



Exploring Quiet Quitting in the organizational context: A Systematic Literature Review and a Theoretical Framework

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Abstract

Purpose: This study's purpose is to improve the understanding of Quiet Quitting (QQ) in organizations. It focuses on synthesizing the empirical and theoretical research published from 2022 up to date in order to establish both what we know and we do not know about this topic, thereby identifying areas for future research.

Methodology: A systematic and structured literature review is carried out to observe and understand the trends and existing patterns in the QQ research area, evaluate contributions, and summarize knowledge, thereby identifying potential directions for future research as well as developing a theoretical framework. Thus, 29 peer-reviewed journal articles in the field of QQ were analyzed (published between 2022 and 2024), and their selection process involved seven major publishers and databases, namely, Emerald, Elsevier/Science Direct, PubMed, Scopus, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis, and Wiley.

Findings: A plethora of future research suggestions identified in the literature are analytically presented, as is a profile analysis of the sample publications.

Research limitations/implications: This systematic literature review (SLR) relied solely on fully accessed English articles published in international, peer-reviewed journals from selected publishers, resulting in a limited sample size. This analysis can serve as a resource for both researchers and practitioners to further develop this area in accordance with future research suggestions and the proposed theoretical framework.

Originality/Value: The primary value of this paper lies in extending the understanding of the QQ concept in research and developing a theoretical framework for it. This has been achieved by analyzing and synthesizing existing QQ publications.

Keywords: Quiet Quitting, Systematic Literature Review

Paper type: Literature Review

1. Introduction

Following the Covid-19 pandemic and the Great Resignation in America, the concept of Quiet Quitting appeared. Specifically, the phenomenon of Quiet Quitting (QQ) emerged in the summer of 2022 through a Tik Tok video which went viral and received considerable media attention. As the term suggests, QQ is not the process of quitting a job (Marples, 2022). Instead, it is described as the behavior of employees who are doing the bare minimum effort in order to keep their jobs, failing to "go above and beyond" their job description and/or being emotionally detached from work (Harter, 2022; Masterson, 2022; O'Connor, 2022). Although academic research indicates that QQ isn't a completely new phenomenon, the changes occurred after the pandemic regarding the traditional work model and the entrance of Generation Z in the global workforce seem to serve as catalysts in the recognition of this workplace concept (Formica and Sfodera, 2022; Yikilmaz, 2022). According to Gallup's Workplace Report (2022), the employees who are Quietly Quitting, through the scope of low engagement, reach the number of 59% with a potential cost for the global economy around \$8.8 trillion. Within the context of remaining productive and surviving in highly competitive environments, business organizations should take into consideration the constantly high percentages of employee disengagement, expressed through the behavior of QQ and implement strategies to tackle this phenomenon.

As a result of the infancy appearance age of QQ in the academic community, there is not a plethora of research conducted yet. In an attempt to investigate the field of QQ, researchers have published articles during the last two years mostly addressing the antecedents, causes and implications for future research (Formica and Sfodera, 2022; Atalay and Dağistan, 2023; Campton et al., 2023; Hamouche et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2023; Kachhap and Singh, 2024; Wu and Wei, 2024), as well as introducing recommendation for management (Formica and Sfodera, 2022; Liu-Lastres et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023). Moreover, tool development attempts have been made in order to measure QQ (Anand and Doll, 2023; Karrani et al., 2023; Galanis et al., 2023). To our knowledge this paper is the first attempt of conducting a Systematic Literature Review for the QQ concept.

Following the introduction, the remainder of this paper is structured as follows: in the next section, a theoretical framework for QQ is established. Afterward, the research methodology applied in this study is described, followed by the presentation and discussion of the results of the SLR. Finally, the conclusions of this work are presented along with the limitations of this study and the suggestions for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

It is widely accepted that the pandemic of Covid-19 has influenced, among other areas of life, the working field (Atalay and Dağistan, 2023). Following the implementation of lockdowns in businesses globally during 2020, the traditional working model shifted from employees performing their duties from an office environment to the remote and hybrid models. Thus, a large number of workers found themselves working either entirely or partially from home, as a required procedure in order to lessen the pandemic's spreading rate as well as its' damaging effects, alternating

significantly the fabric of modern workforce (Cheng et al., 2007). Amidst the Covid-19 lockdowns, individuals were presented with a unique opportunity to reassess their lives, priorities, and work-related relationships by questioning their purpose and focusing on using work as a means to sustain their lives, rather than allowing work to consume their lives (Serenko, 2023). Although the abovementioned measures to tackle Covid-19 lasted less than a year, the business world came across the problem of high resignation rates with the return of the employees to their jobs. More specifically, in America the phenomenon of Great Resignation (GR) was observed, where, by the end of 2021, more than 47 million employees decided not to return to their jobs and voluntarily quit as measured by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) program (Penn and Nezamis, 2022). Despite the fact that the GR was seeing with great concern by academics and practitioners, it actually didn't last since the resignation rates returned to the pre-pandemic levels the following years (Penn and Huang, 2023).

Shortly after, QQ emerged and was considered a continuation of the GR. The term, which describes an employees' reluctance to exceed their job description at work (Harter, 2022), became one of the most popular work-related concepts via a Tik Tok video which attracted more than 3.5 million views within the first weeks of its appearance (Serenko, 2023). Subsequently, QQ has garnered attention in prominent business magazines such as the Wall Street Journal (Smith, 2022) and Forbes (Kruse, 2022), with sources revealing that a significant 50% of current employees have expressed their unwillingness to take on extra responsibilities (Caldwell et al., 2023). Given the rise of QQ during the pandemic, it is reasonable to infer that the pandemic itself is the underlying cause of this trend. Nevertheless, there is a contention that QQ is instigated rather than directly caused by Covid-19 (Mahand and Caldwell, 2023). Essentially, the problem of QQ pertains to individuals who have lost their motivation as a result of various factors such as their working hours, work-life balance, compensation policies, manager behavior, the significance of their work, and organizational fairness (Atalay and Dağistan, 2023). Hence, individuals exhibit a lack of initiative, feel underappreciated, and demonstrate a lack of dedication, engagement, and passion towards the organization. As a consequence, these employees experience psychological detachment from their work when they strictly limit their discretionary efforts and only complete their job description (Constanz, 2022).

In this study, the Social Exchange Theory (SET) has been used to explain the employee behavior in the workplace expressed through QQ. SET, widely applied in the domains of management, sociology, and social psychology, examines the cost-benefit dynamics in social interactions between two parties (such as individuals, groups and/or organizations). According to this perspective, individuals engage in social interactions with the anticipation of acquiring perks and receiving rewards, and they maintain these relationships with this incentive. In other words, SET is a highly significant conceptual framework used to comprehend workplace behavior. The French sociologist Marcel Mauss (1925), was the first who set the foundation for social theories of reciprocity and gift exchange, followed by Homans (1958) whose description of social interactions as exchanges, greatly influenced the advancement of SET. Moreover, Thibaut and Kelley (1959) contributed to SET by investigating the

social psychology of individuals and groups which suggest that individuals cooperate with others in order to achieve desirable results, whereas Blau (1964a, b) expanded the scope of the theory, by focusing on power, justice, and economic notions which suggest that interactions between participants are interdependent and rely on each other's actions. Despite the emergence of many perspectives on SET, scholars agree that social exchange entails a sequence of reciprocal actions that create obligations (Emerson, 1976). In the context of SET, these interactions are commonly perceived as interdependent and reliant on the actions of another individual (Blau, 1964a), and have the ability to create high-quality relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Moreover, it is argued that the relationships between employees and the organization are exchanged and can impact the organizational performance (Jiwen et al., 2009).

Quiet Quitting antecedents through the lens of Social Exchange Theory

The QQ movement has been attributed to various factors, such as a sense of neglect from employers, limited chances for professional growth, a disconnect between the organization and its employees, a preference for work-life balance, and growing disengagement and disappointment towards managers (Formica and Sfodera, 2022; Harter, 2022; Pandey, 2022; Zenger and Folkman, 2022). In this paper, the antecedents of QQ have been clustered into the following categories: Poor Management/Leadership, Fairness of Rewards and Recognition, Perceived Work Overload and Perceived Organizational Support, which are reviewed in the context of SET.

Poor Management/Leadership

Poor management and leadership are significant factors that contribute to employees quietly quitting from their work (Yu et al., 2020). An effective relationship between employees and their managers is vital for both employees and organizations (Tsai et al., 2010), since it has a significant correlation with employee work performance (Kong et al., 2016). A recent study revealed that the least effective managers had a significantly higher number of individuals who fit into the category of "quiet quitting" compared to the most effective leaders (Zenger and Folkman, 2022). Specifically, the least effective managers have three to four times as many individuals in this category. This study also demonstrated that managers with these characteristics have a 14% rate of employee quiet quitting due to dissatisfaction, in contrast to a 20% rate among employees who were willing to exert additional effort in the workplace. Nevertheless, managers who were proficient in their roles and maintained a good relationship with their employees observed 62% of their workforce displaying a willingness to exert additional effort, while only 3% exhibited signs of quietly resigning. Through the scope of SET, poor management and leadership are viewed by employees as a violation of the exchange contract between them and their managers which is demonstrated by a decrease in work performance and job satisfaction and leads employees to the adoption of the QQ behavior.

Fairness of Rewards and Recognition

Rewards and recognition are crucial in motivating employees and enhancing performance (Lawler, 1986). A carefully developed reward system can significantly

augment an organization's efficacy and efficiency (Akafo and Boateng, 2015). The idea of fair rewards, as defined by Paré and Tremblay (2007), quantifies employees' evaluation of various work-related outcomes, such as higher salaries, regular performance assessments, and better task assignments. According to Malhotra et al. (2007), rewards encompass all types of financial compensation, tangible services, and benefits, including promotion, opportunities for professional development and growth, and recognition, that an employee receives as part of their employment relationship (Xueyun et al., 2024). The key aspect of this interaction is the underlying agreement known as the 'psychological contract' (Kotter, 1973; Pearce and Rousseau, 1998), which is based on the principle of reciprocity (Whitener et al., 1998). The fundamental process that explains how an individual's perception of fair treatment by the organization can lead to organizational commitment is reciprocation (Angle and Perry, 1983). It means that employees are more committed when organizations meet their important demands and fulfill their expectations (Haar and Spell, 2004). This exchange perspective posits that organizational commitment is influenced by both work rewards and work values, as it emphasizes the significance of work rewards in consistently motivating employees (Lambert, 2000). Based on SET and reciprocity norm, when an employee perceives that the organization is not adequately compensate them through a fair reward system, they will feel undervalued and unappreciated, and express low commitment by adopting the QQ behavior which is described by employees who perform their duties without putting in extra effort (Atalay and Dağistan, 2023).

Perceived Work Overload

It is acknowledged through research that the degree of work exhaustion experienced by an individual is associated with their perception of work overload and serves as a predictor of their intention to leave their current position (Joseph et al., 2007; Moore, 2000; Sattler et al., 2010). Work overload arises when employees are burdened with an increased number of responsibilities than they can effectively manage within the constraints of time, resources, or abilities (Odogwu, 2021). Consequently, employees must deal with the demand to achieve higher levels of productivity (Ayyagari et al., 2021; Tu et al., 2005) resulting in them working additional hours in order to manage the workload (Saeed et al., 2016). The beneficial relationships established through social exchange of interactions may be impeded by an employee's perception of the growing workload. SET posits that for an exchange to occur, both parties must be in possession of valuable items that the other desires, and both parties must mutually agree on the what amounts of the transaction (Lawler, 2001). Moreover, Keenan and McBain (1978) found that employees who frequently experience stress and overload in the work environment may face undesirable consequences which could lead to decrease in employee satisfaction and well-being (Bliese and Castro, 2000). Thus, QQ expressed as minimizing work tempo can be seen as a method of an employee to cope with intense stress and prioritize work-life balance as well as their well-being (Hamouche et al., 2023).

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to an employee's overall perception that an organization appreciates their efforts and prioritizes their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Moreover, POS signifies the degree to which employees consider their employer to be supportive, considerate, and appreciative (Lamm et al., 2014). Organizational support has a crucial role as an external source of motivation for employees, helping them recover emotionally while performing duties that are challenging (Kurtessis et al., 2015) by enhancing their ability to adjust to the organizational environment (Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019). Hence, POS triggers a social exchange process where employees feel compelled to assist the business in achieving its goals and objectives, anticipating that their increased efforts on behalf of the organization will result in greater rewards (Tsarenko et al., 2018). Previous research has come to the consensus that POS enhances employees' commitment and perception of responsibility towards the organization (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Macey and Schneider, 2008). Thus, employees who possess a high POS ought to exert more effort in tasks associated with their jobs, leading to improved performance both within their designated roles and in their extra role performance, which are advantageous to the organization (Kurtessis et al., 2015). Consequently, we suggest that lack of POS could lead to negative employee behaviors, with QQ being among them, by affecting the balance of social exchange between the employee and the organization.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study follows the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design proposed by Tranfield et al. (2003) which has been effectively utilized in a number of literature review papers (Colicchia and Strozzi, 2012; Delbufalo, 2012; Dimitrantzou et al. 2019; Kamal and Irani, 2014; Seuring and Gold, 2012). In contrast to traditional narrative reviews, systematic reviews use a thorough literature search of published and unpublished studies and provide an audit trail of the decisions, procedures, and conclusions of the reviewers. This means that systematic reviews use a reproducible, scientific, and transparent process, or in other words, detailed technology, to minimize bias. (Cook, Mulrow and Haynes, 1997)

According to Khan et al. (2003), a review can be classified as systematic if it follows a well-defined question, finds pertinent studies, evaluates the quality of the studies, and employs a clear methodology to synthesize the evidence. Furthermore, by implementing the systematic review's guiding principles, bias (or systematic errors) can be limited, chance effects can be minimized, the credibility and authority of the resulting evidence can be increased, and the results will be more reliable for inference and decision-making (Becheikh et al., 2006). By adopting the abovementioned SLR design as our research methodology, we will attempt to review all the empirical and conceptual publications conducted so far in the field of QQ. As far as we are aware, this is the first SLR attempt in the QQ domain.

The systematic review conducted in this paper follows the three-stage approach defined by Tranfield et al. (2003):

Stage I: Planning the review.

Stage II: Conducting the review.

Stage III: Reporting and dissemination.

Stage I: Planning the review

Prior to beginning the review a review panel, consisting of the authors of this paper, was formed. An iterative process of definition, clarification, and refinement was used in the early phases of the systematic review (Clarke and Oxman, 2001). That led to the formulation of the review protocol which specifies the criteria for including and excluding studies in the review, the population (or sample) that the study is focused on, the search strategy for finding pertinent studies, and the specific questions the study addresses (Davies and Crombie, 1998). Moreover, the panel attempted to direct the process through regular meetings in order to resolve any disputed over the inclusion and exclusion of the studies (Tranfield et al., 2003).

In the scope of avoiding any missed literature, a variety of online databases was used. More specifically, the academic databases searched were: Emerald, Elsevier, PubMed, Scopus, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis and Wiley because of the significant proportion of their published material. In order to enhance the high quality of this study, only peer-reviewed publications were considered (David and Han, 2004), by selecting the option “Article” from the Article Type filter. Consequently, different types of documents such as trade publications, books or book chapter, press articles and conference papers etc. were excluded. The peer review process serves as a quality indicator, evaluating the conceptual and methodological rigor of a study (Hohenstein et al., 2015). The time frame period of the researched studies was formulated between the year 2022 and 2024, since QQ was first appeared in the academic scope during the summer of 2022. The articles selected were in the English language, excluding published articles in any other language. An additional parameter considered in the selection of the articles was the full access through our home institution.

Stage II: Conducting the review

Due to the relevantly new appearance of the QQ phenomenon and the not extensive literature, one of our major concerns was the attention to detail (Mulrow, 1994). In conducting the review, Delbufalo’s (2012) four-stage database-searching was partially adopted. During the first stage, the keywords identified and were entered into the chosen databases. In order to avoid artificially limiting the results while still providing limitations to prevent undesirable findings (Hollmann et al., 2015), the following keywords were used for the selection of the articles: “Quiet Quitting”, “Quiet Quitter” and “QQ”. The search string was amended using operators AND/OR and the inclusion criteria abovementioned. This process resulted in 33 articles, of which 31 left as the excluded one’s didn’t comply with the criteria of open access. In the second stage, the titles and abstracts of the articles were analyzed and at the end of this process, 30 articles remained as relevant. Due to the less extensive number of the remaining articles stages three and four were combined and the authors decided to read all the articles (Roeser and Kern, 2015), in order to increase the selection reliability. Any disagreements or doubts were resolved by focusing on the aspects contained within the review scope. From this process one article was excluded from the analysis as it was outside the scope of this review. Conclusively, this resulted in a sample of 29 articles which provided the basis for further analysis.

Then, data extraction from the 29 selected articles, followed. This latter analysis was conducted descriptively using an excel spread sheet, which was created to help the authors organize and extract general information from the sample articles, including the title of the article, authors, publisher and journal, article type (conceptual study, literature review, viewpoint paper, survey), time horizon of the research (cross-sectional, longitudinal), data collection method used (archive, questionnaire, mixed, secondary data), year of publication, geographical location of the research sample, type of industry focused upon in the research and the authors' future research suggestions.

Stage III: Reporting and dissemination

During this last stage, a full (rough-cut and detailed) 'descriptive analysis' of the field will be provided (Tranfield et al., 2003). By using the excel spread sheet created in stage II, the 'current map' of the sample articles developed (Hu et al., 2015).

4. Results

The results of the SLR are presented below in order to outline the distinctive features of QQ articles and offer a comprehensive understanding of the future research agenda in this domain.

Publisher Journal

In terms of publishers, the platform PubMed have published 31.03% (9 articles) of the articles included in the sample, followed by Emerald (24.13%, 7 articles), Taylor & Francis (13.79%, 4 articles), Scopus (13.79%, 4 articles), SpringerLink (10.34%, 3 articles) and lastly, Elsevier and Wiley with 3.44% (1 article) respectively (Table I). The example articles demonstrate the interdisciplinary character of this field by being published in a wide variety of journals. More precisely, within the specified period, papers about QQ have been published in 27 distinct journals. Out of the 27 journals, only the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* and *Healthcare* were found to have published 2 articles, with the remaining journals having a frequency of 1 published article. All the journals and their frequencies with percentages are presented in Table I.

Publisher/Database and Journals	Number of articles	Percent
<i>PubMed</i>	9	0.3103
Plastic Surgery	1	0.0344
Nursing Management	1	0.0344
AIMS Public Health	1	0.0344
Healthcare	2	0.0689
Holistic Nursing Practice	1	0.0344
Journal of Global Health	1	0.0344
BMJ Journal	1	0.0344
Nursing Reports	1	0.0344
<i>Emerald</i>	7	0.2413
Personnel Review	1	0.0344
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	2	0.0689
Journal of Knowledge Management	1	0.0344

International Journal of Organizational Analysis	1	0.0344
International Journal of Conflict Management	1	0.0344
Development and Learning in Organizations	1	0.0344
<i>Taylor & Francis</i>	4	0.1379
Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management	1	0.0344
The Service Industries Journal	1	0.0344
Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health	1	0.0344
Communication Education	1	0.0344
<i>Scopus</i>	4	0.1379
Social Work	1	0.0344
Asian Journal of Business Research	1	0.0344
WSEAS Transactions on Computer Research	1	0.0344
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review	1	0.0344
<i>SpringerLink</i>	3	0.1034
Humanities and Social Sciences Communications	1	0.0344
Scientific Reports	1	0.0344
Nature	1	0.0344
<i>Elsevier</i>	1	0.0344
International Journal of Hospitality Management	1	0.0344
<i>Wiley</i>	1	0.0344
International Nursing Review	1	0.0344

Table I.
Distribution of
articles by
publishers and
journals

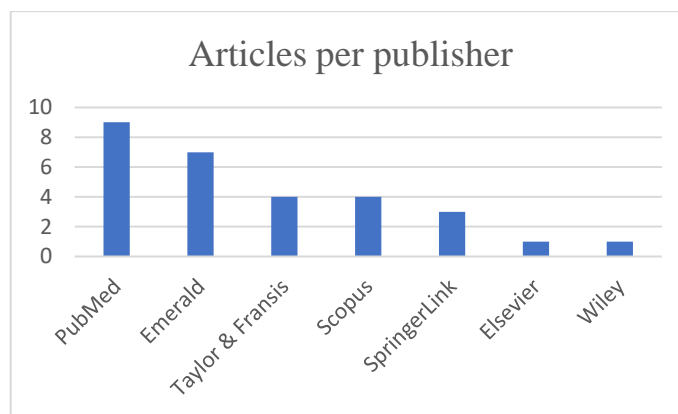


Figure 1.
Articles per
publisher

Article type

In order to determine the type of publication, the sample articles were categorized into five distinct categories: research paper, case study, viewpoint, conceptual paper and literature review. This categorization was based on the classification system adopted by Dwivedi and Mustafee (2009) and Kamal and Irani (2014). The data provided in Table II demonstrate that a vast majority of the publications are “surveys” which accounts for 44.82 percent (13 articles) of the sample articles and “viewpoint” papers which accounts for 34.48 percent (10 articles). Additionally, a smaller number of articles are based on the “literature review” approach (4 articles, 13.79 percent) and even fewer are conceptual papers (2 articles, 6.89 percent).

Based on the data presented, it is evident that the survey methodology is the most frequently used, far surpassing other methodologies. Although initially suitable for descriptive investigations, the approach is currently being utilized for the purpose of

theory development and hypothesis testing (Pavlia et al., 2007). Surveys can achieve significant levels of external validity, but they are prone to issues like worldly richness, lack of control, and low internal validity (Yin, 2002). Qualitative methods, such as case studies and field studies, enable investigators to preserve the holistic and significant aspects of real-life occurrences, whereas experiments provide greater control and internal validity (Patton, 2002). Therefore, it can be concluded that case studies are required in the exploration of the QQ concept and the lack of them is quite disheartening.

Moreover, it is evident from the above that 16 of the sample articles (55.17 percent) are theoretical and the remaining 13 articles (44.82 percent) are empirical (surveys). However, the theoretical category is consisted mostly of “viewpoint” papers and lacks “conceptual” and “literature review” papers.

Types of articles	Frequency	Percent
Survey	13	0.4482
Case study	0	0
Viewpoint	10	0.3448
Conceptual paper	2	0.0689
Literature review	4	0.1379

Table II.
Articles per
article type

Time horizon

In this subsection, the time horizon of the sample articles is outlined. Based on Malhotra and Grover (1998) and Dangayach and Deshmukh (2001), in cross-sectional studies, the data collection is achieved through surveys but the information is obtained at one point in time only, while in longitudinal studies, the sample data are collected at two or more points over a period of time. From the survey articles included, only 7.70 percent (1 article) used longitudinal data, whereas the majority of the surveys were found to utilize cross-sectional data with a percentage of 92.30 (12 articles).

Data collection method

The data collection methods used by researchers in the selected 29 papers were coded under four different categories, namely, archive, questionnaire, secondary data and mixed method. The findings suggest that the archive approach was the most commonly used method for data collection (13 articles, 44.82 percent). Additionally, an important number of researchers have utilized the questionnaire method, as indicated by 9 articles, accounting for 31.03 percent. However, a few studies used more than one method for data collection (4 articles, 13.79 percent), while the remaining articles used the secondary data method (3 articles, 10.34 percent).

Year of publication

According to our findings, the vast majority of the sample articles (75.86%) have been published in 2023. Due to the recent appearance of the QQ concept, it is hard to

identify a trend over time. Nevertheless, we anticipate to see more publications related to the topic of QQ over the years if we consider the limited information available up to this point combined with the impressive numbers of employees adopting QQ (Gallup,2022) as well as the call for [Special Issues](#) related to QQ.

Geographic research area

An essential aspect of a SLR is the categorization of the sample articles by country, which allows for a comprehensive understanding of the global research landscape (Goyal et al., 2013; Fatma and Rahman, 2015). Therefore, the current paper focuses on the examination of the geographical region in which each study was carried out. The data plainly indicates that QQ has been researched in several continents and countries.

According to the research findings the highest concentration of surveys is found in Asia and Europe (53.85 percent and 38.45 percent, respectively) followed by North America (7.7 percent) where there was only one study. It is worth noting that there was a dearth of QQ research in South America and Africa.

Moreover, all the surveys in the sample papers have been conducted in a single country, indicating the absence of cross-national or multinational studies regarding the concept of QQ. To be more precise, most of the research about QQ took place in Greece (5 articles), followed by China (3 articles) and India (2 articles). There was only 1 article found in each of the following countries: Indonesia, the UAE and the USA (Figure 2).

Industry sector

It is important to determine the breadth of industries from which the data is gathered. Articles that contain data from multiple industries are referred to as "Multiples." According to the available literature, the concept of QQ is not only restricted to one type of industry but it is applicable to almost all the industries. In order to demonstrate the industry sectors of the companies participating in the surveys included in the sample articles three distinct categories of sectors were identified, namely, service, manufacturing and multiple sectors. The classification of publications based on the industry sector is quite similar to the method employed by Jasti and Kodali (2014) and Sreedharan and Raju (2016).

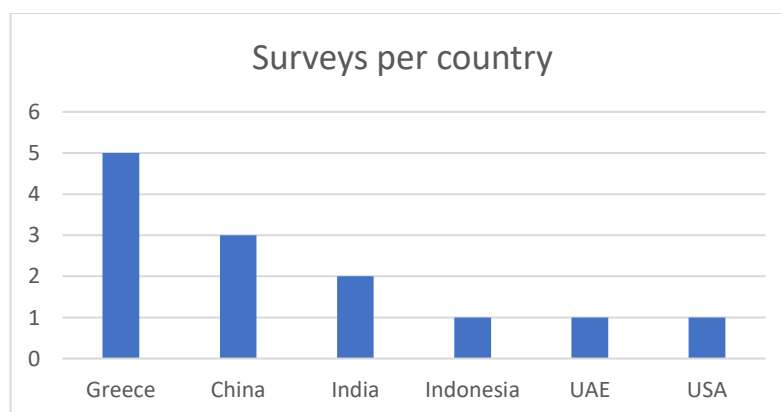


Figure 2.
Surveys per country

Based on the data presented in Figure 3, the researchers have shown a preference for studying the QQ concept in the service sector (10 articles, 76.92 percent). More specifically, the sub-sectors consist this category are the healthcare sector (5 articles, 38.46 percent), the education sector (4 articles, 30.76 percent) and the tourism & hospitality sector (1 article, 7.69 percent). In the category of the manufacturing industry (1 article, 7.69 percent), the data used obtained from information communication technology and electronics (ICTE) industry. The “multiple sector” category (1 article, 7.69 percent) refers to those articles in which data were collected from more than one sector. And, finally, one article (7.69 percent) did not specifically mention the sector name.

Conclusively, a large proportion of the surveys described in the sample articles (69.25 percent) is based on a research sample bigger than 500 units, while the rest of them (30.75 percent) are based on a research sample which is smaller between 200 and 400 units.

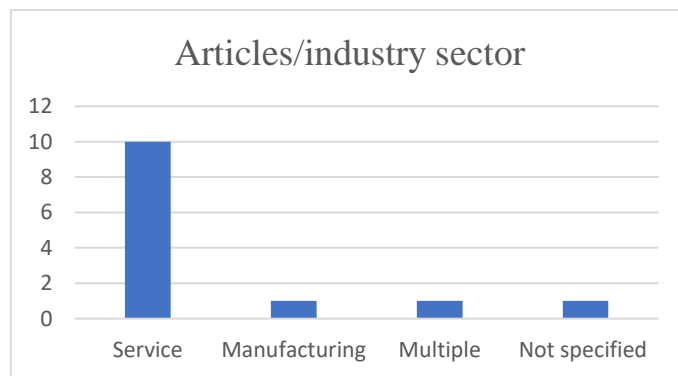


Figure 3.
Articles per
industry sector

5. Conclusions

Despite the fact that QQ is a new concept, for both academics and practitioners, its research involves a variety of academic journals that focus on different issues. The present SLR includes 29 articles published in 27 distinct journals, indicating the widespread coverage of the QQ topic across several fields and disciplines, including management, education, healthcare, and social services. However, only 2 journals published more QQ articles than others, namely, the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* and the *Healthcare* journal. Furthermore, Emerald and Taylor & Francis are the main academic publishers which are host to journals publishing QQ articles, while PubMed and Scopus are the main academic resources, in terms of databases, of QQ articles. Thus, authors wishing to conduct future literature review studies can base them firstly on these journals and databases.

The results of the current study reveal that the survey is the predominant research method used in the QQ field, whereas the case study has not been employed by any researcher so far. The next most popular method is the viewpoint article, while there is a considerable dearth amount of conceptual and literature review papers. This suggests that the sample QQ articles have a substantially empirical nature, as opposed

to being primarily theoretical. In simpler terms, the study of QQ is mostly focus on empirical research. This aligns with the research conducted by Fraser et al. (2015), which emphasized the significance of empirical data for practitioners, since such data enables the evaluation of theoretical models in real-world settings. In order to address the gap that exists between empirical and theoretical studies on QQ, it is recommended that future research includes case studies alongside conceptual and literature review investigations. This will contribute to a more thorough and comprehensive understanding of QQ.

Considering the time horizon of the sample publications, it appears that the researchers are restricting their studies to cross-sectional data instead of longitudinal data collection to investigate the QQ concept. The prevalence of cross-sectional studies is justified due to the fact that they are less time and cost consuming studies than longitudinal studies (Rindfleisch et al., 2008). Moreover, longitudinal data, due to its extended research time span, offers better analysis of a system compared to cross-sectional data studies. Hence, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the QQ concept, researchers must prioritize the longitudinal data collection approach for future research accordingly, as substantial relationships between variables that would be challenging to identify during short time periods can be determined diachronically (Bhasin and Burcher, 2006).

Regarding the data collection methods, the predominant approach adopted by the researchers are archives and questionnaires. Additional data collection methods, such as outside observation and participant observation, are less prevalent. More specifically, the participant observation method is a laborious and challenging process for data collection (Bryman, 2004), yet it yields conclusive findings for researchers. Given these constraints, the majority of researchers did not choose to gather data using the participant observation method, despite its ability to provide efficient and valuable conclusions. The benefits of participant observations appear to outweigh their limitations, thereby warranting their promotion is significant for future research. Furthermore, the number of papers that applied several methods to gather information was much lower compared to articles that used only one method. Thus, future research should prioritize the use of different data collection methods to guarantee the reliability and accuracy of findings.

Considering the fact that QQ is a new concept in the academic world, the time span of its study is just under three years (2022-present). Given this, it is quite difficult to identify a trend over time regarding the published articles, although the number of publications has increased almost tenfold during 2023, indicating a considerable increase with regards to the interest of researchers in QQ issues.

It is noticeable that empirical research in QQ is predominantly performed in Asia and Europe, with a comparatively low number of research articles in other continents. Additionally, the vast majority of the studies have focused on developed countries such as Greece. Regarding developing countries China and India, among others, have contributed significantly in the research of the QQ phenomenon. Due to the fact that a great plethora of multinational companies are establishing their facilities in developing and underdeveloped countries to decrease labor cost, expand their product

markets and access low-cost materials (Sachan and Datta, 2005), it is of great importance that further research should focus on these countries as well. Furthermore, this study proposes that researchers should investigate the influence of country-specific contextual elements (e.g. culture, societal stability, government regulations etc.) in the implementation of QQ.

As far as the industry analysis of the empirical articles is concerned, the concept of QQ is applicable to multiple industries and not restricted to only one type. According to the present study, most of the QQ surveys are addressing issues from the service sector like healthcare, education and tourism and hospitality. QQ concept applied to other sectors like manufacturing, infrastructure, agriculture, etc., is hardly found in the present study, so there is a need to focus on the aforementioned sectors in future research. Conclusively, further research should encompass several industry subsectors to obtain more profound insights into the implementation of QQ in specific subsectors and observe if there are any statistically significant variations in QQ across different subsectors within the same sector.

Taking into consideration only seven academic publishers/databases; excluding books, online sites and gray literature; excluding articles due to lack of free access while including only English-language publications, are the main limitations of the present SLR. Based on these limitations, respective future literature review studies can be designed.

6. Future Research Suggestions

The future research suggestions identified in the field of QQ are worth discussing. Despite the fact that QQ is a newly formed concept, its future research plans cover a range of diverse contents. More specifically, one of the major themes revealed is related with the determination of the causes and implications of QQ (Anand and Doll, 2023; Atalay and Dağistan, 2023; Liu-Lastres et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Serenko, 2023;) by recognizing the factors associated with this phenomenon such as organizational commitment behavior, work withdrawal, cynicism and employee silence (Hamouche et al., 2023), employee well-being, commitment, motivation and job satisfaction (Atalay and Dağistan, 2023), burnout, counterproductive work performance and disengagement (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023), work-life balance, employment flexibility, level of employee engagement, opportunities for career progression, perceived employee value, and feelings of empowerment or autonomy (Suhendar et al., 2023), and finally, other aspects of the 'being', such as beliefs, emotions, mental imagery, and life design to support the employee-organization connection (Formica and Sfodera, 2022).

Furthermore, researchers suggest the utilization of various theories in the exploration of QQ such as, the conservation of resources theory and expectancy theory (Anand and Doll, 2023), as well as, the theories of systems approach and service quality, and institutional theory (Hamouche et al., 2023). In addition, the adoption of a multilevel approach is proposed in order to place QQ across individual and organizational levels of analysis (Hamouche et al., 2023; Galanis et al., 2023b; Kachhap and Singh, 2024; Srivastava et al., 2023) and also between dyadic and group elements (Anand and Doll, 2023) which will explore the existence of any spillover effects across levels. Finally,

comparative research is necessary to understand variations in QQ among generations (Hamouche et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2023) and cultural differences (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023, Atalay and Dağistan, 2023, Galanis et al., 2023b).

As far as the future research plans are concerned, other themes emerged in this SLR are related with the type of industries examined and the geographic area of the surveys. Researchers suggest the broadening of the sample to include employees from diverse industries such as universities (Xueyun et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2024), medicine and manufacturing (Lu et al., 2023), healthcare (Galanis et al., 2023; Galanis et al., 2023a; Galanis et al., 2023b; Kang et al., 2023), digital companies, hospitality (Hamouche et al., 2023; Wu and Wei, 2024) and the banking sector (Suhendar et al., 2023). Additionally, in order to improve the generalizability of the results, future studies should expand the sample to include employees from diverse countries (Anand and Doll, 2023; Galanis et al., 2023a; Karrani et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; Wu and Wei, 2024). Conclusively, the use of longitudinal data which will aid in the examination of QQ progress over time and its lasting effects on individuals and organizations is considered critical for future research (Galanis et al., 2023; Galanis et al., 2023a; Galanis et al., 2023b; Hamouche et al., 2023; Karrani et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2023; Srivastava et al., 2023; Xueyun et al., 2023; Kachhap and Singh, 2024;).

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