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THE EFFECT OF WORKLOAD AND WORK STRESS ON QUIET QUITTING WITH BURNOUT AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE IN GENERATION Z EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

The phenomenon of Quiet Quitting is one of the issues that is getting more and more attention in the world of work because it shows the tendency of employees to limit work involvement only to tasks and responsibilities that have been set without making additional contributions beyond formal obligations. This phenomenon is widely associated with Generation Z who have a high concern for work-life balance and mental health. The focus of this study is to analyze the role of burnout in the relationship between workload, work stress, and Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees. The collected data is then processed using the PLS-SEM technique with the help of SmartPLS. The findings indicate that work stress contributes significantly to increased burnout and quiet quitting, while workload was not found to have a significant influence on both constructs. Burnout has also been shown to have a positive effect on quiet quitting. The results of the mediation test showed that burnout did not mediate the effect of workload on quiet quitting, but mediated the effect of work stress on quiet quitting through a complementary mediation mechanism. This finding confirms that work stress is a more dominant factor than workload in explaining the emergence of burnout and Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees. Therefore, organizations need to prioritize work stress management and burnout prevention to minimize the tendency of Quiet Quitting in the work environment.

Keywords: Workload; Burnout; Generation Z; Quiet Quitting; Work Stress

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INTRODUCTION

In modern organizations, the success of achieving a company's goals is greatly influenced by the level of involvement of employees in carrying out their work. Employees who have a high attachment to the organization not only complete tasks according to formal responsibilities, but also demonstrate initiative, creativity, and a willingness to make additional contributions to the organization's progress. This high level of involvement is one of the factors that support increased productivity, innovation, and work effectiveness in a sustainable manner. According to Bakker, Demerouti, and Sanz-vergel (2023), individuals who have a high level of engagement tend to show work ethic, dedication, and proactive behavior in carrying out their work.

However, the real conditions that occur in various organizations show a situation that is different from the ideal condition. Surveys Gallup (2023) It shows that employee engagement rates globally are still low, with most employees only working at the minimum level of job demands without additional emotional involvement or initiative. This phenomenon is increasingly seen in younger generation employees, especially millennials and Generation Z, who tend to be reluctant to give ideas, ideas, and contributions more to their work. The main determinant of the cause of this phenomenon is the emergence of a perception of injustice in the division of workloads, where active, creative, and initiative employees are more often given additional tasks to execute ideas or ideas that they themselves convey. In practice, employees who frequently provide solutions and innovations typically receive a greater workload than passive employees, while the compensation, appreciation, or rewards received often do not show a fair distinction. Research results Margaretha and Panggabean (2025) This condition is reflected in the decreased willingness of employees to show initiative, participation, and additional contributions when they consider the reward system and the distribution of workload to be unfair. This condition creates a gap between proactive employees and employees who only carry out formal duties, thus giving rise to the perception of injustice in the organization. As a result, many employees choose to limit their contributions to core work, reduce initiative, and are reluctant to convey ideas because they feel that the extra effort put in is not worth the reward received.

The phenomenon of Quiet Quitting does not appear suddenly. The process takes place gradually as employees begin to feel an imbalance between the demands of the job and the available resources, an ever-increasing workload, unrealistic targets, pressure from superiors, hours that exceed reasonable limits,

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and role ambiguity. These pressures cumulatively deprive employees of their intrinsic motivation until they end up draining their psychological and physical energy to the point called burnout. That's when employees develop a withdrawal strategy: staying physically present, yet detaching emotionally and mentally. Quiet Quitting refers to the tendency of employees to limit work contributions only to tasks that are the primary responsibility, resulting in less involvement and additional effort in the work (Manullang, Ramadhan, and Kuniasari 2025; Hamouche 2023). Unlike regular resignations, Quiet Quitting leaves no administrative trail, employees who do so remain present but no longer propose ideas outside of their duties, avoid development meetings, refuse overtime, and do not take the initiative to take on new projects, or in other words they are said to be "silent" in contributions.

This phenomenon is very closely related to Generation Z. In Indonesia, Generation Z dominates 27.94% of the population (BPS, 2020) and now they are starting to enter the world of work with a different perspective and expectations than the previous generation. They are known to be realistic, tech-savvy, more individualistic, and highly demanding of flexibility (Ramadhani, 2025), but at the same time it is easier to get bored and more prone to disengagement (Aji & Yuniasanti, 2025). Previous research indicates that Quiet Quitting behavior tendencies are more common in Generation Z employees than other generations. (Veren et al., 2025), and surveys (Gallup, 2023) noted that 59% of workers globally engage in Quiet Quitting, which is estimated to cause financial losses of $7.8 trillion. If allowed to spread, this phenomenon will hinder innovation, increase the workload for employees who are still actively involved, and cause inhibition of organizational growth (Ramadhi et al., 2024).

This study uses the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory as a basis to understand the factors that encourage the emergence of quiet quitting behavior. According to Demerouti et al. (2001) as well as the development carried out by Bakker and Demerouti (2007; 2017; 2023). Individual work experience is influenced by the interaction between job demands and job resources. In this study, workload and work stress are seen as forms of work demands that have the potential to drain employees' physical and psychological energy. If the demands faced are not balanced with the available resources, this condition can lead to a decrease in motivation, work attachment, and the quality of the individual's relationship with his or her work. One form of response that can arise from this condition is the tendency to limit work involvement which is reflected in quiet quitting behavior.

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This explanation is in line with the concept of burnout put forward by Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001), Burnout describes a condition of work fatigue characterized by three main aspects, namely emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment. Individuals who experience burnout tend to lose energy, show increasingly negative attitudes towards work, and feel a decrease in self-effectiveness at work. As a result, even though they continue to work and are present at work, psychological and emotional involvement with work is reduced. This condition shows characteristics that are in line with the phenomenon of quiet quitting, namely the reduction of employee commitment and contribution outside of formal job demands.

Based on the results of the literature review, various factors have been widely researched as precursors to quiet quitting, including work-life balance, workload, work stress, burnout, job satisfaction, leadership style, organizational fairness, organizational culture, and job insecurity (Ayu et al., 2025; Son, 2025; Putri and Marwansyah 2025). Of these various variables, workload and work stress are theoretically the most relevant job demands in explaining Quiet Quitting based on the JD-R perspective. A number of previous studies have shown that workload has a positive and significant influence on Quiet Quitting (Putri and Marwansyah 2025; Ramadhi et al. 2024; Iloponu et al., 2025), as well as work stress that has been shown to have a positive effect on these behaviors (Putra, 2025; Ramadhani, 2025). However, recent studies have shown that the consistency of the direct influence of the two variables on Quiet Quitting began to experience a discrepancy in the results.

Some studies have shown that the direct influence of workload and work stress on employee withdrawal behavior, including quiet quitting, does not always show consistently significant results (Formica & Sfodera, 2022). In fact, there are studies that show that workload no longer has a significant direct influence on employee withdrawal tendencies, while work stress still shows a more dominant influence (Rifky & Widyantoro, 2025). This condition indicates that the relationship between workload and work stress to Quiet Quitting does not occur directly, but through certain psychological variables as intermediaries. This is in line with the view Bakker, Demerouti, and Sanz-vergel (2023) regarding the mechanism of health impairment (decrease in psychological conditions) in JD-R, which explains that work demands first drain the individual's psychological energy to cause burnout, and then this condition encourages disengagement or quiet quitting.

A number of studies show that burnout has an important role in explaining the tendency to quiet quitting in the work environment. Research Ayu et al. (2025)

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suggests that emotional exhaustion, the appearance of a cynical attitude towards work, and a decrease in feelings of achievement can lead to a decrease in an individual's attachment to their work. As a result, employees tend to reduce engagement and only carry out tasks according to formal obligations. This condition is reinforced by the findings Taufik, Rosyadi, and Aliyuddin (2024) which found that high workload was associated with increased burnout in Generation Z employees.

Based on the trend of the results of the study, a framework can be built that workload and work stress affect burnout, then burnout affects quiet quitting. Thus, the inconsistency of previous research results related to the direct influence of workload and work stress on Quiet Quitting occurred because the two variables worked through an indirect path, namely through burnout as a mediating variable. Therefore, the addition of burnout as a mediating variable in this study is not only a model development, but also a response to theoretical and empirical gaps found in the literature. Research that specifically examines the role of burnout as a mediator between work stress and workload on Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees in Indonesia is still relatively limited, so this condition is the main research gap that underlies the research.

Based on this description, this study is directed to answer several research questions, namely: (1) whether workload affects burnout in Generation Z employees; (2) whether work stress affects burnout in Generation Z employees; (3) whether workload affects Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees; (4) whether work stress affects Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees; (5) whether burnout affects Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees; (6) whether burnout mediates the effect of workload on Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees; and (7) whether burnout mediates the effect of work stress on Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees.

Theoretically, this study is expected to be able to strengthen and expand the application of JD-R Theory and Maslach Burnout Theory in the context of the phenomenon of Quiet Quitting in Generation Z in Indonesia, especially through testing mediation mechanisms that are still limited in previous research. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide strategic recommendations for organizations in designing efforts to mitigate Quiet Quitting through proportionate workload management, work stress control, and systematic burnout prevention to maintain Generation Z employee engagement and productivity in a sustainable manner.

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RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method to analyze the relationship between workload, work stress, burnout, and quiet quitting. In order to gain an understanding of the causal relationship between variables, the study was compiled using an explanatory design. The explanatory design was chosen because the research not only focuses on identifying relationships between variables, but also aims to explain the direction of influence that occurs through testing for direct and indirect influences. Through this approach, the research model can provide a more comprehensive explanation of the mechanisms underlying the emergence of quiet quitting behavior. Therefore, causal explanatory design is considered appropriate to empirically and systematically test the cause-and-effect relationship between variables (Scott, 2023).

The population in this study is Generation Z employees in Semarang City, namely individuals born in the range of 1997-2012 and have worked in various industrial sectors. The sampling technique uses proportionate stratified random sampling, which is the selection of respondents that is carried out proportionally at each strata of the company and accompanied by a random selection process. Through this technique, all members of the population have a relatively equal opportunity to become research respondents so that the representativeness of the sample can be more guaranteed. This study uses an area approach in determining the location of the research, namely the East Semarang area represented by PT. Cahaya Agung Cemerlang, South Semarang represented by PT. Bukit Semarang Jayametro, West Semarang is represented by PT. Apparel One Indonesia, and North Semarang were represented by CV. Sukses Bersama Sejahtera. This technique was chosen because the research population is divided into several groups or strata that have different characteristics so that it is able to produce a more proportional and representative distribution of samples. The respondents in this study were selected based on certain criteria, namely 18-29 years old, have the status of active employees, have a minimum working period of three months, and work under the direct supervision of their superiors.

The determination of the number of respondents was carried out by considering the size of the population that has been known for certain, which is as many as 400 employees. To obtain a representative sample count, the Slovin approach with an error rate of 5% was used. Based on the results of the calculation, the number of respondents needed in this study is 200 people. Furthermore, the number of respondents was allocated proportionally to each company that was the location of the research in the East Semarang, West Semarang, South Semarang, and North Semarang regions. In terms of data

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analysis, the sample size used also met the recommendations for the application of Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). Hair et al., (2021) explained that an adequate number of respondents will improve the stability of the model estimates and support the accuracy of statistical test results. Therefore, the number of samples in this study is considered sufficient to support the hypothesis analysis and testing process.

The variables in this study consist of independent variables, namely workload and work stress, mediation variables, namely burnout, and dependent variables, namely quiet quitting. Workload is operationalized as an individual's perception of the number and complexity of tasks that must be completed in a given time, with indicators of work volume, time pressure, task complexity, and work targets (A. B. Bakker et al., 2023). Work stress is defined as a condition of psychological tension due to job demands that exceed an individual's ability, with indicators of work stress, role conflict, mental fatigue, and work anxiety (Robbins & Judge, 2022). Burnout is defined as a condition of emotional exhaustion, cynical attitude towards work, and decreased self-achievement measured through the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Leiter, 2022). Meanwhile, Quiet Quitting is an employee behavior that limits contributions to only the minimum task without emotional involvement, with indicators of decreased initiative, disengagement, contribution limitation, and rejection of additional tasks (Hamouche 2023).

Data collection was carried out through a closed questionnaire developed based on theoretical indicators and findings of previous research. Respondents were asked to rate each statement using a Likert scale of 1-7. The use of this scale allows researchers to obtain a wider diversity of responses so that respondents' assessments of each construct can be measured in more detail. (Scott, 2023).

Before testing the structural model, the quality of the research instruments is first evaluated to ensure that each indicator is able to represent the measured construct accurately and consistently. The evaluation includes testing validity and reliability. The validity aspect is reviewed through the ability of the indicator to reflect the constructs it represents as well as the ability of each construct to be distinguished from other constructs. Meanwhile, reliability is used to ensure that the instrument produces stable and consistent measurements on each research construct. The assessment of these aspects was carried out by utilizing several evaluation indicators available in the SEM-PLS approach, namely outer loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT),

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Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability (Hair et al., 2021); Sarstedt et al. 2022).

The research data is sourced from primary data obtained through the distribution of online questionnaires using the Google Form platform. The use of online surveys is considered because the majority of respondents come from Generation Z who are relatively familiar with the use of digital technology in daily activities (Ramadhani, 2025). In addition, the online data collection method provides convenience in reaching respondents from various locations, accelerates the data collection process, and increases the efficiency of research implementation (Hair et al., 2021); Sarstedt et al. 2022).

Data analysis in this study was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling approach based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the help of SmartPLS software. The initial stage of the analysis is focused on presenting descriptive statistics that aim to provide an overview of the characteristics of the respondents involved in the study. The next stage includes the evaluation of the measurement model to ensure the validity and reliability of the construct, then continued with the evaluation of the structural model which includes testing for collinearity, coefficient of determination, effect size, and predictive relevance. Hypothesis testing was carried out using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 sample repeats. The decision to accept or reject a hypothesis is based on the t-statistic and p-value that has been determined. In addition to testing the direct relationship between variables, an analysis was also carried out on indirect influences to identify the role of burnout as a mediating variable. The selection of SEM-PLS in this study is based on its ability to accommodate models that involve several latent constructs at once as well as its flexibility to assume data distribution that does not have to be normal (Hair et al., 2021); Sarstedt et al. 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1.
Characteristics of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-21 years old	6	3,0
22-25 years old	90	45,0
26-29 years old	104	52,0
Total	200	100,0

Source: Processed primary data (2026)

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Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents were in the age range of 26-29 years as many as 104 respondents (52.0%). Furthermore, respondents aged 22-25 years amounted to 90 respondents (45.0%), while respondents aged 18-21 years were 6 respondents (3.0%). These findings show that most of the respondents are in the early adult age group that falls into the Generation Z category and have had enough work experience to provide an assessment of the workload, work stress, burnout, and Quiet Quitting that were the focus of the study.

Table 2
Characteristics of respondents based on length of work

Long Time Working	Frequency	Percentage (%)
< 1 year	6	3,0
1-2 years	159	79,5
> 2 years	35	17,5
Total	200	100,0

Source: Processed primary data (2026)

Based on Table 2, the majority of respondents have a working period of 1-2 years as many as 159 respondents (79.5%). Furthermore, respondents with a working period of more than 2 years amounted to 35 respondents (17.5%), while respondents with a working period of less than 1 year amounted to 6 respondents (3.0%). These characteristics show that most of the respondents have gained relatively enough work experience to provide a more objective perception of the work situation they are facing.

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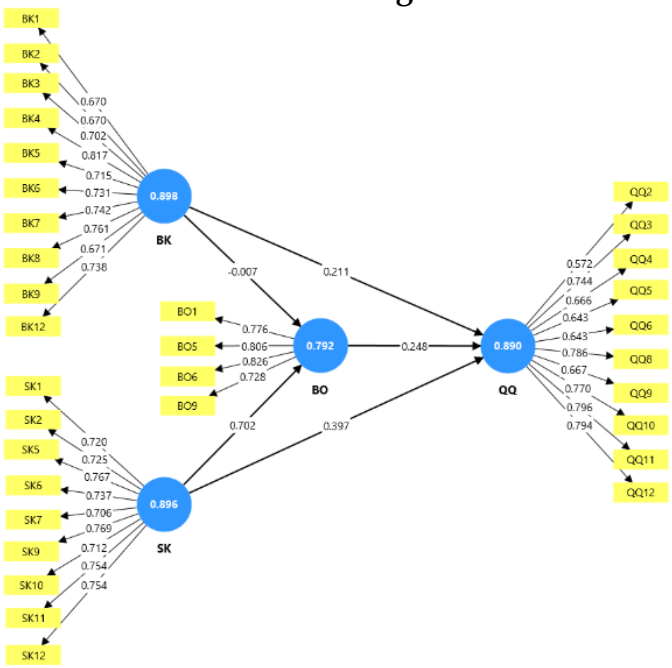
Analysis of measurement models (Outer Model)

Figure 1
PLS Path Diagram



Source: SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

Convergent Validity Test

The convergent validity test was carried out by looking at the outer loading value of each indicator. According to Hair et al. (2021), an outer loading value of 0.70 or more indicates a good level of validity. However, indicators that have an outer loading value in the range of 0.50-0.60 can still be maintained as long as the measured construct shows an adequate level of validity and reliability. This condition can be seen from the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability values that have met the recommended limit (Chin, 1998). Furthermore, the internal consistency of each construct is evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha, Rho_A, and Composite Reliability values. The construct is considered to have good reliability if the three sizes are above the recommended threshold value, which is 0.70 (Hair et al. 2021).

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Table 3.
Convergent Validity and Reliability Test Results

Variable	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Workload (BK)	0,670–0,817	0,898	0,904	0,916	0,523
Burnout (BO)	0,728–0,826	0,792	0,799	0,865	0,616
Quiet Quitting (QQ)	0,572–0,796	0,890	0,892	0,910	0,507
Work Stress (SK)	0,706–0,769	0,896	0,897	0,915	0,545

Source : SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

Based on Table 3, most indicators have an outer loading value above 0.70. Although there are several indicators with an outer loading value below 0.70, all indicators are maintained because the AVE value in each construct has exceeded 0.50 and the Composite Reliability value has exceeded 0.70. The results show that the entire construct meets the requirements of convergent validity.

Furthermore, the results of the reliability test showed that all research variables had Cronbach's Alpha, Rho_A, and Composite Reliability values above 0.70. Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.792 to 0.898, Rho_A values range from 0.799 to 0.904, and Composite Reliability values range from 0.865 to 0.916. Thus, all constructs have a good level of internal consistency and are declared reliable and suitable for use at the next stage of analysis.

Discriminating Validity Test

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Table 4
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) – List

	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
Workload Burnout ↔	0.624
Quiet Quitting ↔ Workload	0.715
Quiet Quitting ↔ Burnout	0.753
Workload Stress ↔	0.849
Burnout Work ↔ Stress	0.818
Quiet Quitting Work ↔ Stress	0.812

Source : SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

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The discriminatory validity test in this study was carried out using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach. According to Hair et al. (2021), a construct can be declared to have sufficient discriminant validity if the resulting HTMT value is below 0.90. The HTMT method was chosen because it is considered more effective in identifying differences between constructs than some conventional approaches. In addition to having a higher level of sensitivity in detecting potential overlap between constructs, this approach is also widely recommended in SEM-PLS analysis to ensure that each construct truly represents a different concept. Therefore, the evaluation of discriminatory validity in this study focuses on the results of HTMT testing as the main indicator.

Based on Table 4, the HTMT value ranges from 0.624 to 0.849. The lowest HTMT value was found in the relationship between Burnout and Workload at 0.624, while the highest HTMT value was found in the relationship between Work Stress and Workload at 0.849. The results of the HTMT evaluation indicate that all constructs in the model have 3330tructu adequate differences from each other. The absence of values that exceed the limit of the recommendation indicates that each variable measures a different concept clearly. Thus, the research model has met the requirements for discriminant validity so that it can proceed to the model testing stage 3330Structural.

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

After the measurement model is declared to meet the criteria, the next stage is to evaluate the structural model (inner model) to obtain an overview of the relationships between the constructs that make up the research model. This stage includes several tests, namely Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), determination coefficient (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2). The VIF value is used to ensure that relationships between independent variables do not give rise to multicollinearity issues that can affect the model's estimation results. Meanwhile, the determination coefficient (R^2) was used to evaluate the level of explanation of the model to endogenous variables through the contribution provided by exogenous variables. The amount of contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous variable was then evaluated through the effect size value (f^2). In addition, the model's ability to produce predictions of the variables studied was analyzed using the predictive relevance (Q^2) value. Through a series of tests, the feasibility of the structural model can be assessed more comprehensively.

Table 5
Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Relationships Between Variables	VIVID
Workload → Burnout	2.452

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Workload → Quiet Quitting	2.452
Burnout → Quiet Quitting	1.943
Work Stress → Burnout	2.452
Work Stress → Quiet Quitting	3.411

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

The results of the multicollinearity evaluation using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) showed that the entire construct met the recommended criteria. Based on Table 5, the VIF value obtained is in the range of 1,943–3,411, so all of them are still below the threshold of 5 (Hair et al. 2021). These findings indicate that the relationships between variables in the model do not cause significant multicollinearity problems, so that the structural analysis process can be continued without any disturbance due to too high correlation between constructs.

Table 6
Value of the Determination Coefficient (R2)

Variable	R-square	R-square Adjusted
Burnout (BO)	0.485	0.480
Quiet Quitting (QQ)	0.586	0.580

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

Evaluation of the determination coefficient showed that the model had sufficient clear power against endogenous variables. In the Burnout construct, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.480 indicates that the variation in burnout that occurs in respondents can be partly explained by the Workload and Work Stress contained in the research model. Meanwhile, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.580 in Quiet Quitting indicates that the variation in Quiet Quitting behavior can be explained by a combination of Workload, Work Stress, and Burnout in relatively adequate proportions. Based on these values, the research model can be categorized as having moderate explanatory ability to the analyzed constructs.

Table 7
Value Effect size (f^2)

Relationships Between Variables	F-Square
Workload → Burnout	0.000
Workload → Quiet Quitting	0.044
Burnout → Quiet Quitting	0.076
Work Stress → Burnout	0.391
Work Stress → Quiet Quitting	0.112

Source : SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

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In addition to assessing the significance of the relationship between constructs, this study also pays attention to the magnitude of the influence exerted by each variable through effect size (f^2) analysis. These measurements are used to look at the relative contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous variable in the structural model. According to Hair et al. (2021) The f^2 value of 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 indicates a medium effect, and 0.35 indicates a large effect.

The results presented in Table 7 show that the relationship between Work Stress and Burnout resulted in an f^2 value of 0.391. These values indicate that Work Stress makes a strong contribution to explaining the variation in Burnout. In other words, changes in the level of work stress have a considerable role in the change in the level of burnout experienced by respondents. Meanwhile, the relationship between Workload to Quiet Quitting of 0.044, Burnout to Quiet Quitting of 0.076, and Work Stress to Quiet Quitting of 0.112 showed a relatively small influence. Based on the f^2 value obtained, the effect of Workload on Burnout is at a very weak level. A value of 0.000 indicates that the variable provides almost no additional explanation for the variation in burnout in the analyzed model.

Table 8
Predictive Relevance (Q^2) Value

Variable	Q^2predict	RMSE	MAE
Burnout (BO)	0.464	0.750	0.565
Quiet Quitting (QQ)	0.523	0.702	0.451

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

To assess the quality of model predictions, this study uses the predictive relevance (Q^2) value as one of the 3332Model Evaluation Structure 3332Structural. The test results showed that the Burnout construct obtained a Q^2 Predict value of 0.464, while the Quiet Quitting construct obtained a value of 0.523. These values indicate that the model has adequate ability to predict the endogenous variables being analyzed. A value of Q^2 that is entirely positive indicates that the model has predictive relevance according to the recommendations Hair et al. (2021). This indicates that the combination of the variables Workload, Work Stress, Burnout, and Quiet Quitting in the model is able to provide enough information to explain and predict the relationship being studied.

Hypothesis Test

Evaluation of the relationships between variables in the model was carried out through bootstrapping analysis using SmartPLS software. The decision on the research hypothesis is determined based on the level of significance indicated by the t-statistic and p-value. A relationship is declared significant if it meets the test

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limit that has been set, i.e. the t-statistical value exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05. A summary of the test results of all hypotheses can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9
Path Coefficients

Relationships Between Variables	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Workload → Burnout	-0,007	0,001	0,112	0,066	0,947	H1 Rejected
Workload → Quiet Quitting	0,211	0,217	0,111	1,894	0,058	H2 Rejected
Burnout → Quiet Quitting	0,248	0,244	0,088	2,819	0,005	H3 Accepted
Work Stress → Burnout	0,702	0,694	0,100	7,057	0,000	H4 Accepted
Work Stress → Quiet Quitting	0,397	0,403	0,126	3,158	0,002	H5 Accepted

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

Referring to Table 9, the interpretation of hypothesis testing can be explained as follows:

1. The results of the pathway test between Workload and Burnout showed a coefficient of -0.007 with a t-statistic value of 0.066 and a p-value of 0.947. This value has not met the set significance criteria, so Workload has not been proven to affect Burnout in study respondents. H1 was therefore rejected.
2. The relationship between Workload and Quiet Quitting resulted in a coefficient of 0.211 with a t-statistic value of 1.894 and a p-value of 0.058. Since the significance value obtained is still above the limit used in the study, the effect of Workload on Quiet Quitting cannot be statistically proven. Thus, H2 was rejected.
3. Testing the effect of burnout on Quiet Quitting yielded a coefficient of 0.248, a t-statistic of 2.819, and a p-value of 0.005. These findings indicate a significant positive relationship between the two variables. This means that an increase in the rate of burnout tends to be followed by an increase in the tendency to quiet quitting. Based on these results, H3 was accepted.
4. In the relationship between Work Stress and Burnout, a coefficient with a value of 0.702 with a t-statistic value of 7.057 and a p-value of 0.000 was

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obtained. These results show that Work Stress has a significant positive influence on Burnout. The higher the stress level that employees feel, the greater the likelihood of burnout. Therefore, H4 was accepted.

5. The effect of Work Stress on Quiet Quitting showed a coefficient of 0.397, a t-statistic of 3.158, and a p-value of 0.002. This value indicates a positive and significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, increased work stress tends to increase employees' tendency to quietly quit. Based on the results of the test, H5 was accepted.

Table 10
Specific Indirect Effect

Relationships Between Variables	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Statistics	P Values	Remarks
Workload → Burnout → Quiet Quitting	-0,002	-0,001	0,029	0,063	0,950	H6 Rejected (No Mediation)
Work Stress → Burnout → Quiet Quitting	0,174	0,170	0,068	2,572	0,010	H7 Accepted (Complementary Mediation)

Source: SmartPLS Data Processing 4.1.1.8 (2026)

The information presented in Table 10 indicates the following:

1. The results of the indirect effect test on the Workload → Burnout → Quiet Quitting pathway produced a coefficient of -0.002 with a t-statistic value of 0.063 and a p-value of 0.950. These values indicate that the mediation pathway involving Burnout has no statistical significance. In addition, the direct relationship between Workload and Quiet Quitting also did not show a significant influence. This condition indicates that Burnout does not play a role as a variable that bridges the relationship between Workload and Quiet Quitting. Thus, H6 was rejected. Based on the classification of mediation effects, these relationships fall into the category of no mediation.
2. In the Work Stress → Burnout → Quiet Quitting pathway, an indirect influence coefficient of 0.174 was obtained with a t-statistic value of 2.572 and a p-value of 0.010. These results show that Burnout is able to channel the

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influence of Work Stress on Quiet Quitting significantly. In other words, an increase in work stress levels can increase the tendency to Quiet Quitting through increased burnout experienced by employees. Therefore, H7 was declared accepted. Based on the combination of direct and indirect influences, Burnout acts as complementary mediation, because the direct relationship between Work Stress and Quiet Quitting remains significant after the mediator is included in the model, while the indirect influence through Burnout is also significant in the same direction of the relationship.

The Effect of Workload on Burnout in Generation Z Employees

The analysis conducted showed that workload was not a factor that determined the appearance of burnout in Generation Z employees. The findings suggest that respondents still have sufficient skills and resources to manage the job demands they face.

In the perspective of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, new job demands will develop into burnout if they are not balanced by adequate resources. Organizational support, positive work relationships, flexibility in work, and the ability of individuals to manage their work can function as protective factors against work burnout. Therefore, even though respondents face various job demands, these conditions are not strong enough to cause burnout.

The findings of this study are different from the results of the study Dudija and Princess (2025) which found that there was a positive effect of workload on burnout. These differences may be influenced by variations in respondent characteristics, work environments, and the level of resources available in each organization. Thus, workload does not always produce the same consequences for every group of workers, especially for Generation Z employees who are the focus of the study.

The Effect of Workload on Quiet Quitting in Generation Z Employees

The analysis showed that workload did not have a significant influence on the tendency of Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees. This states that increased work demands do not automatically make employees limit their contributions only to formal obligations that the organization has set.

In the perspective of JD-R Theory, the impact of job demands is greatly influenced by the availability of resources owned by individuals and organizations. When employees are adequately supported, have the skills appropriate for their job, and work in a conducive environment, workload can be perceived as a challenge that drives productivity, rather than as a source of pressure that triggers withdrawal behavior.

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The results of this study are not in line with the findings Ramadhi et al. (2024) and Taufik et al. (2024) which states that the high demands of work can increase the tendency of Quiet Quitting in Generation Z workers. In addition, an individual's ability to manage work pressure can also determine whether the workload will be perceived as a challenge or a source of discomfort at work.

Based on these findings, it can be understood that Quiet Quitting behavior is not solely influenced by the amount of work that must be completed. Psychological factors, emotional states, perceptions of the work environment, and the level of individual well-being are thought to have a greater role in driving the emergence of these behaviors. Therefore, the workload in this study has not been proven to be a factor that directly affects Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees.

The Effect of Burnout on Quiet Quitting in Generation Z Employees

The results revealed that higher burnout rates tend to be followed by an increased tendency to quiet quitting. This condition shows that the fatigue experienced by employees can reduce their attachment to work, so that the participation and contribution given becomes increasingly limited. In these conditions, employees continue to carry out the duties for which they are responsible, but are no longer encouraged to make additional contributions outside of formal obligations.

This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of burnout put forward by Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001). When individuals experience emotional exhaustion, a cynical attitude towards work, and a decrease in feelings of accomplishment, attachment to work tends to decrease. As a result, employees prefer to maintain energy and psychological well-being by limiting work participation to the minimum level required by the organization.

These findings reinforce the view Formica and Sfodera (2022) which explains that Quiet Quitting often arises in response to long-term work burnout. For Generation Z, this behavior can also be seen as an effort to maintain mental health and life balance when the pressure of work begins to interfere with their psychological well-being.

The Effect of Work Stress on Burnout in Generation Z Employees

Work stress is a factor that contributes to the increase in burnout in Generation Z employees. This condition makes employees more susceptible to experiencing work fatigue in various forms.

These findings can be understood through the perspective of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory which explains that the negative impact of job demands tends to arise when the resources that individuals have are not enough

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to offset the pressures faced. In such situations, individuals will experience a gradual depletion of energy that eventually develops into burnout.

The results of this study are also in line with the findings of the Rifky and Widyantoro (2025) which suggests that work stress contributes to increased burnout. In addition, Deloitte Global Gen Z and Millennial (2024) revealed that mental health is one of the main concerns of Generation Z in the world of work. These characteristics cause this generation group to tend to be more sensitive to prolonged work pressure so that the risk of burnout is higher.

The Effect of Work Stress on Quiet Quitting in Generation Z Employees

Research findings show that increased work stress is followed by an increased tendency to Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees.

In the perspective of JD-R Theory, the lack of balance between work pressure and supporting resources can lead to a decrease in work motivation as well as a weakened attachment of employees to their work. This condition encourages the emergence of various forms of withdrawal behavior as an individual's effort to reduce perceived pressure. In the context of this study, Quiet Quitting behavior may emerge as a strategy used by employees to reduce the impact of work stress, especially when the demands of the job begin to affect their psychological well-being.

The findings support the results of the study (Ramadhi et al., 2024) which suggests that work stress contributes to an increased tendency to Quiet Quitting in Generation Z. Results Deloitte Global Gen Z and Millennial (2024) It also shows that mental health issues and work pressure are important concerns for this generation group. Therefore, work stress can be seen as one of the factors that encourage the emergence of quiet quitting behavior.

The Effect of Workload on Quiet Quitting through Burnout in Generation Z Employees

The results of the mediation test showed that burnout did not play a role in bridging the relationship between workload and quiet quitting. This condition indicates that the workload felt by respondents is not strong enough to trigger burnout or increase the tendency to quiet quitting. In the perspective of JD-R Theory, the impact of job demands on individuals is determined not only by the level of demands themselves, but also by the availability of resources that help individuals cope with them. Therefore, although respondents face various job demands, the condition has not progressed to work burnout which can affect their engagement in work.

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The absence of a mediating effect indicates that burnout is not a factor that explains the relationship between workload and Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees. Based on the mediation classification, the relationship is included in the category of no mediation. The difference in results with previous research shows that not all job demands will lead to burnout or quiet quitting behavior, especially when individuals still have adequate resources to deal with work pressure.

The Effect of Work Stress on Quiet Quitting through Burnout in Generation Z Employees

Burnout has been shown to play a role in explaining the relationship between work stress and Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees. The high pressure felt at work can accelerate the appearance of work fatigue in various psychological and physical aspects. This condition has the potential to reduce the level of employee attachment so that they become less involved in their work.

The findings of this study strengthen the results of the research Rifky and Widyantoro (2025) which places work stress as one of the important factors in increasing employee burnout rates. The greater the pressure that an individual feels at work, the higher the likelihood of work burnout. In addition, Formica and Sfodera (2022) stated that Quiet Quitting often appears in response to prolonged work fatigue and decreased attachment to work. Results Deloitte Global Gen Z and Millennial (2024) also shows that mental health is an aspect that Generation Z pays great attention to in the work environment.

Based on the results of direct and indirect pathway testing, burnout in this study plays a role as complementary mediation. This shows that work stress still has a direct effect on quiet quitting, but at the same time also affects Quiet Quitting through increased burnout. Thus, burnout only explains part of the relationship between work stress and quiet quitting, not entirely. These findings indicate that organizational efforts to suppress Quiet Quitting behavior are not enough to reduce burnout, but also need to manage the sources of work stress faced by Generation Z employees.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to gain an understanding of the factors that affect Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees by considering the role of burnout as a mediating variable. Based on the results of the analysis that has been carried out, the factor that plays the most role in explaining the emergence of Quiet Quitting is work stress. The work pressure that employees feel has been shown to not only

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increase burnout rates, but also encourage a tendency to reduce engagement at work.

On the other hand, workload does not show a significant effect on burnout or quiet quitting. These findings indicate that the number of tasks that employees receive is not necessarily perceived as a condition that causes fatigue or encourages withdrawal behavior. An individual's ability to manage job demands as well as the existence of adequate work resources are suspected to be factors that help employees remain able to carry out their jobs without experiencing significant negative impacts.

This study also shows that burnout has an important role in explaining quiet quitting behavior. When employees experience prolonged emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion, the tendency to limit work involvement becomes even higher. However, the role of burnout as a mediator was only found in the relationship between work stress and quiet quitting. In contrast, burnout has not been shown to be a mechanism that explains the relationship between workload and quiet quitting.

In general, the results of the study indicate that the main problem that needs the attention of the organization is not solely the high workload, but how employees feel and respond to the pressures that arise in their work. Therefore, efforts to manage work stress, strengthen organizational support, create a healthy work environment, and provide programs that support mental health are important steps to reduce the risk of burnout and suppress the tendency to Quiet Quitting in Generation Z employees.

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