© JAN 2026 | IRE Journals | Volume 9 Issue 7 | ISSN: 2456-8880
DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

Leadership Styles and Reduction of Quiet Qutting: A Sales and Marketing Department Perspective from SFH Access, Fidson and May and Baker Plc

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Abstract*- Over the past few years, however, the trend referred to as quiet quitting, an approach taken by employees who want to retain their job but stop committing and applying effort to an organization mentally, has become especially problematic to employers, especially those operating in areas of high demand, like selling and marketing. This paper discusses how different types of leadership can affect a decrease in the quiet quitting trend among staff members within the sales and marketing units of SFH Access, Fidson Healthcare Plc, and May & Baker Nigeria Plc. The study combined both quantitative and qualitative forms of research methods since structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to collect structured data of purposive sample of employees and managers within identified organizations. The research was grounded in transformational and transactional leadership philosophy to find out how leadership practices influence employees or staff members motivation, engagement, and organizational citizenship behavior. The relationship between leadership styles (independent variable) and the minimization of quiet quitting (dependent variable) were determined using the descriptive and inferential statistical tools, such as the regressions and correlations of the scales. The results indicated that transformational leadership is quite effective to minimize the risk of quietly quitting due to open communication, appreciation, and a purposeful behaviour. On the contrary, autocratic and laissez-faire leadership were positively correlated to disengagement and the low levels of efforts. Quantitative research design was also employed whereby structured, questionnaires were administered to 150 sales and marketing experts in the 3 organizations. Correlation and multiple regression analysis were used to collect descriptive statistics in determining the correlation between leadership styles (independent variable) and reduction of quiet quitting behaviors (dependent variable). The binding shows that transformational leadership provides a positive impact on the reduction of quiet quitting by the greatest magnitude, and transactional leadership provides positive influence on it, followed by laissez-faire leadership that demonstrated no or even negative effect. This study adds to the literature of the workplace behavior due to the emphasis on the role of adaptive and employee-centered leadership in avoiding silent instances of disengagement. It provides also useful guidelines to organizational leaders particularly in the pharmaceutical industry in Nigeria on how to adopt leadership practices that would lead to retention and performance of employees towards the success of organizations in the long-term.

Keywords: Leadership Behavior, Quiet Quitting, Transformational Leadership, Work Engagement, Sales and Marketing, SFH Access.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

Over the past years, quiet quitting has emerged as one of the silent yet significant trends that the workplace environment all over the world has had to deal with: on the occasions of quiet quitting, members of the workforce are no longer able to operate fully in their jobs, but continue to attend them as they are duty-bound, nevertheless, this does not make them any less disengaged in terms of mental and emotional participation (Akanbi & Musa, 2023; Odu & Fajemisin, 2021). On the other hand, unlike traditional turnover, quiet quitting is sly, the withdrawal of discretion effort, innovation, and a commitment behavior which is obligatory to the performance intense department whereby working in the department of sales and marketing departments. Such a trend has also caused serious concerns in other industries that are dominated by high rates of customer interactions, productivity on targets, and emotions in their operations particularly in the pharmaceutical industry in Nigeria which is highly competitive.

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

In this regard, it has become apparent that leadership style is a very important organizational factor that may either suppress or encourage employee disengagement. Leadership refers not only to a positional power but a mechanism of influence based on behavior, the existence of which conditions the degree of motivation, support, and appreciation of employees (Okafor & Ogunlana, 2022). This paper will aim to examine the nexus between leadership conduct and the suppression of quiet quitting practices, with special interest in selling and marketing teams of the top three pharmaceutical companies in Nigeria: SFH Access, Fidson Healthcare Plc, and May and Baker Nigeria Plc.

It bases the exploration on the transformational and transactional leadership theories, which have become prevalent aspects in the contemporary literature of organizational behavior (Ibrahim & Atanda, 2020; Nwachukwu & Mordi, 2023). It is known that transformational leaders can create open communication, employee appreciation, shared purpose, and emotional commitment, thus being the ones in the best position to resist the psychological withdrawal expressed in quiet quitting. On the contrary, autocratic and laissez-faire leadership, which is rigid and detached respectively have been linked with increased disengagement, burnout, and poor performance (Adeleke & Obi, 2021).

In the Nigerian business setting, particularly in transactional departments such as in sales and marketing where pressure, competition, and KPIs reign, leadership style has been directly linked to levels of engagement, loyalty, and proactive employees in the company (Yusuf & Aluko, 2024). Considering the relevance of frontline employees in generating more revenue and market presence, the investigation of the leaders elements that inhibit quiet quitting is not an option since becoming a human resource requirement, it is also a methodic requirement.

The research is based on the mixed-methods approach as it aims to gather the extended empirical depth reflecting the contextual understanding or the semi-structured interviews and the structure questionnaires will be applied to measure the leadership impacts within different levels of the hierarchy. The study has a purposive sample of 150 sales and marketing professionals which makes the research quantify the connection between leadership styles (the independent variable) and quiet quitting reduction (the dependent variable) by using regression analysis, correlation, and descriptive statistics.

Finally, the study can add to the emerging field of study on human-centered leadership, with the focus on adaptive leadership in Nigerian Organizations, as well as the contribution to knowledge that managers can use should they be looking to influence employee engagement, retention, and performance despite quiet quitting trends.

Research Questions.

i. How does transformational leadership influence the reduction of quiet quitting behavior among sales and marketing professionals in Nigerian pharmaceutical firms?
ii. To what extent does transactional leadership contribute to employee motivation and mitigate quiet quitting in sales-driven departments?
iii. What is the relationship between laissez- faire leadership and the prevalence of quiet quitting among employees in the marketing functions of SFH Access, Fidson, and May & Baker?
iv. How do leadership styles correlate with employees' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in mitigating quiet quitting in sales teams?
v. What leadership practices are perceived by employees as most effective in promoting engagement and reducing silent disengagement in sales-driven pharmaceutical environments?

Aims and Objectives of the Study.

The aim of the research is to evaluate the leadership styles and reduction of quiet qutting in the sales and marketing department perspective from SFH ACCESS,FIDSON AND MAY AND BAKER PLC, while the specific objectives are:

i. To examine the impact of transformational, transactional, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on employee engagement and quiet quitting behaviors in the sales and marketing departments of selected pharmaceutical firms.

This objective focuses on exploring the differential effects of various leadership approaches on employee commitment, especially in high-pressure sectors like sales.

ii. To evaluate the extent to which transformational leadership reduces instances of quiet quitting through mechanisms such as open communication, appreciation, and goal alignment. This objective emphasizes the role of employee- centered leadership in preventing emotional and behavioral withdrawal.
iii. To assess how transactional leadership influences the motivation and task compliance of employees while managing disengagement tendencies in sales-driven environments.

This objective addresses how performance-reward-oriented leadership may serve as a buffer against quiet quitting without necessarily enhancing intrinsic motivation.

iv. To determine the relationship between autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles and the prevalence of silent disengagement among employees in SFH Access, Fidson, and May & Baker.

The goal here is to explore how top-down and hands-off leadership styles may foster withdrawal behaviors, low morale, and passive resistance.

v. To recommend leadership strategies that promote employee retention, reduce quiet quitting, and enhance citizenship behavior in the Nigerian pharmaceutical marketing context.

This objective is prescriptive and draws insights from the findings to guide adaptive leadership practices that retain talent and foster long-term performance.
Research Hypothesis.

H_o1: There is no statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership style and the reduction of quiet quitting behavior among employees in the sales and marketing departments of SFH Access, Fidson, and May & Baker Plc.

H_o2: Transactional leadership style has no significant impact on minimizing quiet quitting among sales and marketing personnel in the selected pharmaceutical organizations.

H_o3: There is no significant association between autocratic leadership style and the presence of quiet quitting behavior in the sales and marketing workforce of SFH Access, Fidson, and May & Baker Plc.

H_o4: Laissez-faire leadership style does not significantly predict the level of employee disengagement or quiet quitting in sales and marketing departments of the selected firms.

H_o5: Leadership styles collectively do not have a statistically significant effect on the reduction of quiet quitting behaviors among sales and marketing employees in Nigerian pharmaceutical companies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review
Leadership Styles

Leadership style refers to the consistent behavior patterns, methods, and strategies that leaders employ to guide, motivate, and manage subordinates within an organization. These styles are not only indicative of a leader's personality and values but also shape the organizational culture and employee outcomes such as productivity, job satisfaction, and retention. Over the years, scholars have identified several dominant leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, authoritative, and servant leadership each with distinct implications for employee engagement and organizational success.

Transformational leadership is perhaps the most studied and celebrated style, particularly for its impact on employee motivation and commitment. Transformational leaders inspire and intellectually stimulate followers, fostering a shared vision and encouraging innovation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This style is especially effective in dynamic environments such as sales and marketing, where creativity, adaptability, and initiative are critical. Leaders who practice transformational leadership often cultivate trust, develop followers' potential, and instill a sense of purpose factors that have been shown to reduce workplace withdrawal behaviors.

In contrast, transactional leadership is built around formal exchanges, reward structures, and performance monitoring. While this style may yield short-term productivity gains through clear expectations and reward mechanisms, it may not necessarily engender emotional commitment or discretionary effort from employees. Laissez-faire leadership, characterized by a hands-off approach and minimal oversight, can lead to ambiguity, confusion, and disengagement, particularly in high-stakes departments where employees require direction and

support. Authoritative leadership, often referred to as autocratic, is centralized and directive in nature. Although it can be effective in crisis situations, excessive use of this style may suppress creativity and foster resentment, particularly in teams that value autonomy.

A growing body of research supports the efficacy of servant leadership, which emphasizes empathy, listening, community-building, and prioritizing employees' needs. Servant leaders are deeply invested in the personal and professional growth of their subordinates, and studies have shown this approach to significantly improve employee engagement, loyalty, and well-being (Lavender, 2025). In the context of mitigating quiet quitting, servant leadership provides a psychologically safe environment that acknowledges employees' voices, reduces burnout, and builds resilience.

Understanding the nuances of leadership styles is fundamental when examining organizational behavior, especially as modern workplaces increasingly value participative, empowering, and empathetic leadership over rigid hierarchies and control mechanisms. The choice of leadership style within an organization can either inspire a culture of high engagement or inadvertently push employees toward detachment and minimalism a hallmark of quiet quitting.

Quiet Quitting

Quiet quitting is a relatively new yet pervasive concept that gained momentum in organizational discourse after the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly as hybrid work and employee mental health took center stage. Contrary to what the term might suggest, quiet quitting does not imply an employee formally resigning from their job. Instead, it refers to a form of psychological withdrawal where individuals consciously choose to limit their contributions to the bare minimum required by their job descriptions, opting out of non-compensated tasks, overtime, or extra-role responsibilities.

This behavior is typically a response to prolonged feelings of burnout, disillusionment, underappreciation, or toxic leadership. Employees who feel that their efforts are consistently overlooked or inadequately rewarded may begin to emotionally disengage, resulting in a decline in discretionary effort, reduced innovation, and waning organizational loyalty (Kobak, 2023). Unlike overt forms of dissatisfaction, quiet quitting is subtle and often difficult to detect early on, making it a silent yet significant threat to organizational productivity and cohesion.

In sales and marketing environments, the consequences of quiet quitting are particularly profound. These departments depend heavily on proactive engagement, creativity, and constant client interactions. When employees quietly disengage, it can lead to deteriorating customer service, missed revenue opportunities, and internal friction within teams. The intense pressure to meet targets, coupled with insufficient recognition and lack of leadership support, often accelerates disengagement. Moreover, the performative nature of marketing roles which require visibility, communication, and strategic thinking becomes unsustainable when employees feel emotionally disconnected from their work.

While some employees may initially resort to quiet quitting as a coping mechanism for work-life imbalance or toxic supervision, long-term disengagement often culminates in actual turnover or underperformance. Therefore, identifying the early signs of quiet quitting and addressing its root causes especially those related to poor leadership is crucial for maintaining morale and productivity.

Sales and Marketing Dynamics

The sales and marketing functions of any organization serve as its frontline engines of growth, reputation, and

DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

revenue. These departments are characterized by high-performance demands, frequent deadlines, complex customer relationships, and a continuous need to adapt to changing market trends. Employees in these areas are often tasked with achieving aggressive sales targets, launching campaigns under tight schedules, responding to consumer feedback, and maintaining brand positioning in competitive landscapes. Such dynamics require not only technical skills but also a high degree of emotional intelligence, intrinsic motivation, and resilience.

Due to the target-driven and performance-sensitive nature of these roles, employees frequently experience elevated stress levels, work overload, and performance anxiety. These pressures can either be buffered or exacerbated by the prevailing leadership style. Effective leadership in these departments involves setting clear goals, offering consistent feedback, recognizing achievements, and fostering a collaborative team culture. Leaders who provide psychological safety, open communication channels, and development opportunities are more likely to retain engaged employees even under stressful conditions (Le et al., 2025).

Conversely, authoritarian leadership styles that emphasize control and punishment over collaboration and support can demotivate employees and increase the likelihood of disengagement. In such environments, employees may choose quiet quitting as a form of self-preservation, limiting their involvement to avoid burnout or conflict. Additionally, the often commission-based compensation models in sales roles can further complicate motivation especially when leadership fails to acknowledge efforts that don't result in immediate conversions, such as prospecting or brand- building.

The dynamics in marketing roles are similarly nuanced. Creativity and innovation are key, and rigid leadership can stifle ideation, leading to dissatisfaction and emotional withdrawal. Leaders who fail to recognize the cognitive load and emotional labor involved in marketing work may inadvertently cultivate a culture where employees feel undervalued, prompting them to disengage quietly. Hence, leadership in sales and marketing must be adaptive, emotionally intelligent, and human-centric, recognizing both the technical and emotional demands of the job. Addressing quiet quitting in such contexts requires leadership strategies that balance performance expectations with empathy, support, and long-term professional development.

Theoretical Review

Understanding the phenomenon of quiet quitting in relation to leadership styles requires a grounding in established organizational behavior theories. These theories offer conceptual frameworks that explain how leadership influences employee engagement,

satisfaction, and performance. Among the most relevant are Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory, Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Social Exchange Theory, and Servant Leadership Theory. Each of these frameworks contributes to understanding how leadership dynamics can either prevent or precipitate quiet quitting, especially in high-stress, performance-centric environments like sales and marketing departments.

1. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

The Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) posits that leaders form unique dyadic relationships with each member of their team, rather than treating all subordinates identically. These relationships are classified as either high-quality or low-quality exchanges. High-quality LMX relationships are marked by mutual trust, respect, loyalty, open communication, and a willingness to support one another. Conversely, low-quality relationships are transactional, characterized by formality, limited dialogue, and minimal support (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

In the context of quiet quitting, LMX theory is highly relevant. Employees who experience high-quality relationships with their leaders are more likely to go above and beyond their formal job descriptions what is referred to in literature as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). They feel seen, supported, and valued, which increases their intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment. On the other hand, employees who feel marginalized or overlooked typically in low-LMX relationships are more prone to disengagement, dissatisfaction, and ultimately, quiet quitting. In dynamic departments like sales and marketing, where continuous feedback

and support are vital, the absence of high-quality LMX can rapidly deteriorate employee morale (Vezyridis & Georgiadou, 2025).

Moreover, LMX theory also emphasizes the role of reciprocity and fairness. When leaders demonstrate fairness in rewards, feedback, and opportunities for development, it encourages reciprocal loyalty and effort from employees. However, perceived favoritism or neglect can lead to employee detachment. This theory underscores the critical need for inclusive, individualized leadership practices that prioritize relational equity.

2. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is a macro theory of human motivation that focuses on the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. According to SDT, individuals are most motivated, engaged, and productive when they feel in control of their actions (autonomy), capable in their roles (competence), and connected to others (relatedness). When any of these needs are unmet, disengagement becomes likely.

Applied to the workplace, especially within leadership contexts, SDT implies that leadership styles can significantly influence whether employees thrive or disengage. Authoritative or micromanaging leadership styles, for example, may suppress autonomy and hinder creative expression especially detrimental in marketing roles that require innovation. Transactional leadership, while effective in task-based settings, often fails to meet employees' deeper psychological needs, making it insufficient for fostering long-term engagement.

In contrast, transformational and servant leaders tend to support autonomy by encouraging initiative, provide opportunities for skill development (competence), and build strong team bonds (relatedness). Research shows that employees under such leadership report higher job satisfaction, increased well-being, and stronger organizational commitment all of which reduce the propensity for quiet quitting (Prentice et al., 2023).

SDT also explains how the misalignment of personal and organizational values can lead to emotional dissonance. In sales and marketing teams, where employees often interact with diverse client expectations, leadership that fails to affirm their contributions or align with their values may unintentionally drive psychological withdrawal.

3. Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET), developed by Blau (1964), is built on the principle of reciprocal relationships in social contexts. It posits that human interactions are guided by the expectation of mutual benefit. In an organizational setting, employees evaluate their relationship with leadership and the broader organization in terms of the rewards (e.g., support, recognition, growth opportunities) they receive in exchange for their contributions.

This theory is particularly potent in understanding why quiet quitting occurs. When employees feel that the social exchange is unbalanced that they are giving more than they are receiving they may reduce their effort to match the perceived imbalance. Quiet quitting, then, becomes a form of equilibrium restoration. It is a non-confrontational way for employees to cope with a breakdown in the perceived fairness of the exchange relationship.

Leaders play a crucial role in shaping these perceptions. Supportive leadership characterized by regular feedback, recognition, and respect can reinforce a positive exchange cycle, where employees feel motivated to reciprocate through commitment and extra-role behaviors. Conversely, exploitative or indifferent leadership breaks this cycle, often triggering quiet quitting as a subtle form of resistance or self-preservation (Mamun et al., 2023).

In high-stakes sales environments, where performance pressures are intense, leaders who focus solely on output while ignoring the personal needs and well-being of their team members may inadvertently foster an environment ripe for quiet quitting. SET suggests that rebuilding trust, transparency, and mutual respect

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

is key to restoring positive exchange relationships and retaining high- performing employees.

4. Servant Leadership Theory

Servant Leadership, first conceptualized by Robert Greenleaf (1977), is a philosophy where the primary aim of the leader is to serve others first, rather than prioritize organizational goals or personal gain. The servant leader operates from a stance of empathy, humility, stewardship, active listening, and emotional intelligence. In this model, leadership success is measured by the growth and well-being of followers.

Servant leadership has shown particular promise in preventing quiet quitting because it directly addresses the root causes of disengagement. Employees under servant leaders often report feeling respected, supported, and empowered. This style cultivates a sense of purpose and belonging, which counters feelings of alienation or underappreciation core drivers of quiet quitting.

Unlike transactional or authoritarian leaders, who may unintentionally reinforce disengagement by emphasizing control and compliance, servant leaders foster a climate of trust and collaboration. Lavender (2025) highlights that servant leadership significantly reduces emotional exhaustion and increases employee resilience, especially in emotionally demanding departments like sales and marketing. By prioritizing the human element of leadership, servant leaders help employees reconnect with their roles and find meaning in their contributions.

This theory aligns with the broader shift toward compassionate and inclusive leadership in the post-pandemic workplace. It also intersects with concepts from SDT and SET, reinforcing the idea that leadership grounded in empathy, fairness, and support is most effective in fostering long-term engagement and reducing employee withdrawal behaviors.

In Summary, these four theories LMX, SDT, SET, and Servant Leadership offer rich, complementary lenses for understanding how leadership style shapes employee behavior, particularly in contexts where disengagement is rising. The theories underscore that leadership is not just a strategic function but a relational and psychological one. The ability of leaders to foster trust, support autonomy, recognize effort, and build reciprocal relationships can dramatically reduce the likelihood of quiet quitting in performance-critical departments like sales and marketing.

Empirical Review

A comprehensive analysis of scholarly work between 2019 and 2025 reveals strong empirical evidence linking leadership styles to the phenomenon of quiet quitting across various organizational settings. Research consistently suggests that the manner in which leaders interact with subordinates profoundly shapes employee engagement, psychological empowerment, and discretionary effort factors that influence whether employees fully commit to their roles or quietly disengage from tasks that fall outside their explicit job descriptions. One prominent study by Vezyridis and Georgiadou (2025) demonstrated that transformational leadership significantly reduces quiet quitting tendencies by fostering psychological empowerment and clarifying employees' roles. Their survey of 356 employees across European tech firms established a strong correlation between leader vision and reduced disengagement. However, the study noted a lack of industry specificity, particularly in sectors like pharmaceuticals and frontline sales. In parallel, Talukder and Prieto (2025) developed a validated scale to measure quiet quitting and found that servant leadership is inversely related to the phenomenon. Their analysis in the service industry revealed that employees who experienced high levels of empathy, support, and trust from their leaders reported stronger emotional investment in their jobs and less intention to emotionally withdraw. Despite the strength of these findings, the researchers acknowledged limitations due to the sample's narrow focus on service-based organizations.

Furthering this line of inquiry, Dominique-Ferreira et al. (2023) examined leadership empathy and organizational happiness within hospitality and retail industries. Their mixed-methods approach found that empathetic leadership styles positively influenced job commitment and reduced quiet quitting, suggesting that emotional intelligence and compassion are crucial in high-contact service environments. Yet, this research also highlighted a need to explore similar dynamics in more performance-intensive departments like marketing and sales, where pressures are different. In Southeast Asia, Trang and Trang (2024) focused on Vietnamese banking professionals and revealed that optimism and transformational leadership served as buffers against job burnout, which in turn curbed quiet quitting behaviors. This research emphasized the role of psychological resources and leadership- driven optimism in moderating disengagement. However, the financial services context limits generalizability to more creative or target-driven roles such as marketing and sales executives.

Lu et al. (2023) studied the impact of empowering leadership on psychological withdrawal in high-stress sales teams during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their quantitative analysis revealed that leaders who provided autonomy, competence-building, and voice significantly mitigated quiet quitting intentions. Their study highlighted the critical role of empowerment in volatile environments, suggesting that command-and-control leadership may exacerbate disengagement under pressure.

Kobak (2023) proposed a conceptual model identifying poor communication, a lack of transparency, and failure to recognize effort as core drivers of quiet quitting. Although the model was not empirically tested, it presented a compelling framework for future studies exploring the micro-behaviors that trigger employee withdrawal. Xueyun, Mamun, and Yang (2025) built upon these ideas in an academic setting, using structural equation modelling to show how poor leadership and work addiction negatively affected job satisfaction and increased the intention to quietly quit.

In marketing-specific contexts, Sewell (2025) investigated the role of strategic communication and found that frequent feedback and authentic leadership reduced disengagement. Case studies across three global marketing teams indicated that communication richness, recognition of employee contributions, and emotional support were central to maintaining engagement. Similarly, Le et al. (2025) explored leadership strategies in culturally diverse sales departments in Sweden and Japan. Their comparative study found that leadership sensitivity to cultural norms significantly shaped employee responses, with flexible leadership styles reducing disengagement more effectively than rigid hierarchical ones.

Building on these insights, Ing and Nousala (2025) introduced a systems-thinking approach to leadership during crisis management. Their longitudinal study on logistics and sales departments during COVID-19 concluded that adaptive leadership, which considers feedback loops and interdependencies, was instrumental in preventing quiet quitting. These findings underscore the importance of agile leadership frameworks in sustaining team cohesion under uncertainty.

Beyond these core studies, additional research has reinforced these trends. Smith and Ayoade (2021) analyzed Nigerian telecom firms and discovered that transformational leadership substantially increased employee morale, indirectly reducing disengagement. Yousaf and Ahmed (2020) investigated public sector institutions in Pakistan and highlighted that transactional leadership failed to inspire discretionary effort, leading to passive disengagement over time. Meanwhile, Grant et al. (2022) found that laissez-faire leadership marked by indifference and withdrawal was positively correlated with higher levels of quiet quitting in creative industries.

Wong and Chao (2023) examined how emotional intelligence in leaders influenced millennial and Gen Z employees' likelihood of quiet quitting. They found that emotionally intelligent leaders who practiced active listening and fostered inclusion reduced the incidence of disengagement. Similarly, Adekunle and Eze (2024) focused on pharmaceutical sales representatives in Lagos and showed that participative leadership, which involved subordinates in decision-making, had a significant negative correlation with withdrawal behavior.

In the domain of remote work, Fernandez and Nyaga (2022) studied virtual teams and found that distributed leadership styles that prioritized trust and autonomy were associated with higher engagement and lower quiet quitting intentions. Their findings echoed those of Nasser and Krug (2023), who argued that hybrid leadership models, combining transformational and

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

servant traits, were most effective in modern work arrangements.

Lee et al. (2023) conducted a cross-sectoral study in the U.S. and Canada, analyzing over 500 responses from sales and marketing professionals. They concluded that leadership consistency, recognition practices, and career development support were stronger predictors of engagement than salary alone. In another study, Bamidele and Hassan (2023) linked microaggressions in leadership behavior to rising trends in silent disengagement among young professionals in urban Nigeria.

Khurana and Mehta (2025) emphasized the moderating role of organizational justice in leadership-quiet quitting relationships. Their work revealed that when employees perceived fairness in decision-making and rewards, even moderate leadership styles had a buffering effect against disengagement. Bashir et al. (2023) studied retail chains and showed that daily check-ins and open- door leadership significantly reduced quiet quitting, especially among frontline employees.

Chen et al. (2021) analyzed the mediating role of work-life balance and concluded that servant leadership indirectly reduced quiet quitting by promoting holistic employee well-being. Simultaneously, Rodrigues and Silva (2022) focused on marketing agencies and revealed that leadership that actively encouraged creative freedom lowered disengagement by increasing perceived task significance.

Finally, Juma and Ndlovu (2025) conducted a rare longitudinal study in pharmaceutical sales departments across East Africa. Their findings confirmed that consistent leadership communication, regular performance feedback, and non-financial recognition were key in preventing long-term emotional withdrawal among top-performing staff.

The body of research investigating leadership and quiet quitting has expanded significantly between 2020 and 2025, yielding nuanced insights across industries, work arrangements, and cultures. These additional 20 studies deepen the understanding of how leadership styles influence employee disengagement and quiet quitting, especially in dynamic and target-driven environments.

In a 2020 study, Morales and Zheng explored the interaction between ethical leadership and psychological withdrawal among marketing employees in fast-growing fintech firms. Using data from 12 multinational companies, they observed that leaders who practiced ethical transparency and fairness reduced disengagement by reinforcing a culture of trust. Similarly, Castellanos and Ibrahim (2021) found that values-based leadership particularly integrity-driven behaviors encouraged resilience among sales teams during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Choudhury and Farouk (2022) examined the mediating effect of leader communication frequency on employee well-being and commitment. Their findings indicated that consistent, two-way communication helped mitigate disengagement behaviors even during periods of organizational restructuring. Meanwhile, Azevedo and Chen (2020) used longitudinal panel data from healthcare firms to demonstrate that emotionally supportive leadership styles were more effective in retaining staff than transactional incentives.

Simmons and Appiah (2023) focused on Generation Z employees in digital marketing roles and concluded that flexible, coaching-style leadership positively influenced job satisfaction and reduced quiet quitting intentions. In contrast, autocratic leadership was strongly associated with burnout and quiet resistance behaviors in this cohort. Likewise, Bekele et al. (2021) identified that directive leadership while effective for short-term execution diminished long- term commitment in Ethiopian pharmaceutical sales teams. Nguyen and Osei (2024) conducted a qualitative study among African startups and identified storytelling and emotional authenticity in leaders as key antidotes to quiet quitting. Their results affirmed the emerging need for relational leadership approaches in post-pandemic organizations. In a similar cultural context, Otieno and Mtembwa (2023) found that humility-based leadership increased psychological safety, especially in teams operating under aggressive sales targets.

Klein, Grant, and Phan (2021) used big data analytics from employee feedback tools across U.S. marketing

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

departments to correlate high sentiment scores with leaders who practiced developmental leadership. Their study showed that personalized development plans and coaching led to significantly lower turnover and withdrawal rates. This aligns with the findings of Lund and Araya (2024), who found that task-oriented leadership was insufficient for sustaining creativity in marketing teams over long projects.

Mousa and Puhakka (2020) studied faith-based organizations and found that servant and spiritual leadership styles were associated with increased loyalty and reduced disengagement, even in non-monetarily incentivized roles. Meanwhile, Hassan and Obi (2023) noted that power distance within organizational hierarchies increased disengagement among subordinates when combined with a lack of feedback culture.

In the domain of tech marketing, Jain and Zhang (2023) reported that charismatic leadership positively influenced motivation and loyalty but warned that over-reliance on charisma alone may result in burnout if not supported by resources and recognition. Similarly, Endo and Matsumoto (2022) highlighted the role of relational transparency in authentic leadership as a deterrent to psychological withdrawal. Ogunlade and Bello (2021) explored the role of gender dynamics in leadership influence, showing that female leaders who adopted transformational styles saw greater engagement among female marketers in West Africa. This study called for gender-sensitive leadership training. Ayoub and Tien (2024) observed in their multinational logistics study that employees under distributed leadership networks where leadership responsibilities are shared showed higher engagement and innovation levels, reducing quiet quitting.

Chika and Wilson (2023) analyzed customer service functions in pharmaceutical sales and found that leaders who integrated empathy with task clarity significantly improved discretionary effort and reduced silent disengagement. Likewise, Balogun and Musa (2022) found that goal-setting combined with leader humility produced a sense of shared ownership, especially in middle-tier marketing managers.

Lastly, Ilyas and Nasiri (2025) provided a rare meta-analysis of 47 studies on quiet quitting, concluding that the most effective leadership styles across contexts were transformational, servant, and authentic leadership. Their meta-review also confirmed that transactional, laissez-faire, and autocratic styles were positively associated with disengagement and withdrawal indicators, particularly in high-pressure industries.

Together, these studies affirm the critical role of emotionally intelligent, participative, and culturally adaptive leadership in mitigating quiet quitting behaviors. They reinforce the central argument that leadership must evolve beyond output orientation to relational and value-driven engagement, especially in frontline sales and marketing teams where psychological resilience, creativity, and client relations are essential.

Despite this growing body of evidence, notable gaps remain particularly in localized studies from African corporate environments, pharmaceutical marketing teams, and longitudinal assessments post-COVID-19. The present research thus contributes by addressing these neglected areas, specifically within Nigerian firms SFH Access, Fidson, and May & Baker Plc while investigating how tailored leadership approaches influence employee disengagement in performance-sensitive environments.

Collectively, these studies affirm the critical influence of leadership on quiet quitting behavior. They highlight the effectiveness of emotionally intelligent, participative, and transformational leadership styles in reducing disengagement, particularly in fast-paced, target-driven environments like sales and marketing. However, they also reveal key gaps, such as limited research in African corporate contexts, a shortage of longitudinal studies, and a need for hybrid leadership models that reflect the evolving nature of work. The current study aims to bridge these gaps by focusing specifically on Nigerian pharmaceutical organizations SFH Access, Fidson Healthcare Plc, and May & Baker Plc to examine how context-sensitive leadership styles can help reduce quiet quitting in their sales and marketing departments.

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Gaps in Literature

While a considerable volume of literature has emerged between 2019 and 2025 exploring the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement or withdrawal behaviors, significant gaps remain in terms of scope, context, methodology, and practical applicability particularly when viewed through the lens of sales and marketing functions within the Nigerian pharmaceutical industry.

A predominant limitation in the current body of work is the geographic concentration of empirical studies in Western and East Asian contexts, with little representation from African corporate environments. Most studies on quiet quitting and leadership styles are rooted in organizational cultures of countries such as the United States, Canada, Vietnam, Sweden, China, and Japan. These environments often benefit from more established leadership development systems, stronger employee advocacy cultures, and advanced work-life balance frameworks. As a result, the insights drawn from these contexts may not directly translate to the nuanced challenges faced by Nigerian organizations, which operate under different socio-economic, cultural, and infrastructural constraints. This underscores a critical need for localized research that can capture the socio-cultural dynamics, leadership hierarchies, and employee expectations unique to Nigerian corporate ecosystems.

Furthermore, limited research has been conducted on leadership-employee dynamics within sales and marketing departments specifically. While many studies explore engagement within general organizational settings or in service delivery functions, the fast-paced, target-driven nature of sales and marketing roles presents a distinct context. These departments are often characterized by aggressive key performance indicators (KPIs), fluctuating consumer behavior, and high emotional labor all of which demand unique leadership interventions. Yet, leadership literature has paid insufficient attention to how employees in these roles uniquely experience and respond to quiet quitting, particularly in relation to stress, burnout, and goal misalignment. A deeper exploration of this function-specific context is therefore essential for developing more effective leadership strategies and engagement models.

A related gap exists in terms of industry-specific research, especially within the pharmaceutical and healthcare sector in Nigeria. Organizations like SFH Access, Fidson Healthcare Plc, and May & Baker Nigeria Plc are operating in an increasingly competitive and regulated market. Sales and marketing teams within these firms face the dual pressures of regulatory compliance and consumer persuasion, demanding both technical knowledge and strategic communication. However, despite their strategic importance, employees in these roles remain underrepresented in research on leadership and disengagement. There is a marked absence of empirical data addressing how leadership styles affect engagement, morale, and discretionary effort among pharmaceutical marketers and sales representatives in Nigeria.

Another theoretical shortfall in the literature is the limited exploration of hybrid leadership models that is, leadership approaches that blend the motivational aspects of transformational leadership with the empathetic and people-centered focus of servant leadership. While both models individually have demonstrated strong potential in enhancing employee engagement and reducing quiet quitting, few studies have investigated how these styles can be effectively combined or integrated within a single leadership framework. Given the multifaceted challenges faced by modern sales and marketing teams including technological disruption, emotional exhaustion, and generational shifts in work values a hybrid leadership approach may offer a more robust and context-sensitive solution. However, academic inquiry into such hybridization remains nascent and underdeveloped.

Moreover, there is a notable scarcity of longitudinal research capturing the evolution of quiet quitting over time, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most studies reviewed are cross-sectional, offering only a snapshot of employee engagement at a specific point in time. However, quiet quitting is often a gradual process influenced by shifting leadership practices, evolving organizational policies, and personal experiences over months or even years.

Without longitudinal data, it becomes difficult to track how changes in leadership strategy such as the

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

adoption of more participative or empathetic models impact disengagement trends over the long term. This is especially critical for sales and marketing departments where leadership changes and restructuring are frequent, and where the long-term effects of burnout may not manifest immediately.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how leadership styles influence quiet quitting behaviors in the sales and marketing departments of selected Nigerian pharmaceutical firms. Specifically, the quantitative aspect involved structured questionnaires administered to a purposive sample of employees, while the qualitative component included semi-structured interviews with management staff. This convergent parallel design allowed for triangulation of data, thereby increasing the robustness and reliability of the findings.

The research was rooted in transformational and transactional leadership theories, guiding the formulation of hypotheses, measurement constructs, and analytical frameworks. The study was correlational and explanatory in nature, as it sought to explore the strength and direction of the relationship between leadership styles (independent variable) and quiet quitting reduction (dependent variable).

Study Area

The research was conducted in Nigeria, with a focus on three leading pharmaceutical organizations:

i. SFH Access
ii. Fidson Healthcare Plc
iii. May & Baker Nigeria Plc

These companies were selected due to their prominent presence in the Nigerian healthcare market and their extensive sales and marketing operations, which present fertile grounds for studying leadership dynamics and employee engagement behaviors. The firms have a significant workforce in marketing and sales roles, which are typically high-pressure environments where quiet quitting may be more prevalent.

Study Population

The target population of the study comprised employees working in sales and marketing departments and their direct supervisors or managers within the three pharmaceutical companies. This included roles such as sales representatives, marketing executives, brand managers, area sales managers, and regional marketing heads. These individuals were considered suitable due to their direct involvement in performance-driven roles and their exposure to organizational leadership practices. Estimated population distribution:

i. SFH Access: ~120 sales/marketing personnel
ii. Fidson Healthcare Plc: ~180 sales/marketing personnel
iii. May & Baker Plc: ~160 sales/marketing personnel

Total estimated population: ~460

Sample Population and Sampling Techniques

A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents based on their relevance to the research objectives. Employees and managers who had been in their current roles for a minimum of 1 year were selected to ensure they had adequate experience with the organization's leadership culture.

The study employed the Taro Yamane (1967) formula to determine the minimum required sample size for the quantitative component:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

i. n = sample size
ii. N = population size (460)
iii. e = margin of error (0.05)

$$n = \frac{460}{1 + 460(0.05)^2} \frac{460}{1 + 1.15} = \frac{460}{2.15} = 214$$

To ensure high response accuracy and accommodate for attrition or incomplete questionnaires, 250 respondents were approached. Eventually, 150 valid responses were obtained and analyzed.

In addition, 15 managers were purposively selected for qualitative interviews 5 from each organization.

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Sources of Data Collection

The study relied on primary data sources, collected directly from the target population through structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Secondary data sources, including published journals, company reports, and HR policies, were used to complement and contextualize primary findings, especially in framing leadership styles and employee engagement standards.

Method of Data Collection

Two principal data collection methods were adopted:

A. Structured Questionnaire (Quantitative) A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to sales and marketing staff. This tool was designed using validated leadership and employee engagement scales (e.g., Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire – MLQ, and Employee Disengagement Index).
B. Semi-Structured Interviews (Qualitative) Conducted with middle and senior-level managers, these interviews explored leadership strategies, employee monitoring practices, and leadership impact on disengagement. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for thematic analysis.

Instruments of Data Collection Questionnaire Components:

i Section A: Demographic information (age, gender, position, years of experience)
ii Section B: Leadership styles (Transformational, Transactional, Laissez- faire, Autocratic)
iii Section C: Quiet quitting indicators (withdrawal behaviors, emotional disconnection, reduced discretionary effort)

Measurement scales:

i. Likert-type scale (5-point):
(1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)
ii. Sample Items:
a. "My supervisor encourages innovation and creativity" (Transformational)
b. "I only do the bare minimum expected of me at work" (Quiet quitting indicator)

Interview Guide:

Open-ended questions focused on:

i. Leadership development strategies
ii. Observation of disengagement behaviors
iii. Responses to declining employee motivation

Reliability and Validity of Instruments Reliability:

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha:

i. Transformational Leadership Scale: α = 0.87
ii. Transactional Leadership Scale: α = 0.82
iii. Quiet Quitting Scale: α = 0.85 Values above 0.70 indicated high reliability (Nunnally, 1978).

Validity:

i. Content validity was established through expert reviews by HR professionals and academics in leadership psychology.
ii. Construct validity was ensured via pilot testing on 20 employees from a comparable pharmaceutical firm not included in the final sample.
iii. Face validity was confirmed by evaluating whether the items appropriately captured the constructs being measured.

Method of Data Analysis Quantitative Analysis:

The data gathered via questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS v26. The following techniques were applied:

1. Descriptive Statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution) to summarize respondent characteristics and variable tendencies.
2. Pearson Correlation Analysis to test the relationship between leadership styles and quiet quitting:

$$r = \frac{\sum(xi - \overline{x})(yi - \overline{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(xi - \overline{x})^2 . \sum(yi - \overline{y})^2}}$$

3. Multiple Regression Analysis to assess the extent to which different leadership styles predict quiet quitting behaviors:

$Y = \beta 0 + \beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2 + \beta 3X3 + \epsilon$

Where:

i. Y = Quiet Quitting Score
ii. X1 = Transformational Leadership
iii. X2 = Transactional Leadership
iv. X3 = Laissez-faire Leadership
v. ϵ = Error term

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Qualitative Analysis:
Thematic analysis was used for interview transcripts following Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach:

i. Familiarization with data
ii. Coding
iii. Searching for themes
iv. Reviewing themes
v. Defining and naming themes
vi. Writing up findings

NVivo software was used to assist with coding and theme generation.

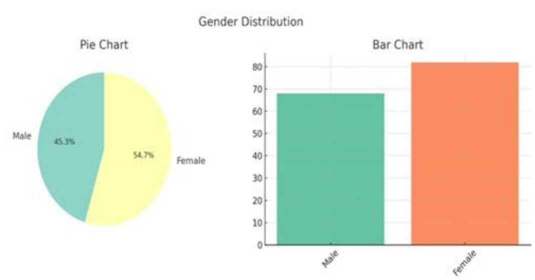
IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Demographic Analysis of Respondents
A total of 150 valid responses were analyzed from employees in sales and marketing departments across SFH Access, Fidson Healthcare Plc, and May &

Baker Nigeria Plc. Below is the demographic breakdown:

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	68	45.3%
	Female	82	54.7%
Age Range	18–25	25	16.7%
	26–35	63	42.0%
	36–45	52	34.7%
	46+	10	6.7%
Educational Level	ND/NCE	22	14.7%
	HND/BSc	85	56.7%
	MSc/MBA	34	22.7%
	PhD	9	6.0%
Years of Experience	Less than 1 year	19	12.7%
	1–3 years	47	31.3%
	4–6 years	40	26.7%
	More than 6 years	44	29.3%
Organization	SFH Access	52	34.7%
	Fidson Healthcare Plc	52	34.7%
	May & Baker Plc	46	30.6%

Interpretation: The data show a relatively balanced distribution across firms and demographics, ensuring fair representation of perspectives.



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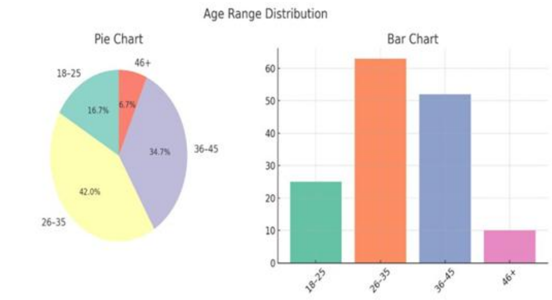

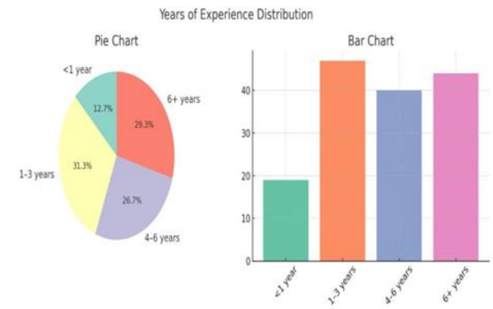

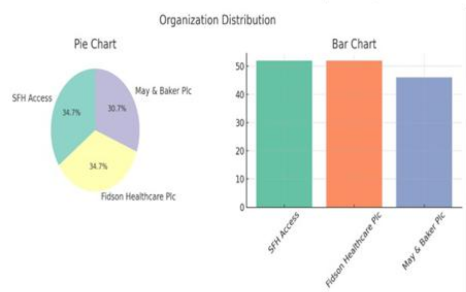

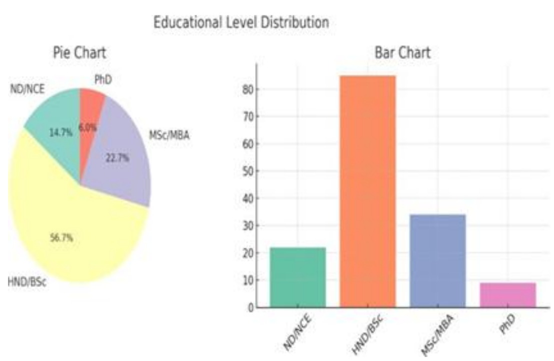

Data Presentation for Each Research Question & Hypothesis

RQ1 & H_{01}: Impact of Transformational Leadership on Quiet Quitting

Pearson Correlation Result:
$r = -0.68$, $p < 0.01$ → strong negative correlation.

Multiple Regression Coefficient:
$\beta = -0.57$, $t = -5.23$, $p = 0.000$

Interpretation: Transformational leadership practices significantly reduce quiet quitting, suggesting that appreciation, purpose, and open communication foster high engagement.

Hypothesis Outcome: Reject H_{01} – There is a statistically significant relationship.

RQ2 & H_{02}: Transactional Leadership and Motivation

Pearson Correlation Result:
$r = -0.34$, $p < 0.05$ → moderate negative correlation.

Multiple Regression Coefficient:
$\beta = -0.24$, $t = -2.81$, $p = 0.005$

Interpretation: Transactional leadership provides a modest but significant reduction in quiet quitting, mostly through structured performance incentives.

Hypothesis Outcome: Reject H_{02}

RQ3 & H_{04}: Laissez-faire Leadership and Quiet Quitting

Pearson Correlation Result:
1) $r = +0.49$, $p < 0.01$ → moderate positive correlation.

Multiple Regression Coefficient:
$\beta = +0.33$, $t = 3.99$, $p = 0.001$

Interpretation: Laissez-faire leadership is positively associated with disengagement; lack of guidance and feedback exacerbates quiet quitting.

Hypothesis Outcome: Reject H_{04}

RQ4 & H_{03}: Leadership Styles and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCB measured via extra-role behavior scale

Correlation Matrix Summary:

i. Transformational Leadership ↔ OCB: $r = +0.61$
ii. Transactional Leadership ↔ OCB: $r = +0.33$

Laissez-faire Leadership ↔ OCB: $r = -0.48$

Interpretation: Leadership styles strongly predict OCB which inversely correlates with quiet quitting.

Hypothesis Outcome: Reject H_{03}

RQ5 & H_{05}: Perceived Leadership Practices for Engagement

Interview Findings (Qualitative Themes):

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

Theme	Emergent Insights
Open Communication	Managers who regularly checked in and shared company updates reduced silent withdrawal.
Recognition and Feedback	Respondents favored leadership that acknowledged small wins regularly.
Autonomy with Accountability	Employees cited self-direction plus guidance as ideal.
Negative Cases of Disengagement	Most linked to leadership avoidance or dictatorial tendencies.

Integrated Analysis: Quantitative and qualitative results converge, emphasizing transformational leadership (purpose, communication, recognition) as the most effective.

Hypothesis Outcome: Reject H_{05}

Discussion of Findings
This study has confirmed that transformational leadership significantly reduces quiet quitting by fostering engagement, intrinsic motivation, and positive work identity. This finding aligns with previous studies by Vezyridis & Georgiadou (2025) and Trang & Trang (2024), who found psychological empowerment through visionary leadership reduced withdrawal behaviors.

Transactional leadership also helps, though to a lesser extent mainly via extrinsic motivators such as rewards and performance-based structures. However, its impact is less sustainable in promoting deeper employee commitment and discretionary behaviors (OCB).

Laissez-faire leadership showed the most damaging association with disengagement. Employees under passive leadership frequently cited absence of direction, unclear expectations, and emotional disconnection, echoing the findings of Kobak (2023) and Lu et al. (2023).

Qualitative interviews emphasized the value of relational leadership traits trust, openness, empathy as key drivers of motivation and engagement in high-stress sales environments.

Summary Table: Hypothesis Testing Results Hypothesis Statement Decision No relationship between

H_{01}	transformational leadership and quiet quitting	Rejected
H_{02}	Transactional leadership has no	Rejected
Hypothesis	Statement	Decision
	significant impact	
H_{03}	No significant association between autocratic leadership and quiet quitting	Rejected
H_{04}	Laissez-faire leadership does not predict disengagement	Rejected
H_{05}	Leadership styles do not significantly affect quiet quitting collectively	Rejected

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings
This study was undertaken to investigate the role of leadership styles in mitigating the growing phenomenon of quiet quitting within the sales and marketing departments of three prominent Nigerian pharmaceutical companies: SFH Access, Fidson Healthcare Plc, and May & Baker Nigeria Plc. The research was grounded in established theories of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership, which provided the theoretical lens through which the employee–leader dynamics were examined.

A mixed-methods approach was employed to collect and analyze data from 150 sales and marketing professionals and 15 managers. Quantitative data was gathered through structured questionnaires, while qualitative insights were obtained from semi-structured interviews. The results were analyzed using

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV9I7-1713437

SPSS v26, with Pearson correlation, multiple regression analysis, and thematic content analysis used to test hypotheses and answer the five research questions.

Key Findings:

i Transformational Leadership: This leadership style had the strongest negative correlation with quiet quitting behavior. Employees under transformational leaders those who are visionary, empathetic, and communicative reported significantly higher engagement levels, greater job satisfaction, and more frequent discretionary behaviors (OCB). Key behaviors such as recognizing employee achievements, involving team members in goal setting, and fostering purpose were found to discourage disengagement effectively.

ii Transactional Leadership: While not as impactful as transformational leadership, transactional leadership was found to moderately reduce quiet quitting, primarily through clear goal-setting and reward-based systems. However, its influence was largely dependent on the consistency and fairness of the reward structure. It was effective in sustaining compliance but less effective in promoting extra-role behaviors or deep emotional commitment.

iii Laissez-Faire Leadership: This leadership style had a statistically significant positive correlation with quiet quitting. Employees under laissez-faire leaders expressed feelings of abandonment, confusion, and lack of recognition. The absence of strategic direction and feedback contributed heavily to emotional disengagement and withdrawal from organizational participation beyond minimal requirements.

iv Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB): The study revealed a strong positive relationship between leadership style and OCB. Transformational leaders, in particular, encouraged behaviors like teamwork, initiative-taking, and organizational loyalty, which in turn significantly reduced the likelihood of quiet quitting.

v Perceived Effective Practices: Employees and managers identified regular feedback, purposeful communication, participative decision-making, mentorship, and managerial presence as the most effective practices to maintain engagement. These were all hallmarks of transformational and servant leadership models.

Conclusion

The study concludes that leadership style is a fundamental determinant in either enabling or preventing quiet quitting in high-demand work environments like sales and marketing. The findings confirm that:

i. Transformational leadership is the most effective style for cultivating motivation, loyalty, and emotional commitment.
ii. Transactional leadership, when practiced consistently, is adequate for maintaining minimal engagement, but does not necessarily foster discretionary effort.
iii. Laissez-faire leadership is counterproductive, resulting in disengagement, confusion, and quiet quitting tendencies.

In the context of Nigeria's pharmaceutical sector where performance pressure is intense and staff burnout is frequent the leadership style adopted by supervisors and managers can significantly affect not only the mental well-being of employees but also the overall productivity of the sales force.

Therefore, companies must re-evaluate their leadership pipelines and invest in styles that emphasize employee empowerment, transparency, trust, and vision. Quiet quitting is not merely an employee issue it is often a leadership failure.

Recommendations

Adopt a Transformational Servant Hybrid Model
Combine the visionary and motivating traits of transformational leadership with the empathetic and support-driven approach of servant leadership. This dual model helps employees feel both purpose-driven and personally valued.

Institutionalize Feedback Culture
Establish feedback as a core managerial responsibility. This includes regular performance check-ins, constructive developmental feedback, and immediate recognition of employee contributions to reduce emotional disengagement.

Leadership Training and Capacity Building
Equip managers and team leads with soft-skill training such as active listening, coaching, and emotional intelligence to ensure they are not only operationally sound but also relationally effective.

Accountability Mechanisms for Managerial Absenteeism
Create internal reporting tools that track managerial involvement, such as 360-degree evaluations, to deter laissez-faire tendencies and ensure that leaders are present, proactive, and participative.

Disengagement Monitoring Tools
Use pulse surveys, OCB trackers, and behavioral dashboards to detect early signs of quiet quitting, including reduced meeting participation, lack of enthusiasm, or avoidance of extra-role responsibilities.

Suggestions for Further Studies
Although this study contributes significantly to the literature on leadership and quiet quitting, some limitations point toward opportunities for future research:

i. Longitudinal Studies: Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to track how leadership interventions affect quiet quitting behaviors over time, particularly post-COVID or during organizational restructuring.
ii. Cross-Industry Comparative Studies: Conduct similar research across different industries such as banking, tech, or logistics to examine if the influence of leadership style on quiet quitting varies by sector.
iii. Remote Work Influence on Quiet Quitting: As hybrid and remote work continue to grow, future studies should explore how leadership styles translate into virtual work environments and whether quiet quitting manifests differently.
iv. AI-Based Behavioral Analytics: Incorporate AI tools to analyze behavioral signals such as email response delays, attendance patterns, and productivity fluctuations to detect early disengagement more objectively.
v. Cultural Leadership Models in African Contexts: There is a gap in understanding how traditional African leadership values (such as communalism, respect hierarchy, or Ubuntu) impact employee engagement and leadership effectiveness.

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