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Is quiet quitting a team-breaker?

Ana Lúcia Azevedo dos Anjos Nascimento

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Supervisor:

Prof. Dra. Patrícia Lopes Costa, Assistant Professor, ISCTE - Business School,

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BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit.
Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,
not looking to your own interests
but each of you to the interests of the others.
Philippians 2:3-4

Resumo

O Covid-19 e a *hustle culture* são apontados como catalisadores do comportamento de *quiet quitting* que envolve fazer tudo o que está contratualmente definido, mas evitando ir para além disso, no sentido de priorizar e melhorar o bem-estar e *work-life balance* do trabalhador. No entanto, a literatura acerca deste fenómeno é muito limitada, o conceito é ambíguo e confundido com outros pré-existentes. Neste sentido, o presente estudo visa clarificar o conceito de *quiet quitting* e relacioná-lo com outras variáveis - perceções de justiça, conflito relacional e *sensemaking* por parte do líder - num contexto de equipa de trabalho. Para o efeito, foi desenvolvida uma nova escala de *quiet quitting*, composta por 2 fatores e 10 itens. Este estudo contou com a participação de 167 indivíduos de 36 equipas diferentes. Os resultados indicaram que o *sensemaking* modera a relação entre as diferenças de *quiet quitting* numa equipa de trabalho e as perceções de justiça interpessoal, tornando-a mais fraca (0.64 [CI: 0.22, 1.05]). Adicionalmente, verificou-se que existe um efeito direto significativo entre o diferencial de *quiet quitting* e a justiça processual, o que significa que o primeiro é um fator preditor desta dimensão de justiça (-0.53 [CI: -0.93, -0.13]). Assim, este estudo oferece sugestões práticas como a formação dos líderes em *sensemaking* e a comunicação clara das expectativas e responsabilidades de cada trabalhador para evitar perceções de injustiça processual em equipas onde existe um diferencial de *quiet quitting*.

Palavras-chave: *quiet quitting*; conflito relacional; justiça distributiva; justiça processual; justiça interpessoal; justiça informacional; *sensemaking*.

Classificação JEL: D63, J01, J24.

Abstract

Covid-19 and hustle culture are seen as catalysts for quiet quitting behaviour, which involves doing everything that is contractually defined, but avoiding going above and beyond, in order to prioritise and improve the employee's well-being and work-life balance. However, the literature on this phenomenon is very limited, and the concept is ambiguous and confused with other pre-existing concepts. With this in mind, this study aims to clarify the concept of quiet quitting and relate it to other variables - perceptions of justice, relationship conflict and sensemaking from the leader - in a work team context. To this end, a new quiet quitting scale was developed, consisting of 2 factors and 10 items. This study involved 167 individuals from 36 different teams. The results indicated that sensemaking moderates the relationship between differences in quiet quitting in a work team and perceptions of interpersonal justice, making it weaker (0.64 [CI: 0.22, 1.05]). In addition, there was a significant direct effect between the quiet quitting differential and procedural justice, which means that the former is a predictor of this dimension of justice (-0.53 [CI: -0.93, -0.13]). This research therefore offers practical suggestions such as training leaders in sensemaking and clearly communicating the expectations and responsibilities of each worker to avoid perceptions of procedural injustice in teams where there is a quiet quitting differential.

Index

Index of Tables

Index of Figures

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Covid-19 emerged without anyone foreseeing it and has had an impact on all dimensions of people's lives, including work (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Hamouche, Koritos, & Papastathopoulos, 2023; Mouton, 2022; Serenko, 2023). As the pandemic progressed and lockdowns followed, companies began to adopt remote working, which, despite its benefits, also blurred the boundaries between work and family life, caused work overload and, consequently, mental health problems (Boy & Sürmeli, 2023; Lu, Mamun, Chen, Yang, & Masukujjaman, 2023; Tsemach & Barth, 2023). In fact, Consiglio, Massa, Sommovigo, & Fusco (2023) showed how problematic technology can be for the health of remote workers. In addition to the pandemic, the hustle culture has been identified as a catalyst for the adoption of quiet quitting behaviour, as employees have refused to continue to subscribe to the mentality that work is our life (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Kang, Kim, & Cho, 2023; Lawless, 2023; Serenko, 2023). The literature condemns both for the pandemic and the hustle culture for contributing to increased burnout (Boy & Sürmeli, 2023; Lawless, 2023; Serenko, 2023; Tsemach & Barth, 2023) and decreased employee well-being (Hamouche et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Mouton, 2022; Serenko, 2023). Burnout is an occupational disease (World Health Organization, 2019) and a key driver for quiet quitting behaviour (Serenko, 2023), used as a strategy to avoid the excessive stress and unrealistic demands of their current work environment (Anand, Doll, & Ray, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Xueyun, Mamun, Masukujjaman, Rahman, Gao, & Yang, 2023). As a result, individuals have started to re-evaluate their priorities, giving greater priority to personal well-being and mental health and creating healthier work-life boundaries (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023). But what exactly is quiet quitting? A definition that is in line with the perspective adopted by this study defines quiet quitting as "a mindset in which employees deliberately limit all work activities to those of a formal or informal job description, meet yet not exceed the preestablished expectations, set up boundaries, never volunteer for and ignore (if possible) all additional tasks and do all this in a manner that merely maintains their current employment status and prioritizes their well-being over larger organizational goals" (Serenko, 2023, p. 4).

Hence, as might be expected, the phenomenon of quiet quitting has only recently emerged (Anand et al., 2023, Atalay & Dağistan, 2023) and, for this reason, the literature and empirical evidence regarding this concept is still very limited. Accordingly, there is a great need for

research into a topic that is increasingly common and noticeable in the business world, in order to better understand what it really means and how organizations can counteract its potential negative consequences (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023). In reality, besides being a global phenomenon (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023), quiet quitting seems to be able to reshape the labour market as we know it (Hamouche, Koritos, & Papastathopoulos, 2023). Furthermore, the literature on this topic does not converge when it comes to the connotation given to quiet quitting, making it an ambiguous concept. Some authors seem to give quiet quitting an extremely negative connotation, saying that they are not engaged in work and do as little as possible to avoid being fired (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Ng & Stanton, 2023), while others conceptualise it as a way for employees to reassess their priorities and boundaries (Anand, Doll, & Ray, 2023; Forrester, 2023). In this line of thinking, quiet quitting is also confused with other pre-existing concepts - e.g. withdrawal behaviours (Moon, O'Brien, & Mann, 2023) - which leads to misunderstandings.

Serenko (2023) points out that employees may become frustrated with co-workers who are quiet quitting, since the former will have to carry out the work that the latter have decided not to take on, as this would exceed the limits imposed by them, according to what is contractually defined. In this sense, the quiet quitters' colleagues may feel an overload of work which, consequently, could contribute to a decrease in perceptions of fairness in the work team. On the one hand, according to Equity Theory, when comparing input/output ratios with those of their colleagues, they may perceive distributive injustice if they are not proportional (Adams, 1963, 1965). On the other hand, they may not consider leaders' decisions about the distribution of resources to be fair - procedural injustice (Leventhal, 1980). Consequently, the relationship between justice and conflict is intuitive – "for example, low pay, biased procedures or disrespectful treatment are usually perceived as unjust situations that could give rise to conflict" (Adamovic, 2023, p. 774). In addition, quiet quitting seems to be confused with other behaviours that are considered negative for the work team, which can result in negative consequences due to misinterpretation of the behaviour in question. For instance, if a teammate considers the quiet quitter to be a social loafer, it could result in interpersonal conflicts (Monzani, Ripoll, Peiró, & Van Dick, 2014). Despite the aforementioned, sensemaking, as a team leadership function, could potentially prevent such negative outcomes, since it involves identifying environmental events, interpreting them and then communicating them to the team members (Morgeson, 2005; Morgeson, DeRue, Karam, 2010; Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001). In other words, the leader can not only give meaning to the concept of quiet quitting,

differentiating it from others, but also better explain the reasons for resource allocations, improving the perceptions of fairness among the quiet quitters' teammates.

Therefore, the goal of this study is to answer the following questions: if my co-worker engages in quiet quitting, how will I react to his behaviour? If I do perceive the behaviour as unfair will I come into conflict with him? Can the leader avoid these consequences through sensemaking?

This study contributes to the literature in several ways including addressing the aforementioned research gaps. Firstly, it contributes to the conceptualisation of the phenomenon of quiet quitting, clarifying its meaning and identifying similarities and differences with existing concepts. Secondly, it introduces new relationships between the phenomenon and other variables which, to the best of our knowledge, have not previously been analysed, in order to increase understanding of quiet quitting (perceptions of justice, relationship conflict and sensemaking). Thirdly, to develop a new scale that better represents quiet quitting behaviour. Fourthly, it presents empirical support for the aforementioned relationships, but with a greater focus on the consequences of the phenomenon under study. Fifthly, unlike the majority of existing studies, this research measures quiet quitting at the team level, and not just at individual and organisational level. And finally, it creates awareness and helps individuals, leaders and organisations to act more correctly in the presence of quiet quitters.

The following sections will first provide a critical analysis of the concept of quiet quitting, followed by the conceptualisation of the other variables under study (perceptions of justice, relationship conflict and sensemaking) and the possible relationships that may exist between them, in order to develop and introduce the research hypotheses. Subsequently, the methods and results of the analysis will be presented, leading to a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications, ending with limitations and suggestions for future research.

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CHAPTER II

Literature Review

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2.1. Quiet Quitting

The rare studies that exist on quiet quitting show the divergent opinions among different authors. In fact, there is no consensus on the concept itself, on what it implies, or on whether or not it is a new phenomenon. With regard to the last point, one side argues that contrary to what has been reported by the mainstream media and social media, quiet quitting is not a totally new concept, having theories and other concepts at its origin (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Formica et al., 2022; Galanis, Katsiroumpa, Vraka, Siskou, Konstantakopoulou, Katsoulas, Moisoglou, Gallos, Kaitelidou, 2023). Another perspective states that quiet quitting is a new construct, which emerged relatively recently, and that for this reason the literature and empirical data are limited regarding this concept (Anand et al., 2023, Atalay & Dağistan, 2023, Xueyun et al., 2023). Finally, Hamouche et al. (2023) presents an intermediate option, believing that quiet quitting is a global phenomenon that is neither totally new nor totally old. In addition to this discussion, quiet quitting does not have a clear definition, but rather an ambiguous one (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023), and is confused with various other concepts (Kang et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023), which are generally connoted negatively and considered intolerable, however this difference will be clarified later in this section.

Researchers who have studied quiet quitting seem to have a non-convergent interpretation of this phenomenon, which leads to uncertainty about what to do when it is observed (Hamouche et al., 2023). In fact, there seems to be a spectrum in which quiet quitting is labelled from very positive to very negative. On the one hand, quiet quitting is considered to be the work-related phenomenon in which the employee leaves early or arrives late, is less motivated and less engaged to their duties, as well as revealing low job satisfaction and limited commitment to carry out their assigned duties (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Ng & Stanton, 2023). On the other hand, some argue that an employee who is engaged in quiet quitting limits their work activities to the job description, not volunteering for extra tasks or responsibilities, working only the contractually defined hours, not going above and beyond what is expected, which does not mean that they are not motivated or passionate about their work, but rather that they have established boundaries between their personal and professional lives (Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023). Furthermore, in order to describe the same behaviour of an employee engaged in quiet quitting, some researchers choose to do it in more damaging terms than others - "carrying out their job responsibilities at the bare

minimum" (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023) or does not put "additional effort to exceed the minimum requirements" (Anand et al., 2023) vs does not "go above and beyond" (Forrester, 2023; Serenko, 2023). However, the authors reached a consensus: quiet quitting is adopted in the sense that workers begin to re-evaluate their priorities and setting boundaries, by putting their well-being, mental health and work life balance first. Table 2.1 displays the various definitions developed by different authors with our critical analysis represented by colours. Moreover, Table 2.2 summarises the theories put forward to explain the phenomenon of quiet quitting.

Table 2.1: Concept of quiet quitting by other authors

Time	Author(s)	Country	Concept
10/2022	Formica & Sfodera	Italy	"The term Quiet Quitting refers to the limited commitment of employees to carry out the assigned duties and to relinquish from any other task not specified in their job description. It also implies a low investment in work activities. Quiet quitters, therefore, are disengaged at work and do not intend to go above and beyond their line of duty."
03/2023	Hamouche, Koritos & Papastathopoulos	United Arab Emirates and Greece	"Quiet quitting involves employees withholding discretionary efforts at the workplace to prevent burnout and improve their work–life balance."
03/2023	Forrester	United States of America	"(…) the idea that workers should no longer go above and beyond their job requirements and subscribe to 'hustle culture'."
03/2023	Boy & Sürmeli	Turkey	"The employees "only" perform the assigned tasks within their job description without extra effort and working de votedly. They do not intend to exceed their baseline obligations; they choose to perform all their tasks during working hours, rejecting the mentality of being available for more work after hours. In other words, they adopt the motto "working to live" instead of "living to work". It allows employees to set boundaries between work and personal life. They work with the understanding of "leaving work at work" to save energy for their social lives"
04/2023	Serenko	Canada	"Quiet quitting is defined as a mindset in which employees deliberately limit all work activities to those of a formal or informal job description, meet yet not exceed the preestablished expectations, set up boundaries, never volunteer for and ignore (if possible) all additional tasks and do all this in a manner that merely maintains their current employment status and prioritizes their well-being over larger organizational goals."
05/2023	Anand, Doll & Ray	India/France, USA, India	"QQ is defined as a decreased psychological commitment to work with a lack of individual engagement, managerial support and quality of life at work, along with increased employee burnout, concern about well-being and work–life balance."

08/2023	Atalay and Dağistan	Turkey	"In short, the phenomenon refers to employees who are no longer motivated due to issues related to their job responsibilities, work hours, work-life balance, pay policies, manager attitude, the meaningfulness of their work and organizational justice. These employees perform their duties without putting in extra effort, feel undervalued and unappreciated and do not show commitment, engagement or enthusiasm towards the organization or their managers. This results in them carrying out their job responsibilities at the bare minimum, avoiding taking responsibility and filling their work hours without feeling psychologically connected to the organization."
11/2023	Tsemach and Barth	Israel	"This term refers to the widespread phenomenon of employees setting limits to their employers and insisting on their unwillingness to go beyond job requirements."
11/2023	Kang, Kim & Cho	Republic of Korea	"(…) employees limiting their efforts to fulfil assigned tasks without going beyond their designated responsibilities."
12/2023	Srivastava, Saxena, Kapoor & Qadir	India	"QQ refers to intentionally sticking to the job description and deliberately limiting work activities, by not taking on additional responsibilities and becoming less productive."

Note: Red (negative connotation) → Yellow → Green (positive connotation)

Table 2.2: Theories related to quiet quitting phenomenon

Theory and Authors	Conceptualization	Relation with Quiet Quitting beahvior
COR (conservation of resource) theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001)	This theory suggests that individuals strive to acquire, protect and maintain their resources and if they perceive a loss they will try to minimise it.	Workers can use quiet quitting as a strategy to safeguard resources and protect themselves from losses (e.g. loss of WLB, which will consequently lead to stress and exhaustion) (Hamouche et al., 2023; Srivastava, Saxena, Kapoor, & Qadir, 2023).
JD-R model (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, Schaufeli, 2001)	It suggests that every occupation has risk factors (demands) and mitigating factors (resources), which are related to job stress and ultimately influence employees' health, behavior and performance.	If demands are greater than resources, employees tend to reduce effort in order to prevent/mitigate possible health problems, such as burnout, which is considered a cause of quiet quitting (Serenko, 2023).
Equity Theory (Adams, 1963, 1965)	According to this theory, individuals compare their input/output ratio with that of others, seeking equality. If they perceive inequality, the worker will increase outputs or decrease inputs.	The perception of injustice is referred as a cause of QQ. Particularly, inputs (e.g. effort and time) are considered superior to the resources given by the company (e.g. rewards), so the former are limited by quiet quitters to a healthier level (Anand et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Karrani, Bani-Melhem, & Shamsudin, 2023; Serenko, 2023). On the one hand, workers who went "above and beyond" rather than being rewarded monetarily were

		rewarded with more work (Serenko, 2023). On the other hand, even when working overtime, the output might not be enough because employees become exhausted (Forrester, 2023).
Social Exchange Theory (SET) Blau (1964)	SET theory centres on the cost-benefit relationship that arises from the interaction between two parties, with the expectation of obtaining benefits and being rewarded. When one party provides something of value to the other, it obliges the recipient to reciprocate.	With the pandemic, workers have come to the conclusion that they have been over-contributing/ "going above and beyond" to the organisation they work for without a fair reward being perceived on their part. As a result, individuals have started doing everything that is contractually defined and for which they are effectively rewarded - quiet quitting (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Serenko, 2023).
Psychological contract theory (Rousseau, 1995)	This theory has its roots in the SET theory (Xueyun et al., 2023). The psychological contract is an agreement containing unwritten expectations and obligations between employees and employers.	The breakdown of the psychological contract between the two parties as a cause of quiet quitting (Karrani et al., 2023). On the other hand, the adoption of this behaviour could affect the nature of these contracts (Anand et al., 2023).

As mentioned above, quiet quitting is confused with other terms which, although they may be related, do not have the same meaning. For instance, based on the name given to the phenomenon in question, quiet quitters do not intend to leave their current position, but rather quit on the idea of going above and beyond (Anand et al., 2023; Forrester, 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023).

There is a tendency to categorise employees into two groups: the good (OCB) and the bad (CWB), ignoring that there may be people who display both types of behaviour (Bolino & Klotz, 2015; Griep, Germeys, & Kraak, 2021). Counterproductive work behaviours (CWB) are harmful to the organisation, affecting its functioning, property and harming other workers, which contributes to reduced productivity (Fox, Spector, Miles, 2001) - e.g. sabotage, theft, abuse toward others, withdrawal (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, 2006), wasting time and workplace gossip (Dalal, 2005). Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) describes discretionary employee behaviour that goes beyond an employee's job description, contributing to organisational effectiveness - e.g. helping colleagues, taking on additional tasks and responsibilities, defending the organisation, tolerating inconveniences and constructively talking about the organisation's problems (Organ et al., 2006). However, it cannot be said that these behaviours are necessarily opposites (Bolino & Klotz, 2015). By establishing a relationship between these behaviours and those of quiet quitting, it can be seen that the latter seems to be on the low side of OCB (Hamouche et al., 2023), which does not mean that it is

engaged in CWB (Serenko, 2023). In fact, quiet quitters set boundaries and choose to do everything that is contractually defined, but no more than that. However, this also does not mean that they do not have any kind of OCB behaviours (e.g. altruism, civic virtue, courtesy and sportsmanship) (Hamouche et al., 2023). Furthermore, despite the benefits attributed to OCB, drawbacks are also pointed out: job stress, work-family conflict, and fatigue - negative impacts on well-being (Anderson & Bolino, 2022; Bolino & Klotz, 2015; Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2013). It is therefore clear that the concepts referred to are different, that not everything can be considered black or white, that there is grey, and that even positive behaviour encouraged by organisations can have costs associated with it.

To our knowledge, a substantial part of the literature on quiet quitting that presents empirical data cites the Gallup survey (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Galanis et al., 2023; Mouton, 2022; Serenko, 2023). However, as mentioned by Galanis et al. (2023), researchers define the 50% of people not engaged as quiet quitters. In this sense, the conclusions drawn from this premise may differ from reality. In fact, when we compare scales of work (dis)engagement with those of quiet quitting, there are differences. Specifically, the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI; Demerouti, Mostert, & Bakker, 2010), includes items such as "It happens more and more often that I talk about my work in a negative way" and "Lately, I tend to think less at work and do my job almost mechanically", which does not reflect quiet quitting behaviour. Moreover, according with Kahn (1990), disengaged individuals take physical, cognitive and emotional distance and will not invest themselves into the work, which is not exactly true for quiet quitters who do not distance themselves from work or their employer (Serenko, 2023). Burnout is also used as an argument to bring together the concept of work disengagement and quiet quitting (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023). On the one hand, there are those who argue that burnout is the opposite of engagement (Maslach and Leiter, 1997, as cited in Atalay & Dağistan, 2023), but on the other hand, there are those who state that the fact that a person is disengaged does not mean that they are in burnout or vice versa (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). However, there seems to be a striking similarity between disengagement and quiet quitting: they appear to be a reaction to a stressor, according to burnout theory (Afrahi, Blenkinsopp, De Arroyabe, & Karim, 2022). Furthermore, disengaged employees are not enthusiastic or motivated, but dissatisfied with their work (Anand et al., 2023), however, Forrester (2023) stresses that quiet quitting behaviour is not due to a lack of passion on the part of employees. Serenko (2023) adds that individuals are not motivated, but to go above and beyond, and that many overachievers were still rewarded with more work. In short, quiet quitters may be engaged in the tasks

described in the contract, they just are not engaged in going above and beyond (Kang et al., 2023; Karrani et al., 2023).

Later in this study, an empirical analysis will be conducted, including the withdrawal behaviour and social loafing variables, to analyse their similarity (or not) with quiet quitting behaviour and the relationship with the other variables. "Work withdrawal included behaviours dissatisfied individuals use to avoid aspects of their specific work role or minimize the time spent on their specific work tasks while maintaining their current organizational and work-role memberships" – e.g. absenteeism and lateness (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991, p.111). According to Carpenter & Berry (2014), the relationship between CWB and withdrawal is strong, and the latter can be represented as a facet of the former. Moon (2023) states that quiet quitting reveals workers' intention to withdraw. However, not only do quiet quitters not show the behaviours mentioned above (Serenko, 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023), they also do not tend to reduce the time spent on tasks, but rather avoid going 'above and beyond' (Hamouche et al., 2023). Moreover, Anand (2023) states that the two concepts analysed are different. Nevertheless, like quiet quitting, the perception of injustice is mentioned as a cause of withdrawal behaviour (Gupta, Sharma, Gupta, 2024). Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller (2011) add that low levels of commitment and satisfaction can be predictors of work withdrawal. This behaviour has been linked to undesirable outcomes such as the deterioration of teammates' morale and work motivation (Koslowsky, Sagie, Krausz, & Singer, 1997), and significant economic costs (Berry, Lelchook, & Clark, 2011). Social loafing is the tendency for individuals to reduce effort when working in groups, compared to working individually (Karau & Williams, 1993; Latané, Williams, & Harkins, 1979). However, quiet quitting behaviour does not arise because the individual works in a team and considers that others will do the work for him. Instead, he chooses to do what is contractually defined and no more, in order to achieve work-life balance. Injustice, as was the case with previous phenomena, has been identified as one of the causes of social loafing (Luo et al., 2013; Murphy, Wayne, Liden, & Erdogan, 2003). In addition, the larger the group, the more difficult it is to assess the contributions of each individual and the greater the possibility of social loafing (Liden, Wayne, Jaworski, & Bennett, 2003). Turnover has been identified both as a cause (Luo et al., 2013) and as a consequence of social loafing, which consequently leads to increased costs (of recruitment, training and on-boarding) (Monzani et al., 2014). This behaviour is also linked to other outcomes, such as: poor team performance (Mulvey & Klein, 1998), reduced group cohesion and interpersonal conflicts (Monzani et al., 2014). Finally, social loafing appears to be independent of the gender, nationality or age of individuals (Karau & Williams, 1993).

In addition, various authors who have studied the phenomenon of quiet quitting in order to clarify it have differentiated it from other concepts: work-to-rule (Anand et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023, Kang et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023), malicious compliance/obedience, sabotage (Serenko, 2023), cynicism (Hamouche et al., 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023), "Phoning it in" (Serenko, 2023), cyberloafing/cyberslacking (Anand et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023), turnover (Anand et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2023) e Tang Ping (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Kang et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023). As we have seen, the concept of quiet quitting is still shrouded in some confusion and ambiguity, thus establishing its definition is extremely important (Sink and Tuttle, 1989, as cited in Tangen, 2005). In this sense, we will use the following definition throughout this work: *Quiet quitting refers to the deliberate behaviour of employees who decide to set boundaries, doing everything that is contractually defined but avoiding going beyond the requirements of their job description (e.g. working extra hours, doing extra tasks, taking on extra responsibilities) in order to prioritise their well-being and work-life balance over their professional goals.*

When we analysed the existing literature on quiet quitting and, more specifically, the scales created to measure this phenomenon, we came across three possibilities, which presented some limitations: Anand et al. (2023), Galanis et al. (2023) and Karrani et al. (2023) - the latter being used in this research. In the case of the scale developed by Anand et al. (2023), the items used to measure quiet quitting were associated with concepts such as job disengagement, which, as mentioned above, is distinct from the phenomenon studied. In addition, affirmations such as "I often arrive late and leave early from work" or "I am doing the bare minimum work to avoid being fired" do not match the behaviour of quiet quitters. In fact, quiet quitters work the hours indicated in their contract, without arriving late or leaving early from work and do everything in their power to fulfil the requirements described in their employment contract. The second scale, suggested by Galanis et al. (2023), consists of nine items and three factors: "Detachment", "Lack of initiative" and "Lack of motivation", which are debatable. Items such as "If a colleague can do some of my work, then I let him/her do it" and "How often do you intend to be working in order to avoid another task?" - Detachment - do not describe the attitude of the quiet quitter, because it is not because a colleague can do their work that they stop doing it (similarities with social loafing), and they do not pretend to work. With regard to the "Lack of motivation" factor, there is no evidence to suggest that quiet quitters do not feel inspired by their work. Finally, in the "Lack of initiative" factor, workers do not shy away from giving their opinions. The last scale analysed, (Karrani et al., 2023), is the most similar to the one constructed in the context of this research, however there is no indication of the well-being or

WLB of employees or the establishment of boundaries, which we consider essential to explain quiet quitting behaviour. Furthermore, the item "I only communicate when necessary" seems extrapolated from the concept, since quiet quitters communicate without restrictions as long as it does not affect their well-being or make them work overtime. With regard to the last statement on the scale ("I don't actively seek feedback or seek to improve my skills"), we do not agree that these individuals do not seek feedback or want to improve their skills; on the contrary, they may do so as long as it does not exceed the healthy limit they have set for themselves, in compliance with fulfilling their contractual established tasks. Clearly, if the scales developed and applied are not a reflection of the quiet quitting phenomenon, the conclusions drawn from their results may not be true to reality.

The main reasons given for quiet quitting behaviour are: job burnout (Anand et al., 2023; Forrester, 2023; Galanis et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023), stress (Anand et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; ; Xueyun et al., 2023), lack of appreciation (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Forrester, 2023), lack of financial compensation (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Forrester, 2023; Serenko, 2023), high work demands (Forrester, 2023; Galanis et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; ; Xueyun et al., 2023), poor management and leadership (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023) and the need to well-being and work-life balance (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023). Indubitably, the causes presented turn out to be related, with a lack of resources and excessive demands leading workers to seek this balance in order to achieve more well-being.

As Serenko (2023) points out, quiet quitting seems to be a counter-intuitive phenomenon in terms of its consequences, i.e. it can either lead to dismissal or jeopardise a worker's career progression, or lead to promotion; it can either lead to a decrease in performance and productivity or an increase in it; and despite being pointed out as causing a loss of knowledge sharing, individuals show an improvement in job satisfaction and an increase in mental health and personal life. In this context, it is important to distinguish between the concepts of performance and productivity: "Performance is the umbrella term of excellence and includes profitability and productivity as well as other non-cost factors such as quality, speed, delivery and flexibility" and productivity is the "relation between output quantity (i.e. correctly produced products which fulfil their specifications) and input quantity (i.e. all resources that are consumed in the transformation process)" (Tangen, 2005, p. 43). On the one hand, managers have labelled quiet quitters as underperformers (Serenko, 2023)), while on the other hand the phenomenon has so far not been associated with poor performance (Hamouche et al., 2023). In

this respect, managers may not be thinking along the following lines: stress and fatigue (an antecedent of quiet quitting) can lead to people not being able to perform to their potential; quiet quitting, by helping to improve workers' mental health, can improve long-term performance (Forrester, 2023); and when there is a large volume of work, individuals have to multitask, which reduces the quality and accuracy of the tasks carried out (Serenko, 2023). Regarding productivity, working fewer hours (exclusively contractually defined hours) does not mean that output decreases. Instead of going above and beyond, workers will try to maximise their efficiency, which can happen through automation, by speeding up repetitive and administrative tasks (Serenko, 2023). As the expression goes: 'Work smarter, not harder'. In fact, according to studies related to 4 Day Work Week (4DWW), productivity can even increase through savings in intermediate costs, since if workers are more rested, they make fewer mistakes, have fewer accidents and fewer mental illnesses (Gomes, 2022). In Portugal, problems related to workers' stress and mental health, which even result in productivity losses, cost Portuguese companies millions of euros a year, and investing in the prevention and mitigation of this problem could reduce these losses by 30 per cent (Ordem dos Psicólogos Portugueses, 2023). In March 2021, Portugal was named as the country in the European Union with the highest risk of burnout (Couto, 2023; Universidade de Coimbra, n.d.) and according to STADA (2022), more than half of the Portuguese (57%) say they have already been close to suffering burnout. If, for example, we compare Portugal to Denmark, the latter is the second OECD country where workers work the fewest hours (OECD, n.d), but the third European Union country with the highest labour productivity per hour in 2022 (Idealista, 2023; Pordata, n.d.). Portugal, on the other hand, works longer hours and is less productive. In addition, according to the OECD's Work-Life Balance ranking, which consists of "being able to combine family commitments, leisure and work", Portugal has a balance of 6.7 out of 10, with Denmark in second place (OECD Better Life Index, n.d.). In short, as well as being identified as one of the causes of the quiet quitting phenomenon, burnout is a prevalent phenomenon in Portugal that entails economic costs, including productivity. Productivity, which is pointed out as a consequence of quiet quitting, is a real problem in Portugal and stems, among other reasons, from mental health problems. Quiet quitting can prevent and reduce mental health problems and, in turn, may lead to improved productivity.

However, even if the quiet quitter may have good motivations, without wanting to harm anyone (Serenko, 2023), his teammates may consider his behaviour to be neither right nor fair towards them, and in this sense lead to conflicts between both parties.

12

2.2. Relationship Conflict

Conflict is a process that results from the realisation of incompatibilities or differences (real or perceived) between group members (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012; Jehn & Mannix, 2001). The literature distinguishes three forms of intragroup conflict: relationship, task and process conflict (Jehn, 1997). Relationship conflict involves disagreements between members of a group over interpersonal issues, including tension, resentment and differences in personality or values (Amason, 1996; Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; O'Neill, Allen, & Hastings, 2013). Task conflicts entail incompatibilities in viewpoints, ideas and opinions regarding the content and outcomes of the task (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; Jehn, 1995). Process conflicts are disagreements among teammates about how the work should be accomplished, such as the delegation of tasks and responsibilities (Jehn & Bendersky, 2003; Jehn & Mannix, 2001; Jehn, 1997). In this study, the variable analysed will be relationship conflict, but it is common for there to be a relationship between the three types of conflict.

Relationship conflict is dysfunctional, as group members spend more time focused on non-task-related issues instead of spending it efficiently on accomplishing a task (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). In fact, this type of conflict not only affects the quality of the group's decisions, it also harms its affective commitment (Simons & Peterson, 2000) and team member satisfaction (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012). In this respect, De Dreu and Weingart (2003) put forward the hypothesis that relationship conflicts can also affect turnover, absenteeism and organisational citizenship behaviour through (lower) satisfaction. Moreover, performance is, to our knowledge, one of the consequences of conflict that has been most referred to and studied in the literature. While there is consensus about the negative effect that relationship and process conflict have on team performance (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; De Wit et al., 2012), there are doubts about the impact of task conflict on this variable. Some authors state that the effect of task conflict can be beneficial (Jehn 1995, 1997), others reveal a negative effect (De Dreu, 2006; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), and others have found neither a positive nor a negative effect (De Wit et al., 2012). Truly, when there is a high correlation between task and relationship conflict, the former has a more negative effect on team performance (De Wit et al., 2012). However, Simons and Peterson (2000) showed that team trust reduces this correlation. Overall, De Wit et al. (2012) argues that any type of conflict is more negatively related to proximal group outcomes (e.g. group member satisfaction) than distal group outcomes (e.g. group performance). Furthermore, as time passes, the effects of relationship and process conflict are increasingly damaging, more personal and difficult to

overcome (O'Neill, Allen, & Hastings, 2013). This conclusion goes in line with the results obtained by De Wit et al. (2012), which found that relationship conflict was less negatively related to group performance in project teams, since workers are together for less time and are relatively more independent. However, according to Huo, Zhang, & Guo (2016), this type of conflict is common in cross-functional project teams, because although they are temporary, the team members come from different functional units, with different rules. The author presented four aspects that lead to relationship conflict in this type of team: intrapersonal diversity, uncertain project task, organisational culture diversity, and inappropriate behaviour. Finally, it is important to note that employees who perceive conflict also tend to perceive low performance, which in turn further fuels the conflict (Jehn, 1995; O'Neill et al., 2013; Peterson & Behfar, 2003).

Given the damaging consequences of relationship conflict for teams and companies, research suggests that leaders should help the team diagnose conflicts that arise, teach them how to deal with them, and create strategies to mitigate and eliminate them (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). However, authors also warn that, unlike task conflict, the best way to avoid or mitigate the harmful effects of relationship conflict is by avoiding colleagues, rather than dealing with it through collaboration or containment strategies (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001; O'Neill et al., 2013).

Taking all this into consideration, if in a work team there is one employee engaged in quietly quitting, the other colleagues may perceive differences between each other's behaviours and values, leading to potential conflict.

When an employee chooses to adopt quiet quitting behaviours, they do everything they have contractually defined and no more than that. If this attitude reduces the amount of work they do, their colleagues may have to complete it, which can generate tension and feelings of frustration in the team (Serenko, 2023). In this regard, when there is an excess of workload, there are resource losses and, by defending themselves, individuals stimulate relationship conflict between team members, which can be minimized if there is team trust (Chen & Jiang, 2022). In fact, the aforementioned study concluded that workload is an antecedent of conflicts, including relationship conflicts, between teammates. Furthermore, process conflict, which arises when there are incompatibilities about how work should be accomplished, includes the distribution of workload, and is detrimental to team performance because workers spend too much time arguing about who should do what (Jehn, 1997; O'Neill et al., 2013). Thus, if there is a differential of quiet quitting behaviours between members of a work team, some may increase the workload, which may contribute to relationship conflicts.

As we noted previously, quiet quitting behaviour can be confused with other behaviours with negative connotations – social loafing and withdrawal behaviour, for example. Misinterpretation of the attitude and, more specifically, the intention of quiet quitters could lead to misunderstandings and mistrust among colleagues. Employees constantly interpret the behaviours of their colleagues and, specifically when there is no trust, they make negative inferences about them. For example, task conflict is usually misattributed as a personal attack, and consequently, leads to relationship conflict (Simons & Peterson, 2000).

Another explanation for the causal relationship between quiet quitting and relationship conflicts could be the difference in expectations and/or objectives between team members. On the one hand, those who are not quiet quitting may expect their colleagues to act like themselves, going above and beyond what is supposed, in order to achieve their professional goals; however, the quiet quitter will not, since they have started to prioritise their well-being (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023). On the other hand, workers who do not adhere to the behaviour studied may feel that they will be jeopardised, because in teamwork, joint efforts are what lead to the desired outcome.

For all these reasons, it is possible that relationship conflict may exist in teams where one or more members are quietly quitting and others are not, either because the workload has increased for some, or because of a misinterpretation of the phenomenon or a difference in expectations and objectives between colleagues. It is therefore hoped that:

H$_1$: *The quiet quitting differential between team members will be positively related to relationship conflict.*

However, the existence of quiet quitting differences in a work team may not lead directly to relationship conflicts. In other words, these differences in behaviour between employees may lead quiet quitters' colleagues to perceive unfairness in the allocation of work or rewards in the first place. Consequently, the relationship between justice and conflict is intuitive (Adamovic, 2023).

2.3. Organisational Justice

Organizational justice is the study of employees' perceptions of justice in the workplace (Colquitt, 2001) and is defined by four dimensions: distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1993, as cited in Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Initially, the study of justice focussed essentially on distributive justice, i.e. the perceived fairness of outcomes, such as salary and promotions (Adams, 1963, 1965). Based on Adam's

(1965) equity theory, employees react to outcome allocations by comparing their ratio of outcomes to inputs to the ratios of similar employees. If there is a balance between the ratios, the individual will have a perception of justice, otherwise he will have a perception of injustice, either because they are at a disadvantage or in advantage (Adams, 1965; Colquitt, 2012). In this sense, distributive justice is defined as "the degree to which the appropriate allocation norm is followed in a given decision-making context" (Colquitt, 2012, p.2). Subsequently, the literature began to focus not only on the study of the perceived fairness of the results – distributive justice, but also on the perceived fairness of the process through which the results are achieved - procedural justice. The introduction of this new concept is attributed to Thibaut and Walker's (1975, as cited in Adamovic, 2023). Leventhal (1980), expanded the conceptualization of procedural justice in the context of resource allocation decisions and stated that allocation procedures are viewed as fair if they adhered to aspects such as consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability, and ethicality. When comparing the two authors' studies, Rupp, Shapiro, Folger, Skarlicki, & Shao (2017) concluded that while the former considered the two types of justice to be independent, the latter saw procedural justice as an antecedent of distributive justice. Bies and Moag (1986) introduced a new type of justice: interactional justice, which represents the interpersonal side of organisational practices (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). In fact, even if there are results and processes that are considered fair, the way they are communicated can lead to a perception of unfairness (Rupp et al., 2017). In addition, Cohen-Charash & Spector (2001) compare the three types of justice, taking into account the receiver, i.e., when there is a perception of distributive injustice, the employee is expected to react negatively towards the specific result; in the case of a perception of procedural injustice, the reaction is towards the organisation; and in the case of a perception of international injustice, it is towards their supervisor or the person who was unfair to them. Later, Greenberg (1993) recommended a different way of conceptualising interactional justice, dividing it into two dimensions: interpersonal justice, which is promoted when procedures are communicated respectfully and appropriately, and informational justice, which is perceived when the justification for decisions is based on honest and truthful information (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt, 2012). In truth, interpersonal justice is defined as the social side of distributive justice, while informational justice is considered the social side of procedural justice (Adamovic, 2023; Greenberg, 1993). Hence, our study will take into account the four-dimensional construct of justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational), which although strongly related, are different (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). In this sense, the concept of justice will not be approached in an aggregated way, but in a differentiated way, so that a more careful

16

and detailed analysis can be conducted (Colquitt, 2012). We intend to understand if there is a quiet quitting differential between employees in a work team, there are perceptions of injustice, and if so, which dimension(s) prove to be significant, since the way it can be resolved will depend on the type of injustice perceived.

Of the limited number of studies on quiet quitting, justice is always placed as an antecedent of this phenomenon and not as a consequence (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023). As can be seen from Table 2.2, which presents theories related to the phenomenon of quiet quitting, some of them also relate to the concept of justice, such as the Equity theory (Adams, 1963, 1965) and the Social Exchange theory (Blau, 1964). Equity theory would explain quiet quitting behaviour, in the sense that individuals reduce their efforts in order to compensate for the perceived distributive injustice and thus balance the ratio of their input/output when compared to that of another colleague (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023). On the other hand, we expect that the opposite could also happen, i.e. we can presume that when an employee finds that one or more colleagues are engaging in quiet quitting behaviour, they may feel unfairly treated, since although the outputs are similar, the colleague's inputs are inferior to their own. Along these lines, quiet quitters' colleagues may feel that they are not fairly rewarded based on the effort they put into their work. Furthermore, as mentioned, the perception of distributive injustice is due to the perceived unfairness of outcomes, such as the distribution of workload, tasks and responsibilities (Adamovic, 2020). The quiet quitter chooses not to take on extra tasks and responsibilities (Anand et al., 2023, Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Serenko, 2023) and, according to the last author, colleagues will have to take on the burden of the work that the quiet quitter will not do. The apparent unequal distribution of work may contribute to teammates feeling wronged, more specifically, having a perception of distributive injustice.

When we refer to the perception of procedural justice, the focus shifts to the decision-making process of superiors and/or the organisation (Adamovic, 2023; Leventhal, 1980). If, on the one hand, we suggest that the distribution of the workload can lead to perceptions of distributive injustice, on the other hand, the decisions behind this same outcome can lead to perceptions of procedural justice, i.e. the quiet quitters' colleagues may consider the procedures for assigning tasks to be unfair. Moreover, if the recognition given to an employee who has worked "above and beyond" is equal to that of a quiet quitter, i.e. who is seen as having contributed less to the team's success, there could be a perception of procedural injustice. In this way, we could deduce that there is a flaw in the rule of accuracy, which refers to the quality of the information used as a basis for the decision (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), and which

will lead colleagues to consider the allocation of the resource (in this case, recognition) as unfair.

The adoption of quiet quitting behaviour by an employee can result in feelings of frustration on the part of their colleagues when they see that the former is putting less effort than they are (Serenko, 2023). The perception of interpersonal injustice can then arise because they employees may feel disrespected by this type of behaviour that can be considered morally or socially inappropriate. Lastly, quiet quitting behaviour is described as someone who does the contractually described hours (Anand et al., 2023, Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Forrester, 2023) and therefore has less time to socialise with colleagues (Serenko, 2023). In this sense, there may be greater difficulty in the process of knowledge sharing, and colleagues may feel that they are not being given the information they need, leading to feelings of informational justice (Serenko, 2023).

Since we are hypothesising that the quiet quitting differential could lead to perceptions of unfairness in a work team, it is important to know what other causes the literature has already found. Unfortunately, Cohen-Charash & Spector (2001) are clear when they say that not much is known about the topic in question. However, the author concluded that voice (when individuals can speak openly), outcome negativity and outcome satisfaction predict justice. On the other hand, demographic characteristics have not been shown to be significant, so people of different ages, genders, races and education view justice in a similar way.

As mentioned earlier, there are concepts that can be confused with quiet quitting: social loafing and withdrawal behaviour. Some authors that argue that social loafing arises as a consequence of the perception of injustice (Chen et al., 2024; Murphy et al., 2003), but on the other hand they blame free riding (a type of social loafing; Bennett, 2005) for the appearance of perceptions of injustice (Behfar et al., 2011). In addition, withdrawal behaviours, according to Cohen-Charash & Spector (2001), are seen as reactions to perceptions of injustice. Accordingly, since the three concepts are seen as similar, it is not surprising that quiet quitting is also considered a consequence. However, our question remains: can't quiet quitting lead to perceptions of unfairness in a work team, just as free riding does?

In addition to quiet quitting being pointed out as a consequence of perceptions of injustice (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023), it is also relevant to refer other effects of this concept in individuals, teams and organizations. In fact, prior research points to various consequences of perceived fairness, including OCB, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and task performance (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Scott, Rodell, Long, Zapata, Conlon, & Wesson, 2013; Rupp et al., 2017). On the other hand,

18

the perception of unfairness can lead to outcomes that are considered dysfunctional, such as CWB and turnover intentions (Colquitt et al., 2013; Rupp, Shao, Jones, & Liao, 2014), which, as we have seen, do not describe quiet quitting behaviour. Adamovic (2023), in a review on organisational justice, mentions that the perception of justice plays an important role in different organisational settings. In addition, Campbell, Perry, Maertz, Allen, & Griffeth (2013) argues that perceived justice can improve employee well-being, which is one of the main objectives of quiet quitters.

Another consequence of injustice could be conflict. Surprisingly, the relationship between the two concepts is not widely studied, and Adamovic (2023) states that it is because justice research focuses on vertical relationships, while conflict research focuses on horizontal relationships. Adamovic (2020) used Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity, specifically negative reciprocity, to explain that injustice leads to conflict, since individuals tend to reciprocate unfair treatment from colleagues with conflict, i.e. they try to correct behaviour seen as unfair through retaliation. This author believed that all dimensions of injustice would lead to both high levels of process and relationship conflict, and therefore tested these hypotheses. The results showed that both procedural and interpersonal unfairness cause relationship conflict. Furthermore, Simons & Peterson (2000) established the link between harsh language, justice and conflicts. In fact, the authors believe that harsh language leads individuals to feel disrespected, which consequently results in relationship conflicts.

Taking all this into consideration, it is expected that:

H_2: *Perceptions of (a) distributive (b) procedural (c) interpersonal (d) informational justice mediate the relationship between the quiet quitting differential between team members and relationship conflict.*

However, if these relationships do occur, it is important for the team leader to be aware of their team's environment and act to minimise possible negative consequences from the outset.

2.4. Sensemaking

Sensemaking, as a team leadership function, and involves the identification and interpretation of internal or external events, and the subsequent communication to group members (Morgeson, 2005; Morgeson et al., 2010; Zaccaro et al., 2001). In truth, throughout the life of every team, there are events that can be critical to its functioning. Therefore, when employees are unable to deal with them, leaders must be prepared to help the team resolve them (Morgeson, 2005; Morgeson et al., 2010). In this study, the concept described, as in Morgeson et al. (2010),

includes the dimensions of sensemaking and sensegiving, without making a distinction between the two. However, there are authors who adopt the two concepts separately, attributing to the former the dimension of understanding the situation, and to the latter, the dimension of communication to team members, moulding their perception and comprehension of the event (Dixon, Weeks, Boland, & Perelli, 2017).

In fact, through sensemaking, leaders contribute to the development of shared mental models in teams, and consequently improve team performance (Marks, Zaccaro, & Mathieu, 2000; Zaccaro et al., 2001). In other words, sensemaking helps to simplify the complexity of an event - the leader makes sense of the information they gather and shows the team how to respond to the situation, always considering the limits and resources available - resulting in more shared and accurate mental models within the team, which will thus adapt better in dynamic environments (Zaccaro et al., 2001). However, Morgeson (2005) warns that this type of leader intervention can be considered intrusive and manipulative when we talk about self-managed teams and external leadership. On the other hand, even in this case, the author defends its effectiveness as events become more disruptive. Finally, Hoang (2022), based on investigations by other authors, presents other consequences of sensemaking such as: the achievement of organizational results and processes, improvements in organizational creativity and innovation, and boosts strategic change.

Sensemaking is triggered by events that are ambiguous (with numerous different interpretations) and uncertain (people are unaware of these interpretations) (Hoang, 2022). In this sense, quiet quitting, or more precisely its concept, is also considered ambiguous and with non-convergent interpretations (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023). In fact, quiet quitting behaviour can be confused with others, such as withdrawal behaviours, which have an extremely negative connotation (Serenko, 2023). In addition, not only does the quiet quitter himself seem to have changed his behaviour, or at least escapes the norm, restricting his effort to that indicated in his employment contract, in order to achieve greater work-life balance and well-being - from a micro perspective - but it is also pointed out as a phenomenon capable of reshaping the current labour market - from a macro perspective (Hamouche et al., 2023). Thus, the adoption of quiet quitting behaviour in a work team can lead to ambiguous or incorrect interpretations by colleagues of what it really is and implies, leading to potential negative consequences (perceptions of injustice and relationship conflict, as we hypothesised before). And if the quiet quitting differential in a work team does lead to a decrease in perceptions of justice, can the team leader, through sensemaking, minimise this relationship? On the one hand, Dixon et al. (2017) state that individuals' perceptions of an event influence their understanding

20

of it; but on the other hand, sensemaking can be used as a leader's strategy to persuade employees to redefine their perception and meaning of a given situation (Dixon et al., 2017; Gioia & Chittipeddi, 1991). In addition to the ambiguity and uncertainty that trigger sensemaking processes, emotions can also do so (Dougherty & Drumheller, 2006, as cited in Sandberg and Tsoukas, 2014). As we noted previously, quiet quitters can lead to feelings of frustration on the part of team-mates (Serenko, 2023). In any of the hypotheses presented, we believe that the functioning of the work team may change with the adoption of quiet quitting. However, the leader can play a fundamental role in resolving any possible problems by interpreting the phenomenon and the atmosphere in the team and then communicating it to the employees.

In reality, it is normal for an employee to have doubts and uncertainties about the procedures and criteria that guide their leader's decision-making, since this information remains at the hierarchically higher levels (Johanson, 2000). We assumed that if there was a quiet quitting differential in a team, this could lead to perceptions of unfairness, either because colleagues do not understand the allocation of resources, or because of the decisions that have been made, or because of the information and respect received from either colleagues, the leader or the organisation. Therefore, we believe that if the leader interprets quiet quitting behaviour as we have characterised it throughout this study, and explains it to the workers, he or she can influence them to think in a similar way and reduce their possible perceptions of injustice. More specifically, the explanation given should be clear and transparent, but not only about the behaviour of quiet quitters and their motivations - to achieve well-being and not harm anyone (Serenko, 2023) - but also about the processes and criteria used to allocate resources, in order to reduce ambiguities, uncertainties (about the leader's own attitude and response) and perceptions of distributive and procedural injustice. In fact, Burke (1999) and Burke and Zaccaro (in preparation), as cited in Zaccaro et al. (2001), found that when leaders presented detailed justifications in the presence of a change, the team's mental models were more accurate, which contributed to greater employee adaptation. In addition, Morgenson et al. (2010) talk about open discussion as a sensemaking activity, in the sense that it can help employees interpret what is happening in the team and realise its implications. In this way, the leader can understand the expectations and needs of the employees and act accordingly, i.e. align everyone's expectations with each other and with the organisation - what everyone has to do and what they get in return. On the one hand, employees will feel respected and, on the other, more informed - perceptions of interpersonal and informational justice. Hoang (2022) seems to support this argument when he says that uncertain events, which drive the sensemaking process,

are unexpected or unparalleled and violate expectations. However, even through sensemaking, employees may still consider the distribution of the workload and the decisions made by the leader to be unfair, their perception of interpersonal and informational justice may improve, since, as Cohen-Charash & Spector (2001) mention, the reaction of individuals is to the leader who, in this case, took care to inform them in an open and respectful way.

To sum up and conclude, by interpreting quiet quitting behaviour, its impact on the team in terms of perceptions of justice, and its clear and respectful communication by the leader, we believe that it is possible for employees to better understand the reasons for organisational decisions, and thus reduce the possibility of conflicts resulting from perceptions of injustice. We therefore hope that:

H_3: Sensemaking by the leader negatively moderates the relationship between the quiet quitting differential in a work group and perceptions of justice.

2.5. Research Model

Considering the hypotheses mentioned, the following research model was proposed and tested:
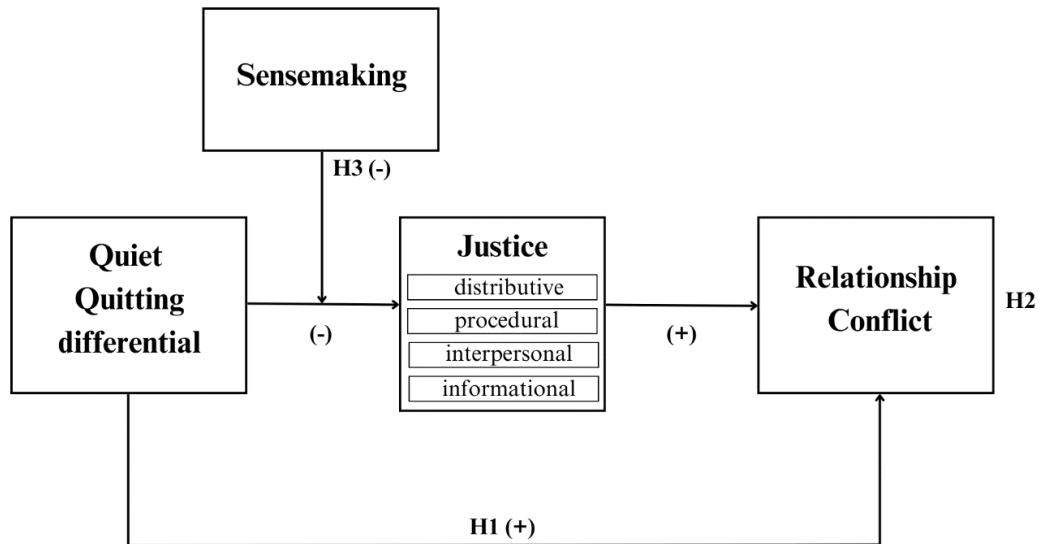
Figure 2.1: Hypothesized Research Model

CHAPTER III

Methodology

3.1. Procedure

Participants were selected using the snowball sampling method. The sample includes employees who work in teams within organisations from different sectors of activity that have a presence in Portugal. The participants answered the questionnaire anonymously, and were only distinguished by the team code defined by the team leader as this was necessary for the correct analysis of the data and consequently for the research to be carried out. Thus, using the code entered by the participants at the start of the questionnaire, we were able to allocate each individual to their team and analyse the data at the team level. The questionnaire (Annex A) was carried out online, on the Qualtrics platform, and in Portuguese, to make it easier to interpret the questions asked, since they were in the individuals' mother tongue. The data was collected between the months of February and May of 2024.

3.2. Sample

The sample in this study consists of 167 individuals nested into 36 teams with an average team size of 4,64 members (sd = 2,3).

The participants are between 19 and 59 years old, with the majority aged up to 34 years old (61.7%) and 70.10% of the sample being female. More than a third of the respondents have been working in their current team for less than a year (36.6%). The largest proportion of participants have worked in the team for between 1 and 2 years (25.7%) and the smallest proportion have worked for more than 10 years (7.2%). Almost half of the employees always work in person (49.1%) and only 1.2% always work remotely. An overview of all sociodemographic information is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sample Characteristics

Variable	Index	Frequency	Percentage
	Female	117	70,10%
Gender	Male	49	20,30%
	Other	1	0,60%
	19-24	25	15,0%
	25-29	52	31,1%
	30-34	26	15,6%
	35-39	13	7,8%
Age (years)	40-44	21	12,6%
	45-49	12	7,2%
	50-54	8	4,8%
	55-59	10	6,0%
	0 - 6 months	22	13,2%
	7 - 12 months	39	23,4%
Time working on the team	1- 2 years	43	25,7%
	2 - 5 years	34	20,4%
	5 - 10 years	17	10,2%
	more than 10 years	12	7,2%
	0%	2	1,2%
	1% - 49%	41	24,6%
% of time working in person	50%	11	6,6%
	51% - 99%	31	18,6%
	100%	82	49,1%

3.3. The Quiet Quitting scale developed by the authors and validation process

3.3.1. Generation of scale items

In order to create the items for a scale that represents the phenomenon of quiet quitting, we used the relevant existing literature as a basis (Churchill, 1979, as cited in Karrani et al., 2023). The authors of this study identified and selected the common points mentioned in the limited research on this topic, in order to obtain statements that captured the concept in a simple and concrete way, and excluding the ones that could be confused with other concepts. It is therefore important to note that to arrive at the scale in question there was a critical reflection on the existing literature so that the items defined went in the same direction, since the past research proved to be contradictory and unclear. Table 3.2 shows the 11 items that were initially created to represent the concept of quiet quitting and the four main articles on which they were based.

Table 3.2: Initial Items for Quiet Quitting Scale

Items	Authors
I prioritise my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance rather than my work goals.	A; B; C; D
I have been more psychological detached from the work, because I started to prioritizing my well-being.	A; B; C; D
I have clear boundaries that prevent me from spending more time or effort at work if it compromises my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance.	A; B; C; D
I avoid working more hours than the ones described in my contract.	A; B; C; D
At my job, I do what is contractually defined, and no more than that.	A; B; D
I do not put an extra effort at work that would lead me to exceed the formal requirements of my job.	A; B; D
I work above and beyond my formal work requirements. [R]	A; B; C; D
I reduce the inputs (e.g. effort, time and resources expended on work) I give to the company if they are not reflected in the outputs (e.g. salary, benefits and autonomy).	A; C; D
I do not help colleagues with their tasks at work, if it means going beyond my work–life balance boundaries.	A; B; D
I avoid taking on extra tasks, beyond mandatory ones, when I'm asked to.	A; B; D
I avoid taking more responsibilities beyond mandatory ones.	A; B; D

A: Anand et al. (2023); B: Atalay and Dağistan (2023); C: Forrester (2023); D: Serenko (2023)

3.3.2. Factor analysis

Since the Quiet Quitting scale used in this study is new, a factor analysis was conducted, as this is a statistical method that helps to prove its validity, giving confidence to the instrument used to collect data and draw conclusions (Knekta, Runyon, & Eddy, 2019).

Firstly, we performed a factor analysis for the 11 items that represent the phenomenon of quiet quitting. As can be seen in Table 3.3, the factor loadings after rotation show the presence of three factors, however the third component is composed of just one item. We therefore opted to eliminate it from the scale and measure quiet quitting with the remaining 10 items. Thus, all the results obtained and presented throughout this study come from a quiet quitting scale developed by the authors and containing 10 items.

Table 3.3: Rotated Factor Loadings with 11 items

Nr.	Items	Component		
		1	2	3
1	I avoid taking on extra tasks, beyond mandatory ones, when I'm asked to.	0,841		
2	I avoid taking more responsibilities beyond mandatory ones.	0,835		
3	I reduce the inputs (e.g. effort, time and resources expended on work) I give to the company if they are not reflected in the outputs (e.g. salary, benefits and autonomy).	0,754		
4	I do not put an extra effort at work that would lead me to exceed the formal requirements of my job.	0,714		
5	I do not help colleagues with their tasks at work, if it means going beyond my work–life balance boundaries.	0,682		
6	At my job, I do what is contractually defined, and no more than that.	0,653		
7	I have clear boundaries that prevent me from spending more time or effort at work if it compromises my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance.		0,831	
8	I prioritise my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance rather than my work goals.		0,824	
9	I have been more psychological detached from the work, because I started to prioritizing my well-being.		0,823	
10	I avoid working more hours than the ones described in my contract.		0,589	
11	I work above and beyond my formal work requirements. [R]			0,893

Afterwards, the adequacy of the application of the principal component analysis was ensured by confirming the necessary assumptions. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = 0.867, which is a "meritorious" value according Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999), as cited in Field (2013). Furthermore, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (815.618; df=45; sig=0.001) reinforced the previous result, as the null hypothesis was rejected (H_0: The variables are uncorrelated). Hence, the principal component analysis was conducted on the 10 items with orthogonal rotation (varimax).

Analysing the new quiet quitting scale, there were two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (Kaiser criterion) and in combination explained 64,58% of the variance. The scree plot confirmed that we must retain 2 components (Beavers, Lounsbury, Richards, Huck, Skolits, & Esquivel, 2013). Table 3.5, shows the factor loadings after rotation. The first six items, correspond to the component 1, and represent the extra efforts and responsibilities not adopted by employees; and the last 4 items, correspond to the component 2, representing the well-being and mental health dimension on adopting quiet quitting behaviour.

Table 3.4: Communalities of 10 quiet quitting items

Nr.	Items	Initial	Extraction
1	I prioritise my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance rather than my work goals.	1.000	0.683
2	I have been more psychological detached from the work, because I started to prioritizing my well-being.	1.000	0.692
3	I have clear boundaries that prevent me from spending more time or effort at work if it compromises my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance.	1.000	0.716
4	I avoid working more hours than the ones described in my contract.	1.000	0.562
5	At my job, I do what is contractually defined, and no more than that.	1.000	0.668
6	I do not put an extra effort at work that would lead me to exceed the formal requirements of my job.	1.000	0.664
7	I reduce the inputs (e.g. effort, time and resources expended on work) I give to the company if they are not reflected in the outputs (e.g. salary, benefits and autonomy).	1.000	0.575
8	I do not help colleagues with their tasks at work, if it means going beyond my work–life balance boundaries.	1.000	0.365
9	I avoid taking on extra tasks, beyond mandatory ones, when I'm asked to.	1.000	0.763
10	I avoid taking more responsibilities beyond mandatory ones.	1.000	0.770

Table 3.5: Rotated Factor Loadings with 10 items

Nr.	Items	Component	
		1	2
1	I avoid taking more responsibilities beyond mandatory ones.	0,871	
2	I avoid taking on extra tasks, beyond mandatory ones, when I'm asked to.	0,867	
3	I do not put an extra effort at work that would lead me to exceed the formal requirements of my job.	0,772	
4	At my job, I do what is contractually defined, and no more than that.	0,734	
5	I reduce the inputs (e.g. effort, time and resources expended on work) I give to the company if they are not reflected in the outputs (e.g. salary, benefits and autonomy).	0,719	
6	I do not help colleagues with their tasks at work, if it means going beyond my work–life balance boundaries.	0,601	
7	I have clear boundaries that prevent me from spending more time or effort at work if it compromises my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance.		0,831
8	I prioritise my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance rather than my work goals.		0,826
9	I have been more psychological detached from the work, because I started to prioritizing my well-being.		0,824
10	I avoid working more hours than the ones described in my contract.		0,585

3.4. Instruments

3.4.1. Quiet Quitting - Author's scale

As mentioned above, the concept of Quiet Quitting, being recent, is not yet consensual in the literature, and of the few scales already published, none seemed to fully represent the construct. To this end, we constructed a Quiet Quitting scale based on the theoretical concepts defined by various authors (Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023), consisting of 10 items (e.g. "I prioritise my well-being, mental health, and work–life balance rather than my work goals") that represent behaviours of the phenomenon analysed, and which are in line with the perspective defended in the previous section. We asked participants to indicate, using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree), the extent to which they agreed with the statements presented. The 7-point Likert items were chosen to give more precision and detailed insights. The Chronbach's alpha was 0.87, proving the good reliability of the construct.

It is important to note that this variable will be analysed later using the standard deviation, in the sense of representing the differences that may exist in quiet quitting behaviours between individuals in a team. A standard deviation measures how dispersed the data is from the mean. In other words, if its value is low, it means that the data is not very dispersed, but if its value is high, the data is more dispersed. In this case, if the value of the standard deviation for quiet quitting is low, it means that the individuals within the work team have similar behaviours; if the value is high, it means that there are employees who adopt more quiet quitting behaviours and others who do not. This choice of data analysis stems from the fact that not only can quiet quitting behaviour have consequences, but differences in this behaviour between teammates can also have consequences.

3.4.2. Quiet Quitting - Karrani et al. (2023) scale

In addition to being measured using the scale developed in the context of this study, quiet quitting was also assessed using Karrani's scale (2023). The respondents applied a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree), to demonstrate the extent to which they agreed with the statements presented. The scale presented by the aforementioned author also has 10 items (e.g. 'I do only what is expected of me and nothing more') to represent the behaviours of the phenomenon in question. The Chronbach's alpha of this scale was 0.92.

3.4.3. Relationship Conflict

To measure the amount of relationship conflict in work teams we used the intra-group conflict scale developed by Jehn (1995). However, we replaced the words "work unit" with "work group" in each item. We asked the participants to rate the 4 items (e.g. "How much friction is there among members in your work group?") using a 5-point frequency scale (1 = none, 7 = a lot) on how they view the relationship that exists between the members of their team. The Chronbach's alpha for the current study was 0.90.

3.4.4. Organisational Justice

We assessed the employees' perception of justice using the justice scale developed by Colquitt (2001), generated following the seminal works in the justice literature. The scale consisted of 20 items from the four dimensions of organisational justice: procedural (e.g. "Have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?"); distributive (e.g. "Does your (outcome) reflect the effort you have put into your work?"); interpersonal (e.g. "Has (he/she) treated you in a polite way?"); and informational (e.g. "Has (he/she) been candid in (his/her) communications with you?"). The items were evaluated by the participants on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always), which revealed their perceptions of justice within the work team. Moreover, the authors of this study analysed the data separately, taking into consideration each dimension individually and not the justice scale as a whole.

The only construct that revealed a weak Crohnbach's alpha coefficient, and, therefore, an unacceptable internal consistency, was the interpersonal justice dimension (0.51). However, this value improved significantly (0.96) when the 4th item was removed from the scale: "Has (he/she) refrained from improper remarks or comments?". For this reason, the analyses carried out using this scale contain three items instead of the original four. In addition, the Chronbach's alpha coefficient for the other dimensions of organizational justice was accepted, since they are higher than 0.7: procedural (0.74), distributive (0.95) and informational (0.93).

3.4.5. Sensemaking

Of the 15 team leadership functions presented by Morgeson, DeRue, and Karam (2010), we used the 5-item sensemaking scale. However, we added "the leader" at the beginning of each statement to clarify who the participants should evaluate; and we inserted "related to the behaviours described above" after mentioning some of the behaviours displayed by employees engaged in quiet quitting in the introduction to this question (e.g. "The leader assists the team in interpreting things that happen inside the team, related to the behaviours described above").

We asked the participants to express, using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree), the extent to which they consider that their team leader plays a role in interpreting and transmitting the phenomenon studied. The Chronbach's alpha for the current study was 0.97.

3.4.6. Social Loafing

Social loafing was assessed using a scale developed by Mulvey and Klein (1998). Although the original scale contains thirteen items, only four items, regarding "perceived loafing" (e.g. "Members of my group are contributing less than I anticipated"), were deemed relevant to the present study. In addition, we specifically explained the meaning of "free-loaders" so that the participants had no doubts when interpreting and answering the question. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). The Chronbach's alpha for the current study was 0.83.

3.4.7. Withdrawal Behavior

Withdrawal behavior was measured with a scale developed by Lehman and Simpson (1992), consisting of a total of 12 items from 2 different dimensions: psychological withdrawal behaviors (e.g. "Thoughts of being absent") and physical withdrawal behaviors (e.g. "Left work early without permission"). Participants evaluated each one of the statements with a value from 1 (never) to 5 (always), revealing how often, in the 12 months prior to answering the questionnaire, they had experienced the behaviours described. The Chronbach's alpha for the current study was 0.78.

Table 3.6 shows the Cronbach's alpha values used to assess the reliability of each variable, as well as the number of items used to measure each phenomenon.

Table 3.6: Cronbach's alpha coefficient and number of items for each variable in study

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Quiet Quitting	0,87	10
Quiet Quitting K	0,92	10
Distributive Justice	0,95	4
Procedural Justice	0,74	7
Interpersonal Justice	0,96	3
Informational Justice	0,93	5
Relationship Conflict	0.90	4
Sensemaking	0,97	5

Social Loafing	0,83	4
Withdrawal Behavior	0,78	12

3.4.8. Individual and contextual variables

The questionnaire also included sociodemographic questions such as: age, gender, their sector of activity, the length of time on the current team (in months) and the percentage of time working in person.

Results

4.1. Justification of aggregation

The data collected was aggregated in order to analyse it on a team level (Costa, Graça, Marques-Quinteiro, Santos, Caetano, & Passos, 2013). To justify the aggregation, we computed the index of interrater agreement – rwg (j) (James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1993) - and the intra-class correlation coefficients - ICC (Bliese, 2000). Table 4.1 displays the mean, standard deviation, rwg, ICC(1) and ICC(2) values for each variable. As rwg values must be higher than 0.7 to be accepted, the distributive justice variable (rwg = 0.42) was removed from the analysis. With regard to the ICC (1), all the values are acceptable. According to DeShon, Kozlowski, Schmidt, Milner, & Wiechmann (2004), ICC (2) values should be higher than ICC (1), which proves to be true for all variables. Thus, quiet quitting, all the dimensions of justice except distributive justice, relationship conflict, sensemaking, social loafing and withdrawal behaviour represent shared constructs at the team level.

Table 4.1: Means, Standard Deviations, rwg's and ICCs

Variable	M	SD	rwg	ICC (1)	ICC (2)
Quiet Quitting	3.52	0.74	0.80	0.24	0.59
Quiet Quitting K	1.80	0.52	0.75	0.19	0.53
Procedural Justice	2.90	0.5	0.7	0.12	0.38
Distributive Justice	2.73	0.94	0.42	0.32	0.69
Interpersonal Justice	4.58	0.59	0.8	0.45	0.79
Informational Justice	3.79	0.9	0.71	0.50	0.83
Relationship Conflict	1.91	0.65	0.85	0.45	0.80
Sensemaking	3.90	0.88	0.69	0.50	0.82
Social Loafing	2.12	0.76	0.76	0.41	0.77
Withdrawal Behavior	1.78	0.3	0.94	0.26	0.62

4.2. Hypotheses Testing

Before testing the hypotheses put forward by this study, Table 4.2 exhibit the bivariate correlations between the variables studied. The results found a negative correlation between quiet quitting differential and procedural justice (r = -0.42; ρ = 0.012), which may mean that the more different the levels of quiet quitting are between members of a group, the less procedural justice is verified. The three dimensions of justice analysed (procedural, interpersonal and informational) not only positively correlate with each other, but also with

sensemaking (r = 0.54, ρ = 0.001; r = 0.68, ρ = 0.001; and r = 0.82, ρ = 0.001, respectively). Informational justice is negatively correlated with relationship conflict (r = - 0.41, ρ = 0.013). The variable representing the standard deviation of age, i.e. the dispersion of the ages of the participants in a team, appears to be positively correlated with sensemaking (r = 0.37, ρ = 0.026), therefore we anticipate that a greater variety of ages in a group will lead to greater sensemaking. In addition, age is positively correlated with procedural justice (r = 0.34, ρ = 0.046). Finally, the variable representing the gender of the participants showed no correlation with any other variable.

Table 4.2: Correlations between variables

	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Quiet Quitting_sd	-													
2	Quiet Quitting K_sd	0.41*	-												
3	Procedural Justice	-0.42*	-0.33	-											
4	Interpersonal Justice	-0.17	-0.31	0.55**	-										
5	Informational Justice	-0.07	-0.25	0.62**	0.77**	-									
6	Relationship Conflict	0.22	0.15	-0.32	-0.31	-0.41*	-								
7	Sensemaking	-0.14	-0.12	0.54**	0.68**	0.82**	-0.41*	-							
8	Age_mean	0.02	-0.20	0.34*	0.32	0.30	0.01	0,30	-						
9	Age_sd	0.15	0.11	0.30	0.27	0.36*	-0.06	0.37*	0.41*	-					
10	Male_pgt	0.19	0.25	0.06	0.09	-0.01	-0.07	-0.01	0.11	0.07	-				
11	TimeOnTeam_mean	0.21	-0.15	0.32	0.18	0.21	0.28	0.08	0.54**	0.45**	0.23	-			
12	TimeOnTeam_sd	0.19	-0.12	0.27	-0.04	0.06	0.29	-0.02	0.47**	0.20	0.16	0.81**	-		
13	InPersonWork_mean	0.11	0.20	0.10	-0.10	0.03	0.26	0.04	0.30	0.36*	0.05	0.39*	0.41*	-	
14	InPersonWork_sd	0.06	-0.15	-0.14	-0.14	-0.05	-0.34*	-0.17	-0.10	-0.21	-0.21	-0.32	-0.24	-0.38*	-

N = 36 teams. *p < .01. **p < .001.

The hypotheses presented were empirically tested using Hayes' Macro PROCESS in SPSS. This statistical tool uses bootstrapping, which is a procedure that performs 5000 re-samples, to estimate 95% confidence intervals (CIs). When the upper and lower limits of the CIs are both positive or negative, the interaction effect is considered significant. If one of the limits is positive and the other negative, the effect is not significant (Hayes, 2013; Hayes & Preacher, 2010).

Model 4 (simple mediation) of the PROCESS Macro was used to test whether the independent variable (quiet quitting differential) affects the dependent variable (relationship conflict), and whether this relationship is influenced by perceptions of justice (mediator); and Model 1 (one moderator) to assess the direct relationship between quiet quitting differential and the three dimensions of justice, as well as the moderating effect of sensemaking on this relationship (Hayes, 2013).

In hypothesis 1, we proposed that differences in quiet quitting between team members could be positively related to relationship conflict. The results of the direct effects were not significant, which can be viewed in Table 4.3; thus, this hypothesis was not supported.

In hypothesis 2, we anticipated that the relationship between the quiet quitting differential between team members and relationship conflict would be mediated by perceptions of justice (procedural, informational and interpersonal). The results, presented in Table 4.3, revealed that none of the justice dimensions analysed mediates the relationship described above, since the model tested found no significant indirect effects. Thus, hypothesis 2 was not supported.

In hypothesis 3, we proposed that sensemaking moderates the relationship between differences in quiet quitting in a work team and perceptions of justice, making it weaker. When testing the moderations of this model, we did not find significant results for the moderating effect of procedural justice (-0.11 [CI: -0.53, 0.31]) or informational justice (-0.03 [CI: -0.60, 0.54]). However, interpersonal justice (0.64 [CI: 0.22, 1.05]) shows significant results for the moderating effect of this model (Figure 4.1). Thus, for the last case mentioned, hypothesis 3 is supported.

Table 4.3: Model path coefficients for mediation models

Mediations	β	CI_{low}	CI_{high}
Quiet Quitting_sd → Procedural Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.17	-0.44	0.78
Indirect effect	0.19	-0.13	0.53
Quiet Quitting_sd → Interpersonal Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.28	-0.28	0.83
Indirect effect	0.08	-0.14	0.35
Quiet Quitting_sd → Informational Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.31	-0.21	0.84
Indirect effect	0.05	-0.23	0.26
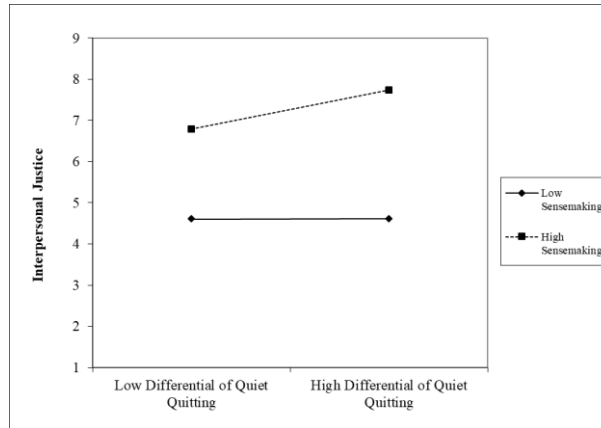
Figure 4.1: Moderation effect of sensemaking on the relationship between the differential of quiet quitting and interpersonal justice

4.3. Post Hoc Analysis

Given the results of the previous section and the fact that quiet quitting is confused with other concepts, we again conducted a correlation analysis and tested relationships using these variables (social loafing and withdrawal behaviour).

Table 4.4 presents the bivariate correlations between the variables *Post Hoc*. As expected, the quiet quitting scale developed in the context of this study is positively correlated with the scale developed by Karrani et al. (2023), but the correlation with withdrawal behaviour is lower when comparing the former ($r = 0.37$, $\rho = 0.025$) with the latter ($r = 0.54$, $\rho = 0.001$). Additionally, there is no correlation between quiet quitting and social loafing, variables which, as mentioned in the literature review, explain phenomena perceived as similar. Moreover, if we analyse the quiet quitting variable, which represents the variability of this phenomenon in team members (through the standard deviation), there is no correlation with withdrawal behaviour. On the contrary, the three dimensions of justice analysed are negatively correlated with withdrawal behaviour ($r = -0.57$, $\rho = 0.001$; $r = -0.54$, $\rho = 0.001$; and $r = -0.50$, $\rho = 0.002$), which is not the case with quiet quitting. Sensemaking is negatively correlated with social loafing ($r = -0.36$, $\rho = 0.032$) and withdrawal behaviour ($r = -0.350$, $\rho = 0.036$), both of which are viewed negatively in the literature, but not with quiet quitting. Relational conflict, on the other hand, is positively correlated with social loafing ($r = 0.64$, $\rho = 0.001$). Furthermore, age is negatively correlated with withdrawal behaviour ($r = -0.55$, $\rho = 0.001$), yet not with quiet quitting, which is inconsistent with the literature, which tends to accuse generation Z as quiet quitters and no other generations. Ultimately, both social loafing ($r = 0.35$, $\rho = 0.035$) and withdrawal behaviour ($r = 0.35$, $\rho = 0.038$) appear to be correlated with the variable measuring the length of time, in months, that the employee has been with their current team. Gender continued to show no correlation with any of the variables studied.

Table 4.4: Correlations between variables Post Hoc

	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	QQ_mean	-																			
2	QQ_sd	0.23	-																		
3	QQK_mean	0.65**	0.42*	-																	
4	QQK_sd	0.26	0.41*	0.56**	-																
5	Proc_Justice	-0.16	-0.42*	-0.47**	-0.33	-															
6	Inter_Justice	-0.14	-0.17	-0.23	-0.31	0.55**	-														
7	Infor_Justice	-0.14	-0.07	-0.29	-0.25	0.62**	0.77**	-													
8	R_Conflict	0.06	0.22	0.27	0.15	-0.32	-0.31	-0.41*	-												
9	Sensemaking	-0.08	-0.14	-0.25	-0.12	0.54**	0.68**	0.82**	-0.41*	-											
10	SL_mean	0.08	0.19	0.15	0.22	-0.17	-0.27	-0.31	0.64**	-0.36*	-										
11	SL_sd	-0.16	0.08	0.03	0.02	0.06	0.004	-0.06	0.11	0.01	0.23	-									
12	WB_mean	0.37*	0.15	0.54**	0.46**	-0.57**	-0.54**	-0.50**	0.11	-0.35	0.25	0.01	-								
13	WB_sd	-0.02	0.02	0.15	0.33	-0.07	-0.23	-0.11	-0.06	-0.16	0.22	0.34*	0.54**	-							
14	Age_mean	-0.09	0.02	-0.27	-0.20	0.34*	0.32	0.30	0.01	0.30	-0.12	0.19	-0.55**	-0.23	-						
15	Age_sd	0.32	0.15	0.18	0.11	0.30	0.27	0.36*	-0.06	0.37*	0.02	-0.11	-0.29	-0.08	0.41*	-					
16	Male_pgt	0.01	0.19	-0.02	0.25	0.06	0.09	-0.01	-0.07	-0.01	0.23	-0.07	-0.04	-0.03	0.11	0.07	-				
17	TOT_mean	-0.08	0.21	-0.13	-0.15	0.32	0.18	0.21	0.28	0.08	0.35*	0.18	-0.35*	-0.08	0.54**	0.45**	0.23	-			
18	TOT_sd	-0.27	0.19	-0.29	-0.12	0.27	-0.04	0.06	0.29	-0.02	0.39*	0,30	-0.34*	-0.17	0.47**	0.20	0.16	0.81**	-		
19	InPW_mean	0.19	0.11	0.12	0.20	0.10	-0.10	0.03	0.26	0.04	0.09	0.12	-0.19	-0.13	0.30	0.36*	0.05	0.39*	0.41*		
20	InPW_sd	-0.24	0.06	-0.15	-0.15	-0.14	-0.14	-0.05	-0.34*	-0.17	-0.35*	-0.06	0.02	0.14	-0.10	-0.21	-0.21	-0.32	-0.24	-0.38*	-

N = 36 teams. *p < .01. **p < .001. QQ= Quiet Quitting; SL= Social Loafing; WB= Withdrawal Behavior; TOT= Time on work; InPW= In person work.

As mentioned in the literature review section, quiet quitting, being a relatively recent phenomenon, can be confused with other concepts, such as social loafing. To this end, we carried out *post hoc* analyses, testing the aforementioned hypotheses, but replacing the quiet quitting variable with social loafing. When testing the mediations of this model, the direct effect of social loafing on relational conflict was significant. However, the same cannot be said about the social loafing differential between members of a work team. When testing the moderations, no significant results were obtained, therefore sensemaking does not moderate the relationship between social loafing and the perceptions of justice analysed.

Furthermore, according to the results previously reported, there is a negative correlation between the quiet quitting differential and procedural justice. In this sense, and although the latter has not been shown to have a mediating effect, from Hayes PROCESS Macro Model 4 it is possible to verify the existence of a significant direct effect between the independent variable and procedural justice, which means quiet quitting differential is a predictor of this justice dimension. The result is demonstrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Model path coefficients for mediation models Post-Hoc Analysis

Mediations	β	CI_{low}	CI_{high}
Quiet Quitting_sd → Procedural Justice			
Direct effect	-0.53	-0.93	-0.13
Quiet Quitting_mean → Procedural Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.01	-0.29	0.31
Indirect effect	0.04	-0.10	0.22
Quiet Quitting_mean → Interpersonal Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.01	-0.29	0.31
Indirect effect	0.04	-0.08	0.23
Quiet Quitting_mean → Informational Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	-0.0003	-0.29	0.29
Indirect effect	0.05	-0.08	0.23
Social Loafing_sd → Procedural Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.27	-0.44	0.97
Indirect effect	-0.04	-0.44	0.18
Social Loafing_sd → Interpersonal Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.23	-0.48	0.94
Indirect effect	-0.003	-0.30	0.35
Social Loafing_sd → Informational Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.17	-0.51	0.86

	0.05	-0.25	0.43
Indirect effect	0.05	-0.25	0.43
Social Loafing_mean → Procedural Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.52	0.29	0.75
Indirect effect	0.03	-0.02	0.16
Social Loafing_mean → Interpersonal Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.52	0.28	0.75
Indirect effect	0.03	-0.02	0.28
Social Loafing_mean → Informational Justice → Relationship Conflict			
Direct effect	0.49	0.26	0.73
Indirect effect	0.06	-0.02	0.26

Since the topic of age is mentioned several times by various authors, more specifically arguing that younger employees demonstrate or have a bigger tendency to adopt more quiet quitting behaviours, differentiating it from other employees, we wanted to find out if the distribution of quiet quitting, social loafing or withdrawal behaviour is different between at least 2 groups defined by age. To this end, the Age variable was recoded into 8 groups, as can be seen in Figures 4.2 and 4.3. We propose the following hypotheses:

H_0: The distribution of the Quiet Quitting/Social Loafing/Withdrawal Behaviour variable is equal for the eight population groups of the Age variable.

H_1: the distribution of the Quiet Quitting/Social Loafing/Withdrawal Behaviour variable is not equal for the eight population groups of the Age variable.

Previously, we verified that age was correlated with withdrawal behaviour and the result of the (Kruskal-Wallis) non-parametric test is in line with this statistical result, since sig=0.001 < α=0.05, which means that we don't reject the null hypothesis, indicating that the distribution of withdrawal behaviour is different between at least two population groups. Additionally, through the pairwise comparisons of the variable Age (Figure 4.2), we were able to identify that the differences are between individuals aged between 19 and 24 and those aged between 45 and 49. It is important to note that in the other cases tested (with the quiet quitting and social loafing variables) the null hypothesis is maintained (sig < 0.05), consequently there are no significant differences between the population groups of the age variable. Thus, contrary to what the literature on this subject argues (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Boy & Sürmeli, 2023; Galanis et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2023; Karrani et al., 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2023), the phenomenon of quiet quitting does not seem to have a greater impact on a specific age group. On the contrary, we found these differences in the case of withdrawal behaviour between the two age groups mentioned. In fact, we can proceed with

the idea that quiet quitting and withdrawal behaviour does not have the same meaning, since they present different results.
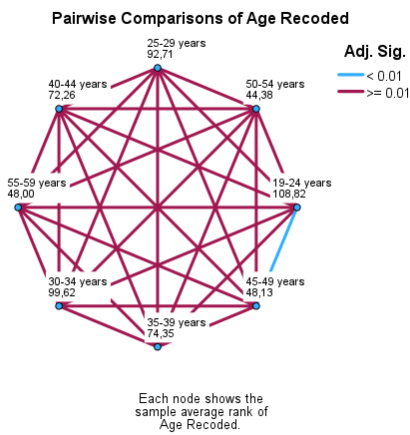
Figure 4.2: Comparison of withdrawal behaviours by different age groups
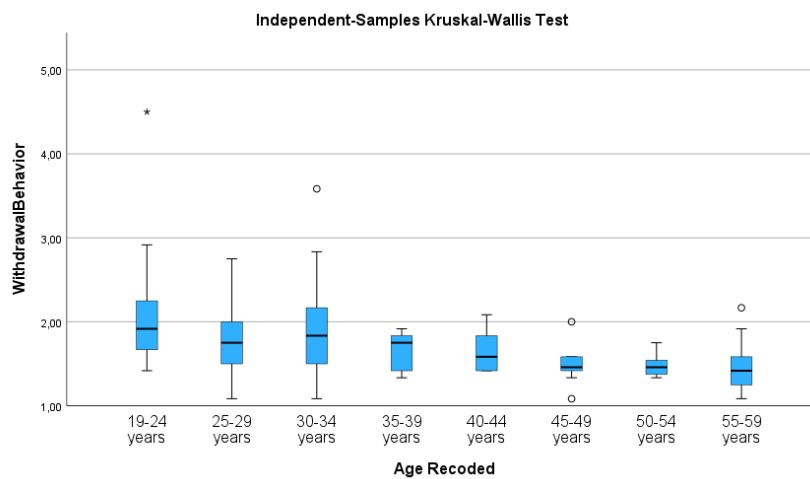
Figure 4.3: Comparison of withdrawal behaviours by different age groups

CHAPTER V

Discussion and Conclusions

5.1. Discussion and Theoretical Implications

One of the aims of this study was to explore whether there was any relation between the quiet quitting differential of the members of a work team and relationship conflict, mediated by perceptions of justice, as possible consequences of the phenomenon studied, but also whether sensemaking, as a function of the leader, could moderate the relationship between the quiet quitting differential and perceptions of justice. The results did not support any hypotheses put forward a priori, except for the proposal that the leader, through sensemaking, manages to moderate the relationship between quiet quitting differential and perceptions of interpersonal justice.

As mentioned in previous sections, some of the authors who study the phenomenon in question seem to demonise it (e.g. Anand et al., 2023; Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Boy & Sürmeli, 2023; Formica & Sfodera, 2022), however we did not find any significant effect between (the differential) quiet quitting and relationship conflict. In addition, none of the mediations carried out proved to be significant, which leads us to realise that quiet quitting isn't so bad, at least as far as perceived (in)justice and relationship conflicts are concerned. Nevertheless, a *post hoc* analysis found a significant direct effect between the quiet quitting differential and procedural justice. In fact, the literature warns us that the adoption of quit quitting behaviours by some employees could put a burden on their colleagues, since they will accept extra tasks that the former refused to perform (Atalay & Dağıstan, 2023; Serenko, 2023). Hence, inequality in the distribution of tasks between team members can lead to a perception of procedural injustice if there is no recognition from leaders, in other words, if employees do not understand the decisions made by the latter. However, the fact that there is a perception of procedural injustice does not mean that personal relationships between colleagues are affected, therefore adopting quiet quitting behaviour does not necessarily imply that there is a lack of respect or courtesy (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Moreover, unlike the quiet quitting differential, a *post hoc* analysis found significant direct effects between social loafing and relationship conflict, which seems to support the idea put forward in this study that these concepts can be confused, despite not having the same meaning. In this sense, the importance of differentiating quiet quitting from existing terms is extremely important in order to avoid future relational conflicts between members of a work team. Although in both cases the matter of the effort put into the work is present, the two phenomena differ in terms of motivation. The

quiet quitter fulfils contractual requirements and avoids going "above and beyond" in order to achieve WLB. On the other hand, the "loafer" deliberately reduces the effort put into a task because they know that by working in a group, someone else will do their work. In the latter case, when one colleague sees the other postponing the obligatory responsibilities of their work, they will feel wronged, it will affect group cohesion and trust between both. Consequently, the literature has blamed social loafing for the negative relational consequences (Liu, Zheng, Zhang, & Schaubroeck, 2024; Monzani et al., 2014). The same does not seem to be true in the context of quiet quitting.

According to a study by Jehn and Mannix (2001), in high-performance groups, levels of relationship conflict are always low in any of the team's development phases. On the other hand, in low-performance teams, relationship conflict is the most worrying when compared to other types of conflict (moderate in the initial phase and high in the remaining phases). As the current study did not differentiate between low and high-performance teams, the results might be different if this differentiation were made. Furthermore, Simons and Peterson (2000) distinguished the levels of trust between "stranger teams" (at the beginning of the team's creation) and "acquaintance teams" (in the middle and at late stages of its creation). In the first case, the level of trust is low and in the second high. The authors found that when there is no trust between team members, they are more likely to interpret ambiguous behaviour as negative, which will lead to relationship conflicts. As this study did not analyse the trust variable, it would be interesting for future studies to do so.

Another conclusion drawn from the results obtained by analysing the moderations was that when there is a variability of quiet quitting behaviours among the members of a work team, and the leader intervenes using sensemaking skills, the perception of interpersonal justice is less affected. Thus, when the leader makes an effort not only to understand what quiet quitting is and clarify what lies behind this phenomenon, but also to explain the leader's own decisions in this context, employees tend to feel more respected and may not feel that other colleague(s) benefit more than they do. In fact, one way of improving the perception of interpersonal justice is through an effective communication from employers, who should explain to employees the reasons behind a certain type of situation or decision in a respectful way (Kernan & Hanges, 2002), refraining from inappropriate statements in this interaction (Colquitt, 2001). Alikaj and Hanke (2021) add that leaders can strategically alter their discourse in order to increase perceived interactional justice (informational and interpersonal justice), such as through an empathetic approach, expressing their concern about how news might affect employees. Transformational leadership has been also shown to be positively related to interactional justice

(Fouquereau, Morin, Huyghebaert, Chevalier, Coillot, & Gillet, 2020). Two of the components of this type of leadership, advanced by Bass (1995), seem to be directly linked to the topic under discussion: inspirational motivation (the ability to inspire, motivate and convince individuals through simple words) and individualised consideration (showing genuine concern for the needs and feelings of others by helping them). This point in the discussion is even more interesting, since individuals with low levels of perceived interpersonal justice tend to have high levels of burnout and anxiety (Fouquereau et al., 2020), which are pointed out as (possible) causes of quiet quitting behaviour. However, as we have seen, the leader can have a say in this matter.

According to the results, quiet quitting is positively correlated with withdrawal behaviour, whether measured by the scale developed in the context of this research or the one defined by Karrani et al. (2023) – r = 0.37 and r = 0.54, respectively. However, as can be seen, the correlation is higher in the latter scale. In fact, the concept of withdrawal behaviour is connoted negatively, which is more in line with the scale developed by Karrani et al. (2023) where there is constant use of the expression 'I don't'. In addition, there is no indication of the employee's well-being, unlike the scale created by the author of this research. Finally, the ideas behind the items "I only communicate when necessary" or "I don't offer new ideas or suggestions to improve processes or procedures" don't seem to be in line with the concept of quiet quitting found in most of the literature. In fact, if communicating with colleagues and making suggestions does not jeopardise the employee's work-life balance and/or working hours, there is no reason not to do so. In fact, these behaviours can even lead to well-being. With this in mind, the scale developed in the context of this research seems to distance itself more from the concept of withdrawal behaviour, being more faithful to the concept of quiet quitting.

We try not to see quiet quitting as an extremely negative or extremely positive phenomenon. We do believe that it has emerged and evolved due to the current context and that it is not by taking measures to eliminate it that the possible negative consequences will end. On the other hand, we believe that it is important to understand that the adoption of this behaviour should be accepted and not criticised, however, the possible causes and consequences should be seen as warnings to improve employees' working conditions. Thus, quiet quitting is not seen as the bogeyman that destroys the well-being of the team that should be the target of strategies to put an end to it, but rather to avoid the negative consequences that can arise from these behaviours, such as the wrong and negative perceptions of teammates about them. Bearing this in mind, if we know that if the leader, using sensemaking, improves the perception of interpersonal justice in his team, this strategy should be recommended.

Taking this in consideration, there are other phenomena that seem to be related to quiet quitting and which are also beginning to emerge and be debated, such as slow work and the 4-day work week (4DWW). "Slow work is a way of working that respects the balance between individual rhythms and the objectives of the organisation, in favour of the sustainability of both parties, and that advocates qualitative goals, thinking time, individual recovery, purpose, and the humanisation of work", by treating workers as individuals rather than machines (Silvestre, Gonçalves, & Velez, 2024, p. 1). Like quiet quitting, slow work contradicts today's fast-paced world, which is so detrimental to workers' health and well-being (Silvestre et al., 2024). With regard to the 4DWW, Portugal implemented a pilot programme in 41 companies, which involved an effective reduction in the number of average weekly working hours. The results of the final report showed that there was no negative performance in terms of revenues and profits and that, at the same time, there were no additional costs in the overwhelming majority of companies. On the company side, a reduction in absenteeism, turnover, stress, errors and recruitment and training costs was identified. Additionally, the 4DWW improved employee commitment and team functioning. It was concluded that 80% of the companies benefited from this change and that none suffered from it. On the workers' side, there were positive effects on their physical and mental health, as well as an improvement in work-life balance (Gomes & Fontinha, 2024). The similarities between the three phenomena are displayed in Appendix B. Furthermore, the European Parliament intends to create the 'right to disconnect', a legal right that allows workers to disengage from work during non-working hours, with the aim of guaranteeing their well-being and work life balance (Wood & Shine, 2023). These measures are in line with the predominant characteristics of quiet quitting behaviour. Accordingly, we conclude that workers' current focus is their health and well-being, and companies must adapt to new phenomena and new needs. If workers are starting to rethink their priorities, companies must reflect on their work practices. The good news is that this is a win-win situation: companies need productive workers, who aren't productive when their health is compromised due to the ongoing working rhythm. If companies adopt policies that prioritise work life balance, the health and well-being of their workers, the organization will save costs and the employees will be in a better position to carry out the duties required of them. These strategies are both sustainable in the long run for workers and organizations and a competitive advantage for the latter (Gomes, 2023; Jahal, Bardoel, & Hopkins, 2023; Silvestre et al., 2024). Naturally, caution is needed - whether the new practices come from companies (4-day work week) or from the workers themselves (quiet quitting and slow work) - but caution doesn't mean cutting off

any chance of these phenomena existing. It is necessary to analyse and weight up the pros and cons, including their common purpose: improving employee's well-being.

On the other hand, sensemaking has shown no influence when it comes to social loafing behaviour. We therefore believe that in this case, no matter how much the leader clarifies the employees about this phenomenon, the perception of justice is not altered, since we expect that it is more difficult to find an acceptable explanation for the decision taken, which is seen as negative. Bennett et al. (2025, as cited in Liu et al., 2024) emphasise how morally problematic social loafing is and Mihelič and Culiberg (2018) describe the phenomenon as a form of production deviance in addition to being negatively related to moral awareness. Latané et al. (1979) characterise social loafing as a social disease that needs a 'cure', since it has consequences for individuals, institutions and society. In this sense, this type of behaviour should be corrected, unlike quiet quitting. Therefore, the strategies adopted by leaders should not be similar in the two cases, just as the researchers who study the two phenomena should not put them on the same scales, presenting them as similar.

As mentioned in section 4, it was not possible to analyse the variable representing the perception of distributive justice, since the rwg value was lower than necessary to be accepted, which means that the team members' answers did not have a high level of agreement with regard to this variable. One possible explanation could be that the perception of distributive justice tends to be different when comparing leaders with other team members, i.e. that the latter don't consider that the income they receive reflects the effort and work they put in. In addition, the values of rwgs, ICC(1) and ICC(2) justified the aggregation of the quiet quitting variable for teams, which could mean that people from the same team tend to have similar quiet quitting values. We can therefore put forward the possibility that quiet quitting can lead to contagion between team members, thus future studies of this phenomenon at this level of analysis are extremely relevant.

Furthermore, we concluded that although there were differences in withdrawal behaviour between two age groups, this was not the case with quiet quitting, which did not prove to have a greater impact on a particular age group. Firstly, this result is in line with the idea put forward in this study that different authors may confuse the two concepts, saying that quiet quitting has more impact on generation Z, but that in fact it is withdrawal behaviour that tends to have more impact on younger people. In fact, the research made so far argues that quiet quitting is a social movement led by the younger generations (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Boy & Sürmeli, 2023; Galanis et al., 2023; Hamouche et al, 2023; Kang et al., 2023; Karrani et al., 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2023), who are looking for a better future for

themselves (Hamouche et al, 2023) and who will soon represent the majority of workers in the labour market (Xueyun et al., 2023). Unlike older generations, they highly value work-life balance and well-being (Boy & Sürmeli, 2023), mainly because they started their professional lives at a time of COVID-19, overcoming problems such as layoffs, inflation and recession (Karrani et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2023). Xueyun et al. (2023) sees quiet quitting as a silent protest by young (Chinese) people who have seen their expectations dashed because, despite working extremely hard, they cannot meet the current costs of living (e.g. housing). Secondly, this confusion may be due to the fact that some of the existing data on quiet quitting seems to be based on the calculation of employee disengagement, as mentioned before. The third argument we put forward for the obtained result, instead of being based on the generations of the workers, as the research on quiet quitting has done, is discussed in terms of age, differentiating them into younger and older people, since today's younger workers are tomorrow's middle-aged and older workers. Based on the theories of Life Span Development, workers have different goals and work motivations due to the physical and psychological changes that come with age (Truxillo, Cadiz, & Hammer, 2015; Truxillo & Fraccaroli, 2013) and which consequently affect the choices they make about work, including the effort put into the tasks (Beier, Kanfer, Kooij, & Truxillo, 2022). According to SOC theory, the older we are, the more we tend to select goals that can be achieved and avoid those that can result in losses. In addition, SST theory adds that as the future time perspective (FTP) becomes shorter as people age, goals shift from being related to the development and acquisition of knowledge to socio-emotional goals (Beier et al., 2022; Fisher, Chaffee, Tetrick, Davalos, & Potter, 2017). In this respect, older workers seem to be more in line with the intrinsic behaviour of a quiet quitter who prioritises their own well-being over their work goals. Furthermore, younger workers seem to give greater importance to the outcome side of equity theory, while older workers give greater importance to the input side. Rewards, for example, do not affect these two groups in the same way, as they contribute more to job satisfaction among younger people, while older people tend to value task and meaningful contributions more. Increasing rewards for older people can even have a negative impact on job satisfaction if they see it as unfair compared to their contributions. However, young people seem to react more authoritatively to the inequity between output/input, while older people react more benevolently (Kollmann, Stöckmann, Kensbock, & Peschl, 2019). Therefore, although both groups react to the inequity between input and output, the younger workers are the ones who are more likely to adopt quiet quitting behaviour, reducing inputs to reflect the outputs received. On the other hand, psychological detachment from work, as well as being one of the characteristics of quiet quitting, is also a behaviour associated with

older workers nearing retirement age (Beier et al., 2022). Additionally, Zaniboni, Truxillo, & Fraccaroli (2013) found that younger workers are more interested in task variety, including doing more tasks, while skill variety is a motivating factor for older workers. However, quiet quitters avoid doing extra tasks, which contradicts the idea that young people are largely responsible for the phenomenon studied. In short, the literature considers that intrinsic motives are more important for older workers and extrinsic motives for younger ones (Kooij, De Lange, Jansen, Kanfer, & Dikkers, 2011). Overall, we argue that both younger and older workers can opt for quiet quitting behaviour, which is in line with the results of the present study, that revealed no differences in quiet quitting behaviour between people of different ages.

Hamouche et al. (2023) suggested that women may not afford to adopt quiet quitting behaviours, since as a more discriminated group, they are more likely to be seen in a negative light. Nevertheless, our study contradicts this thinking, with the results showing no significant differences between genders. We believe that the author's hypothesis may be true depending on the countries and regions of the world. In fact, Portugal ranks 15th in EIGE's Gender Equality Index 2023 and has shown the biggest increase of all EU member states (EIGE, 2023). In the domain of 'Work' it has the highest ranking (9th among the Member States), rising 4 places when compared to 2020. In addition, the Global Gender Gap Report 2023 states that Europe has the highest gender parity in the world, followed by North America; however, the Middle East and North Africa remain the region furthest from parity (World Economic Forum, 2023). For these reasons, the results of this study make sense since it was carried out in a Portuguese context, but the assumption of Hamouche et al. (2023) may also be true in other countries such as the United Arab Emirates.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many people to work from home (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023). Anand et al. (2023) argues that those who work remotely are more likely to adopt quiet quitting behaviours because they are more alienated from the organisation, however, the results of this study show no correlation between the phenomenon studied and the format in which the employee works (in person or remotely). On the one hand, Consiglio et al. (2023, as cited in Silvestre et al., 2024) showed that technology has a direct and negative impact on workers' health, and that there is a relationship with burnout, one of the causes presented for the adoption of quiet quitting behaviours, but on the other hand, Karrani et al. (2023) showed that quiet quitting is conceptually different from the concept of work alienation. In other words, although burnout is presented as a cause of quiet quitting and work alienation, it doesn't mean that quiet quitting arises via work alienation, caused by remote working.

46

5.2. Practical Implications

The current study provides practical insights for individuals, human capital managers and policy makers.

Firstly, we showed evidence that the leader can have an influence, through sensemaking, on improving interpersonal justice when there is a quiet quitting differential in a work team. For the leader to be effective, they need training that informs them about the phenomenon of quiet quitting and what it involves, but also teaches them how to communicate this information clearly and appropriately.

Furthermore, according to the results of this study, the quiet quitting differential seems to have a significant direct effect on procedural justice. In this sense, we suggested that this may be due to a perception of unfair distribution of tasks. To prevent this from happening, we recommend encouraging clear communication of the expectations and responsibilities of each team member to avoid perceptions of unfairness and rewarding those who go "above and beyond" either through recognition or bonuses. For this to happen, employee performance appraisals should be fair, differentiating between mandatory and optional tasks/responsibilities. On the one hand, it does not make sense to penalise a worker who does not do something that is not compulsory and/or contractually defined, however, on the other hand, those who go above and beyond should also receive in proportion to what they give.

One of the reasons given by employees for adopting quiet quitting behaviour is the search for well-being and work life balance, as well as escaping burnout. In this way, workers seem to be "crying for help", showing companies what they need, with the latter having to intervene and respond by adapting their practices to workers' needs. In fact, individuals want to prevent and combat the state of burnout in which they find themselves and/or increase their level of well-being, and companies must respond to this request. Gabriel and Aguinis (2022) present recommendations for practices to prevent and combat burnout: provide stress management interventions (e.g. cognitive-behavioural training); allow employees to be active crafters of their work; cultivate and encourage social support; engage employees in decision-making and; implement high-quality performance management. Van Wingerden, Bakker, & Derks (2017) focuses, specifically, on the topic of job crafting, as a proactive attitude by employees to adapt job demands and resources. However, he adds that managers should facilitate and support this type of action, not least because there are studies that show positive impacts on work engagement. In a way, quiet quitting is also a self-initiated behaviour adopted by employees with good intentions, which can be supported by their superiors. When an

employee only works the hours described in the contract, it is important that they reorganise the way they work so that they do what is asked of them, and no more than that. The costs associated with mental health problems are high for workers, organisations and society (Silvestre et al., 2024). The economic costs are also mentioned in the literature (Serenko, 2023), thus investing in the prevention and elimination of burnout can offset future costs.

Also based on one of the dimensions of quiet quitting, our third suggestion is the adoption of work-life balance policies, specifically flexible work arrangements (FWA), which aim to reduce work-family conflict, one of the main stressors impacting workers' lives (Truxillo et al., 2015). As well as being a resource that individuals can use to mitigate stress, gain greater control over the way they perform tasks and thus satisfy their nonwork demands (Smit & Lawson, 2022), it is also a strategy for attracting and retaining employees, which is extremely important in professions such as nursing (Galanis et al., 2023) and hospitality (Formica & Sfodera, 2022), which also show significant levels of quiet quitting. The pandemic has shown the need for adaptability and flexibility in the workplace, as well as the creation of new working conditions that protect workers (De Lucas Ancillo; Gavrila, & Del Val Núñez, 2023). However, it is important to note that not all workers may want to have flexible working hours, or leave at certain times, i.e. there will never be 'one size fits all' solution. The important thing is that with new flexible working conditions and the acceptance of behaviours such as quiet quitting, workers are given the opportunity to decide whether they want to do it or not, without being penalised for it (Vyas, 2022).

One of the characteristics of quiet quitting behaviour is to do everything that is contractually defined and no more than that. The exact and clear definition of the employee's duties towards the company is very important, so that each side knows exactly what is expected, and thus protects their rights. An environment should then be created that is conducive to ongoing, honest conversations about each party's expectations (Lawless, 2023). Each person's expectations can vary, so they can be related to monetary compensation for the work carried out, as well as the flexibility of the job, among other aspects. If either party changes their mind, the contract should be amended to balance demands and resources. For example, the company asks the worker to do more hours - the individual should have two options: either say no, or ask for a proportional increase in compensation (Lawless, 2023). Like Serenko (2023), we therefore suggest renegotiating contracts to reflect fair compensation for the level of effort put into the tasks performed. This measure would benefit both parties. However, it should be implemented with caution, as Kang et al. (2023) argue that certain aspects of job descriptions are not easily quantifiable or described, such as the emotional skills of healthcare professionals.

Creating and carrying out quiet quitting surveys could be relevant to better understand the level at which workers are, their needs and how the company can act, either by reducing demands or increasing resources. The workers' responses could result in individual reports that include suggestions for both the individual and the company to help define general policies. Afrahi et al. (2022) point out that even when the company is unable to fulfil employees' requests, the efforts made are valued, as they demonstrate the company's concern for individuals.

As well as presenting possible solutions, it's important to mention what not to do: remain in inertia and dismiss workers who are quietly quitting. On the one hand, as already mentioned, quiet quitting seems to be a warning sign about the needs that workers have, so it is crucial that the company tries to act accordingly and does not stand still. On the other hand, Serenko (2023) warns that when the company fires people, knowledge leaves with them. In addition, since there is still some confusion and uncertainty about the phenomenon studied and its consequences, it seems premature to make such a definitive decision, especially in the case of Portugal, when there is a problem of attracting and retaining talent. As has been the case with 4DWW, empirical studies should be carried out to analyse the actual (negative) consequences of quiet quitting in work teams, and even whether the cons outweigh the pros (e.g. OCB is also encouraged by companies, but it has negative consequences).

As practical suggestions for employees, we suggest that if they want to adopt quiet quitting behaviours, they should: avoid working in companies where the hustle culture is still prominent; find ways to maximise their efficiency, showing that it is not because they work the contractually defined hours or do not take on extra tasks that they are not a productive, quality worker; and be aware that not all colleagues and managers will understand their choices (Serenko, 2023). With regard to companies, we suggest that they: invest in policies to prevent and combat burnout and in WLB policies, such as FWA; encourage job crafting; create clear contracts, based on constant conversations between the two parties, which reflect their interests; create quiet quitting surveys; and do not fire employees that reveal quiet quitting behaviors. Finally, policymakers too, in wanting more productive workers, must help them to be healthier, through awareness-raising campaigns and by encouraging companies to adopt HR practices that favour the well-being of individuals. Quiet quitting behaviour can be considered a strategy not only for improving the well-being and WLB of workers, but also for attracting and retaining talent, as seems to be the case with 4DWW. Thus, it can go from being self-initiated to being suggested and supported by superiors (through sensemaking, for example). Naturally, since research on the subject is more limited, caution is needed, but we encourage companies to start

experimenting with adopting these behaviours step by step, and consequently to carry out a study to evaluate the results.

5.3. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The fact that the concept of quiet quitting is at the beginning of the theorization process (Anand et al., 2023) and that there are not a significant number of studies on this phenomenon, brings not only several limitations to this research, but also opportunities for future research. The first limitation of this study is the small sample size (167 individuals from 36 teams), which leads to more uncertain results (Button, Ioannidis, Mokrysz, Nosek, Flint, Robinson, & Munafò, 2013), as it makes data analysis subject to false positives (type I error), non-detection of effects (type 2 error) and leads to the sample distribution being more likely to deviate from normality (Hackshaw, 2008; Makin & De Xivry, 2019). In this sense, confirmatory studies with a larger sample should be made in the future (Hackshaw, 2008).

Secondly, despite guaranteeing the psychometric properties, the new scale developed to measure quiet quitting has not been validated, which does not allow it to be generalised (Hinkin, Tracey, & Enz, 1997; Morgado, Meireles, Neves, Amaral, & Ferreira, 2017), but it opens the door for others to do so. In addition, regular reviews of the items generated should be conducted to maintain their accuracy, as new studies on quiet quitting emerge (Karrani et al., 2023). This study applied a cross-sectional survey, thus future research should pursue a longitudinal investigation in order to capture the evolution over time of quiet quitting, its causes, consequences and suggested interventions (Hamouche et al, 2023). Finally, we found two limitations when conducting the factor analysis: the reversed item that was eliminated from the scale ("I work above and beyond my formal work requirements"), but which could be restored in a future study, placing the statement in the negative in order to avoid problems such as measurement error, reduced validity and reliability and distortion of the factor structure (Weijters & Baumgartner, 2012); and the value of the communalities of one item ("I do not help colleagues with their tasks at work, if it means going beyond my work-life balance boundaries") which was less than 0.5 (Table 3.4), meaning we are losing half of the information, however, according with MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong (1999), under the conditions of the scale developed, a sample size of 300 would be beneficial to address this question.

The reliance on self-report measures may also be a limitation of this study, since respondents may be tempted to answer questions in order to project a favourable image of themselves (Fisher, 1993). In this sense, in future studies, instead of collecting data on

individuals' perceptions of their own behaviour, an attempt should also be made to understand individuals' perceptions of their colleagues' (quiet quitting) behaviour. Furthermore, as mentioned before, the theory of equity developed by Adams (1963) has been used by authors (Anand et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023) to explain the adoption of quiet quitting behaviour by workers, who try to re-establish equity in a situation of imbalance between what they give to the company and what they receive in return, which includes the topic of salary and, consequently, the perception of distributive justice. Unfortunately, the variable in question was removed from the analysis because it did not show a high level of agreement in the answers given by people from the same teams, a necessary condition to justify its aggregation. This may be due to the difference in perceptions of distributive justice between leaders and employees, hence we suggest that in future investigation, information regarding this dimension of justice should be collected and analysed separately to avoid this problem.

This study is also limited to just one geographical area, Portugal. Since quiet quitting is a global phenomenon (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023), this type of research should be applied to other countries and cultures. For instance, authors can use the Hofstede model, such as Alikaj and Hanke (2021), who confirmed that power distance orientation negatively moderates the relationship between motivational language of leaders and the perception of interpersonal justice of employees. Some questions can be raised: would these conclusions change depending on the country? Are some cultures more likely to adopt quiet quitting behaviour than others? Would the proposed interventions have the same outcome? Additionally, unlike other studies that have focused on analysing quiet quitting in a particular area of activity (health services and academia, predominantly), we tried to conduct a more diversified study, however, as the sample was small, it was not possible to collect information on more areas and compare them. We therefore propose that this topic be studied and applied to more professions, including those that are reported to have higher rates of burnout or where the demands of the job are great, such as food services, insurance, consultancy and banking (Statista, 2024).

Quiet quitting should continue to be analysed not only at the individual level (e.g. personality) and organisational level (e.g. organisational culture), but also at the team/group level (e.g. team cohesion). Studying the causality of individuals' personalities in the adoption of quiet quitting behaviours could be valuable, not least because this know-how could help build the team. Moreover, Moon et al. (2023) found that during the pandemic, extroverted workers had less burnout than introverted employees when there was high role overload. Knowing that burnout is pointed out as a cause of quiet quitting, we could assume that extroverted workers will be less inclined to adopt quiet quitting behaviours, which may be

something to explore in the future. With regard to team cohesion, social loafing has been identified as a cause of its decline (Monzani et al., 2014), and for that reason, it would be pertinent to see if the same is true of quiet quitting. Hamouche et al. (2023) calls attention to the lack of empirical research into quiet quitting, which is why it is necessary to look into the causes, consequences and solutions, in order to better understand the concept. With regard to the consequences, we suggest: productivity/performance, knowledge sharing and cooperation, based on a comparative analysis (teams in which quiet quitting occurs versus teams in which it does not occur versus teams in which some do it and others do not). The information gathered could act not only as an incentive for companies to accept quiet quitting, but also as a strategy for attracting talent, as happened with 4DWW (Gomes, 2023; Jahal et al., 2023). Furthermore, just as a comparison was made between the characteristics of quiet quitting with those of 4DWW and slow work, as new trends in the labour market, other phenomena can be explored: quiet firing (Anand et al., 2023) and slashing (Wei, 2020).

Serenko (2023) points to the social contagion effect as a possible cause of the rapid spread of quiet quitting. In the present study, we have put forward the quiet quitting differential as a variable that could have an impact in individuals, teams and organizations, in addition to the phenomenon itself. Hence, future research could examine whether quiet quitting is "contagious" or not, pointing out possible consequences if it is.

In this study, we measured the possible correlations between quiet quitting and its differential with other variables that could be either related or confused with the phenomenon. Scholars should perform the same type of analysis by comparing and distinguishing it from the following constructs: counterproductive work behaviour (CWB), work disengagement, sabotage and cynicism.

Given that several researchers disagree with the term given to the behaviour studied, we encourage the discussion and creation of a new name to quiet quitting, in order to reduce the negative connotation attributed to it, not least because people are neither quiet nor want to quit (Forrester, 2023). We advance with the term soft staying, because people stay in their jobs, however without the hustle culture mentality.

Truly, the possibilities for future research are endless, since as well as being a relatively recent phenomenon it also has a significant impact on the labour market (Serenko, 2023). Despite this study's efforts to clarify the concept of quiet quitting and present possible consequences, there is still a long way to go and we encourage other authors to explore what this phenomenon is and implies.

5.4. Conclusion

This study contributes to increasing the little knowledge that exists about the phenomenon of quiet quitting and its relationship with other concepts. Employees have begun to rethink their priorities and place more value on their well-being and work-life balance, hence companies should also rethink their practices, adapting them to meet the current needs of individuals and the new reality of the labour market (Hamouche et al, 2023). The results of this study reveal that the leader can have an influence, through sensemaking, on increasing workers' perception of interpersonal justice when there is a quiet quitting differential in their team. Additionally, it was found that the greater the differences in quiet quitting in a work group, the lower the perception of procedural justice, however we present suggestions to remedy this possible problem. Finally, no relationship was found between quiet quitting and relationship conflict. Future research should focus on performing a multi-level empirical analysis to discover the causes and consequences of quiet quitting and compare it with concepts with which it is confused.

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Annexes

Annex A – Questionnaire

O presente estudo surge no âmbito de um projeto de investigação a decorrer no Iscte – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa. O estudo tem por objetivo determinar qual/quais a(s) consequência(s) da existência de quiet quitting numa equipa de trabalho.

O estudo é realizado por Ana Lúcia Nascimento (alaan4@iscte-iul.pt), que poderá contactar caso pretenda esclarecer uma dúvida ou partilhar algum comentário.

A sua participação no estudo, que será muito valorizada pois irá contribuir para o avanço do conhecimento neste domínio da ciência, consiste em responder a questões de escolha múltipla e de resposta breve acerca do seu comportamento no trabalho, das perceções de justiça dentro da sua equipa, a relação entre os vários membros e a forma como analisa o seu líder. Demorará cerca de 10 minutos a responder a todas as perguntas. Não existem riscos significativos expectáveis associados à participação no estudo.

A participação no estudo é estritamente voluntária: pode escolher livremente participar ou não participar. Se tiver escolhido participar, pode interromper a participação em qualquer momento sem ter de prestar qualquer justificação. Para além de voluntária, a participação é também anónima e confidencial. Os dados obtidos destinam-se apenas a tratamento estatístico e nenhuma resposta será analisada ou reportada individualmente. Em nenhum momento do estudo precisa de se identificar.

Tendo em conta o que é proposto e referido acima:

O Aceito participar no estudo.

O Não aceito participar no estudo.

Secção A

Para iniciar a sua participação no estudo deverá preencher o seguinte campo com o código de equipa criado pelo líder. Este código possibilitará que se consiga identificar as respostas dadas por elementos da mesma equipa, sem colocar em causa o seu anonimato.

Código de equipa (6 dígitos)

Secção B: Quiet Quitting

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar a forma como se comporta no que diz respeito ao seu trabalho.

Indique em que medida concorda ou discorda de cada afirmação apresentada.

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo	Concordo totalmente
Dou mais prioridade ao meu bem-estar, à minha saúde mental e ao equilíbrio entre a vida profissional e pessoal do que aos meus objetivos profissionais.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tenho-me desligado psicologicamente do trabalho, porque comecei a dar prioridade ao meu bem-estar.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Estabeleci limites claros que me impedem de despender mais tempo ou esforço no trabalho se isso comprometer o meu bem-estar, a minha saúde mental e o equilíbrio entre a vida profissional e pessoal.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Evito trabalhar mais horas do que as descritas no meu contrato.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
No meu trabalho, faço o que está definido contratualmente, e não mais do que isso.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Não faço um esforço extra no meu trabalho se este me levar a exceder os requisitos formais do meu emprego.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Trabalho para além das exigências formais do meu trabalho.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reduzo os inputs (por exemplo, esforço, tempo e recursos despendidos no trabalho) que dou à empresa se estes não se refletirem nos outputs (por exemplo, salário, benefícios e autonomia).	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Não ajudo os meus colegas de equipa nas suas tarefas, se isso significar ultrapassar os limites do meu equilíbrio entre vida profissional e pessoal.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Evito assumir tarefas adicionais, para além das obrigatórias, quando me pedem para o fazer.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Dou mais prioridade ao meu bem-estar, à minha saúde mental e ao equilíbrio entre a vida profissional e pessoal do que aos meus objetivos profissionais.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Secção C.1: Perceções de justiça

Por favor, responda de forma clara à seguinte questão. Indique e descreva qual é o resultado do seu trabalho. (Exemplo: número de vendas, qualidade do trabalho…)

Secção C.2: Perceções de justiça

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar qual a sua perceção de justiça dentro da sua equipa de trabalho.

As seguintes afirmações referem-se aos procedimentos que foram usados para determinar o seu salário e benefícios. Em que medida considera que:

	Nunca	Algumas vezes	Cerca de metade das vezes	A maioria das vezes	Sempre
Foi capaz de expressar os seus pontos de vista e sentimentos durante esses procedimentos?	○	○	○	○	○
Teve influência sobre o resultado desses procedimentos?	○	○	○	○	○
Os procedimentos foram aplicados de forma consistente?	○	○	○	○	○
Os procedimentos não foram enviesados?	○	○	○	○	○
Os procedimentos basearam-se em informações corretas?	○	○	○	○	○
Teve possibilidade de recorrer da decisão determinada por esses procedimentos?	○	○	○	○	○
Os procedimentos refletiram padrões éticos e morais?	○	○	○	○	○

As seguintes afirmações referem-se ao seu salário e benefícios. Em que medida considera que:

	Nunca	Algumas vezes	Cerca de metade das vezes	A maioria das vezes	Sempre
O seu salário e benefícios refletem o seu esforço no trabalho?	○	○	○	○	○
O seu salário e benefícios são adequados tendo em conta o trabalho que faz	○	○	○	○	○
O seu salário e benefícios refletem o que tem contribuído para a empresa?	○	○	○	○	○
O seu salário e benefícios são justificados tendo em conta o seu desempenho?	○	○	○	○	○

70

As seguintes afirmações referem-se ao seu líder da sua equipa. Em que medida considera que:

	Nunca	Algumas vezes	Cerca de metade das vezes	A maioria das vezes	Sempre
Ele/ela trata-o(a) de forma educada?	○	○	○	○	○
Ele/ela trata-o(a) com dignidade?	○	○	○	○	○
Ele/ela trata-o(a) com respeito?	○	○	○	○	○
Não foi vítima de observações ou comentários impróprios pela sua chefia?	○	○	○	○	○
Ele/ela é franco(a) quando comunica consigo?	○	○	○	○	○
Ele/ela explica minuciosamente os procedimentos que o afetam?	○	○	○	○	○
As suas explicações sobre procedimentos que o afetam são razoáveis?	○	○	○	○	○
Ele/ela comunica os detalhes dos procedimentos em tempo útil?	○	○	○	○	○
Ele/ela adapta a comunicação às suas necessidades específicas?	○	○	○	○	○

Secção D: Conflitos relacionais

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar a forma como os membros da sua equipa de trabalho se relacionam entre si.

Indique:

	Nenhum	Ligeiramente	Uma quantidade moderada	Bastante	Muito
Qual é o grau de fricção entre os membros do seu grupo de trabalho?	○	○	○	○	○
Em que medida é que os conflitos de personalidade são evidentes no seu grupo de trabalho?	○	○	○	○	○
Quanta tensão existe entre os membros do seu grupo de trabalho?	○	○	○	○	○
Qual o grau de conflito emocional entre os membros do seu grupo de trabalho?	○	○	○	○	○

Secção E: Sensemaking

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar a forma como olha para o líder da sua equipa.

Numa equipa de trabalho, as pessoas podem ter diferentes comportamentos relacionados com o quanto optam por ir, ou não, além daquilo que é pedido em termos de trabalho, horário, esforço, e tarefas não obrigatórias ou responsabilidades extra. Tendo isto em mente, indique em que medida é que o líder da sua equipa tem um papel na interpretação e transmissão deste assunto:

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo totalmente
O líder ajuda a equipa a interpretar as coisas que acontecem dentro da equipa, relacionadas com os comportamentos descritos acima.	○	○	○	○	○
O líder ajuda a equipa a interpretar as coisas que acontecem fora da equipa, relacionadas com os comportamentos acima descritos.	○	○	○	○	○
O líder facilita a compreensão de acontecimentos ou situações pela equipa, relacionados com os comportamentos acima descritos	○	○	○	○	○
O líder ajuda a equipa a interpretar acontecimentos internos ou externos, relacionados com os comportamentos acima descritos.	○	○	○	○	○
O líder ajuda a equipa a dar sentido a situações ambíguas, relacionadas com os comportamentos acima descritos.	○	○	○	○	○

Secção F: Social Loafing

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar a sua perceção acerca do esforço dos membros da sua equipa.

Indique em que medida concorda ou discorda de cada afirmação apresentada.

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo totalmente
Os membros do meu grupo de trabalho estão a esforçar-se o mais que podem.	○	○	○	○	○
Os membros do meu grupo de trabalho são "free-loaders" (deixam que os outros façam o trabalho por eles)	○	○	○	○	○
Os membros do meu grupo de trabalho estão a contribuir menos do que eu esperava.	○	○	○	○	○
Tendo em conta as suas capacidades, os membros do meu grupo de trabalho estão a fazer o melhor que podem.	○	○	○	○	○

Secção G: Withdrawal Behaviors

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar o seu comportamento no último ano, no que diz respeito ao seu trabalho.

Nos últimos 12 meses, com que frequência...

	Nunca	Algumas vezes	Cerca de metade das vezes	A maioria das vezes	Sempre
Pensamentos sobre estar ausente do trabalho.	O	O	O	O	O
Conversou com colegas de trabalho sobre assuntos não profissionais.	O	O	O	O	O
Abandonou o posto de trabalho por razões desnecessárias.	O	O	O	O	O
Sonhou acordado.	O	O	O	O	O
Gastou o tempo de trabalho em assuntos pessoais.	O	O	O	O	O
Esforçou-se menos do que deveria no trabalho.	O	O	O	O	O
Pensou em deixar o emprego atual.	O	O	O	O	O
Deixou que outros fizessem o seu trabalho.	O	O	O	O	O
Saiu mais cedo do trabalho sem autorização.	O	O	O	O	O
Fez um intervalo para almoço ou descanso mais longo do que o permitido.	O	O	O	O	O
Levou materiais ou equipamento sem autorização.	O	O	O	O	O
Adormeceu no trabalho.	O	O	O	O	O

Secção H: Quiet Quitting – Karrani et al. (2023)

Esta parte do questionário tem como objetivo analisar a forma como se comporta no que diz respeito ao seu trabalho.

Indique em que medida concorda ou discorda de cada afirmação apresentada.

	Discordo totalmente	Discordo parcialmente	Nem concordo nem discordo	Concordo parcialmente	Concordo totalmente
Faço apenas o que esperam de mim e nada mais.	O	O	O	O	O
Faço o meu trabalho, mas não dedico qualquer esforço ou tempo extra.	O	O	O	O	O
Não me voluntario para responsabilidades adicionais.	O	O	O	O	O
Não assumo projetos ou tarefas adicionais para além do que consta na minha descrição de funções	O	O	O	O	O
Não apresento novas ideias ou sugestões para melhorar processos ou procedimentos.	O	O	O	O	O
Evito tomar iniciativa ou assumir papéis de liderança no local de trabalho.	O	O	O	O	O
Não participo em quaisquer atividades ou projetos voluntários fora das minhas responsabilidades profissionais normais.	O	O	O	O	O
Só comunico quando necessário.	O	O	O	O	O
Não participo ativamente em conversas relacionadas com o trabalho com colegas de equipa ou supervisores.	O	O	O	O	O
Não procuro ativamente obter feedback ou melhorar as minhas competências.	O	O	O	O	O

Secção I: Dados sociodemográficos

Selecione ou escreva a resposta adequada para cada um dos itens abaixo indicados.

1. Género:
   ○ Feminino
   ○ Masculino
   ○ Outro

2. Idade:

   ┌─────────────────┐
   │   │
   └─────────────────┘

3. Qual é a sua área de atividade?

   ┌─────────────────┐
   │   │
   └─────────────────┘

4. Qual a percentagem de tempo que trabalha em regime presencial?

   ┌─────────────────┐
   │   │
   └─────────────────┘

5. Há quantos meses trabalha com a equipa onde atualmente pertence?

   ┌─────────────────┐
   │   │
   └─────────────────┘

6. É líder da sua equipa?
   ○ Não
   ○ Sim

Annex B – Relation between Quiet Quitting, Slow Work and 4 Day Work Week

Similarities	Quiet Quitting	Slow Work	4DWW
a) The Covid-19 pandemic seems to have precipitated its discussion and/or implementation	Some authors argue that the concept of quiet quitting emerged after the Covid-19 pandemic (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Formica & Sfodera, 2022; Kang et al., 2023), as a response to work stressors (Wu & Wei, 2024), which led individuals to re-evaluate their priorities (Anand et al., 2023) and the way they worked (Atalay & Dağistan, 2023; Lu et al., 2023).	Berwick (2024) points out that the post-pandemic moment is favourable to making changes such as adopting slow work, since there has also been a shift from knowledge work to totally remote work, highlighting what has worked badly so far.	Although the 4-day work week has been talked about since the 1970s, it has regained importance as a response by companies to the increased demand for more flexible working arrangements (FWA) following the COVID-19 pandemic (Jahal et al., 2023).
b) The primary objective is to improve the well-being of workers	Quiet quitting represents the constructive approach that workers take in order to create a balance between their work and personal life (Anand et al., 2023; Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2023; Tsemach & Barth, 2023), improve their well-being (Anand et al., 2023), boost mental health (Forrester, 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023) and alleviate burnout (Hamouche et al., 2023; Tsemach & Barth, 2023).	With our current unnatural pace of work, we need to make room for slowing down (Berwick, 2024), and adopt these kinds of policies to promote workers' well-being (Silvestre et al., 2024).	Workers' mental health was identified as one of the main motivations for adopting the 4DWW and, according to the results of the pilot project report, it has become a reality (Gomes & Fontinha, 2024).
c) These phenomenon demand changes in the labour market, which frighten companies and entrepreneurs, but are considered beneficial changes	Firstly, the concept of quiet quitting implies the need for systemic changes in working conditions (Kang et al., 2023), which challenges the assumptions underlying the hustle culture (Serenko, 2023), such as 4DWW and slow work. Hamouche et al. (2023) claims that quiet quitting could reshape the contemporary labour market. Additionally, the very definition of quiet quitting shows that workers' priorities have changed (Anand et al., 2023). These changes are recent and organisations are not certain either about the nature of this phenomenon, its impact or how to act efficiently (Hamouche et al., 2023).	Berwick (2024) contends that slow productivity is possible and that although it's a scary first step, it's a decision for the better. The benefits include: improving the well-being of workers, as well as their individual performance and productivity, which will consequently be a competitive advantage for organisations (Silvestre et al., 2024).	Gomes & Fontinha (2024) claim that taking the initiative to adopt the 4-day work week brings changes, but that the benefits already mentioned outweigh the possible discomforts. For example, the 4DWW can be considered a strategy to compete for talent, as an alternative to increasing salaries (Gomes, 2023; Jahal et al., 2023). In the case of Portugal, the labour market is converging towards low-wage policies (Suleman et al., 2023), thus companies may try to compete for talent through work conditions and flexibility rather than (just) salary. A study on Australian companies found that 4DWW increased attraction and retention of talent, increased productivity and reduced absenteeism (Hopkins, Bardoel, & Djurkovic, 2023).
d) The issue of productivity is pointed out as critical, despite the fact that, to our knowledge, there is no statistical data to prove that adopting these behaviours harms productivity	In the Literature Review section, the relationship between quiet quitting and the concepts of productivity and performance is explained.	Berwick (2024) is critical of the way productivity is measured and distinguishes pseudo productivity from actual productivity. The author believes that individuals tend to think that something is productive if it is a visible activity – pseudo productivity. On the other hand, he argues that "the right measure of useful effort is actually finishing things that are valuable (...) Work on fewer things at the same time, do those things really well, give yourself more than enough time to get them done"- actual productivity. In fact, Silvestre et al. (2024) leave no doubt and state that slow work is in favour of productivity for individuals and organisations.	Entrepreneurs are demonstrating their opposition to the 4-day work week, as they believe that the priority for Portuguese companies should be to invest in measures to boost productivity. The argument of low productivity in Portugal is used to prevent the 4DWW from going ahead (Patrício, 2024). However, in the final report of the pilot project, the employees pointed to an increase in the level of productivity with the adoption of a 4-day work week (Gomes & Fontinha, 2024). In addition, Gomes (2022) states that 4DWW contributes to productivity because there is a reduction in intermediate costs. On the one hand, workers are less tired and make fewer mistakes and, on the other hand, there are savings in initiatives to cope with the mental fatigue of workers who are showing increasingly high levels of burnout and stress.