 Pandemic: Insights into Motherhood and Working Life' and focussed on the experiences of women (who gave birth and continued working during the Covid-19 lockdowns) regarding family and work-related issues like motherhood, post-partum and breastfeeding

while working from home. In-depth interviews were conducted with 14 participants. These 14 women are working mothers who gave birth to their first, second or third babies during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Findings showed that the daily schedules of the participants who became mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic changed (sleeping, working, eating, cleaning, playing, childcaring, etc.) and became more demanding. Participants' partners also worked from home, or their jobs were partially halted during this period. Thus the participants have had to make arrangements to balance the added requirements of care work and paid work during the lockdowns (e.g. putting a desk in the bedroom, turning the balcony into a playroom, sharing housework and childcare responsibilities with partners, saving time by online shopping, meeting with family members in the kitchen for lunch). Second, the fear of contagion affected the new mothers, and they report to have experienced high anxiety about being pregnant, giving birth, breastfeeding and forming attachment with their babies. They juggled increased multiple roles while maintaining family and business lives, adapting to working from home, managing their careers and being 'good' mothers.

As editors of the volume, we also have a contribution, Chapter 10, titled 'Motherly Care Under Neoliberal Market Conditions: Of Instamoms and Saturday Mothers'. We draw on two extreme examples of motherhood under neoliberal market conditions in Turkey to study the social, political and affective standing of motherly care. We show that relying on market tools makes one kind of motherhood (Instamoms) legitimate and visible and lack of reliance on market resources renders the second kind of motherhood invisible (Saturday Mothers). Instamoms' social, political and affective performances of motherly care are protected and supported by the market. Saturday Mothers are a group of mothers who are looking for their children, who have disappeared under police custody. Saturday Mothers and their motherly care are socially and politically rejected although they too rely on Instagram to build support. We illustrate that the way motherly care is viewed by the population, with the help of mainstream media, is shaped by their relationship with the neoliberal market.

Beliz Ulgen and Nurgul Keles Taysir authored Chapter 11, titled 'Commodification of Childcare and Working Mothers' Experiences: Who Cares?'. Authors explain that working mothers often face the challenge of balancing their professional responsibilities with their childcare duties. Historically, women have shouldered the primary responsibility for managing household tasks and caring for children, which has limited their full participation in the labour force. This problem is particularly pronounced in developing countries like Turkey, which has the lowest percentage of employed mothers among OECD nations. As more women join the workforce, the need to temporarily assign traditional caregiving duties to others has become more prominent. To better understand this phenomenon, this chapter investigates the outsourcing of domestic care by examining the experiences of 12 working mothers who have employed childminders. This chapter aims to explore the following critical aspects of working mothers' experiences in delegating domestic care responsibilities: the decision-making process for hiring caregivers; the prioritised criteria in their selection; the scope of childcare responsibilities; and the nature of the relationships they form with their childminders.

By exploring these aspects, this study aims to offer a thorough understanding of the process and implications of hiring childminders, contributing valuable insights into this increasingly prevalent childcare option for working families.

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