Quiet Quitting: Insights from Generation Z Workers in Vietnam

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the working behaviours of employees and employers, creating a serious and widely propagated through various platforms counter-productive behaviour: quiet quitting. Notably, Generation Z, the currently main workforce, are most influenced by social media platforms and most likely to engage in this phenomenon. This study applied the Conservation of Resources Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Theory of Generations to propose a research model and use cross-sectional data from 1,018 participants analysed through SEM to examined factors influencing Vietnamese Generation Z employees'quiet quitting intention. The findings revealed that work-life balance, affective organizational commitment, and perceived organizational support, through the mediating effect of job burnout, significantly influenced their' intention to quiet quit, while toxic workplace environment only have a direct effect. These results offer valuable insights for both employees and organizations, helping them recognize fundamental causes and how to effectively reduce quiet quitting intentions.

Keywords: Quiet Quitting, Work-life Balance, Toxic Workplace Environment, Organizational Support, Organizational Commitment, Job Burnout, Generation Z, Vietnam.

Introduction

Quiet quitting emerged as a phenomenon in 2022 and gained popularity among young people through social media platforms. The phenomenon of "quiet quitting" gained widespread attention in 2022, following a viral TikTok video by Zaid Khan. By 2023, the top workplace trend on TikTok is none other than quiet quitting, with 762.3 million views. The term describes employees who disengage from going above and beyond in their work, performing only the tasks stipulated in their job descriptions. Though first introduced Mark Badger in 2009, quiet quitting has gained prominence amid post-pandemic shifts toward revaluating work-life balance and employee well-being.

Quiet quitting is often linked to work-related stress and burnout, with employees withdrawing from additional duties as a coping mechanism for emotional exhaustion and lack of career progression. Organizational factors such as perceived employer neglect, poor work environments, and misalignment of values are key contributors to this behaviour. On the other hand, supportive work environments that prioritize job satisfaction and well-being are protective factors, reducing the likelihood of quiet quitting. The trend is especially prevalent among Generation Z, who place high value on mental health and work-life balance. A 2023 Gallup report revealed that nearly 50% of Generation Z workers perform only the duties specified in their job descriptions. Furthermore, over 60% of younger employees prioritize mental health in their job satisfaction. This disengagement, though subtle, negatively affects organizational productivity, leading to lower motivation and decreased team morale. Initially, quiet quitting might not seem like a significant issue; however, over time, this behaviour leads to consequences for the organization and colleagues. Globally, according to, it is estimated that the majority of employees worldwide are quiet quitters, and this reality incurs a loss of $8.8 trillion USD, equivalent to 9.9% of the global GDP.

Due to its serious impacts, many studies worldwide have addressed this issue across various industries, including human resources, healthcare, and hospitality. In Vietnam, a country deeply

influenced by powerful social media platforms, with the number of internet users ranking among the top 18/20 countries worldwide, employees are easily exposed and develop quiet quitting intentions through this trend, and many studies have been conducted on this issue, such as those focusing on burnout and quiet quitting in the banking sector or the work-life balance of Gen Z. This is a global issue, so organizations and employees need to adapt strategies to maintain employee engagement. However, the specific factors influencing the intention to quiet quit and the degree of its impact remain unknown. This is a significant gap that needs to be addressed in order to solve the problem effectively. Therefore, this study aims to measure the impact and examine the prevalence of quiet quitting among Gen Z employees in Vietnam, exploring how factors such as toxic work environments, work-life balance, and organizational support influence their engagement. By applying theories such as Conservation of Resources theory (COR), Theory of Generations (TOG) and Social Exchange Theory (SET) [8], this research aims to provide valuable insights for businesses and employees to create a more balanced and supportive work culture.

Literature Review
Generation Z

Based on the work of [82], the current workforce comprises four generations, namely "Baby Boomers", "Generation X", "Millennials" (also known as "Generation Y") and "Generation Z". While prior studies concur on the categorization of generations, there are no universally accepted birth date boundaries for each generation. Contends that each generation spans 20 years, representing the time between an individual's birth and the birth of their first child. According to, Generation Z includes individuals born from 2001 to 2016. On the other hand, specifies the range as 1996 to 2010 for Generation Z define Generation Z as those born between 1995 and 2010, as genuine digital natives who have grown up with the internet, social media, and mobile technology, whereas state that Generation Z refers to those born between 1995 and 2009. However, recent research consistently defines Generation Z as those born between 1997 and 2011.

Generation Z is known for prioritizing technology, innovation, and creativity and prefers simplicity and safety, with high expectations. Not being able to meet these expectations can lead to a decrease in job satisfaction, job burnout, employee disengagement, and potentially resulting in quiet quitting. has suggested that Generation Z workers are less loyal to their organizations as they are more impatient and keener on pursuing new opportunities. Compared to the previous generations, Generation Z places greater emphasis on mental well-being, is more educated, diverse, and entrepreneurial. According to, Generation Z tends to be more pragmatic in their work expectations and more optimistic about the future compared to previous generations. They exhibit less organizational loyalty, indicating that long-term commitment to companies is not their priority argued that happiness is a key motivator for Generation Z in the workplace. Engaged and motivated Generation Z employees are more committed to their jobs and less likely to leave. Furthermore, motivated Generation Z employees contribute to achieving the organization's objectives. Generation Z places a higher value on work-life balance compared to previous generations and they prioritize work-life balance over career advancement.

Quiet Quitting Intention

Quiet quitting is a relatively new term which adopts the general idea of turnover intention where it suggests that employees not leaving their jobs, but only restricting their tasks to contractual time and refraining from extra effort and only fulfilling the requirements of the job description. The concept of quiet quitting involves performing only the minimum work required and not exceeding expectations and those who quietly quit resist the pressure to give extra effort or work overtime. Additionally, they avoid taking extra unpaid or unrewarded responsibilities and not making extra efforts is their respond to the overwork culture. The primary reasons leading to quiet quitting includes the lack of clear sense of purpose, insufficient fair acknowledgement, and the urging need to achieve a healthy work-life balance. With the COVID-19 pandemic causing the boundaries between professional and personal life to blur out, quiet quitting might be viewed as a solution for employees to restore the imbalance between their work and life, prioritize their mental health, and spend time on

more fulfilling activities. Through quiet quitting, individuals may believe they can address their concerns, safeguard their mental health, and pursue a more meaningful life.

Proposed a theoretical framework on quiet quitting based on the COR, SET, and TOG. In the professional setting, employees tackle their tasks and duties by utilizing available resources [37] and expect resource gain/increase in return for what they have invested. Noted that this anticipation reflects individuals' drive to acquire, safeguard and enrich their resources as outlined by COR. In this context, when employees do not receive the desired return for the investment, they may engage in strategic behaviour like quiet quitting to prevent further resource loss. In other words, in this scenario, quiet quitting can be used as a tool to help employee seek the balance that they are lacking by completing only their minimal tasks. On the other hand, whether employee expectations for the return of their investments are fulfilled is related to SET. This theory suggests that the relationship between an organization and its employee is capable to transcend beyond a simple labour-wage transaction contract and can evolve into a social exchange relationship based on mutual benefits. In this interaction, employees depend on their exchange relationship and organizational assistance, which motivates them to generate values that exceed the obligation of their responsibilities. As a result, based on the SET, the behaviours and attitudes of managers toward their employees served as key factors to the phenomenon of quiet quitting. Another important theory that holds a part in elaborate the concept of quiet quitting is the TOG. According to, individuals who share the same age group tend to have similar behavioural patterns and aspirations. Suggested that Generations Z workers are quite new in the labour market is moving away from the idea of stable and sacrificing employment. In general, quiet quitting highlights the importance of generational influences regarding the emergence and characteristics of individuals who adopts this behaviour. Pointed out that Generation Z is identified to have a high tendency to engage in the quiet quitting behaviour. Stated that Generation Z exhibits low level organizational commitment and views work as a necessary mean to get the income they need to survive. As a result, the reason why most employees who engage in quiet quitting consists of Generation Z workers is because of the thought and behaviour pattern of their generation. Based on these theories, proposed a conceptual model with 18 factors that may have effect on employee's quiet quitting intention. These factors can be divided into two categories, which are managerial/organizational factors and employee-based factors. This study will explore the impact of 4 factors from both groups which are Work-life balance, Toxic workplace environment, Affective organizational commitment from the managerial/organizational group and perceived organizational support from the employee-based group.

Overall, the quiet quitting phenomenon is relatively new, among the academic literature on this concept remains a significant research gap. Therefore, it lacks theoretical framework or established theories for thorough analysis. Despite its prevalence in popular discussions, most existing research is qualitative and exploratory. This presents an opportunity for more quantitative research to enhance comprehension through larger, representative samples. Additionally, there is a lack of studies specifically focusing on Generation Z, a generation with unique workplace attitudes and behaviours influenced by the digital age, remote work culture, and post-pandemic dynamics. In Vietnam, where the social, politics, economic and cultural context may impact work perceptions and employee engagement differently, there is particularly limited research on quiet quitting. Addressing these gaps by conducting a quantitative study on quiet quitting in general, among Generation Z workers and in Vietnam would yield valuable insights and significantly contribute to both academic and practical understandings of this emerging trend.

Job burnout mentioned that certain attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, job alienation and job burnout may hold bidirectional effects on the relationship between quiet quitting intention and its contributing factors. The condition of job burnout arises from intense work pressure, leading to physical or mental exhaustion, as defined by describe job burnout as a psychological condition that arises from experiencing emotional and interpersonal stress in the workplace environment. Job burnout has been linked to decreased levels of job satisfaction in previous studies, which can also negatively impact employee turnover intentions and productivity. Furthermore, individuals experiencing burnout may be more prone to health issues, and highlighted how this can be particularly problematic in professions that demand physical stamina and resilience. According to, the

workplace environment holds a notable impact on employee retention, suggesting that employees are less likely to leave if their organization is a positive workplace environment. When employees encounter ongoing workplace stress, they become more exposed to burnout, leading to a quiet intention to quit because of the negative effects of workplace environment. Heightened job burnout can lead employees to engage in quiet quitting to avoid excessive stress and expectations. Lack of work-life balance can also contribute to increased anxiety and stress level, resulting to job burnout and eventually quiet quitting. Additionally, lack of support from the organization can make employees feel abandoned, leading to decrease of job satisfaction and burnout, which eventually may lead to quiet quitting. While there are studies on how burnout affects employees' quiet quitting intentions, there is limited research specifically focusing on these two concepts. For example, research revealed that the well-being of employees and job burnout significantly influences the likelihood of employees engaging in quiet quitting behaviours. Their findings illustrate the interconnectedness of these variables and how they influence professors' decisions to leave discreetly. Another study by demonstrated that job burnout is notably related to quiet quitting intentions.

Work-Life Balance

According to one of the first managerial/organizational factors that can affect employee's quiet quitting intention is work-life balance. Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to manage their responsibilities at work and their personal life, with clear boundaries between the two defined work-life balance as an individual's desire to effectively manage work and home commitments, without feeling overwhelmed by either. Work-life balance is crucial for maintaining a healthy combination of work and personal life, ensuring that one does not negatively impact the other explained how poor work-life balance may lead employees to consider leaving their employers. According to the negative effects of poor work-life balance include mental and physical health issues, employee burnout, which can eventually trigger quiet quitting. Overall, successful work-life balance initiatives can reduce turnover, stress levels, conflict, and improve job satisfaction and organizational commitment, making it less likely for negative behaviour such as quiet quitting happening.

Based on study, the primary reason for quiet quitting across all participants is the low salary but for Generation Z participants, the main reason is the imbalance between work and personal life suggested that Generation Z emphasizes work-life balance when choosing a job. In addition proposed that the COVID-19 pandemic caused difficulties in separating professional and personal life, and quiet quitting can be a solution for prioritizing their well-being. Based on the above literature, the following hypotheses is proposed:

Hypothesis 1A: Work-life balance is negatively related to quiet quitting intention.
Hypothesis 1B: Work-life balance is negatively related to job burnout.
Hypothesis 1C: Job burnout mediates the relationship between work-life balance and quiet quitting intention.

Toxic Workplace Environment

The next managerial/organizational factors that suggested was Toxic workplace environment. The concept of a toxic workplace environment is often described as a workplace that is harmful to employees' well-being especially their mental and emotional health defines a toxic workplace environment as a setting where abuse, harassment, or discrimination is persistent and ignored by the employer without adequate corrective measures refer to toxic workplace environment as one with narcissistic behaviour, offensive leadership, harassment, bullying, and other negative behaviours among employees defines a toxic workplace environment as one that is considered harmful and negative for employees due to various pressures arising from organizational and social interactions suggests that a toxic work environment fosters turnover intention among employees and contains behaviours such as harassment and bullying that decrease job satisfaction. In toxic organizations with interpersonal, tenure, and promotion conflicts, the absence of merit-based in career development, unfair advancement practices, and inadequate recognition of their skills and competence reduce employees' trust. This lack of recognition and fair compensation can decrease job satisfaction and lead employees to engage in behaviour such as quiet quitting, negatively affecting their well-being due to

toxic workplaces and dissatisfaction with career management, and compensation. Based on the literature discussed, the following hypotheses is proposed:

Hypothesis 2A: Toxic workplace environment is positively related to quiet quitting intention.
Hypothesis 2B: Toxic workplace environment is positively related to job burnout.
Hypothesis 2C: Job burnout mediates the relationship between toxic workplace environment and quiet quitting intention.

Affective Organizational Commitment

The final managerial/organizational factors that suggested which this study will look into is Affective organizational commitment provided a definition of organizational commitment as "the psychological connection between employees and their organizations that decreases the likelihood of voluntary resignation." They explained that affective commitment entails a strong emotional attachment to and engagement with an organization, reflecting the emotional ties employee has with it. Affective commitment is associated with work-life balance, and is vital in mitigating job burnout. discovered that the connection between job burnout and organizational commitment holds notable importance due to the practical consequences for organizations when an employee lacks alternatives or has to sacrifice too many advantages. Burnout leads to substantial negative repercussions that can significantly impact enterprises financially, such as increased employee turnover, absenteeism, reduced productivity, and various personal issues. It has been noted that employees lacking organizational commitment tend to underperform at a in their job-related tasks, and are inclined to maintain their continuance commitment due to the belief that the cost of leaving their jobs are high indicates that organizational commitment could be one of the reasons that drive employees to quiet quit suggested that, according to SET, employees who demonstrate affective commitment toward their organizations are driven to participate in social interactions with their organization and feel a sense of purpose in their work. In other words, those employees with strong affective commitment are easier to view their work as significant and find joy in their work. Drawing from the presented literature, the following hypotheses is proposed:

Hypothesis 3A: Affective organizational commitment is negatively related to quiet quitting intention.
Hypothesis 3B: Affective organizational commitment is negatively related to job burnout.
Hypothesis 3C: Job burnout mediates the relationship between affective organizational commitment and quiet quitting intention.

Perceived Organizational Support

The only employee-based factors that suggested which this study will look into is perceived organizational support. The way an organization supports its employees reflects how much it values their hard work and welfare. When employees feel acknowledged, understood, and valued for their skills, it fosters positive feelings and contributes a part in the process of recovering from the burnout, exhaustion as a result of stressful work. Organizational support is a significant external source of energy for employees; facilitate their emotional recuperation during challenging tasks. This support involves help from managers, supervisors, and leaders in the workplace, ultimately leading to elevated employee performance. Employees are drawn to organizations that meet their expectations on both professional and personal aspects

According to employees engage in quiet quitting to lower their level of stress. With the framework of the Conservation of resources theory, it can be argued that employees engage in quiet quitting in order to prevent the loss of motivation, job satisfaction minimum productivity and performance [91] that they would otherwise experience due to various organizational stress factors such as work demands, role conflict, ambiguous tasks, physical working conditions, lack of social support, and concerns about career development. Given the aforementioned literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4A: Perceived organizational support is negatively related to quiet quitting intention.
Hypothesis 4B: Perceived organizational support is negatively related to job burnout.
Hypothesis 4C: Job burnout mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and quiet quitting intention.

Research Methodology

Research Model

From the conceptual theoretical framework of quiet quitting by which is based on the COR, SET and the TOG, the authors proposed a new research model. The research model includes 4 independent variables which are ―Work-life balance‖, ―Toxic workplace environment‖, ―Perceived organizational support‖, ―Affective organizational commitment‖ along with the dependent factor ―Quiet quitting intention‖ and ―Job burnout‖ as a mediator. The proposed research model is shown in Figure 1:
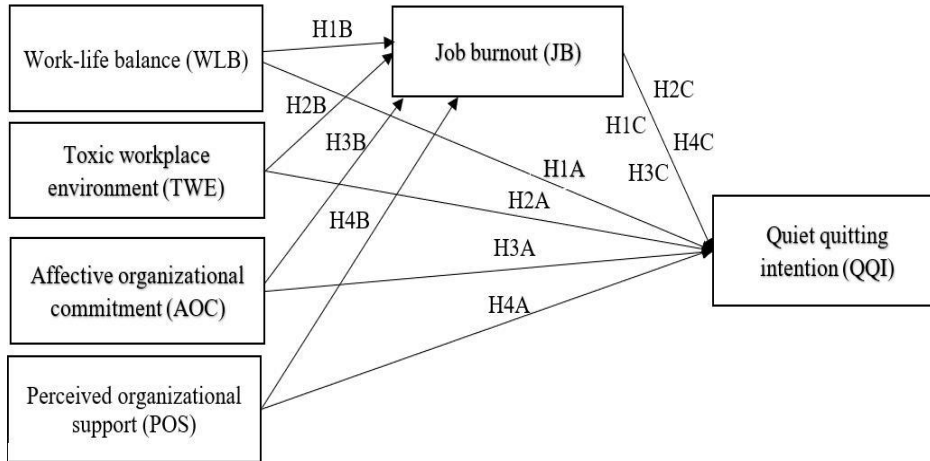

Figure 1: Proposed research model

Measurement

The measurement used in this research was developed based on prior literature with the initial version in English and latter translated into Vietnamese. The Liker scale 5 (1 - strongly disagree, to 5 - strongly agree) is used in this study. The "Work-life balance" scale comprises of 15 items was inherited from research, which was reported to have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.90, and in our study, Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.924. The scale for "Toxic workplace environment" consists of 7 items was taken from research with the Cronbach's alpha was reported to be 0.935, and it was 0.90 for this research. In addition, the scale of the variable "Perceived organizational support" includes 8 items was adapted from study, which had the Cronbach's alpha of 0.89, and for this study, it is 0.878. Furthermore, the scale of the variable "Affective organizational support" as inherited from contains of 5 items had the Cronbach's alpha reported to be 0.897, which was the same for this study. Next, ―Job burnout‖ scale which also possesses 5 items was inherited from [48] has the reported Cronbach's alpha to be 0.904 and 0.896 for this study. Finally, the Cronbach's alpha of the ―Quiet quitting intention‖ scale, which containing 9 items and was inherited from [28], was reported to be 0.803 and in this research, it is 0.889.

Data Collection and Sample

The research sample of this study includes the most recent generations to have entered the job market in Vietnam - Generation Z and examines their distinctions. This study adopts the birth years for Generation Z as defined by the, which defines Generation Z as those born between 1997 and 2011. The sample size is established using the formula for determining the minimum sample size, expressed as n = m*5, in which m represents the independent variable, in the context of multiple regression analysis. Therefore, the minimum sample size is: 30 x 4 = 120. In order to enhance the model's accuracy, the authors came to the decision to collect at least 400 samples to conduct a pilot test. The sample approach utilized was convenience sampling, which is based on the accessibility of the study subjects. The data collection process was conducted from June 2024 until the end of September 2024, culminating in a total of 1070 respondents. However, 52 of them were excluded because they did not meet the required standards such as incomplete information, lack of objectivity, etc.

Data collecting was executed through a structured questionnaire based on a scale completed in 3 stages. The first stage involved performing a pilot questionnaire consisting of 20 samples and making adjustments to generate the final survey questionnaire. The second stage consisted of

collecting data via Google Form, where respondents answered the questions using a 5-point scale corresponding to each statement. The final stage entailed processing and analysing all the collected data. The data was compiled into an Excel file in table format, with samples failing to meet the standards removed. Finally, through AMOS 24 software and IBM SPSS 23 software the authors performed EFA test, CFA test as well as Cronbach's Alpha test to eliminate variables that fail to meet the conditions and SEM analysis to test the hypothesis and the effect of the variables.

Results

Demographic Details

This study uses data collected from 1018 survey samples of Generation Z workers in Vietnam. Table 1 shown the demographic details of all respondents.

Table 1: Sample Description

Demographic	Category	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	560	55
	Female	458	45
Marital status	Married	48	4.7
	Single	970	95.3
Education level	High school graduated or lower	214	21
	Associate degree	52	5.1
	Bachelor's degree	708	69.5
	Master's degree	40	3.9
	Doctoral degree or above	4	0.4
Employment status	Full-time job	626	61.5
	One or multiple part-time job(s)	208	20.4
	Unemployed	184	18.1
	Retired	0	0
Organization	Government organization	82	8.1
	Private organization	768	75.4

type (Employer)	Foreign organization	84	8.3
	Self-employed	46	4.5
	Others	38	3.7
Job level	Entry level	418	41.1
	Intermediate or experienced level	530	52.1
	First-level management	52	5.1
	Middle management	12	1.2
	Executive or Senior management	6	0.6
Years of experience	Less than 1 year	396	38.9
	From 1 to less than 2 years.	320	31.4
	From 2 to less than 5 years	254	25
	From 5 to less than 10 years	48	4.7
	More than 10 years	0	0

Out of all the respondents, 55% were male and 45% were female and the majority of them were single (95.3%), and only 4.7% were married. Most of the sample had a bachelor's degree (69.5%), followed by a high school diploma or lower (21%), associate degree (5.1%), master's degree (3.9%), and doctoral degree or above (0.4%). None of the respondents were retired, while 18.1% of them were unemployed, 20.4% had one ore multiple part-time jobs, and 61.5% had a full-time job. Among the respondents, 75.4% were employed by private organizations, followed by foreign organizations (8.3%), government organizations (8.1%), self-employed (4.5%), and other types of organizations (3.7%). A small fraction of the respondents was on executive or senior management level (0.6%), followed by those were on management level (1.2%), those were on first-level management (5.1%), entry level (41.1%), and those are on intermediate or experienced level (52.1%). About their working experience, the majority (38.9%) had less than 1 years, 31.4% worked for 1 to less than 2 years, followed by 2 to less than 5 years (25%), 5 to less than 0 years (4.7%) and none of the respondents has more than 10 years of working experiences.
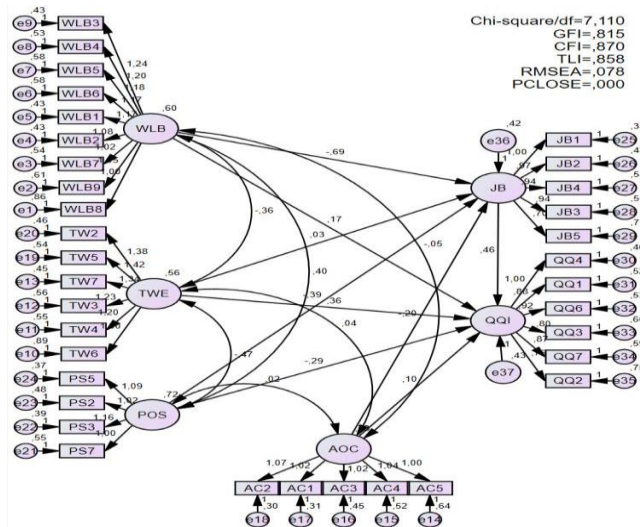
Validity Testing

Figure 2: SEM analysis result

Before applying Cronbach's Alpha test, in order to enhance the reliability of the measurement scale, the authors performed Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on all the scales. The findings revealed that 6 out of 15 items from the ―Work-life balance‖ scale, 1 out of 7 items of the ―Toxic workplace environment‖ scale, 4 out of 8 items from the ―Perceived organizational support‖ scale, 3 out of 9 items from the ―Quiet quitting intention‖ scale with factor loading below 0.5 so the authors decided to remove them.

Next, the authors performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for further validation. The findings shown that Chi-square/df ratio was 7.110, and the CFI and GFI values were 0.865 and 0.88, respectively. Furthermore, the RMSEA value of 0.078. All of these results shown that the proposed research model has a good fit with the collected data.

Validity Testing
The direct and indirect impact tests are presented in Table 2, Table 3.
Table 2: Direct effect

Association	Beta	S.E	C.R	P - Value	Standard Beta
WLB --> QQI	.165	.056	2.969	.003	-.126
TWE --> QQI	.356	.061	5.840	***	.262
POS --> QQI	-.294	.057	-5.135	***	-.246
AOC --> QQI	.096	.032	3.015	.003	-.080
WLB --> JB	-.691	.053	-13.126	***	-.514
TWE --> JB	.034	.058	.588	.557	.025
POS --> JB	-.390	.054	-7.270	***	-.318
AOC --> JB	-.204	.030	-6.696	***	-.167
JB --> QQI	.458	.045	10.222	***	.470

P: significance level; ***: p < 0.001

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WLB: Work-life balance, TWE: Toxic workplace environment, POS: Perceived organizational support,AOC: Affective organizational commitment, JB: Job burnout, QQI: quiet quitting intention.

Table 3: Indirect effect

Associtaion	P - Value	Standard Beta
WLB --> JB --> QQI	.002	-.242
TWE --> JB --> QQI	.629	.012
POS --> JB --> QQI	.002	-.149
AOC --> JB --> QQI	.002	-.079

P: significance level; ***: p < 0.001
WLB: Work-life balance, TWE: Toxic workplace environment, POS: Perceived organizational support,AOC: Affective organizational commitment, JB: Job burnout, QQI: quiet quitting intention.

The results in table 2 and table 3 revealed all the direct and indirect effect between the observed factors. First, work-life balance was found to have a negative and significant influenced on both job burnout and quiet quitting intention with β = - 0.514, P < 0.001 and β = - 0.126, and P < 0.05, respectively. This means hypothesis H1A and H1B were accepted. Next, toxic workplace environment was shown to have a positive and significant effected on quiet quitting intention β = 0.574, P < 0.001 but have no effect on job burnout as P > 0.1. Therefore, the hypothesis H2A was accepted and H2B was rejected. Affective organizational commitment was found to have a negative and significant influenced on both job burnout and quiet quitting intention with β = - 0.167, P < 0.001 and β = - 0.08, and P < 0.05, respectively. This indicates that hypothesis H3A and H3B were accepted. Similarly, perceived organizational support was also found to have a negative and significant influenced on both job burnout and quiet quitting intention with β = - 0.318, P < 0.001 and β = - 0.246, and P < 0.001, respectively. This indicates that hypothesis H4A and H4B were accepted. Finally, Job burnout was found to have a positive and significant effected on Quiet quitting intention (β = 0.610; P < 0.001). The test for indirect effect shows that there was a mediating effect in the relationship between work-life balance, perceived organizational support, affective organizational commitment, and quiet quitting intention (β = - 0.242, β = - 0.149, β = - 0.079 and P < 0.05, respectively). The results also indicates that there was no indirect effect between toxic workplace environment and quiet quitting intention (β = 0.12, P > 0.1). As a result, the hypotheses H1C, H3C, H4C were accepted and hypothesis H2C was rejected.

Discussion

This research focuses on test the effect of various factors, which are work-life balance, toxic workplace environment, and affective commitment to the organization, perceived organizational support, and job burnout on the intention to quietly quit among Generation Z workers in Vietnam. Following the reviewed literature and theoretical foundation, this research proposed a research model with 12 hypotheses, which includes both direct and indirect relationships. The results suggested that employee's intention to quiet quit is affected by many factors, and they collectively contribute to the overall result.

Firstly, this study results shows that the influence of work-life balance on job burnout and quiet quitting intention (H1A and H1B) and work-life balance has the strongest effect on job burnout and quiet quitting intention among all the independent variables. These finding suggests that the imbalance between the professional and personal life can ultimately be a part of the growing of job burnout among Generation Z workers in Vietnam, which can diminish their enthusiasm for their work and lead to their intention to quiet quit. It also similar to the research results of which shows that work life balance has a great effect on quiet quitting and the imbalance can cause the intention to quiet quit arise. The result also proves that the workplace environment holds a notable direct effect on employees' quiet quitting intention (H2A). This is similar to prior studies by which showed that

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workplace environment affects employees' quiet quitting intention. Employees who frequently suffer from significant burnout and stress caused by toxic workplace environment are more likely to quiet quit. However, the result of this research also proves that the toxic workplace environment only possesses a direct effect on Generation Z workers' quiet quitting intention and not their level of job burnout (H2B and H2C rejected). This is inconsistent with the findings and the suggestions from the study. This can be the results of difference characteristics of Generation Z workers to other generations and unique cultural, social norm and workplace perception in Vietnam.

Next, the result also confirms that affective organizational commitment holds a significantly negative influence on employees' level of burnout and quiet quitting intention. This result is similar to the findings of the study which has suggested that job burnout and affective commitment are closely correlated and that this affective commitment between employees and their organizations can be a form of protection against job burnout and quiet quitting intention, consisting with the result of H3A and H3B. The findings suggest that perceived organizational support has a negative effect on both job burnout and quiet quitting intention (H4A and H4B). Perceived organizational support was also proved to have the second strongest relationship with both job burnout and quiet quitting intention. This result is similar to the findings which suggested that those who experience low level of support from their organization suffer from job burnout and are more likely to quiet quit. In addition, this study outcome shows that job burnout mediates the relationship between work-life balance, affective organizational commitment, perceived organizational support and quiet quitting intention (H1C, H3C and H4C).

Ultimately, the outcome of this study suggests that when Generation Z employees possess work-life balance, organizational commitment, and receive support, the likelihood that they will experience job burnout is reduced. On that matter, organizations need to take proactive steps to form a supportive workplace environment, ensure work-life balance in order to minimize job burnout and ultimately lower the chance of engaging in quiet quitting among Generation Z employees. First, organizations can reduce employee stress and improve engagement by offering flexible work hours, remote work options, and setting clear boundaries between work and personal time. Helping employees maintain a work-life balance keeps them energized and productive, reducing the risk of burnout and the chance of engaging in quiet quitting. Next, businesses need to create a supportive environment that encourages employees to be open, non-judgmental, share, and stay engaged. Managers should regularly recognize and celebrate employee accomplishments, provide constructive feedback, create opportunities for professional development, and provide resources such as mentoring, training, and career development programs can help employees feel valued and motivated. Businesses should foster an inclusive, respectful environment by implementing and enforcing clear policies on conduct, bullying, and harassment. Moreover, organizations should encourage open communication and ensure that management acts quickly to resolve issues, reinforcing a culture of safety and respect. In addition, businesses should regularly assess and adjust workloads, allow employees to take appropriate breaks, and manage tasks more effectively. Open lines of communication about workload concerns can empower employees to discuss and resolve issues without fear of judgment. Additionally, building a strong emotional connection between employees and the organization can increase their commitment and engagement. Employers can strengthen this bond by linking organizational goals to employees' personal values and involving them in decision-making processes. Finally, businesses also need to have a clear strategic direction, offer training courses that enhance employees' capabilities to serve the organization, and have clear career paths that demonstrate the organization's commitment to their development, thereby promoting engagement and reducing turnover.

On the other side, when Generation Z workers fall into a state of quiet quitting, there are several important steps they can take to re-engage and improve their work experience. First, they should re-evaluate their work-life balance, as poor balance is a major factor in disengagement. Setting boundaries between work and personal time or asking for flexible arrangements can help reduce stress. Next, they need to communicate openly with management, such as expressing support needs, asking for recognition, and suggesting opportunities for growth. Regular feedback and dialogue between both parties will promote better collaboration. Third, toxic work environments, both

physically and mentally, need to be avoided. Generation Z needs to speak up when they find a work culture that is negatively affecting their health, and workers should raise concerns with Human resource department or higher management. If no improvement occurs, they may need to reassess their fit with the organization. Additionally, building emotional commitment by aligning personal values with the organization's mission and fostering strong relationships can help drive engagement. To optimize their success, they need to prioritize tasks by urgency and importance, take frequent breaks, and communicate about their workload to help manage burnout. Finally, pursuing professional development through training and new challenges will increase purpose and engagement at work.

Conclusion

This study contributes meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge on quiet quitting, specifically focusing on Generation Z workers in Vietnam—a demographic and context previously underexplored in academic research. By providing empirical data within a nuanced socio-cultural and economic setting, this study addresses a significant research gap in understanding quiet quitting through a quantitative lens. The findings offer key insights into the factors driving quiet quitting, including work-life balance, toxic workplace environments, perceived organizational support, and job burnout. These results not only confirm the critical influence of these factors but also highlight their interconnectedness in shaping disengagement behaviours. In doing so, the study provides actionable, evidence-based recommendations for organizations seeking to mitigate the risk of quiet quitting, offering strategies to foster greater employee engagement and well-being. By focusing on Generation Z—a cohort that approaches work with distinct values shaped by the digital age, evolving workplace norms, and post-pandemic dynamics—this research illuminates the unique expectations and challenges faced by this generation in the Vietnamese workforce. Their strong emphasis on mental well-being, work-life balance, and organizational support calls for businesses to adapt management practices that align with these priorities in order to sustain productivity and commitment.

The study marks a significant advancement in the research on quiet quitting, particularly in quantifying the factors influencing this behaviour and providing valuable insights into quiet quitting among Generation Z in Vietnam. However, further research is needed. Future studies could explore quiet quitting across different cultures to identify unique societal influences, conduct longitudinal research to track changes over time, and investigate the impact of remote and hybrid work environments. Additionally, sector-specific studies and analysis of digital tools and generational comparisons will enrich the understanding of work engagement. This research offers a foundational framework for organizations and researchers to navigate the complexities of quiet quitting in today's evolving workforce, with a particular focus on Generation Z in Vietnam. By continuing to explore this phenomenon, both academics and practitioners can develop more targeted interventions to promote an engaged and proactive workforce, creating greater value for both Generation Z and businesses.

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