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# Quiet Quitting reason and behavior scale design and development process

- Ismet Çelebi<sup>a,\*</sup>, Emrah Gökkaya<sup>b,1</sup>, Adeviye Çopur<sup>c,2</sup> and Elçin Balci<sup>d,3</sup>
- <sup>a</sup>Department of Paramedic, Gazi University, Vocational School of Health Services, Ankara, Türkiye
- <sup>b</sup>Civil Defense and Firefighting Department, Kayseri University Bünyan Vocational School, Kayseri, Türkiye
- <sup>c</sup>Department of Paramedic, Lect. Kayseri University, Vocational School of Health Services, Kayseri, Türkiye <sup>d</sup>Department of Public Health Kayseri, Faculty of Medical, Dr. Erciyes University, Kayseri, Türkiye
- Received 29 November 2023 Accepted 3 July 2024

#### 10 Abstract.

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BACKGROUND: The concept of "Quiet Quitting", which might be considered new in the literature, is used to describe a passive and silent giving up.

OBJECTIVE: The aim of this study is to develop a scale to evaluate both the causes and consequences of "quiet quitting" which is believed to be increasing for various reasons in our country as well as in the world.

**METHOD:** Five-stage scale development method which was presented by Cohen and Swerdik was used in the process of developing the Quiet Quitting Reason and Behavior Scale (QQRBS). First, the conceptual structure of the scale was determined. In the second stage, the scale was structured. Structuring the scale is deciding on the scale type and scaling technique. The third stage is the first application of the scale. After the scale was applied, factor analysis, internal consistency assessment and validity studies were carried out in the item analysis section, which is the fourth stage. The fifth stage is the second application stage of the scale and at this stage, the scale was reviewed by test-retest and an application guideline was prepared.

**RESULTS:** Cronbach's alpha value of draft items is 0.87, quiet quitting behavior sub-dimension Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.76 and reasons for quiet quitting Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.820. It was decided to keep the remaining 35 items after EFA analysis because the corrected correlation numbers of the items were >0.30. This study explains the design and development process of the QQRBS in Turkish society.

**CONCLUSION:** According to this developed scale, as the scale mean score of the total and sub-dimensions increases, the tendency to quiet quitting increases.

Keywords: Worker, resignation, validity, reliability, unemployment, quiet quitting

## 1. Introduction

The concept of "Quiet Quitting", which might be considered new in the literature, is used to describe a passive and silent giving up [1, 2]. This concept is

also expressed with words such as "silent giving up, silent abandonment, quiet quitting". Quiet quitting is accepted as one of the behavioral changes which became evident in working life during the pandemic period. It is assumed that it developed as a kind of reaction to the culture of constant hustle and effort to promote in the pre-pandemic world. Here, employees do not actually leave their jobs, but they do not fulfill the duties in their job descriptions with their previous desires. They consciously stay away from all kinds of work-related activities such as working overtime or doing work which they had previously

<sup>\*</sup>Address for correspondence: Ismet Çelebi (Ph.D), Gazi University, Vocational School of Health Services, Gölbaşi Campuss Ankara, Türkiye. Tel.: +905522300112; E-mail: ismetcelebi@gazi.edu.tr. ORCID: 0000-0002-6494-2908

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>ORCID: 0000-0002-1373-3188.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>ORCID: 0000-0002-6805-2347.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>ORCID: 0000-0003-3203-198X.

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undertaken voluntarily, receiving phone calls from the workplace outside of working hours, or answering e-mails [1]. They prioritize their private lives which they think they previously neglected. Their enthusiasm and efforts to advance in their careers are less than before [3]. There are also those who argue that there is no ill intention towards the institution or company behind this distancing attitude of employees, and that the main purpose is an effort to protect their own mental health by determining work boundaries [4]. Quiet Quitting is, at its core, not quitting your job but quitting the idea and mindset that work has to dominate your entire life. This implies a low investment in business activities and indicates limited commitment of employees to perform the tasks assigned to them and forego any other duties not specified in their job descriptions [5].

There may be many reasons for quiet quitting. For reasons such as employers not valuing their employees or not showing it, or not appreciating their achievements enough, employees' motivation decreases and they become more reluctant than employees who are appreciated.

and perform higher quality work on behalf of the organization. The first group, which is not appreciated, is the group that is a stronger candidate for quiet quitting, and employees associate the reason for this situation with the attitude and behavior of the employer [6, 7]. If employers and managers can notice such behavioral changes in their employees in advance, they may have the chance to take precautions before employees experience quiet quitting or burnout. Otherwise, it will become increasingly difficult to achieve fruitful results with the employees whose productivity and motivation are low. The new trend of "silent resignation" has been embraced in many countries, especially among young workers [8]. The effects of silent resignation can particularly impact individuals working within health care. It can reduce nurses' efforts and creativity in their work, hinder their professional development - which is a necessary prerequisite for organizational growth and trigger a toxic organizational culture, thereby negatively affecting the quality of healthcare services [2, 8].

Since Quiet Quitting was a new concept, there was a very limited literature available [1, 2, 5, 8]. However, Galanis and his colleagues developed a scale on this subject. Galanis and his colleagues focused specifically on three basic components in the scale they developed. These were (a) disengagement, as it is considered emotional detachment from work-related

concerns and thoughts; (b) lack of motivation, and (c) lack of initiative [9]. However, we think that it would be more useful for a scale related to Quiet Quitting to evaluate both the causes and consequences of Quiet Quitting.

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The aim of this study is to develop a scale that can reveal the existence of the concept of "quiet quitting Reason and Behavior" which is believed to be increasing for various reasons in our country as well as in the world. By applying this developed scale in various business lines, it is aimed to eliminate the negativities by revealing the existing reasons for quiet quitting and to give ideas to employers to ensure the mental health and job satisfaction of employees before they reach the point of burnout.

# 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Scale development stages

The scale development method presented by Cohen and Swerdik (2009) was used in the process of developing the Quiet Quitting Reason and Behavior Scale (OORBS). First, the conceptual structure of the scale was determined. In other words, it is stated what the scale measures and what the purpose of the scale is. In the second stage, the scale was structured. Structuring the scale is deciding on the scale type (classification, ranking, range and ratio) and scaling technique. The items were written according to the determined scale type and scaling technique. The third stage is the first application of the scale. After the scale was applied, factor analysis, internal consistency and validity studies were carried out in the item analysis section, which is the fourth stage. The fifth stage is the second application stage of the scale and at this stage, the scale was reviewed by test-retest and an application guideline was prepared [10].

#### 2.2. Creating the item pool – Conceptual validity

In this context, the relevant literature was scanned in detail to prepare the item pool. As a result of this process, an item pool consisting of a total of 43 questions emerged. Care was taken to ensure that the items should measure only one feature, and attempts were made to write items that could be understood by everyone in the same way. While writing the items, care was taken to measure only one feature in each item and to be understandable at the primary education level. Additionally, an attempt was made to

prevent random marking by writing reverse-scored items. After the item pool was created, it was decided that the measurement method of the scale would be Likert type. "The score which is obtained from a scale suitable for Likert type or rating sums technique generally consists of the sum of the weights that are given to the reactions to the items within its scope, or in technical words, the sum of the scores" [15]. QQRBS items are rated according to the Likert type as "Never (1)", "Rarely (2)", "Occasionally (3)", "Usually (4)" and "Always (5)".

## 2.3. Content validity – expert consultation

Content validity is an indicator of whether the items that make up the test are sufficient in quantity and quality to measure the desired feature [16]. For this reason, expert opinion was sought to ensure the content validity of the scale. All items were collected in an item evaluation form and evaluated by five academicians who are experts in the fields of public health, psychology, nursing, human resources and management.

The item evaluation form was prepared according to the triple rating scale as "Unnecessary (1)", "Must be corrected (2)", "Necessary (3)" and arranged in accordance with the scoring of each item. In addition, experts were asked to fill in each item, if necessary, by leaving a blank under each item so that they could express their additional opinions on the subject. Changes were made to the items in line with the feedback of the experts and it was concluded that the scale was able to represent the scope. After expert opinion, a total of 50 statements were included in the item pool.

## 2.4. Language validity

Before the pilot study of the draft items, a linguist evaluated and edited the items for their suitability to semantic and grammatical rules. In the pilot study, the feedback about the design, clarity and content of the survey was received from the participants. In order to determine the level of understandability of the draft items, 10 workers/public officials working in any field were asked to read the scale items and explain what they understood from each item. As a result of the answers given, no item changes were required. Moreover, since the research was conducted in Turkish, all items were translated and back-translated in order to accurately present the items in the scale in English for this article.

## 2.5. Data collection form

The data collection form, which consists of two parts, was collected via Google Forms. In the first part, socio-demographic characteristics of the participants such as age, gender, and the institution they work for (Private/Public) were included, and in the second part, the item pool that was created about quiet quitting was included.

#### 2.6. Procedure

In scale development research, when determining the sample, the rule of having people at least five times more than the number of items in the scale was taken into account [10]. A total of 513 people who were over 18 years old and working in any job (Private/Public) were included in the study. A total of 507 data forms were included in the analysis because there was missing information in six forms. In order to conduct a test-retest analysis in the study, the same survey was re-administered to 158 people who agreed to participate in the second study under the same conditions between two and three weeks. Data collection was carried out using the snowball method. First, participants reached out to people they knew who would be suitable for this study (they had to be over 18 years of age, working in Ankara and working in the private sector or public sector). Potential participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the deadline for responding to the data collection form. At the same time, they were told that they could stop responding to the data collection form whenever they wanted and that this situation would not have any consequences. In this way, a total of 16 people were contacted. Participants who agreed to participate in the research were asked to fill out the online survey form created with Google Forms. Then, they were asked if they knew anyone with similar characteristics, and the data collection process continued in this way.

# 2.7. Construct validity

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to examine the construct validity of the scale which was developed within the scope of the research. EFA is to define the underlying dimensions of a field that was evaluated with a specific measurement tool [16]. In this context, the factors of the scale which was desired to be developed were tried to be revealed with EFA. EFA was carried out on the data that were obtained from study group 1.

#### 2.8. Analysis

SPSS 22.0 statistical package program (IBM; Armonk, New York USA) was used in the analyses. Analyses related to the study are grouped under two headings.

1-) Validity analysis: Content Validity Ratios (CVR), Content Validity Index (CVI), normality test and Explanatory Factor Analyzes (EFA) were performed within the scope of validity analysis of the draft quiet quitting items. With the Lawshe technique, improvements were made on the items and CVR and CVI analyses were made in line with the feedback from six experts. In deciding to keep the items in the draft survey, the CVR criterion  $\geq 0.58$  and the CVI criterion > 0.71 were taken in a group of six experts, and these were calculated separately for each dimension [17]. Since the skewness and kurtosis values of each item were within  $\pm 2.0$ , it was considered to be normally distributed [18].

Since the study consisted of different components, EFA analysis was conducted to reveal the structures of variables whose structure is not fully known but whose existence is obvious [19]. In the research, two separate EFA studies were conducted in the areas of quiet quitting reasons and quiet quitting behaviors.

Factor loading values of 0.30 and above were used in this study. In order to prevent the factor loadings of two items from being considered overlapping, the difference between them was taken as at least 0.15 [19]. Principal Components Analysis was used to reveal the factors related to quiet quitting. In determining the number of factors emerging at the end of the analysis, the eigenvalue was taken as 1 or above. Since the factor loading value of 10 of the 30 statements regarding quiet quitting behavior was below 0.30, they were removed from the item pool and re-analyzed. Likewise, in the reasons for quiet quitting section, 5 items with factor loading values lower than 0.30 were removed and the analysis was repeated. Since the quiet quitting reasons and behaviors are transitive in the study, the OBLIQUE rotation process was preferred. For the suitability of the sample for factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was taken as >0.5, Bartlett Test as p < 0.05, and Anti-Image Correlation Matrix value as >0.5 [19]. The communality value, which expresses the variance

that a variable shares with other variables in the analysis, was taken as >0.500 to obtain better results [19].

2-) Reliability analyses: Within the scope of the reliability analysis of the scale, Test Re-test (p < 0.05), Interaclass Correlation Coefficient (p < 0.05), Item Analysis, Cronbach's Alpha, Split Half Reliability (Spearman-Brown), Additive (Tukey's Additivity Test) (p < 0.05), Response Bias (Hotelling's T-squared) (p < 0.05), Floor and Ceiling Effect (<20%) tests were used [16]. In item analysis, Pearson Correlation coefficient was taken as  $\geq 0.25$  [17], Cronbach's Alpha value was  $\geq 0.80$  and corrected item total correlation coefficient was  $\geq 0.30$  [19].

#### 3. Results

## 3.1. Findings of the sample

The average age of the participants is  $32.15 \pm 8.09$ , the youngest age is 22 and the oldest is 51. 53.5% of the participants were male, 61.3% were university graduates, 56.4% were married and 69.2% were working in the public sector.

# 3.2. Validity findings

In item analyses, item and total score correlation coefficients of the draft 50 items were found to be positively significant between r = 0.351 and r = 0.718 (p < 0.001). Since the item and total correlation coefficients were >0.30 and significant, EFA analyzes were carried out.

In the EFA analysis of the quiet quitting behavior dimension of the draft items, the KMO value = 0.824was found to be sufficient and the Bartlett test was significant (p < 0.001). As stated in the method, since the factor loading values of the items (r < 0.30) were insufficient, the analyses were repeated twice and 10 items were removed. The rotated components table of the final analysis (Table 2) and a single-factor structure with an eigenvalue greater than 1 was reached in the total explained variance. The total variance of a single factor is 51.620%. In the EFA analysis of the draft items belonging to the quiet quitting reasons dimension, the KMO value = 0.829 was found to be sufficient and the Bartlett test was significant (p < 0.001). As stated in the method, since the factor loading values of the items (r < 0.30) were insufficient, the analyzes were repeated twice and five items

Table 1
Definition and topics of the two basic structures of QQRBS

Structures	Definition	Topics
Behaviours of Qu	iet Quitting (Çimen, Yilmaz, 2023)	
Emotional Stage	At this stage the employee is confused about what is happening to him/her and cannot come to a clear understanding of what to do next. An internal conflict occurs between the desire to stay and the decision to continue.	Staying silent in meetings, not contributing, not taking action, not taking initiative, standing in the background, not producing new ideas, not being involved in planning processes.
Mental Stage	In this phase, the employee experiences a mental detachment from his/her job and her work environment. Employees remain active contributors to their work but are no longer mentally committed to the hustle culture. There is a conscious effort to avoid work stress.	Frequently saying no to tasks expected of him/her, isolating himself/herself from the work environment, setting boundaries between himself/herself and the work environment, not leaving his/her room, taking work slowly.
Physiological Stage	Employees clearly convey their discomfort and the message that they do not want to continue working. Employees no longer hesitate to express that they are actively considering options outside the workplace.	Coming to work late, leaving work early, completing work late, being sick very often, taking medical reports frequently, making excuses for not coming to work, talking less with others, communicating less, appearing as "looking for a job" on your social media profile.
Reasons of quiet of Needs	quitting: (Formica & Sfodera, 2022)  The satisfaction of needs is considered an important determinant of individual functioning in life and is considered essential to achieving peak potential and maintaining growth, integrity, and health.  Additionally, meeting the needs of employees creates a sense of belonging and commitment.	Determining the needs of employees, the level of satisfaction in meeting the needs, reaching a high level of need satisfaction
Values	Employees show interest and curiosity in their values about what is important in life	Identifying personal values, determining person-organization value fit, harmonizing values and behaviors, and understanding and showing interest to the values of others.
Aims	Aims are a moral virtue that helps happiness and development of people. Employees who feel a sense of aim at work are more determined and committed than their colleagues who do not do that.	Lack of connection to the purpose of the organization, lack of professional satisfaction, and meaningfulness of the work

were removed. The rotated components table of the final analysis (Table 2) and a single-factor structure with an eigenvalue greater than 1 was reached in the total explained variance. The total variance explained by the four factors together is 55.018%. As a result of the validity analysis, 15 items out of 50 were removed and reliability analysis was carried out.

#### 3.3. Reliability findings

Test-retest was found to be significant in the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient calculation (r = 0.83, p < 0.001), which was conducted to reveal whether there was a relationship between the participants' (n = 158) first and second answers to all scale expressions. In another analysis conducted for the same purpose, Cronbach's alpha value was found to be high and significantly correlated in the Interaclass Correlation Coefficient calculation (Cronbach  $\alpha$  = 0.871, p < 0.001).

The Spearman-Brown test, which was used to determine the reliability of a scale in written tests

to avoid some of the drawbacks of applying the same test to the same group twice, was high with 0.913. This test was conducted on the first 50 items to determine whether the answers given to the statements were reliable before proceeding with the EFA analysis. Whether the participants' responses to the draft items were equal was evaluated with the Hotelling T2 test. As a result of the test, Hotelling's T-Square value was determined as T2 = 1615.176, p < 0.001, and it was determined that there was no response bias.

The floor and ceiling impact value percentages of the draft items were below 20% in all dimensions, and it was found that the answers given to the items were homogeneously distributed.

The Cronbach Alpha value of the draft items is quite high at 0.871. The Cronbach Alpha value of quiet quitting behavior is 0.763, the Cronbach Alpha value of quiet quitting reasons is 0.820. Since the corrected correlation numbers of the items were >0.30, it was decided to keep the remaining 35 items after the EFA analysis (Table 3)

Table 2
Distribution of EFA factor load values of the remaining 35 items in the scale

item no	Factor Load Values	
	Quiet	Quiet
	quitting	quitting
	behavior	reasons
17 I can fulfill the task assigned to me without any problems.	0.742	
29 I do not make any effort to achieve the goals of the institution I work for.	0.684	
43 I spend more time on social media than usual when I'm on duty	0.670	
44 I will not do any work outside my job description.	0.669	
9 I make more phone calls than usual when I'm on duty	0.667	
15 I come to work late	0.650	
38 I leave work early	0.615	
39 I am reluctant to attend workplace meetings.	0.612	
18 I do my job at the lowest level to avoid being fired.	0.597	
10 Even if I have any initiative regarding my work, I never use it.	0.594	
14 When I am sick, I do not make an effort to complete my unfinished work.	0.566	
47 I answer workplace calls in my free time/when I am off.	0.532	
6 I participate in teamwork at work.	0.526	
16 I only do what I do because I get paid.	0.513	
41 I postpone my work-related plans while spending time with my family.	0.479	
7 I remain silent even if I participate in meetings at work	0.450	
13 I generally do not communicate with anyone at work who is not related to my work.	0.442	
45 I make the job given to me wait until the last day.	-0.435	
5 I am not proud of the achievements of the institution I work for.	-0.388	
37 I do not communicate with my colleagues outside working hours	-0.379	
17 If my supervisor/supervisor/manager changes at work, I will probably be more committed to my job.		0.735
29 I think I have no chance of promotion in this institution.		0.702
43 There is no reward system at work		0.679
9 I don't have any reason to be attached to my job.		0.678
44 I think I work harder than other employees at work		0.662
15 I'm trying too hard to get annual leave from work		0.652
38 The salary I get at this job is insufficient		0.642
39 I have to work even outside working hours for my job		0.618
18 My boss never appreciates me		0.607
10 Work efficiency beyond my capacity is expected from me.		0.579
6 My colleagues who are less experienced than me are more valuable than me		0.548
14 The development of technology has reduced the importance of my job		0.548
41 Unqualified promotions are made in the workplace		0.529
47 I think I'm burning out at this job		0.522
16 I am not motivated enough in the organization I work for.		0.522

Table 3
Reliability values of draft items

Quietquitting scale dimensions	Number of Items	Item Total Correlation	Item Mean (SD)	Skewness/ Kurtosis	Cronbach Alfa
Total	35	0.087-0.402	2.81 (0.57)	0.152/0.563	0.871
Quiet quitting behavior	20	0.190-0.402	2.73 (0.54)	0.178/0.387	0.763
Quiet quitting reasons	15	0.189-0.434	2.94 (0.76)	0.111/-0.311	0.820

Silent resignation scale items were found to have additive properties according to Tukey's additive test results (p < 0.001).

## 4. Discussion

Quiet quitting, which expresses the limited commitment of employees to fulfill assigned duties and

abandon any other duties that are not specified in job descriptions, is snowballing all over the world [11]. In order to determine the extent of this growth, it has become a necessity to reveal the reasons for quiet quitting and what kind of behavior it turned into. In this way, the extent of silent resignation among ages, genders, professions and even among countries will be able to be measured. QQRBS, developed with this idea, has been confirmed to be a valid and reli-

able measurement tool suitable for Turkish culture. This scale can be applied to anyone working in any profession.

The newly developed measurement tool is required to fulfill two features: validity and reliability. Validity is the degree to which the scale accurately measures the desired feature without mixing it with other features [20]. To ensure the validity of the draft QQRBS, face validity was first assessed. Face validity is highly subjective and the least scientific of the validity types [20]. Accordingly, in the research, an item pool was created within the scope of the conceptual framework at the first stage for face validity, then peer evaluation was provided, then the scale was re-evaluated according to expert opinions and finally a pilot application was carried out. For peer evaluation, all items were collected in an item evaluation form and evaluated by five academicians who are experts in public health, psychology, nursing, human resources and management. While creating the conceptual framework during the development phase of the scale, two main focal points were determined. These are quiet quitting reasons and quiet quitting behaviors [1, 11]. However, the issue of quiet quitting specifically refers to the fields of public health and human resources science. In this regard, the opinions of experts with professional training background and experience in the field of public health and human resources science were consulted in the development of the measurement tool. Considering the feedback from experts and relevant analyses, a conceptual model regarding quiet quitting was matched to the purpose of the study by adhering to the original ideas. (The expressions in the item pool are paired as quiet quitting reasons and quiet quitting behaviors). Additionally, reversescored items were written to prevent random marking of participants.

In the first item pool, there were totally 43 statements regarding quiet quitting reasons and behaviors. At the end of the expert evaluation, the number of statements increased to 50, and as a result of the validity and reliability analysis of the item pool, 15 of the 50 statements were removed and 35 statements were reached. When the terms in the remaining expressions were examined, it was seen that no term was omitted and each term was included in an expression at least once. Therefore, it can be said that the developed scale covers all dimensions of quiet quitting.

In the development of the QQRBS, EFA was first conducted for construct validity. Principal Component Analysis was used as the factor extraction method in EFA. Before starting EFA, KMO coefficient and Bartlett Sphericity Test results were examined to determine whether the data set was suitable for factor analysis. The KMO value varies between 0–1, and in order for the data set to be considered suitable for factor analysis, the KMO coefficient has to be greater than 0.50. KMO value between 0.50–0.60 indicates 'bad', 0.61–0.70 indicates 'poor', 0.71–0.80 indicates 'medium', 0.81–0.90 indicates 'good' and above 0.90 indicates 'excellent' [19]. Within the scope of the research, the KMO value for quiet quitting reasons was found to be 0.83, and the KMO value for quiet quitting behaviors was 0.82, and it was concluded that the data set was at a "good" level for factor extraction.

In single-factor designs, 30% variance rate is considered to be sufficient [1]. For this reason, items with factor loading values less than 0.30 were respectively excluded from the analysis. A factor load value at least 0.30 was accepted as the criterion value for substance elimination within the scope of this research. The variance ratio explained from the single-factor structure was found to be 51.620% for the quiet quitting behavior items and 55.018% for the quiet quitting reasons items.

The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient which was calculated for both subscales reliability varies between 0.763–0.871. Tezbaşaran stated that in order for the measurement tool to have sufficient reliability, the reliability coefficient should be over 0.7000 [15]. Accordingly, it is possible to say that the measurement tool is sufficiently reliable. Similar results were obtained as a result of the scale developed by Galanis et al. [9].

# 5. Limitations

The strength of this study, in addition to previous similar scale development studies, is that it reveals the reasons for quiet quitting of the applied group and the behavioral changes that occur in line with these reasons. In this way, the reasons that cause quiet quitting will become more understandable and the necessary measures will be taken to eliminate these reasons. In addition, the quiet quitting dimension will be clearly revealed through the behavior of the employees. Finally, a connection can be established between causes and behaviors and preventive measures can be taken accordingly. There are some limitations in the design and development of QQRBS. First of all, since the scale was developed in Turkish, further validity

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and reliability studies should be carried out by taking different cultures into consideration. Secondly, this study did not check the criterion-related validity of the scale, that is, data were not collected simultaneously on the scale and other similar scales. Finally, the use of the snowball method during the data collection phase and the collection of data online is an important limitation of our study.

#### 6. Conclusion

This study describes the design and development process of the Quiet Quitting Reason and Behavior Scale in Turkish society. In the EFA analysis of the quiet quitting behavior dimension, the KMO value = 0.824 was found to be sufficient and the Bartlett test was significant (p < 0.001). The total variance of a single factor is 51.620%. In the EFA analysis of the the quiet quitting reasons dimension, the KMO value = 0.829 was found to be sufficient and the Bartlett test was significant (p < 0.001). The total variance of a single factor is 55.018%. Goals, scopes, and limitations are defined and explained with a detailed description of the steps in the design and development process of QQRBS for other communities that may use the tool. As a result, a valid and reliable scale consisting of 35 items (quiet quitting behaviors 20 items, quiet quitting reasons 15 items) was created. According to this developed scale, as the average score of the total and sub-dimensions of the scale increases, the tendency to quiet quitting increases. This scale is recommended to be applied in different communities and professions.

#### Ethichal approval

This study was approved by the ethics committee of Kayseri University (Date: 08.07.2023 & No: 65751).

# Informed consent

Before filling out the online data form, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participants who agreed to participate in the study accessed the data collection form by clicking on the relevant box.

#### Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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# Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

# **Funding**

Not applicable.

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