

Quiet Quitting Phenomenon among Gen Z: The Influence of Toxic Workplace Environment on Quiet Quitting Moderated by Organizational Commitment

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ABSTRAK

This research aims to investigate the influence of a toxic work environment and its impact on the quiet quitting phenomenon among Generation Z. The quiet quitting phenomenon refers to employee dissatisfaction that is not expressed openly, but leads to a decrease in engagement with work and the organization. This research focuses on the influence of a toxic work environment on the occurrence of quiet quitting by considering the moderating role of organizational commitment. This research method used a quantitative approach. Sampling used purposive sampling technique. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire survey. The data was then analyzed using the Smart PLS statistical method. The practical implications of this research are expected to help organizations identify factors that influence employee engagement and design strategies to prevent quiet quitting in the work environment. The research results show that there is an influence of the toxic workplace environment on quiet quitting, organizational commitment has a good effect on quiet quitting and organizational commitment does not moderate the relationship between the toxic workplace environment and quiet quitting.

Keywords: *Quiet Quitting, Toxic Workplace Environment, Gen Z, Organizational Commitment*

1. Introduction

The role of the work environment in shaping employee well-being and performance becomes very important in increasingly complex and dynamic work. A healthy work environment can foster relationships between employees and create physical and psychological well-being, thereby motivating them to contribute optimally (S. Rasool & Siddiqi, 2018). However, in some situations, an adverse work environment also has a negative impact on employees and the organization. A detrimental environment (toxic environment) can be discrimination, harassment, social pressure, ineffective communication (S. F. Rasool et al., 2021).

One of the phenomena that appears in a toxic work environment is "quiet quitting" (Anand et al., 2023). This phenomenon refers to the actions of employees who exert minimal effort and reduce responsibility for their work (Öztürk et al., 2023). Quiet quitting is a mindset where employees deliberately limit their work activities only to their job description, meet the expectations that have been set but do not exceed these expectations, never offer themselves to do additional tasks, and work solely to maintain their employment status. them today while prioritizing personal well-being

over organizational goals. Employees engage in quiet quitting due to poor extrinsic motivation, excessive fatigue, and dissatisfaction with their boss or organization. Quiet quitting can have serious impacts on individual performance, productivity, and organizational climate (Serenko, 2023).

The quiet quitting phenomenon is not a phenomenon that just appears. Quiet quitting is the result of broader social, cultural and work environment changes. The Great Resignation that occurred after Covid-19 and the characteristics of Generation Z entering the business world have triggered quiet quitting. These two trigger factors illustrate how the work environment and work dynamics change, which in turn can influence individual responses to the company, such as quiet quitting. Several factors that can influence quiet quitting are work-life imbalance, toxic workplace culture, lack of career advancement opportunities and work overload (Öztürk et al., 2023).

Academics argue that quiet quitting (QQ) is similar to low engagement in work and lack of job satisfaction (Hamouche et al., 2023 ; Boy & Sürmeli, 2023). Because QQ is a relatively new concept (Formica & Sfodera, 2022 ; Detert, 2023), academics still need to comprehensively investigate the antecedents of quiet quitting (Anand et al., 2023). Research conducted (Suhendar et al., 2023) examine the reasons why employees of digital start ups in Indonesia prefer to do quiet quitting by linking several research variables. The results of this research indicate that increasing levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior can help reduce the level of quantitative overload experienced by employees. Therefore, companies need to focus on improving JS, building OC, and encouraging OCB to overcome the QQ phenomenon and improve employee performance and commitment.

Meanwhile, the research carried out (Anand et al., 2023) provides recommendations for conducting research by adding variables that can reduce the level of quiet quitting. Therefore, this research tries to test organizational commitment as a moderator. Through a deeper understanding of these interactions, organizations can take steps to prevent quiet quitting and develop strategies to create a healthy, productive, and supportive work environment. Thus, this research has significant relevance for the development of more effective human resource management practices in the future.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Exchange Theory

This research was conducted based on Social Exchange Theory, which emphasizes economic input and output from social behavior, and defines interpersonal communication as a phenomenon of social exchange (Liu & Deng, 2011). People are driven by self-interest to engage in interpersonal exchange and communication. Social Exchange Theory tries to explain that humans naturally tend to engage in social interactions with the hope of getting benefits or rewards from these interactions. This theory also describes interaction as a reciprocal exchange and states that the relationship will end if one party feels that they no longer benefit from the exchange. It focuses on the basic motivations behind social interactions and how humans seek benefits and satisfaction through interactions with others (Lu et al., 2023). Homans, 1958 suggests that exchange of benefits, or giving something of relative value to another person, underlies human behavior. In social life, humans tend to prefer behavior that provides the most benefits and is in line with personal interests.

2.2 Toxic Workplace Environment

Toxic Workplace Environment can be defined as an atmosphere in the workplace that is considered detrimental and evil for employees due to various pressures that arise from organizational and social interactions (S. F. Rasool et al., 2021). The Conservation of Resources theory also indicates that there are 3 factors that can create a toxic workplace environment which can result in a lack of employee performance and employee engagement. These 3 factors are:

- a) Workplace Harassment : Refers to threats and poor handling from co-workers and superiors.
- b) Workplace Bullying: Refers to mistreatment by a group of people or individuals in any situation, such as cyber bullying or harming colleagues and stakeholders in the workplace.
- c) Workplace Ostracism : Defined as loneliness at work experienced by employees due to colleagues, family, stakeholders and superiors

TWE tends to cause high absenteeism, depression, job burnout, and serious mental health problems such as work stress and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). An unhealthy work environment if ignored over a long period of time, without decisive action to address it, can have a negative impact on employee well-being and overall company performance. (Alsereidi et al., 2022).

2.3 Quiet Quitting

Quiet Quitting is defined as a mindset in which employees deliberately limit all work activities to the formal or informal job description, meet but not exceed predetermined expectations, set limits, no longer do work voluntarily, ignore all additional tasks and work only to maintain their current employment status and prioritize their welfare (work life balance) rather than organizational goals (Serenko, 2023). The causes of the quiet quitting phenomenon according to (Öztürk et al., 2023) due to life imbalance, unhealthy environment, lack of career path, and excessive workload. Meanwhile, according to (Serenko, 2023) due to lack of extrinsic motivation, maintaining mental health and fighting for work life balance, holding grudges with managers.

2.4 Organizational Commitment

Commitment to the organization (OC) is the extent to which a person is ready and willing to invest loyally in the organization where he works. According to Kanter, 1968, OC is a person's willingness to be dedicated and devoted to the organization.

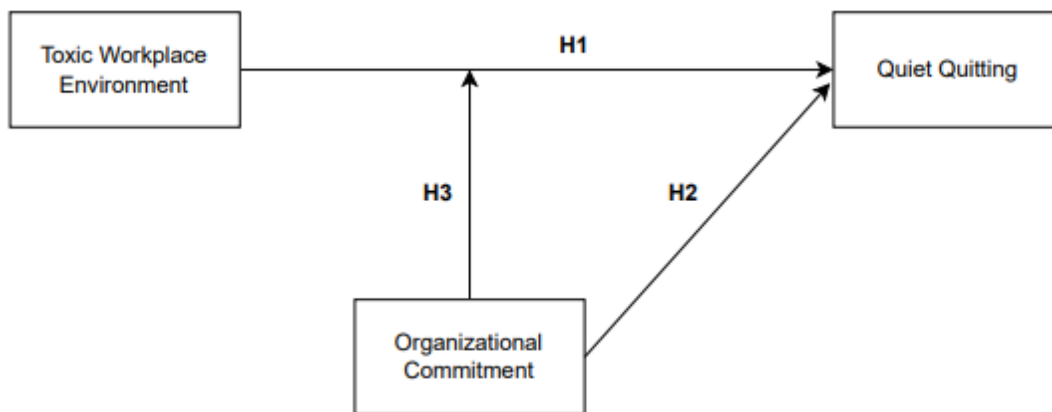
Many different approaches are used by researchers to understand and measure commitment to an organization. There are three common characteristics in these approaches identified by (Meyer & Allen, 1991) : affective commitment, commitment based on continuity (continuance commitment), and normative commitment. Commitment to the organization (OC) refers to individuals who remain in an organization because of desire (affective), need (continuance), or a sense of obligation (normative). The OC concept can create a pleasant organizational atmosphere, increase employee morale, encourage staff, and increase productivity (Salami, 2008). OC is considered an important variable in understanding employee attitudes, behavior, and performance in the workplace (Devece et al., 2016; Shaw et al., 2003).

Commitment to the organization was previously discussed as a factor that influences employees' decisions to stay or leave an organization during organizational uncertainty, such as during the Covid-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic may have amplified the lack of OC among employees, but this trend is already becoming increasingly common especially among the younger workforce (Hervas-Oliver et al., 2015). Losing OC from employees can have a significant impact

on organizations in dynamic and frequently changing fields such as information technology and security.

Through a review of the basic theory and hypotheses proposed regarding the relationship between Toxic Workplace Environment, Quiet Quitting and Organizational Commitment, the author proposes the following conceptual research model:

Figure 1 Research Model



Based on the research model in Figure 1, the following research hypothesis can be formulated:

H1: Toxic Workplace Environment is positively related to quiet quitting

H2: Organizational Commitment is positively related to quiet quitting

H3: Organizational Commitment moderates the relationship between Toxic Workplace Environment and quiet quitting

3. Research Methodology

The type of research used in this research is a quantitative research method. This research was conducted on Gen Z employees (1996-2012) who had worked for at least 1 year. In taking samples using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling collects samples that meet the researcher's criteria or several considerations, namely 100 people. The questionnaire used in this research has a 5 Likert scale type, where scale 1 means strongly disagree and scale 5 means strongly agree. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires online via Google Forms to respondents.

4. Results

4.1. Respondent Profile

The respondents consisted of 44% men and 56% women. In addition, respondents consisted of 44% permanent employees, 44% contract employees, 4% interns, and 8% freelancers. Regarding the working period, 15% less than 6 months, 6-12 months 33% 6 to 12 months, 29% for 1 to 2 years, while 23% more than two years of working experience.

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The CFA test measures whether a construct is consistent with a latent variable. To provide in-depth analysis, we carefully refined our model by excluding indicators that did not meet validity requirements, thereby ensuring the precision and reliability of our findings. Figure 2 presents the results of PLS analysis of the relationships between variables. In addition, Table 2 shows the results of the validity test after eliminating invalid question indicators, namely OC 3, OC 4, OC 5, OC 8, OC 9, QQ 1, QQ 2, QQ 3, QQ4, TWE 1 and TWE 6.

Figure 2 SEM Analysis Results

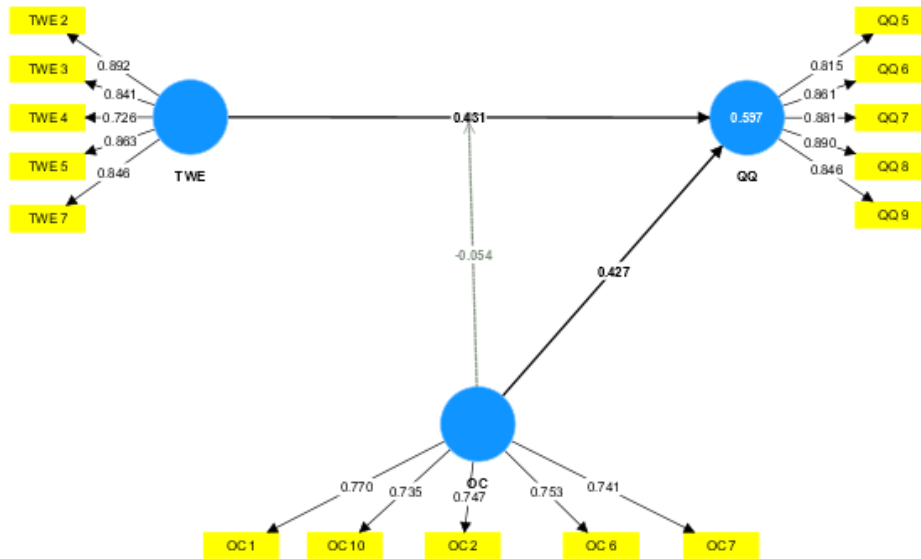


Table 1 Outer Loadings

Variable	OC	QQ	TWE	Result
OC 1	0.743			Valid
OC 10	0.706			Valid
OC 2	0.713			Valid
OC 6	0.754			Valid
OC 7	0.736			Valid
QQ 5		0.788		Valid
QQ 6		0.82		Valid
QQ 7		0.85		Valid
QQ 8		0.873		Valid
QQ 9		0.815		Valid
TWE 2			0.886	Valid
TWE 3			0.826	Valid
TWE 4			0.721	Valid
TWE 5			0.853	Valid
TWE 7			0.847	Valid

Research findings show that all indicators for each variable show validity. The Organizational Commitment variable shows the highest factor value, namely 0.754 on indicator 6. For the quiet quitting variable, the highest value is on indicator 8 with a value of 0.873. Meanwhile, for the toxic workplace environment variable, the highest value is in the second indicator with a value of 0.886.

4.3 Validity Test

Two approaches were used: convergent and discriminant. In assessing convergent validity, factor loadings were examined to ensure they exceeded the threshold of 0.708. The factor loading values in table 1 all met this criterion, indicating their validity. Moreover, Table 2 shows that all constructs included in the study model had Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.5. The OC construct had the lowest AVE value of 0.561, which still surpassed the threshold.

Table 2 AVE

	AVE
OC	0.561
QQ	0.738
TWE	0.698

4.4 Reliability Test

Validity and reliability criteria can also be seen from the reliability value of a construct and the AVE) of each construct. A good construct has a high reliability value if the value is above 0.70 and the AVE is above 0.50. The following are the results of composite reliability and AVE testing for all variables :

Table 3 Composite Reability & Cronbach's Alpa

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)
OC	0.805	0.805	0.865
QQ	0.911	0.913	0.934
TWE	0.890	0.899	0.920

Based on table 3, it can be concluded that all constructs meet the reliable criteria. This is indicated by composite reliability values above 0.70 and average variance extracted (AVE) above 0.50. From the data above it can be concluded that the construct has good reliability values.

4.5 Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

Tests on the structural model are evaluated by paying attention to the percentage of variance explained, that is, looking at the value R^2 u for the dependent latent variable using the predictive relevance value (Q^2). Quantity Q^2 with range $0 < Q^2 < 1$, The closer the value to 1, the better the model. Likewise, if it is below 0 (zero), it shows that the model lacks predictive relevance. To assess a model with PLS output, start by looking at the R-Square of each latent variable. Change in R-Square value which is a goodness-fit-model test. Used to assess the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable whether it has a substantive influence. The following is the coefficient of determination (R^2) of the endogenous variable which is seen in the table below:

Table 4 The R Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
QQ	0.597	0.585

Based on the value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) presented in table 4, the value of Q^2 can be determined using the following calculation:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Q^2 &= 1 - (1 - R_1^2) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0,597^2) \\
 &= 1 - (1 - 0.356) \\
 &= 0.644 \text{ (64.4\%)}
 \end{aligned}$$

Based on the calculation results, it is known that the predictive relevance value (Q^2) = 0.644 or 64.4%. This means that the accuracy or correctness of this research model can explain the diversity of toxic workplace environment variables, quiet quitting and organizational commitment of 64.4%. The remaining 35.6% is explained by other variables not included in this research model. This model can be used for hypothesis testing, meaning that the Q^2 obtained can be said to be a model that is formed and has good model accuracy because the value obtained is above 60%. This shows that the model in this research is said to have good predictive value and is suitable for use in testing hypotheses.

4.6 Model Fit

SRMR is Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. In Yamin (2022), this value is a measure of model fit, namely the difference between the data correlation matrix and the model estimated correlation matrix. In Hair et al (2021), SRMR values below 0.08 indicate a fit model. However, in Karin Schmelleh et al (2003), SRMR values between 0.08-0.10 indicate an acceptable fit model. The model estimation result is 0.10, which means that the model has an acceptable fit. Empirical data can explain the influence between variables in the model

Table 5 Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.098	0.1

4.7 Hypothesis Testing

SmartPLS 4.0 was used to test the hypothesis using bootstrapping as a statistical method. This approach makes it possible to assess the direction and significance of latent variable relationships. The details are presented in Table 6

Table 6 Path Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ((O/STDEV))	P values
OC -> QQ	-0.427	0.43	0.152	2.807	0.005
TWE -> QQ	0.431	0.437	0.177	2.441	0.015
OC x TWE -> QQ	-0.054	-0.056	0.057	0.953	0.341

First Hypothesis Testing (H1). The path coefficient value is 0.431 with a significant value of $0.015 < 0.05$ or below 5% which is shown by the t-statistic value of 2.441, so it can be concluded that the positive path coefficient value indicates that an unhealthy environment (toxic workplace environment) has a significant positive effect on quiet quitting behavior. . Based on the test results, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is accepted.

Second Hypothesis Testing (H2). The path coefficient value is -0.427 with a significant value of $0.015 < 0.05$ or below 5% which is indicated by a t-statistic value of 2.441, so it can be concluded that a positive path coefficient value indicates that an unhealthy environment (toxic workplace environment) has a significant negative effect on quiet behavior. quitting. Based on the test results, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is accepted. Third Hypothesis Testing (H3). The path coefficient value is -0.054 with a significance value of $0.341 > 0.05$ or above 5% which is indicated by a t-statistic value of 0.953, so it can be concluded that the negative path coefficient value indicates that organizational commitment has an insignificant influence in reducing a toxic workplace environment which can weaken the desire employees to engage in quiet quitting behavior. Based on the test results, it can be concluded that the third hypothesis is rejected.

5. Discussion

The investigation confirmed the statement of hypothesis 1 (H1), indicating a real positive relationship between TWE and QQ among employees. This reflects previous research which defines a negative relationship between these two variables. Employees who are in an unhealthy work environment or toxic workplace environment can encourage them to do quiet quitting. Employees gradually start lowering their levels of engagement, motivation and productivity at work without announcing or looking for a new job. Through QQ, employees can keep their jobs and focus their efforts on things they find more meaningful (Inc, 2022; Marples, 2022).

For example, McKinsey (2022) found that workers in the 25–45 year age group were more ready to dive into the world of entrepreneurship and innovative forms of work, while workers in the 18–24 year age group were more likely to value autonomy and independence. meaningful work. As employees may reprioritize their efforts based on their values, they may seek more autonomy and/or remote positions to have greater independence and time to spend with family or work on side projects. Likewise, employees may lose interest and dedication to their organization if they do not believe their work has value or meaning (Detert, 2023).

The second hypothesis (H2) revealed a striking inverse relationship between OC and QQ, indicating that employees who have stronger relationships with their organizations are less likely to display QQ behavior. These results are in line with previous research by (Wang et al., 2022), who also noted a negative relationship between OC and QQ. Employees who feel more emotionally, mentally, and morally connected or committed to their organization have a stronger incentive to continue contributing and performing well, even in situations that may be difficult or toxic. They tend to feel that their work has meaning, their self-identification is linked to the organization, and they have intrinsic motivation to do their best.

The third hypothesis shows that (H3) is not significant or the hypothesis is rejected. This can happen because despite having high commitment, employees may not have the control or power to change or overcome the toxicity of the work environment. The situation is beyond their control.

In addition, a toxic work environment threatens the physical or mental well-being of employees, organizational commitment is not enough to encourage them to remain in the organization. Organizational commitment does not moderate the relationship between toxic workplace environment and quiet quitting, which can occur because 44% of respondents are permanent employees who may not be in a toxic environment and do not experience quiet quitting. These findings provide important insights for organizations to foster a positive work culture that encourages employee commitment and citizenship behavior and reduces the likelihood of QQ behavior.

6. Conclusion

Based on the research results above, it can be seen that there is an influence of the toxic workplace environment on quiet quitting, organizational commitment has the best effect on quiet quitting and organizational commitment does not moderate the relationship between the toxic workplace environment and quiet quitting.

The impact of this observation is far-reaching, especially in guiding human resource management strategies in generation z. This underscores the essence of cultivating an enriching work culture, where employees are provided with a variety of development opportunities, recognized for their contributions, and actively encouraged to engage, strengthening organizational commitment. At the same time, these companies must ensure the competitiveness of their benefits packages, maintain transparency around compensation, offer performance-related bonuses, and align salaries with market standards to increase employee commitment. Additionally, to mitigate QQ behavior, it is important for these companies to establish clear and concise policies, expand necessary resources, and encourage a healthy work-life balance. Although our study significantly enriches the existing literature on TWE, OC, and QQ, we acknowledge its limitations, primarily stemming from the limited and homogeneous sample size. Therefore, we suggest that future research seeks to include a broader and more diverse sample, thereby enabling the exploration of these variables across different contexts and industries, potentially yielding universal findings, beyond the field of start-ups and digital industries in Indonesia. Important contribution to the domain of organizational behavior studies.

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