

Quiet Quitters: The importance of work-life balance*Shatakshi**PGDM Student,**International School of Management Excellence, Bangalore**Prof. Shyam S Prasad**Professor**International School of Management Excellence, Bangalore*

Abstract

‘Quiet Quitting’ has become popular recently. This phenomenon is quite common with increased load and loss of work-life balance. The employees stick to their job just to keep their earnings and are not fully emotionally or intellectually engaged. This is a serious problem that needs to be understood and tackled. This write-up discusses this act by reviewing the literature on the subject. The authors have also identified some remedies.

Keywords: Work-Life Balance, work pressure, quiet quitters, disengagement, work load

Introduction

A Nashville-based corporate recruiter, Bryan Creely, first used "Quiet Quitting" on March 04, 2022 (PEARCESTAFF, 2022). "Quiet Quitting" has become the latest corporate buzzword, but this term is not new. Quiet quitting refers to remaining in one's job by only doing the least amount of work required. As a result, it is a misnomer because the employee continues in their job and continues to be paid (Daugherty, 2022). Quiet quitters "make up at least 50% of the U.S. workforce—probably more," according to a June 2022 Gallup study of adults 18 and older. The rate is especially high among employees under 35 (Daugherty). In China, a new generation of young employees is rebelling against the idea of lengthy, difficult workdays, with the idea of "lying flat" acquiring enormous popularity in 2021 (Ally Foster, 2022). China must emphasise helping people "lying flat" and motivating them to fight as it tackles the challenge of transitioning development (Ally Foster). This paper starts with a literature review, followed by an Analysis of the information gathered, a section on discussion and ends with conclusions.

Literature review

Quiet quitting

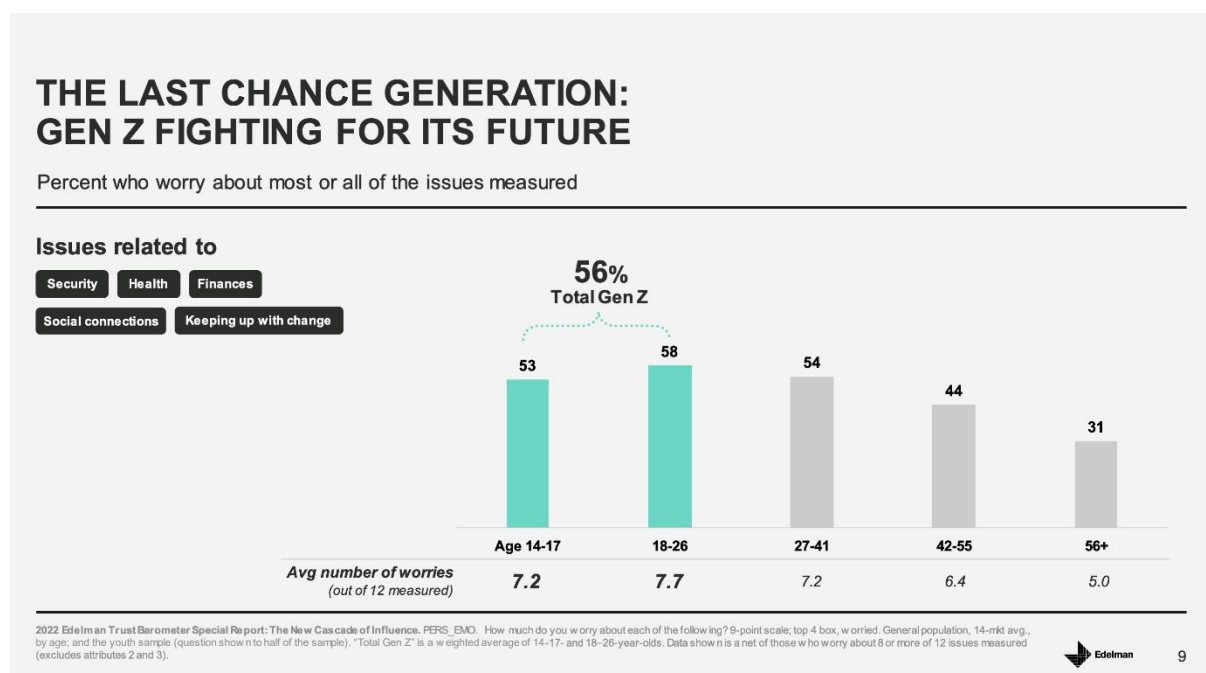
At first glance, "Quiet Quitting" and resignation resembles to be the same, but that is not true and, at the same time, may not seem problematic because employees are not disengaging from the core task (Bolino, 2022). In an HBR review, Professors Anthony C. Klotz and Mark C. Bolino noted that quiet quitters continue in their job by completing their minimum required work. Generally, they do not come early to work, stay late, attend only the mandatory meetings, and are not emotionally or intellectually engaged.

Quiet quitting is different from quitting one's job. It refers to continuing work by maintaining a work-life balance by doing only mandatory requirements (Masterson, 2022). Zaid Khan, a 24-year-old software engineer and musician in New York whose 'silent resigning' video went popular on TikTok, says that while one is still doing one's job, one is no longer adhering to the hustle culture attitude that says work needs to be one's life (Masterson).

The pandemic has changed people's opinions on work-life balance across generations. One out of every five workers worldwide intends to leave their current position in 2022, according to PwC's "Global Workforce - Hopes and Fears" poll. Even if all generations have reviewed their work-life balance, Gen Z holds dramatically different opinions from all earlier generations regarding careers and what constitutes success in life and the workplace (CALLAHAN, 2022).

In the "2022 Gen Z and Millennial" poll conducted by Deloitte Global, it was discovered that these generations are more than ever calling for balance and change. The study found that respondents' top priorities when selecting employment were a decent work-life balance and possibilities for professional growth. It also revealed that 44% of Gen Z have quit their jobs because of workload stress and that 45% feel burned out at work (CALLAHAN).

According to Joe Galvin, chief research officer of Vistage, a CEO coaching and peer advising company, the generational influences that were put on hold during the two years of COVID have returned and have accelerated (CALLAHAN, 2022). According to Khan, "Gen Z is less frightened to stand up and be vocal about their work-life balance." They realise their excessive work does not produce the same positive results for them as it did for earlier generations (CALLAHAN). By 2030, Gen Z workers will make up 30% of the labour force, and because of their influence in the workplace, they may be able to use quiet resignation to avoid burnout and maintain a healthy work-life balance (CALLAHAN).



Reasons for quiet quitting

People become quiet quitters for less than expected salary, tremendous workload, burnout and lack of growth potential. Subsequently, these employees leave their job looking for greener pastures. In the year 2021, seven out of ten workers reported having a burnout, according to Asana's 2022 Anatomy of Work report. According to the report, overworked people disengage themselves from work, commit more mistakes, have low morale and quit their job (Hetler, 2022).

According to Fortune experts, the emotional distance that results from employees working from home with their employers encourages disengagement in the workplace. Others feel that quiet resigning is simply a new name for a long-standing problem and that younger generations are more at ease discussing awkward subjects like compensation, crappy supervisors, or how work affects their well-being (London, 2022). Some people quietly leave their positions because their employment is not mentally challenging or because they do not like their occupations. In contrast, some people drive themselves to exhaustion by toiling away in an office for twelve hours a day for years (London). The above study also adds that employees who had the chance to work remotely during the epidemic have come to appreciate the benefits of a work-life balance and are eager to develop a sense of self distinct from excessive work.

There are differing views on how to handle work pressure. Some people believe that quietly retiring is the only way to deal with the pressure of being a knowledge worker, while others see it as a sin of epic proportions (London, 2022). Although work ethic plays a significant role in the debate, those opposed to silent quitting perceive the issue from a broader perspective. Others contend that working hard requires almost as much energy as trying to avoid work and that silent leaving is difficult (London).

Kevin O'Leary, a Shark Tank legend, once claimed that quietly quitting makes one a "failure," someone who enjoys being lazy and holding one's company back. Nothing is worse in the hustle or grind culture than a person who is not giving their best to advance their profession.

We can now infer that factors such as salary, recognition, work life balance, work culture, workload, and peers play a vital role in an employee quitting a job. However, these are not the only reasons; an organisation's employer contributes equally to the rise in the number of quiet quitters in an organisation. Even if an employee faces workload and burnout and has the support of their manager, there is probably less chance of an employee quitting.

Analysis

HBR data on 2,801 managers from 2020 shows that each boss received an average of five direct reports' ratings. Compared to the most effective leaders, the least effective managers have three to four times as many employees who leave their jobs quietly. Only 20% of the direct reports to these supervisors were willing to work harder, and 14% of them covertly quit. However, 62% of the direct reports of those judged to be the best at managing relationships and results wanted to put in more effort, and only 3% were surreptitiously quitting.

Trust is the most essential and critical factor if one is confident in one's leadership abilities. HBR says that when more than 113,000 data are analysed to identify the top behaviour of leaders that supports balancing results with their concern for team members, trust comes out on top. Direct reports who thought their management cared about them and was concerned about their welfare also respected their manager.

HBR research has linked trust with three factors:

Firstly, look forward to connecting and enjoying talking to them. The second factor in building trust is consistency. Leaders must be candid and follow their commitments thoroughly. Expertise is the third component that fosters trust. One should ponder if one is good at what one does. Is one outdated in any particular areas in one's line of work? Do others respect one's thoughts and advice? Only experts can provide clarity, a strategy, and unequivocal insight to boost trust.

Discussion

Characteristics of quiet quitters

Do not judge a book by its cover! The profile of every silent quitter appears to be the same at first glance. However, employers must apply caution when evaluating the motivations of quiet quitters (Bryan Robinson, 2022; Galvin, 2022). A closer examination reveals several reasons that may cause workers to lose interest and perform below standard. A frustrated employee passed over for a promotion or pay increase may act passive-aggressively, withholding information and dragging their feet out of anger (Bryan Robinson, 2022). The Vistage Worldwide Chief Research Officer, Joe Galvin, referred to quiet quitters as "those who attended meetings often but did nothing." In the hybrid or remote work model, quiet resignation is made easier because it is easier to disguise. Quiet quitters are just meeting the barest performance standards (Bryan Robinson, 2022).

Galvin outlined the following six signs that a quiet quitter may be present:

1. A continuous lack of engagement.
2. Adherence to a minimal set of performance standards only.
3. Isolation from other team members.
4. Avoiding any unnecessary interactions, chores, or activities.
5. Attending meetings but without contributing or acting.
6. Co-workers claim that as a result of having to pick up the slack, their workload has suddenly increased.

There are a few more causes for quiet quitting:

- People desire for greater work-life balance
- Lack of refreshment and more of burnout

- Improper management and work culture
- Lack of support when working remotely

Importance of identifying quiet quitter

The trend of quiet quitting affects not only the performance of an organisation but also their co-workers and employer. From the above discussion, staff disengagement is one of the forms of quiet quitting, and this is a severe issue.

It may signify that something is seriously wrong with a company's culture if its employees only agree to do what is required by contract. Employees who are not totally committed to their jobs or unwilling to go beyond for their employers may experience several negative consequences, such as disengagement and dissatisfaction.

The primary outcomes of silent quitting are disengagement and unhappiness. The employee who arrives on time cooperates but does not seem to get anything out of a job and is bored. This casual approach leads to the wastage of resources and loss of workplace happiness, which is crucial for the success of an organisation. As adults spend an average of 40 hours per week and roughly one-third of their lives in the workplace, they need to feel that their time at work is more than just a way to pay the bills (Robinson, 2022). Finding proper balance and fulfilment would make these professionals happier than refusing to stop thinking about work. Quitting subtly is settling (Robinson, 2022).

Lower workplace morale

One employee's low morale can impact the mood and performance of co-workers. Although silent leaving is frequently a sign of a broken system, mass demotivation is not always the fault of a single person. However, attitude is contagious, and an angry or disinterested employee can negatively affect their co-workers, mainly if sympathetic people surround them. Whenever feasible, most people prefer to work with passionate, content teammates. However, one unhappy team member can impact the perspectives and experiences of the rest of the team.

Decreased output

One of the most prominent outcomes of quiet quitting is decreased output. Employees fulfil the basic job requirements but are unwilling to put on extra effort. Productivity, Creativity and collaboration suffer when dexterous employees check out from an organisation. When employee is going through the motions, they do not contribute to office camaraderie, discussions, brainstorming sessions, and culture. Then, the whole organisation faces the impact this individual could bring to the table.

Inter team conflict

It occurs when extra work falls on team members because of high turnover or attrition. Quiet quitters sometimes emphasise their interests over the team, which might irritate employees who value cooperation and the company's objective. Teams get divided into parts as per their attitude towards work. Other team members might feel separated or abandoned. When conflicts occur in the organisation, it increases the workload. These circumstances result in passive aggression or open conflict. Both outcomes are undesirable since teamwork requires dependability and trust. Every employee should have a realistic workload and be able to rely on co-workers for the smooth functioning of an operation.

Solutions for manager

The very first task that a manager should do is to identify the difference between workers who are disengaged and not giving their best and those who are engaged and giving their all. Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman, leadership development consultants, in a Harvard Business Review article from August 2022, encouraged managers to start by analysing their own behaviour. Ask oneself, "Is this a problem with my direct reports, or is this a problem with me and my leadership abilities?" (Folkman, 2022).

Conclusion

This paper focuses on presenting quiet quitting and its consequences. For an employer, it is essential to know a quiet quitter's working tendency to maintain an organisation's performance by keeping employee welfare under consideration.

Here are a few of the most effective strategies organisations can implement in order to boost employee engagement:

- Employers can foster employee engagement through effective communication, offering rewards, and discussing career advancement.
- Ensure greater work-life balance.
- Job rotation to avoid Burnout and job dissatisfaction.
- Good management system.
- An employer should be aware of their employee source of motivation.
- Equitable treatment by the management and
- Support when working remotely.
- Managers should also be well-trained and knowledgeable in their job.

Joe Galvin, Chief Research Officer at Vistage, concludes that it is acceptable for workers to continue producing at their current level of productivity when silent quitting is accepted as the norm. Because of this, he claimed, "managers must require performance control and accountability for hybrid/remote work, or quiet quitters would flourish in the firm." At Vistage, we provide a learning and development (L&D) program to retrain managers to comprehend, hire, and retain the modern worker. Employers must rethink their approaches to serve better the Millennial and Gen Z workers, who will soon be taking over the workforce (Galvin, 2022).

Though quiet quitting is not a new phenomenon, organisations cannot ignore it because the working tendency of an employee plays a vital role in the organisation's performance.

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