

Quiet-Quitting-Related Withdrawal among Generation Z Employees in Batam: What Really Matters?

Rifa Mulyani^{1*}, Mutia Ulfah^{2*}

*Applied Business Administration Study Program, Business Management Department
Politeknik Negeri Batam, Ahmad Yani Street, Batam Centre, Batam 29461, Indonesia

E-mail: mutiaulfah@polibatam.ac.id

Abstract

Quiet quitting has become an emerging workplace concern among Generation Z employees, yet the mechanisms through which job resources and job demands relate to this withdrawal-related tendency remain insufficiently understood. Drawing on the Job Demands–Resources model, this study examines the relationships among pay satisfaction, role clarity, workload, emotional engagement, and quiet quitting-related withdrawal tendencies among Generation Z employees in Batam, Indonesia. Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey of 251 employees using purposive sampling and analyzed with partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Pay satisfaction and role clarity were positively associated with emotional engagement, whereas workload showed no significant relationship with emotional engagement. Emotional engagement was negatively associated with quiet quitting and indirectly mediated the relationships of pay satisfaction and role clarity with quiet quitting. Workload, however, was directly and positively associated with quiet quitting. These results reveal asymmetric motivational and demand-driven pathways in which job resources were associated with lower quiet quitting through emotional engagement, whereas workload operated independently of emotional engagement. The study refines the application of the JD-R model to quiet quitting by showing that resources and demands may shape quiet quitting through distinct psychological mechanisms.

Keywords: *Quiet Quitting; Generation Z; Job Demands-Resources Model; Emotional Engagement; Pay Satisfaction; Role Clarity; Workload*

1. Introduction

Quiet quitting has emerged as an increasingly important workplace phenomenon, reflecting changes in how employees define commitment, discretionary effort, and the boundaries of formal employment. Unlike voluntary turnover, quiet quitting does not involve employees physically leaving an organization. Instead, employees remain in their positions while limiting their contribution to formally prescribed responsibilities, reducing extra-role effort, and withdrawing part of their psychological or emotional investment in work (Gallup, 2022; Taufik et al., 2024). Employees may continue to meet basic job requirements while becoming less willing to demonstrate initiative, accept additional responsibilities, or contribute beyond what is explicitly expected.

Although the term has gained widespread attention through public and professional discourse, quiet quitting is related to established organizational behavior concepts, including psychological withdrawal, employee disengagement, reduced organizational citizenship behavior, and declining

organizational attachment. Psychological withdrawal occurs when employees remain physically present but become cognitively or emotionally detached from their roles, resulting in lower initiative and reduced voluntary contribution (Duran & Sanchez, 2021). Quiet quitting may therefore be understood as a contemporary withdrawal-related tendency rather than an entirely new organizational phenomenon.

Nevertheless, quiet quitting should not automatically be interpreted as laziness or weak work commitment. Employees may limit discretionary effort in response to perceived unfairness, excessive demands, unclear expectations, insufficient recognition, or deteriorating psychological attachment to their work. In some cases, declining additional uncompensated duties may also reflect boundary management rather than complete disengagement. Quiet quitting is therefore better understood as a sustained reduction in emotional involvement and discretionary contribution while employees continue to perform their formal responsibilities (Gallup, 2022; Taufik et al., 2024).

The phenomenon is particularly relevant among Generation Z employees, who constitute a growing

segment of the contemporary workforce. Generation Z employees have been described as placing substantial emphasis on organizational fairness, psychological well-being, work-life balance, meaningful work, and transparent employment expectations (Gallup, 2022; Twenge, 2017). When organizations fail to provide fair compensation, clear responsibilities, sufficient support, or sustainable working conditions, younger employees may respond through reduced emotional engagement, intention to leave, or minimum-effort work tendencies (Hayatul & Mega, 2024; Rahayu et al., 2025; Taufik et al., 2024). These responses should not be interpreted as evidence of inherently weaker commitment, but as possible reactions to perceived imbalances in the employment relationship.

The less visible nature of quiet quitting makes it an important organizational concern. Employees may remain at work and complete assigned tasks while their enthusiasm, initiative, emotional involvement, and voluntary contribution gradually decline. Employee engagement is associated with important organizational outcomes, including performance, retention, and employee well-being (Harter et al., 2002; Rich et al., 2010). Quiet quitting should therefore not be treated solely as an individual attitude problem, but as a workplace phenomenon associated with organizational conditions and employees' psychological responses to their work experiences.

Previous research has examined quiet quitting in relation to job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout, job stress, leadership, and turnover intention. Sitorus and Rachmawati (2024) examined engagement and job satisfaction as mediating variables in explaining quiet quitting, while Ramadhan and Tricahyadinata (2026) connected quiet quitting with job stress, burnout, and turnover intention. Zhong et al. (2025) investigated psychological mechanisms associated with quiet quitting intention, and Moisoglou et al. (2025) demonstrated that engaging leadership may reduce quiet quitting while strengthening work engagement. These studies indicate that quiet quitting is associated with multiple organizational and psychological factors rather than a single workplace condition.

However, the mechanisms linking specific job conditions to quiet quitting remain insufficiently explained. Existing studies frequently establish associations among satisfaction, engagement, burnout, leadership, and quiet quitting, but provide less explanation of how specific job resources are translated into lower withdrawal-related tendencies. In particular, it remains unclear whether resources such as satisfactory compensation and clearly defined roles relate directly to lower quiet quitting or whether their relationships operate through stronger emotional engagement. Similarly, the pathway through which workload relates to quiet quitting remains uncertain.

Excessive workload may weaken emotional engagement, but employees may also continue to value their work while restricting additional effort as a protective response to unsustainable demands.

The Job Demands-Resources model provides an appropriate framework for examining these mechanisms. The JD-R model explains employee well-being and work behavior through the roles of job resources and job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job resources are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that support goal attainment, reduce uncertainty, promote development, and stimulate motivation. Job demands are aspects of work that require sustained physical, cognitive, or emotional effort and may generate strain when they become excessive (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lee & Jo, 2023).

The JD-R model distinguishes between a motivational process and a demand-related impairment process. Through the motivational process, job resources strengthen engagement by enabling employees to achieve work goals, experience competence, and perceive their work as meaningful. Through the demand-related process, excessive demands consume employees' available energy and may encourage strain or withdrawal-related responses (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lee & Jo, 2023). This distinction is relevant to quiet quitting because employees may restrict discretionary effort either because available resources fail to generate sufficient engagement or because excessive demands make additional effort increasingly difficult to sustain.

In this study, pay satisfaction and role clarity are positioned as job resources, while workload is positioned as a job demand. Pay satisfaction reflects employees' evaluations of the fairness, adequacy, structure, and motivational significance of their compensation (Heneman & Schwab, 1985). Beyond its economic value, compensation may signal recognition and organizational appreciation, which can strengthen employees' emotional connection to their work. Role clarity reduces uncertainty by helping employees understand their tasks, responsibilities, procedures, performance expectations, and coordination boundaries. Clear roles may strengthen competence, confidence, and meaningful work experiences (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Manolache & Epuran, 2023; Syed Abu Bakar et al., 2021).

Workload, in contrast, reflects excessive task quantity, limited completion time, tight deadlines, simultaneous responsibilities, and task complexity. Such conditions require sustained effort and may encourage employees to restrict discretionary contribution when work demands become difficult to sustain (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Previous research has associated

workload with quiet quitting among Generation Z employees (Putri & Marwansyah, 2025), yet it remains unclear whether this relationship operates through reduced emotional engagement or through a more direct demand-related pathway.

Emotional engagement is proposed as the central psychological mechanism linking job resources to quiet quitting. It refers to employees' affective investment in their work, reflected in pride, enjoyment, enthusiasm, motivation, and personal meaning (Rich et al., 2010). Fair compensation and clearly defined roles may not automatically reduce quiet quitting merely because they exist as organizational arrangements. These resources become motivationally meaningful when employees experience them as recognition, guidance, competence, and connection. This reasoning is consistent with the JD-R motivational process, in which job resources strengthen engagement and engagement subsequently relates to more favorable work outcomes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lee & Jo, 2023).

Three theoretical gaps therefore remain. First, it is unclear whether workload relates to quiet quitting through reduced emotional engagement or through a more direct demand-related pathway. Second, limited research has examined emotional engagement as the specific psychological mechanism connecting pay satisfaction and role clarity with quiet quitting. Third, quiet quitting research has rarely examined whether job resources and job demands operate through asymmetric pathways within the same JD-R model. Addressing these gaps can clarify whether resources and demands are associated with quiet quitting through similar or differentiated psychological mechanisms.

Batam, Indonesia, provides a relevant empirical setting for investigating these relationships. As a major industrial and employment center, Batam encompasses manufacturing, logistics, electronics, shipbuilding, tourism, technology, food and beverage, retail, and service industries. These sectors employ substantial numbers of young workers and are frequently characterized by productivity demands, contractual employment arrangements, time-sensitive responsibilities, and heterogeneous role expectations. Batam is therefore treated as a relevant empirical context for examining the proposed relationships rather than as the sole source of the study's theoretical novelty.

Accordingly, this study examines the relationships among pay satisfaction, role clarity, workload, emotional engagement, and quiet quitting tendencies among Generation Z employees in Batam. Specifically, it investigates whether pay satisfaction and role clarity are positively associated with emotional engagement, whether workload is

negatively associated with emotional engagement and positively associated with quiet quitting, and whether emotional engagement mediates the relationships between these job conditions and quiet quitting.

This study makes three contributions. First, it refines the application of the JD-R model to quiet quitting by examining quiet quitting as a withdrawal-related tendency associated with job resources and job demands. Second, it positions emotional engagement as a psychological conversion mechanism through which pay satisfaction and role clarity may relate to lower quiet quitting. Third, it tests the possibility of asymmetric JD-R pathways, in which job resources operate through the motivational mechanism of emotional engagement, while workload may follow a more direct demand-related pathway. The study therefore moves beyond a purely contextual research gap and offers a theoretically differentiated explanation of quiet quitting among younger employees.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. JD-R Model and Quiet Quitting

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model explains employee well-being and work behavior by distinguishing between job resources and job demands. Job resources are physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that facilitate goal attainment, reduce uncertainty, support development, and stimulate motivation. Job demands, by contrast, require sustained physical, cognitive, or emotional effort and may produce strain when they exceed employees' available capacity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

The JD-R model proposes two conceptually distinct processes. In the motivational process, job resources strengthen engagement by enabling employees to achieve work goals, experience competence, and perceive their work as meaningful. In the demand-related process, excessive demands consume employees' energy and coping resources, increasing the likelihood of strain, detachment, or effort-reduction responses (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lee & Jo, 2023).

These processes provide a relevant framework for explaining quiet quitting, which refers to a withdrawal-related tendency in which employees remain formally employed but restrict their discretionary effort, initiative, or organizational involvement. Although quiet quitting differs from formal turnover, both may reflect employees' responses to unfavorable workplace conditions. Employees may reduce their involvement because available resources fail to sustain motivation or

because excessive demands make additional effort increasingly difficult to maintain (Gallup, 2022; Taufik et al., 2024).

Previous studies have associated quiet quitting with job satisfaction, engagement, burnout, job stress, leadership, and turnover intention (Moisoglou et al., 2025; Ramadhan & Tricahyadinata, 2026; Sitorus & Rachmawati, 2024; Zhong et al., 2025). However, it remains unclear whether job resources and job demands relate to quiet quitting through identical psychological mechanisms. The present study addresses this issue by positioning pay satisfaction and role clarity as job resources, workload as a job demand, and emotional engagement as a potential psychological mechanism linking workplace conditions with quiet-quitting tendencies.

2.2. Job Resources and Emotional Engagement

Emotional engagement refers to employees' affective investment in their work, reflected in pride, enjoyment, enthusiasm, motivation, and personal meaning (Rich et al., 2010). Within the JD-R motivational process, job resources are expected to strengthen emotional engagement by enabling employees to experience recognition, competence, certainty, and meaningful contribution.

Pay satisfaction reflects employees' evaluation of the fairness, adequacy, structure, and administration of their compensation (Heneman & Schwab, 1985). It may function as both an economic and symbolic job resource. Adequate compensation supports employees' material needs, while fair compensation communicates that their effort and contribution are recognized by the organization. Employees who perceive their compensation as proportionate and equitable may consequently experience stronger reciprocity, pride, and emotional investment in their work.

Previous evidence has associated pay satisfaction with stronger work engagement among Generation Z employees (Hayatul & Mega, 2024). Compensation may therefore become motivationally meaningful when employees interpret it not merely as contractual payment but as an indication of fairness and organizational appreciation. Accordingly the following hypothesis is proposed *H1: Pay satisfaction is positively associated with emotional engagement.*

Role clarity refers to employees' understanding of their duties, responsibilities, procedures, performance standards, priorities, and coordination boundaries. As a job resource, role clarity reduces the cognitive and emotional costs of interpreting ambiguous instructions, conflicting expectations, or unclear performance criteria. Clear roles enable employees to direct their attention toward task accomplishment and understand

how their contribution supports broader organizational objectives.

Role clarity may also strengthen competence and psychological security. Employees who understand what is expected of them are better able to evaluate their progress, perform confidently, and attach meaning to their work. Job-design theory similarly proposes that work characteristics influence employees' psychological experiences and motivation (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Empirical studies have also associated role and goal clarity with stronger engagement and favorable job attitudes (Manolache & Epuran, 2023; Syed Abu Bakar et al., 2021).

Role clarity is therefore expected to strengthen emotional engagement, particularly when expectations and authority boundaries are experienced as coherent rather than merely documented in formal job descriptions. Thus the following hypothesis is proposed *H2: Role clarity is positively associated with emotional engagement.*

2.3. Workload and Emotional Engagement

Workload refers to the quantity, intensity, complexity, and time pressure associated with employees' tasks. It may arise from excessive task volume, insufficient completion time, simultaneous assignments, tight deadlines, or cognitively demanding responsibilities. Within the JD-R model, workload constitutes a job demand because it requires sustained effort and may consume the resources employees need to remain emotionally involved in their work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Persistent workload may shift employees' attention from enjoyment, meaning, and enthusiasm toward task completion and coping. When employees repeatedly expend substantial energy merely to meet work requirements, fewer emotional resources may remain available for affective involvement. This reasoning suggests that excessive workload can weaken emotional engagement.

Nevertheless, workload does not invariably reduce engagement. Intensive tasks may be perceived as temporary, professionally meaningful, or consistent with occupational expectations. Workload is therefore most likely to undermine emotional engagement when employees experience it as excessive and difficult to sustain. In the present study, workload is operationalized through excessive task quantity, limited time, tight deadlines, and simultaneous responsibilities. Accordingly the following hypothesis is proposed *H3: Workload is negatively associated with emotional engagement.*

2.4. Emotional Engagement and Quiet Quitting

Emotionally engaged employees experience their work as personally meaningful and invest affective energy in performing their roles. Engagement has been associated with favorable outcomes such as stronger performance, retention, and employee well-being (Harter et al., 2002; Rich et al., 2010). Employees who feel proud of and enthusiastic about their work possess stronger psychological reasons to maintain their involvement.

Quiet quitting represents an opposing withdrawal-related tendency in which employees continue to fulfil formal responsibilities but become less willing to provide additional contribution or sustain their organizational involvement. Employees who experience limited pride, enthusiasm, or emotional attachment may perceive fewer internal reasons to contribute beyond minimum requirements.

Previous studies have identified engagement as an important mechanism associated with quiet quitting. Sitorus and Rachmawati (2024) showed that work engagement contributes to explaining quiet-quitting behavior, while Moisoglou et al. (2025) demonstrated that engaging leadership may reduce quiet quitting by strengthening engagement. Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed *H4: Emotional engagement is negatively associated with quiet quitting.*

2.5. The Mediating Role of Emotional Engagement

The JD-R motivational process proposes that job resources influence employee outcomes by first strengthening engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lee & Jo, 2023). Organizational resources may not automatically produce favorable behavior merely because they are formally available. Their behavioral relevance depends on how employees psychologically experience them.

Pay satisfaction may reduce quiet quitting when employees interpret compensation as fair recognition of their contribution. Such perceptions can strengthen pride, motivation, and emotional connection with work. However, employees may evaluate their compensation favorably without necessarily becoming emotionally invested in their roles. Pay satisfaction is therefore expected to relate to lower quiet quitting primarily when it generates stronger emotional engagement. Accordingly the following hypothesis is proposed *H5: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between pay satisfaction and quiet quitting.*

Role clarity may similarly reduce quiet quitting by strengthening employees' competence, confidence, and understanding of how their work contributes to organizational objectives. Nevertheless, employees

may clearly understand their duties while performing them without enthusiasm or emotional attachment. Role clarity is therefore expected to become relevant to quiet quitting when it creates a positive emotional experience of work. Thus the following hypothesis is proposed *H6: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between role clarity and quiet quitting.*

Workload may also relate to quiet quitting through emotional engagement. Excessive demands can consume the emotional resources required to sustain enthusiasm and enjoyment, potentially encouraging employees to restrict their involvement. From this perspective, workload may increase quiet quitting by first weakening emotional engagement.

However, employees may remain proud of and emotionally connected to their work while deciding that further discretionary effort is unsustainable. Workload may therefore produce either an engagement-mediated response or a more direct effort-limiting response. Testing the indirect pathway is consequently necessary to determine whether emotional disengagement explains the workload–quiet quitting relationship. Accordingly the following hypothesis is proposed *H7: Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between workload and quiet quitting.*

2.6. Direct Relationships with Quiet Quitting

In addition to their indirect relationships through emotional engagement, pay satisfaction, role clarity, and workload may relate directly to quiet quitting. Employees may adjust their contribution in response to workplace conditions even when those conditions do not substantially alter their emotional connection to work.

Employees evaluate the employment relationship partly by comparing their contributions with the rewards they receive. When compensation is perceived as inadequate or unfair, employees may restore a sense of balance by withholding effort that is not formally required. Conversely, satisfactory compensation may reduce employees' perceived need to limit their contribution. Therefore the following hypothesis is proposed *H8: Pay satisfaction is negatively associated with quiet quitting.*

Role clarity may directly reduce quiet quitting by limiting uncertainty about responsibilities, authority boundaries, priorities, and performance expectations. Employees facing unclear expectations may hesitate to undertake additional responsibilities because they cannot determine whether their effort is appropriate, valued, or aligned with organizational objectives. Clear roles may consequently support continued involvement even when emotional engagement remains unchanged. Thus the following hypothesis is

proposed *H9: Role clarity is negatively associated with quiet quitting.*

Excessive workload may directly encourage employees to prioritize mandatory duties and limit additional responsibilities as a means of conserving their remaining resources. This response does not necessarily indicate that employees no longer value their work. They may remain emotionally connected while concluding that discretionary effort is no longer sustainable. Previous research has similarly identified workload as an antecedent of quiet quitting among Generation Z employees (Putri & Marwansyah, 2025). Accordingly the following hypothesis is proposed *H10: Workload is positively associated with quiet quitting.*

2.7. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework positions pay satisfaction and role clarity as job resources, workload as a job demand, emotional engagement as the proposed psychological mechanism, and quiet quitting as the outcome. The model simultaneously evaluates direct and indirect relationships to determine whether job resources operate through a motivational pathway involving emotional engagement, while workload follows either an engagement-mediated or direct demand-driven pathway.

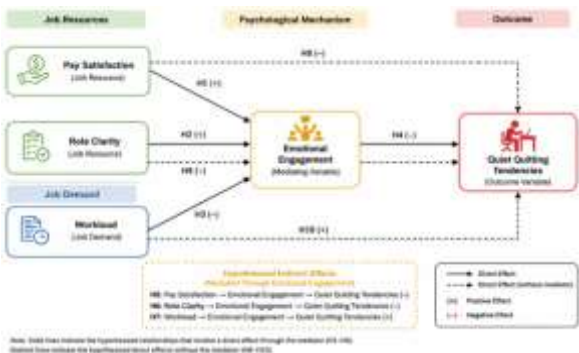


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The hypothesized relationships are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Hypotheses	
Hypothesis	Proposed relationship
H1	Pay satisfaction is positively associated with emotional engagement.
H2	Role clarity is positively associated with emotional engagement.
H3	Workload is negatively associated with emotional engagement.
H4	Emotional engagement is negatively associated with quiet quitting.
H5	Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between pay satisfaction and quiet quitting.
H6	Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between role clarity and quiet quitting.
H7	Emotional engagement mediates the relationship between workload and quiet quitting.

H8	Pay satisfaction is negatively associated with quiet quitting.
H9	Role clarity is negatively associated with quiet quitting.
H10	Workload is positively associated with quiet quitting.

3. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional research design to examine the relationships among pay satisfaction, role clarity, workload, emotional engagement, and quiet quitting tendencies among Generation Z employees in Batam, Indonesia. The quantitative approach was appropriate because the study sought to test theoretically specified relationships among multiple latent constructs derived from the Job Demands–Resources model.

Data were collected at a single point in time using a structured self-administered questionnaire. Accordingly, the estimated relationships represent associations among the constructs within the observed period and should not be interpreted as definitive evidence of temporal or causal relationships.

Partial least squares structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data. PLS-SEM was appropriate because the study incorporated multiple latent constructs, simultaneous direct and indirect relationships, and two endogenous constructs namely emotional engagement and quiet quitting. The study also adopted an explanatory-predictive orientation by examining the model’s explanatory power through R² and effect sizes and its out-of-sample predictive performance through PLSpredict and CVPAT.

3.2. Population and Sample

The target population consisted of Generation Z employees working in Batam, Indonesia. Respondents were members of Generation Z, were at least 18 years old at the time of data collection, were actively employed in Batam, and had completed at least 12 months of employment. The minimum employment-tenure requirement was applied to ensure that respondents had sufficient exposure to their compensation arrangements, assigned responsibilities, workload conditions, organizational expectations, and emotional experiences at work. Employees with very limited organizational tenure may not yet have developed sufficiently informed evaluations of these workplace conditions.

Purposive sampling was used because a complete sampling frame of Generation Z employees across industries in Batam was unavailable. The study also required respondents to satisfy specific age, location, employment, and tenure criteria. Purposive sampling therefore enabled the researchers to recruit participants

who possessed direct and relevant experience with the workplace conditions examined in the model. The study did not claim that the resulting sample statistically represented all Generation Z employees in Batam; rather, it was intended to provide theoretically relevant observations from eligible employees across diverse employment settings.

An a priori statistical power analysis was conducted using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009). The analysis was based on the most complex endogenous construct, quiet quitting, which had four predictors. Using the linear multiple regression: fixed model, R^2 deviation from zero procedure, with a medium effect size of $f^2 = 0.15$, a significance level of 0.05, statistical power of 0.95, and four predictors, the minimum required sample size was 129. The final sample of 251 respondents exceeded this minimum requirement.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected between October and December 2025 through an online questionnaire developed using Google Forms. The questionnaire link was distributed through alumni networks, professional contacts, employee WhatsApp groups, and workplace-related-social-media communities in Batam.

Before accessing the substantive questionnaire items, prospective respondents were presented with an introductory statement explaining the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the estimated completion time, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to discontinue participation at any stage. The questionnaire did not request directly identifying personal information. Respondents were required to indicate informed consent before proceeding to the eligibility-screening questions and the main questionnaire. Responses were screened for age eligibility, current employment in Batam, minimum employment tenure, completeness, and duplicate entries.

3.4. Measurement of Variables

The questionnaire measured five latent constructs namely, pay satisfaction, role clarity, workload, emotional engagement, and quiet quitting. The initial instrument consisted of 42 items:

- Pay satisfaction was initially measured using eight items adapted from Heneman and Schwab (1985).
- Role clarity was initially measured using eight items developed with reference to Hackman and Oldham (1976).
- Workload was measured using eight items developed with reference to the conceptualization of job demands in the JD-R literature (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

- Emotional engagement was initially measured using ten items adapted from Rich et al. (2010). The study focused on emotional engagement as a distinct affective mechanism rather than using a general engagement score combining physical, cognitive, and emotional dimensions.
- Quiet quitting was initially operationalized using eight items developed and contextually adapted based on the conceptual descriptions of Quiet quitting and withdrawal-related work behaviour provided by Duran and Sanchez (2021), Gallup (2022) and Taufik et al (2024)

The measurement items were adapted or contextually developed from the theoretical and empirical sources used in the study. The wording was adjusted to ensure its relevance to Generation Z employees working across different industries in Batam. The initial questionnaire items were examined for conceptual relevance, wording clarity, and suitability for Generation Z employees working in Batam. The questionnaire was reviewed by two academics with expertise in human resource management and quantitative research methodology. They assessed the relevance, clarity, and contextual suitability of the items. Several wording adjustments were subsequently made to reduce ambiguity and improve comprehension.

3.5. Common Method Bias Assessment

Because all variables were collected from the same respondents through a self-reported questionnaire at a single point in time, the study recognized the potential for common method bias. Procedural measures were used to reduce respondents' tendency to provide artificially consistent or socially desirable answers. Participation was voluntary, responses were anonymous, and respondents were informed that there were no right or wrong answers. The introductory statement emphasized that responses would remain confidential and would be used only for research purposes. The questionnaire also used direct and relatively concise wording to reduce ambiguity and evaluation apprehension.

In addition to these procedural measures, potential common method bias was statistically assessed using the full collinearity VIF procedure. Full-collinearity VIF values below 3.3 were interpreted as indicating that common method bias was unlikely to constitute a critical threat to the model estimates (Kock, 2015). Auxiliary structural models were estimated in which each latent construct was treated in turn as an endogenous variable and regressed on all remaining constructs. This procedure differed from the inner VIF assessment of the original structural model because it examined collinearity across all latent constructs rather

than only among the predictors specified in the hypothesized model.

3.6. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4 through two stages (Ringle et al., 2024). First, the reflective measurement model was assessed using outer loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability ρ_A and ρ_C , average variance extracted, HTMT, and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. Indicator deletion was determined based on outer loadings, reliability, convergent validity, cross-loading patterns, and theoretical relevance rather than statistical improvement alone. A sensitivity analysis was also performed to evaluate the effect of retaining versus removing QQ6.

Second, the structural model was assessed using inner VIF, R^2 , adjusted R^2 , f^2 , SRMR, and the comparison of PLS-SEM prediction errors with a linear model benchmark. Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, reporting standardized path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and 95% confidence intervals. Specific indirect effects were examined to evaluate the mediating role of emotional engagement. Mediation was classified by jointly considering the significance of the direct and indirect effects.

4. Results

4.1. Respondent Profile

A total of 251 eligible Generation Z employees working in Batam participated in the study. As shown in Table 3, the sample was predominantly female (69.32%), contract-employed (54.98%), and at an early stage of employment. Respondents represented diverse industries, with the largest proportions working in services, manufacturing, and technology or digital sectors. Because purposive sampling was used, the profile should not be interpreted as statistically representative of all Generation Z employees in Batam.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	77	30.68%
Female	174	69.32%
Employment Status		
Permanent employee	113	45.02%
Contract employee	138	54.98%
Industry Sector		
Manufacturing	50	19.92%
Technology/Digital	39	15.54%

Services	66	26.29%
Food and Beverage	35	13.94%
Retail	31	12.35%
Others	30	11.95%
Length of Employment		
12 months	126	50.20%
> 1 - 3 years	106	42.23%
More than 3 years	19	7.57%

Source: Author (2025)

4.2. Indicator Assessment and Deletion Decisions

The initial measurement model comprised 42 reflective indicators: eight each for pay satisfaction, role clarity, workload, and quiet quitting, and ten for emotional engagement. Initial assessment identified inadequate outer loadings for RC1–RC3, EG1, and QQ1–QQ6. These weak indicators contributed to AVE values below 0.50 for role clarity, emotional engagement, and quiet quitting. Indicators were removed based on their outer loadings, contribution to convergent validity, cross-loading patterns, and theoretical relevance rather than statistical improvement alone. The deletion decisions are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Indicator Deletion Decisions

Construct	Indicator	Initial Loading	Decision	Basis for Decision
Role Clarity	RC1	0.515	Deleted	Weak indicator contribution & initially inadequate AVE
	RC2	0.506	Deleted	
	RC3	0.486	Deleted	
Emotional Engagement	EG1	0.524	Deleted	Low loading and limited contribution to convergent validity
	QQ1	0.134	Deleted	Very low loading and weak shared variance with the latent construct
	QQ2	0.268	Deleted	
	QQ3	0.249	Deleted	
	QQ4	0.361	Deleted	
Quiet Quitting	QQ5	0.142	Deleted	Low loading & conceptual overlap with emotional engagement
	QQ6	0.386	Deleted	Low loading; retaining the item reduced reliability and convergent validity

The final model retained eight pay-satisfaction indicators, five role-clarity indicators, eight workload indicators, nine emotional-engagement indicators, and two quiet-quitting indicators. Several retained indicators had loadings between approximately 0.59

and 0.70 but were preserved because their constructs achieved acceptable composite reliability and AVE and the items contributed relevant conceptual content.

Table 4. Outer Loadings of the Final Measurement Model

Construct	Indicator	Outer loading
Workload	WL1	0.801
	WL2	0.797
	WL3	0.741
	WL4	0.778
	WL5	0.833
	WL6	0.794
	WL7	0.593
	WL8	0.711
Role Clarity	RC4	0.736
	RC5	0.786
	RC6	0.802
	RC7	0.780
	RC8	0.610
Emotional Engagement	EG2	0.681
	EG3	0.756
	EG4	0.744
	EG5	0.685
	EG6	0.649
	EG7	0.645
	EG8	0.678
	EG9	0.777
	EG10	0.787
Pay Satisfaction	PS1	0.741
	PS2	0.610
	PS3	0.664
	PS4	0.691
	PS5	0.733
	PS6	0.760
	PS7	0.727
	PS8	0.747
Quiet Quitting	QQ7	0.920
	QQ8	0.894

The final indicators of quiet quitting had strong loadings of 0.920 and 0.894. However, because both indicators primarily represented reduced long-term organizational interest, the construct was interpreted as reflecting quiet quitting tendencies rather than the full multidimensional domain of minimum-effort behavior. This issue is addressed further in the study limitations.

4.3. Reliability and Convergent Validity

The final measurement model met the required standards for internal consistency and convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeded the recommended minimum levels, and all AVE values were above 0.50. The quiet-quitting construct demonstrated the highest AVE after QQ6 was removed. The final indicator loadings and construct-level measurement statistics are reported in Table 5.

Table 5. Final Measurement Model Assessment

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	ρ_A	ρ_C	AVE
Workload	0.894	0.910	0.915	0.576
Role Clarity	0.799	0.812	0.862	0.557
Emotional Engagement	0.879	0.885	0.903	0.509
Pay Satisfaction	0.860	0.870	0.891	0.505

Quiet Quitting	0.786	0.796	0.903	0.823
----------------	-------	-------	-------	-------

4.4. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait–monotrait ratio and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. HTMT was used as the principal assessment because it directly evaluates the empirical distinctiveness of latent constructs (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 6. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

Construct pair	HTMT
Workload – Role Clarity	0.268
Workload – Emotional Engagement	0.167
Workload – Pay Satisfaction	0.132
Workload – Quiet Quitting	0.378
Role Clarity – Emotional Engagement	0.725
Role Clarity – Pay Satisfaction	0.680
Role Clarity – Quiet Quitting	0.433
Emotional Engagement – Pay Satisfaction	0.659
Emotional Engagement – Quiet Quitting	0.505
Pay Satisfaction – Quiet Quitting	0.418

All HTMT values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85. The highest value was 0.725 between role clarity and emotional engagement. Although these two constructs were relatively more closely related than the remaining pairs, the value remained sufficiently below the threshold, indicating that they captured empirically distinguishable concepts.

Table 7. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	WL	RC	EG	PS	QQ
Workload	0.759				
Role Clarity	–0.241	0.746			
Emotional Engagement	–0.138	0.616	0.713		
Pay Satisfaction	–0.101	0.571	0.591	0.711	
Quiet Quitting	0.328	–0.355	–0.425	–0.350	0.907

The square root of the AVE for each construct, shown on the diagonal, exceeded its correlations with the other constructs. The Fornell–Larcker results therefore supported the HTMT findings. The negative correlations between quiet quitting and the three resource-related constructs—role clarity, emotional engagement, and pay satisfaction—were consistent with the proposed theoretical direction. Workload, by contrast, was positively correlated with quiet quitting. These correlations were descriptive and were not used as substitutes for structural hypothesis testing.

4.5. Collinearity, Common Method Bias and Model Fit

Structural collinearity, common method bias, and overall model fit were assessed jointly. Inner VIF values ranged from 1.064 to 1.880, indicating no problematic multicollinearity among the predictors.

Full-collinearity VIF values ranged from 1.065 to 1.877 and remained below 3.3, suggesting that common method bias was unlikely to constitute a critical threat, although its complete absence could not be established.

The SRMR value was 0.064 for both the saturated and estimated models, indicating no substantial discrepancy between the observed and model-implied correlation matrices. The NFI value of 0.765 was interpreted together with the measurement quality, structural estimates, explanatory power, and predictive performance.

Table 8. Collinearity, Common Method Bias & Model Fit

Assessment	Result	Interpretation
Inner VIF	1.064–1.880	No problematic structural collinearity
Full-collinearity VIF	1.065–1.877	Common method bias unlikely to be critical
SRMR, saturated model	0.064	Acceptable residual discrepancy
SRMR, estimated model	0.064	Acceptable residual discrepancy
NFI	0.765	Interpreted with broader model evidence

4.6. Explanatory and Predictive Assessment

The model explained 46.4% of the variance in emotional engagement and 26.9% of the variance in quiet quitting. Role clarity made the largest contribution to emotional engagement, followed by pay satisfaction, whereas workload contributed virtually no additional explanatory power. For quiet quitting, workload produced the largest effect, although its effect size remained small. Emotional engagement also contributed a small effect, while the direct contributions of pay satisfaction and role clarity were negligible. Out-of-sample prediction was evaluated using PLSpredict and CVPAT. All indicator-level Q²predict values were positive, and PLS-SEM generated lower RMSE values than the linear-model benchmark. At the construct level, Q²predict was 0.433 for emotional engagement and 0.195 for quiet quitting.

Table 9. Explanatory and Predictive Assessment

Assessment	Emotional Engagement	Quiet Quitting
R ²	0.464	0.269
Adjusted R ²	0.458	0.257
Q ² predict	0.433	0.195
PLSpredict RMSE	0.766	0.905
PLSpredict MAE	0.551	0.704

Table 10. CVPAT Results

Comparison	Construct	Average loss difference	t-value	p-value
PLS-SEM vs. Indicator Average	Emotional Engagement	−0.109	3.922	<0.001
	Quiet Quitting	−0.127	3.167	0.002
	Overall	−0.112	4.302	<0.001
PLS-SEM vs. Linear Model	Emotional Engagement	−0.038	4.538	<0.001

Comparison	Construct	Average loss difference	t-value	p-value
	Quiet Quitting	−0.079	2.763	0.006
	Overall	−0.045	5.067	<0.001

Negative CVPAT loss differences indicate lower predictive loss for PLS-SEM than for the benchmark.

Table 11. Effect Sizes

Relationship	f ²	Relative Contribution
Workload → Emotional Engagement	0.000	No meaningful contribution
Workload → Quiet Quitting	0.090	Small
Role Clarity → Emotional Engagement	0.203	Moderate
Role Clarity → Quiet Quitting	0.001	Negligible
Emotional Engagement → Quiet Quitting	0.060	Small
Pay Satisfaction → Emotional Engagement	0.158	Moderate
Pay Satisfaction → Quiet Quitting	0.014	Negligible to small

4.7. Direct and Indirect Effects

The direct and indirect relationships were tested using nonparametric bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, a two-tailed test, and 95% percentile confidence intervals.

Table 12. Direct-Effect Testing

Hypothesis/Relationship	β	STDEV	t-value	p-value	95% CI	Decision
H1: PS → EG	0.355	0.073	4.870	<0.001	[0.213, 0.500]	Supported
H2: RC → EG	0.412	0.081	5.102	<0.001	[0.246, 0.559]	Supported
H3: WL → EG	−0.003	0.048	0.060	0.952	[−0.102, 0.087]	Not supported
H4: EG → QQ	−0.287	0.084	3.402	<0.001	[−0.449, −0.121]	Supported
H8: PS → QQ	−0.131	0.082	1.589	0.112	[−0.298, 0.029]	Not supported
H9: RC → QQ	−0.040	0.080	0.500	0.617	[−0.195, 0.123]	Not supported
H10: WL → QQ	0.265	0.058	4.587	<0.001	[0.160, 0.386]	Supported

Table 13. Specific Indirect Effects

Indirect relationship	β	STDEV	t-value	p-value	95% CI	Decision
H5: PS → EG → QQ	−0.102	0.041	2.504	0.012	[−0.193, −0.036]	Supported
H6: RC → EG → QQ	−0.118	0.040	2.978	0.003	[−0.204, −0.046]	Supported
H7: WL → EG → QQ	0.001	0.014	0.058	0.954	[−0.025, 0.033]	Not supported

Pay satisfaction and role clarity were positively associated with emotional engagement, whereas workload was unrelated to emotional engagement. Emotional engagement was negatively associated with quiet quitting. The indirect effects of pay satisfaction

and role clarity through emotional engagement were significant, while their direct effects on quiet quitting were not, indicating indirect-only mediation. By contrast, workload was directly associated with quiet quitting, but its indirect effect through emotional engagement was negligible.

The total effects on quiet quitting were -0.232 for pay satisfaction, -0.158 for role clarity, and 0.266 for workload. Thus, the relationships of pay satisfaction and role clarity with the outcome occurred substantially through emotional engagement, whereas the total workload effect was almost entirely direct.

4.8. Sensitivity Analysis

A sensitivity analysis compared the model retaining QQ6 with the final model excluding QQ6. As shown in Table 14, QQ6 had an inadequate outer loading of 0.376. Its removal increased Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE, slightly improved SRMR and explained variance, and did not materially alter the structural coefficients.

Table 14. Sensitivity Analysis of the Quiet Quitting Measurement with and without QQ6

Criterion	QQ6 retained	QQ6 removed	Absolute Change
QQ6 outer loading	0.376	—	—
QQ7 outer loading	0.913	0.920	0.007
QQ8 outer loading	0.888	0.894	0.006
Cronbach's alpha	0.643	0.786	0.143
(rho_A)	0.820	0.796	0.024
(rho_C)	0.793	0.903	0.110
AVE	0.588	0.823	0.235
SRMR	0.067	0.064	0.003
R ² Quiet Quitting	0.261	0.269	0.008
Adjusted R ² Quiet Quitting	0.249	0.257	0.008
WL → EG	-0.003	-0.003	0.000
WL → QQ	0.269	0.265	0.004
RC → EG	0.412	0.412	0.000
RC → QQ	-0.048	-0.040	0.008
EG → QQ	-0.296	-0.287	0.009
PS → EG	0.355	0.355	0.000
PS → QQ	-0.095	-0.131	0.036

Although ρ_A declined slightly, its final value remained satisfactory and did not offset the substantial improvements in alpha, composite reliability, and convergent validity. The direction and magnitude of the structural relationships also remained stable. The final model without QQ6 was therefore retained.

The deletion of QQ6 involved a conceptual trade-off. Although it improved psychometric quality, the final quiet-quitting construct was represented only by QQ7 and QQ8, which primarily reflected reduced long-term

organizational interest. The findings should therefore be interpreted within this measurement boundary.

Overall, six of the ten hypotheses were supported. The findings demonstrated two distinct empirical pathways. Pay satisfaction and role clarity were positively associated with emotional engagement, which subsequently corresponded with lower quiet-quitting tendencies. Neither resource had a significant direct relationship with quiet quitting. Workload followed a different pattern. It was directly and positively associated with quiet quitting but showed no significant relationship with emotional engagement. Thus, the results supported a resource-based motivational pathway and a separate demand-related direct pathway.

5. Discussion

The findings revealed two differentiated pathways. Pay satisfaction and role clarity were associated with lower quiet-quitting tendencies through emotional engagement, whereas workload showed a direct positive relationship with quiet quitting without reducing emotional engagement. This pattern indicates that job resources and job demands did not operate through identical psychological mechanisms within the present model.

5.1. Job Resources and Emotional Engagement

Pay satisfaction and role clarity were positively associated with emotional engagement, supporting the motivational process of the Job Demands–Resources model. Job resources may foster positive psychological experiences by helping employees perceive their work as fair, understandable, manageable, and meaningful (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Lee & Jo, 2023).

Pay satisfaction functioned as both an economic and symbolic resource. Employees who perceived their compensation as fair and proportionate to their responsibilities reported stronger emotional investment in their work. Compensation may therefore communicate more than economic adequacy; it may also signal organizational recognition and reciprocity. This interpretation is consistent with Heneman and Schwab's (1985) multidimensional view of pay satisfaction and with evidence connecting pay satisfaction to engagement among Generation Z employees (Hayatul & Mega, 2024). The present findings further indicate that compensation was relevant primarily through employees' emotional experience of work rather than through a direct relationship with quiet quitting.

Role clarity demonstrated the stronger contribution to emotional engagement. Clear responsibilities, performance expectations, work procedures, and coordination boundaries may reduce the cognitive and

emotional costs of ambiguity, allowing employees to redirect their effort toward task accomplishment, competence, and meaningful involvement. This interpretation is consistent with job-design theory and previous studies associating role clarity with engagement and favorable job attitudes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Manolache & Epuran, 2023; Syed Abu Bakar et al., 2021).

The importance of role clarity may partly reflect the characteristics of the sample, which predominantly consisted of early-career employees. A plausible explanation is that employees who are still developing occupational confidence are particularly responsive to understandable expectations and consistent guidance. Pay satisfaction communicates fairness and recognition, whereas role clarity structures employees' everyday work experience. Both resources may therefore strengthen emotional engagement through distinct but complementary meanings. These findings should not imply that compensation or formal job descriptions automatically generate engagement. Their motivational value depends on whether employees experience compensation as fair and appreciative and role expectations as coherent, understandable, and supportive of effective performance.

5.2. Workload and the Direct Demand-Driven Pathway

Workload was not significantly associated with emotional engagement. One possible explanation is that emotional attachment to work and willingness to absorb excessive demands represent distinct employee responses. Employees may continue to feel proud of their work, enjoy their occupational roles, and find their tasks meaningful while simultaneously judging their workload to be unsustainable.

The effect of workload may also depend on occupational context. In environments characterized by production targets, service pressures, tight deadlines, and simultaneous responsibilities, employees may perceive demanding conditions as a normal or temporary feature of work. Such conditions may not immediately reduce enthusiasm or pride but may instead influence how employees regulate their behavioral contribution.

Although workload did not weaken emotional engagement, it was directly associated with stronger quiet-quitting tendencies. This finding is consistent with the demand-related process of the JD-R model, in which excessive demands require sustained effort and encourage employees to conserve their remaining resources by prioritizing mandatory duties and limiting further contribution (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). It also aligns with studies identifying workload and unfavorable workplace conditions as antecedents of

quiet quitting among Generation Z employees (Putri & Marwansyah, 2025; Taufik et al., 2024).

Emotional engagement did not mediate the relationship between workload and quiet quitting. Thus, workload operated through a direct demand-driven pathway rather than through emotional disengagement. Employees may remain emotionally connected to their work while concluding that additional effort is no longer sustainable. Under these circumstances, restricting further contribution may represent effort management or boundary protection rather than complete psychological withdrawal.

This distinction challenges the assumption that quiet quitting necessarily originates from indifference or low motivation. Some employees may reduce their involvement because they no longer value their work, whereas others may continue to care but perceive existing demands as excessive. Consequently, engagement-building initiatives alone are unlikely to address demand-related withdrawal when workload volume, staffing, deadlines, and task allocation remain unresolved.

5.3. Emotional Engagement as a Resource-Conversion Mechanism

Emotional engagement was negatively associated with quiet-quitting tendencies. Employees who experienced greater pride, enjoyment, enthusiasm, motivation, and personal meaning were less likely to report declining long-term organizational interest. This result supports the view that employees' affective experience of work is relevant to withdrawal-related tendencies and is consistent with research linking engagement to favorable performance, retention, and well-being outcomes (Harter et al., 2002; Rich et al., 2010).

Nevertheless, emotional engagement represented one mechanism rather than a complete explanation. Its contribution to quiet quitting was limited, indicating that other factors such as leadership, burnout, psychological-contract fulfilment, organizational support, career opportunities, employment insecurity, organizational culture, and work-life conflict may also shape withdrawal-related tendencies.

More importantly, emotional engagement demonstrated indirect-only mediation in the relationships of pay satisfaction and role clarity with quiet quitting. The two resources were associated with the outcome when they were psychologically translated into stronger engagement, whereas their direct relationships were nonsignificant. For pay satisfaction, this pattern indicates that favorable compensation evaluations may reduce withdrawal tendencies when employees interpret compensation as recognition, fairness, and reciprocity. Employees may consider their salary and benefits acceptable without necessarily becoming emotionally connected to their

work. The motivational meaning attached to compensation therefore matters alongside its financial value.

Role clarity showed a similar mechanism. Employees may understand their responsibilities without experiencing enthusiasm or attachment. Clear roles become psychologically consequential when they strengthen competence, confidence, and employees' understanding of how their work contributes to organizational objectives. The nonsignificant direct effects of pay satisfaction and role clarity should therefore not be interpreted as evidence that these resources were unimportant. Rather, their relevance emerged through emotional engagement. Formal organizational arrangements became associated with lower withdrawal tendencies when employees experienced them as recognition, direction, competence, and meaningful support. Emotional engagement consequently functioned as a resource-conversion mechanism within the present JD-R model.

5.4. Theoretical Implications

The study offers three main theoretical implications. First, the findings demonstrate asymmetric resource and demand pathways. Pay satisfaction and role clarity followed a motivational pathway through emotional engagement, whereas workload operated through a direct demand-related pathway. Resources and demands therefore need not influence withdrawal-related outcomes through the same psychological process.

Second, the findings clarify emotional engagement as a mechanism through which job resources become behaviorally relevant. The availability of resources alone was insufficient; their associations with quiet quitting depended on the emotional meaning employees attached to fairness, recognition, direction, competence, and role certainty. However, emotional engagement did not function as a universal mediator because it did not explain the workload relationship.

Third, quiet-quitting tendencies should not be treated as synonymous with emotional disengagement or as an inherent Generation Z characteristic. Employees may remain emotionally connected to their work while restricting their involvement in response to unsustainable demands. Reduced involvement among younger employees may therefore reflect the quality of workplace resources and demands rather than entitlement, weak commitment, or a stable generational disposition.

By simultaneously examining job resources, job demands, emotional engagement, and direct and indirect relationships, the study integrates previously fragmented explanations of quiet quitting. Its contribution should nevertheless be understood as a

refinement of the JD-R model's application to withdrawal-related tendencies rather than a fundamental extension of the theory, particularly given the cross-sectional design and the restricted final outcome measure.

5.5. Practical Implications

Organizations should avoid treating quiet quitting as a uniform attitude problem that can be addressed through a single intervention. Resource-related and demand-related pathways require different managerial responses. To strengthen emotional engagement, compensation systems should be fair, transparent, and proportionate to employees' responsibilities. Managers should communicate how salaries, benefits, bonuses, and performance-related rewards reflect employee contributions. Organizations should also reinforce role clarity through understandable performance standards, clearly defined responsibilities and authority boundaries, consistent supervisor communication, and regular feedback.

Workload requires a structural rather than purely motivational response. Organizations should review workload volume, staffing adequacy, deadlines, simultaneous assignments, and task allocation. Recognition programs, motivational communication, or engagement activities cannot indefinitely compensate for excessive demands. Managers should also distinguish emotional disengagement from sustainable boundary-setting. Employees who decline additional responsibilities may be attempting to protect their functioning while maintaining acceptable formal performance. Interpreting every refusal of extra work as evidence of poor commitment may weaken trust and intensify withdrawal tendencies.

For early-career Generation Z employees, structured onboarding, regular role clarification, developmental feedback, and clear links between individual contributions and organizational outcomes may be particularly valuable. Effective prevention therefore requires the integration of compensation fairness, role clarity, meaningful communication, and sustainable work design.

5.6. Interpretation Boundaries

The findings must be interpreted in proportion to the final measurement model. After QQ1–QQ6 were removed because of inadequate outer loadings, the quiet-quitting construct was represented only by QQ7 and QQ8, both of which primarily reflected reduced long-term organizational interest. Consequently, the measured outcome did not capture the full behavioral domain of quiet quitting. It may overlap with turnover intention or organizational withdrawal intention and should not be interpreted as comprehensively representing deliberate minimum-effort behavior,

refusal of extra-role responsibilities, reduced initiative, or psychological disengagement.

This boundary is particularly important when interpreting the workload relationship. The result indicates that employees facing heavier workloads were less likely to envision a long-term future with their current organization. It does not establish with equal confidence that workload increased every behavioral manifestation commonly associated with quiet quitting. Similarly, the negative relationship between emotional engagement and the outcome may partly indicate that emotionally engaged employees were more likely to perceive a continuing organizational future. It should not be interpreted as evidence that engagement fully explains all forms of effort restriction or legitimate boundary-setting.

The sensitivity analysis supported the statistical removal of QQ6 by demonstrating improved reliability and convergent validity without materially changing the structural relationships. However, this psychometric improvement did not restore the construct's content breadth. The study therefore provides evidence concerning a quiet-quitting-related withdrawal tendency primarily reflecting reduced long-term organizational interest rather than a comprehensive measurement of quiet quitting.

6. Conclusions

This study examined the relationships among pay satisfaction, role clarity, workload, emotional engagement, and quiet-quitting-related withdrawal tendencies among Generation Z employees in Batam. The findings revealed two differentiated pathways. Pay satisfaction and role clarity were associated with lower withdrawal tendencies through emotional engagement, whereas workload showed a direct positive relationship with the outcome without significantly reducing emotional engagement.

These findings refine the application of the Job Demands-Resources model by demonstrating asymmetric resource- and demand-related pathways. Job resources became relevant to the outcome through the motivational mechanism of emotional engagement, while workload operated through a more direct demand-driven process. The results also indicate that emotional disengagement is not a necessary precondition for withdrawal-related tendencies; employees may remain emotionally connected to their work while restricting further involvement when job demands become difficult to sustain.

From a practical perspective, organizations should address job resources and job demands through differentiated interventions. Compensation should be perceived as fair, transparent, and proportionate to employees' responsibilities, while role expectations

should be reinforced through clear procedures, performance standards, authority boundaries, and consistent supervisory communication. Workload requires structural attention to staffing, deadlines, task allocation, and simultaneous responsibilities rather than reliance on engagement-building initiatives alone.

The conclusions must nevertheless be interpreted within the boundaries of the final measurement model. Following indicator deletion, the quiet-quitting construct was represented only by QQ7 and QQ8, which primarily reflected reduced long-term organizational interest. The findings therefore concern a quiet-quitting-related withdrawal tendency that may overlap with turnover intention and should not be generalized to the full behavioral domain of quiet quitting, including minimum-effort behavior, refusal of extra-role responsibilities, reduced initiative, or psychological disengagement.

7. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, its cross-sectional design limits causal and temporal interpretation because all variables were measured at a single point in time. Second, purposive sampling was used because a complete sampling frame was unavailable; consequently, the findings should not be interpreted as statistically representative of all Generation Z employees in Batam or Indonesia. Third, the data were collected through a single-source self-reported questionnaire. Although procedural remedies and full-collinearity VIF results suggested that common method bias was unlikely to be a critical threat, responses may still have been influenced by individual perceptions, social desirability, or consistency motives.

The most important limitation concerns the measurement of quiet quitting. Six of the eight initial indicators were removed because of inadequate outer loadings, leaving only two indicators reflecting reduced long-term organizational interest. Although the sensitivity analysis showed that removing QQ6 improved reliability and convergent validity without materially altering the structural relationships, this psychometric improvement reduced the breadth of the construct and increased its conceptual overlap with turnover-related withdrawal.

Future studies should employ longitudinal or time-lagged designs to examine temporal ordering and reciprocal relationships among workplace conditions, emotional engagement, and quiet quitting. Broader probability-based or multisite samples would also improve generalizability across industries and employment contexts. Most importantly, future research should develop and validate a multidimensional quiet-quitting measure that distinguishes deliberate restriction of discretionary

effort, avoidance of extra-role responsibilities, reduced initiative, psychological withdrawal, declining organizational attachment, and legitimate boundary-setting.

Additional studies should also examine other explanatory mechanisms and boundary conditions, including burnout, psychological-contract fulfilment, perceived organizational support, leadership quality, career opportunities, employment insecurity, employment status, and workload controllability. These extensions would clarify when job resources strengthen engagement, when job demands encourage withdrawal, and when employees' restriction of additional effort reflects disengagement rather than a reasonable response to unsustainable working conditions.

References

- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands–resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Duran, M., & Sanchez, J. (2021). Employee engagement and well-being in times of COVID-19: A proposal of the 5Cs model. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(10), Article 5470. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18105470>
- Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A.-G. (2009). Statistical power analyses using G*Power 3.1: Tests for correlation and regression analyses. *Behavior Research Methods*, 41(4), 1149–1160. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378101801014>
- Gallup. (2022). *Generation Z research hub*.
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 16(2), 250–279. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(76\)90016-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(76)90016-7)
- Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2022). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Harter, J. K., Schmidt, F. L., & Hayes, T. L. (2002). Business-unit-level relationship between employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and business outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(2), 268–279. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.2.268>
- Hayatul, H., & Mega, P. (2024). Analysis of the influence of psychological empowerment, relational psychological contract, and pay satisfaction on turnover intention mediated by work engagement among Generation Z employees. *Syntax Literate: Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, 9(9), 4695–4707.
- Heneman, H. G., III, & Schwab, D. P. (1985). Pay satisfaction: Its multidimensional nature and measurement. *International Journal of Psychology*, 20(1), 129–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00207598508247727>
- Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43, 115–135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8>
- Kock, N. (2015). Common method bias in PLS-SEM: A full collinearity assessment approach. *International Journal of e-Collaboration*, 11(4), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijec.2015100101>
- Lee, D. Y., & Jo, Y. (2023). The job demands–resources model and performance: The mediating role of employee engagement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, Article 1194018. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1194018>
- Liengaard, B. D., Sharma, P. N., Hult, G. T. M., Jensen, M. B., Sarstedt, M., Hair, J. F., & Ringle, C. M. (2021). Prediction: Coveted, yet forsaken? Introducing a cross-validated predictive ability test in partial least squares path modeling. *Decision Sciences*, 52(2), 362–392. <https://doi.org/10.1111/deci.12445>
- Manolache, M., & Epuran, G. (2023). The mediating impact of goal-role clarity on the relationship between feedback-seeking behavior and goal orientations with job satisfaction intrinsic cognitions and person–organization fit. *Sustainability*, 15(17), Article 12776. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su151712776>
- Moisoglou, I., Katsiouroumpa, A., Papathanasiou, I. V., Konstantakopoulou, O., Katharaki, M.,

- Malliarou, M., Tsaras, K., Prasini, I., Rekleiti, M., & Galanis, P. (2025). Engaging leadership reduces quiet quitting and improves work engagement: Evidence from nurses in Greece. *Nursing Reports*, 15(7), Article 247. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nursrep15070247>
- Putri, Z. Q. F., & Marwansyah. (2025). Pengaruh beban kerja dan budaya organisasi terhadap quiet quitting pada karyawan Generasi Z di industri fashion Kota Bandung. *Jurnal Disrupsi Bisnis*, 8(3),302–311. <https://doi.org/10.32493/dr.b.v8i3.48984>
- Rahayu, I., Azzahra, F., Prameswari, D., Ramadhani, D. P., & Trisiana, A. E. A. (2025). Dilema Gen Z di dunia kerja: Burnout atau quiet quitting? *Jurnal Ekonomi dan Bisnis*, 26(2), 96–114.
- Ramadhan, A. B., & Tricahyadinata, I. (2026). The effect of job stress and quiet quitting on turnover intention with burnout as a mediating variable among motor sailing vessel crews in Bontang City. *International Journal of Social Science, Educational, Economics, Agriculture Research and Technology*, 5(5), 2434–2439.
- Rich, B. L., LePine, J. A., & Crawford, E. R. (2010). Job engagement: Antecedents and effects on job performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(3),617–635. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.51468988>
- Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Becker, J.-M. (2024). *SmartPLS 4* [Computer software]. SmartPLS.
- Sharma, P. N., Liengaard, B. D., Hair, J. F., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2023). Predictive model assessment and selection in composite-based modeling using PLS-SEM: Extensions and guidelines for using CVPAT. *European Journal of Marketing*, 57(6), 1662–1677.
- Shmueli, G., Sarstedt, M., Hair, J. F., Cheah, J.-H., Ting, H., Vaithilingam, S., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). Predictive model assessment in PLS-SEM: Guidelines for using PLSpredict. *European Journal of Marketing*, 53(11), 2322–2347. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-02-2019-0189>
- Sitorus, M. G., & Rachmawati, R. (2024). Analysis of the quiet quitting phenomenon with work engagement and job satisfaction as mediators: A study of employees in the Indonesian banking industry. *Eduvest: Journal of Universal Studies*, 4(11), 10671–10793. <https://doi.org/10.59188/eduvest.v4i11.44765>
- Syed Abu Bakar, S. M., Tara Singh, H. S., Salahudin, S. N., AlQershi, N., Saad, A., & Sandhu, S. K. (2021). Role clarity, autonomy, work engagement and voluntary turnover intentions: The moderating role of personal circumstances. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 25(4S), 1–17.
- Taufik, N., Rosyadi, A., & Aliyuddin, M. (2024). Why are millennials and Generation Z silently leaving their jobs? Unraveling the quiet quitting trend. *Asian Management and Business Review*, 4(2),276–292. <https://doi.org/10.20885/ambr.vol4.iss2.art7>
- Twenge, J. M. (2017). *iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood—and what that means for the rest of us*. Atria Books.
- Zhong, X., Al Mamun, A., Yang, Q., Naznen, F., & Ali, M. H. (2025). Modeling quiet quitting intention among academics: Mediating effects of work addiction and satisfaction. *Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health*, 40(1), 84–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15555240.2024.2323636>