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CHANGE FATIGUE AND QUIET QUITTING IN AIRPORT GROUND HANDLING: A PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the association between change fatigue and quiet quitting among airport ground handling employees and tested the moderating role of psychological resilience. Data were collected through online surveys completed by 394 employees from Group A ground handling companies at Istanbul Airport and Sabiha Gökçen Airport. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to assess the measurement structure, while Pearson correlation analysis, hierarchical regression, and PROCESS Macro Model 1 were used to test the hypotheses. The findings showed that change fatigue was positively associated with quiet quitting. Psychological resilience was negatively associated with quiet quitting, and the positive association between change fatigue and quiet quitting became weaker at higher levels of psychological resilience. Simple slope analysis indicated that the association was stronger when psychological resilience was low, weaker at the mean level of resilience, and statistically nonsignificant when psychological resilience was high. The results are consistent with the JD-R model and COR theory. The study suggests that accumulated change-related strain may be reflected in reduced discretionary effort, while psychological resilience may function as a protective personal resource in safety-sensitive and high-tempo airport ground handling operations. By extending change fatigue and quiet quitting research to airport ground handling, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating the buffering role of psychological resilience in a safety-sensitive operational context.

Keywords: airport ground handling, change fatigue, psychological resilience, quiet quitting

HAVALİMANI YER HİZMETLERİNDE DEĞİŞİM YORGUNLUĞU VE SESSİZ İSTİFA: PSİKOLOJİK DAYANIKLILIK PERSPEKTİFİ

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, havalimanı yer hizmetleri çalışanlarında değişim yorgunluğu ile sessiz istifa arasındaki ilişkiyi ve psikolojik dayanıklılığın bu ilişkideki düzenleyici rolünü incelemektedir. Araştırma, İstanbul Havalimanı ve Sabiha Gökçen Havalimanı'nda faaliyet gösteren A Grubu yer hizmetleri şirketlerinde çalışan 394 personelden çevrim içi anket yoluyla elde edilen verilere dayanmaktadır. Ölçüm yapısını değerlendirmek amacıyla doğrulayıcı faktör analizi uygulanmış; hipotezler Pearson korelasyon analizi, hiyerarşik regresyon analizi ve PROCESS Macro Model 1 aracılığıyla test edilmiştir. Bulgular, değişim yorgunluğunun sessiz istifa ile pozitif yönde ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. Psikolojik dayanıklılık ise sessiz istifa ile negatif yönde ilişkili bulunmuş ve psikolojik dayanıklılık düzeyi arttıkça değişim yorgunluğu ile sessiz istifa arasındaki pozitif ilişkinin zayıfladığı görülmüştür. Basit eğim analizi, bu ilişkinin psikolojik dayanıklılık düşük olduğunda daha güçlü, ortalama düzeyde daha zayıf ve yüksek psikolojik dayanıklılık düzeyinde istatistiksel olarak anlamsız olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuçlar, İş Talepleri-Kaynakları Modeli ve Kaynakların Korunumu Kuramı ile tutarlıdır. Çalışma, birikmiş değişim kaynaklı zorlanmanın yer hizmetleri çalışanlarında gönüllü katkının azalmasıyla ilişkili olabileceğine; psikolojik dayanıklılığın ise emniyet duyarlı ve yüksek tempolu havalimanı yer hizmetleri operasyonlarında koruyucu bir kişisel kaynak olarak değerlendirilebileceğine işaret etmektedir. Bu yönüyle çalışma, değişim yorgunluğu ve sessiz istifa ilişkisini havalimanı yer hizmetleri bağlamında ele alarak psikolojik dayanıklılığın emniyet duyarlı operasyonlardaki koruyucu rolünü ortaya koyması bakımından literatüre özgün katkı sunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: değişim yorgunluğu, havalimanı yer hizmetleri, psikolojik dayanıklılık, sessiz istifa

1. Introduction

Airport ground handling is a critical part of the aviation service chain. It includes tasks that must be completed within limited time, under strict safety rules, and through close coordination among different teams (Muecklich et al., 2023). Ground handling work has been examined as an important part of the civil aviation cycle, where safety culture and coordination are central to safe performance (Ek & Akselsson, 2007). Employees in airport settings may also face demanding work conditions, time pressure, shift-based work, and job-related strain (Baeriswyl et al., 2016). Therefore, ground handling is not only a routine service activity. It is also a work setting in which standardized procedures and repeated adaptation demands are experienced together.

Airport operations have been affected by digital systems, automation practices, revised service procedures, and capacity-driven process changes. Digital change in airports has been linked to organizational readiness, innovation, airport size, and the broader transformation of airport processes (Halpern et al., 2021). Digital technologies in airport ground operations have also been discussed in relation to automated service data, big data, wearable technologies, and process efficiency in ground handling activities (Kovynyov & Mikut, 2019). These changes are not limited to managerial planning. They may also be reflected in daily work through updated reporting tools, equipment use, safety briefings, task flows, and coordination practices.

For this reason, a change in ground handling should not be understood only as strategic restructuring. It may also be experienced as repeated operational adaptation in the daily work environment. A new system, a revised safety instruction, a changed reporting procedure, or an updated task sequence may require employees to adjust their work (Halpern et al., 2021; Kovynyov & Mikut, 2019). When such changes accumulate, they may create a psychological burden. This burden is closely related to change fatigue. Change fatigue refers to the strain that may emerge when employees are repeatedly exposed to change and feel that their capacity to adapt has weakened (Bernerth et al., 2011; McMillan & Perron, 2020).

From the perspective of the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model, repeated change can be interpreted as a job demand when it requires additional effort, attention, and learning from employees (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Demerouti et al. (2001) also stated that job demands may consume energy when sustained physical or psychological effort is required. In airport ground handling, this demand may become more visible because adaptation is expected while time pressure, physical workload, and safety responsibility continue. In this sense, change fatigue may reflect more than a negative attitude toward change. It may also signal a reduced capacity to adapt under demanding work conditions.

The same issue can be explained through the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. According to COR theory, individuals try to protect their remaining resources when they experience or anticipate resource loss (Hobfoll, 1989). Later developments in the theory also show that stress is more likely when valued resources are threatened, lost, or not sufficiently restored (Hobfoll et al., 2018). In this study, time, attention, emotional energy, and perceived control are considered important resources for ground handling employees. Repeated operational changes may weaken these resources. As a result, employees may become less willing to invest additional effort in their work role.

Quiet quitting has been discussed as a form of work withdrawal in which employees remain in the organization but limit their contribution to the formal requirements of the job (Formica & Sfodera, 2022; Serenko, 2024). Galanis et al. (2023) also defined quiet quitting through reduced voluntary effort and extra-role behavior rather than actual resignation. In airport ground handling, this concept should be used carefully. Quiet quitting does not mean ignoring safety rules or moving away from standard procedures. Such an interpretation would not be compatible with aviation safety.

In this context, quiet quitting may be reflected in declines in voluntary support, extra attentiveness, proactive communication, handover quality, and willingness to help coworkers. It may also appear as a lower readiness to contribute beyond minimum task requirements during operational disruptions. These forms of discretionary effort

are meaningful even in standardized work settings. Safe and efficient ground operations depend not only on formal compliance. They also depend on vigilance, cooperation, and coordination among employees (Ek & Akselsson, 2007). Demanding airport work conditions may also shape employee strain and job attitudes (Baeriswyl et al., 2016).

The possible link between change fatigue and quiet quitting can therefore be explained through a resource-based logic. When repeated change depletes employees' psychological resources, they may try to conserve their remaining energy by narrowing their work roles. This response does not necessarily lead to turnover. Employees may continue to perform required duties while reducing voluntary effort and emotional involvement. Quiet quitting has also been interpreted as a response to unmet recognition and excessive expectations in the workplace (Corbin & Flenady, 2024). In this sense, quiet quitting may be viewed as a self-protective response to accumulated strain rather than a simple lack of motivation.

Psychological resilience may play a protective role in this process. Resilience has been described as the capacity to adapt, recover, and maintain functioning under stress and adversity (Masten, 2001; Southwick et al., 2014). In organizational settings, resilience has also been considered a personal resource that helps employees maintain functioning in the face of uncertainty and demanding work conditions (Hartmann et al., 2020). Thus, resilient employees may be better able to regulate their emotional responses, reinterpret stressful events, and continue investing effort despite pressure. In airport ground handling, this capacity may be important because employees are expected to sustain attention, cooperation, and service quality while dealing with both operational pressure and repeated adaptation demands.

Although change fatigue, quiet quitting, and psychological resilience have been examined in different streams of organizational research, their relationship has received limited attention in airport ground handling. Previous studies have provided important evidence on change fatigue in organizational settings (Bernerth et al., 2011). Quiet quitting has also been examined as a new form of employee withdrawal (Serenko, 2024). However, less is known about how change fatigue is associated with quiet quitting among frontline employees working in standardized and safety sensitive airport operations. This gap is important because ground handling employees are exposed not only to traditional job demands, such as workload and time pressure. They are also required to adapt to repeated procedural, technological, and operational changes that shape their daily work.

Against this background, this study examines whether change fatigue is associated with quiet quitting among airport ground handling employees and whether psychological resilience moderates this relationship. The study does not claim a causal process based on cross-sectional data. Rather, it tests whether the observed pattern is consistent with the JD-R model and COR theory. The study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, it clarifies why change fatigue is a relevant concept for ground handling employees by framing change as repeated operational adaptation rather than only strategic organizational restructuring. Second, it explains how quiet quitting may appear in a procedural aviation context without implying safety rule violations. Third, it examines psychological resilience as a personal resource that may weaken the association between change fatigue and quiet quitting.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Change fatigue

Change fatigue is defined as a subjective condition characterized by employees' perceptions of "excessive change," stress, burnout, and reduced capacity to adapt to change as a result of the cumulative impact of rapid, successive, and extensive change initiatives within organizations (Bernerth et al., 2011; de Vries & de Vries, 2023). McMillan and Perron (2020) also described change fatigue as a psychological burden that may emerge when employees are repeatedly exposed to change. In the original study introducing the construct, change fatigue was conceptualized as a single-factor structure and showed meaningful links with job-related attitudes, including burnout and organizational commitment (Bernerth et al., 2011). In this respect, change fatigue differs from change specific

cynicism. Cynicism primarily reflects negative beliefs and attributions based on past experiences, whereas change fatigue refers to the emotional strain and resource depletion triggered by the frequency, uncertainty, and intensity of change (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006; Wanous et al., 2000). As the perceived frequency and scope of organizational change increase, employees may appraise change as a threat rather than a challenge (Rafferty & Jimmieson, 2017). Thus, change fatigue should not be treated as simple resistance to change. It is better understood as an early sign that employees' adaptive capacity has begun to weaken.

The JD-R model and COR theory provide a useful basis for explaining this process. In the JD-R model, repeated change may become a job demand when it requires additional attention, learning, coordination, and emotional effort. Antwi et al. (2019) showed that change related demands may function as hindrance stressors and may weaken employee engagement. COR theory also suggests that constant waves of change may erode valued resources such as time, energy, competence, and perceived control (Hobfoll, 1989). When these resources are threatened, employees may try to protect what remains rather than invest further effort (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). In this sense, change fatigue may prepare the ground for lower extra-role effort. Galanis et al. (2023) associated quiet quitting with reduced voluntary contributions and going beyond formal job requirements. Therefore, quiet quitting can be viewed as a possible behavioral response to accumulated strain rather than a sudden or isolated reaction.

This argument is especially relevant to airport ground handling, but it should be carefully framed. Ground handling employees do not usually design change strategies or make managerial change decisions. However, they may experience change through daily operational consequences. Digital systems, revised reporting practices, new equipment procedures, updated safety briefings, and changing task sequences may alter how work is performed. Digital change at airports has been linked with changes in organizational readiness and airport processes (Halpern et al., 2021). Digital technologies have also been discussed in relation to automated service data, big data, wearable technologies, and process efficiency in airport ground operations (Kovynyov & Mikut, 2019). Therefore, change fatigue in this context does not only refer to formal restructuring. It may also refer to the cumulative burden of repeated operational adaptations in a standardized, safety-sensitive work setting.

This form of fatigue becomes more critical in airport ground handling, where a 24/7 operational rhythm, physical workload, and intense time pressure stemming from aircraft turnaround times shape the work environment. Aviation related studies indicate that demanding airport work conditions may reduce job satisfaction and increase withdrawal-oriented responses among employees (Baeriswyl et al., 2016; Tam & Trang, 2024). When repeated procedural and technological changes are added to these demands, employees may feel less able to maintain the same level of attention, energy, and voluntary contribution. Beaulieu et al. (2023) similarly emphasized that repeated change may create cumulative strain in service settings where employees must continue working while adapting. The scale developed by Bernerth et al. (2011) remains one of the most widely used measures of change fatigue. Its single factor structure and internal consistency have also been supported in the Turkish context (Ekingen & Yıldız, 2021). In addition, employee characteristics such as non-cognitive skills and psychological resilience may reduce the negative consequences of change fatigue (Li & Mao, 2014; Volchenko et al., 2021). For this reason, change fatigue may be considered an important warning signal in airport ground handling. It may indicate that repeated operational adaptation has begun to create psychological costs that can weaken voluntary effort and support withdrawal-oriented behaviors such as quiet quitting (Kim & Sohn, 2024).

2.2. Quiet quitting

Quiet quitting refers to a pattern of workplace disengagement in which employees fulfill only the formal requirements of the job and reduce voluntary contributions. It is marked by lower extra-role effort and weaker cognitive or emotional involvement in work (Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2024). Magrizos et al. (2026) also treated quiet quitting as a form of reduced work involvement rather than actual resignation. Thus, quiet quitting does not refer to turnover behavior.

It reflects a narrowing of the work role and a decline in discretionary effort (Galanis et al., 2023). It should also be distinguished from a change in cynicism and resistance. Change in cynicism reflects negative beliefs and attributions shaped by prior unfavorable experiences, whereas resistance refers more directly to an intention to oppose change (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006; Wanous et al., 2000). Quiet quitting, by contrast, is observed through the systematic reduction of voluntary contribution while the employee remains in the organization.

From a theoretical standpoint, quiet quitting can be conceptualized as a resource conservation response within the framework of COR theory. According to Hobfoll (1989), individuals try to protect their valued resources when they face resource loss or the threat of further loss. When chronic stressors such as change fatigue deplete employees' energy and cognitive resources, they may reduce their effort to the minimum acceptable standards. This may help them avoid a deeper loss cycle. Rafferty and Griffin (2006) also showed that threatening appraisals of change may lead to negative employee responses. For this reason, quiet quitting differs from burnout as a psychological condition and from turnover intention as a future-oriented intention. It can be understood as an attempt to draw a psychological boundary while remaining within the organization (Galanis et al., 2023; Serenko, 2024).

The meaning of quiet quitting should be framed carefully in airport ground handling. Ground handling is a standardized and safety-sensitive work setting. Therefore, quiet quitting should not be interpreted as ignoring procedures, violating safety rules, or avoiding mandatory duties. In this context, it may appear as a decline in voluntary support, extra attentiveness, proactive communication, shift handover quality, and willingness to help coworkers. It may also be reflected in lower readiness to contribute beyond minimum task requirements during operational disruptions. This distinction is important because discretionary effort can still exist in procedural work. Safe and efficient airport operations depend not only on formal compliance, but also on coordination, cooperation, and careful communication among employees. Demanding airport work conditions and time pressure may increase employee strain (Baeriswyl et al., 2016). In a similar way, hindrance demands may reduce enthusiasm and foster withdrawal-oriented responses (Antwi et al., 2019).

Quiet quitting may become more salient when a heavy workload, role ambiguity, digital change, and unstable work conditions are experienced together. Galanis et al. (2024) associated quiet quitting with organizational factors such as workload and role ambiguity. In airport operations, high-paced demands and difficult interactions may also reduce job satisfaction and increase withdrawal tendencies (Tam & Trang, 2024). At the same time, individual and social resources may reduce this risk. Non-cognitive skills and proactive tendencies may help employees maintain effort under demanding conditions (Li & Mao, 2014; Volchenko et al., 2021). Psychological safety and procedural fairness may also support engagement and reduce tendencies toward disengagement (Kim & Sohn, 2024). Therefore, quiet quitting in airport ground handling should be treated as a relevant employee withdrawal response. It may weaken voluntary support, service quality, affective commitment, and cooperative action if it is not addressed through clear communication and supportive work practices (Georgiadou et al., 2025).

2.3. Psychological resilience

Psychological resilience refers to an individual's capacity to adapt, recover, and sustain functioning when facing adversity, chronic stress, or traumatic experiences. Bonanno (2004) showed that many individuals can maintain relatively stable functioning after highly adverse events, while Masten (2001) described resilience as an adaptive process rather than an extraordinary personal trait. Southwick et al. (2014) emphasized that resilience is shaped by individual, social, and contextual factors. In organizational behavior, resilience has been treated as a valuable psychological resource that helps employees maintain effective functioning under demanding work conditions (Avey et al., 2009; Hartmann et al., 2020). In work settings marked by uncertainty and repeated change, this capacity may help employees preserve psychological resources and respond more constructively to stressors. Empirical research also shows that resilience is associated

with more favorable responses to organizational change and may reduce the adverse effects of stress on work-related attitudes and behaviors (Shin et al., 2012).

At the process level, psychological resilience is supported by active coping and self-regulatory capacities such as cognitive reappraisal, emotion regulation, and stress management (Polizzi & Lynn, 2021; Stover et al., 2024). Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) argued that resilience should be examined through the interaction between risk factors and protective resources. This view is relevant to airport ground handling because employees may experience operational pressure and repeated adaptation demands at the same time. Fredrickson and Joiner (2002) also suggested that positive emotions can contribute to the development of personal resources and strengthen recovery from stressful experiences. In organizational behavior, resilience is considered a core component of Psychological Capital, alongside hope, self-efficacy, and optimism (Luthans et al., 2006a; Luthans et al., 2006b; Youssef & Luthans, 2007). Studies in this line indicate that psychological resources are associated with job satisfaction, engagement, and performance (Basım & Çetin, 2011; Bitmiş et al., 2013). Longitudinal evidence further suggests that resilience can reduce the negative effects of job insecurity and continuing threats on employees (Probst et al., 2017).

The Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model provides a suitable basis for explaining the role of resilience in this study. Psychological resilience can be considered a personal resource that helps employees cope with hindrance demands and protect their energy (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In airport ground handling, this resource may be important because employees are expected to sustain attention, coordination, and service quality under time pressure, shift-based work, and safety responsibility. Resilience may help employees regulate emotional reactions and maintain effort when procedural or technological changes create additional strain. Consistent with aviation and organizational behavior research, non-cognitive skills and psychological resources may help employees remain engaged under demanding conditions (Li & Mao, 2014; Volchenko et al., 2021). Therefore, psychological resilience may weaken the association between change fatigue and quiet quitting by helping ground handling employees preserve effort, cooperation, and work involvement during repeated operational adaptation.

2.4. Relationships among change fatigue, quiet quitting, and psychological resilience

Change fatigue may be associated with quiet quitting because both concepts are linked to employees' psychological resources. Change fatigue reflects mental and emotional depletion that emerges when employees are repeatedly exposed to change and begin to perceive "too much change" in the organization (Bernerth et al., 2011; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Workload, uncertainty, loss of control, and limited psychological resources may strengthen this strain (Antwi et al., 2019). Rafferty and Griffin (2006) argued that employees may appraise organizational change either as a challenge or as a threat. When change is appraised as threatening, negative work responses may become more likely (Fugate et al., 2012). In airport ground handling, this process may be more visible because aircraft turnaround pressure, safety requirements, and recurring procedural updates are experienced together. Under such conditions, change fatigue may signal that employees have fewer psychological resources for adaptation, problem-solving, and voluntary contributions. This may increase the tendency to narrow the work role and reduce extra effort (Baeriswyl et al., 2016; Bernerth et al., 2011).

Quiet quitting can be understood as one possible withdrawal-oriented response to this resource strain. It refers to a situation in which employees remain in the organization and continue to fulfill their formal duties but reduce their voluntary contributions and extra-role behaviors (Hamouche et al., 2023; Serenko, 2024). From the perspective of COR theory, individuals try to conserve and protect their resources when they experience resource loss or the threat of further loss (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Therefore, quiet quitting may be interpreted as a protective strategy through which employees limit further investment of energy and attention. In airport ground handling, this does not mean avoiding mandatory duties or violating procedures.

Rather, it may appear as lower willingness to help coworkers, weaker proactive communication, reduced shift handover quality, and less voluntary effort during operational disruptions. Digitalization, staffing pressure, and labor force instability may also increase the psychological load experienced in ground handling services (Tam & Trang, 2024; Wandelt & Wang, 2024). Dilekçi et al. (2025) also reported a positive relationship between change fatigue and quiet quitting in teachers. This finding suggests that repeated change may be linked with withdrawal-oriented responses across different occupational settings.

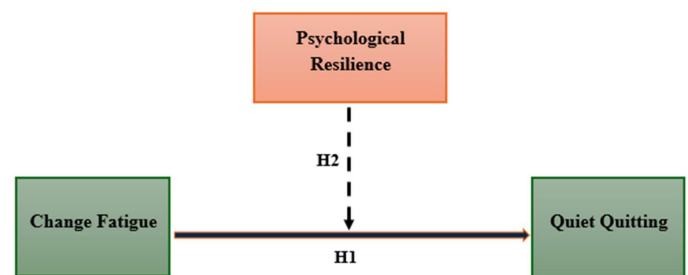
Psychological resilience may act as a boundary condition in this relationship. In the JD-R model, personal resources help employees cope with demanding work conditions and support positive adaptation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) also emphasized that personal resources may shape employees' responses to job demands. Psychological resilience is one of these resources because it supports recovery and adjustment in stressful and uncertain situations (Hartmann et al., 2020). Employees with higher resilience may evaluate stressful work experiences as more manageable. They may also regulate their emotions and reinterpret difficulties more effectively (Polizzi & Lynn, 2021). Research in positive organizational behavior shows that resilience is associated with job satisfaction, engagement, and performance (Luthans et al., 2006a; Luthans et al., 2006b). Longitudinal evidence also indicates that resilience may reduce the negative effects of job insecurity and other continuing threats on employees (Probst et al., 2017).

For airport ground handling employees, resilience may be especially important because operational pressure and repeated adaptation demands are experienced at the same time. Evidence from the service sector suggests that resilience can reduce adverse psychological responses to stress and uncertainty (Aguiar-Quintana et al., 2021). Aviation related studies also indicate that psychological distress may harm frontline employee performance, while individual and organizational resources may reduce burnout and strain (Tam & Trang, 2024; Tung & Ramasamy, 2026). Based on this reasoning, employees with higher psychological resilience may be less likely to respond to change fatigue by reducing their voluntary effort. In other words, psychological resilience is expected to weaken the positive association between change fatigue and quiet quitting. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were developed:

H1: Change fatigue is positively associated with quiet quitting.

H2: Psychological resilience moderates the relationship between change fatigue and quiet quitting.

Figure 1 | Conceptual model of the study



3. Materials and methods

3.1. Research ethics

Ethics committee approval for this study was granted by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee for the Social and Human Sciences of the Rectorate of Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University with decision no. 2025/05, dated 10 September 2025 (document no. 269427).

3.2. Population and sample

This study was designed as a cross-sectional quantitative study. The data were collected at a single point in time. Therefore, the findings were interpreted as relational and predictive patterns rather than causal evidence. This study investigates change fatigue, quiet quitting and psychological resilience in employees of Group A ground handling

companies operating in Turkey. The focus on Group A companies was appropriate because these companies represent a highly intensive segment of ground handling services. Their operations involve passenger services, ramp processes, baggage handling, coordination tasks, safety procedures, and service continuity. For this reason, procedural, technological, safety-related, and human resources-based changes are more visible in daily work. These companies are responsible for the continuity of aviation transportation processes, which is one of the areas most frequently impacted by changes such as digitization, process reengineering, changes in safety policies, and human resources practices. Accordingly, Group A ground handling employees were considered a relevant population for examining change fatigue as a form of repeated operational adaptation. However, this sampling frame also limits the direct generalization of the findings to Group B or Group C ground handling companies.

The sample in this study comprises ground handling personnel working at Istanbul Airport (IST) and Sabiha Gökçen Airport (SAW). These airports are among the largest air travel hubs in Turkey in terms of passenger traffic. They are also settings where capacity pressure, technological change, service intensity, and infrastructure-related adjustments may become more visible in daily operations. The data were collected through convenience sampling because of constraints on employees' working conditions and shift-based work schedules, which made online surveys feasible in their work environment.

Using Gürbüz and Şahin (2018) and Cohen et al. (2000) as guides, data are typically sampled with at least 384 people for populations of 100,000 or more to provide a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error. Accordingly, the survey data were collected from 408 employees who agreed to participate. Between September 2025 and December 2025, the surveys were distributed online. The incomplete responses were excluded from the survey, yielding 394 valid completed questionnaires for the analysis phase of the study.

Table 1 | Demographic data

Variable	Category	n	%	Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	173	43.9	Education Level	High school	68	17.3
	Male	221	56.1		Associate degree	142	36.0
Age	18-23	31	7.9	Bachelor's degree		156	39.6
	24-29	129	32.7		Postgraduate (Master's/ PhD)	28	7.1
	30-35	134	34.0	Experience	< 1 year	24	6.1
	36-41	74	18.8		1-4 years	145	36.8
	42 and +	26	6.6		4-8 years	115	29.2
Marital Status	Married	207	52.5		8-12 years	70	17.8
	Single	187	47.5		12-16 years	20	5.1
					16+ years	20	5.1

An examination of the demographic data presented in Table 1 indicates that participants aged 24-35 constituted the largest proportion of the sample (n = 263; 66.7%). In terms of gender distribution, 56.1% of participants were male (n = 221) and 43.9% were female (n = 173). With respect to educational attainment, the largest group consisted of participants with a bachelor's degree (n = 156; 39.6%). Regarding marital status, 52.5% of the participants were married (n = 207), whereas 47.5% were single (n = 187). In terms of professional experience, employees with 1 to 8 years of tenure represented 66.0% of the total sample (n = 260).

Because all data were collected from the same respondents through self-report instruments, common method bias was assessed through several complementary procedures. Harman's single factor test was first conducted. Full collinearity VIF values were then examined following Kock's (2015) full collinearity assessment approach. Finally, a common latent factor was added to the measurement model as a sensitivity analysis. The numerical results of these procedures are reported in the Findings section.

3.3. Data collection instruments

The data were collected through an online survey prepared by considering the work context of airport ground handling. This context is characterized by shift-based work, time pressure, and limited access to employees during working hours. Before distributing the survey, permission was obtained to use the relevant scales. The survey consisted of four parts. These parts included demographic questions and the scales for change fatigue, quiet quitting, and psychological resilience.

The change fatigue scale developed by Bernerth et al. (2011) and adapted to Turkish by Ekingen and Yıldız (2021) was used to assess change fatigue. The scale is composed of six items scored on a seven-point agreement scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scale measures the extent to which employees feel worn out by repeated organizational changes. In this study, the scale's reliability was calculated at 0.857.

Quiet quitting was measured using Akduman's (2025) quiet quitting scale. The final form of the scale includes seven items with five-point Likert type response options. The scale measures employees' tendency to perform only the minimum level required by their job and to reduce extra-role behaviors. Although the scale was originally developed in a white-collar employee context, its items focus on minimum role performance and reduced discretionary effort. These behavioral expressions were considered applicable to airport ground handling employees because the study interprets quiet quitting as reduced voluntary contribution rather than non-compliance with formal duties. The reliability score for this scale was 0.882 in the study sample.

Psychological resilience was measured with the Brief Resilience Scale developed by Smith et al. (2008) and adapted to Turkish by Doğan (2015). The scale consists of six items with five-point Likert type response options. It measures the tendency to recover from adversity, stress, and difficult experiences. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.828 was obtained for the scale in this research.

3.4. Data analysis

Frequency analyses were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the participants. The study variables were examined through descriptive statistics, normality values, reliability coefficients, correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and moderation analysis. To evaluate the reliability of each scale in the sample, internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were calculated based on the standardized factor loadings obtained from AMOS.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine whether the previously validated factor structures of the scales were supported in the present sample. Standard goodness-of-fit indices were used to evaluate the measurement models. The fit indices included χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, GFI, AGFI, NFI, RMR, SRMR, RMSEA, CR, and AVE, where relevant. Pearson correlation analysis was then used to examine the relationships among the study variables.

The moderating effect was tested through hierarchical regression analysis and PROCESS Macro Model 1. Bootstrap estimation with 5,000 resamples was employed, and the findings were reported with 95% confidence intervals. To interpret the interaction effect more clearly, simple slope analyses were performed at low, average, and high levels of psychological resilience.

In response to the methodological concern that demographic characteristics may influence the main relationships, additional models were tested with control variables. Gender, age, marital status, education level, and professional experience were included as control variables. These demographic variables were included because prior organizational behavior research suggests that work attitudes and withdrawal-related tendencies may vary by demographic and career-stage characteristics. These variables were entered in the first step of the hierarchical regression model. Change fatigue and psychological resilience were entered in the second step. The interaction term was entered in the final step. The same covariates were also included in the PROCESS Model 1 analysis. This strategy allowed the main interaction effect to be examined after accounting for relevant demographic

characteristics.

Because the data were cross-sectional, the analyses were not interpreted as evidence of causality. The regression and moderation results were used to assess whether the observed pattern was consistent with the theoretical expectations based on the JD-R model and COR theory.

4. Findings

This section presents the measurement analyses, reliability and normality results, correlation findings, common method bias checks, and moderation analyses. Since previously validated scales were used, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was first conducted to examine whether the expected factor structures were supported in the present sample. Model fit was evaluated through CMIN/df, CFI, TLI, NFI, RFI, RMSEA, RMR, SRMR, GFI, and AGFI, where applicable, in line with commonly accepted fit criteria (Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003). Convergent validity was assessed through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR). AVE values of .50 or higher, CR values of .70 or higher, and CR values greater than AVE were accepted as evidence of convergent validity and reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The CFA results for the change fatigue scale are presented in Figure 2 and Table 2.

Figure 2 | CFA results for the change fatigue scale

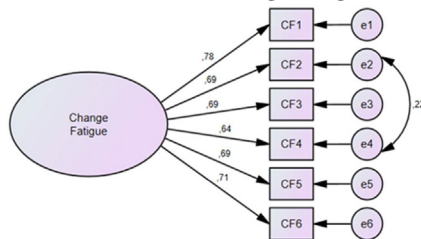


Table 2 | CFA fit indices for the change fatigue scale

	CMIN/df	RMSEA	RMR	GFI	CFI	NFI	RFI	AGFI
Good Fit	≤ 2	≤ .05	≤ .05	≥ .95	≥ .97	≥ .95	≥ .90	≥ .90
Acceptable Fit	≤ 5	≤ .08	≤ .08	≥ .80	≥ .95	≥ .90	≥ .85	≥ .80
Obtained	3.37	.078	.038	.97	.97	.97	.94	.94

The change fatigue scale showed acceptable model fit. The AVE value was .50 and the CR value was .85. These values met the recommended criteria and indicated satisfactory convergent validity and reliability.

The CFA results for the quiet quitting scale are presented in Figure 3 and Table 3.

Figure 3 | CFA results for the quiet quitting scale

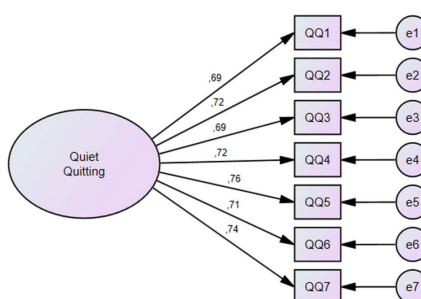


Table 3 | CFA fit indices for the quiet quitting scale

	CMIN/df	RMSEA	RMR	GFI	CFI	NFI	RFI	AGFI
Good Fit	≤ 2	≤ .05	≤ .05	≥ .95	≥ .97	≥ .95	≥ .90	≥ .90
Acceptable Fit	≤ 5	≤ .08	≤ .08	≥ .80	≥ .95	≥ .90	≥ .85	≥ .80
Obtained	2.61	.064	.026	.97	.98	.97	.95	.94

The quiet quitting scale also produced acceptable fit values. The AVE value was .51 and the CR value was .88. These results supported the convergent validity and reliability of the scale.

The CFA results for the psychological resilience scale are presented in Figure 4 and Table 4.

Figure 4 | CFA results for the psychological resilience scale

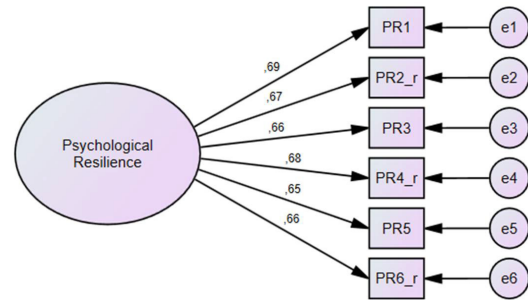


Table 4 | CFA fit indices for the psychological resilience scale

	CMIN/df	RMSEA	RMR	GFI	CFI	NFI	RFI	AGFI
Good Fit	≤ 2	≤ .05	≤ .05	≥ .95	≥ .97	≥ .95	≥ .90	≥ .90
Acceptable Fit	≤ 5	≤ .08	≤ .08	≥ .80	≥ .95	≥ .90	≥ .85	≥ .80
Obtained	1.06	.023	.018	.99	.99	.98	.98	.98

The psychological resilience scale demonstrated good model fit. The AVE value was .51 and the CR value was .86. These findings indicated that the scale had adequate convergent validity and reliability in the present sample.

In addition to the separate CFA models, a three-factor measurement model was examined to assess whether change fatigue, quiet quitting, and psychological resilience represented distinct constructs. The three-factor model showed acceptable fit values: $\chi^2/df = 2.10$, CFI = .951, TLI = .943, RMSEA = .052, and SRMR = .045. By contrast, the two-factor model in which change fatigue and quiet quitting were combined showed weaker fit: $\chi^2/df = 4.22$, CFI = .834, TLI = .811, RMSEA = .090, and SRMR = .076. The one factor model also produced poor fit: $\chi^2/df = 7.46$, CFI = .621, TLI = .574, RMSEA = .128, and SRMR = .111. These results supported the distinctiveness of the three constructs. They also reduced the concern that change fatigue and quiet quitting reflected the same underlying response.

Normality and reliability results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 | Normality and reliability analysis results

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Change Fatigue	4.567	.893	.565	-.081	.857
Quiet Quitting	3.124	.734	.270	-.010	.882
Psychological Resilience	2.952	.782	-.260	.618	.828

Note: Skewness and kurtosis values fall within conventional thresholds for approximate normality; internal consistency is acceptable to good across all scales ($\alpha \geq .80$).

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were above the .70 threshold for all scales. The values were $\alpha = .857$ for change fatigue, $\alpha = .882$ for quiet quitting, and $\alpha = .828$ for psychological resilience. These results showed that the scales had acceptable internal consistency. Normality was assessed through skewness and kurtosis values. Since all values were within the -1.5 to +1.5 range, the data were considered suitable for parametric analyses (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Because the data were collected from the same respondents through self-report instruments, common method bias was examined through several complementary procedures. First, Harman's single-factor test showed that the first unrotated factor explained 32.46% of the total variance. This value was below the 40% threshold. Second, full collinearity VIF values ranged from 1.08 to 1.39, remaining below the 3.3 threshold recommended for full collinearity assessment (Kock, 2015). Third, a common latent factor was added to the measurement model as a sensitivity analysis. The baseline measurement model showed

acceptable fit values: $\chi^2/df = 2.10$, CFI = .951, TLI = .943, RMSEA = .052, and SRMR = .045. The common latent factor model produced similar fit values: $\chi^2/df = 2.05$, CFI = .954, TLI = .946, RMSEA = .051, and SRMR = .043. The largest change in standardized factor loadings was .049, which was below the .20 criterion. These results suggested that common method bias was unlikely to be a serious threat to the interpretation of the findings (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 2012).

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the associations among the focal variables. The results are presented in Table 6. Correlation coefficients were interpreted cautiously, as their practical meaning should be evaluated in the research context rather than through rigid, universal cutoffs (Schober et al., 2018).

Table 6 | Correlation analysis and discriminant validity results

Variables	1	2	3
1. Change Fatigue	.707		
2. Quiet Quitting	.333**	.714	
3. Psychological Resilience	-.193**	-.241**	.714

Note: Diagonal values represent the square root of AVE. ** $p < .01$, two tailed. $N = 394$.

The correlation results showed a positive association between change fatigue and quiet quitting, $r = .333$, $p < .01$. This finding was consistent with the direction proposed in H₁. Change fatigue was weakly and negatively associated with psychological resilience, $r = -.193$, $p < .01$. Psychological resilience was also weakly and negatively associated with quiet quitting, $r = -.241$, $p < .01$. The square root of AVE values on the diagonal exceeded the inter-construct correlations. This result supported discriminant validity and provided additional evidence that the constructs were empirically distinguishable.

4.1. Hierarchical regression analysis

The association between change fatigue (CF) and quiet quitting (QQ), and the moderating role of psychological resilience (PR), were tested through hierarchical regression analysis. Gender, age, marital status, education level, and professional experience were entered as control variables in Step 1. CF and PR were entered in Step 2. The interaction term (CF $\times$ PR) was entered in Step 3. CF and PR were mean-centered before the interaction term was calculated. The results are presented in Table 7.

In Step 1, the control variables explained 2.6% of the variance in QQ, $R^2 = .026$, $F(5, 388) = 2.06$, $p > .05$. None of the control variables showed a statistically significant association with QQ.

In Step 2, CF and PR were added to the model. The explained variance increased to 15.5%, $\Delta R^2 = .129$, $p < .001$. CF was positively associated with QQ, $\beta = .285$, $p < .001$. PR was negatively associated with QQ, $\beta = -.170$, $p < .001$. Thus, employees with higher change fatigue reported higher quiet quitting tendencies, whereas employees with higher psychological resilience reported lower quiet quitting tendencies.

In Step 3, the interaction term was added. The CF $\times$ PR interaction was negative and significant, $B = -.142$, $SE = .051$, $\beta = -.136$, $p = .006$. The model explained 17.2% of the variance in QQ, $R^2 = .172$. The interaction term made a small but meaningful contribution to the explained variance, $\Delta R^2 = .017$, $p < .01$. The incremental effect size was $\Delta f^2 = .021$. This result showed that the positive association between CF and QQ became weaker as PR increased.

The same moderation model was also tested through PROCESS Macro Model 1 with 5,000 bootstrap samples and the same control variables. The interaction effect remained significant, $B = -.142$, $SE = .051$, $t = -2.78$, $p = .006$, 95% CI [-.242, -.041]. PROCESS reports unstandardized coefficients and conditional effects; therefore, these values should be compared with the unstandardized B coefficients rather than the standardized beta coefficients in Table 7. Since the confidence interval did not include zero, the moderation effect was supported. These findings supported H₁ and H₂.

Table 7 | Hierarchical regression results with control variables. Dependent variable: QQ

Variable	B	SE	β	t	p	R ²	ΔR^2	F(model)
Step 1						.026	–	2.06 (5, 388)
Gender	.052	.071	.036	.73	.466			
Age	.041	.038	.064	1.08	.281			
Marital status	.073	.069	.054	1.06	.290			
Education level	-.021	.032	-.033	-.66	.510			
Professional experience	.065	.041	.090	1.59	.113			
Step 2						.155	.129***	10.12 (7, 385)***
Gender	.050	.068	.035	.74	.463			
Age	.028	.037	.043	.76	.448			
Marital status	.055	.066	.041	.83	.407			
Education level	-.018	.031	-.027	-.58	.562			
Professional experience	.042	.040	.056	1.05	.294			
CF	.237	.040	.285	5.93	< .001			
Step 3						.172	.017**	9.99 (8, 385)***
Gender	.049	.068	.034	.72	.471			
Age	.025	.037	.039	.68	.497			
Marital status	.052	.066	.039	.79	.431			
Education level	-.017	.031	-.026	-.55	.583			
Professional experience	.039	.040	.052	.98	.328			
CF	.220	.040	.267	5.56	< .001			
PR	-.154	.045	-.164	-3.42	< .001			
CF $\times$ PR	-.142	.051	-.136	-2.78	.006			

Note: $N = 394$. CF = change fatigue; QQ = quiet quitting; PR = psychological resilience. B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error of B; β = standardized beta coefficient. Gender was dummy coded as female = 0 and male = 1. Marital status was dummy coded as single = 0 and married = 1. Age, education level, and professional experience were entered as ordinal control variables. CF and PR were mean centered before the interaction term was calculated. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

4.2. Conditional effects and simple slope analysis

To interpret the moderation effect, the conditional effect of CF on QQ was examined at low, mean, and high levels of PR. Low PR was defined as one standard deviation below the mean. High PR was defined as one standard deviation above the mean. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 | Conditional effects of change fatigue on quiet quitting at levels of psychological resilience

PR level	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Low	.3311	.0520	6.37	< .001	.2289	.4333
Mean	.2200	.0396	5.56	< .001	.1422	.2978
High	.1089	.0628	1.73	.084	-.0145	.2323

Note: Coefficients are unstandardized coefficients from PROCESS output. CF = change fatigue; QQ = quiet quitting; PR = psychological resilience. PR mean = 2.9526; SD = .7828. Low PR = 2.17, mean PR = 2.95, high PR = 3.74. LLCI and ULCI represent 95% confidence interval bounds. $N = 394$.

The conditional effect of CF on QQ was strongest when PR was low, $B = .3311$, $SE = .0520$, $t = 6.37$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.2289, .4333]. At

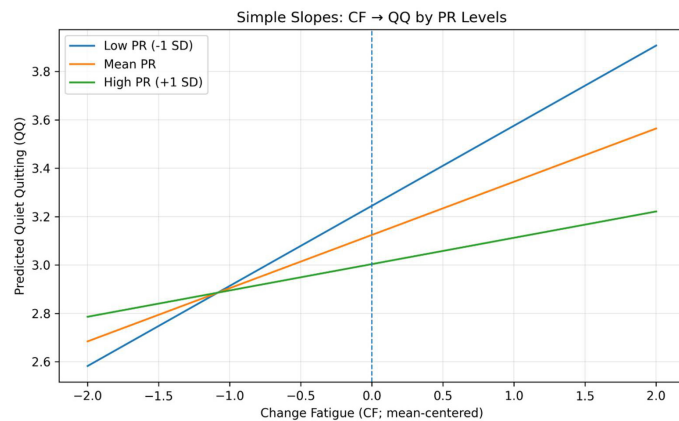
the mean level of PR, the effect remained positive and significant, $B = .2200$, $SE = .0396$, $t = 5.56$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.1422, .2978]. At high levels of PR, the effect became weaker and non-significant, $B = .1089$, $SE = .0628$, $t = 1.73$, $p = .084$, 95% CI [-.0145, .2323].

These findings showed that PR buffered the association between CF and QQ. Change fatigue was more strongly associated with quiet quitting among employees with lower psychological resilience. Among employees with higher psychological resilience, this association was weaker and statistically non-significant.

4.3. Interaction plot and simple slope test findings

Figure 5 presents the simple slope plot illustrating the moderating role of PR in the relationship between CF and QQ. The analysis follows the Aiken and West (1991) approach and shows how the CF $\rightarrow$ QQ slope varies at low, mean, and high levels of PR.

Figure 5 | Interaction plot for CF $\rightarrow$ QQ by levels of PR



The results indicate a significant moderating effect of PR on the relationship between CF and QQ, $B = -.142$, $SE = .051$, $t = -2.78$, $p = .006$, $\Delta R^2 = .017$. Thus, the association between CF and QQ varies by the level of PR.

At low PR, the slope was positive and significant, $B = .331$, $t = 6.37$, $p < .001$. This indicates that higher QQ scores were observed at higher levels of CF among employees with lower psychological resilience. At the mean level of PR, the slope remained positive and significant but became weaker, $B = .220$, $t = 5.56$, $p < .001$. At high PR, the slope became weaker and statistically non-significant, $B = .109$, $t = 1.73$, $p = .084$.

In the interaction plot, the low PR line has the steepest slope, whereas the mean PR line shows a more moderate increase. The high PR line is relatively flat. This pattern supports the protective buffering role of psychological resilience. As resilience increases, change fatigue is less strongly associated with quiet quitting. Overall, these findings support H₂, which proposes that psychological resilience moderates the relationship between change fatigue and quiet quitting.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study examined the association between change fatigue and quiet quitting among airport ground handling employees and tested whether psychological resilience moderated this relationship. The findings showed that change fatigue was positively associated with quiet quitting. They also showed that psychological resilience weakened this association. The conditional effects indicated that the relationship between change fatigue and quiet quitting was stronger when psychological resilience was low, weaker at the mean level of resilience, and statistically nonsignificant when psychological resilience was high. This pattern is consistent with the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model and Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. The JD-R model suggests that demanding work conditions may deplete employees' energy, while personal resources can reduce the adverse consequences of such demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). COR theory similarly argues that individuals try to protect their remaining resources when they experience or anticipate resource loss (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). In this study, change fatigue can be interpreted as a sign of accumulated resource strain, whereas psychological resilience can be

viewed as a personal resource that helps employees preserve effort and work involvement under repeated adaptation demands.

The first finding showed that change fatigue was positively associated with quiet quitting. This result is consistent with earlier research showing that repeated change may weaken employees' psychological resources and generate unfavorable work attitudes. Bernerth et al. (2011) showed that change fatigue was associated with burnout and lower organizational commitment. McMillan and Perron (2020) also emphasized that continuous change may create a psychological burden for employees who are expected to keep adapting. More recently, Dilekçi et al. (2025) reported that change fatigue was positively related to quiet quitting among teachers. The present study extends this evidence to airport ground handling. This extension is important because ground handling employees are not usually the designers of organizational change. Rather, they experience the daily consequences of change through revised procedures, updated reporting tools, new equipment practices, digital systems, safety briefings, and changing task sequences.

This point responds to an important issue in the interpretation of change fatigue. In airport ground handling, change fatigue should not be understood only as a reaction to formal restructuring or strategic change projects. It may also reflect the cumulative burden of repeated operational adaptation. Ground handling employees work under time pressure, physical workload, strict safety rules, and close coordination requirements. In such a context, even small procedural or technological changes may require additional attention and adjustment. When these changes accumulate, employees may feel that their adaptive capacity has weakened. This interpretation is consistent with research showing that demanding airport work conditions may increase strain and reduce positive job attitudes (Baeriswyl et al., 2016; Tam & Trang, 2024). It is also consistent with studies showing that digital transformation and process changes affect airport and ground operations (Halpern et al., 2021; Kovynyov & Mikut, 2019).

The present finding also contributes to the developing quiet quitting literature by connecting two related but different interpretations of the concept. Galanis et al. (2023) and Serenko (2024) describe quiet quitting mainly through reduced extra-role effort, minimum role performance, and a deliberate limitation of work activities to formal job requirements. Corbin and Flenady (2024), however, interpret quiet quitting not only as a loss of motivation but also as a boundary-setting response to unmet recognition and weakened reciprocity in the workplace. The present study brings these interpretations together in the context of airport ground handling. From the COR perspective, quiet quitting may reflect an attempt to conserve depleted psychological resources. At the same time, from a recognition and reciprocity perspective, it may reflect a reduced willingness to offer voluntary contribution when repeated adaptation demands are not sufficiently balanced by support, recognition, or recovery opportunities. Thus, the findings suggest that quiet quitting in ground handling is not simply a passive withdrawal response. It may also be a way of psychologically narrowing the work role under accumulated change-related strain.

The findings also clarify how quiet quitting can be understood in a standardized and safety-sensitive work setting. In airport ground handling, quiet quitting should not be interpreted as ignoring safety rules, violating procedures, or avoiding mandatory duties. Such an interpretation would be inconsistent with aviation safety requirements. Instead, quiet quitting may appear as reduced voluntary support, extra attentiveness, proactive communication, willingness to help coworkers, and care during shift handovers. These forms of discretionary contribution are important even in procedural work. Safe and efficient ground operations depend not only on formal compliance but also on coordination, vigilance, and cooperation among employees (Ek & Akselsson, 2007). Broader safety research also indicates that job demands and resources are linked with burnout, engagement, and safety outcomes (Nahrgang et al., 2011). Therefore, the present findings suggest that change fatigue may be relevant to operational reliability because it is associated with a lower willingness to invest effort beyond minimum role requirements.

This contextual interpretation also distinguishes the present study from much of the existing quiet quitting literature. Previous studies

have often examined quiet quitting in education, health care, tourism, hospitality, or general employee samples (Dilekçi et al., 2025; Galanis et al., 2024; Hamouche et al., 2023). These settings are important, but they differ from airport ground handling because ground handling work is more tightly shaped by standardized procedures, safety requirements, aircraft turnaround deadlines, and task interdependence. In less procedural work settings, quiet quitting may be discussed mainly as disengagement, work-life boundary setting, or reduced service enthusiasm. In airport ground handling, however, the concept must be interpreted more narrowly and carefully. It is less about abandoning formal duties and more about the weakening of discretionary behaviors that support smooth operations. This distinction is important because there is limited direct evidence showing that change fatigue is unrelated to, or negatively related to quiet quitting. Rather than contradicting previous studies, the present findings show how the same general withdrawal logic may take a context-specific form in safety-sensitive operational work.

The second finding showed that psychological resilience moderated the relationship between change fatigue and quiet quitting. The positive association between change fatigue and quiet quitting was weaker among employees with higher psychological resilience. This result supports the JD-R model, which positions personal resources as factors that can help employees cope with demanding work conditions (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). It also fits the COR perspective, because resilient employees may be better able to protect their psychological resources and avoid deeper resource loss cycles (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Psychological resilience has been described as a capacity to recover, adapt, and maintain functioning under stress (Masten, 2001; Southwick et al., 2014). In organizational settings, it has been treated as a personal resource that supports adjustment under uncertainty and strain (Hartmann et al., 2020). Shin et al. (2012) also showed that resilience was related to more favorable responses to organizational change.

The simple slope results provide a more detailed interpretation of this moderating role. At low levels of psychological resilience, change fatigue was strongly associated with quiet quitting. At the mean level of resilience, this association remained significant but became weaker. At high levels of resilience, the association became statistically non-significant. This pattern suggests that resilience does not remove change fatigue itself. Rather, it reduces the likelihood that change fatigue is accompanied by a withdrawal-oriented response. The interaction effect was statistically significant but modest in size. This effect should therefore be interpreted cautiously. Moderation effects in field studies are often small, especially when they are tested after accounting for control variables and main effects (Aguinis et al., 2005).

The modest size of the interaction effect is meaningful in the present context. Ground handling behavior is not shaped only by individual psychological resources. It is also constrained by formal procedures, staffing levels, shift patterns, equipment availability, supervisory control, pay fairness, and real-time operational pressure. Recent aviation research has emphasized that airport ground workforce issues involve hiring, scheduling, retention, and digitalization challenges, all of which may shape employee strain and work behavior (Wandelt & Wang, 2024). Therefore, a small moderating effect of psychological resilience should not be treated as weak or unimportant. Rather, it is a realistic indication that personal resources matter, but they operate within a highly regulated and operationally constrained work system. In this sense, the findings avoid an overly individualistic interpretation of resilience. Psychological resilience may help employees cope with change fatigue, but it cannot replace adequate staffing, fair recognition, recovery time, and clear operational communication.

The aviation context makes this finding practically important. Ground handling employees are expected to maintain attention, coordination, and service quality while working under strict time constraints and safety requirements. Psychological resilience may help employees regulate their emotional reactions, reinterpret demanding situations, and sustain voluntary contribution during repeated operational adaptation. Evidence from service and aviation-related research also suggests that resilience and psychological resources may reduce adverse responses to stressful work conditions (Aguar-Quintana et al., 2021; Tam & Trang,

2024). At the same time, studies in hospitality and tourism have warned that quiet quitting can undermine service excellence when employees reduce voluntary effort and emotional investment (Liu-Lastres et al., 2024). This concern is also relevant for airport ground handling, but the mechanism is more operational than relational. In ground handling, reduced discretionary effort may be reflected in weaker coordination, lower willingness to support coworkers, and reduced proactive attention during time-sensitive processes.

The study makes several theoretical contributions. It extends the quiet quitting literature to airport ground handling, a standardized and safety-sensitive work context in which quiet quitting must be defined carefully. In this context, quiet quitting refers to reduced discretionary contribution rather than non-compliance with mandatory safety procedures. The study also clarifies why change fatigue is relevant for frontline ground handling employees. These employees may not design change, but they carry the operational burden of repeated procedural, technological, and service-related adjustments. Finally, the study integrates the JD-R model and COR theory to explain why change fatigue is associated with quiet quitting and why psychological resilience weakens this association. By doing so, it contributes to clarifying the concept of quiet quitting as a response that may involve resource conservation, boundary setting, and reduced discretionary contributions in safety-sensitive operational work (Magrizos et al., 2026).

The findings also offer practical implications for airport and ground handling managers. First, managers should monitor change load as part of operational planning. Repeated updates in procedures, reporting systems, equipment use, and safety instructions should be coordinated in a way that does not overload employees. Changes should be communicated clearly, especially during shift handovers and pre-shift briefings. Second, quiet quitting should be treated as an early warning sign rather than as a simple motivation problem. A decline in voluntary support, proactive communication, or willingness to help coworkers may signal that employees are conserving depleted resources. Third, managers should strengthen resources that help employees cope with repeated change. These may include supervisor support, fair recognition, realistic staffing, recovery opportunities, and clear communication. Psychological resilience training may also be useful, but it should not be used as a substitute for improving working conditions. Resilience-based practices may be more effective when they are integrated into daily operational routines, such as safety briefings, toolbox talks, and post-shift recovery practices.

Several limitations should be considered. First, the study used a cross-sectional design. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as associations rather than causal effects. Longitudinal research could examine whether change fatigue predicts later quiet quitting tendencies or whether the relationship changes across different phases of organizational change. Second, the data were collected through self-report measures. Although common method bias was examined through several procedures, self-report designs cannot fully remove this concern. Future studies may include supervisor ratings, objective indicators, or time-lagged data. Third, the sample was limited to employees working in Group A ground handling companies at Istanbul Airport and Sabiha Gökçen Airport. The findings may not be directly generalized to Group B or Group C ground handling companies or to other aviation service areas. Future studies may compare different ground handling categories, airports, and job families, including ramp, passenger services, cargo, operations control, security, and catering. Fourth, the study included demographic control variables, but other job-related factors may also shape quiet quitting. Future research may examine shift type, perceived staffing adequacy, pay fairness, supervisor support, psychological safety, and organizational justice as additional moderators or mediators. Fifth, this study did not directly measure employees' objective exposure to organizational or operational change. Although change fatigue was examined as perceived strain resulting from repeated change, the type, frequency, intensity, and timing of specific changes experienced by each participant were not captured. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with caution, as quiet quitting tendencies may reflect not only change fatigue but also broader operational job demands. Relatedly, the meaning of quiet quitting in airport ground handling is bounded by the highly standardized and procedure-driven nature

of the occupation. Since mandatory tasks are shaped by safety rules, turnaround procedures, and operational standards, quiet quitting in this context should not be understood as non-compliance with safety procedures or withdrawal from formal duties, but as a narrower reduction in discretionary contribution, such as voluntary support, proactive communication, extra attentiveness, and willingness to help coworkers. Future studies should distinguish change-related strain from general operational stressors such as workload, staffing shortages, time pressure, shift-related fatigue, and supervisor demands. They should also compare frontline employees with supervisors, middle managers, project teams, or other groups directly involved in change implementation and management, because the present sample consisted of employees who mainly experience the consequences of change rather than design or manage change processes.

In conclusion, this study showed that change fatigue is positively associated with quiet quitting among airport ground handling employees and that psychological resilience weakens this association. The findings suggest that repeated operational adaptation may create psychological costs that are reflected in reduced discretionary effort. At the same time, psychological resilience may help employees maintain work involvement under demanding conditions. The study does not claim a causal process. Rather, it provides evidence that the observed pattern is consistent with the JD-R model and COR theory. The findings also show that quiet quitting in airport ground handling should be interpreted in a context-specific way. It does not imply non-compliance with safety procedures, but it may indicate a weakening of the voluntary effort and cooperative behaviors that support reliable ground operations. For airport ground handling organizations, the findings underline the importance of managing change load, supporting employee resources, and recognizing quiet quitting as a possible signal of accumulated strain. However, these conclusions should be interpreted within the boundaries of the study context, because the observed associations may also be shaped by broader operational demands and by the limited discretionary space available in standardized ground handling work.

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