Understanding Quiet Quitting: Organizational Citizenship Behavior Reductions in the Post-Pandemic Workplace

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ABSTRACT

In this study, I seek to understand what has led workers to engage in a trend known as Quiet Quitting, where employees continue to perform their work but choose not to go above and beyond the formal obligations of their employment. I propose that this phenomenon can be operationalized as reduction of organizational citizenship behaviors and it exists as a result of return to the pre-pandemic status quo in which employees are no longer allowed to work in a primarily remote work environment.

I used three well-known theories to explain the possible ways in which the return to a primarily in-person work environment may have led employees to stop going above and beyond in their obligations: psychological contract breaches, work engagement, and adaptive cost. Using a cross-sectional questionnaire, I gathered data from 251 participants on each of those constructs as well as their beliefs in Quiet Quitting and organizational citizenship behaviors. I analyzed the data using partial least squares structural equation modeling.

The results suggest that employees being mandated back to a primarily in-person work environment has a negative relationship with meaningfulness. This, in turn, has a negative relationship on their performance of discretionary behaviors. Also, the results suggest that the adaptive costs associated with the COVID-19 drained workers' resources such that they were less likely to engage in those behaviors whether they wanted to or not.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a largely unprecedented event in modern history and the measures to mitigate its spread brought several changes to how work is performed. This study tries to understand the lasting impacts of those changes and the lessons they bring to managers. It will help advance the scholarship on remote work and how three important organizational

behavior theories apply to workers in the post-pandemic world. It will also provide further information to help practitioners make informed decisions on the future of the workplace and how much flexibility to give employees in how they perform their jobs.

Keywords: remote work, Quiet Quitting, COVID-19, return to the office, psychological contract, work engagement, adaptive cost, organizational citizenship behaviors.

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ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS

CDC = Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CWB = Counterproductive Workplace Behavior

IRB = In-role behavior

OCB = Organizational Citizenship Behavior

OCB-C = Organizational Citizenship Behavior Checklist

OCB-I = Organizational Citizenship Behavior directed at individuals

OCB-O = Organizational Citizenship Behavior directed at the organization

CB-SEM = Covariance-based structural equation modeling

PLS-SEM = Partial least squares structural equation modeling

SEM = Structural equation modeling

UWES = Utrecht Work Engagement Scale

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UNDERSTANDING QUIET QUITTING: ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR REDUCTIONS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC WORKPLACE

1.0 Introduction

In 2020, the world lived through life-changing events when COVID-19 became an international pandemic and most governments and organizations put measures in place to mitigate its spread. The workplace was a major part of life that was affected with a shift from in-person work to remote work for millions of workers (Bick et al., 2021; Dalton & Groen, 2022). In turn, these newfound choices and independence on how to perform one's work, characterized by remote work, appear to have changed how workers perceive their relationship to work, how they should perform their work, and how to maintain work-life balance (De Smet et al., 2021; Parker et al., 2022).

Just a few weeks from when COVID-19 started to spread in the United States, the New York Times presciently asked, "What if we don't want to go back to the office?" (Cramer & Zaveri, 2020). Although originally coined to refer to the changes that the 2008 financial crisis brought to the economy, culture, and society, the phrase "new normal" reappeared in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic (Manuti, 2022). Nevertheless, as the health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic subsided, questions were asked about the workplace: should, and are we able to, put things the way they were before? What are the consequences if we try to force this return?

In the workplace, workers seemed to be demanding a "new normal" that allowed for greater independence and control over how to perform their work. However, employers seemed doggedly insistent on returning to the pre-pandemic status quo. Particularly in the United States

of America, employers generally pushed for a return to that way of performing work. I propose this has had significant consequences to extra-role work behaviors and set conditions for Quiet Quitting.

Quiet Quitting is a contemporary trend in which employees only perform the explicitly required employment functions without going above and beyond (Lappelin, 2022; Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022; Harter, 2022). This trend appeared during the aforementioned events and has since spread on social media and gained the attention of employers and popular publications (e.g., Masterson, 2022; Kilpatrick, 2022). The explanations for it have been varied, including lack of voice in the workplace, generational differences, poor management, and learned helplessness (Detert, 2022; Skinner, 2022; Zenger & Folkman, 2022; Rock & Dixit, 2023).

In their article, de Smet et al. (2021) note that if employees return to the office and "find that they aren't fully reenergized, that they still feel tired, and that they still carry uncertain and unresolved grief, they will disconnect emotionally even further from their organizations and leaders" (para. 9). If workers had work conditions they grew to like working remotely, and those conditions were compatible with their revised outlook on work and life, a trend like Quiet Quitting seems like a natural response to being pushed to return to in-person work.

During the preliminary stages of my research, it became evident the trend known as Quiet Quitting was being spread predominantly on American publications, forums, and social media, with little regard to other countries. Also, because the context of my research depends on how much concern society was worried about COVID-19 and public health recommendations, including more countries would have greatly increased the complexity of my research. Therefore, I chose to focus my research on the United States, where the Quiet Quitting trend and

the proposed conditions for this phenomenon appears to have been discussed most frequently in various forms of media.

In this research, I seek to explain why Quiet Quitting is occurring. Specifically, I use three theories (Psychological Contracts, Engagement Theory, and Adaptive Cost Theory) to explain three complementary but separate mechanisms that may predict the occurrence of Quiet Quitting among employees in the United States. Specifically, I propose three mechanism that may explain why Quiet Quitting has arisen during a period when COVID-19 restrictions subsided and employers pushed for a return to the pre-pandemic status quo.

First, using psychological contract theory, I propose workers' expectations towards their employers may have changed during their time working online and the changes that came as restrictions disappeared were perceived as a psychological contract breach. This breach then was associated with lower positive beliefs about citizenship behaviors and actual organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., going above and beyond one's in-role tasks; Organ, 1988; Smith et al., 1983).

Second, using engagement theory, I propose changes to the return to worksite following the pandemic left workers feeling less engaged than they were during their time working online, which related to them being less motivated to go above and beyond. Namely, these workers had more positive attitudes about Quiet Quitting and less positive attitudes about organizational citizenship behaviors.

Third, using adaptive cost theory, I propose the rapidly changing demands following the start of the pandemic depleted workers' psychological and physical availability, which left them with fewer available resources to go above and beyond their job roles. In other words, fewer

internal resources resulted in Quiet Quitting, not from an intentional perspective but from an actual lower rate of organizational citizenship behaviors.

My research project will bring several benefits to scholarship. It will add to the literature on understanding the societal impacts of COVID-19. This is an interesting phenomenon and a rich area for study as it was a new, widespread, and largely unprecedented occurrence in modern history. Ultimately, Quiet Quitting is a catchy phrase that carries a lot of meaning. It likely helps workers express their beliefs about work and their dispositions, and it seems to encapsulate many issues workers have been experiencing as the pandemic restrictions wane. As a researcher, Quiet Quitting is a trend that lays a path for me to go into the exploration of how the policies originally meant to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 may have altered the workplace.

This study is also relevant as it helps to contribute to the literature on the three theories I will use in this paper: Psychological Contracts, Engagement Theory, and Adaptive Cost Theory. With these separate-but-complementary theories, I expect to produce a paper that is more nuanced and complex in its attempts to explain the reasons for this phenomenon.

In addition, I clearly link the concept of Quiet Quitting to Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, which may help grow the research on both constructs. On the one hand, my research especially adds to the literature around OCBs for two important reasons: it adds a new understanding of why workers may withhold their discretionary behaviors and it uses the measures developed by Fox and Spector (n.d.), which are purported to be superior to previous measures (Fox et al., 2012). On the other hand, my research builds on the scholarly understanding of Quiet Quitting and how it should be approached.

This study will also bring several benefits to practitioners. I expect it will offer insights on the expectations and attitudes towards work three years after the pandemic first started and

one year after restrictions started to subside considerably (Wu et al., 2020; Smart, 2022; Massetti et al., 2022). Also, this study will help employers make evidence-based decisions on the choice to bring employees back to in-person work, what to expect when making those transitions, and whether continuing to allow remote or hybrid work is a good decision. Importantly, it will offer practitioners a thoughtful and well-researched view on the trend of Quiet Quitting than they may have learned about in the popular media.

Lastly, this study will bring several benefits to the community. In early 2020, very important and significant decisions were made by governments and organizations in an attempt to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Those decisions were taken in very short order and may not have involved the planning or meaningful reflection on all the consequences these decisions would have throughout society, not just on our health. I believe it is now an appropriate time to reflect on those choices and assess the consequences of those decisions beyond the scope of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

In the next chapter, I present the historical and theoretical context in more detail. I begin by explaining three important contexts on which my research project relies. First, I explain the timeline of policies by governments and organizations to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 that affected the workplace. Second, I discuss workers' acceptance and preference for remote work, including scholarly research that indicates there were known benefits to remote work for employees and organizations before the emergence of COVID-19 (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Martin & MacDonnell, 2012). Then, I examine contemporary evidence from pollsters, researchers, and workers that indicate that the trend among workers is that they have embraced remote work and thrived in it.

Finally, I conclude by explaining the impetus and justification for this research project. I recognize that concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on people's health had reduced considerably by the time I collected my data. However, greater independence on how to perform one's work, characterized primarily by a preference for remote work, which became more widespread in 2020 as a way of mitigating the spread of the virus, continued to be popular (Dua et al., 2022; Lewis, 2021a; Ford, 2022).

2.0 Research Context

In this chapter, I provide a historical background on COVID-19 mitigation measures, policy and workplace changes, and the Quiet Quitting trend, before presenting the theoretical research framework and the associated hypotheses in the next chapter.

2.1. Historical Events

In March 2020, most jurisdictions in the United States imposed restrictions on people's ability to gather in-person in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 (Wu et al., 2020). These policies led to a shift from in-person work to remote work for millions of workers (Bick et al., 2021; Dalton & Groen, 2022).

In the spring of 2021, changes to COVID-19 policies began to appear and a sense of normality started to return to the lives of Americans (McCarthy, 2021). Notably, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) loosened some of its guidelines related to mask requirements (Rodriguez, 2021) and returning to pre-pandemic activities may have felt safer as millions of people were vaccinated against COVID-19 in the United States (Our World in Data, n.d.).

Meanwhile, companies started to announce their expectations that employees would return to a primarily in-person workplace. For example, Amazon announced they would like their office-based employees to come back during the course of the summer of 2021 (Palmer, 2021), Apple reported its employees should be working in-person for at least three days per week by that September (Hamilton, 2021), and financial organizations like Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan, and Citigroup expressed similar desires (Kelly, 2021a).

Nevertheless, as the summer of 2021 progressed, many of the plans to bring employees back to the workplace were delayed as the more deadly and contagious Delta variant spread in

the United States (Mandavilli, 2021). As a consequence of this variant, companies like Lyft, Google, Twitter, and Facebook delayed their return to in-person work (Kelly, 2021b; Woo & Conger, 2021).

Over the course of 2022, concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic considerably subsided, in pace with recommendations from the CDC. In the spring of 2022, the CDC started considering the risk of contracting COVID-19 to be low or medium for the vast majority of the country and it again stopped recommending that masks be required (Brangham & Mufson, 2022). In August of that year, the CDC declared that the risk of illness or death from COVID-19 was significantly reduced (Massetti et al., 2022). Keeping with the trend towards abandoning or loosening health restrictions and concerns related to COVID-19, many employers signaled their desire to bring employees back to an in-person work environment by Labor Day 2022 (Telford, 2022; Cutter & Bindley, 2022). However, their desires were rebuked by many workers, who often considered whether the pandemic was under control, felt reluctant to go back to their old work attire and office environment, and felt they had other options because of the seemingly good job market at the time (Barron, 2022; Telford, 2022; Smart, 2022). For example, an engineering manager, who had worked at the same company for 10 years, described the return to onsite work as hurtful and argued that his company was trying to turn back to where it was before the pandemic started (Telford, 2022).

2.2. Approaches to Remote Work

Although remote work was already a reality before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was considerably less widespread (Bick et al., 2021; Dalton & Groen, 2022). During that time, two pioneers in allowing for remote work were IBM and Yahoo, but even those companies tried

to roll back some of those policies at various points before the pandemic (Goudreau, 2021; Kessler, 2017; McGregor, 2013; Simon, 2005). Despite not being a widespread practice, academic evidence already pointed towards the potential of remote work for better work-life balance and business performance before the pandemic (Fonner & Roloff, 2010; Hill et al., 2003).

Two meta-analyses conducted before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic show that the academic literature already strongly demonstrated remote work had benefits to the individual and the organization (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). First, in a meta-analysis of 46 studies, working remotely appeared to be a positive thing for workers, being associated with increased perceptions of autonomy, lower work-life conflict, quality employee-supervisor relationships, job satisfaction, and lower turnover role stress (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). However, this meta-analysis did not find it improved performance (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

Second, in a meta-analysis of 22 remote work studies, this form of work was associated with perceptions by the organization of increased productivity, employee retention, organizational commitment, and performance (Harker Martin & MacDonnell, 2012). Notably, the researchers concluded by noting how telework had not been embraced by organizational decision makers at the time despite its potential benefits (Harker Martin & MacDonnell, 2012).

Based on a Pew Research Poll, workers continued working remotely more because of choice than fear of contracting COVID-19 between 2020 and 2022 (Parker et al., 2022). This poll also complements previous research (e.g., Bick et al., 2021; Dalton & Groen, 2022) that indicated remote work was the exception prior to COVID-19, showing that 57% of respondents who had jobs that could be done remotely rarely or never did so before the pandemic. This group of workers has indicated that remote work made it easier for them to balance their work and

private lives (64%) and complete their work and meet deadlines (44%; Parker et al., 2022). Nevertheless, 60% felt less connected to their coworkers when working remotely (Parker et al., 2022).

Many common concerns associated with in-person work, such as commute time, costs to get to work, flexibility, professional attire, and sleep, made workers concerned about returning to the office based on a survey conducted in 2021 (Lewis, 2021a). These results also indicated that employees have changed their views on remote and in-person work, reporting that 45% of workers believed working in the office was less important than they thought before the pandemic (Lewis, 2021a).

In a McKinsey article, the authors suggest that the changes to work arrangements arising from the response to COVID-19 offer an opportunity to reimagine how people work (De Smet et al., 2021). However, there appears to be a disconnect between employees' desire to work remotely and employers' desire to bring workers back to the office (De Smet et al., 2021). Employees seem to be reevaluating their relationship with work and employers in light of the new work arrangement options and increasing the blending of personal and work lives that has happened since 2020 (De Smet et al., 2021).

In the spring of 2022, Ipsos conducted a survey of 25,062 respondents in the continental United States, Alaska, and Hawaii. In this survey, workers signaled they were embracing remote work and demanding more of it (Dua et al., 2022). The results of the survey show that 35% of respondents had been offered to work fully remotely, 23% partly or occasionally, and 42% only in person (Dua et al., 2022). For those working remotely in some fashion, they were spending on average three days working online (Dua et al., 2022).

Ford (2022) investigated a remote work pilot program that took place before the pandemic and seven other pilots that occurred during the pandemic. Based on her results, it appears workers have developed a greater disposition to accept remote work. Almost all the workers in the post-pandemic remote programs (98.5%) chose to participate in them because they had already experienced remote work and wanted to continue to seize the benefits of it, in contrast with the pre-pandemic program, where participants were motivated by factors like curiosity and pull and push forces. Participants of the post-pandemic programs unanimously stated online work options should continue even when not considering COVID-19 health-related concerns, which contrasted with the pre-pandemic program in which a slim majority felt it should continue (Ford, 2022).

The reported benefits of remote work for employees included better performance, more flexibility, improved wellness, less use of sick leave and personal leave time, work environment benefits, better relationships and access to people, better recruitment and retention, improved equity and inclusion, diminished environmental footprint, and financial savings (Ford, 2022). Meanwhile, the challenges workers reported included technological and software issues, policies, procedures and operations, and occupational health and safety (Ford, 2022). The challenges supervisors reported included changing their management style to supervise online workers and not receiving the same level of support from upper management that they were giving to their subordinates (Ford, 2022).

Overall, the relevant information from the aforementioned surveys, assessments, and professional media demonstrates that remote or hybrid work offers benefits for both employees and employers. This evidence contributes to the scholarly research from before the pandemic, which demonstrated remote work can bring benefits to workers and organizations. Altogether, it

appears the pandemic contributed to workers developing a more favorable attitude towards online work, which does not seem to be shared as enthusiastically by employers as suggested by De Smet et al. (2021) and repeated calls to return to the office starting in 2021.

2.3. Quiet Quitting

While the aforementioned developments regarding COVID-19 and the response to it were happening, the notoriety of Quiet Quitting seems to have surged in the summer of 2022, when a TikTok video[1] showed images of an unspecified city while a voice-over narration described Quiet Quitting as not quitting one's job but rather quitting the idea of going above and beyond, before remarking that a person's work is not their life and a person's labor does not define their worth (Lappelin, 2022). This video has gone viral and appeared on articles from mainstream media, such as the World Economic Forum (Masterson, 2022) and National Public Radio (Kilpatrick, 2022).

Quiet Quitting has been described in a National Public Radio article as "a philosophy for doing the bare minimum at your job" (Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022, para. 4). Meanwhile, in a Forbes article, it was defined as "employees who show up to work with the purpose of doing no more than what's required to stay employed" (Samuel, 2022, para. 1).

In a Gallup article looking at Quiet Quitting within the context of engagement, this construct is defined as "the idea spreading virally on social media that millions of people are not going above and beyond at work and just meeting their job description" (Harter, 2022, para. 2). For the purposes of this poll, workers who are not engaged were defined as "people who do the minimum required and are psychologically detached from their job" (Harter, 2022, para. 6). The

[1] Link to video: https://www.tiktok.com/@zaidleppelin/video/7124414185282391342?lang=en

results of the poll claim only 32% of employees were engaged at work and 18% were not engaged (Harter, 2022).

Harvard Business Review has published three articles trying to understand Quiet Quitting better. Klotz and Bolino (2022) discussed it in connection with citizenship behaviors and argued that having employees who engage in Quiet Quitting is worse for organizations than having employees who actually quit. Zenger and Folkman (2022) wrote that Quiet Quitting is a new name for an old behavior, and while they did not directly label it as a reduction OCBs, they noted there is already previous research on workers not going the "extra mile." They see Quiet Quitting as a response to employees who work for managers that make them feel undervalued and under-appreciated, arguing it is not borne out of laziness or lack of motivation on the part of the workers (Zenger & Folkman, 2022). Rock and Dixit (2023) also claimed this is a new name for an existing phenomenon. These writers blamed Quiet Quitting on workers who are facing persistent and inescapable stressors and who cannot actually quit. In the face of aversive events, these workers shut down and passively accept the status quo. Hence, Quiet Quitting can be understood as learned helplessness (Rock & Dixit, 2023).

Quiet Quitting may stem from employees who feel they cannot speak up about issues in their organizations and respond to this lack of voice by either leaving the organization or decreasing their effort (Detert, 2022). This lack of voice possibly comes from a lack of job security that would come with being a member of a union and this silence from organization members may be linked to problems like employee disengagement and feelings of inauthenticity (Detert, 2022).

Remarking on the popularity of the term Quiet Quitting, Skinner (2022) argued it has mainly been used to describe Generation Z. The author discussed Quiet Quitting in connection

with the phrase “acting your wage” in that both terms relate to not going above and beyond without pay or recognition. It appears that Generation Z is feeling a disconnect from their social capital, a need to be constantly connected to work, and a desire for a different direction for their careers (Skinner, 2022).

Besides the attention Quiet Quitting has received on the media, it has also been popular among some workers communicating online. I have reviewed some public comments written on this subject by workers on Reddit. For example, a comment in the r/antiwork subreddit about Quiet Quitting generated hundreds of comments, many of which included first-hand experiences of employees who claim to be currently engaging in this behavior and their reasons for doing so. In the original post, a user was appalled at what they understand as employees being required to do more than they were hired to do (vashthestampede121, 2022).

Comments on that Reddit thread generally reflected an opinion that employers do not offer enough compensation for extra work and that Quiet Quitting is an expected reaction to this employer behavior. One user described how they turn off their phone immediately upon the end of their shift despite the desires of their supervisors (AppealLongjumping497, 2022). Other comments by users included the following claims: they perform the tasks of their job well but are not concerned with doing anything extra (SunshotDestiny, 2022), going above and beyond in one’s job will result in a very small raise and more work, which means there is no point in doing it (whoocanitbenow, 2022), and Quiet Quitting is a reaction to the realization one’s job will not provide enough income for a comfortable life or lead to better opportunities (ImoJenny, 2022).

All in all, it appears some workers have narrowed down the employee-employer relationship to the bare minimum. Therefore, these employees show up to work and perform the functions that are explicitly required of them. Yet, they do not get involved beyond the minimum

required, they do not create a strong commitment with the organization, and, most of all, they do not go above and beyond.

I believe social media is, at least in the case of Quiet Quitting, a conduit that allows us to see in real time the attitudes people hold. In this case, these attitudes concern how people have approached their jobs in the workplace following the start of COVID-19 and the policies that came with it. It leads me to believe that there is something happening that is worthy of further investigation. Despite its widespread attention as a TikTok trend, Quiet Quitting does not seem like just any given TikTok trend. As Klotz and Bolino (2022) point out, it is hard to define a job in a formal contract. Indeed, it is not even uncommon for employers to include the phrase "other duties as assigned" in the job contract (Taylor, 2019).

2.4. Theoretical Framework

For this research, I use organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) as a way to operationalize Quiet Quitting. OCBs are ideal to understanding Quiet Quitting. Both constructs relate to the idea of whether a worker performs discretionary behaviors that go above and beyond their formal job expectations (Organ, 1988; Smith et al., 1983; Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022; Samuel, 2022). In this thesis, I will propose that when a worker engages in Quiet Quitting, they are deciding to withhold those discretionary behaviors. Moreover, OCBs are similar to Quiet Quitting in that they are hard or impossible to enforce (Smith et al., 1983; Organ, 1997). Therefore, while OCBs are the intentional engagement in extra-role behaviors that are beneficial to the organization, Quiet Quitting is the intentional disengagement of those same extra-role behaviors. Nonetheless, Quiet Quitting does not appear to be a malevolent engagement in behaviors to intentionally harm the organization.

Overall, in this research project, Quiet Quitting is not an entirely different concept. Rather, it is only a reduction of OCBs. However, understanding this reduction of discretionary behaviors that go above and beyond the work requirements through the lens of Quiet Quitting is important because although a reduction of OCBs and Quiet Quitting may be the same behaviorally, the intentions that lead an employee to withhold OCBs, in this context, are different than the intentions that lead an employee to perform OCBs. Therefore, the distinction between exists only in so far as the reasons to engage in or withhold a behavior are concerned.

While there have been many explanations for Quiet Quitting, I propose three possible avenues to understanding it, Psychological Contract Theory, Engagement Theory, and Adaptive Cost Theory, which are described below and will be explored further in my literature review.

Psychological contracts are based on exchanges parties have with each other and refer to "an individual's beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party" (Rousseau, 1989, p. 124). The views each party of the exchange relationship has on their psychological contract evolves over time and the behaviors of the parties influence the contract (Robinson et al., 1994). I expect that, when workers were allowed to work remotely for several months, during which time they were able to adapt, thrive and stay safe during a pandemic, they perceived those exchanges as a revision of the psychological contract with their employers. When employers led efforts to move towards the pre-pandemic status quo, characterized by a return to in-person work, I expect workers perceive it as a violation of their revised psychological contract.

Engagement is the expression of one's preferred self, which is more likely to occur when three psychological conditions are met: meaningfulness, safety, and availability (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004). Workers may express their engagement in ways that repay their organization

for the resources it has given them, and a consequence of engagement is the performance of OCBs (Saks, 2006). In the "new normal" that followed the start of COVID-19, I expect that workers experienced greater engagement. During this time, I expect that greater autonomy improved workers' meaningfulness, being away from in-person work hazards led to greater feelings of safety, and opportunities for better work-life balance created more availability. However, all three psychological conditions described above may have been negatively affected as employers pushed for a return towards the pre-pandemic status quo. Consequently, I believe engagement was lowered and workers developed positive beliefs towards Quiet Quitting and negative beliefs towards the performance of OCBs as their engagement diminished.

Adaptive cost refers to the price workers pay in the form of personal resources as they adapt to their environments. It relates to social and nonsocial stressors to which workers are exposed. When faced with stressors, workers must decide how to allocate their resources, which has consequences for their behaviors (Cohen, 1978; Cohen, 1980). Therefore, I propose that the switch to a "new normal" status quo with the onset of COVID-19 restrictions and a push towards the pre-pandemic status quo as restrictions subsided has led a depletion of workers' resources. This ultimately has led them to become less able to engage in OCBs regardless of their beliefs about them.

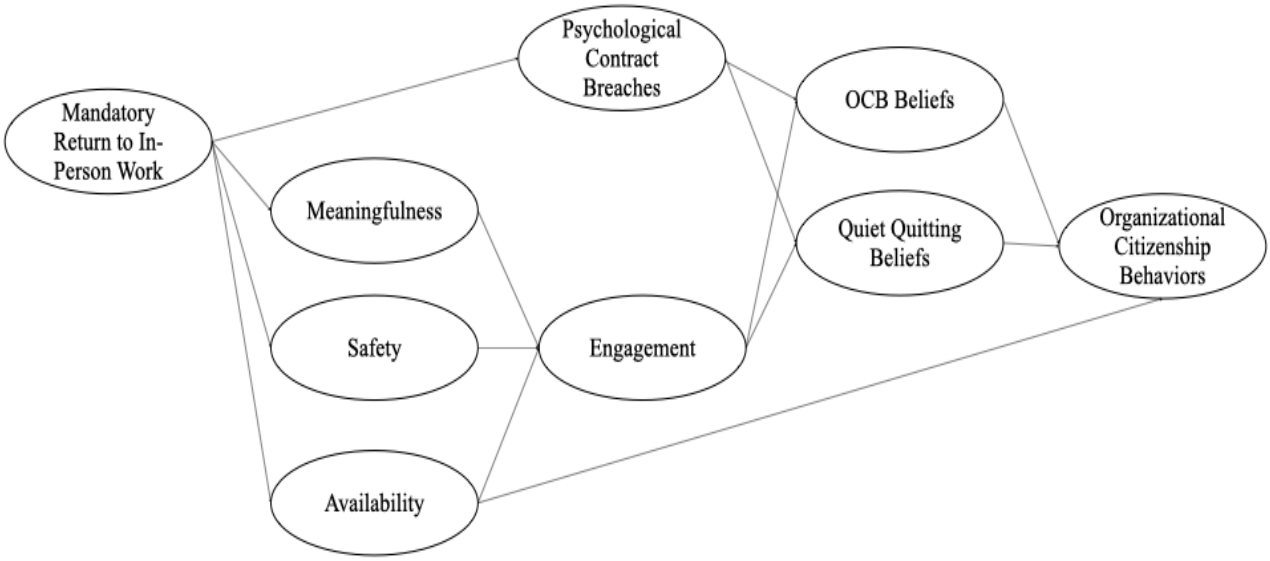
In the next chapter, I discuss the literature in more detail and develop my research model and hypotheses.

3.0 Research Model Development

In the previous chapters, I explained the context for this study and provided the theoretical framework, objectives, and justification for this research. In this chapter, I begin by explaining why Quiet Quitting can be operationalized as a withdrawal of organizational citizenship behaviors. Then, I review the relevant literature to understand the Quiet Quitting phenomenon. Based on the existing literature, I draw hypotheses that I expect will help me understand the potential predictors of this phenomenon.

Particularly, given the aforementioned events and research, I propose the following model for my research (see Figure 1). Specifically, the model shows different mechanisms to explain how workers' performance of behaviors that go above and beyond has been affected: (1) cognitive assessment of a breach of the "new normal" psychological contract due to changes in work experiences during the pandemic and the subsequent return to in-person work orders, (2) changes in the presence of employees via engagement and the changes in the work's meaningfulness, safety, and availability and the associated changes in motivation via engagement, and (3) reduced OCB behaviors due to the costs associated with changes brought by the policies to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Figure 1: Proposed Research Model



3.1. Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

A seminal definition of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) is that they constitute "an individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization […] and performance that supports the social and psychological environment in which task performance takes place" (Organ, 1988, p. 4).

OCBs have several characteristics: these behaviors are unenforceable job components and their omission is not punishable, they are discretionary and non-contractual, they contribute to organizational effectiveness in the aggregate, and they do not necessarily lead to a reward for the person performing them (Organ, 1997). Moreover, they are modest, trivial, and mundane on their own (Organ et al., 2006).

According to Organ et al. (2006), there are two important factors to determine if an action constitutes an OCB. First, the behavior needs to be discretionary. They cannot be a directly or

explicitly recognized job requirement. Hence, performing contractual obligations well does not constitute an OCB (Organ et al., 2006). This requirement, however, is not shared by many other prominent scholars (e.g., van Dyne et al, 1994; Graham, 1991). Second, the behavior must promote the efficient and effective functioning of the organization as a whole (Organ et al., 2006).

Although important for organizations, it can be hard for supervisors to enforce or incentivize behaviors that do not comprise formal role descriptions (Smith et al., 1983). Likewise, these behaviors can be difficult to be governed by incentive schemes as they are "often subtle, difficult to measure, may contribute more to others' performance than one's own" (Smith et al., 1983, p. 653).

Organizational citizenship behaviors work much in the same way that society at large depends on individual acts of citizenship not required or enforced by law, which gives rise to the terms "good citizen" and "good soldier" syndrome (Smith et al., 1983). These citizenship behaviors can be divided into altruism, which are behaviors aimed at other people and emerge from situational outcomes, and generalized compliance, which are behaviors aimed at the organization and emerge from a desire to act appropriately (Smith et al., 1983).

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors have a myriad of antecedents. Altruism and generalized compliance are two dimensions of OCBs (Smith et al., 1983). Also, at the unit level, helping other members of the unit and displaying conscientiousness to help the organization as a whole are the consequences of a procedural justice climate and leaders who act in ways that benefit their subordinates and help them grow (Ehrhart, 2004). Additionally, self-interest is a reason why some people engage in OCBs as they may expect a return for their behavior (Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004). Later, Korsgaard et al. (2010) explained OCBs through two

mechanisms: “paying me forward,” which refers to this sort of self-interested process when the person expects to receive a benefit for their behavior, and “paying you back,” which is founded on the obligation to reciprocate through one’s behavior for something another person has done.

Using political philosophy to understand organizational citizenship behaviors through the conceptual framework of citizen responsibilities in society at large, Graham (1991) divided OCBs into three categories. The first form, organizational obedience, refers to compliance with rules, policies, regulations, and structures (e.g., being punctual, completing tasks, taking care of resources). The second form, organizational loyalty, refers to employees’ allegiance to the organization as a whole and its members (e.g., defending the organization, helping build the organization’s reputation, and working with others for the organization’s interests). The third form, organizational participation, refers to individuals’ full and responsible involvement in the organizational governance (e.g., attending non-required meetings, sharing opinions and ideas, and combating groupthink).

Early research on organizational citizenship behaviors described three types of behavior that are necessary for an organization to function (Katz, 1964). First, new employees entering the organization must keep pace with those exiting it, while also considering psychological absentees. Second, employees need to perform their jobs dependably, not just in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. Third, employees need to perform innovative and spontaneous actions (Katz, 1964).

Examples of organizational citizenship behavior include: portraying the organization well to others, not leaving the job for more money, coming to work on time, producing quality work, following rules and instructions, keeping an attractive and appropriate appearance, getting

involved with social groups outside the organization, and pursuing additional training to improve performance (van Dyne et al., 1994).

Beyond the nature of the OCBs, it is also possible to understand these behaviors by considering their targets. Later research has demonstrated that a distinction exists between the regular in-role behaviors that workers perform (IRB), organizational citizenship behaviors aimed at the organization (OCB-O), and organizational citizenship behaviors aimed at individuals (OCB-I), which benefit certain people specifically and thus the organization indirectly (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

Considering conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism, which are the five types of OCB explained by Organ (1988), more recent research has included "a profile-based model of OCB that tests whether employees engage in discernible and predictable patterns of citizenship behavior" (Klotz et al., 2018, p. 630). These authors found evidence for five distinct profiles: prosocial citizens use the all five at the highest levels, disengaged citizens use all five at the lowest levels, contributors used all five at relatively high levels, moderates engaged in slightly below-average levels of all OCBs except conscientiousness, and specialists performed relatively high levels of civic virtue and altruism (Klotz et al., 2018).

Considering the relationship between OCBs and Quiet Quitting, I was influenced by the connection Klutz and Bolino (2022) raised between these two constructs. They wrote, "Quiet quitters continue to fulfill their primary responsibilities, but they're less willing to engage in activities known as citizenship behaviors: no more staying late, showing up early, or attending non-mandatory meetings" (Klutz & Bolino, 2022, para 1). In the paragraphs below, I will further explain why I believe it is appropriate to operationalize Quiet Quitting as a reduction of OCBs using evidence from several reliable publications and social media.

My main focus will be to use Organ's (1988) five types of OCBs, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism, as a structured way of reading the evidence currently available about Quiet Quitting. First, civic virtue is a form of OCB whereby employees display an interest in the success of their organization and participate in its activities (Organ, 1988). However, comments from employees currently claiming to be engaged in Quiet Quitting demonstrate a lack of concern with doing anything extra (e.g., SunshotDestiny, 2022; vashthestampede121, 2022) and an opinion that work does not define their worth (Lappelin, 2022). Also, in many comments about Quiet Quitting, employees denigrate their employers (e.g., "won't someone think of the poor business men;" KnittinAndBitchin, 2022, para. 1).

Second, altruism is a citizenship behavior whereby employees help others without expecting their efforts to be reciprocated (Organ, 1988). However, quiet quitters seem to be doing the opposite. Klutz and Bolino (2022) discussed Quiet Quitting as an imbalanced relationship in which workers demand more effort from employers without investing enough on the employer. In social media comments, there is a strong emphasis on describing Quiet Quitting as a response to workers' pay (e.g., ImoJenny, 2022). For example, encapsulating this feeling, another user commented, "You get paid to do something and you do it. Employer wants you to do more? He has to pay you more. Simple as that" (Samira827, 2022, para. 1).

Third, conscientiousness is associated with going above the basic work requirements of the job (Organ, 1988). Hence, this type of OCB is the one that I believe is most fundamentally linked to Quiet Quitting as it is associated with going above the basic work requirements of the job. For example, speaking to National Public Radio, a department manager stated, "Since COVID, I feel like my priorities, values, who and what are important to me have shifted drastically" (Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022, para. 25). Feelings of a lack of conscientiousness can be

traced back to the original TikTok video about Quiet Quitting, which discusses quitting the idea of going above and beyond in one's job (Lappelin, 2022). Similarly, Quiet Quitting has been discussed as workers who do not go the "extra mile" (Zenger & Folkmann, 2022).

Fourth, sportsmanship, also described by Organ (1988), seems severely lacking in employees engaged in Quiet Quitting. Given that Quiet Quitting began as the pandemic restrictions subsided (Harter, 2022; Smart, 2022; Massetti et al., 2022), a lack of sportsmanship may be a possible demonstration of employees' unwillingness to adapt to different needs from their employers. In a comment to NPR, a school bus driver showed a lack of sportsmanship towards their employer, writing, "The company I work for wants me to voluntarily put an app on my personal phone. I don't put it on there. ... If they want to communicate with me about work, they can either give me a phone call, a text-message, heck, even send me a letter in the mail. But I will not give the company access to my phone" (Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022, para. 30).

Fifth, when it comes to the final citizenship behavior described by Organ (1988), courtesy, there seems to be less evidence employees are being impolite towards each other, but their actions are arguably less considerate. For example, an administrative assistant commented, "I do not interact with anything from work before 7:00 or after 4:30, which is the time my office is open. I work in a corporate setting so my tasks are not life or death. If someone asks for something, like maybe a file scanned or something like that, at the end of the day — it can wait until the next day" (Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022, para. 27). In comments about Quiet Quitting to the Washington Post, a senior director of workforce transformation described it as "withdrawing from the team, limiting communication and interaction to only what's required" (Telford, 2022, para. 11).

Given this anecdotal evidence, I propose it is appropriate to operationalize Quiet Quitting as a reduction of organizational citizenship behaviors. Both constructs relate to behaviors that go above and beyond the strict expectations of the job (Smith et al., 1983; Organ, 1988; Lappelin, 2022; Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022). When workers engage in OCBs, they go above and beyond when doing their jobs. However, when a person engages in Quiet Quitting, it seems to be because they judge that it is appropriate to reduce their performance of these same behaviors as much as possible, potentially not engaging in them at all. Additionally, OCBs relate to behaviors that are unenforceable and whose omission is not punishable (Organ, 1997; Smith et al., 1983), which are also applicable standards to Quiet Quitting, where workers continue to perform the explicitly required aspects of their jobs.

Finally, the comments about Quiet Quitting, which I have analyzed through the structure of Organ's (1988) five types of OCB demonstrate it is appropriate to consider OCBs as a whole, including both behaviors directed at the organization and the individuals in it (i.e., OCB-I and OCB-O), when looking at OCB in the context of Quiet Quitting. Although it appears the organization is the main target of the actions, in this study, I have not distinguished between the targets of the OCBs.

3.2. Beliefs and Actual Performance

Given the evidence presented in the previous section, it becomes apparent that Quiet Quitting is an intentional act. Hence, it is appropriate to understand it within the context of how beliefs lead to actual performance.

According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), human behavior follows "reasonably and often spontaneously from the information or beliefs people possess about the behavior under

consideration" (p. 20). These beliefs may originate from a variety of places, such as the internet and other media, family and friends, TV, and experience (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). They posit that beliefs associated with a given behavior guide a person's decision on whether to perform the behavior in question.

Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) explain different types of beliefs. For this paper, the most relevant ones I am exploring are beliefs about Quiet Quitting and beliefs about organizational citizenship behaviors. People have beliefs regarding the positive or negative consequences they might experience if they perform a behavior. Generally, outcomes that are expected to be more positive than negative result in more favorable attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). To the extent that an individual holds favorable beliefs about an action, they are more likely to engage in that behavior. Hence, if an individual has positive beliefs about OCBs, they may be more likely to actually engage in OCBs. Likewise, if an individual has positive beliefs about Quiet Quitting, they may be less likely to engage in OCBs. Additionally, it may be possible that an individual has positive beliefs about Quiet Quitting and OCBs, and together they relate to a moderate level of OCBs. Consequently, I propose:

Hypothesis 1: Favorable beliefs about OCBs are positively related to the performance of OCB behaviors.

Hypothesis 2: Favorable beliefs about Quiet Quitting are negatively related to the performance of OCB behaviors.

3.3. Psychological Contract Breaches

The phrase psychological contract refers to "an individual's beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party"

(Rousseau, 1989, p. 123). Organizations may have policies that "can send a message of reciprocal obligations to employees and create a relationship between the organizations and the individual" (Rousseau, 1989, p. 125). Importantly, psychological contracts are subjective and can be perceived differently by the parties to it (Rousseau, 1989).

Psychological contracts can be formed in either a relational or transactional manner depending on the way in which employers and employees relate (Rousseau, 1990). In a relational contract, organizations make substantial commitments to workers in exchange for loyalty and buy-in to organizational culture and values. In a transactional contract, organizations usually want workforce flexibility and cultivate a more short-term relationship, which is reciprocated in kind by their workers (Rousseau, 1990).

Moreover, the psychological contract between employers and employees evolves over time (Rousseau, 1989). Employees may view their psychological contract differently as the relationship with the employer evolves and behaviors of the parties influence the contract (Robinson et al., 1994). Over time, employees feel they owe less to the employer and the employer owes more to them (Robinson et al., 1994). Contracts based on relationships are dynamic rather than static (Rousseau, 1989) and employees of long standing may believe there is a relational psychological contract. As parties have exchanges between each other, they create a bond between them and exiting the contract becomes costly over time. Although implied contracts involve mutual predictability and trust, its parties may still have divergent "perceptions regarding obligations, promises, and commitments" (Rousseau, 1989, p. 131).

There are several antecedents to psychological contract breaches. First, job demands can lead to negative affect, which is associated with employees to have more perceptions of psychological contract breach in the short-term. Conversely, job resources can lead to positive

affect, which is associated with employees being less likely to report psychological contract breaches (Vantilbourgh et al., 2016). Second, supervisor-subordinate similarities in term so cognitive style are negatively related to subordinates' perceptions of psychological contract breaches. In this model, the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationship was a mediator of that relationship. In addition to this, the researchers found that the race and gender of the supervisor or subordinate did not affect perceptions of a psychological contract breach (Suazo et al., 2017). Third, job insecurity is positively related to negative behaviors, with psychological contract breaches serving as a mediator in that model (Costa & Neves, 2017).

Morrison and Robinson (1997) identified factors that are associated with perceptions of psychological contract breaches. First, reneging occurs when the organization recognizes it has an employment promise but fails to fulfill it. Second, incongruence occurs when the employee and the organization have different understandings on whether an obligation exists and the nature of it. This gap may have originated from when the contract was first established or as it evolved. Three factors contribute to it: divergent schemata regarding employment obligations, the complexity and ambiguity of the perceived obligations, and a lack of communication regarding the obligations. Third, employees who are more vigilant about their psychological contract are more likely to detect a breach and perceive that a breach took place even in ambiguous circumstances (Morrison & Robison, 1997).

In Robison and Morrison's (2000) study, the authors lend further support to the findings of Morrison and Robison (1997). In this research, they provide a list of antecedents to psychological contract breach, writing, "As predicted, employees were more likely to perceive that their psychological contract had been breached when their organization had been performing poorly, when they reported their own performance as low, when they had not experienced a

formal process of socialization, and when they had little interaction with members of the organization prior to being hired. Employees were also more likely to perceive a contract breach if they had experienced psychological contract breach in prior employment relationships and if they had numerous employment alternatives at the time of hire" (Robinson & Morrison, 2000, p. 540).

A breach of the psychological contract may lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, betrayal, frustration, and disappointment, while the possible outcomes of the breach are outrage, shock, resentment, and anger (Rousseau, 1989). Employer violations of the psychological contract affect what employees feel they are owed and what they feel they obligated to offer in return. Obligations can be transactional (i.e., specific, monetizable, finite contracts) or relational (i.e., less specific, monetizable or non-monetizable, and usually long-term; Robinson et al., 1994). Psychological contract breaches are negatively related to "performance, civic virtue behavior, and intentions to remain with the organization" (Robinson, 1996, p. 592).

The two-way nature of the employee-employer psychological contract has implications to workers' performance of organizational citizenship behaviors (Robinson & Morrison, 1995). Since OCBs are behaviors for which workers go above and beyond, they presume the existence of a psychological contract (Robinson & Morrison, 1995). Civic virtue is the type of OCB described by Organ (1989) that is most likely to be impacted. When an employee believes their employer did not fulfill the terms of the employment contract, they are less likely to perform organizationally directed OCBs (Robinson & Morrison, 1995).

In the spring of 2020, measures imposed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 brought about abrupt changes to the way in which employees perform their work. This is relevant as research has identified that organizational change relates to psychological contracts. Schalk et al.

(1998) defined organizational change as "the deliberate introduction of novel ways of thinking, acting and operating within an organization as a way of surviving or accomplishing certain organizational goals" (p. 157).

The psychological contract is an important variable to whether an organizational change will succeed. Schalk et al. (1998) argue that, "in the case of organizational change leading to changes in the psychological contracts of employees, the attitudes and behaviours of employees may be affected because a different set of mutual obligations is created, or as a consequence of violations of the psychological contract" (p. 158). There is a link between the psychological contract and employee attitudes because, when employees resist change, they "cope with their feelings by ignoring them and go along, by communicating (talking to supervisor or fellow workers), by changing their attitude, or by starting to look for another job" (Schalk et al., 1998, p. 162).

The way in which organization change takes place matters (Schalk et al., 1998; van den Heuvel & Schalk, 2009). The psychological contract between employees and employers is affected by the way employers communicate the implementation of the change, the support employees receive during the change, and the participation employees have in implementing the change (Schalk et al., 1998). One the one hand, incremental and developmental changes build trust and planned and organization-wide changes foster social capital. On the other hand, low-trust situations, namely transformation and remedial organizational changes and unplanned and subsystem changes, are associated with stronger effects of breach of the psychological contract (van den Heuvel & Schalk, 2009).

I propose that the trend towards a return to in-person work constitutes a low-trust situation. In 2021, the several months following the beginning of when COVID-19 restrictions in

the United States considerably started to be eased included contentious political debates about health and safety, the rise of new variants, and corporate policies that in some cases went back and forth on the return to in-person work policies (Barron, 2022; Mandavilli, 2021; Miller, 2021; Palmer, 2021; Smart, 2022; Telford, 2022). Hence, it seems reasonable to conclude this period was heavily characterized by transformation and remedial organizational changes as well as unplanned and subsystem changes, which are known to be associated with stronger effects of breach of the psychological contract (van den Heuvel & Schalk, 2009).

Moreover, the general preference employers have towards in-person work and, in many cases, a forced return to in-person work demonstrate a gap between the messages employees were sending (i.e., a preference for online work) and the desire from employers to return to the office. Professional publications reported on this dichotomy (e.g., De Smet et al., 2021). There appears to have been a substantial lack of discussion between workers and employers during this period. This is in stark opposition to Morrison and Robinson's (1997) argument on the importance of employers' communication with employees to minimize cases of incongruence of expectations. Therefore, it appears that expectations around remote work were distorted.

Further to Morrison and Robinson's (1997) article, navigating the changing landscape of work following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic may have led to complexity and ambiguity in the perceived obligations employees and employers have to each other. Coupled with disruptions to everyday life and discussions about work on social media and other publications, it is possible employees became more vigilant about the obligations their employers had towards them.

I have found no evidence of employees who were guaranteed the ability to work remotely indefinitely but were later mandated to return to work. This specific situation does not appear to

be an issue in American society today. However, because the psychological contract is formed by patterns of interaction over time and they can be subjective (Rousseau, 1989; Robinson et al., 1994), I believe employees were led to believe their psychological contracts with their employers had been revised to include the expectation they could perform their work remotely. This revision likely happened because employers allowed workers to perform their jobs online for an extend period of time, workers did well during that time, and they grew to prefer online work (e.g., De Smet et al., 2021; Dua et al., 2022; Cutter & Bindley, 2022; Parker et al., 2022; Telford, 2022).

Finally, employees' performance of OCBs is reciprocal to the employer's performance of actions that go above and beyond the formal contract (Robinson & Morrison, 1995). In the case of employees who were forced to return to in-person work, rather than reciprocating employees' performance and preference for remote work, those employers chose to force their employees out of a space in which they had grown to be comfortable and back into a less desirable work environment.

Consequently, I expect that this gap between employers' preferences for in-person work and employees' preference for more choice on how they perform their work, coupled with a low-trust environment from society and greater vigilance, led workers to feel their psychological contracts with their employers were breached. Schalk et al. (1998) wrote, "In the case of organizational change leading to changes in the psychological contracts of employees, the attitudes and behaviors of employees may be affected because a different set of mutual obligations is created, or as a consequence of violations of the psychological contract" (p. 158).

I expect that a breach of the psychological contract has led to workers' behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. These outcomes would entail a change in their beliefs regarding

organizational citizenship behaviors and Quiet Quitting, as the workers would perceive that they owe less to their employers. In other words, I expected employees' psychological contract breach perceptions led them to believe they do not owe their employers efforts that go above and beyond what is required of them such that:

Hypothesis 3: Psychological Contract breaches are negatively related to OCB beliefs.

Hypothesis 4: Psychological Contract breaches are positively related to Quiet Quitting beliefs.

Hypothesis 5: A mandatory return to in-person work is positively associated with perceived psychological contract breaches.

3.4. Engagement

The concept of engagement originated in Kahn's (1990) studies employing grounded theory that used summer camp counselors and members of an architecture firm. When personally engaged, workers are able to bring their preferred selves to work, thereby expressing their real identity, thoughts, and feelings. As a result, workers become physically involved in tasks, cognitively vigilant, and empathically connected to others. This initial research led to a seminal definition of the construct as "the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviors that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performances" (Kahn, 1990, p. 700).

In a follow-up article, Kahn (1992) developed the concept of psychological presence. This construct refers to "the experiential state that accompanies such personally engaging behaviors" (p. 322) that were described by Kahn (1990): physical, cognitive, and emotional

energies. Presence is characterized by attentiveness, connection, integration of different aspects of oneself, and focus. These factors allow for growth, learning, change, and productivity to take place. Therefore, "the portrait of psychological presence developed from this integration of people feeling open to oneself and others, connected to work and others, complete rather than fragmented, and within rather than without the boundaries of the given role" (Kahn, 1992, p. 324). One the one hand, psychological presence depends on mechanisms that are employed by the organization, including job characteristics, the role a person occupies, the structure of how jobs are organized, norms, and group and intergroup dynamics. On the other hand, psychological presence depends on individual factors, including models of self-in-role, security, courage, and adult development (Kahn, 1992).

Later, conceptualizing engagement as the opposite of burnout, it was described as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p. 74). Considering the popularity of engagement among practitioners and the research produced since Kahn's (1990) studies, this construct has more recently been defined in a literature review as "an individual employee's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes" (Shuck & Wollard, 2010, p. 103).

Engagement is a motivational construct experienced through three traits: vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004a). First, vigor is characterized by high energy levels, mental resilience at work, a willingness to invest oneself into work, and a persistence in the face of difficulties, while being the opposite of the exhaustion trait from burnout scholarship. Second, dedication is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge, while being the opposite of cynicism. Third, absorption is

characterized by being concentrated and happily engrossed in work, a quick passage of time, and difficulties distracting oneself from work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004a).

There are three main predictors of job engagement: meaningfulness, safety, and availability (Kahn, 1990). Meaningfulness is experienced when a person feels they are receiving a return on the physical, cognitive, or emotional energies they invest into their work (Kahn, 1990). This condition is felt when a person believes they made a difference and were not taken for granted. It arises from tasks that are challenging, clearly delineated, varied, creative, and somewhat autonomous (Kahn, 1990). For example, working in a rich and complex project will earn the worker a sense of competence from the routine demands and give them a sense of growth and learning from new tasks. Meaningful roles carry a sense of identity and status. Also, they involve rewarding interpersonal interactions with co-workers and clients, which promote dignity, self-appreciation, and a sense of worthwhileness (Kahn, 1990).

Safety is experienced when a person employs their self into their work without fear of negative consequences to their self-image, status, or career (Kahn, 1990). This condition is promoted by situations that are predictable, consistent, clear, and nonthreatening (Kahn, 1990). The ability to try and fail without consequences is important to promote safety both in interpersonal relationships, which should be supportive and thrusting, and in management styles, which should be supportive, resilient, and clarifying (Kahn, 1990). Group and intergroup dynamics that reduce anxiety, both conscious and unconscious, also promote safety. Additionally, safety is promoted when workers stay within the generally appropriate ways of working and behaving, since deviating from those norms may lead to anxiety and frustration.

Availability is experienced when a person feels they have the physical, emotional, and psychological resources to personally engage at a given moment (Kahn, 1990). Therefore,

availability is a measure of a person's readiness to engage given the distractions they experience as a member of social systems (Kahn, 1990). A worker will bring themselves more fully to work depending on how they are able to cope with the work and non-work demands placed on them. All in all, four types of distractions affect a person's availability (Kahn, 1990). First, physical energy, strength, and readiness are necessary to engage. Second, emotional energy is necessary as workers need emotional resources. Third, insecurity affects how a person feels about work and status, either because insecurity keeps them from bringing their selves to work or because their self-consciousness keeps them from engaging because they are distracted with worries about how others judge them. Fourth, non-work life can have a positive or negative effect on a person's ability to bring themselves fully to work depending on which events the person is experiencing in their outside life (Kahn, 1990).

Several factors affect the three psychological conditions defined by Kahn (1990). Job enrichment and work-role fit are positively related to psychological meaningfulness. Coworker relations and supervisor relations are positively related to psychological safety, while coworker norms and self-consciousness are negatively related to it. Resources are positively related to psychological availability, while outside activities are negatively related to it. Moreover, all three psychological conditions are positively related to engagement at work (May et al., 2004).

When workers believe their organizations are concerned about their well-being, they fulfill their obligations to the organization by becoming more engaged in their work (Saks, 2006). This assertion is built on Kahn's (1990) studies and uses social-exchange theory to understand employee engagement. Under this conception, the antecedents of engagement are job characteristics, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, rewards and recognition, procedural justice, and distributive justice (Saks, 2006). In a later study, Saks (2019)

used correlation and multiple regression analyses, literature reviews, and a replication of the regression analyses for antecedents, consequences, and moderators using the UWES instead of Saks' (2006) measures. With this, Saks (2019) determined the original results continued to be valid and generalizable, and the following antecedents were included: distributive justice, fit perceptions, leadership, opportunities for learning and development, job demands, dispositional characteristics, and personal resources.

Engagement can be a way for workers to repay their organizations for the resources it has given them (Saks, 2019). Employees will repay actions from the organization by bringing themselves more fully into their work roles and dedicating more cognitive, emotional, and physical resources to their work (Saks, 2019). The consequences of this increase in engagement are greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors towards the organization and individuals, as well as a decrease in intentions to quit (Saks, 2006). Further consequences of engagement are increased task performance, extra-role performance, and health and well-being, along with lower burnout, and stress and strains (Saks, 2019).

Previous research has shown that a strong positive relationship exists between being engaged at work and performing organizational citizenship behaviors. One of the many positive consequences of engagement described by Saks (2019) was the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. Similarly, a study using a sample of staff nurses in different hospitals found there is a significant positive correlation between work engagement and the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors (Abed & Elewa, 2016). Moreover, a retrospective analysis study demonstrates that engagement is a driver of organizational citizenship behaviors and, by doing so, has the potential to increase organizational effectiveness (Kataria et al., 2012).

Another study on the relationship between engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors using a sample of non-managerial employees further showed the positive relationship between these two constructs (Rurkkhum & Bartlett, 2012). The results of this study also highlighted that when workers "perceived a sincere support from an organization in terms of their well-being and development opportunities, employees were likely to reciprocate by willingly participating in non-mandatory activities hosted by the organization" (Rurkkhum & Bartlett, 2012, p. 168).

As it pertains to my research project, the strong relationship that has been established in the literature between engagement and the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors is vital (Abed & Elena, 2016; Kataria et al., 2012; Rurkkhum & Bartlett, 2012; Saks, 2006; Saks, 2019). On the one hand, I expect that workers perceived their experiences in the "new normal," with more independence and control and a dominance of remote work, as a positive action from their employers and an increase of resources that help them perform their work. On the other hand, I expect that workers being confronted with a push to return to the pre-pandemic status quo saw it as a negative action from their employers and a withdrawal of resources that help them perform their work. Therefore, I propose:

Hypothesis 6: Engagement is positively related to beliefs in Organization Citizenship Behaviors.

Hypothesis 7: Engagement is negatively related to beliefs in Quiet Quitting.

Overall, there has been a strong relationship demonstrated in the scholarship that meaningfulness, safety, and availability are related to engagement (Kahn, 1990; Kahn, 1992; May et al., 2004; Saks, 2006). Therefore, I expect that this relationship will be replicated in my research such that:

Hypothesis 8: Meaningfulness is positively related to engagement.

Hypothesis 9: Safety is positively related to engagement.

Hypothesis 10: Availability is positively related to engagement.

It is important to establish these three aforementioned relationships, as I seek to demonstrate that a return to the pre-pandemic normal had an impact in each of meaningfulness, safety, and availability. First, I expect workers have been able to experience psychological meaningfulness while working from home, in the context of the "new normal" ushered in by COVID-19 restrictions, as they were able to practice their work more autonomously and did not need to invest as many physical, cognitive, or emotional energies as they would when making their way to and from work every day.

Second, I expect workers found the home work environment more predictable, consistent, clear, and nonthreatening than their traditional workplaces. They also had fewer anxieties and were exposed to fewer threats to their physical and mental safety, such as the possibility of contracting COVID-19 (Birimoglu Okuyan & Begen, 2021). A return to in-person work would have disrupted those two psychological conditions that workers found given their new work environment at home.

Third, I expect workers had their physical, emotional, and psychological availability reduced by all the uncertainty and changes experienced as a result of policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and a return to the pre-pandemic status quo further drained those resources still available.

Therefore, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 11: A mandatory return to in-person work is negatively related to psychological meaningfulness.

Hypothesis 12: A mandatory return to in-person work is negatively related to psychological safety.

Hypothesis 13: A mandatory return to in-person work is negatively related to psychological availability.

3.5. Adaptive Cost Theory

On a regular basis, workers may be exposed to several stressors, which can be social or nonsocial. These stressors include noise, crowding, task load, frustrating experiences with bureaucracy, an experience of arbitrary sex discrimination, and polluted air (Cohen, 1978; Cohen, 1980). Adaptive Cost Theory holds that continued exposure to stressors and environmental demands creates an attention overload (Cohen, 1978; Cohen, 1980). This overload affects an individual's capacity to attend to physical and social cures that they would otherwise have attended under less demanding conditions. Notably, the effects of the continued exposure to a stressor can appear only after the stimulation is terminated (Cohen, 1978; Cohen, 1980).

The development of Adaptive Cost Theory is steeped in the literature on the aftereffects of stress on performance (Cohen, 1980). Selye (1956) was an early proponent of the idea that a prolonged exposure to stressors leads to fewer adaptive reserves, a breakdown of resistance, and exhaustion. In a similar manner, Glass and Singer (1972) focused on how the efforts necessary to adapt to unpredictable, uncontrollable stressors leave an individual less able to cope with subsequent demands and frustrations.

Adaptive Cost Theory makes four assumptions about humans: they have a limited capacity for attention, they develop a set of priorities when the demands of the environment exceed their capacities, they evaluate the significance of an actual or anticipated environmental

stimulus to decide on appropriate coping responses, and they attend to fewer inputs after enduring longer demands than they would in a rested state (Cohen, 1978).

When people are exposed to environmental stressors, they need to allocate their capacities, which is likely to create an information overload (Cohen, 1978). In situations of information overload, a person's available capacity is exceeded by the demands they face. In turn, prolonged demands for attention shrink a person's capacity and they become able to attend to fewer inputs than they otherwise would in a rested state. Moreover, demands on attention capacity increase if the stressor is intense, unpredictable, or uncontrollable (Cohen, 1978).

Attention overload has implications for social behavior. With a restricted attention, a person may neglect important social cues. This neglect leads to a "lowered probability of helping another, expressing sympathy for another, or reacting appropriately to another's needs" (Cohen, 1978, pp. 20-21). Therefore, when faced with a social cue, the person may not even perceive it, not be able to evaluate the significance of the cue, or perceive and evaluate the cue but not aid the person in need because they do not have the resources necessary or are reserving their available resources for a more important ongoing activity (Cohen, 1978).

Overall, this literature suggests workers can adapt to their environment, but it comes at a price to their available resources in the future. This evidence correlates with the concept of psychological availability, which refers to a worker's readiness to engage given the distractions of the social system, which consist of physical energy, emotional energy, insecurity, and outside life (Kahn, 1980).

In the months following the onset of COVID-19 in the United States, many workers were asked to make two adaptations to how they performed their work. The first happened in an abrupt manner when workers were brought to a "new normal" due to policies intended to

mitigate the spread of the virus. In this context, workers moved from a primarily in-person work environment from the society before the onset of COVID-19 to an online work environment. The second adaptation consisted of moving away from this "new normal" and closer to a pre-pandemic status quo, mostly going back from an online environment to a primarily in-person work environment. I expect even just the first shift would drain resources, with the effect being even stronger for workers who underwent the second shift as well.

Outside the workplace, the events that followed the implementation of public health policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 were, for the most part intense, unpredictable and uncontrollable, which would create an even greater demand on workers. For example, workers may have perceived a lack of physical safety over concerns about contracting COVID-19, experienced uncertainty about new variants, vaccination, masking, and other issue specific to this period of history, and macroeconomic stressors such as worker shortages and inflation (Bhattarai, 2022; Ellyatt, 2021; Rugaber, 2022). Additionally, workers who returned to in-person work also faced many commons stressors of work from which they may have received a respite while working remotely (e.g., noise, crowding, pollution).

Consequently, these demands likely led to a depletion of the physical, emotional, and psychological resources that are crucial for people to have the capacity to engage in extra-role behaviors. Therefore, regardless of their beliefs about work or their the extent to which they should go above and beyond in it, workers were left without the resources to practice extra-role behaviors that go above and beyond their duties and would benefit other individuals or the organization. In other words:

Hypothesis 14: Psychological Availability is positively related to the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors.

4.0 Methodology

Having completed a review of the literature and developed hypotheses, I moved on to determine the best methodology to accomplish my research objectives. In this section, I consider the procedure and ethics for the research, narrow down the eligibility to participate in my study, describe the measurements used, and outline my methods for data analysis.

4.1. Research Strategy

In this research, I employed quantitative methods. With a hypothetico-deductive approach, I have kept with what Locke (2007) described as the contemporary philosophy of science, going from the general to the particular. Also, I have used a deductive approach, hypothesizing the relationship between variables to explain why workers are engaging in Quiet Quitting based on inferences made from established theories on psychological contract breaches, work engagement, and adaptive cost.

My research design followed the characteristics of quantitative methods. I developed a strict research design that was defined prior to the actual research (Adams et al., 2007) and my methods were defined in advance of data collection (Kite & Whitley, 2018). Also, I employed a structured research design and I took a passive approach such that I did not interact with the participants as they provided data (Corbetta, 2003).

In this study, my objective was to demonstrate the relationship between variables (Heath, 2018). Hence, it is a correlational study given that it explores "the extent to which differences in one characteristic or variable are related to differences in one or more other characteristics or variables" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, p. 185).

I employed a cross-sectional questionnaire to gather my data, which is an appropriate technique given the correlational aspect of this research (Tharenou et al., 2003). This kind of survey is useful when researchers want to collect data at single point in time. A cross-sectional survey offers "a picture of a group of individuals at a particular moment in time" (Corbetta, 2003, p. 31). In a cross-sectional design, "data are then used to look for patterns of association or relationships either in the group as a whole (all cases) or in subgroups sharing characteristics or attributes" (Somekh & Lewin, 2005, p. 216).

A cross-sectional survey is an ideal method for this study as I sought to gather data on participants' attitudes and behaviors at the time when they were completing the survey. In this research, gathering the data for the endogenous and exogenous variables at different time points would not provide a significant improvement to the data collected for two main reasons. First, my research model has a timeframe factor inherent to it that diminishes the need for a time lag. As it is unlikely participants' responses to questions about their past attitudes would change, the survey was designed such that participants would answer questions about their past attitudes according to their perspectives at the time when taking the survey. Second, it was important that I measure participants present behaviors when accounting for their attitudes towards events that already happened.

Despite their aforementioned features, it is also important to consider that cross-sectional surveys tend to be weak in internal validity. This is an important drawback for researchers to consider. While these surveys are able to test whether a relationship between two variable exists, they are not a tool that can be used to test for causality (Tharenou et al., 2007). Nevertheless, I believe this is the best design choice for this research given the research objectives I have listed.

Collecting data using a single method can lead to detrimental effects (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Using multi-trait multi-method matrices, the authors were able to determine that method factors have an effect on the reliability and validity of research. Importantly, Podsakoff et al. (2012) also ascertained that the covariation between constructs is influenced by whether their measures come from the same or different sources. Finally, other factors the authors list that may affect the covariation between constructs are the effects of response style, proximity and reversed items, item wording, and item context.

My survey was designed to be entirely self-reported by the respondents. All of the constructs I used can only be validly measured using self-reports, except for organizational citizenship behaviors. Besides using self-measures, OCBs can be measured using ratings by observers of the participant's organizational citizenship behaviors, such as coworkers and supervisors. A meta-analysis of 42 studies with 44 independent samples addressed two important considerations when deciding between self-reports and observer reports to measure OCBs (Carpenter et al., 2014). In drew two important considerations from this study to guide my decision to use a self-report questionnaire to measure OCBs. First, Carpenter et al. (2014) concluded over-reporting by self-raters are not a major concern. Second, the observer(s) may not have had the opportunity to observe many OCBs the other person has enacted (Carpenter et al., 2014). Furthermore, a self-report survey is justified given that much of my research was focused on how beliefs and actual behaviors are preceded by subjective factors, such as perceptions of psychological contract violations, and assessments of meaningfulness, safety, and availability.

My decision to use a self-report questionnaire considered the several advantages and disadvantages this method brings. One the one hand, self-reports are a good way of assuring participants' anonymity (Warner et al., 2011). A self-report questionnaire also allows me to a

large amount of data (Demetriou et al., 2015). Questionnaires are cost-effective and efficient (Tharenou et al., 2007). On the other hand, self-report questionnaires may have issues with clarity and give way to social desirability bias and response bias (Demetriou et al., 2015). However, I used effective techniques to help avoid these problems, such as ensuring anonymity, counterbalancing question order, and using validated measures as much as possible (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

4.2. Procedure

At first, the potential participants encountered the title of my research, *Understanding Quiet Quitting*, on Prolific (www.prolific.co). Only those who were employed full-time, lived in the United States, and were aged 19 years or older would have been offered the survey. These were the only screening criteria Prolific made available that matched my own.

The potential participants who clicked on my research project, while still on the Prolific platform, were given the opportunity to read my recruitment script. In this script, participants were introduced to me, the purpose of my research project, the full list of screening criteria, and the reimbursement rate for their participation. In addition, they were provided the link to the survey and the contact information for my supervisor, the university's ethics board, and me.

Those who chose to proceed beyond the recruitment script were taken to Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2023) via the survey link. Qualtrics is a survey platform contracted by Memorial University to conduct surveys (Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.). The security and compliance of Qualtrics have been reviewed by Memorial University to ensure this platform meets its privacy, security and legislative standards. This survey software was developed originally for researchers and continues to meet their needs, offering automated data

collection, the ability to collect data anonymously, and an intuitive user interface that makes it easy to create and edit professional surveys (Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador, n.d.).

Once on the Qualtrics site, participants first received the letter of informed consent, which outlined all the information necessary for participants to give informed consent before participating in the survey. Among other points, they were informed of their rights and reminded that their participation in the questionnaire was voluntary and they had the ability to withdraw from it at any time. I did not use outright deception when recruiting participants for my survey, but I purposefully gave few specific details regarding the research hypotheses in the recruitment script and the informed consent letter. In those documents, I explained in broad terms the topic of my research and the area of study I was exploring. I employed this approach to ensure participants' rights to informed consent while keeping them as neutral and dispassionate as possible when completing the research.

At the end of the informed consent page, participants were able to read a summary of the key takeaways in bullet-point format (see Appendix A for the recruitment letter and the letter of informed consent). Finally, participants were able to choose one of three options: agreeing to participate in the research project, declining to participate in the research project, or asking for more information before making a decision. If they chose one of the last two options, the survey flow took them to a page where they were thanked for their interest in the project and given the contact information for my supervisor and me.

The participants who agreed to proceed after reading the letter of informed consent were taken to the screening questions (see Appendix B for survey). Those who failed to pass one of the required screening components were taken to the same final page of the survey as those who

chose not to participate or asked for more information. The participants who passed the screening questions were given a chance to answer all the questions in the body of the survey (see Appendix B).

The Qualtrics survey was designed so that each construct would be presented as its own block. Specifically, the body of the survey was divided into five blocks around each of the constructs: (1) the three psychological conditions of engagement (meaningfulness, safety, availability), (2) engagement, (3) psychological contract breaches, (4) organizational citizenship behaviors, and (5) beliefs around quiet quitting and OCBs. The order of the items within each block remained the same at all times but the blocks were presented to survey participants in random order to decrease context effects (Lavrakas, 2008).

After answering the research questions, participants were asked about their demographics, including ethnicity, age, gender, education, and industry of employment (see Appendix B). Next, participants were given a chance to write what they believed the study was about and offer additional comments or feedback they would like to share with me.

After this final section, participants were debriefed (see Appendix B). Participants found a more comprehensive summary of my research, in which I explained how I defined Quiet Quitting, the relationships I expected to see, and how my research may benefit future researchers and practitioners. As part of the debriefing script, I included two recommendations on how participants could access mental health resources if they felt distressed. First, I suggested that they discuss their experiences with a professional, such as a psychologist, counsellor, or look into whether their company has an employee assistance program. Second, I directed them to Mental Health America, which is a nonprofit organization in the United States.

Finally, I asked participants to provide final informed consent. This step was important since at this point participants could fully consent to having their data included in my research given that they had been provided a more comprehensive overview of my study. At this stage, I gave participants a final opportunity to withdraw from the study if they would like. Regardless of their choice, participants could give their Prolific ID to be compensated for their participation.

4.3. Ethics

Prior to conducting this research, I completed the TCPS 2: CORE 2022 certification program. This research project received approval from the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) of Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador (ICEHR File #20231597-BA). As I noted earlier, although some deception was used in the initial informed consent, participants were given a full debrief and an opportunity to provide fully informed consent at the end of the research. There were no concerns raised by participants regarding any ethical issues in this research.

4.4. Participants

To participate in my research project, participants were screened based on the following criteria: (1) Primarily worked in-person before March 2020, (2) Transitioned from a primarily in-person work environment in March 2020, (3) Employed in the United States in March 2020, (4) Worked with the same employer since March 2020, and (5) At least 19 years old.

The March 2020 date appeared in the first four criteria because that was the time when policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 became widespread in the United States, including significant changes to work arrangements (Wu et al., 2020; Bick et al., 2021; Dalton et al., 2022).

The first two criteria ensured that, if the effects of a new psychological contract and potential breach of it existed, they would have been felt by the participants of the survey. Although I did not seek to prove causality in this research, I was exploring possible ways in which people's attitudes changed because of the COVID-19 mitigation measures. Therefore, I needed to ensure that participants had experienced a traditional in-person work experience before March 2020 and that they had transitioned to a primarily online work experience after it. These criteria served mostly to ensure that I was excluding individuals who already worked primarily online before the COVID-19 mitigation measures and those who did not transition away from in-person work as COVID-19 mitigation measures appeared.

The third criterion ensured that participants came from the geographic location I chose for my research project. The United States had a markedly different response to the COVID-19 pandemic than other countries (Lewis, 2021b), including other developed economies and neighboring nations. Therefore, it was important to control for this factor.

The fourth criterion, still working for the same employer, ensured that there were no other major factors influencing workers' perception of their workplace and their relationships in it. It is likely that a change in workplace would be a major event that would impact workers' perception of psychological contract breaches and engagement at work. Unlike some other factors that may also impact those phenomena, such as economic changes, this was an easy criterion to implement to improve the quality of the data I gathered.

The fifth criterion ensured that participants were old enough to provide informed consent to participate in my research project. Given the nature of the project and the previous screening questions, it is unlikely anyone under the age of 19 would have been able to participate in the survey, but having this age limit as a criterion was an important step in ensuring participants

were able to provide informed consent, complying with the requirements for conducting ethical research.

To access my target population, I recruited participants using Prolific. Prolific allowed me to remotely recruit participants from all over the United States. This aided the feasibility of collecting data for me without travel expenses. Furthermore, although I did not select a number of participants proportional to each state or ask respondents for this information, having my survey available to potential participants regardless of where they are located possible gave me a sample that is representative of the country as a whole. Prolific was also an ideal platform because it is openly available and only charges a small fee per participant, making it a conducive way of recruiting respondents (Prolific, n.d.).

Moreover, Prolific provides a similar level of data quality as Mechanical Turk, including having participants that are more diverse and naïve to common research tasks (Peer et al., 2017). Other benefits of Prolific as a crowd working platform include the transparency it provides to participants on what to expect (e.g., payment, treatment), functionality and usability, and a focus on providing a subject pool for research as the core of its business (Palan & Schitter, 2018).

In data quality assessments of leading online data collection platforms, Prolific and CloudResearch have performed better than their competitors (Peer et al., 2021; Douglas et al., 2023). Douglas et al. (2023) compared MTurk, CloudResearch, Prolific, Qualtrics, and an undergraduate student sample, using outcome measures like attention checks, having a unique IP address and geolocation, spending over three minutes on the survey, and proving meaningful open responses. They concluded, “Prolific and CloudResearch provided the highest quality data, for the lowest price” (Douglas et al., 2023, p. 12). Similarly, significant advantages to the platforms Prolific and CloudResearch include attentiveness, comprehension, and reliability. The

"data quality from both Prolific and [CloudResearch] is similarly high" (Peer et al., 2021, p. 16570).

Participants received a small financial compensation of 2 USD for their participation in my research project. This questionnaire required a small investment of time from the participants and I expected it would not require significant effort. Based on feedback from colleagues and my experience completing the survey, I estimated it would take roughly 15 minutes to be completed. I chose the financial compensation amount based on the federal minimum wage of 7.25 USD, in accordance with Prolific protocol.

It is increasingly important in research to select the appropriate sample size given the "scientific, economic, and ethical aspects" (Kang, 2021, para. 5) associated with it. Having the wrong sample size may have consequences such as a waste of resources for a study with a sample size that is too large and low power or imprecise estimates for a study with a sample size that is too small. An appropriate software for measuring sample size is G*Power given that it supports several different statistical methods, it is free to use, and it is easy to use (Kang, 2021).

Using G*Power, my choice of statistical test was linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R^2 deviation from zero. As I will further explain below, I used PLS-SEM for my data analysis, which is a method of analysis that "estimates partial model structures by combining principal components analysis with ordinary least squares regressions" (Mateos-Aparicio, 2011 as cited in Hair et al., 2019, p. 4). Hence, it is a form of regression analysis. I chose the other parts of the setting, fixed model and R^2 deviation from zero, because I was working with an existing model and I expected to explain variance in the dependent variable.

My choice of power analysis was a priori as I was running the calculation before starting the survey and I wanted to calculate the necessary sample size given the effect size. For Type I, I

used the typical significance criterion of $\alpha = 0.05$ (Lakens, 2013). For Type II, I went beyond the recommended minimum of 0.80 to input a $1 - \beta = 0.95$, which is more desirable (Lakens, 2013). Finally, six was the number of predictors in my study.

For effect size, I chose 0.14 for the effect size (small effect). This was based on the results of two meta-analyses of key constructs in my model. Zhao et al.'s (2007) meta-analysis on the impact of psychological contract breaches on work-related outcomes, the effect sizes were: large to moderate for perceived violations ($\rho = 0.43$) and mistrust ($\rho = 0.53$), and small for OCBs ($\rho = -0.14$). While psychological contract breaches had some moderate to large effect sizes, it only had a small effect size on OCBs (Zhao et al., 2007). In addition, I examined a meta-analysis on engagement and OCBs, which reported a moderate effect size of 0.55 (Kanjanakan, 2021). Thus, the more conservative estimate for my constructs of interest is the small effect size, so I used the lowest effect size ($\hat{p} = 0.14$) when conducting my calculations on G*Power. This led me to define a sample size of 350.

4.5. Measurements

For this research project, I primarily used existing, validated scales. However, due to the nature of how the psychological contract was being studied in this project, I added three new items to the Psychological Contract scale to reflect the specific ways in which I wanted to understand Psychological Contract breaches with respect to the changes that came with the pandemic. Those new items are listed below in their respective section. Moreover, I developed the items to measure beliefs regarding quiet quitting and OCBs based on the instructions provided by Fishbein and Ajzen (2010). Each measure is discussed in detail below.

Meaningfulness, Safety, and Availability: I used the measurements from May et al. (2004), which are based on the three components of work engagement that were identified by Kahn (1990). The measurements showed strong reliability for meaningfulness ($\alpha = 0.90$) and availability ($\alpha = 0.85$), and an acceptable reliability for safety ($\alpha = 0.71$; May et al., 2004).

Participants were asked to rate 14 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Questions with (R) beside them indicate they were reverse coded. Two of the six items for Meaningfulness were: "The work I do on this job is very important to me," and "I feel that the work I do on my job is valuable" (May et al., 2004, p. 36). Safety was operationalized as psychological safety (not physical safety) and used three items, such as "I'm not afraid to be myself at work," and "I am afraid to express my opinions at work" (R) (May et al., 2004, p. 36). Availability was measured using five items, such as "I am confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work," and "I am confident in my ability to deal with problems that come up at work" (May et al., 2004, p. 36).

Engagement: I used the nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), which serves to assess three dimensions of work engagement: vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). This version of the UWES has three items for each dimension (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004b). Assessing the psychometric properties of the shortened UWES, it was found to be suitable as "Cronbach's alpha for the total nine-item scale varied between 0.85 and 0.92 (median = 0.92) across all 10 countries" (Schaufeli et al., 2006, p. 709).

Participants were asked to rate items on a 7-point Likert-type scale (0 = never, 1 = almost never, a few times a year or less, 2 = rarely, once a month or less, 3 = sometimes, a few times a month, 4 = often, once a week, 5 = very often, a few times a week, 6 = always, every day).

Participants were asked to rate items such as “At work, I feel bursting with energy” and “My job inspires me” (Schaufeli et al., 2006, p. 714).

Psychological Contract Breaches: I used the measurements developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). For their study, these authors surveyed 147 recent MBA graduates who had begun new full-time jobs. There is evidence of high internal consistency for the measurements developed for this study, with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.92.

Participants were asked to rate their agreement with different statements on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). This measurement has nine items, including “I feel a great deal of anger toward my organization. I feel betrayed by my organization” and “I feel extremely frustrated by how I have been treated by my organization” (Robinson & Morrison, 2000, p. 539).

In addition to the original items by Robinson and Morrison (2000) listed above, I added items to reflect the potential changes in the Psychological Contract that may be relevant given the pandemic conditions. These used the same answer scale. Specifically, the following three items were added that captured the changes in remote work and workload experienced as a result of the response to the pandemic.

(1) I feel like I now expect to be able to work remotely given my remote work experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

(2) I feel I am owed more by my employer given my work contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

(3) I feel returning to in-person work violates the current expectations I have for my relationship with my employer.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors: I used the 20-item Organizational Citizenship Behavior Checklist (OCB-C) developed by Fox and Spector (n.d.). In two self-report samples of the OCB-C, coefficient alphas were 0.89 and 0.92, and for a coworker sample it was 0.94 (Fox & Spector, n.d.).

The OCB-C was developed to address issues the authors identified with previous OCB measures, mainly item overlap and the use of Likert scales (agree-disagree format) for the items (Fox et al., 2012). In the OCB-C, all items reflect helpful behaviors, contrasting with previous measurements which include the absence of harmful behaviors. Also, the items in the OCB-C are behavioral in nature and make it easy for respondents to make judgement calls. Other measures, such as the scale developed by Podsakoff (1990), raise issues of accuracy and relevance (Fox et al., 2012). Consequently, "a more clear-cut behavioural checklist asking about what the person has actually done would be preferable to items asking one organization member to make judgements about attributions, beliefs, or personality of another" (Fox et al., 2012, p. 204).

The OCB-C was developed using "actual events or incidents submitted by the subject matter experts" (Fox et al., 2012, p. 204), who consisted of 38 employed students or alumni of the Master of Science in Human Resources and MBA programs. After eliminating redundancies and unusable suggestions, the researchers produced a 36-item checklist based on critical incidents from the subject matter experts. After eliminating the items with a high frequency of never responses, the authors proposed the 20-item OCB-C.

In my study, participants were asked to rate the items on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = never, 2 = once or twice, 3 = once or twice per month, 4 = once or twice per week, 5 = every day). The OCB-C includes statements about behaviors directed at other individuals in the

organization, such as“ Lent a compassionate ear when someone had a work problem,” and behaviors directed at the organization, such as “Helped new employees get oriented to the job” (Fox & Spector, n.d.).

Beliefs: I followed the instructions from Fishbein and Ajzen’s (2010) book to create a scale for beliefs. Specifically, I used the Direct Attitude Scales instructions of the book (available on p. 461). For all items, participants were asked to rate the statements below on an 11-point Likert-type scale (0 to 10). Items 1-4 were meant to gauge OCB beliefs and items 5-8 were meant to gauge quiet quitting beliefs.

The first batch of questions focused on workers’ current attitudes towards organizational citizenship behaviors. In order to avoid confusion and bias, I phrased the statements in a simple and straightforward way:

(1) My performance of discretionary actions that benefit the organization is (0) good… (10) bad. (R)

(2) My performance of discretionary actions that benefit the organization is (0) unpleasant… (10) pleasant.

(3) My performance of discretionary actions that benefit the organization is (0) harmful… (10) beneficial.

(4) My performance of discretionary actions that benefit the organization is (0) important… (10) unimportant. (R)

(5) Performing my work without going above and beyond my job requirements and responsibilities is (0) unacceptable… (10) acceptable.

(6) Performing my work without going above and beyond my job requirements and responsibilities is (0) fair… (10) unfair. (R)

(7) Performing my work without going above and beyond my job requirements and responsibilities is (0) bad… (10) good.

(8) Performing my work without going above and beyond my job requirements and responsibilities is (0) honest… (10) dishonest. (R)

Return to In-Person Work: Along with the screening questions at the beginning of the survey, which have been described in my section concerning the participants of the study in this manuscript, survey respondents were presented the nominal question below.

In the months following the implementation of online work, you have:

(1) Been ordered to return to a primarily in-person work environment (including hybrid; coded as 3),

(2) Volunteered to return to a primarily in-person work environment (including hybrid; coded as 2),

(3) Continued to work primarily online (including hybrid; coded as 1).

4.6. Data Analysis

In this section, I outline the steps I took to assess the quality of the data I gathered and my chosen data analysis techniques.

4.6.1. Data Quality

Once I collected all the data on Qualtrics, I downloaded it as an Excel spreadsheet. Using that spreadsheet, I assessed the quality of the data collected and deleted a participant's data when appropriate. I will provide further details in the next chapter, where I describe my results. Concerning the procedures to assess data quality, I first deleted the data of all participants who did not provide final informed consent or who failed an attention check. Then, I deleted the data of participants whose answers exhibited nonsensical patterns, such as selecting the same number for all answers or being inconsistent when answering the questions with reverse-coded items. Finally, I assessed the data quality by examining the answers to the open-ended questions, which dealt with hypothesis guessing and feedback on the research. Unsatisfactory answers to those questions (e.g., no text, simplistic descriptions of the study) led me to review the data quality of the participant's questionnaire more closely.

After completing the data quality steps above, I moved my data to SPSS. First, addressed missing values. Since this was not a widespread issue in my data, I decided to employ to use the number -9 for every instance where an answer was missing. I chose this number as it would never have naturally appeared in the data collected. This is common approach for instances of user-defined missing data (UCLA, n.d.). Second, I checked for outliers and considered whether any respondent's data should be deleted in an effort to avoid a situation that could lead to variance error or reduce the power of the statistics (Osborne & Overbay, 2004).

4.6.2. Statistical Analysis

I completed the subsequent data analysis using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) on SmartPLS (version 4; Ringle et al., 2022). This software has become

increasingly popular since the early 2000s among researchers as a useful technique for analyzing the relationship between latent variables (Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019). Using PLS-SEM for my analysis helps me avoid many of the issues inherent to other first-generation techniques: simple model structures that involve one layer of dependent and independent variables, processing restricted to observable variables, and systematic or random errors that accompany each real-world observation (Hair et al., 2021). Structural Equation Modeling overcomes those limitations, enabling "researchers to simultaneously model and estimate complex relationships among multiple dependent and independent variables" (Hair et al., 2021, p. 4).

Unliked covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM), which serves as a good method of analysis for confirmatory studies, PLS-SEM is better for exploratory studies (Hair et al., 2021). Therefore PLS-SEM is the appropriate method of analysis for my research project. PLS-SEM is particularly good when different explanatory constructs predict and explain the variance of key target constructs, the sample size is relatively small, and/or the available data is not normal (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2009; Reinartz et al., 2009 as cited in Hair et al., 2012).

However, a drawback to traditional PLS-SEM is that it has a "lack of consistency when estimating common factor models" (Djikstra & Henseler, 2015, p. 299). In order to avoid this shortcoming, I employed the consistent PLS version for my data analysis, which "overcomes traditional PLS's consistency problems when estimating common factor models in the sense that it consistently estimates the path coefficients, inter-construct correlations, and indicator loadings" (Djikstra & Henseler, 2015, p. 299). That is, results will be the same regardless of how many times I run the data through the SmartPLS calculation. Therefore, the consistent PLS

version is advantageous over the regular PLS because it allows me to test my hypotheses in a way that is not just unique but also statistically replicable.

I used consistent PLS-SEM to conduct my data analysis for the outer and inner models of my research. The outer model refers to the psychometrics, which consist of the outer weights and loadings, construct reliability and validity, discriminant validity, collinearity, and model-fit statistics. The inner model refers to hypothesis testing, which consist of the variance in the dependent variable (R^2) and path coefficients.

In order to accomplish this, I employed consistent PLS bootstrapping with a sample of 500. When assessing considering relative validity, using 500 sample bootstrapping is appropriate given research that found "the number of bootstrap replicates, ranging from 500 to 2000, had little effect on either bootstrap standard error or confidence interval" (Deng et al., 2013, p. 9).

5.0 Results

In this chapter, I present the results of both the pilot study and the main study.

5.1. Pilot Study

I conducted a pilot study before starting the full data collection. Pilot studies have a role in "ensuring that the research instrument as a whole functions well" (Bryman, 2012, p. 263). They serve as an important step in the research process as small versions of the full study (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2002). These studies are particularly important in research that uses a self-completion questionnaire, as is the case in my project, because the researcher is not present to address any confusion (Bryman, 2012). Pilot studies provide valuable insights about the study and may give advance warning of where the study might fail, increasing the likelihood of success of the full project (van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001).

For my pilot study, I gathered the responses of 45 participants in March 2023. Following the steps previously outlined to address the quality of the data, I only had to delete one participant's response due to failing an attention check. There were a few instances of random missing data that I did not deem them to be an issue (Pigott, 2001). The two open-ended questions, asking for hypothesis guessing and offering an opportunity for feedback from participants, provided me no valuable feedback in how to update the questionnaire but also offered no concern that would lead me to delete any participant's data. Therefore, I had the data of 44 participants to analyze for my pilot study after completing the data quality check.

In this sample of 44 participants, gender was mostly balanced, with 23 males (52.2%) and 21 females (47.3%). Ages ranged from 24 to 65 years. Most participants were Caucasian/European/White (28; 63.6%), followed by participants who were African/African-

American (Canadian)/Black (11; 25%). The majority of participants (22; 50%) had a college/undergraduate degree, followed by those with a graduate school/master's degree (15; 34.1%).

My main concern in analyzing the data of the pilot study was assessing the validity and reliability of my data. When analyzing Cronbach's alphas, I was pleased to see all constructs had an alpha over 0.70 except for psychological safety ($\alpha = 0.64$). The low Cronbach's alpha for psychological safety was not altogether unexpected given that, in May et al.'s (2004) study, which introduced this measurement, it had an alpha of 0.71. Despite the low alpha, I decided to continue with this measurement for safety because it does a good job comprising important aspects of safety that I would like to measure for my research project: supervisor relations, co-worker relations, and adherence to co-worker norms.

The responses to the hypothesis-guessing question did not give me reasons for concern. Many of the responses mentioned the study was about quiet quitting or the workplace. A few respondents mentioned remote work in their responses. Three answers were more sophisticated: "Levels of satisfaction with work and their correlation with engagement at work," "Do employers forget what workers did for them during COVID, are they grateful," and "I am not sure but something to do with if you feel you have been cheated since you are now required to do in person work." However, I deemed these answers to not be concerning since they were referring to parts of the study and the actual hypotheses were more nuanced.

5.2. Main Study

Having accepted the quality and reliability of the data I gathered for the pilot study, I continued my research using the same questionnaire without any amendments. Therefore, I was able to include the data from the pilot study into the final analyses of the main study.

5.2.1. Sample

For the main study, I gathered 212 responses during a course of eight days in April 2023. I assessed the quality of this data using the same criteria outlined previously, which I also used to assess the quality of the data gathered in the pilot study. At this stage, I deleted the data from five participants to ensure data quality and research ethics, as three participants did not give final informed consent and two participants failed at least one attention check.

Therefore, my study had a total of 251 participants. This number includes the 44 participants whose answers were accepted from the pilot study and 207 acceptable responses from the main study. Considering both the pilot and main study, there were 465 individuals who proceeded beyond the recruitment letter to actually take the questionnaire on Qualtrics: 251 of them became a part of my research sample and 214 did not. Looking at those who did not, 3 failed attention checks (1.40%), 9 passed the screening but did not complete the survey all the way to giving final informed consent at the end (4.21%), and 202 failed to pass the screening questions (94.39%), leaving my study with a completion rate of 53.98%.

The demographics of the 251-participant sample were diverse. Gender was almost balanced between male (50.6%) and female (49%) with only one individual identifying as other (0.4%). The majority of the participants identified themselves as Caucasian/European/White (69%), with African/African-American/Black and Asian/East Asian being the next ethnicities most represented (9% and 10% respectively). The sample was mostly highly educated (80% had an undergraduate degree or higher), and nearing middle-age (41% 31-40, 22% 41-50 years). Most industries were represented, with the most representation in Professional / Scientific /

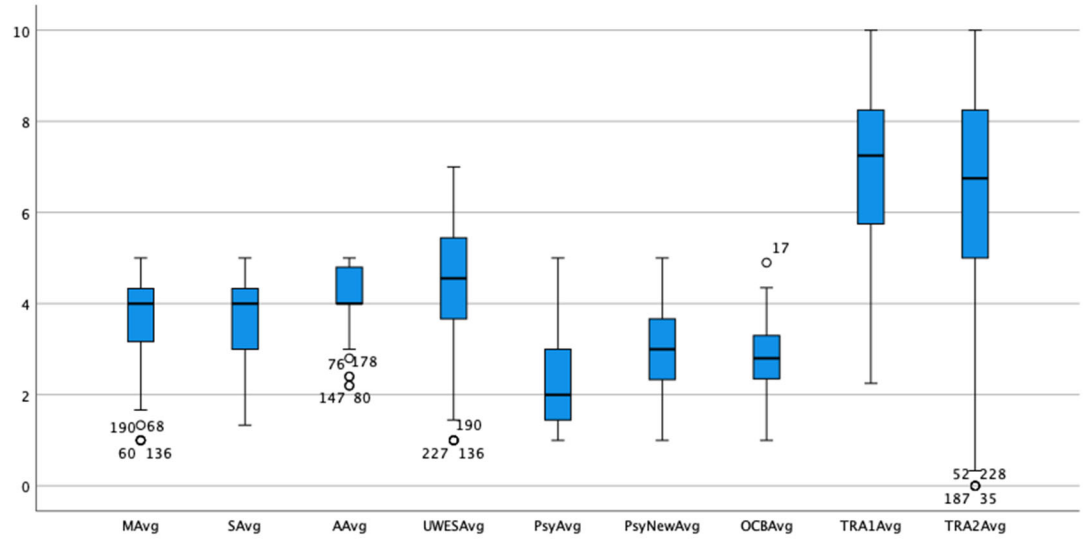
Technical (18%), Education Services (18%) and Health Care / Social Assistance (14%; see Appendix C for more details).

According to the responses to the screening regarding how people were working at the time they answered the survey, 125 respondents (49.8%) indicated they had been ordered back to a primarily in-person work environment, 20 respondents (8%) indicated they had volunteered to return to a primarily in-person work environment, and 106 respondents (42.2%) indicated they were continuing to work in a primarily online work environment.

5.2.2. Data Quality Check

Using boxplots of variable scores (based on means in SPSS), I ascertained that there were a few outliers among my survey participants. Some participants gave me reason for concern, as demonstrated in chart below, which was created on SPSS before I started my data analysis. Meaningfulness, availability, engagement, and Quiet Quitting beliefs all had a few low outliers each, while Organizational Citizenship Behaviors had one high outlier. Participants #136 and #190 gave me the most concern as they were outliers on both psychological meaningfulness and engagement (see Figure 2). PLS-SEM analyses were conducted both with and without the outliers. The outer and inner model results did not differ with the exclusion of these individuals. Thus, I decided not to remove the outliers.

Figure 2: Box Plot for Outliers



5.2.3. Outer Model Psychometrics

The psychometrics of my research project, explained in this section, consist of the outer weights and loadings, construct reliability and validity, discriminant validity, collinearity, and model-fit statistics.

The outer loadings matrix showed that all results were above the 0.3 factor loading threshold (Field, 2013) except for the 16th item in the OCB scale. I believe this item, "gave up meal and other breaks to complete work" has a lower outer loading because of the context in which my survey was administered is somewhat different than the one in which Fox and Spector (n.d.) developed their measurements. Given that 42.2% of my survey respondents were working primarily online, they may have had more flexibility in when they took their breaks and had food more readily available to them as they were at home. I chose to keep this item, because I did not want to change the measurements created by Fox and Spector (n.d.) as their scale has been tested

previously, the item may be relevant for some participants of my survey, and keeping the item allows my study to be included in future meta-analyses that use this scale.

Similarly, while items 1, 7, 11, and 14 did not have outer landings below 0.3, their loadings were lower than other items. However, these four items also describe OCBs that workers may have had fewer or no opportunities to practice, such as helping a coworker lift a heavy object and picking up a meal for others. Thus, I have decided to keep these items as their particular factor loading performance can be explained by the context of the research. See Appendices D and E, respectively, for outer weights and outer loadings.

To examine the reliability and convergent validity, I assessed the Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) values shown in Table 1 below. The reliability results (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability) showed similar results. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of around 0.7 or greater are considered desirable (e.g., Taber, 2017). The reliability was above the accepted cut-off for all constructs, except for safety. The low reliability results for Psychological Safety were not altogether unexpected as this item also had a lower-than-desirable Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability in May et al.'s (2004) study, which first used this measurement. As I previously explained, I was conscious of this short-coming when I chose to use this scale, but it served the purposes of my research well.

Three of my measurement scales presented issues with their average variance extracted: organizational citizenship behaviors, OCB beliefs, and safety. These measurements scored below the recommended 50%, which means they explain less than half of the variation experienced by their demonstrators (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 1: Reliability and Convergent Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Availability	0.866	0.861	0.566
Engagement	0.948	0.948	0.673
Meaningfulness	0.958	0.958	0.794
OCB	0.933	0.923	**0.394**
OCB beliefs	0.772	0.777	**0.478**
Psych Contract	0.930	0.926	0.523
Quiet Quitting beliefs	0.888	0.889	0.670
Safety	0.663	0.663	**0.416**

The Fornell-Larcker criterion analysis assesses discriminant validity (see Table 2). The bolded numbers on the diagonal are the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE). For discriminant validity to be substantiated, the correlation with the other variables must be lower than the √AVE. The results for this test signaled there is discriminant validity at the construct level for all but one case. Engagement has a stronger correlation with meaningfulness (0.826) than its √AVE (0.820). However, this occurrence is not altogether unexpected given that meaningfulness is a predictor of engagement. This may constitute a limitation of my study, which I will further explore in the discussion section of this paper. However, given the theoretical relevance of meaningfulness within the context of this research and the fact I used an existing, well-established scale to measure it, I kept meaningfulness in the model.

Table 2: Discriminant Validity [1]

	Avail.	Engag.	Mean.	OCB	OCB beliefs	PCB	QQ beliefs	Return	Safety
Availability	**0.753**								
Engagement	0.443	**0.820**							
Meaningfulness	0.392	0.826	**0.891**						
OCB	0.325	0.421	0.315	**0.627**					
OCB beliefs	0.340	0.653	0.590	0.324	**0.691**				
Psych Contract	-0.313	-0.566	-0.533	-0.057	-0.477	**0.723**			
QQ beliefs	-0.033	-0.298	-0.273	-0.227	-0.261	0.205	**0.819**		
Return	-0.099	0.026	0.127	0.005	0.055	-0.020	-0.110	**1.000**	
Safety	0.482	0.490	0.427	0.121	0.356	-0.576	-0.039	-0.076	**0.645**

[1.] Avail. = Availability, Engag. = Engagement, Mean. = Meaningfulness, OCB = Organizational citizenship behaviors, OCB beliefs = Organizational citizenship behaviors beliefs, PCB = Psychological Contract Breaches; QQ beliefs = Quiet Quitting beliefs.

Another test for discriminant validity is assessing cross loadings. In this test, I ascertained whether constructs were different from each other by using the values in the table to determine if an item had a higher cross loading with a different construct than with itself (Gefen & Straub, 2005). The results presented in cross-loadings matrix (see Appendix E) indicate the constructs are distinct, as none failed this test.

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) table (Appendix F) shows some of the items in my research are presenting issues with multicollinearity, as they had VIF scores higher than 5. Namely, items 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the meaningfulness construct and items 2, 3, 7, 8, and 9 of the psychological contract breaches construct are presenting issues. On the one hand, the items for meaningfulness revolved around statements about the importance, significance, and

meaningfulness of a respondent's work. On the other hand, the items for the psychological contract breaches revolved around whether the organization was fulfilling its promises and whether the respondent felt betrayed, violated, or frustrated. Therefore, it appears this multicollinearity issue may be due to the variables being conceptually related as they are essentially asking in opposite ways how satisfied a respondent is with their psychological experience at work. I chose to keep those items because they are theoretically important for my research objectives.

5.2.4. Inner Model

With my analysis of the outer model completed, I moved to the inner model to test the hypotheses. In my model, the organizational citizenship behaviors variable is the criterion variable, since this is the construct I am trying to explain given the other variables in the model. The R^2 results shown on Table 3 indicate that 18% of variance in OCBs is explained by its exogenous variables. The other endogenous variables and the explained variance are also shown on Table 3. My model explains 9% of Quiet Quitting beliefs, 44% of OCB beliefs, and 71% of engagement. These results suggest that Quiet Quitting Beliefs have identified predictors not captured in this model, which I will discuss further in the next chapter.

Table 3: Variance Explained Table

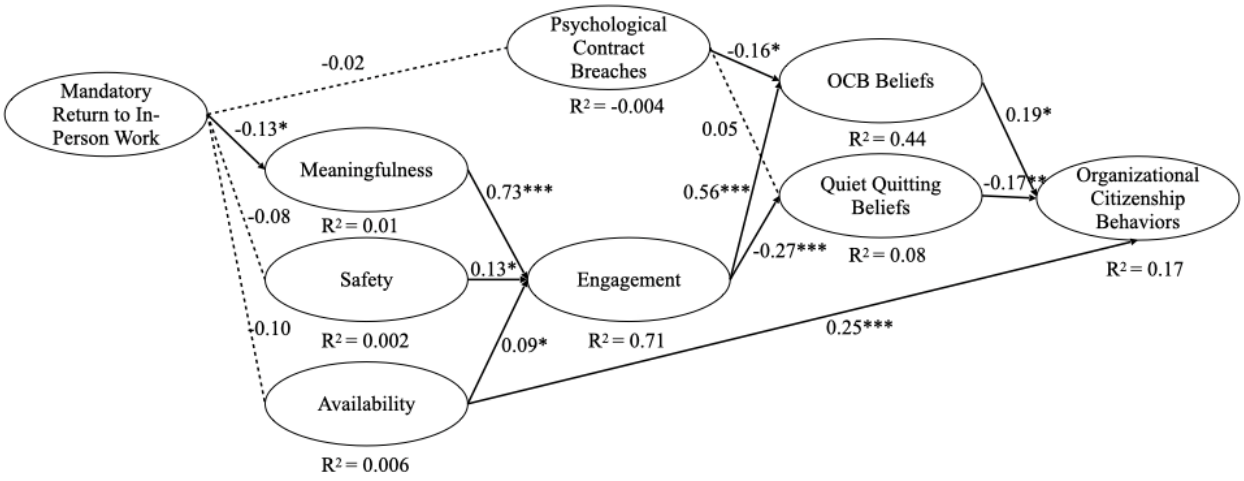
	R^2	R^2 adjusted
Meaningfulness	0.016	0.012
Safety	0.006	0.002
Availability	0.010	0.006
Engagement	0.712	0.708
Psychological Contract Breaches	0.000	-0.004
OCB Beliefs	0.444	0.439
Quiet Quitting Beliefs	0.091	0.083
OCB	0.183	0.173

Table 4 presents the results of the inner model and the bootstrapping. This includes the original inner model path coefficient, the sample mean, standard deviation, t-statistic, and p-value from the bootstrapping sample. These results test the research hypotheses. See Figure 3 for a graphical representation of these results.

Table 4: Path Coefficients

	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	T-statistic	P-value
Return -> Meaningfulness	0.127	0.121	0.063	2.003	0.023
Return -> Safety	-0.076	-0.077	0.076	1.000	**0.159**
Return -> Availability	-0.099	-0.102	0.065	1.533	**0.063**
Return -> Psych Contract	-0.020	-0.018	0.086	0.232	**0.408**
Meaningfulness -> Engagement	0.733	0.731	0.040	18.429	0.000
Safety -> Engagement	0.134	0.139	0.059	2.277	0.012
Availability -> Engagement	0.090	0.089	0.052	1.743	0.041
Engagement -> OCB beliefs	0.564	0.564	0.076	7.416	0.000
Engagement -> QQ beliefs	-0.267	-0.268	0.079	3.364	0.000
Psych Contract -> OCB beliefs	-0.157	-0.159	0.074	2.135	0.017
Psych Contract -> QQ beliefs	0.053	0.060	0.083	0.641	**0.261**
OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.194	0.201	0.087	2.240	0.013
QQ beliefs -> OCB	-0.168	-0.180	0.069	2.450	0.007
Availability -> OCB	0.254	0.257	0.076	3.320	0.000

Figure 3: Research Model Results[1]



[1]. * denotes p-value < 0.05; ** denotes p-value < 0.01; *** denotes p-value < 0.001. Non-significant relationships are denoted with dashed lines. Significant relationships are denoted with solid lines.

My first two hypotheses served to show a connection between beliefs and behaviors. The first hypothesis stated that favorable beliefs about organizational citizenship behaviors would be positively related to actual OCB behaviors. The second hypothesis stated that favorable beliefs about Quiet Quitting would be negatively related to OCB behaviors. Both hypotheses were supported (H1: $\beta_{OCB\_beliefs}$ = 0.194, t = 2.240, df = 499, p = 0.013; H2: $\beta_{QQ\_beliefs}$ = -0.168, t = 2.450, df = 499, p = 0.007).

My following group of hypotheses was related to psychological contract breaches. Two hypotheses of this group were that psychological contract breaches would be negatively related to OCB beliefs and positively related to Quiet Quitting beliefs. Hypothesis 3, regarding OCB beliefs, was supported (β = -0.157, t = 2.135, df = 499, p = 0.017) but the Hypothesis 4, regarding Quiet Quitting beliefs, was not (β = 0.053, t = 0.641, df = 499, p = 0.261). The other hypothesis of this group (Hypothesis 5) stated that a mandatory return to in-person work would

be positively related to psychological contract breaches. This hypothesis was also not supported (β = -0.020, t = 0.232, df = 499, p = 0.408).

The next set of hypotheses was related to various relationships centered around engagement. It started by hypothesizing there would be a positive relationship between engagement and OCB beliefs and a negative relationship between engagement and Quiet Quitting beliefs. Both of those hypotheses were supported (Hypothesis 6 (engagement to OCB beliefs): β = 0.564, t = 7.416, df = 499, p < 0.001; Hypothesis 7 (engagement to Quiet Quitting beliefs): β = -0.267, t = 3.364, df = 499, p < 0.001).

Following those hypotheses, I also postulated that, in my sample, there would be a positive relationship between each of meaningfulness (Hypothesis 8), safety (Hypothesis 9), and availability (Hypothesis 10) with engagement, as expected. All of those hypotheses were supported (H8: β = 0.733, t = 18.429, df = 499, p < 0.001; H9: β = 0.134, t = 2.277, df = 499, p = 0.012; H10: β = 0.090, t = 1.743, df = 499, p = 0.041).

I continued my hypotheses about engagement by looking at how a mandatory return to in-person work would be negatively related to meaningfulness (Hypothesis 11), safety (Hypothesis 12), and availability (Hypothesis 13). Hypothesis 11, concerning meaningfulness, was supported (β = 0.127, t = 2.003, df = 499, p = 0.023) but the other two, concerning safety and availability, were not supported (H12: β = -0.076, t = 1.000, df = 499, p = 0.159; H13: β = -0.099, t = 1.533, df = 499, p = 0.063).

Lastly, Hypothesis 14 proposed a positive relationship between availability and the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. This hypothesis was supported (β = 0.254, t = 3.320, df = 499, p < 0.001).

While they were not hypothesized, it is relevant to examine the indirect and total effects within the model. Looking at total indirect effects (see Tables G.1 and G.2 in Appendix G), mandating return to worksite had no significant indirect effects via meaningfulness. The other significant indirect effects were: engagement to organizational citizenship behaviors ($\beta = 0.154$, $t = 3.202$, $df = 499$, $p = 0.001$), meaningfulness to Quiet Quitting beliefs via engagement ($\beta = -0.196$, $t = 3.226$, $df = 499$, $p = 0.001$), to OCB beliefs via engagement ($\beta = 0.414$, $t = 6.717$, $df = 499$, $p < 0.001$), and to OCB ($\beta = 0.113$, $t = 3.084$, $df = 499$, $p = 0.001$), and, and safety to OCB ($\beta = 0.021$, $t = 1.764$, $df = 499$, $p = 0.039$). The total effects of the exogenous variables on the endogenous variables are shown in Table G.3 in Appendix G.

Model fit results are presented on Table 5 below for both the saturated and estimated models.

Table 5: Model Fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.087	0.175
Chi-square	5628.647	5927.222
NFI	0.604	0.583

6.0 Discussion

In this research, I sought to understand the Quiet Quitting phenomenon as a possible consequence of the changes in practices and policies (i.e., remote work) that were put in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 but then removed as the seriousness of the pandemic subsided. In the early days of the pandemic, a "new normal" appears to have been created as those who could do so mostly moved to an online work environment (Bick et al., 2021; Dalton & Groen, 2022). However, as pandemic-related restrictions subsided, a tug of war seems to have started between workers, who generally preferred online work, and employers, many of whom were eager to bring workers back to the office (De Smet et al., 2021; Dua et al., 2022; Hamilton 2021; Palmer, 2021). Within this pandemic context, a trend called Quiet Quitting has emerged, where workers perform the tasks of their jobs but do not go above and beyond (Harter, 2022; Lappelin, 2022; Rosalsky & Selyukh, 2022; Samuel, 2022).

In this research, I operationalized Quiet Quitting as a withholding of organizational citizenship behaviors. This study was framed using three theories: Engagement Theory, Psychological Contract Theory, and Adaptive Cost Theory. I hypothesized that an individual's belief system may relate to their engagement in organizational citizenship behaviors (i.e., favorable beliefs regarding organizational citizenship behaviors or favorable beliefs about Quiet Quitting). In addition, I hypothesized that changes in the working conditions may relate to changes in these attitudinal factors. The results of this research show support for Engagement Theory and Adaptive Cost Theory, such that some of the hypothesized relationships were supported. Furthermore, the results of my research support my hypotheses that having favorable beliefs about OCBs was associated with more OCBs being enacted, whereas having favorable beliefs about Quiet Quitting was associated with fewer OCBs being enacted. However, this

research had mixed results for psychological contract breaches and the relationships with changes in location of work and attitudes.

The psychological contract is steeped in the notion of patterns of interaction over time, which can be subjective (Rousseau, 1989; Robinson et al., 1994). Hence, when exploring psychological contract breaches as a possible explanation for Quiet Quitting, my hypotheses originated from the idea that being allowed to work remotely for an extended period would be perceived by employees as a renegotiation of their psychological contract with their employers. I was particularly inspired to postulate psychological contract breaches can be a reason for Quiet Quitting because of the potential changes to expectations around the employment relationship during the pandemic. Additionally, research on psychological contracts during organizational change (e.g., van den Heuvel & Schalk, 2009; Schalk et al., 1998) suggests that organizational changes associated with the pandemic may be related to psychological contract changes and, consequently, potential breaches.

As expected given the existing literature, my research results support the notion that a negative relationship exists between psychological contract breaches and OCB beliefs. However, my results indicate psychological contract breaches are not related to Quiet Quitting beliefs specifically. These results suggest that feelings of breach have an effect on attitudes about discretionary behaviors, but they do not lead employees to go as far as to believe they would be justified in performing their work without going above and beyond. Moreover, these results suggest that, at least when it comes to psychological contract breaches, having positive beliefs about Quiet Quitting may be seen as a step further than having less positive beliefs about OCBs.

My other hypothesis relating to the psychological contract sought to establish a relationship between the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and feelings of contract breach.

However, the results did not support this hypothesis. Consequently, I am led to believe that, although a majority of respondents were forced to return to in-person work and there is reluctancy to return to this type of work (e.g., Barron, 2022; De Smet et al., 2021; Parker, 2022; Telford, 2022; Smart, 2022), workers did not perceive a forced return to the office as a psychological contract breach. Hence, it does not seem they perceived their time working online as a revision of their psychological contract.

Engagement Theory was another avenue to understand Quiet Quitting offered in this study. The first two hypotheses from this section focused on whether engagement would be positively related to beliefs in OCBs and negatively related to beliefs in Quiet Quitting. Both hypotheses were supported. These findings build on the research suggesting that an increase in engagement will be correlated with an increase in OCB performance (Saks, 2006; Saks, 2019; Abed & Elena, 2016; Rurkkhum & Bartlett, 2012; Kataria et al., 2012). My results show engaged workers have positive beliefs about performing discretionary behaviors. However, these results also show that engaged workers are less likely to have positive beliefs about Quiet Quitting (i.e., performing their work without going above and beyond).

The next group of hypotheses in the engagement avenue of my research was much more steeped in the literature and the results were not surprising, but they are significant as they constitute important links between the variables of my model. Meaningfulness, safety, and availability are understood to be predictors of engagement (Kahn, 1990; Kahn, 1992; May et al., 2004; Saks, 2006). I hypothesized that these relationships would be present in my research as well. The results support this theory and are a replication within the post-pandemic context.

The final group of hypotheses dealt with how a return to the pre-pandemic status quo, explained here through a mandatory return to in-person work, would be negatively related to

meaningfulness, safety, and availability. For this group of hypotheses, the results were mixed. On the one hand, my hypothesis related to meaningfulness was supported. This suggests that, under the "new normal" ushered in by COVID-19 prevention measures, when employees started primarily working from home, workers may have also experienced a greater sense of autonomy and experienced meaningfulness. However, as a narrowing down of worker autonomy, characterized by a push by employers for in-person work, took place as restrictions subsided, this was associated with employees experiencing less meaningfulness.

On the other hand, my hypotheses related to safety and availability were not supported. This leads me to conclude that employees either did not feel a greater sense of psychological safety when working from home compared to a return to the pre-pandemic normal, characterized by work done primarily onsite, or the return to the worksite did not have an effect on this feeling of safety. Alternatively, either workers did not feel their physical, emotional, and psychological availability was reduced by all the uncertainty and changes experienced as a result of policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 or the return to the pre-pandemic normal did not further drain those resources. However, since safety has a lower-than-desirable reliability ($\alpha = 0.663$) in my study, this result related to safety may not be completely reliable given the possible measurement error introduced by the lower measurement reliability. Also, the measure of safety focused on primarily on the psychological aspect of safety (i.e., supervisor relations, co-worker relations, and adherence to co-worker norms). It may be that this did not capture physical safety (e.g., health and exposure risks). Future research should examine whether this form of safety was related to the mandatory return to worksite and if this may have been related to lower engagement and higher Quiet Quitting beliefs.

Finally, concerning Adaptive Cost Theory, I hypothesized that there were costs associated with adaptations made during and after the pandemic, which may have been associated with a lower ability to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors. This theory was supported, suggesting availability is positively related to the performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. Therefore, I am led to conclude that a negative relationship exists between an employee's available resource and their performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. This finding signals that employee well-being may be a factor for those performing fewer OCBs.

When accounting for all the theories explored within my research framework, it becomes clear meaningfulness is important, as it stands at the heart of two possible uninterrupted paths between the change of worksite and my final criterion variable. It seems many of the characteristics defined by Kahn (1990), such as having challenging, clearly defined, varied, creative, and somewhat anonymous work, were all present in the work environment initially ushered in by COVID-19 mitigation policies. However, the push for a return to the pre-pandemic status quo, characterized by primarily in-person work, appears to be negatively related to feelings of meaningfulness. This was associated with workers' beliefs about OCBs and Quiet Quitting, which ultimately related to their performance of organizational citizenship behaviors. Therefore, these results show my conception of deliberate Quiet Quitting by workers as a response to a return to the pre-pandemic status quo may be correct, but its reasons are far narrower that I had originally expected in my original model.

Additionally, I conceived a more direct path between the return to worksite and my organizational citizenship behaviors. This path went through availability and was explained by the adaptive cost related to the changes as restrictions related to COVID-19 appeared and were eventually rescinded. The results suggest availability predicts the performance of organizational

citizenship behaviors in the workplace today may not be a response to a deliberate action by workers to retaliate, but rather an action borne from the adaptations associated with the pandemic and organizational changes in general.

6.1. Research Limitations

A major factor in writing this paper was deciding how to explain the phenomenon known as Quiet Quitting using an existing theory. I made an argument that it could be understood as employees withholding discretionary behaviors (i.e., organization citizenship behaviors). Although others, such as Klutz and Bolino (2022), have raised the same connection, I am mindful that Quiet Quitting is a new phenomenon and my understanding of it originates in large part from the media. Therefore, it is possible that it may be different than we think and there may be other possible or more appropriate ways of operationalizing it.

In this research project, I employed a cross-sectional approach to my data collection. This approach means I collected my data at a single point in time (Corbetta, 2003). I believe collecting data from the same group of workers at different points in time since just before the start of the pandemic restrictions would have yielded better results. Given that this approach would have been impossible or hard to achieve, I had to mitigate the drawback of collecting data at a single point in time by developing a strict set of requirements to participate in the survey and including a timeframe factor to the way I framed my questions. Furthermore, the choice of a cross-sectional approach meant I was able to show which relationships existed but I was not able to demonstrate causality in this paper.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors can be measured using self-reports, as I did in this research, or using ratings from persons who have observed a participant's behaviors, such as a

coworker or a supervisor. Despite some of the advantages I previously outlines, having used only self-reports in this research is a weakness. For example, Allen et al. (2000) found that the reliability of OCB ratings increases when aggregating raters.

Given the data was collected at a single time with a single method, there is the threat of mono-method bias. In this research project, I implemented several of Podsakoff et al.'s (2003) suggestions to reduce the effects of common method of bias. First, I employed counterbalancing question order, which meant that survey respondents were given questions blocks in different orders from each other, which is a method of controlling for issues like priming effects and item-context-induced mood states. Second, I protected my participants' privacy and reduced their evaluation apprehension. To accomplish this, I used a platform with which they were familiar (Qualtrics) and I clearly outlined how their anonymity would be protected. Third, I used good scale items that came from the diverse origins of each of my measurements, whose reliability and validity have been ascertained and were, for the most part, ideal.

I limited the focus of this research to one country, the United States. I believe this was a good choice given that policies to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 varied between countries. However, when screening participants on Prolific, I did not discriminate based on where in the United States they came. However, I could have been even more specific and accounted for how all the relationships I explored in this research were impacted in different jurisdictions of the country. For example, a comparison of restrictions related to COVID-19 in Florida and California shows different parts of the United States had different responses to the pandemic (Fox, 2022).

In retrospect, I wish I had made a greater effort to distinguish between organizational citizenship behaviors directed towards the organization and those directed at individuals. The

analysis I conducted in the literature review led me to believe Quiet Quitting could be understood as a lack of both types of OCB, but I somewhat leaned towards a research model that overall emphasis behaviors directed at the organization. Even when writing the questionnaire items regarding OCB beliefs, I phrased those items as discretionary actions that benefit the organization, which may have been a bit of an oversight. At this point, although I could conduct a new analysis splitting the OCB items, the measurements about OCB beliefs cannot be changed in the same way.

Moreover, some items in the organizational citizenship behavior checklist presented issues with low factor loadings. In my analysis, I argue this may be because many of participants of my research were working in a primarily remote work environment. This may signal the checklist is not as appropriate of a tool to measure OCBs for workers working in an online or hybrid fashion as it is for workers working in person. This has implications for the validity of my study as I may have, unknowingly at the time, used measurements that were not entirely suitable to I was trying to measure, which ultimately casts doubt over the results related to the OCBs in this research.

A further consideration when looking at the OCB behaviors in the work-from-home context is whether the switch to a primarily in-person work environment was positively related to a worker's propensity to engage in a given behavior. As I have previously discussed, many behaviors in the OCB-C could not be practiced when working from home. It may be possible that the disruption causes by working from home affected people's habits and customs, leading them to be less likely to continue practicing behaviors to which they were accustomed before the pandemic when they returned to a primarily in-person environment.

Another limitation for this research is the measure I used for psychological safety. I was particularly drawn to May et al.'s (2004) study and decided to use their measurements since they served well to measure the constructs the way I wanted. I specifically decided to use their measurement for psychological safety despite having an acceptable but somewhat low reliability ($\alpha = 0.71$). Unfortunately, the reliability of this construct as it was used in my paper was less than desirable ($\alpha = 0.663$) as a consequence. This casts a doubt on the validity of my results regarding this variable since I decided to keep it in my research model. Future researchers should consider alternative ways of measuring safety, including measurement scales that capture a more holistic perspective on this construct (e.g., greater consideration to all of physical, emotional, psychological and other possible components of safety).

When considering the discriminant validity of my results using the Fornell-Larcker criterion analysis, I notice that engagement had a stronger correlation with meaningfulness (0.826) than its own √AVE (0.820). At this stage, I considered deleting one of those constructs from my analysis but decided to keep them despite their issue with discriminant validity because doing otherwise would have left an important gap in my research model. Nevertheless, I am mindful that this issue may signal that my research participants saw little distinction between meaningfulness and engagement. In this research, I have even explored whether there is a link between meaningfulness and engagement, which is a hypothesis that was ultimately supported. It appears this study's participants did not distinguish between meaningfulness and engagement. In other words, from a measurement perspective, meaningfulness and engagement are the same construct in the data set I used for this research. Hence, at a theoretical level, it is hard to conclude a relationship existed between those two constructs. Future researchers should consider alternative ways of measuring one of those constructs when studying both in the same research

model.

6.2. Directions for Future Research

In a world where, as my survey results and literature review indicate, a large number of individuals are working in a primarily online work environment, it may be appropriate to rework some of the tools we use to measure organizational citizenship behaviors. As I have previously discussed, the outer loadings matrix showed interesting results regarding specific items of Fox and Spector's (n.d.) checklist, which I explained as constituting behaviors workers would not have the opportunity to practice in remote work environment, such as helping a coworker pick up a heavy object. Conversely, there may be certain OCBs that can only exist in the remote work environment but were not captured by Fox and Spector (n.d.).

When discussing the development of the OCB-C, Fox et al. (2012) do not mention having taken remote work into consideration when producing the items that eventually appeared in the scale. Given the relatively low prevalence of remote work before the COVID-19 pandemic, this is not surprising. However, especially as this form of work continues to be present, whether in on a full-time basis or hybrid format, it may be worthwhile for researchers to consider which items they choose to include or not in their OCB measurements and whether it may be necessary to have separate measurements for remote, hybrid, and in-person workers.

Looking at my R^2, it is noteworthy that approximately 91% of the variance in Quiet Quitting beliefs was not explained. This signals that there still remains a large space to explore the underlying causes of Quiet Quitting beliefs, which appears to be an even more complex and multi-faceted construct that I originally expected. In retrospect, my study could have incorporated mixed methods as a way of better exploring this construct. In suggesting this, I am

informed by one of the papers I cited heavily in this study, Kahn's (1990) research that laid the foundation for the study of engagement, which employed grounded theory. It was only after that paper that other researchers (e.g., May et al., 2004; Saks, 2006) expanded this field of study.

I am also interested in the 8% of survey respondents who claimed to have voluntarily returned to a primarily in-person work environment. Although this percentage was in the single digits, it still covers a large number of individuals in the workforce and may reveal interesting insights. For example, in the Pew Research Poll referenced previously, 60% of respondents claimed they felt less connected to their coworkers when working remotely (Parker et al., 2022). It is possible those with fewer connections at home, such as family, may miss the social interactions with coworkers at the workplace, among other possible explanations.

My research had very specific screening criteria, such as having worked with the same employer since before the pandemic began. It would be interesting to see if the same results I found here would still be present for workers who began their employment during the pandemic or workers who started their employment in recent months, when most COVID-19 restrictions are considerably less strict.

Looking at Ford's (2022) report, it is fortunate that she had collected data on remote work before the pandemic. She was eventually able to contrast that data with data collected after the pandemic began, using a sample from the same organization. Undoubtably, my research project would offer much more full assessments if it had started in early 2020, when the first possibilities of switching to online work first began, and tracked a group of workers over a few years, periodically given them a survey on the constructs I explored in this project. Future researchers should keep this in mind when a new disruption takes place, whether it is a return to COVID-19 prevention measures or something else.

In this research project, I operationalized Quiet Quitting as a withholding of organizational citizenship behaviors. However, it could also have been conceived as a counterproductive workplace behavior (CWB). Both OCBs and CWBs are voluntary acts performed by individuals who engage in extra-role behaviors, where OCB is a benevolent extra-role behavior while CWB is a malevolent extra-role behavior (Spector & Fox, 2010). Although that is not the approach I took in this paper, it is possible Quiet Quitting is itself a type of extra-role behavior, such that it is an intentional engagement of withholding behaviors that are helpful for organizations, rather than the simple disengagement or lack thereof. For example, Spector and Fox (2010) discuss workers perform an OCB that is not acknowledged and are led to anger and eventually CWBs. It may be possible that a forced return to in-person work, despite workers' preference for and productivity in remote work, led to a similar sort of anger and eventually CWBs.

Moreover, as another form of extra-role behavior, contextual performance refers to actions which "are not directly related to their main task functions but are important because they shape the organizational, social, and psychological context that serves as the critical catalyst for task activities and processes" (Borman & Motowildlo, 1993, p. 71). In this research project, I did not use contextual performance to define Quiet Quitting as a construct because my focus was primarily on behaviors that are volitional and whose absence would be hard or impossible to punish. Nevertheless, contextual performance may be an important consideration for future scholars who would like to further develop Quiet Quitting as a separate construct.

Additionally, the role of trust is an area that future researchers could explore further. In my literature review of psychological contract breaches, I described a study by van de Heuvel and Schalk where the authors describe how incremental and developmental change is associated

with higher levels of trust from employees and transformational and remedial change are associated with lower levels of trust from employees, which is, in turn, associated with stronger effects of psychological contract breaches. Future researchers could place a greater emphasis in their research to how to the way in which companies brought employees back to a primarily in-person work environment affected their workers' perceptions of psychological contract breach and eventually beliefs in Quiet Quitting.

Finally, in this research, I explored Quiet Quitting as a response to a return to the pre-pandemic status quo, which was a shift away from a remote environment that many workers had grown to like, and back to a primarily in-person environment. Quiet Quitting could be interpreted as a form of inconspicuous protest by workers about their work conditions. Simply following the rules and doing the minimum required can have such negative consequences to organizations that it is a tactic that has been used as a form of industrial action (Lord, 2022). While writing about Quiet Quitting, MacDonald (2022) suggested it might more appropriately be called work-to-rule. While it shares some similarities and may have similar negative consequences, Quiet Quitting is not a work-to-rule effort because it is not a coordinated effort or contained to a single organization. Therefore, I believe my research may serve as a part of understanding how workers choose to protest in an environment in which unionization is becoming rarer. In 2022, union membership rates in the US reached their lowest level, 10.1%, which is effectively half the rate of 20.1% from when records first started being kept in 1993 (U.S. Department of Labor, 2023).

6.3. Implications for Practitioners

The most significant change for the workplace brought by COVID-19 mitigation measures was likely the widespread implementation of remote work for workers who could work

like that. However, a trend has started to appear where employers push for a return to a pre-pandemic status quo, characterized by in-person work, despite workers' demands. Even years after COVID-19 health policies started to become less strict, Labor Day was again touted as a return-to-office reset in 2023 (Sahadi, 2023). My research has shed light on important factors practitioners should consider when making those decision.

When crafting or recrafting jobs, practitioners should take into consideration that only 8% of workers in this sample volunteered to return to a primarily in primarily in-person work environment. This may signal a preference for online, given that either these individuals were not given a chance to volunteer back to work or they were given a choice of whether to return and chose to do so. It would not be surprising if only offering the option to work in a primarily in-person workplace would have strong implications to recruitment and retention, especially in an environment where workers have choices and power.

In this research project, I found engagement is a strong predictor of the phenomena of interest. Particularly, meaningfulness is the best way of understanding how workers' engagement was impacted. In order to promote psychological meaningfulness, employers should give workers tasks that are challenging, clearly delineated, varied, creative, and somewhat autonomous (Kahn, 1990). Employers should also consider job enrichment and work-role fit as precursors of engagement (May et al., 2004).

Engagement is a reward that workers give to their organizations as a way of rewarding the resources invested in them (Saks, 2019). Practitioners should keep this in mind. I expect that considering the nuances of psychological meaningfulness, especially how it may be impacted by a return to an in-person workplace, can help managers create a better in-person work environment for their workers. In turn, this may increase workers' performance of organizational

citizenship behaviors. This shows the importance of reinventing the workplace given the lessons learned from the "new normal" ushered in by the pandemic rather than simply pushing for a return to pre-pandemic status quo. Employers should find ways in which they can create a worksite that promotes many of the benefits workers found in remote work. They should create environments that, in a positive way, are challenging, rich, and autonomous.

Furthermore, my research shows there is an adaptive cost for workers when they are faced with changes associated with the pandemic. Practitioners could consider the consequences of putting further stressors on their employees when these workers have already been depleted. Doing so may have the unintended consequences that workers will prioritize where they direct their efforts, which could lead them to start by not performing behaviors that are important but discretionary or hard to enforce, such as OCBs (Organ, 1988; Smith et al., 1983).

Finally, taking an inductive approach, Quiet Quitting could be seen as a specific situation from which we practitioners could draw lessons that will apply to other contexts. What does Quiet Quitting tell us about other occasions when there is a disconnect between what workers want and what employers want? What are the unintended consequences of forcing a change that workers do not want?

Overall, it appears practitioners should make a strong decision about whether to compel workers to come back to the office and whether that return will be on a full-time basis or a hybrid mode. Uncertainty may drain workers' resources even further. It seems that workers may be brought back kicking and screaming, but they will not have an almost-vengeful approach where they consciously withhold important discretionary behaviors in most cases. However, rather than trying to ignore the past several months and returning to a pre-pandemic status quo,

managers should seek ways they can promote meaningfulness in the workplace to increase engagement.

6.4. Conclusion

This paper used a popular social media trend to explore the frustrations it appears workers are feeling as restrictions related to COVID-19 subside and they are often asked to abandon what was once hailed as a "new normal" and return to what seems to be a pre-pandemic status quo, characterized by work being performed primarily in-person. Using organizational citizenship behaviors to operationalize Quiet Quitting, I set out to determine whether psychological contract breach, work engagement, and adaptive cost had had an impact on workers beliefs regarding OCBs and Quiet Quitting, and consequently the actual performance of OCBs. The results indicate that there is a relationship between those beliefs and the performance of OCBs. The main drivers of my model were meaningfulness and adaptive cost. All in all, it appears the return to the pre-pandemic status quo has not had as far reaching negative impacts as I had expected and workers have largely not reacted so strongly as to withhold discretionary behaviors as a consequence. However, much still remains to be understood about this phenomenon and what has led to it.

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Appendix A: Recruitment and Letter of Informed Consent

Recruitment Script

Understanding Quiet Quitting

I am conducting a study on the popular trend known as Quiet Quitting. The purpose of this study is to understand work engagement and psychological contract violations when returning to in-person work after experiencing remote work in the first several months of the COVID-19 pandemic. I will also explore the effect being order back to a primarily on-site work environment employees, and the behaviors workers have demonstrated or withheld since this return to on-site work.

My name is Kaue Matias. I am a student at the Faculty of Business Administration at Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador. I am conducting research for my Master's degree under the supervision of Dr. Dianne Ford.

For this study, we are recruiting participants who meet the following criteria:

(1) Normally worked exclusively in-person before COVID-19 mitigation measures started in the March 2020.

(2) Transitioned exclusively to online work as part of an effort to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the Winter/Spring 2020.

(3) Employed in the United States when all these events happened.

(4) Have worked with the same company since January 2020.

(5) Be 19 years or older.

If you meet the criteria above, we invite you to participate in a single online survey in which you will be asked to complete questions about your experiences and opinions about your work experiences during and after organizational responses to the pandemic. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Participants will receive an honorarium of $2 (USD) for participating if they provide us with their Prolific ID number. Participants who do not meet selection criteria will not receive the honorarium. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time prior to submitting your responses without penalty.
If you have any questions regarding this study, you may reach me at kmmatias@mun.ca or by phone at 709-327-8522 (Canada) or 202-621-0349 (USA) or my supervisor at dpford@mun.ca.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Kaue Matias, M.Sc. Student, Faculty of Business Administration

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Letter of Informed Consent

Informed Consent Form

Title: Understanding Quiet Quitting

Researcher(s): Kaue M. Matias, MSc Student, Department of Business Administration, Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador, kmmatias@mun.ca, 709-327-8522 (Canada), 202-621-0349 (USA).

Supervisor(s): Dr. Dianne Ford, Supervisor, Faculty of Business Administration, Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador, dpford@mun.ca, 709-864-8511 (Canada).

You are invited to take part in our research project, "Understanding Quiet Quitting."

To partake in this study, you must be meet the following criteria:

(1) Normally worked exclusively in-person before COVID-19 mitigation measures started in the March 2020.

(2) Transitioned exclusively to online work as part of an effort to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in the March 2020.

(3) Employed in the United States when all these events happened.

(4) Have worked with the same company since January 2020.

(5) Be at least 19 years old.

Informed Consent

Informed consent is essential to potential participants of any research project, as it allows you to make a free and informed choice on whether to participate in the study.

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In deciding whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Kaue Matias, or his supervisor, Dr. Dianne Ford, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction

My name is Kaue Matias and I am a student at the Faculty of Business Administration at Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador. As part of my Master's, I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Dianne Ford.

Purpose

After working in an online environment to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, many workers have been ordered to return to primarily in-person work. This study seeks to understand the impact this transition had on workers 'engagement, whether workers have responded to this transition by withholding voluntary behaviors at work, and their decision-making process. This study is important to help advance research on the emerging phenomenon known as Quiet Quitting.

Your role in this study

You will be asked to complete a series of questionnaires on Qualtrics. Participants will be asked to rate different sentences, phrases, and items on a scale to indicate their agreement with each of them.

Possible benefits

Personally, this research will offer you the ability to reflect on some of your work behaviors and attitudes. You will be contributing to science by helping me understand the phenomenon of Quiet Quitting, which has the potential to inform future research and improve workplace conditions. You may experience some personal growth and development by becoming more self-aware of your work attitudes and behaviors. You may also find it fulfilling and rewarding to reflect on major events that may have been spurred by the response to COVID-19 and employers 'remote work policies of the past few years.

In advancing research, this study has several benefits. The phenomenon of Quiet Quitting has received significant media attention in the past several months. It is believed to be a response to employers 'policies mandating a return to in-person following changes to allow/mandate online work that were put in place as a way try to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. In this study, I explore the reasons and psychological processes workers have experienced to engage in Quiet Quitting.

Possible risks

Participating in these surveys comes with a risk of distress as you will be asked to recall potentially negative emotions and stressful situations in your life, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. You may feel discomfort reflecting on your experiences and behaviors at work and how you have responded to them. For example, some of the questions in the questionnaire will ask about your attitudes and behaviors at work. I do not expect any physical, social or financial harms would be incurred while participating in this research. You may contact my supervisor or me if you would like to discuss risks or your experiences completing the questionnaires. As a reminder, you are free to not answer a question or withdraw your participation in a variety of ways, as described previously.

If you experienced distress in completing this questionnaire, consider looking into discussing it with a professional, such as a psychologist, counsellor, or looking into whether your company has an employee assistance program. If you do not have access to either professional consultation or an employee assistance program at your company of employment, the following may be of use:

Mental Health America: https://mhanational.org/finding-help

Compensation
Participants will receive an honorarium of $2 (USD) for participating if they provide their Prolific ID number to the researcher and meet selection criteria (which includes passing attention checks). Participants who do not meet selection criteria or pass attention checks will not receive the honorarium.

Length of Time
This questionnaire should take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Withdrawal from the study
Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may end your participation in this study at any time. There is no penalty for withdrawing your consent.

There are several ways you may withdraw your consent. You may choose not to agree to participate in the study by closing this message or clicking “Disagree” below. You may choose to close your browser window while answering the questionnaires. If you choose to withdraw your consent before completing the questions, the data provided up until that point will be removed. If you choose to withdraw your consent in one of these two ways, you will not receive the compensation described above.

Additionally, you may choose not to give final consent when prompted to do so at the end of the questionnaires. If you choose to withdraw your consent this way, you will still receive the compensation described above.

The data will be collected anonymously, which means it will not contain any information that could be used to identify you. Given the data is being collected anonymous, it will be impossible for me to delete your data once you have submitted the data by giving final consent at the end of the survey.

Confidentiality
The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants ’identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data will be reported in aggregate form, so that it will not be possible to identify individuals. Finally, your confidentiality will be protected as the data will be collected anonymously, which means it will not contain any information that could be used to identify you. In fact, the company used to administer this questionnaire, Qualtrics, does not offer me the ability to link the information collected back to any individual.

Data Storage
The data collected will be stored in the computers belonging to the researcher and his supervisor, which are protected by passwords (mine include biometrics), and encryption. My supervisor will have access to the data. Some of the data will also be shared with the scholars who developed the measurements used in this questionnaire. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. The surveys of the company providing the online test platform, Qualtrics, are in the United States.

Anonymity
Anonymity refers to protecting participants 'identifying characteristics, such as name or description of physical appearance. In this research, I will not report any of your personally identifiable information. I will not identify any participants when reporting my findings. Your data will be collected anonymously, which means it will not contain any information that could be used to identify you. In fact, the company used to administer this questionnaire, Qualtrics, does not offer me the ability to link the information collected back to any individual.

Reporting of Results
Upon completion, my thesis will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library, and can be accessed online at: http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses. Also, the information collected may be used for conferences or published in other articles by the researcher. The information collected will be randomized and reported anonymously.

Questions
You are welcome to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact the researcher, Kaue Matias, kmmatias@mun.ca, 709-327-8522 (Canada) or 202-621-0349 (USA), or my supervisor, Dianne Ford, dpford@mun.ca, 709-864-8511 (Canada).

Ethics
The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (for example, the way that you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at +1 (709) 864-2861.

Please print a copy of this for your records

Sincerely,

Kaue M. Matias, MSc Student
Faculty of Business Administration
Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador

e-mail: kmmatias@mun.ca

Dr. Dianne P. Ford, Professor
Faculty of Business Administration
Memorial University of Newfoundland & Labrador
e-mail: dpford@mun.ca

Appendix B: Survey

Questionnaire

Screening Questions

[No instructions provided for these questions]

Before March of 2020, your work was:
- Primarily in-person
- Primarily online [If chosen, skips to end of survey with a thank-you note]

In March of 2020, you were employed in:
- The United States of America
- Another country [If chosen, skips to end of survey with a thank-you note]

In March of 2020: [if last two options are chosen, skips to end of survey with a thank-you note]
- Your work arrangement transitioned to a primarily online environment.
- Your work continued to be performed primarily in-person (for example, essential worker, jurisdiction/company did not implement/require online work).
- You stopped working (your employment was terminated or paused).

Since March 2020, you have:
- Worked with the same employer.
- Switched employers. [If chosen, skips to end of survey with a thank-you note]

You are:
- At least 19 years old.
- Younger than 19 years. [If chosen, skips to end of survey with a thank-you note]

In the months following the implementation of online work, your have: [not a selection criteria – used for statistical analysis as control variable]
- Been ordered to return to a primarily in-person work environment (including hybrid).
- Volunteered to return to a primarily in-person work environment (including hybrid).
- Continued to work primarily online (including hybrid).

Demographics

The following questions are questions about you and are intended to gather demographic information about our study's participants. Please answer the questions truthfully but remember that you can choose not to answer any questions. Please remember that all of your answers are confidential. The information you provide here is solely for statistical purposes and will not be used to identify any individual answers.

What is your ethnicity? Be as specific as possible.

- Aboriginal/Indigenous/Native American
- African/African-American(Canadian)/Black Asian/East Asian
- Caucasian/European/White
- Hispanic/Latino
- Middle Eastern
- Multiple Ethnicities/other (please specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Please indicate your age.

- Enter below:
- Prefer not to answer

To which gender identity do you most identify?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender Female
- Transgender Male
- Gender Variant / Non-conforming
- Not listed:
- Prefer not to say

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Some high school
- High school diploma/GED
- Some college/university or vocational school (i.e., trade school)
- Vocational diploma (i.e., trade school diploma)
- College/undergraduate degree
- Graduate school/master's degree
- Ph.D.
- Prefer not to answer

Please state the industry in which you are employed.

- Accommodation/ Food Services/Hospitality
- Administrative and Support/Waste Management/Remediation Services
- Agriculture/Fishing/Forestry/Hunting
- Arts/Entertainment/Recreation
- Construction
- Educational Services
- Finance/Insurance
- Health Care/Social Assistance
- Management of companies and enterprises
- Manufacturing
- Mining/Quarrying/Oil & Gas
- Professional/Scientific/Technical Services
- Public Administration

- Real Estate/Renting/Leasing
- Sales/Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Utilities
- Wholesale Trade
- Other Services (please specify)
- Prefer not to answer

Meaningfulness, Safety, and Availability

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements

[Answer scale provided: 1= strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree]

Meaningfulness (sample items):

(1) The work I do on this job is very important to me.
(2) I feel that the work I do on my job is valuable.

Safety (sample items):

(1) I'm not afraid to be myself at work.
(2) I am afraid to express my opinions at work. (r)

Availability (sample items):

(1) I am confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work.
(2) I am confident in my ability to deal with problems that come up at work.

Work Engagement

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. If you have never had this feeling, select the "0" (zero) in the space after the statement. If you have had this feeling, indicate how often you feel it by crossing the number (from 1 to 6) that best describes how frequently you feel that way (sample items).

[Answer scale provided: 0 = Never; 1 = Almost never. A few times a year or less; 2 = Rarely. Once a month or less; 3 = Sometimes. A few times a month; 4 = Often. Once a week; 5 = Very often. A few times a week; 6 = Always. Every day]

(1) At my work, I feel bursting with energy.
(2) My job inspires me.

Psychological Contract Breaches

(sample items)

[No instructions provided for this question. Answer scale provided: 1= strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree]

(1) I feel a great deal of anger toward my organization.
(2) I feel extremely frustrated by how I have been treated by my organization.
(3) I feel like I now expect to be able to work remotely given my remote work experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. **[New item]**
(4) I feel I am owed more by my employer given my work contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic. **[New item]**
(5) I feel returning to in-person work violates the current expectations I have for my relationship with my employer. **[New item]**

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

How often have you done each of the following things on your present job? (sample items)

[Answer scale provided: 1= Never; 2 = Once or twice; 3 = Once or twice per month; 4 = Once or twice per week; 5 = Every day]

(1) Helped new employees get oriented to the job.
(2) Lent a compassionate ear when someone had a personal problem.

Beliefs

My performance of voluntary actions that benefit the organization is
(1) good : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10 : bad
(2) unpleasant : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: pleasant
(3) harmful : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: beneficial
(4) important : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: unimportant

Performing my work **without** going above and beyond my job requirements and responsibilities is
(1) unacceptable : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: acceptable
(2) fair : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: unfair
(3) bad : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: good
(4) honest : 0 : 1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6 : 7: 8: 9: 10: dishonest

Open-Ended Questions

[Participants provided a text box for replies]

(1) In the space provided, please briefly describe what you think this study is about.
(2) We welcome any additional comments or feedback you wish to share with us regarding this study.

Debriefing Webpage

Thank you for your time and effort for this study.

My study explores the trend known as Quiet Quitting that became popular following a TikTok video in the Summer of 2021 and has since received considerable media attention. It refers to how some workers have narrowed down the employee-employer relationship to the bare minimum: these employees show up to work and perform the functions that are explicitly required of them. They don't get involved beyond the minimum required, they don't create an affective commitment with the organization, and — most of all — they don't go above and beyond.

The answers you have just given will help me understand whether Quiet Quitting can be understood as employees performing fewer Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, which are discretionary behaviors that promote the effective functioning of the organization. Your answers will help me understand whether workers feel their employers have broken an implicit psychological contract by bringing them back to in-person work after having experienced a primarily remote work environment. Your answers will also help me understand whether workers feel less engaged after this switch. Finally, your answers will help me understand the decision making process workers have undergone if choosing to performing fewer Organization Citizenship Behaviors or engage in Quiet Quitting.

This study will help academics and practitioners better understand the trend known as Quiet Quitting. Despite the attention this phenomenon has received in the popular media and professional publications, there are virtually no academic papers studying it, likely due to its recency. My study will also contribute to better understanding different work arrangements (i.e., online, in-person) and contribute to the literature on Psychological Contract violations, Engagement Theory, and Reasoned Action theory by using these existing theories as a lens to understand a contemporary phenomenon. Moreover, this study will contribute to understanding a way in which the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures we took in an attempt to mitigate its impact have changed our society. Finally, I expect this study will prove valuable in helping practitioners make evidence-based business decisions when considering the work arrangements of their employees.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research (for example the way that you have been treated or your rights as a participant), you may contact the Chairperson at ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at +1 (709) 864-2861.

If you experienced distress in completing this questionnaire, consider looking into discussing it with a professional such as a psychologist, counsellor, or looking into whether your company has an employee assistance program. If you do not have access to either professional consultation or an employee assistance program at your company of employment, the following may be of use:

Mental Health America: https://mhanational.org/finding-help

You may access the completed thesis at Memorial University of Newfoundland's Library, which is accessible through this link: https://research.library.mun.ca/view/theses_dept/ after December 2023.

Please print a copy of this final consent form for your personal records.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor, Dr. Dianne Ford.

Kaue Matias, Master's student
Faculty of Business Administration
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Email: kmmatias@mun.ca

Dr. Dianne Ford, Professor
Faculty of Business Administration
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Email: dpford@mun.ca

Appendix C: Demographics of Survey Respondents

Measures	Items	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	127	50.60
	Female	123	49.00
	Other	1	0.40
Ethnicity	Aboriginal/Indigenous/Native American	2	0.80
	African/African-American(Canadian)/Black	23	9.16
	Asian/East Asian	25	9.96
	Caucasian/European/White	174	69.32
	Hispanic/Latino	20	7.97
	Middle Eastern	3	1.20
	Multiples Ethnicities/Others	4	1.59
Education	Some high school	1	0.40
	High school diploma/GED	14	5.58
	Some college/university or vocational school (i.e., trade school)	29	11.55
	Vocational diploma (i.e., trade school diploma)	6	2.39
	College/undergraduate degree	120	47.81
	Graduate school/master's degree	67	26.69
	Ph.D	14	5.58
Age	21 to 30 years	46	18.33
	31 to 40 years	102	40.64
	41 to 50 years	54	21.51
	51 to 60 years	34	13.55

Measures	Items	Frequency	Percentage
	61 years and older	10	3.98
	No Answer	5	1.99
Industry	Accommodation/ Food Services/Hospitality	2	0.80
	Administrative and Support/Waste Management/Remediation Services	2	0.80
	Agriculture/Fishing/Forestry/Hunting	2	0.80
	Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	12	4.78
	Construction	8	3.19
	Educational Services	45	17.93
	Finance/Insurance	19	7.57
	Health Care/Social Assistance	34	13.55
	Management of companies and enterprises	9	3.59
	Manufacturing	12	4.78
	Mining/Quarrying/Oil & Gas	0	0.00
	Professional/Scientific/Technical Services	44	17.53
	Public Administration	8	3.19
	Real Estate/Renting/Leasing	4	1.59
	Sales/Retail Trade	15	5.98
	Transportation and Warehousing	4	1.59
	Utilities	1	0.40
	Wholesale Trade	2	0.80
	Other Services	26	10.36
	No Answer	2	0.80

Appendix D: Outer Weights Matrix

	Avail.	Engage	Mean.	OCB	OCB beliefs	PCB	QQ beliefs	Return	Safety
A1	0.286								
A2	0.265								
A3	0.246								
A4	0.289								
A5	0.134								
M1			0.188						
M2			0.187						
M3			0.170						
M4			0.192						
M5			0.191						
M6			0.168						
OCB1				0.064					
OCB10				0.081					
OCB11				0.052					
OCB12				0.073					
OCB13				0.070					
OCB14				0.043					
OCB15				0.111					
OCB16				0.016					
OCB17				0.070					
OCB18				0.083					
OCB19				0.073					
OCB2				0.092					
OCB20				0.072					
OCB3				0.079					
OCB4				0.096					
OCB5				0.099					
OCB6				0.092					
OCB7				0.064					
OCB8				0.083					
OCB9				0.075					
PSY1						0.114			

(continued)	Avail.	Engage	Mean.	OCB	OCB beliefs	PCB	QQ beliefs	Return	Safety
PSY10						0.098			
PSY11						0.052			
PSY12						0.137			
PSY2						0.109			
PSY3						0.112			
PSY4						0.089			
PSY5						0.088			
PSY6						0.134			
PSY7						0.133			
PSY8						0.125			
PSY9						0.120			
S1									0.604
S2									0.359
S3									0.317
SCR6								1.000	
TRA1					0.226				
TRA2					0.403				
TRA3					0.376				
TRA4					0.268				
TRA5							0.282		
TRA6							0.334		
TRA7							0.249		
TRA8							0.288		
UWES1		0.122							
UWES2		0.123							
UWES3		0.144							
UWES4		0.145							
UWES5		0.131							
UWES6		0.124							
UWES7		0.146							
UWES8		0.138							
UWES9		0.110							

Appendix E: Cross Loadings

	Avail.	Engage	Mean.	OCB	OCB beliefs	PCB	QQ beliefs	Return	Safety
A1	**0.859**	0.369	0.320	0.301	0.306	-0.215	-0.078	-0.062	0.385
A2	**0.795**	0.337	0.304	0.276	0.258	-0.229	-0.040	-0.088	0.355
A3	**0.739**	0.346	0.326	0.210	0.209	-0.281	-0.000	-0.085	0.371
A4	**0.869**	0.392	0.329	0.271	0.302	-0.272	-0.014	-0.091	0.394
A5	**0.402**	0.179	0.170	0.130	0.193	-0.186	0.045	-0.040	0.337
M1	0.334	0.758	**0.916**	0.268	0.561	-0.501	-0.245	0.107	0.400
M2	0.331	0.752	**0.910**	0.300	0.554	-0.502	-0.285	0.116	0.422
M3	0.321	0.687	**0.829**	0.212	0.498	-0.433	-0.132	0.093	0.380
M4	0.364	0.767	**0.936**	0.330	0.535	-0.468	-0.302	0.158	0.342
M5	0.371	0.769	**0.931**	0.338	0.555	-0.474	-0.292	0.118	0.387
M6	0.379	0.679	**0.818**	0.226	0.447	-0.475	-0.188	0.081	0.353
OCB1	0.174	0.159	0.089	**0.518**	0.101	0.083	-0.179	0.056	-0.101
OCB10	0.242	0.248	0.141	**0.656**	0.174	0.027	-0.146	0.040	0.058
OCB11	0.138	0.183	0.115	**0.419**	0.078	-0.007	-0.153	0.220	-0.034
OCB12	0.267	0.228	0.150	**0.596**	0.134	0.047	-0.088	-0.052	0.015
OCB13	0.079	0.285	0.220	**0.566**	0.256	-0.052	-0.208	0.040	-0.013
OCB14	0.053	0.152	0.078	***0.351***	0.161	0.151	-0.120	0.016	-0.054
OCB15	0.259	0.358	0.320	**0.905**	0.365	-0.264	-0.183	-0.122	0.239
OCB16	-0.009	0.077	0.095	***0.130***	0.085	0.116	-0.061	0.054	*-0.185*
OCB17	0.151	0.245	0.202	**0.566**	0.195	0.009	-0.165	0.065	0.039
OCB18	0.224	0.277	0.191	**0.679**	0.225	-0.026	-0.144	-0.033	0.085
OCB19	0.166	0.256	0.214	**0.591**	0.203	-0.018	-0.162	0.065	-0.024
OCB2	0.294	0.337	0.273	**0.749**	0.210	-0.086	-0.129	-0.035	0.161
OCB20	0.231	0.261	0.197	**0.586**	0.175	0.043	-0.089	0.016	0.075
OCB3	0.231	0.264	0.203	**0.643**	0.203	-0.033	-0.119	-0.050	0.047
OCB4	0.260	0.350	0.302	**0.784**	0.273	-0.061	-0.149	-0.081	0.172
OCB5	0.237	0.303	0.250	**0.802**	0.272	-0.093	-0.204	0.094	0.122
OCB6	0.215	0.305	0.241	**0.748**	0.263	-0.063	-0.189	0.103	0.037
OCB7	0.170	0.275	0.146	**0.516**	0.158	-0.005	-0.124	-0.073	0.160
OCB8	0.272	0.291	0.174	**0.678**	0.199	-0.067	-0.098	-0.053	0.177
OCB9	0.211	0.275	0.200	**0.614**	0.182	-0.047	-0.140	-0.032	0.130
PSY1	-0.255	-0.483	-0.453	-0.100	-0.358	**0.738**	0.149	0.088	-0.421
PSY10	-0.013	-0.292	-0.328	-0.152	-0.237	**0.633**	0.227	-0.375	-0.054
PSY11	-0.035	-0.221	-0.160	0.089	-0.151	**0.338**	0.100	0.074	-0.274
PSY12	-0.115	-0.358	-0.435	-0.029	-0.379	**0.888**	0.240	-0.352	-0.263
PSY2	-0.269	-0.469	-0.426	-0.077	-0.337	**0.706**	0.154	0.089	-0.453
PSY3	-0.291	-0.509	-0.443	-0.078	-0.345	**0.723**	0.151	0.016	-0.456
PSY4	-0.223	-0.267	-0.256	0.031	-0.310	**0.574**	0.051	0.074	-0.422
PSY5	-0.254	-0.352	-0.334	0.003	-0.259	**0.567**	0.142	0.019	-0.426
PSY6	-0.291	-0.465	-0.412	-0.027	-0.432	**0.869**	0.150	0.078	-0.569
PSY7	-0.300	-0.500	-0.448	-0.019	-0.428	**0.861**	0.145	0.045	-0.550
PSY8	-0.291	-0.453	-0.413	-0.033	-0.395	**0.806**	0.147	0.025	-0.517
PSY9	-0.300	-0.469	-0.423	-0.041	-0.403	**0.779**	0.105	0.103	-0.540
S1	0.362	0.439	0.374	0.182	0.249	-0.380	-0.108	-0.004	**0.875**
S2	0.320	0.248	0.196	0.095	0.211	-0.300	0.037	-0.087	**0.520**
S3	0.257	0.215	0.224	-0.127	0.253	-0.499	0.058	-0.101	**0.459**
SCR6	-0.099	0.026	0.127	0.005	0.055	-0.020	-0.110	**1.000**	-0.076

(cont.)	Avail.	Engage	Mean.	OCB	OCB beliefs	Psych Cont.	QQ beliefs	Return	Safety
TRA1	0.227	0.294	0.280	0.203	**0.478**	-0.200	-0.024	-0.101	0.180
TRA2	0.259	0.564	0.511	0.248	**0.852**	-0.436	-0.245	0.077	0.347
TRA3	0.210	0.527	0.454	0.257	**0.796**	-0.359	-0.216	0.024	0.200
TRA4	0.268	0.367	0.347	0.188	**0.568**	-0.278	-0.188	0.123	0.246
TRA5	-0.043	-0.217	-0.198	-0.198	-0.303	0.186	**0.796**	-0.128	-0.038
TRA6	-0.028	-0.279	-0.256	-0.224	-0.178	0.172	**0.945**	-0.093	-0.031
TRA7	-0.070	-0.236	-0.202	-0.111	-0.279	0.204	**0.702**	-0.078	-0.056
TRA8	0.028	-0.241	-0.235	-0.199	-0.117	0.118	**0.813**	-0.064	-0.007
UWES1	0.319	**0.760**	0.589	0.328	0.555	-0.404	-0.246	0.096	0.299
UWES2	0.375	**0.762**	0.592	0.402	0.514	-0.437	-0.302	0.099	0.316
UWES3	0.424	**0.897**	0.729	0.383	0.595	-0.483	-0.264	0.005	0.458
UWES4	0.381	**0.902**	0.772	0.398	0.563	-0.526	-0.261	-0.026	0.431
UWES5	0.388	**0.814**	0.658	0.365	0.519	-0.462	-0.269	-0.021	0.471
UWES6	0.350	**0.772**	0.599	0.346	0.544	-0.465	-0.223	0.055	0.457
UWES7	0.388	**0.908**	0.795	0.258	0.554	-0.531	-0.226	0.014	0.459
UWES8	0.388	**0.858**	0.735	0.310	0.553	-0.488	-0.200	-0.028	0.414
UWES9	0.233	**0.681**	0.595	0.332	0.417	-0.362	-0.215	0.024	0.289

Appendix F: Variation Inflation Factor

	VIF
A1	2.493
A2	2.661
A3	2.205
A4	1.910
A5	1.522
M1	5.433
M2	5.852
M3	3.331
M4	6.264
M5	6.211
M6	2.886
OCB1	1.592
OCB10	2.494
OCB11	1.871
OCB12	2.999
OCB13	1.901
OCB14	1.924
OCB15	1.609
OCB16	1.465
OCB17	2.560
OCB18	2.368
OCB19	1.647
OCB2	2.509
OCB20	2.054
OCB3	2.769
OCB4	2.045
OCB5	3.259
OCB6	3.295
OCB7	1.762
OCB8	3.048
OCB9	3.271
PSY1	4.151
PSY10	1.575
PSY11	1.536
PSY12	1.771
PSY2	5.600
PSY3	5.777

	VIF
PSY4	2.463
PSY5	3.865
PSY6	3.891
PSY7	7.040
PSY8	6.786
PSY9	5.562
S1	1.247
S2	1.440
S3	1.289
SCR6	1.000
TRA1	1.340
TRA2	1.980
TRA3	1.899
TRA4	1.550
TRA5	2.669
TRA6	3.070
TRA7	2.087
TRA8	3.178
UWES1	3.204
UWES2	3.774
UWES3	4.827
UWES4	4.807
UWES5	3.209
UWES6	2.538
UWES7	3.956
UWES8	3.949
UWES9	2.166

Appendix G: Effect Sizes

Table G.1: Specific Indirect Effects

	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	5.0% CI Limit	95.0% CI Limit	T-statistic	P-value
Return -> Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs	-0.025	-0.024	0.015	-0.051	-0.001	1.627	0.052
Return -> Availability -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	-0.000	-0.000	0.001	-0.002	0.000	0.698	0.243
Return -> Psych Contract -> QQ beliefs	-0.001	-0.003	0.009	-0.018	0.008	0.119	0.453
Psych Contract -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	-0.009	-0.009	0.016	-0.033	0.018	0.571	0.284
Return -> Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs	**0.053**	**0.051**	**0.029**	**0.003**	**0.100**	**1.821**	**0.035**
Return -> Availability -> OCB	-0.025	-0.026	0.019	-0.060	-0.000	1.335	0.091
Return -> Safety -> Engagement	-0.010	-0.010	0.012	-0.031	0.008	0.831	0.203
Return -> Availability -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs	-0.005	-0.005	0.005	-0.015	0.001	1.046	0.148
Safety -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs	0.076	0.079	0.036	0.024	0.142	2.116	0.017
Availability -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs	0.051	0.051	0.031	0.004	0.102	1.650	0.050
Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.109	0.115	0.054	0.029	0.207	2.010	0.022
Safety -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	0.006	0.007	0.005	0.001	0.017	1.181	0.119
Return -> Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.010	0.011	0.008	0.000	0.025	1.256	0.105
Return -> Safety -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	-0.001	-0.001	0.002	-0.004	0.001	0.702	0.242
Psych Contract -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	-0.030	-0.030	0.018	-0.064	-0.004	1.657	0.049
Availability -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.000	0.011	1.085	0.139
Return -> Meaningfulness -> Engagement	0.093	0.089	0.047	0.005	0.162	1.998	0.023
Return -> Safety -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	-0.000	-0.001	0.001	-0.002	0.000	0.622	0.267
Return -> Psych Contract -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.001	0.001	0.003	-0.004	0.006	0.192	0.424
Safety -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs	-0.036	-0.037	0.019	-0.072	-0.009	1.924	0.027
Return -> Psych Contract -> OCB beliefs	0.003	0.004	0.015	-0.019	0.028	0.214	0.415
Return -> Availability -> Engagement	-0.009	-0.009	0.009	-0.026	0.001	1.052	0.147
Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs	-0.196	-0.196	0.061	-0.299	-0.095	3.226	0.001
Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.080	0.084	0.041	0.020	0.153	1.979	0.024
Return -> Availability -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs	0.002	0.003	0.003	-0.000	0.007	0.947	0.172
Availability -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs	-0.024	-0.024	0.016	-0.054	-0.002	1.523	0.064
Return -> Safety -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs	0.003	0.003	0.003	-0.002	0.009	0.826	0.205

(Continued)	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	5.0% CI Limit	95.0% CI Limit	T-statistic	P-value
Return -> Psych Contract -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	0.000	0.001	0.002	-0.001	0.003	0.113	0.455
Availability -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.010	0.011	0.009	-0.000	0.026	1.161	0.123
Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	0.045	0.050	0.028	0.011	0.103	1.609	0.054
Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs	0.414	0.413	0.062	0.312	0.511	6.717	0.000
Safety -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.015	0.016	0.010	0.002	0.036	1.418	0.078
Return -> Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.000	0.011	1.172	0.121
Return -> Availability -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs -> OCB	-0.001	-0.001	0.001	-0.003	0.000	0.846	0.199
Meaningfulness -> Engagement -> QQ beliefs -> OCB	0.033	0.037	0.021	0.008	0.076	1.583	0.057
Return -> Safety -> Engagement -> OCB beliefs	-0.006	-0.006	0.007	-0.019	0.005	0.828	0.204

Table 6.2: Total Indirect Effects

	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	5.0% CI Limit	95.0% CI Limit	T-statistic	P-value
Availability -> OCB	0.014	0.015	0.010	0.001	0.033	1.378	0.084
Availability -> OCB beliefs	0.051	0.051	0.031	0.004	0.102	1.650	0.050
Availability -> QQ beliefs	-0.024	-0.024	0.016	-0.054	-0.002	1.523	0.064
Engagement -> OCB	0.154	0.165	0.048	0.083	0.247	3.202	0.001
Meaningfulness -> OCB	0.113	0.121	0.037	0.060	0.185	3.084	0.001
Meaningfulness -> OCB beliefs	0.414	0.413	0.062	0.312	0.511	6.717	0.000
Meaningfulness -> QQ beliefs	-0.196	-0.196	0.061	-0.299	-0.095	3.226	0.001
Psych Contract -> OCB	-0.039	-0.039	0.024	-0.078	0.003	1.617	0.053
Return -> Engagement	0.074	0.069	0.054	-0.024	0.156	1.365	0.086
Return -> OCB	-0.013	-0.013	0.026	-0.059	0.027	0.492	0.311
Return -> OCB beliefs	0.045	0.043	0.041	-0.023	0.109	1.093	0.137
Return -> QQ beliefs	-0.021	-0.022	0.020	-0.057	0.009	1.050	0.147
Safety -> OCB	0.021	0.023	0.012	0.006	0.044	1.764	0.039
Safety -> OCB beliefs	0.076	0.079	0.036	0.024	0.142	2.116	0.017
Safety -> QQ beliefs	-0.036	-0.037	0.019	-0.072	-0.009	1.924	0.027

Table G.3: Total Effects

	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	5% CI limit	95% CI limit	T statistic	P value
Availability -> Engagement	0.090	0.089	0.052	0.007	0.178	1.743	0.041
Availability -> OCB	0.268	0.272	0.074	0.139	0.397	3.592	0.000
Availability -> OCB beliefs	0.051	0.051	0.031	0.004	0.102	1.650	0.050
Availability -> QQ beliefs	-0.024	-0.024	0.016	-0.054	-0.002	1.523	0.064
Engagement -> OCB	0.154	0.165	0.048	0.083	0.247	3.202	0.001
Engagement -> OCB beliefs	0.564	0.564	0.076	0.436	0.686	7.416	0.000
Engagement -> QQ beliefs	-0.267	-0.268	0.079	-0.399	-0.133	3.364	0.000
Meaningfulness -> Engagement	0.733	0.731	0.040	0.655	0.796	18.429	0.000
Meaningfulness -> OCB	0.113	0.121	0.037	0.060	0.185	3.084	0.001
Meaningfulness -> OCB beliefs	0.414	0.413	0.062	0.312	0.511	6.717	0.000
Meaningfulness -> QQ beliefs	-0.196	-0.196	0.061	-0.299	-0.095	3.226	0.001
OCB beliefs -> OCB	0.194	0.201	0.087	0.054	0.341	2.240	0.013
Psych Contract -> OCB	-0.039	-0.039	0.024	-0.078	0.003	1.617	0.053
Psych Contract -> OCB beliefs	-0.157	-0.159	0.074	-0.279	-0.041	2.135	0.017
Psych Contract -> QQ beliefs	0.053	0.060	0.083	-0.082	0.207	0.641	0.261
QQ beliefs -> OCB	-0.168	-0.180	0.069	-0.291	-0.065	2.450	0.007
Return -> Availability	-0.099	-0.102	0.065	-0.206	-0.001	1.533	0.063
Return -> Engagement	0.074	0.069	0.054	-0.024	0.156	1.365	0.086
Return -> Meaningfulness	0.127	0.121	0.063	0.007	0.222	2.003	0.023
Return -> OCB	-0.013	-0.013	0.026	-0.059	0.027	0.492	0.311
Return -> OCB beliefs	0.045	0.043	0.041	-0.023	0.109	1.093	0.137
Return -> Psych Contract	-0.020	-0.018	0.086	-0.160	0.127	0.232	0.408
Return -> QQ beliefs	-0.021	-0.022	0.020	-0.057	0.009	1.050	0.147
Return -> Safety	-0.076	-0.077	0.076	-0.198	0.062	1.000	0.159
Safety -> Engagement	0.134	0.139	0.059	0.045	0.238	2.277	0.012
Safety -> OCB	0.021	0.023	0.012	0.006	0.044	1.764	0.039
Safety -> OCB beliefs	0.076	0.079	0.036	0.024	0.142	2.116	0.017
Safety -> QQ beliefs	-0.036	-0.037	0.019	-0.072	-0.009	1.924	0.027