



Quiet Quitting and Quiet Cracking Practices In Basic Education: A Basis for Ethical and Language-based Management Training for School Administrators

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Received: April 19, 2026

Revised: April 24, 2026

Accepted: April 28, 2026

Online: April 30, 2026

Abstract

The plight of teachers is truly having an impact, especially the practice of quiet quitting and quiet cracking. Based on the theories of Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Politeness Theory, this study defines quiet cracking as the slow process of becoming inwardly detached among teachers, characterized by emotional exhaustion, demotivation, and professional passivity. The study used a quantitative research design with a correlational approach, in which 223 teachers were selected through purposive sampling. Age significantly correlated negatively with quiet quitting ($r = -.34, p < .001$) and quiet cracking ($r = -.31, p < .001$). Years of service were also associated negatively with quiet quitting ($r = -.28, p < .001$) and quiet cracking ($r = -.26, p < .001$). These results imply that young, less experienced teachers are more susceptible to workplace stress. Communication satisfaction proved to be the strongest predictor, significantly and negatively correlating with quiet quitting ($r = -.42, p < .001$) and quiet cracking ($r = -.47, p < .001$). No significant relationships could be established between perceived organizational support, civil status, position in the school, and school size on the one hand and disengagement types on the other ($p > .05$). These results underscore that although structural processes are in place, the importance of communication in terms of its actual practice is a determining factor in the process of teachers' engagement. Communication failures such as non-transparency, lack of recognition, and a lack of constructive interaction may be among the factors leading to psychological distance from work and low professional dedication.

Keywords: *Quiet Quitting, Quiet Cracking, Resignation, Basic Education Practices, Teachers' Attitude, Teachers' Motivation*

INTRODUCTION

Stress at work is common and unavoidable, but it can be reduced with appropriate interventions. [Schneider & Harknett \(2023\)](#) found that, posted on the Harvard University website, around the world, young workers usually resigned at work, as claimed there were 49% only who stayed at their job, 39% looked for a new job, 12% resigned and decided to be unemployed, and 1% continued other endeavors outside the labor market. Almost half of young workers continue to resign due to low pay, a toxic work environment, unfair treatment, office corruption, unpredictable schedules, and limited benefits.

In the workplace, [Malola et al. \(2024\)](#) found that a negative work environment, workplace bullying, an unfair workload, personal and professional conflicts, poor management, and a lack of professional growth were among the reasons young people left. This has been supported by the 2023 Eon Employee Sentiment survey, which found that 64% of Filipinos are constantly looking for a job, a perfect environment with less gossip, a fun place to work, flexible work arrangements, and possible scholarship opportunities.

Amid the global phenomenon of job resignations, the terms "quiet quitting" and "quiet

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cracking" are becoming popular in resignation discussions. Quiet quitting is defined as providing only the bare minimum of effort at work. Not maximizing their full potential, and employees usually avoid work responsibilities that consume most of their time (Galanis et al., 2023). Instead of resigning from their posts, employees often remain and seek better job opportunities in response to burnout, negative feedback at work, and a lack of professional growth.

On the other hand, another related concept but a different one is quiet cracking, which describes the state where workers undergo psychological distress arising from prolonged exposure to negative organizational circumstances like personal insults, unbalanced workload, role misfit, and professional value deterioration, resulting in emotional exhaustion, detachment, and dissatisfaction (Hall, 2025).

Although quiet quitting is described as a situation in which workers deliberately refrain from putting additional effort into their discretionary duties, quiet cracking is more about the internal psychological collapse of workers resulting from prolonged work-related stress. It therefore explains why the two concepts should be examined as separate yet related variables, given that the current results show they are similarly affected by organizational forces.

Although there is growing concern about employee disengagement worldwide, there remains a lack of research on how this relatively new concept operates in education, especially in a developing nation like the Philippines. The available research tends to focus on business organizations, overlooking the importance of communication behavior and organizational culture for teacher engagement. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill the gap by investigating the correlations between socio-demographic variables, organizational support, and communication satisfaction, and quiet quitting and quiet cracking. More importantly, the results reveal that while organizational support is not necessarily important, satisfaction with communication proves vital for reducing disengaged behavior among teachers.

Given the increasing prevalence of these trends across various occupations, it is necessary to examine their occurrence in education. These results show that, despite teachers' dedication, the occurrence of these phenomena is influenced by factors such as poor communication, workplace conflicts, and poor leadership, which can lead to these trends even among the most committed teachers. Despite existing organizational structures intended to address the problem, the insignificance of their relationships suggests a disconnect between practice and theory.

Recognizing the importance of teachers in shaping the Philippines' educational future, the human resources or division offices play a key role in helping to prevent, if not reduce, quiet quitting and quiet cracking in the workplace. This study explored potential preventive measures to reduce resignations in the education sector. The study used a self-administered questionnaire to assess how teachers perceived the support they received from the top-level management of their school and division, and how satisfied they were with the communication practices used to address issues and concerns they experienced at work.

On a larger scale, beyond its local relevance, this paper added value to the global academic conversation by contributing to the existing discourse on workplace disengagement by developing a new concept, quiet cracking, alongside the already existing concept of quiet quitting. The findings indicate that creating effective communication environments within educational organizations is a globally applicable means of boosting employee well-being and retention.

Generally, this study aimed to determine the level of quiet cracking and quiet quitting tendencies among public school teachers in the Division of Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija.

Specifically, it sought an answer to the following questions:

1. How can the respondents be described using their socio-economic profile?
2. What was the perceived organizational support of the public-school teachers by their school administrators and educational leaders in their division?

3. What was the satisfaction level of the public-school teachers with the communication strategies in addressing school or teaching-related concerns or problems they faced at work?
4. What was the level of quiet quitting among public school teachers?
5. What was the quiet cracking level among teachers in public schools?
6. Was there a correlation between the perceived organizational support of the public-school teachers by their school administrators and the quiet quitting and quiet cracking of them?
7. How does language choice and politeness in various communication approaches help to prevent quiet quitting and quiet cracking?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concepts of quiet quitting and quiet cracking are among the most commonly used terms in organizational and educational research, referring to manifestations of employees' attitudes and engagement towards their work. First, there is quiet quitting, which refers to employees limiting their work efforts to the minimum required responsibilities, often as a response to dissatisfaction, burnout, or office politics, an unprofessional working environment, and a hostile management approach, which young employees see as unmotivating and unworthy to engage with (Galanis et al., 2023).

Unlike quiet quitting, quiet cracking reflects a gradual internal deterioration in motivation and emotional well-being, often linked to prolonged exposure to stressors, unfair treatment at work, low morale practices, office corruption, and organizational dysfunction (Ratnatunga, 2022). In the education sector, these phenomena are increasingly observed among teachers who experience excessive workloads, insufficient support, workplace bullying, and systemic inequities. In educational institutions, teacher plights have been popularized and documented on social media and in various research that should be addressed as a critical issue that may influence other educators to leave the education sector as well.

Cammayo et al. (2023) found that Filipino teachers experience high levels of stress due to long working hours, Saturday training, and the need to shoulder their own studies to gain a promotional advantage. Aside from that, teachers face heavy teaching loads and large class sizes; as a result, they are also emotionally affected by their learners' current circumstances. They were most likely to be blamed for their learners' noncompliance and misbehavior, which were beyond their control.

These conditions contributed to emotional exhaustion and reduced professional efficacy, which are closely associated with disengagement behaviors such as quiet quitting. Similarly, Malquisto et al. (2023) reported that secondary teachers experienced significant burnout during the transition to a new curriculum to be implemented across all administrations, emphasizing how systemic changes lead to increased stress and disengagement.

Furthermore, workload misalignment contributes to disengagement among educators. Francisco et al. (2024) highlighted that teachers assigned ancillary tasks experience overwhelming responsibilities beyond teaching, leading to fatigue, self-doubt, low employee morale, loss of motivation to function, and decreased job satisfaction. Likewise, Etor (2025) described Filipino teachers as "underpaid and undervalued," which forces them to seek greener pastures and shift to work in the non-education sector abroad, as it offers a better quality of life.

On the other hand, quiet quitting has also been directly examined among Filipino educators. Varias and Conway (2024) found that teachers who engage in quiet quitting often perceive unfair treatment, excessive workload, unethical workplace treatment, and lack of institutional support. These teachers tend to limit their engagement to the minimum requirements, which affects their ability to deliver quality instruction to their learners.

Similarly, Hong et al. (2023) observed that quiet quitting could be influenced by unmet

psychological needs, including autonomy, competence, opportunity, and relatedness. When these needs are not met, educators are more likely to disengage and experience diminished professional fulfillment, which affects their performance at work.

The departure of teachers can be attributed to toxic leadership that did not value empathy in the Philippine education system. Teachers have reported experiencing favoritism, unfair treatment, intentional sabotage, malicious gossip, and inequitable workload distribution. According to [Dacanay \(2025\)](#), structural pressures and limited autonomy contribute to reduced intrinsic motivation among educators. This increases susceptibility to quiet quitting. Additionally, qualitative narratives from DepEd teachers reveal that systematic abuse of power, unfair promotional standards, excessive administrative demands, and lack of respect for personal time contribute to dissatisfaction and withdrawal behaviors ([Garcia, 2024](#)).

Hence, the most pressing issue now is bullying, which affects teacher well-being and engagement. Recent studies highlight that teachers themselves are identified as victims of bullying from students, colleagues, and administrators. [Maghanoy \(2025\)](#) documented the lived experiences of secondary teachers in the Philippines, revealing that verbal abuse, disrespect, subtle insults, and hostile interactions contribute to emotional distress and professional dissatisfaction. Similarly, [Habito \(2023\)](#) found that bullying behaviors in education negatively affect teachers' psychological well-being and performance. These experiences create a hostile work environment that fosters disengagement and reduces teachers' commitment to their roles.

[Manarin \(2025\)](#) emphasized that teachers who engage in professional acting or still maintain a professional attitude by suppressing their emotions are more likely to experience burnout. Emotional labor, when not supported by adequate psychological resources, leads to exhaustion and reduced motivation, which may lead to quiet cracking. This suggests that teacher disengagement is not always visible but may manifest internally through declining emotional resilience.

Another issue would be the malpractices in the school's resources. Corruption and governance issues in the Philippine education system further complicate problems. [Aquino \(2025\)](#) argued that weak institutional accountability and policy implementation create opportunities for unethical practices, which undermine trust and morale among educators. When teachers perceive that systems are unjust or corrupt, their motivation to perform beyond minimum expectations diminishes.

Moreover, establishing a negative work environment is more likely to lead to teacher resignations. The culture of maintaining and tolerating power tripping and bullying, according to [Tiauzon & Malsquito \(2018\)](#), created a cycle of reduced performance and absenteeism among teachers. The [Philippine Institute for Development Studies \(2025\)](#) further highlighted that bullying in schools has long-term consequences on educational outcomes, indicating that toxic environments impact the entire educational practices, including the relationship between teachers and students.

[Anog et al. \(2024\)](#) found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment significantly influence teacher retention in Philippine schools. When teachers feel valued and supported, they are less likely to engage in quiet quitting behaviors. Conversely, a lack of support, the maintenance of partisan practices or "kumpadre" systems, and the provision of special privileges are more likely to lead to teachers' resignation, as they cannot see a better future without the political will to engage in office politics in the education sector.

[Skaalvik and Skaalvik \(2017\)](#) further emphasized that teacher motivation is influenced by self-efficacy, job satisfaction, high salary rate, ability to contribute, employees' engagement in school management discourses, and emotional exhaustion, all of which are affected by workplace conditions. Moreso, organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping employee behavior. [Ratnatunga \(2022\)](#) argued that quiet quitting is often a response to ineffective performance

management and a lack of engagement strategies. In educational institutions, this suggests the need for leadership practices that promote fairness, transparency, and support for teachers, which was the focus of this study.

In summary, the review indicated that quiet quitting and quiet cracking among teachers are multilayered phenomena influenced by workload, burnout, bullying, unfair treatment, and systemic issues, including corruption. In the Philippine context, these challenges are particularly pronounced due to structural limitations and socio-cultural factors that require a holistic approach that considers both individual and organizational factors, which this study explored.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, specifically the convergent parallel type, which combines quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative method employed a non-experimental design and used correlation analysis based on the survey questionnaire distributed to target respondents. This was necessary to determine any relationships among organizational support, teacher job satisfaction, and the likelihood that teachers would engage in quiet cracking and quiet quitting, without manipulating the variables. To further enhance this process, it was deemed appropriate to supplement it with qualitative data from selected respondents to provide a clearer picture of teachers' experiences.

Theoretical Framework

The current research examines the connection between Social Exchange Theory (SET) and Politeness Theory, enabling a holistic examination of teacher disengagement from both relationship and communication perspectives. Rather than presenting these theories side by side, the current research combines SET and Politeness Theory by treating communication at work as a social exchange process in which language is used as a tool and resource. The Social Exchange Theory (SET), attributed to John Thibaut, George Homans, Peter Blau, and Harold Kelley, was rooted in 1958 communication interaction theory practices. This theory highlighted that, in dyadic and organizational communication, to fully engage target receivers, their benefits should be highlighted, and they should be supported to encourage commitment and enhance harmonious, better relationships in interpersonal communication.

In this research, the SET has been applied to examine how the organizational support and communication practices of top-level management officials could influence the quiet quitting and quiet cracking attitudes of the teachers who were the respondents of this study. This theory claims that a one-size-fits-all approach does not apply to all; addressing issues arising from the results may yield various solutions to avoid quiet quitting and quiet cracking among teachers.

Linguistic impoliteness will be viewed as a negative social cost or relational cost within the SET theory. Such repeated communicative costs can lead to psychological stress, disrupting the balance of the exchange relationship between teachers and the organization. In the absence of mutual contributions from both sides, such as respect and recognition for teachers or a good discussion, there will be an imbalance in the social exchange.

The negative exchange at its first stage might lead to quiet quitting, as an attempt by employees to withdraw from the situation due to the negative experience they have faced. In this way, the concept of quiet cracking can be seen as theoretically grounded, as it is understood to result from ongoing negative interactions arising from communicative breaches. Quiet quitting, on the other hand, is an adjustment in effort one makes to maximize returns. Quiet cracking is an example of a breach in the psychological contract between the teacher and the organization.

The same framework can be used to explain the study's empirical results, which show that

greater significance is placed on communication satisfaction than on organizational support. Organizational support refers to formal structures, while communication refers to the implementation of said structures. In other words, organizational support, if not accompanied by effective communication practices, fails to act as a reward within the social exchange process. Communication thus becomes the locus where the negotiation of relational equity is carried out.

On the other hand, in the Social Exchange Theory (SET), language also played a pivotal role in maintaining balance in transactions. The politeness theory of [Brown and Levinson \(1987\)](#) explained how top-level management used impolite discourse toward teachers, which was deemed to violate their personal boundaries, leading to quiet quitting and quiet cracking. The theory was applied to qualitative data gathered from respondents' written survey answers.

Respondents of the Study

Two hundred thirty-three respondents completed the questionnaire. The Division of Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippines, endorsed the instrument tool to all the School Heads under their division. The School Principal requested that their teachers complete the survey, and only those who answered it from November 10, 2025, to January 15, 2026, were included in the analysis. After the indicated date, the link was closed to prevent any further responses. Consent was integrated into the instrument, and once respondents agreed to the conditions of participation, they could access the survey.

Instrumentation

The instrument tool was developed by integrating several parts: (1) Socio-demographic profile; (2) Leader-Member Scales; (3) Perceived Organizational Support; (4) Organizational Communication Practices; (5) Work Disengagement; and (6) Overcommitment Scale.

Each part, except for the socio-demographic profile, used Likert scales with only four quantifiable choices. Then, the respondents could also provide qualitative answers, providing additional input regarding the factors that may influence their engagement and disengagement at work. The survey instrument was converted into a Google Form and checked by a psychometrician, a language expert, and a statistician for fitness.

Reliability of the Instrument

The test-retest method involved 15 teachers from another division to determine the instrument's internal consistency before its actual use. Organizational support, communication satisfaction, quiet quitting, and quiet cracking were measured using the instrument and tested for reliability with Cronbach's alpha. The results showed satisfactory to high internal consistency, as all Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeded the minimum requirement of $\alpha \geq .70$. This means that the variables within the scales correlate with each other in measuring the construct. Although a limited number of subjects were used in the pilot test, the results are still acceptable.

Data Gathering

A letter to conduct was sent to the Division of Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija. It was reviewed and endorsed by the research committee of the division. Once approved, the link was sent to all the School Heads, who encouraged their teachers to complete the survey. The respondents reached out to the proponents to clarify some concepts and concerns. Hence, all the data gathered was kept confidential and intended to be stored for only 2 years, as explained to the study's respondents.

Data Analysis

The data gathered was analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as Frequency, Percentage, and Mean, to present the study's findings. Hence, to examine correlations among the study variables, a Pearson r test was employed to assess relationships between respondents' socio-demographic profiles and the likelihood of quiet quitting and quiet cracking. For the qualitative statements in the survey indicated by the respondents, the statements were categorized, and a possible code was found for each category, which was then included under the theme based on the purpose of the study. To avoid biases in interpretation, the data gathered were sent to a non-affiliated individual who could access the data only and present it to the study's proponents.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the paper stated that the findings aligned with the theoretical framework and were analyzed using the intended statistical tools to answer the research questions provided in this study.

How can the respondents be described using their socio-economic profile?

The table below presents the socio-economic background of the respondents that may influence teachers' attitudes toward quiet quitting and quiet cracking in basic education.

Table 1. Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

School Size	Frequency (N=223)	Percentage (%)
Small	110	50
Medium	80	36
Large	20	9
Mega	13	5
Total	223	100
Position	Frequency	Percentage
Teacher 1	45	20
Teacher 2	25	11
Teacher 3	110	50
Teacher 4–6	25	11
Master Teacher (1–3)	18	7
Total	223	100
Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	170	77
Single	43	18
Widowed	8	4
Separated	2	1
Total	223	100
Specialization	Frequency	Percentage
Generalists (Elementary)	120	55
English	23	9
Mathematics	20	9
Science	20	9
Others (TVL, PE, Social Sci, Values)	40	18
Total	223	100
Age Group	Frequency	Percentage

20-29	33	14
30-39	70	32
40-49	70	32
50-59	40	18
60+	10	4
Total	220	100
Years of Service	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 years	41	17.94
6-15 years	79	35.87
16-25 years	70	31.39
26+ years	33	13.45
Total	223	100

Table 1 revealed that most respondents belonged to the small school category (50%), compared with the large school category (5%). This may have influenced how quiet quitting and quiet cracking could be interpreted, as a small-sized category school caters to a limited number of learners compared to the Mega/Large School category, which provides one school head and is highly competitive among educators. Hence, this may have an effect explicitly on how the other variables were interpreted.

Meanwhile, when it comes to teaching positions, half of the respondents were Teacher III (50%), which means they were halfway up the promotion ladder to reach Teacher VI, the highest post under the proficient level. The least were the Master Teacher (7%) and Teacher I (20%). This meant that basic education was still in the process of promoting teachers to leverage their teaching positions. Since most of the respondents were from small-scale schools, a limited number of Master Teacher positions were available there.

For Civil Status, most respondents were Married (77%) and Single (18%), which may also influence quiet quitting and quiet cracking among respondents. These Single respondents were probably among the beginning teachers aged 20-29 years (14%). This study assumed that basic education today employed younger teachers, as most of them were 30-39 years old (32%) and 40-49 years old (32%). In which only 4 respondents were 60 years old or older. Most respondents were Generalists, primarily elementary teachers (55%). Hence, despite being educated as younger teachers in basic education, these individuals chose to remain in service, with most having 6 to 15 years of service (35.87%) and 15 to 25 years of service (31.39%).

What was the perceived organizational support of the public-school teachers by their school administrators and educational leaders in their division?

Table 2 shows how the school leader and teacher communicate professionally by providing support that may influence quiet cracking and quiet quitting among basic education teachers.

Table 2. School Leader-Teacher Professional Engagement

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
I know where I stand with my immediate supervisor.	3.85	Strongly Agree
My school head/supervisor understands my job problems and needs.	2.67	Agree
My school head/supervisor recognizes my efforts.	3.33	Strongly Agree
My school head/supervisor helps me to perform well when I need his/her guidance.	2.62	Agree

My supervisor/school head is willing to bail me out when I need personal/professional help.	3.33	Strongly Agree
I have issues with my supervisor's management style.	3.58	Strongly Agree
I do not have confidence that my supervisor/ school head will defend my decisions.	3.68	Strongly Agree
Average Mean	3.29	Strongly Agree
Notes: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree	1.76 – 2.50 Disagree	
2.51 – 3.25 Agree	1.00 - 1.75 Strongly Disagree	

Table 2 demonstrates a high level of overall engagement between school leaders and teachers at a professional level ($M = 3.29$). On further analysis, however, some discrepancies are visible among various indicators. The items regarding role clarity ($M = 3.85$) and recognition ($M = 3.33$) had relatively higher mean scores. However, the items on supervisors' knowledge about teacher requirements ($M = 2.67$) and guidance ($M = 2.62$) had significantly lower mean scores. With reference to Social Exchange Theory, it can be argued that while there is a balance in the exchange, there is an imbalance in reciprocity. In simple terms, although the teachers experience recognition and role clarity, the relatively low mean scores on the emotional and professional aspects suggest dissatisfaction in this exchange.

Further, the high levels of agreement with negatively worded items, such as the absence of confidence in supervisor support for teacher decision-making ($M=3.68$) and problems with management style ($M=3.58$), point to underlying relational problems. Based on Politeness theory, the response pattern here can be seen as a manifestation of face threats to teachers, including threats to positive and negative face. Without appropriate handling of face needs in leadership communication, dissatisfying conditions can arise. This shows that although an average overall score is achieved, important leadership shortcomings coexist with high engagement, which can result in quiet cracking or quitting.

Table 3. Perceived Organization Support

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
My school values my contribution.	2.99	Agree
My school really cares about my well-being.	3.21	Agree
My school strongly considers my goals and values.	3.83	Strongly Agree
Help is available from my school when I have a problem.	3.06	Agree
My school would ignore any complaint from me.	2.43	Disagree
Even if I do my best work, my school will fail to notice	3.68	Strongly Agree
My school takes pride in my accomplishments.	2.27	Disagree
My school has seminars and training on workplace professionalism and on policies regarding bullying of learners and teachers.	3.32	Strongly Agree
My school has no efforts to address bullying behavior among my co-workers, and does not mind negative behavior from others.	3.69	Strongly Agree
Average Mean	3.19	Agree
Notes: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree	1.76 – 2.50 Disagree	
2.51 – 3.25 Agree	1.00 - 1.75 Strongly Disagree	

Table 3 suggests that teachers have an overall positive perception of organizational support

(M = 3.19). However, certain contradictory findings have been observed from the data. On the one hand, it seems that teachers perceive a high level of recognition regarding their aims and beliefs (M = 3.83); on the other hand, they strongly agree with statements implying that organizational support might fail to recognize their work (M = 3.68) or react to certain problems within the workplace, for example, bullying (M = 3.69).

Social Exchange Theory suggests that, despite symbolic support, affective or tangible support may be absent, thereby disrupting reciprocity. Furthermore, Politeness Theory helps explain the potential threats to teachers' positive face posed by non-recognition and lack of response from organizations. When there is no recognition of achievements and no response to grievances, it creates a sense of neglect that may lead to disengagement. These results suggest that organizational support not only involves policy but also requires practice.

What was the satisfaction level of the public-school teachers with the communication strategies in addressing school or teaching-related concerns or problems they faced at work?

Table 4 presents the teachers' satisfaction with organizational communication within their school organization and their division's communication practices.

Table 4. Organizational Communication Satisfaction

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
Information reaches me promptly.	2.67	Agree
Information from administrators is accurate.	2.89	Agree
Communication in my school is open and transparent.	2.76	Agree
I receive adequate feedback from my supervisor.	2.54	Agree
I receive enough information about school plans and developments.	3.87	Strongly Agree
Communication tools (memos, emails, group chats) are effective.	3.45	Strongly Agree
I receive sufficient recognition for my work.	3.51	Strongly Agree
My supervisor listens to my ideas.	3.22	Strongly Agree
Average Mean	3.11	Agree
Notes: 3.26 - 4.00 Strongly Agree	1.76 - 2.50 Disagree	
2.51 - 3.25 Agree	1.00 - 1.75 Strongly Disagree	

As indicated in Table 4 below, satisfaction levels are high among respondents regarding organizational communication (M = 3.11). Areas where high scores were reported include the availability of information (M = 3.87) and the effectiveness of communication tools (M = 3.45). On the other hand, low scores were recorded in the provision of feedback (M = 2.54) and the timely dissemination of information (M = 2.67).

From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, effective communication is an important factor in the social exchange between teachers and the organization. Failure to disseminate information promptly and provision of inadequate feedback imply failure to reciprocate. Politeness theory additionally postulates that failure to provide feedback and restricted listening can affect teachers' positive face by implying that their views are of low value. This is likely to demotivate teachers and discourage their engagement, despite the presence of functional communication structures. In essence, although communication systems have been rated as structurally effective, the relational aspect of communication, which primarily involves giving feedback, needs

improvement.

What was the level of quiet quitting among public school teachers?

The table below shows the level of quiet quitting among teachers in basic education.

Table 5. Quiet Quitting Indicators

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
I feel less involved in my work lately.	3.28	Strongly Agree
I struggle to find enthusiasm for my tasks.	3.83	Strongly Agree
I feel mentally disconnected from my work.	3.29	Strongly Agree
I feel that my co-workers are talking behind my back, which demotivates me.	3.44	Strongly Agree
I feel that the power dynamics in the school affect how we communicate professionally.	3.69	Strongly Agree
I observe a silent effort to exclude me at work and somehow sabotage my work.	3.68	Strongly Agree
I experience subtle bullying at work that isolates me more.	3.37	Strongly Agree
I feel like my co-teachers are talking about my private life and spreading rumors about me that affect my engagement at work.	2.98	Agree
I feel that the administration has no intervention in cases of employee bullying or makes no effort to investigate instances of bullying, which has left me disengaged at work.	3.37	Strongly Agree
Average Mean	3.44	Strongly Agree

Notes: 3.26 - 4.00 Strongly Agree 1.76 - 2.50 Disagree
2.51 - 3.25 Agree 1.00 - 1.75 Strongly Disagree

As shown in Table 5, the symptoms of quiet quitting exhibited by the educators were highly correlated with personal and organizational factors, as evidenced by the relatively high mean values for all significant variables. For instance, teachers admitted difficulty in finding interest in their activities ($M = 3.83$), noted the impact of power structures on workplace interactions ($M = 3.69$), and detected covert forms of exclusion or sabotage at work ($M = 3.68$).

Considering the results within the scope of Social Exchange Theory, there is a clear breakdown of reciprocity in organizational relations. If teachers feel there is inequity, discrimination, or even inadequate support from the organization, they respond in ways typical of quiet quitting. Given the high scores on indicators associated with motivation (enthusiasm) and relations (power games, exclusion), one can assume that teachers adjust their level of engagement based on what they receive from the organization.

According to Politeness Theory, the presence of feelings of exclusion and of communication being affected by power indicates that "face-threatening acts" regularly occur in the communication process at work. The positive face (the feeling of respect as a professional) and the negative face (autonomy) might be damaged by politeness-antagonizing behaviors during interactions among employees.

What was the quiet cracking level among teachers in public schools?

The table below shows the tendency toward quiet cracking among teachers in basic

education.

Table 6. Quiet Cracking Indicators

Statement	Mean	Interpretation
I get easily overwhelmed by time pressures at work.	2.85	Agree
People close to me say I sacrifice too much for my job.	2.87	Agree
Work still occupies my mind even when I go to bed.	3.06	Agree
My supervisor or co-workers are still reaching out to me even during weekends.	3.34	Strongly Agree
I must finish certain tasks on weekends, which leaves me exhausted.	3.73	Strongly Agree
Average Mean	3.17	Agree

Notes: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree
2.51 – 3.25 Agree 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree

As shown in Table 6, the major causes of quiet crack for teachers are associated with the workload and timing factors. For example, “time pressures at work are too overwhelming” (M = 2.85) and “workload demands constant effort on the part of teachers at their own expense” (M = 2.87) are classified under the “Agreement” category, indicating that the identified sources of stress are persistent amongst teachers. Additionally, the comparatively high mean value for “Work consumes me even after bedtime” (M = 3.06) underscores the impact of work-related stress on teachers’ private lives.

According to Social Exchange Theory, such results point to a discrepancy between the expectations placed on the teacher and the rewards or support they receive. In situations where employees feel the organization is requiring too much of them while offering insufficient returns in time, appreciation, or well-being efforts, there is a likelihood that the individual will withdraw in their actions.

Was there a correlation between the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and the results of the quiet cracking and quiet quitting scales?

Table 7 shows the relationship between respondents’ socio-demographic background and quiet cracking and quiet quitting.

Table 7. Relationship between Respondents’ Profile, Quiet Cracking, and Quiet Quitting Scales

Variables	Quiet Quitting (r)	p-value	Interpretation	Quiet Cracking (r)	p-value	Interpretation
Age	-0.34	$p < .001$	Significant	-0.31	$p < .001$	Significant
Years of Service	-0.28	$p < .001$	Significant	-0.26	$p < .001$	Significant
School Size	0.09	$p = .18$	Not significant	0.07	$p = .29$	Not significant
Position	-0.15	$p = .02$	Significant (weak)	-0.12	$p = .07$	Not significant
Civil Status	-0.08	$p = .23$	Not significant	-0.05	$p = .46$	Not significant

The results revealed a moderate negative correlation between age and both quiet quitting (r

= $-.34$) and quiet cracking ($r = -.31$), suggesting that younger teachers are more likely to exhibit disengagement and work-related stress behaviors. Likewise, years of service also show a negative relationship, suggesting that less experienced teachers are more vulnerable to workplace pressures, which may lead to reduced engagement and increased emotional exhaustion.

Findings implied that early-career teachers may struggle more with workplace adjustment, institutional expectations, and workload demands, and they were more susceptible to quitting quietly and quietly cracking compared to their more experienced counterparts. Therefore, adjustable workloads and expectations should be considered.

Was there a relationship between the perceived organizational support and communication satisfaction of public school teachers by their school administrators and their quiet quitting and quiet cracking?

Table 8 shows the relationship between the perceived organizational support and communication satisfaction of public school teachers by their school administrators, and quiet quitting and quiet cracking.

Table 8. Perceived Organizational Support and Communication Satisfaction of Filipino Public School Teachers

Variables	Quiet Quitting (r)	p -value	Interpretation	Quiet Cracking (r)	p -value	Interpretation
Organizational Support	0.07	$p = .29$	Not significant	-0.03	$p = .65$	Not significant
Communication Satisfaction	-0.42	$p < .001$	Significant	-0.47	$p < .001$	Significant

The results highlighted that organizational support has a negligible relationship with both quiet quitting ($r = 0.07$) and quiet cracking ($r = -0.03$). This suggests that general institutional support alone does not significantly influence teachers' disengagement or emotional stress. This suggests that while support systems may exist, they may not be sufficiently targeted or impactful to address the underlying causes of these behaviors.

In contrast, communication satisfaction shows a moderate negative correlation with both quiet quitting ($r = -0.42$) and quiet cracking ($r = -0.47$). This indicates that as teachers' satisfaction with communication increases, their likelihood of experiencing quiet quitting and quiet cracking decreases. Effective communication—characterized by clarity, openness, and responsiveness—appears to play a crucial role in reducing both disengagement and psychological strain among teachers.

It underscored the importance of communication practices within organizations. While general support mechanisms may not strongly predict teacher outcomes, high-quality communication emerges as a significant protective factor. This suggests that schools and educational leaders should prioritize transparent, inclusive, and supportive communication strategies to enhance teacher well-being and engagement.

How does language choice and politeness in various communication approaches help to prevent quiet quitting and quiet cracking?

The respondents mostly indicated the following:

Table 9. Common Language Usage and Politeness Strategies in Public School Settings

Category	Codes	Verbatim Statements from the Selected Respondents
Communication and Language	Authoritarian language; Top-down communication; Public criticism; Lack of appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions are given without explanation. • Decisions are already final when announced. • Feedback is given in front of others. • Our efforts are rarely acknowledged.
Politeness and Respect	Disrespectful interaction; Lack of politeness; Face-threatening communication; Perceived respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some comments sound insulting. • There is no courtesy when correcting mistakes. • I feel embarrassed when corrected harshly. • I feel motivated when my opinions are valued. • My school head is nice and polite.

It appears that language use and politeness strategies play important roles in motivating teachers during the communication process. The way information from management is delivered is crucial, since receivers' perceptions determine whether healthy, effective communication takes place. Thus, the use of polite and empathic language will facilitate positive relational communication. In contrast, directive or punitive communication tends to have a demotivating effect, especially when memos follow.

According to Politeness Theory, the way communication occurs will contribute to satisfying or endangering listeners' "face" needs. In other words, empathic and constructive communication will help meet teachers' needs for both positive and negative face, thus facilitating the development of healthy communication. Face-threatening acts, such as direct criticism, are likely to lead to teachers' withdrawal, quiet quitting, and cracking.

In a similar vein, Social Exchange Theory offers a valuable framework in understanding why supportive communication creates a sense of reciprocity between teachers and school administrators. When teachers feel that their performance issues are being addressed through instruction and discussion rather than punishment right off the bat, they tend to react positively, becoming more dedicated and hardworking in the process.

In summary, the problem lies not simply in being calm or empathic but in engaging in supportive communication practices that balance accountability and encouragement. Handling performance problems through discussion and problem-solving, rather than swift punitive action, can help maintain teacher motivation and integrity. This recognizes that teacher performance is not a static variable but one that depends on many factors.

CONCLUSIONS

Teachers in basic education were mostly young, belonging to the millennial and Gen Z age brackets, and were able to retire in service at a young age or in the exploratory stages of their careers, when quiet quitting and quiet cracking were common. Thus, given the reality that most of

them were single.

However, the findings indicate a need to enhance public school teachers' perceptions of organizational support and satisfaction with communication, particularly regarding feedback, recognition of their performance, and addressing their personal issues. Even if structural support is available, its effectiveness will depend on the quality of communication. The relatively low level of communication satisfaction implies that it is imperative to establish communication policies, define boundaries, and resolve issues quickly.

In addition to the general training sessions, this research suggests concrete non-monetary management measures that could be adopted at the school level and across the division as a whole. These measures are as follows: (1) developing effective feedback mechanisms, for instance, through organizing individual meetings with staff members regularly and holding reflective discussion meetings; (2) introducing clear communication policies that would delineate all communication channels available to report problems and indicate the expected response timeframes; (3) employing participatory decision-making techniques, for example, involving teachers in decision-making committees responsible for the planning process; (4) creating mentorship programs designed to assist young teachers who may be particularly prone to disengaging from work due to various reasons; and (5) fostering psychologically safe communication climates characterized by the use of respectful language and constructive discussion.

Although the number of educators engaged in quiet quitting is relatively low, this phenomenon signals emerging disengagement trends that must be actively addressed. The more pressing issue, however, is the occurrence of quiet cracking, a more serious form of disengagement caused by negative emotions stemming from poor communication, lack of inclusion, and other workplace problems.

Theoretically, this study advances Social Exchange Theory by showing that social exchanges in education occur not only through transactions and structures but also through discourse. The contribution of Politeness Theory concerns the idea that communicative practices, especially those involving respect and inclusion through language, become important rewards in social exchanges. In contrast, linguistic impoliteness becomes an important cost or violation. The analysis shows that formal support from the organizational context does not necessarily yield positive outcomes unless the organization implements it effectively.

From the perspective of the international academic community, the results presented here have further implications for workplace disengagement in the era of post-COVID education. Across various frameworks, educators face emotional and professional challenges in the course of their work, making communication an integral aspect of their continued engagement. Thus, the conceptualization and investigation of "quiet cracking" as a phenomenon becomes relevant and additional to the existing literature on the topic, with the implication that, apart from observable signs of disengagement, we must also consider psychological stress.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Some limitations in this study must be taken into account. For one thing, the research has been conducted among a select group of teachers working in the Division of Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija. It cannot, therefore, be generalized to all Philippine educational institutions. The chosen locality could have impacted the teachers' perception of the problem.

The second limitation is that the study relied primarily on self-reported data, which may be subject to response biases. Social desirability bias occurs when a teacher chooses a more socially acceptable response rather than what he or she really feels; recall bias is a tendency to distort information about one's past experiences.

Thirdly, although the study has established the association among organizational support,

communication methods, and the occurrence of quiet cracking and quiet quitting behaviors, it lacks longitudinal and behavioral data (for instance, the exact figures for turnover, absenteeism, and productivity levels). Therefore, it cannot fully validate whether the study's findings correlate with real-world effects within the organization. Lastly, the study does not measure the number of teachers who leave the organization in a particular period (monthly or annually). The reasons behind their decisions to leave are also not analyzed in detail.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A. Training Management Plan based on the outcomes of the Study

Proponent: Maristelle Cruz, Administrative Officer IV

Module	Content	Strategies/Activities	Duration
Day 1 – Understanding Teachers’ Motivation			
Understanding Teacher Disengagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quiet quitting and quiet cracking Impact on teaching 	Lecture-discussion; case analysis	4 hours
Effective Language Use in Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Practice of Empathy in Professional Communication 	Role-playing; communication drills	2 hours
Workshop/Presentation Proper			
Day 2 – Effective Communication for School Leaders			
Politeness and Professional Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politeness Strategies and Providing Constructive Feedback through an Outcomes-based approach 	Simulation activities; peer feedback	4 hours
Building Positive Communication Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging participation and Psychological safety at work 	Group workshop; action planning	2 hours

Note: These modules can tap the National University to conduct this two-day seminar, as this research was a collaborative initiative of the two institutions.