

## **The Impact of *Burnout* on *Quiet Quitting* : A Theoretical Analysis of Literature Studies**

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**Article History : Received: 13-06-2025**

**Accepted: 11-08-2025 Publication: 23-08-2025**

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**Abstract:** *The phenomenon of Quiet Quitting has gained prominence as a response to burnout caused by excessive workload and workplace stress in modern work environments. Burnout, characterized by physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion, negatively impacts employee productivity and well-being. From an Islamic perspective, principles such as tawazun (balance), justice, and the avoidance of israf (excess) offer valuable solutions to address these issues. This study employs a literature review and hermeneutic analysis of the Qur'an to examine the relationship between burnout and quiet quitting through religious lenses and the potential benefits of Islamic values in fostering a healthy and just workplace culture. The findings suggest that applying Islamic principles related to work boundaries and social justice can help prevent burnout and reduce tendencies toward quiet quitting, thereby enhancing overall productivity and worker well-being.*

**Abstrak:** *Fenomena quiet quitting semakin meningkat sebagai respons terhadap burnout yang disebabkan oleh tekanan dan beban kerja yang berlebihan di tempat kerja modern. Burnout, yang ditandai dengan kelelahan fisik, mental, dan emosional, berdampak negatif pada produktivitas dan kesejahteraan pekerja. Dari perspektif agama, khususnya dalam Islam, ada prinsip-prinsip seperti tawazun (keseimbangan), keadilan, dan menghindari israf (kerja berlebihan) yang dapat menjadi solusi penting dalam mengatasi masalah ini. Penelitian ini menggunakan tinjauan pustaka dan analisis hermeneutik Al-Qur'an untuk mengkaji hubungan antara burnout dan quiet quitting dari perspektif agama dan manfaat penerapan nilai-nilai Islam dalam membangun budaya kerja yang sehat dan adil. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan prinsip-prinsip Islam terkait batasan kerja dan keadilan sosial dapat membantu mencegah burnout dan mengurangi kecenderungan untuk terlibat dalam quiet quitting, sehingga meningkatkan produktivitas dan kesejahteraan pekerja secara keseluruhan.*

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**Keywords:** *Burnout, Quiet Quitting, Mental and Emotional Balance*

### **INTRODUCTION**

For years, we've often heard the phrase "hard work is the key to success." This notion has become so ingrained that many workers sacrifice rest time, even their personal lives, to pursue their careers. However, amidst increasingly intense work pressures, a new trend has emerged among younger workers, particularly Generation Z, called " *quiet quitting*" (Matondang and Ramadansyah 2024) . This term refers to a situation where employees continue to carry out their duties but without any involvement beyond the essentials. *Quiet quitting* is not only a sign of declining productivity but also reflects a

fundamental problem in the company's work culture (Syarifuddin 2025) . One of the main causes of this phenomenon is work exhaustion (*burnout*), which is caused by excessive workloads, high pressure, and a lack of support from management. When employees experience *burnout*, they tend to only complete their primary tasks without participating in additional initiatives or other creative activities.

The centrality of work in Islamic thought enabled early generations of Muslims to engage in extensive economic activity and pursue transcontinental trade with energy and determination. The perspective provided by Islam at that time differed from existing norms and even resembled contemporary discourse. The Qur'an commands Muslims to always strive to find available work whenever the opportunity arises (Suryani 2023) . In this regard, the Qur'an explains, "*He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth - all (as grace) from Him. Indeed, in this are signs for a people who give thought*" [Qs. AL-Jatsiyah: 13]. The Prophet Muhammad also preached that perfection in work is a religious obligation, stating, "*God blesses the worker who learns and perfects his profession .*" Likewise, the Prophet's companion, Ali ibn Abi Thalib, stated, "*Persevere in your actions with a noble goal in mind. Failure to perfect your work while you are certain of its reward is an injustice to yourself.*" He also added, "*Poverty is almost the same as impiety.*" (Hamim 2022) .

If we relate it to contemporary interpretations according to several experts, such as Fadzlor Rahman, Muhammad Syahrur, and Quraisy Shihab, it has significant significance in understanding this issue. Their contextual and dynamic approaches allow us to examine this issue through the lens of the Qur'an, which is relevant to current realities. Fadzlor Rahman, with his "double movement" method, emphasizes the importance of balancing work demands and workers' rights, referring to the principle of social justice in Islam, as aligned with the Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 286, which explains the prohibition of excessive burdens (Hamim 2022) . Meanwhile, Muhammad Syahrur through his "hudud" theory provides a flexible framework to assess quiet quitting as a form of self-protection from work exploitation that exceeds reasonable limits (Abdullah 2024) which is adapted to the Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa, verse 29. Quraisy Shihab complements it with a psychological approach by linking *burnout* with mental imbalance and offers a spiritual solution adapted to the Qur'an, Surah Al-Insyirah, verses 5-6 (Lufaei 2019) .

The problems of burnout and quiet quitting in the contemporary workplace demand a holistic approach, including a religious perspective relevant to the modern context. This study aims to examine how contemporary interpretations explain the concepts of workplace justice, the prohibition of excessive workload (*israf*), and workers' responsibilities from a Qur'anic perspective, as well as Islamic solutions that can be offered to prevent these problems. This research is important considering the widespread phenomenon of work-life imbalance that leads to decreased productivity, a crisis of work meaning, and violations of workers' rights. While conventional religious understanding often fails to adequately

address the root of the problem. By exploring contemporary interpretations, this study seeks to provide recommendations that are grounded in Islamic values while also responsive to the challenges of today's workplace.

## METHOD

This study uses a literature review method with a Qur'anic hermeneutic approach (thematic interpretation) to analyze the concept of work justice, israf and worker responsibility in a contemporary perspective. The primary data of the study consists of relevant Qur'anic verses, such as Qs. Al-Baqarah verse 286 (about the burden according to ability), Qs. Al-Qashas verse 73 (about the right to rest), and Qs. Al-Ma'arij verses 19-21 (about human nature in work). In addition, to support the analysis of this research issue, *Publish or Perish* (PoP) is used to collect the necessary articles using the article database from Google Scholar.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Definition of Burnout and Quiet Quitting

The term *burnout* was first introduced by Herbert Freudenberger, a clinical psychologist in New York. The term was used in 1974 in a psychology journal discussing the "*burnout syndrome*." Initially, the term referred to the effects experienced by chronic drug users. According to Freudenberger, some behavioral signs of *burnout* include employees becoming irritable, crying easily, and exhibiting suspicious behavior, along with feelings of victimization.

Work fatigue, or what is now often called Burnout, is a psychological syndrome caused by an overwhelming feeling of exhaustion, whether physical, mental, or emotional, that causes a person to be disturbed and results in a decrease in personal achievement (Alam 2022) . According to the World Health Organization (WHO), burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as a result of chronic stress in the workplace that is not successfully addressed (Nelma 2019) .

Meanwhile, according to Pines and Aronson (1989), burnout is physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in situations full of emotional demands (Alam 2022) . So it can be concluded, burnout is different from ordinary stress, if stress is a short-term reaction and can still be managed, while burnout is total exhaustion due to prolonged work pressure, thus reducing motivation, productivity, and giving rise to negative attitudes towards work and the surrounding environment.

## Contemporary Interpretation Analysis

### Fadzlur Rahman's Perspective

Fadzlur Rahman (1919–1988) was an Islamic reformist thinker known for his “*Double Movement*” method in interpreting the Qur'an. His approach emphasized contextual understanding of the verses of the Qur'an with two movements: (1) understanding the message of the Qur'an in its historical context, and (2) applying its universal principles to the current context (Rahman 2012) .

#### 1. The Concept of Work and Justice in the Qur'an

Fadzlur Rahman explains that the Qur'an emphasizes social justice ('adl) and prohibits exploitation in work. For example, in QS. Al-A'raf (7): 85:

*“And do not harm people by reducing their rights.”*

According to Rahman, this verse not only applies in the trade context of the Prophet's time, but is also relevant to modern industrial relations, including workers' rights to fair wages and protection from exploitation (Rahman 2012) .

#### 2. Burnout as a Violation of the Principle of Balance (Mizan)

In QS. Al-Qamar (54): 49, Allah says:

*“Indeed, We have created everything in due measure.”*

Fadzlur Rahman interprets that excessive work to the point of burnout is contrary to the principle of "qadar" (balance) (Rahman 1982) . Islam teaches that humans must work according to their capacity (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 286), and an inhumane work system is a form of injustice. *Quiet Quitting* as a Form of Resistance Against *Zhulm* (Injustice) . In the context of *quiet quitting* , Rahman would see it as a response to an unfair work environment. For example, QS. Al-Ma'idah (5): 2:

*"And help you in goodness and piety, and do not help in sin and enmity."*

If a company demands workers to exceed their limits without compensation, then quiet quitting can be justified as a form of rejection of "zhulm" (injustice). However, Rahman also reminds us that Islam encourages professionalism (QS. Al-Isra [17]: 34), so total withdrawal from responsibility without a valid reason is not justified (Putri 2018) .

### Muhammad Syahrur's Perspective

Muhammad Syahrur (1938–2019) is a contemporary Islamic thinker known for his “Hudud Theory” (Legal Boundaries). His approach emphasizes the flexibility of sharia through linguistic and contextual readings of the Qur'an (Syamsuddin 2012) . In the context of burnout and quiet quitting, Syahrur's analysis focuses on the minimum limits (al-adna) and maximum limits (al-a'la) of work obligations.

1. The concept of work within the framework of "Hudud"

Syahrur divides work responsibilities into two boundaries:

a. Minimum Limit (Al-Adna): Basic Obligations of Workers

*"And don't overdo it. Indeed, Allah does not like people who overdo it."*

Syahrur interpreted that every worker is obliged to fulfill the work contract (akad) as agreed, but is not required to go beyond that (Darnela 2008). Quiet quitting, in this case, is a legitimate attitude as long as the worker still fulfills his or her basic obligations.

b. Maximum limit (al-A'la): Prohibition of Exploitation

*"And do not exaggerate. Indeed, Allah does not like people who exaggerate."*

Syahrur explained that burnout occurs when the work system exceeds the "hudud Allah" (maximum limits) (Anon 1938). Companies that force overtime without compensation are violating this principle.

2. *Quiet quitting* as self-protection from "*Taghyir*" (unjust changes)

Syahrur uses the concept of "*tahgyir*" (unjust changes to natural law) to analyze toxic work environments. For example, in Qs Ar-Ra'd verse 11:

*"Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change themselves."*

If a company creates an inhumane system (such as excessive workload), then *quiet quitting* is a form of resistance against "*tahgyir*". (Sujatmiko 2005). However, Syahrur also emphasized that workers must be productive within reasonable limits. Syahrur suggested using a "*al-Wasataniyyah*" (moderation) approach to work. Workers have the right to refuse assignments outside their contract, but they must not neglect their core obligations. Furthermore, companies are required to ensure workloads comply with "*hudud al-'amal*," namely, fair work limits (Fanani 2005).

### **Quraish Shihab's Perspective**

Quraish Shihab is known for his contextual and moderate approach to interpretation. In interpreting Qur'anic verses related to work and life balance, he emphasizes the importance of understanding the text holistically, taking into account the asbabun nuzul (the sources of revelation), in-depth Arabic linguistics, and the contemporary sociocultural context (Shihab 2007).

1. The concept of work in the view of Quraisy Shihab

a. The principle of balance (Tawazun) Qs. Al-Qhasas verse 77:

*"And, seek what Allah has bestowed upon you (rewards) in the land of the afterlife, but do not forget your share in this world. Do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you and do not cause damage on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like those who do damage."*

According to Quraisy Shihab, this verse emphasizes the importance of balance between worldly and afterlife affairs, including in the context of work. Burnout occurs when this balance is disturbed (Shihab 2002) .

b. Excessive prohibition (Israf) Qs. al-A'raf verse 31:

*"O children and grandchildren of Adam, wear your beautiful clothes every time (entering) the mosque and eat and drink, but do not be excessive. Indeed, He does not like excessive people."*

Quraisy Shihab interprets that working to the point of neglecting health and family is included in the category of israf which is prohibited.

2. Workers' rights in Tafsir Al-Misbah

In the interpretation of surah At-Taubah verse 105:

*"Say (to the Prophet Muhammad), 'Work!' Then Allah, His Messenger, and the believers will see your work. You will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the seen. Then He will inform you of what you used to do."*

Quraisy Shihab explains that Islam recognizes the right of workers to receive fair remuneration, adequate rest time, and to refuse work beyond their capabilities. He then analyzes the phenomenon of quiet quitting through the lens of maqasid sharia, specifically in maintaining the hifzun nafs (self-control), hifzul aql (aql), and hifzul mal (self-control). To prevent burnout and quiet quitting, he bases his attention on the principles of ihsan (goodness), the concept of tawakkal (religious devotion), and maintaining brotherhood (ukhuwah) (Zulfikar and others) .

## CONCLUSION

Based on this analysis, burnout is one of the main causes of the quiet quitting phenomenon among today's workers. Burnout occurs due to excessive work pressure, an unbalanced workload, and a lack of support from the work environment. When individuals experience prolonged physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion, they tend to only complete basic obligations without actively participating in developing additional tasks or initiatives. This negatively impacts productivity and job satisfaction and has the potential to widen the gap between employees and their employers. From an Islamic perspective, the principles of balance (tawazun) and fairness in work are key to addressing *burnout and quiet quitting* . Islam teaches the importance of fulfilling work responsibilities within one's capabilities without overdoing it (israf), as well as safeguarding workers' rights to adequate rest. By implementing these values, it is hoped that workers will be able to maintain their mental and emotional health, thus creating a fair, balanced, and harmonious work culture, and preventing negative phenomena such as quiet quitting.

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