

FACTORS AFFECTING QUIET QUITTING BEHAVIOR: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES IN EDUCATION SECTOR IN HYDERABAD

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Abstract

Quiet quitting has gained increasing attention as a contemporary workplace phenomenon, particularly among Generation Z employees; however, empirical evidence from Pakistan's education sector remains limited. This qualitative study explores the personal and professional factors influencing quiet quitting behavior among Generation Z employees working in private educational institutions in Hyderabad, Pakistan. Guided by an interpretivist paradigm and an inductive approach, the study adopts a phenomenological research design to capture participants' lived experiences. Data were collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with nine Generation Z educators selected using purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework with the support of Atlas.ti software.

The findings reveal four key themes contributing to quiet quitting: erosion of work-life boundaries, economic devaluation and inadequate compensation, low organizational support and work environment, and rejection of hyper-productivity in favor of personal well-being. The results suggest that quiet quitting is a deliberate coping mechanism rather than a lack of commitment, driven by unmet expectations and emotional exhaustion. The study offers context-specific insights and practical implications for educational institutions seeking to improve employee engagement, well-being, and retention among Generation Z employees.

INTRODUCTION

The term quiet quitting is a phenomenon where the employee disengages in tasks and refuses to take on additional responsibilities beyond what is explicitly required, basically meeting minimum expectations and not going over and beyond for the job.(Sitorus & Rachmawati, 2024). The idea of quiet quitting surfaced after the viral and heavy-liked and shared video on TikTok and other social media platforms.(Khan, 2022) However, some authors believe that the concept was not entirely new and it already existed but COVID-19 accelerated it and brought it to the attention of many people working around the globe. (Harris, 2025). A study suggests that employees who consider their job or employment

a calling rather than only a job to make a living are more committed to their duties and do not endorse quiet quitting which requires them to accomplish minimum tasks to secure their job. (Nikolova, 2024)

The latest workforce to join in 2017 is the Generation Z or post-millennials (born between 1995 and 2012). With previous generations already working, managing four generations at the same time has been challenging for organizations due to different styles of learning, preferences and work-related environment. Gen Z is known for being tech-savvy and have seamlessly incorporated technology in their everyday lives. Although they prefer to work alone, they still want to build social contact and

work relationships and crave for work-life balance and stability to achieve holistic professional goals.(Barhate & Dirani, 2022) Generation Z in Pakistan (which is approximately 52% of Pakistan's population) , like their counterparts around the world, were born into a world saturated with social media presence , technology and internet, this generation is most active users of social media platforms like Facebook , Instagram and TikTok, where they share opinions, videos and photos while connecting with local and international audience. (Jamal, 2020)

An individual's knowledge, skills and competencies are shaped through education, thus contributing to societal development and progress. Nevertheless, the challenges faced by educators have been reported to be increasingly complex, leading to problems like quiet quitting, job burnout and decline in job satisfaction.(Palad, 2023). Quiet quitting can be harmful for the education system if not addressed properly and will spread rapidly due to inability to develop sustainable solutions for the teachers who are facing problems, for teachers to cope with occupational stress, burnout and change fatigue, employers and organizations need to implement strategic interventions that will play a crucial role in preventing quiet quitting behaviors.(Dilekçi et al., 2025)

Statement of the Problem:

While numerous researchers have identified and explored quiet quitting behavior and the factors that influence or cause it , very limited work has been done in Pakistan which leaves many areas unexplored, one of which is why quiet quitting behavior is potentially increasing amongst Generation Z employees particularly in the education sector in Hyderabad.

RQ1: What are the personal and professional factors that contribute to the emergence of quiet quitting behavior amongst Generation Z employees particularly in Hyderabad's education sector.

Significance of the Study:

This study is important because it aims to investigate a phenomenon that is still relatively unexplored: silent resignation among Generation Z employees in Hyderabad, Pakistan's educational sector. There is little empirical information on how quiet quitting, which can be described as employees performing the bare minimum of their jobs without going above and beyond, appears in the local educational sector, particularly in Gen Z employees, despite the fact that this behavior has garnered increasing attention worldwide.

Insight into Generation Z work culture:

Gen Z workers are renowned for their unique work ideals, which include a strong desire for psychological safety, meaningful employment, and work-life balance. A better understanding of how these values affect silent quitting behavior in the educational sector will be possible thanks to this study. The results will assist legislators and educational institutions in modifying their management strategies to better suit the demands and standards of Gen Z workers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term quiet quitting refers to the phenomena of working only to the extent that is required for the job. (Xueyun et al., 2023) Some of the reasons quiet quitters limit their efforts are so that they can disconnect from high-pressure duties, preserve their well-being, and to maintain work-life balance.(Ochis, 2024). Fifty percent of today's workforce have decided to opt for limited commitment to their respective jobs in the US according to the wall street journal article.(Mahand & Caldwell, 2023). According to Gallup's state of the global workplace report the estimated cost of low engagement in the global economy is \$8.8tr.(Dawn, 2023). Quiet quitting doesn't necessarily mean leaving the job altogether, but limiting their task strictly to what is expected and avoiding working longer hours and taking responsibilities that are not in the job description. Employees want to set clear boundaries at work, do bare minimum and fulfil their responsibility without burdening them with extra work so that they can go home leaving work

behind and spend time with family and manage other activities that require their attention.(Hetler, 2024)

Generation Z in Pakistan (which is approximately 52% of Pakistan's population) , like their counterparts around the world, were born into a world saturated with social media presence , technology and internet, this generation is most active users of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, where they share opinions, videos and photos while connecting with local and international audience.(Jamal, 2020) While other generations faced consequences of COVID-19 differently, Generation Z were most affected by the quiet quitting phenomenon, which makes it crucial for the organizations to address this concept and understand the preferences of this generation since they are projected to surpass millennials in numbers by 2025 when millennials will retire(Xueyun et al., 2023)

Globally, a lot of work has been done on quiet quitting and the factors that predict the behavior. (Taufik et al., 2024) argues that the key factors in experiences and behaviors of GenZ employees include empowering leadership, job satisfaction and work overload. Empowering leadership approach gives the employees the freedom to work on their time, provides opportunities to include in decision making which boosts motivation and ultimately increases job satisfaction. However, work overload has been examined to have a negative impact on GenZ due to lack of work-life balance and exhaustion resulting in decline of job satisfaction leading to quiet quitting. Furthermore, a positive organizational culture plays a vital role in increasing employees' willingness to work. Similarly, (Sitorus & Rachmawati, 2024) suggests that. Job Satisfaction mediates the inverse relationship between career development opportunities, affective organizational commitment, and organizational support on Quiet quitting, which means that the more dissatisfied the employees are, the more they are likely to exhibit quiet quitting tendencies.

Although quiet quitting is often seen as a single, homogeneous phenomenon in existing literature,

it is important to supply grounded evidence of the nature of quiet quitting and to examine outcomes of quiet quitting of the perpetrators longitudinally.(Harris, 2025)

For example, a study in the UK was conducted with a number of 53 employees who were interviewed through in-depth interviews that took place in phase 1 and then again after a year in phase 2. Research findings suggested that after phase 2, quiet quitters had both positive as well as negative outcomes of their actions. Positives being general happiness, physiological/health benefits, non-work satisfaction, work effectiveness, and negative outcomes included pressure to conform and worsened relationships with co-workers. These studies highlight the importance and the need for our study to explore Gen Z's workforce preferences and to examine which personal or professional factors contribute to the emergence of the quiet quitting trend amongst the education sector

Notably, a rising amount of research indicates the relationship between job burnout and quiet quitting. There is a significant impact of job burnout and emotional impairment , on the quiet quitting behaviors, Furthermore, Job satisfaction also affects the relationship suggesting its role in reducing the negative impacts of Job burnout.(Zhang, 2024) Burnout is characterized by exhaustion, detachment from job and a sense of ineffectiveness, and is usually associated with behaviors like absenteeism, intent to quit, and turnover.(Ochis, 2024) The existing literature indicates burnout and occupational stress as predictors and drivers for quiet quitting. Employees who face burnout during a job are more likely to exhibit an increased tendency of quiet quitting for teachers.(Dilekçi et al., 2025)

Quiet quitting is driven through factors like work-life balance, toxic work environment, perceived organizational support and job burnout.(Nguyen & Vu, 2025) In some of the existing studies, Personal, organizational politics and people dynamics were identified as three main reasons for quiet quitting.(Nimmi et al., 2024) The root cause of disengagement with job lies with failed practices of managers and supervisors who do not engage, empower or

inspire the employees that they work with resulting in decline in job satisfaction and eventually leading to quiet quitting.(Mahand & Caldwell, 2023)One of the factors that hugely impacts the healthcare professionals in the process of quiet quitting is the emotional detachment from the job. Although it can avoid burnout and prevent reduced productivity, increased turnover and decreased work quality which consequently affects patient safety, it does not provide career growth and can be harmful for their future (Karadas & Çevik, n.d.)

After COVID-19, organizations and employers need to build greater resilience. In order to increase productivity and match up to the changing markets with advanced technology, employees need to up skill or relearn, engage in continuous learning, and become comfortable to secure new economy jobs.(Ng & Stanton, 2023)

For employers to address the quiet quitting issue proactively, it is critical to recognize the signs of employees who might be pondering over the idea. Common indicators include isolation from team activities, when employees start to withdraw from social events or show no interest in team meetings. Decreased productivity, a noticeable decline in quality or quantity of work, and increased absenteeism which reflects the unwillingness of showing up to work. By identifying these signs and acting proactively, employers can help control the problem before it widespread by re-engaging the employees.(Delta, 2024)

In Pakistani Context, Generation Z or Gen Z have undergone many changes and transformations nationally as well on an international level, especially after the digital revolution, which makes them distinctive than any other generation cohorts. Being tech-savvy and technologically competent allows them to be creative, innovative, critical thinkers and environmentally sound people. It is essential for organizations to understand and learn how to manage a multi-generational workforce considering that Gen Z employees have different values, traits and preferences. This practice is already adopted by organizations and employers around the globe and is crucial for Pakistan's

sustainable development as well.(Dar et al., 2025) Upon studying different generations and their tendencies of quiet quitting in the UK, significant reduction was noticed in working hours among younger generations like Gen Z.(Hamilton et al., 2023) It is no surprise that Gen Z as compared to any other generational cohort prefers to work alone and tend to be more individualistic, their concern of personal benefit makes them entrepreneurial and money-conscious. One of the common factors of a successful career in Gen Z was identified as flexible working hours which helps them manage family , work and hobbies because they prioritize work-life balance unlike their parents who refused to take their health seriously and worked just for the sake of it.(Bulut, 2021)

The existing body of literature sheds light on the importance of understanding quiet quitting in Generation Z employees as they embark upon the journey in the labor market in different industries around the world. However, in Pakistan, there is a lot of area that is undiscovered and that needs to be researched. Our research presents a novel approach to quiet quitting behavior by using qualitative research methodology which is longitudinal in nature unlike the most of research done on the subject.

Our study demonstrates the reasons and causes for encouraging QQ behavior amongst employees, particularly Gen Z(s), in the educational sector of Pakistan and specifically in the Hyderabad region. This study has potential to explore the impact of QQ on employees which opens up new avenues to study Generation Z employees' workplace dynamics and preferences in the current era.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To understand quiet quitting phenomena among Generation Z, it's important to look beyond numbers and statistics, instead focus on how individuals actually feel and think about their work lives. This research follows interpretivism approach, which means it aims to explore personal experiences and the meanings people attach to them. Quiet quitting is more than just reduced productivity. It's link with how people

view their roles, balance their values, and react to work environment. By taking this lens, the study hopes to capture those deeper, personal insights that numbers alone can't explain (Saunders et al., 2019).

Research Approach:

The study employs an inductive approach since it aims to investigate quiet quitting, instead of starting with preconceived notions, this method lets the results evolve from what participants truly say. The objective is to maintain an open mind and allow fresh themes or concepts to organically surface from the data. This makes sense since the definition of silent resigning varies from person to person and is influenced by personal values and workplace culture (Creswell, 2013).

Research Design:

Since the goal of this study is to understand how Generation Z employees truly experience silent quitting in their daily work life, it adopts a qualitative, phenomenological method. This approach allows us to get closer to the actual experiences, emotions, and viewpoints of those who work in private schools rather than concentrating on statistics or generalizations. We can go deeper into the "how" and "why" of this conduct by hearing their voices. Because it emphasizes lived experiences—what individuals go through, how they interpret it, and what it means to them—the phenomenological approach is particularly useful in this context (Moustakas, 1994). This enables us to view silent resignation as a personal and emotional reaction influenced by personal values and workplace culture, rather than merely as a trend (Creswell, 2013). There are around 884 school, with 8860 of them is operating, unexplored in terms of quiet quitting in Gen z (Pakistan Institute of Education, 2024)

Population and Sampling Frame:

The target population of this study includes Generation Z employees in Hyderabad. This group is defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024). According to the most recent data, Pakistan's government allocated 1.8686% of the nation's

GDP to education in 2023. (Trading Economics, 2024).

Time Horizon:

This study adopts a cross-sectional approach, show the data is taken all at once rather than over period of time. Because it eliminates the requirement for continuous monitoring, this approach is an excellent fit for investigating the existing connections among artificial intelligence, worker performance, and job engagement. It's also a handy and economical method of obtaining insightful information in a constrained amount of time and money. (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019).

Sampling Technique:

Given the qualitative nature of this study and the aim to gain deep insights into the personal and professional factors behind quiet quitting in Generation Z employees in Hyderabad's private education sector, purposive sampling will be used. Purposive sampling (also known as judgmental or selective sampling) involves selecting participants based on specific characteristics that align with the study's objectives. In this research, participants will be the Generation Z, typically defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024), currently working in the private school education sector in Hyderabad, Pakistan, and individuals who have at least one year of work experience in the sector to ensure they can provide meaningful insights into the quiet quitting phenomenon. This sampling method allows the researcher to target individuals most likely to provide rich, relevant, and diverse perspectives.

Data Collection:

This is a qualitative and interpretivist study that focuses on collecting in-depth data from Generation Z employees working in private schools in Hyderabad (Creswell, 2013). Semi-structured interviews will be used to give participants the freedom to express their thoughts openly, allowing the researcher to gain rich insights into their experiences (Galletta,

2013). These interviews will consist of open-ended questions and will be conducted face-to-face, each lasting approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Audio recordings will be made (with consent) to ensure accurate analysis. Participants will be selected through purposive sampling, specifically targeting individuals born between 1997 and 2012 who have at least one year of experience working in the school sector (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The target sample size is six to seven participants, and recruitment will be carried out through school administrators.

Data Analysis:

Thematic analysis is suitable for this qualitative, inductive study as it allows for the identification of patterns and helps extract meaning from participants' descriptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis will follow the Six-Phase Framework: First, in the Familiarization with Data phase, the researcher will transcribe the interviews and make notes for initial ideas (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In the Generating Initial Codes phase, Atlas software will be used to highlight meaningful phrases, keywords, and behaviors (Saldana, 2016). Next, in the Searching for Themes phase, the initial codes will be grouped into broader themes. During the Reviewing and Naming Themes phase, themes will be reviewed for accuracy, clearly defined, and their relevance to the phenomenon of quiet quitting will be identified (Nowell et al., 2017). In the Triangulation phase, data will be compared with field notes and observations for consistency and reliability (Flick, 2018). Finally, in the Member Checking phase, participants will be asked to review the transcripts or summaries of their interviews to ensure the accuracy of the interview data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

ANALYSIS

This chapter details the analytical approach used to interpret the narrative accounts collected from Gen Z employees in the education sector concerning the phenomenon of quiet quitting.

Our goal was to move past basic observation to truly understand the human factors and subjective experiences driving this behavior. We used Thematic Analysis (TA), a powerful and flexible method (Braun & Clarke, 2006), specifically because it allows researchers to uncover deep, complex patterns of meaning within qualitative data. To systematically manage and organize the extensive interview material, the data were processed using the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti.

The analytical process was a meticulous journey of fidelity, strictly following the established phases of Braun and Clarke (2012). It began with the foundational step of data preparation and immersion. All interviews, conducted in English, required verbatim transcription to preserve the authenticity of the participants' voices (Oliver et al., 2005). We used Turboscribe software for audio-to-text conversion, but the human element remained paramount: the software-generated text was subsequently verified and reconciled against the original audio recordings by the researchers to ensure total accuracy. Following transcription, the data was thoroughly familiarized through repeated reading, enabling researchers to achieve a deep understanding of the participants' worlds and subjective perspectives.

The final phase involved interpretation and thematic synthesis. We generated initial codes—short, resonant markers assigned to significant quotes—that were inductively derived and reflected the participants' emic language (Saldana, 2013). These codes were then organized using a spreadsheet to facilitate the search for and review of broader themes—collections of related codes that told a unified story. Through an iterative and rigorous process of thematic refinement, these potential themes were checked for internal consistency and external distinctiveness (Braun & Clarke, 2012). This systematic approach culminated in the definition of the final themes and sub-themes, offering a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the human reality behind quiet quitting in this demographic.

Demographic Characteristics of the Interviewees

S.No.	Respondent	Age	Level of education
1	Respondent - 1	27	Early Years
2	Respondent - 2	27	Early Years
3	Respondent - 3	25	Pre-Primary
4	Respondent - 4	22	Kindergarten
5	Respondent - 5	25	Primary
6	Respondent - 6	24	Primary
7	Respondent - 7	27	Primary
8	Respondent - 8	23	Pre-Primary
9	Respondent - 9	24	Primary

“The Total Number of participants is 9, all of whom are dedicated teachers and members of the Gen Z generation (born 1997 or later) working in the education sector, bringing a fresh perspective on the teaching profession. Reflecting the realities of young adulthood, their personal lives feature a mix of experiences: the group is composed of individuals who are single as well as those who are married. Each teacher generously shared their perspective and experiences, providing the rich, qualitative data that helps us understand the human reasons behind the quiet quitting phenomenon in their demanding roles as educators.”

Theme 1: Erosion of Work Life Boundaries

This theme reflects how the line between personal life and work responsibilities is fading, prompting people to push back against unpaid tasks beyond their official duties.

Personal Time Under Pressure:

The responses highlight the difficulty in maintaining a personal life or feeling exhausted due to work demand spilling over into private time.

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 1	My life is totally revolving around school, so I have no personal life left.
2	Respondent 1	There is no balance left. All you do is go to work and come back home exhausted
3	Respondent 5	They ask us to take online classes once we are back home so that becomes stressful.

Setting Work Boundaries:

These responses directly address the attempt to or the failure to define limits between professional

and personal life, often related to compensation or scheduled time.

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 3	I do not believe in spending extra time beyond my contract hours because that is my personal life
2	Respondent 2	They expect you to do a lot of tasks at home, for which you are not being paid.
3	Respondent 3	Even after 5, you have to reply to the emails, which is really not fair.

Theme 2: Economic Devaluation and Inadequate Compensation

Feeling their compensation and benefit do not justify the stress, workload and required emotional investment.

Workload Discrepancy:

The respondent shared that there is an imbalance between the volume of work, time, or tasks required, and the financial reward received.

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 2	They expect you to do a lot of tasks for which you are not being paid

Devaluation of Intangible Labor:

The Responses highlighting the lack of emotional investment of the job, irrespective of the physical hours worked. justification for the psychological cost or required

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 2	I don't think it is worth the stress and the time that I am investing
2	Respondent 6	The level of stress is too high in this profession

Insufficient Total Compensation Package:

The Responses highlight that the complete financial package (salary plus benefits) does not

provide a reasonable return for the demands and commitment required by the role.

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 3	There is no incentive for the extra effort that you are putting in.
2	Respondent 5	I would be willing if they pay a fair compensation.
3	Respondent 4	There was no overtime, no appreciation just an expectation.

Theme 3: Low Organizational Support and Environment

This theme focuses on how a lack of organizational support, poor management, and a non-nurturing culture contribute to withdrawal.

Lack of Organizational Support:

The Respondent explicitly mentions inadequate support, feeling abandoned, or a lack of backing when facing difficulties (e.g., student issues, resource shortages, workload).

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 1	I do not think I have enough support from the school administration

Toxic/Non-Nurturing Workplace Culture:

The Respondent describing poor interpersonal relationships, an overly critical atmosphere, high-

pressure availability expectations, or a "toxic" administration/management style.

S.NO.	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 3	My admin is very toxic. They expect you to be available 24/7
2	Respondent 4	There are too much politics in the school, which I do not like

Poor Management and Communication:

The Respondent pointing to arbitrary decision-making, unclear expectations, lack of

transparency or general incompetence in the way the organization is led.

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 2	I feel like there is a lack of transparency in the administration

Theme 4: Rejection of Hyper-Productivity and Personal Priority

This theme addresses the shift in Gen Zs motivation, prioritizing personal well-being and defined boundaries over professional sacrifice and striving.

Prioritizing Well-being over Professional Sacrifice:

The Respondents are discussing burnout, stress, emotional investment, and the decision to value the self over the job.

S.NO	Responded	Response
1	Respondent 1	I am mentally and physically very tired all the time
2	Respondent 2	I just feel lazy when it comes to going to work
3	Respondent 3	I prioritize my mental health

		over my professional growth
4	Respondent 5	I feel accomplished but mentally tired
5	Respondent 6	Most days, I'm exhausted and to be honest, teaching takes a lot of energy.

DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to investigate the factors that affected the Quiet Quitting Behavior amongst Generation Z employees within the context of existing literature on emotional consequences, recognition, workplace dynamics and Generation Z work values. The four emergent themes - (1) Erosion of Work Life Boundaries, (2) Economic Devaluation and Inadequate Compensation, (3) Low Organizational Support and ,and (4) Rejection of Hyper-Productivity and Personal Priority give us insight into complex and critical social and personal factors that affect Gen Z employees' behavior regarding Quiet Quitting.

Interpretation of Themes with Alignment to Existing Literature:

Theme: Erosion of Work Life Boundaries:

The study suggests that Gen Z perceives the blurring of lines between personal and professional life. This erosion of boundaries is mainly driven by consistent organizational expectations of availability outside formal working hours. The respondents expressed distress regarding undesirable workload and faced the feeling of disengagement and pressure to respond after work hours, eventually leading to emotional and mental exhaustion.

These findings are in coherence with the prior research highlighting the significance of employee well-being, and job burnout on quiet quitting behavior among Generation Z employees. (Xueyun et al., 2023 , Zhang, 2024)

Theme: Economic Devaluation and Inadequate Compensation:

Economic devaluation was another theme identified. Participants described feeling undervalued for the work they were assigned because it did not match with the compensation or the adequate amount of rewards in terms of monetary or non-monetary benefits. This sheds light on a broader and critical concern regarding current inflation, job markets and overall economic situation.

The participants expressed that their workload did not justify the salaries or the compensation they received from the schools, hence resulting in decrease of the work engagement. These findings reconfirms the findings of the prior research that shows the effect of work engagement on quiet quitting and how Gen Z's perceptions of work affect their engagement at workplace.(Sitorus & Rachmawati, 2024 and Bulut, 2021)

However, the novel finding from this particular study suggests that the employees do not show unwillingness to adopt work or take on new duties, the employees showed interest and excitement when talking about taking on new and challenging responsibilities at the workplace, this shows that the willingness for extra work exist and employees are motivated to work more, just not without any recognition or compensation by the management.

Another novel contribution highlights the importance of high monetary benefits and salaries for the employees. In the current changing economy, job security and a good monetary package is one of the most important and sought-after factors. The Gen Z employees are aware of the fact that their time is important and if they are not paid fairly, they will not engage in any extra workload provided by the management.

Theme: Low Organizational Support and Environment:

Another theme that was identified in the study refers to the Low organizational support and environment. Participants expressed their grievances regarding unclear goals, lack of appreciation, poor communication and inadequate feedback. Such an environment at the workplace diminishes the motivation for work and sense of physiological safety in the workplace.

The findings resonate with the previous literature that elaborates the importance of empowering leadership at the workplace. When employees feel seen and heard and when the leaders allow employees to take initiatives and provide a growth mindset the employees eventually feel motivated and the overall impact on their job satisfaction increases significantly resulting in decreased tendency of quiet quitting behavior. (Taufik et al., 2024)

One of the highly anticipated preferences at work for Gen Zs is open communication and supportive mentors. A good management provides an environment where the employee feels safe and valued, recognition, appreciation and supportive leadership is very important for gen Z employees as they are young enthusiastic employees and they want to collaborate with seniors who have more experience and can guide them in the right direction about career paths or life in general. (Dirani, Barhate 2021)

The novel finding in this research inclines towards the intention or desire for collaboration. The Gen Z employees actually look forward to working with their supervisors to gain perspective and hands-on experience while they are still struggling in their career. The willingness to collaborate and to show up for new initiatives keep these young employees motivated and if handled correctly by the management, the ratio of disengagement can reduce to a significant level among school teachers.

Theme: Rejection of Hyper-Productivity and Personal Priority

The study reveals a notable insight regarding dismissal of the hustle culture hyper-productivity.

The participants rejected the idea of working long hours or after hours, prioritizing their mental health and peace over work overload or constant striving for organization gain. Participants focused on having personal time, leisure and meaningful family interactions rather than only working without pause. This trend aligns with the post-pandemic work culture where a lot of employees shifted to remote working conditions and realized that they needed to spend their time mindfully and draw a line between work and life.

These findings suggest how generational values and perceptions change and how different generations value different things. Which are also relevant to the earlier work done by the researchers especially while drawing a contrast between different generations like Millennials and Generation Z. (Lordan et al, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study explored the phenomena of Quiet Quitting among Generation Z employees using qualitative research, identifying the underlying interpretations and experiences that shape the emerging workplace behaviors. The findings indicate that the Quiet Quitting is not merely disengaging from work but it's a response to the cultural, social, and professional conditions in modern organizations. The four themes that emerged gave an insight into how quiet quitting serves as a self-advocacy and silent critique of existing workplace norms.

Summary of Key Findings:

The study identified four themes, Erosion of Work Life Boundaries, Economic Devaluation and Inadequate Compensation, Low Organizational Support and Environment, and Rejection of Hyper-Productivity and Personal Priority. Some novel contributions that emerged from the research were Willingness to take on extra work, Desire for Collaboration, and Handsome Monetary Packages offered by the organizations. However the Emotional consequences and concern for mental health was observed among all employees which remains consistent with prior existing literature as well.

Practical Implication:

To address the issues that affect the Quiet Quitting behavior, the management in the education sector must come up with policies and initiatives that take in account the aspirations and preferences of Generation Z employees. Different training sessions must be initiated to improve time management and organization skills. The policy makers must recognize the need for mental health and employee well-being and design a curriculum that aligns with the students and teacher's capacity and ability. The leaders must provide a safe and positive working environment without any toxic characteristics like favoritism, work overload or after hour jobs. The education sector must take initiatives like rewarding deserving employees with appreciation and recognition to boost motivation of employees.

Directions for Future Research:

Our study focused on understanding employees' perspectives on quiet quitting. In the future, researchers could explore management's point of view to better understand the challenges they face and to identify strategies for retaining employees. One of the novel findings of our study includes the themes of willingness to take on extra work, desire for collaboration, and fair monetary benefits, which could be further explored to see how they influence quiet quitting behavior. Studies in other cities of Pakistan, such as Karachi and Lahore, could provide a broader understanding of quiet quitting among Generation Z employees. Additionally, future research could examine quiet quitting in Hyderabad across different generations, like Generation Alpha, to see how attitudes toward work and engagement differ across age groups.

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