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# QUIET QUITTING IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: EFFECTS OF PAY EQUITY, JOB CRAFTING, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT, AND WORK ENGAGEMENT

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## ABSTRACT

*Quiet quitting has become a significant issue in the workplace in knowledge-based organizations, but the consequences it has on higher education have not been fully investigated in the Indian context. This paper has discussed the impact of quiet quitting on work engagement and organizational commitment among employees in higher education institutions within the Telangana region. It also examined how the perceived pay equity and job crafting can explain employee reactions to institutional work conditions. The quantitative cross-sectional design was chosen, and 253 employees were studied with the help of a structured questionnaire. The results revealed that quiet quitting had a negative impact on organizational commitment and work engagement. Perceived pay equity positively influenced the two outcome variables, which means that equity in compensation enhanced institutional attachment and engagement in work. Job crafting was also found to have a positive effect, specifically in terms of enhancing organisational commitment; however, the positive role of job crafting on work engagement was weaker in the regression analysis. The paper has identified that quiet quitting in higher education is not only a personal behaviour problem, but also a symptom of overall institutional circumstances in regard to fairness, participation, and meaning in the workplace. These results provide practical recommendations to academic management, which should focus on providing equitable, human-centered, and participatory workplaces that can maintain employee motivation and reinforce scientific culture in the modern higher education.*

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**KEYWORDS:** Quiet Quitting; Organizational Commitment; Work Engagement; Perceived Pay Equity; Job Crafting.

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years the type of employee commitment and engagement in work has evolved significantly, especially in information-oriented industries where the demands are not as much about completing the tasks formally. In this evolving environment, the concept of quiet quitting has been observed as a trend where employees minimize their work output to the expected roles and minimize extraneous work without officially quitting the company. According to recent scholarship, quiet quitting cannot be seen in terms of a simplistic refusal to work, but a multidimensional response that is created by work conditions, leadership, expectations, and meaning systems in which employment is embedded (Magrizos et al., 2026). This change is particularly pertinent in the area of higher education, where workers are supposed to carry out designated duties, but also to help with mentoring, teamwork, institutional growth, and overall culture of academic engagement.

The role of higher education institutions in modern society is a unique one since they are both workplace and knowledge communities as well as cultural spaces. Their internal work climate influences the well-being of employees, as well as the quality of education, co-worker relations, and persistence of scientific and intellectual culture. These issues have gained significance in the Indian context with higher education growing under circumstances of growing performance pressure, shifting student expectations, administrative heightening, and professional values. Quiet quitting cannot be perceived, thus, as a personal-level attitude issue only; it also needs to be studied as an expression of how employees feel about fairness, recognition, workload and role meaning in the institutional setting. Studies have also revealed that work systems with high levels of stress, work-life imbalance, and unfavourable supervisory experiences may lead to the development of conditions that promote withdrawal-based reactions, such as quiet quitting (Bhawna et al., 2026). The insights would be relevant to the field of higher education since teaching and non-teaching staff frequently work in a challenging environment where institutional tasks can cross the line of their formal work.

The two significant outcomes of quiet quitting that were considered in the present study were the organizational commitment and work engagement. Organization commitment is still a key factor in higher education as the success of the institution is largely determined by the ability of the employees to identify with the organizational objectives and to

have an emotional attachment to the workplace. Work engagement is also important as it demonstrates vitality, commitment, and immersion in professional work, which are vital in the teaching process, assisting students, conducting research, and the administrative processes. Previous research has consistently revealed that engagement is a valuable organizational asset that is related to retention, effectiveness, and performance across industries (Sinisterra et al., 2024; Kossyva et al., 2024). Employee engagement in the context of higher education in particular has also been found to positively influence the institutional functioning and performance outcomes (Abdullahi et al., 2023). Meanwhile, research has shown that the lack of engagement, work pressure, and a shift in generational expectations can undermine job attachment and raise the risk of withdrawal behaviours (Nnamani, 2026; Saraiva and Nogueiro, 2025).

Another issue in the research on quiet quitting is the lack of a clear and precise definition and measurement of it. Popular discourse on the phenomenon has been sometimes debated in general or unevenly, making it challenging to investigate empirically. Nevertheless, recent scholarly efforts have assisted in finding a higher degree of conceptual clarity and measurement framework, so that now it is feasible to study quiet quitting as an actionable organizational behaviour as opposed to a cultural buzzword (Magrizos et al., 2026; Talukder and Prieto, 2025). This is critical since silent quitting can be on the one hand a result of dissatisfaction, but on the other hand, an intentional effort to safeguard well-being, rebuild boundaries or oppose unsustainable demands. Others have even suggested that in some situations quiet quitting can be viewed as a shift back to more human-focused work values, as opposed to disengagement (Dillard et al., 2025). Nonetheless, in the setting of institutions like higher education, less discretionary engagement can have severe consequences to academic cooperation, organizational citizenship, and the viability of a rich educational culture.

The role of perceived pay equity and job crafting becomes especially relevant in this context. Perceived pay equity reflects the view of the workers on whether compensation is equitable based on effort, contribution, and comparison scales. Such perceptions may have symbolic significance in the context of higher education since they convey legitimacy, institutional respect, and recognition. In comparison, job crafting indicates the degree to which employees engage in the active restructuring of tasks, relations and meanings attached to work to

ensure a fit and motivation. According to prior research, meaningful work adaptation will be particularly useful within the context where the employees are structurally constrained and still desire to find impact and purpose in their work (Barkema et al., 2024). Similarly, organizational practices and leadership have been depicted to be significantly involved in maintaining engagement between more recent workforce groups and in knowledge-based workplaces (Revuru and Bandaru, 2024; Kosyva et al., 2024). Studies in digital and modern work environments have also indicated a connection between quiet quitting and alterations in labor expectations and new work cultures instead of isolated motivation shortfalls (Suhendar et al., 2023; Saraiva & Nogueiro, 2025).

Although there has been increasing attention on quiet quitting, there is a lack of research gap as far as Indian higher education is concerned. A substantial portion of the existing literature has examined quiet quitting in general workplace settings, conceptual discussions, or sectors outside higher education. The impact of quiet quitting on organizational commitment and work engagement among workers in institutions of higher learning, especially in the Telangana area has received relatively little attention. This gap is significant since institutions of higher learning rely on shared values, engagement, and long-term involvement of employees to ensure organizational efficiency and a vibrant culture of science. Another aspect is the values of work, which affect the perception of the employees of effort, fairness, and burnout in the institutional life (Dahiya and Raghuvanshi, 2023). It is on this basis that this current research paper investigated the impact of quiet quitting on organizational commitment and work engagement within the context of Indian higher education, focusing especially on the perceived pay equity and job crafting. Through this, it sought to add to more context-sensitive conceptualization of disengagement, equity, and adaptive work behaviour within the modern academic institutions.

### 1.1 Theoretical Foundation of the Study

The current study was underpinned by three interrelated theoretical approaches: Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, Social Exchange Theory and Equity Theory. **Job Demands-Resources Theory** held that employees' attitudes and behaviour is determined by the interaction of job demands and resources. In the case of higher education, factors such as excessive workload, administrative demands and growing job expectations may contribute to increased strain, while lack of organisational support

may lead to lower work engagement and withdrawal-oriented behaviours like quiet quitting. This theory was therefore useful to explain the negative association between quiet quitting and work engagement.

**The Social Exchange Theory** explained the interpersonal underpinning of work-related commitment and engagement. This view suggests that employees react to the institutional treatment they receive and the strength of the institutional exchange affects their degree of commitment, reciprocity and willingness to go above and beyond the call. When employees perceive the institutional exchange as fair, supportive, and valuable, they will be more committed and engaged. Conversely, if the institutional exchange is perceived to be poor or negative, employees may disengage psychologically from their work, and thus increase the likelihood of quiet quitting.

**Equity Theory** was especially relevant to the inclusion of perceived pay equity in the present study. This theory proposed that individuals compare their relative inputs (contributions) and outcomes (rewards) to assess the fairness of the reward exchange in terms of effort, recognition and reward. In higher education, perceived pay and reward inequity may contribute to lower trust, commitment and work engagement. Therefore, Equity Theory formed a solid conceptual foundation for understanding the potential impact of perceived pay equity on organizational commitment and work engagement.

### 1.2 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study positioned **quiet quitting** as the principal independent variable, while **organizational commitment** and **work engagement** were treated as the primary dependent variables. In addition, **perceived pay equity** and **job crafting** were included as related explanatory variables because they were expected to shape employee reactions to institutional work conditions. Within this framework, quiet quitting was expected to reduce employees' emotional attachment to the institution and their active involvement in work. In contrast, perceived pay equity was expected to strengthen employees' sense of fairness and institutional trust, while job crafting was expected to enhance meaning, adaptability, and work ownership. The framework therefore linked withdrawal behaviour, fairness perceptions, and proactive role

adaptation to important organizational outcomes in higher education institutions in Telangana.

### 1.3 Hypotheses Development

Based on the variables and theoretical grounding of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

**H1:** Quiet quitting has a significant negative effect on organizational commitment among employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.

**H2:** Quiet quitting has a significant negative effect on work engagement among employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.

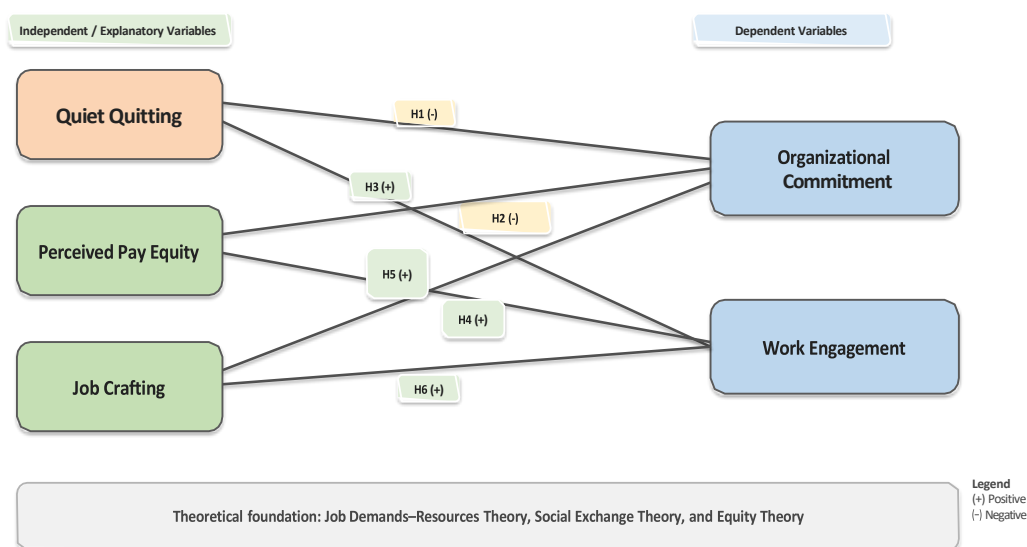
**H3:** Perceived pay equity has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment among employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.

**H4:** Perceived pay equity has a significant positive effect on work engagement among employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.

**H5:** Job crafting has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment among employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.

**H6:** Job crafting has a significant positive effect on work engagement among employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.

**Conceptual Model Showing the Hypothesized Relationships among Quiet Quitting, Perceived Pay Equity, Job Crafting, Organizational Commitment, and Work Engagement**



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model Showing the Hypothesized Relationships among Quiet Quitting, Perceived Pay Equity, Job Crafting, Organizational Commitment, and Work Engagement**

The major objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate the impact of quiet quitting on organizational commitment among the employees in higher education institutions in Telangana.
2. To determine the impact of quiet quitting on work engagement among people working in higher education institutions in Telangana.
3. To examine how perceived pay equity and job crafting relate to organizational commitment and work engagement in the case of quiet quitting.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design

The research design used in the study was quantitative and cross-sectional and explanatory

design to examine the impact of quiet quitting on organizational commitment and work engagement in Indian higher education. This design was chosen on the basis that it allowed the systematic study of the connections between behavioural, perceptual and institutional variables in a modern academic environment. It was also fitting the interest of the journal in changing culture of work, human values, and organizational change in higher education, particularly with regard to equity, employee involvement, and professional involvement.

### 2.2 Study Area

It was carried out in the Telangana region, that was one of the most dynamic higher education settings in India based on urban development, institutional heterogeneity and evolving professional demands.

The respondents were selected in institutions of higher learning that are spread in this region which enabled the study to have a reflection of the current work culture in academia in metropolitan India. The field was deemed to be suitable since it intercepted the relationship between educational modernization, institutional pressure and the changing work values that were applicable to the scientific culture and social change.

### 2.3 Population and Sample

The population of interest was the employees of higher education institutions located in the Telangana area. Both teaching and non-teaching staff were included in the study since both groups had a role in the institutional culture, functional continuity and value system of higher education. Two hundred and fifty-three respondents took part in the research. It was deemed that this sample was suitable to test the hypothesized relations between quiet quitting, organizational commitment and work engagement, perceived pay equity and job crafting in a narrow and context specific academic setting.

### 2.4 Sampling Technique

The research employed purposive sampling method to select the respondents that would be most useful in achieving the research objectives. Only the current members of institutions of higher learning, who had one year of working experience, and were within the Telangana region were considered. The teaching and non-teaching staff were deemed eligible. This method assisted in making sure that the respondents were exposed to the organizational climate, work expectations and perceptions of fairness enough to be able to measure quiet quitting and other outcomes at the workplace.

### 2.5 Respondent Profile Variables

Several background variables were provided to familiarize oneself with the profile of the respondents and to put the findings into perspective. These variables comprised of gender, age group, category of role, years of experience, type of employment and stream of the department. These characteristics were included to understand the quiet quitting and engagement patterns among various employee groups in higher education. These profile indicators enhanced also the institutional and social relevance of the study, as they connected the behaviour of the employees with the overall construct of the academic work culture and positioning of the profession.

### 2.6 Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used to gather data because it was necessary to gather demographic traits and the key study constructs at the same time. The instrument had respondent profile, quiet quitting, organizational commitment, work engagement, perceived pay equity, and job crafting sections. The questionnaire format was selected since it enabled systematic gathering of similar answers among subjects. It also aided the purpose of the study to investigate the institutional behaviour in the context of higher education on some quantifiable dimensions pertaining to fairness, participation, working meaning, and attachment in the organization in the modern academic environments.

### 2.7 Measurement of Variables

Each of the variables of the study was measured with a five-point Likert scale, i.e., 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. This scale was embraced since it enabled the respondents to indicate the extent of their agreement on behavioural and attitudinal items clearly and consistent. The measurement framework was developed to be capable of explaining both the individual perceptions and how they relate to the institutional culture. All the constructs were operationalized using the dimensions that concerned professional behaviour, workplace equity, role adaptation, and employee involvement in higher education organizations.

#### 2.7.1 Quiet Quitting

Quiet quitting was assessed using measures of minimum-role performance, less discretionary effort, emotional withdrawal, and less organizational initiative. These dimensions were chosen since they reflected slight types of disengagement without suggesting an actual resignation. The weakening of the culture of collaboration in academic endeavours and decreased dedication to the participation in the institution were applicable in the context of higher education. The construct was thus conceptualized as an action which is not just an attitude of a worker, but also an indicator of the changing professional values and organizational experience within the educational settings.

#### 2.7.2 Organizational Commitment

Measures of organizational commitment included those that dealt with feelings of emotional attachment to the institution, desire to stay, and compatibility with the institutional aims. These indicators were employed due to the fact that in higher education commitment goes beyond

contractual employment to imply identification with the academic mission, collegial culture and institutional values. The construct played a critical role in the given study since commitment was one of the main levels of scientific culture within the educational institutions where the sense of belonging and purpose of the employees play a crucial role in the sustainability, participation, and the quality of academic life.

### 2.7.3 Work Engagement

The items were used to measure work engagement based on items that concerned vigor, dedication and absorption in work. These dimensions summed up the vitality, engagement, and focus employees carried over to their professions. Engagement in higher education has been considered critical to the quality of teaching, administrative performance, the support of students, and continuity of the institution. The construct was added on the basis of the fact that the disengagement in the academic environment can undermine the performance of the organization, as well as the culture of knowledge work, in general. It was thus measured in accordance with the concern of the journal with education, human values, and institutional change.

### 2.7.4 Perceived Pay Equity

The items used to measure perceived pay equity included fairness of compensation, internal comparison, reward recognition, and adequacy when compared to effort. These dimensions were chosen due to the fact that compensation was not only perceived as a matter of economics, but as a moral and institutional indicator of worth. In higher education, the perception of fairness influences trust, morale and the feeling of being respected by the organization. The construct was particularly pertinent to the present study since inequity can be a contributing factor to withdrawal behaviour and undermine employee engagement in an environment that is supposed to promote intellectual and professional integrity.

### 2.7.5 Job Crafting

Job crafting was gauged using task adjustment, relational adjustment, meaning enhancement, and proactive role shaping items. These dimensions represented how much the employees proactively altered elements of their work to enhance fit, motivation, and importance. Job crafting was especially applicable in the field of higher education where the employees tend to change their job roles in response to changes in workloads, institutional needs,

and expectations. The construct was added as a good organizational behaviour that might enhance engagement and commitment even in circumstances that relate to quiet quitting tendencies.

### 2.8 Content Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was also critically examined to achieve conceptual and contextual clarity and alignment. Special care was taken with the question of whether the items were relevant to measure higher education work culture, perceptions of fairness and patterns of employee engagement. Reliability was evaluated using the standard internal consistency tests that are usually applied in the social science research. The constructs were all found to be acceptable and were included in the analysis. This was done to ensure that the instrument had sufficient coherence and relevance in measuring the intended variables with respect to institutional culture in academic settings.

### 2.9 Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to simple ethics during the data collection process. The study was purely voluntary, and the respondents were made aware of the academic intent of the study prior to filling the questionnaire. The names of all institutions and personally identifying information were not documented, thus safeguarding anonymity and confidentiality. Only research purposes were considered in the form of responses that were given in aggregate. These precautions were significant as the research was concerned with delicate perceptions regarding work behaviour, fairness, and institutional attachment in higher learning settings.

### 2.10 Data Analysis Strategy

The data collected was analyzed through descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis and group mean comparison where appropriate. The reason why these methods were chosen was that they were suitable in studying the direction and the strength of relationships among the study variables without applying the complexity of coding-based or computationally intensive procedures. The descriptive analysis was used to summarise the patterns among respondents, correlation and regression were used to determine the explanatory power of quiet quitting, perceived pay equity and job crafting on the organisational commitment and work engagement within higher education setting.

### 2.11 Analytical Model

The model used analysis placed quiet quitting as the independent variable where the organizational commitment and work engagement were the primary dependent variables. Perceived pay equity and job crafting were added as some related explanatory variables since they were supposed to influence the employee responses towards the institutional work environment. This model was created to capture the behavioural, ethical and cultural aspects of employment in higher education. It was also pertinent to the scope of the journal as it connected the workplace attitudes to the more general problems of institutional values and educational culture.

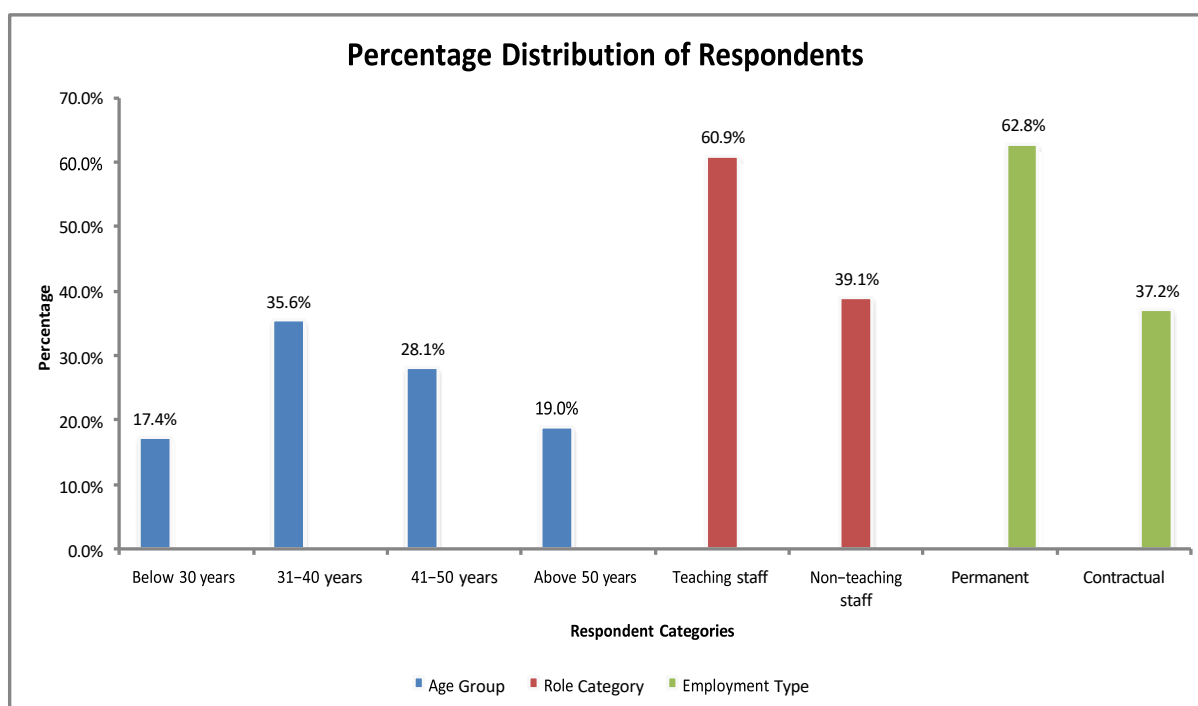
## 3. Results

### 3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The distribution of the respondents was even and varied in the higher education sector of Telangana. Of the 253 respondents, 54.2% were male and 45.8% were female. Most participants belonged to the 31–40 years age group (35.6%), followed by 41–50 years (28.1%). As shown in Table 1 and Figure 2, 60.9% of the sample was teaching staff and 39.1% non-teaching staff. There was also a high number of years of experience in the 4–10 years range, indicating that the sample was primarily a representation of professionally engaged employees with enough experience in the institution.

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 253)**

| Variable               | Category           | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Gender</b>          | Male               | 137       | 54.2       |
|                        | Female             | 116       | 45.8       |
| <b>Age Group</b>       | Below 30 years     | 44        | 17.4       |
|                        | 31–40 years        | 90        | 35.6       |
|                        | 41–50 years        | 71        | 28.1       |
|                        | Above 50 years     | 48        | 19.0       |
| <b>Role Category</b>   | Teaching staff     | 154       | 60.9       |
|                        | Non-teaching staff | 99        | 39.1       |
| <b>Experience</b>      | 1–3 years          | 56        | 22.1       |
|                        | 4–10 years         | 111       | 43.9       |
|                        | Above 10 years     | 86        | 34.0       |
| <b>Employment Type</b> | Permanent          | 159       | 62.8       |
|                        | Contractual        | 94        | 37.2       |



**Figure 2.** Percentage distribution of respondents by age group, role category, and employment type.

### 3.2 Descriptive Statistics of Core Variables

The descriptive results found that quiet quitting was at moderate levels ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ ). Organizational commitment had moderate positive score ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ) and work engagement was moderately positive ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ). Pay equity

perceptions were moderate ( $M = 3.37$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ) which reflects mixed feelings of fairness. The average of job crafting was higher ( $M = 3.71$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ), as this indicates active role adjustment of the participants (Table 2).

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Core Variables**

| Variable                  | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Standard Deviation |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|------|--------------------|
| Quiet Quitting            | 1.40    | 4.80    | 3.15 | 0.66               |
| Organizational Commitment | 1.60    | 5.00    | 3.58 | 0.63               |
| Work Engagement           | 2.00    | 5.00    | 3.58 | 0.59               |
| Perceived Pay Equity      | 1.00    | 5.00    | 3.37 | 0.69               |
| Job Crafting              | 2.40    | 5.00    | 3.71 | 0.54               |

### 3.3 Reliability Results

The reliability test was done to make sure that all the constructs of the study were internally consistent in a satisfactory manner. The alpha scores of the scales ranged between 0.82 and 0.88 and this implies that items used in assessing the constructs of the scales had sufficient coherence. Table 3 revealed that the

alpha of quiet quitting was 0.88, organizational commitment was 0.88, work engagement was 0.85, perceived pay equity was 0.84 and job crafting was 0.82. These results established validity of the questionnaire and enabled all variables to be included in the correlation and regression tests that would be conducted.

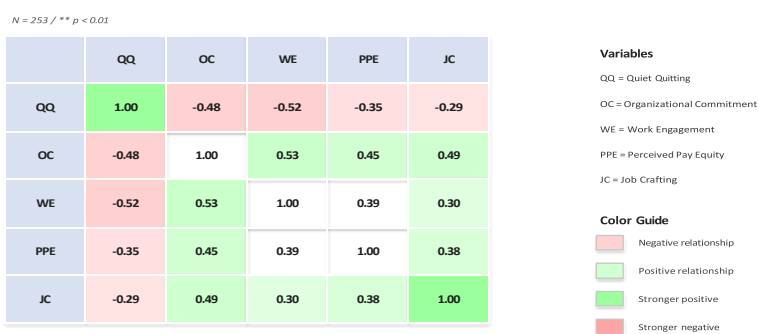
**Table 3. Reliability Results**

| Variable                  | No. of Items | Cronbach's Alpha | Reliability Status |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Quiet Quitting            | 5            | 0.88             | Good               |
| Organizational Commitment | 5            | 0.88             | Good               |
| Work Engagement           | 5            | 0.85             | Good               |
| Perceived Pay Equity      | 4            | 0.84             | Good               |
| Job Crafting              | 5            | 0.82             | Good               |

### 3.4 Correlation Results

Correlation analysis showed that there was significant negative correlation between quiet quitting and organizational commitment ( $r = -0.48$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and work engagement ( $r = -0.52$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Organizational commitment ( $r = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and work engagement

( $r = 0.39$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) had a positive association with perceived pay equity. The overall direction of hypotheses in the study was confirmed by finding a significant positive correlation between job crafting and organizational commitment ( $r = 0.49$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and work engagement ( $r = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) (Figure 3).



Note: Values represent Pearson correlation coefficients. All reported correlations are significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

**Figure 3.** Correlation heat map showing the direction and strength of relationships among variables.

### 3.5 Regression Results for Organizational Commitment

The results of the multiple regression analysis showed that quiet quitting was a significant predictor of organization commitment (beta = -0.31,  $p < 0.001$ ). The perceived pay equity was not only significant (beta = 0.22,  $p < 0.001$ ) but job crafting also

played a positive role (beta = 0.31,  $p < 0.001$ ). The model accounted 40.4 percent of the organizational commitment variability ( $R^2 = 0.404$ ), suggesting that the overall explanatory power of the predictors was strong (Table 4). These findings were consistent with the concept of fairness and proactive role adjustment as variables that alleviated the negative impact of withdrawal behaviour.

**Table 4. Regression Results for Organizational Commitment**

| Predictor            | Unstandardized B | Standard Error | Beta   | t-value | p-value |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Constant             | 2.478            | 0.339          | —      | 7.314   | 0.000   |
| Quiet Quitting       | -0.301           | 0.051          | -0.313 | -5.893  | 0.000   |
| Perceived Pay Equity | 0.204            | 0.050          | 0.222  | 4.040   | 0.000   |
| Job Crafting         | 0.368            | 0.064          | 0.312  | 5.797   | 0.000   |

*Model Summary:*  $R = 0.636$ ,  $R^2 = 0.404$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.397$ ,  $F = 56.251$ ,  $p < 0.001$

### 3.6 Regression Results for Work Engagement

Regression model of work engagement also yielded significant results. Quiet quitting was also significant results were also obtained in the regression model of work engagement. It was also established that quiet quitting had a great negative predictive value (beta = -0.418,  $p < 0.001$ ) and this means that withdrawal behaviours had a negative

effect on the energy and engagement of employees in the workplace. Perceived pay equity was found to have positive and significant impact (beta = 0.203,  $p < 0.01$ ) and job crafting was also found to have positive impact but not significant at the conventional level (beta = 0.098,  $p > 0.05$ ). The model has described 32.5 percent of the variance in work engagement ( $R^2 = 0.325$ ).

**Table 5. Regression Results for Work Engagement**

| Predictor            | Unstandardized B | Standard Error | Beta   | t-value | p-value |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------|---------|---------|
| Constant             | 3.772            | 0.338          | —      | 11.162  | 0.000   |
| Quiet Quitting       | -0.377           | 0.051          | -0.418 | -7.392  | 0.000   |
| Perceived Pay Equity | 0.175            | 0.050          | 0.203  | 3.471   | 0.001   |
| Job Crafting         | 0.108            | 0.063          | 0.098  | 1.710   | 0.089   |

*Model Summary:*  $R = 0.570$ ,  $R^2 = 0.325$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.317$ ,  $F = 39.944$ ,  $p < 0.001$

### 3.7 Comparative Pattern Findings

Comparative analysis showed that the respondents who felt that there was more equity in pay also displayed less quiet quitting and more organization commitment. Similarly, employees with greater job crafting interests were better engaged in work regardless of the extreme institutional environment. The permanent workers were a little more committed

( $M = 3.66$ ) to it than the contractual workers ( $M = 3.45$ ). Teaching staff had a slight better job crafting as compared to non-teaching staff. The trends meant that the sense of work, understanding of fairness, and role flexibility affected the employee responses in different groups of Telangana higher education employees.

**Table 6. Comparative Mean Differences Across Respondent Groups**

| Group Variable  | Category           | Quiet Quitting Mean | Organizational Commitment Mean | Work Engagement Mean | Job Crafting Mean |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Employment Type | Permanent          | 3.05                | 3.66                           | 3.63                 | 3.72              |
|                 | Contractual        | 3.33                | 3.45                           | 3.48                 | 3.70              |
| Role Category   | Teaching staff     | 3.13                | 3.63                           | 3.62                 | 3.71              |
|                 | Non-teaching staff | 3.18                | 3.52                           | 3.51                 | 3.72              |

### 3.8 Hypothesis Testing Summary

The results of hypothesis testing indicated that a majority of the hypotheses proposed were accepted. Quiet quitting had a detrimental impact on organizational commitment and work engagement,

but perceived pay equity had a positive impact on the two outcome variables. Job crafting positively influenced organizational commitment significantly, but not statistically significant in work engagement in the regression model.

**Table 7. Hypothesis Testing Summary**

| Hypothesis | Statement                                                                           | Decision      |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| H1         | Quiet quitting has a significant negative effect on organizational commitment       | Supported     |
| H2         | Quiet quitting has a significant negative effect on work engagement                 | Supported     |
| H3         | Perceived pay equity has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment | Supported     |
| H4         | Perceived pay equity has a significant positive effect on work engagement           | Supported     |
| H5         | Job crafting has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment         | Supported     |
| H6         | Job crafting has a significant positive effect on work engagement                   | Not Supported |

### 4. Discussion

The results revealed that quiet quitting had a negative impact on organizational commitment and work engagement of employees in Telangana higher education institutions to a significant degree. This finding indicates that quiet quitting does not simply mean a decrease in additional effort, but a more general type of a psychological distance to the institution. In the current research, the employees who claimed to have greater quiet quitting were less emotionally attached to their organizations and more engaged in their work. The significance of this trend in the context of higher education is that teaching and non-teaching personnel play not just a role in the formal job performance but also in the academic setting, teamwork and institutional sustainability. Regression findings also revealed that the negative impact of quiet quitting on work engagement was stronger than the one on organizational commitment, so withdrawal behaviour could initially have an impact on the day-to-day energy, commitment and engagement of employees before conclusively undermining their long-term commitment to the institution. Perceived pay equity proved to be a strong positive predictor of organizational commitment and work engagement which suggests that fairness in compensation was still a strong institutional indicator of appreciation and importance. Job crafting was also a positive predictor of organizational commitment and had a positive but statistically insignificant impact on the work engagement in the regression model. This implies that proactive role-adjustment can be particularly relevant in maintaining institutional attachment, but the independent predictive power of proactive role-adjustment can be diluted when the effects of quiet quitting and pay equity are both factored in.

Originally, the findings suggest that employee disengagement within the higher education system should be perceived as a relational and institutional problem that is influenced by equity, sense of purpose, and the overall quality of working environment.

The current results were generally congruent with the prior investigations, and also provided a more exact view of higher education. It has been indicated that organizational conditions, in particular, support, role conflict and job satisfaction are highly relevant to quiet quitting, which is consistent with the current finding that institutional experience is a determinant of withdrawal behaviour and not merely unwillingness to work (Singh et al., 2025). The previous literature has proposed that quiet quitting can impact academic performance, student satisfaction, and research productivity, which underpins the current perspective that lower levels of commitment and participation can undermine the broader institutional purpose in higher education (Khan et al., 2025). The observed negative correlation between quiet quitting and organizational commitment is also consistent with the literature on work which highlights person-organization fit and work-life balance as determinants of faculty alignment with organizational goals (Templeton, 2026). Similarly, the negative correlation between quiet quitting and work engagement can be reconciled with the findings that motivational resources determine educator engagement and resilience in work roles (Albig, 2024). The general trend of disengagement is also indicative of previous claims that quiet quitting and associated work behaviour decrease employee engagement in modern organizations (Jana et al., 2026). Moreover, the conceptual work, which links disengagement

with undermined organizational citizenship behaviour, contributes to the current meaning that quiet quitting can lead to less discretionary institutional participation than what is required of minimum formal duties (Kulshreshtha et al., 2025). Lastly, the current results are also consistent with the evidence provided by knowledge-intensive environments that unfavourable workplace experiences, such as ostracism and knowledge hiding, could promote quiet quitting behaviours, thus supporting the perspective that these behaviours are usually reactionary to poor organisational environments as opposed to an individual decision (Dutta et al., 2024).

There were a few limitations of the study. First, it was restricted to the Telangana region and this limits the applicability of the results to other contexts of higher education in India. Second, despite the fact that the sample size of 253 respondents was more robust than in a smaller exploratory design, it nevertheless reflected a limited institutional and regional sample as opposed to the entire Indian higher education diversity. Third, the cross-sectional design did not allow interpreting the causal direction, as all the variables were measured at a single point in time. Fourth, the researchers conducted a study that only considered quiet quitting, perceived pay equity, job crafting, organizational commitment, and work engagement, and did not cover other potentially significant variables, including leadership style, workload distribution, institutional trust, and digital work pressure. Lastly, the research failed to differentiate higher education institutions types, which would have provided more differences in employee attitudes and work behaviour.

The practical and theoretical implications of the study were implied. Practically, the results indicate that higher education institutions cannot view quiet quitting as a sole employee performance problem, but as a sign of institutional strain, perceived unfairness, and diminished meaning at the workplace. Clear compensation, equal recognition, equal workload, and more participatory working conditions can be useful in minimizing the withdrawal behaviours and enhancing employee attachment. Organizations can also take advantage of promoting types of job crafting that enable employees to design tasks and roles in a purposeful manner. Theoretically, the results indicate that social exchange, equity, and work-resource views are applicable in the explanation of employee withdrawal in academic institutions. On a bigger scale, the research supports the notion that quiet quitting among college and university staff members

is correlated with scientific culture, as the stability of academic organizations relies on the loyalty, engagement and appreciation of employees, who can enliven the knowledge working culture.

## 5. Conclusion

Quiet quitting has now become an issue that matters in higher education since it undermines the psychological and behavioural pillars that support institutions to remain effective. The results showed that organizational commitment and work engagement decreased when employees only performed minimum work roles. This trend implied that decreased discretionary participation in academic workplaces influenced not only personal motivation but also the culture of participation, responsibility and institutional belonging in general. Perceived pay equity was also a significant favourable determinant, which demonstrated that equity in pay reinforced trust, attachment, and readiness to stay engaged. Job crafting also played a constructive role, particularly in strengthening organizational commitment and supporting employees in maintaining meaning and ownership in their work.

These results highlight that quiet quitting in higher education cannot be viewed as the problem of individual attitude solely. It is also related to the experience of recognition, equity, and opportunity to meaningfully contribute to the institution by employees. Academic settings rely on industrious and active workers to maintain the quality of teaching, the relationship among colleagues, and the persistence of the culture of science. Increasing open compensation, promoting role shaping, and more conducive working conditions can thus be used to diminish disengagement. The humanistic institutional approach is still crucial in establishing resilient, ethical and participatory higher education systems in modern India.

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