



**International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies**

ISSN online: 1749-916X - ISSN print: 1749-9151

<https://www.inderscience.com/ijtcs>

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**A future population of mediocracy**

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**DOI:** [10.1504/IJTCS.2024.10063024](https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTCS.2024.10063024)

**Article History:**

Received:	27 October 2023
Last revised:	01 November 2023
Accepted:	04 December 2023
Published online:	21 March 2024

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## **A future population of mediocracy**

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**Abstract:** This case takes a glance into the academic world at South Asian Pacific University. Specifically, the case's focal point is the Landman Program. The main character of the case, Doha, is approaching retirement and is excited to end her teaching career on a high note. Presented in Doha's class are five students. These five students in previous semesters demonstrated behaviour that led one to believe the bare minimum was not a common practice. However, as the semester begins, Doha notes that the behaviour displayed is nothing short of disappointing. Doha is taken aback by her observations. Altering points of view the case takes a glance into the mindset of each one of the five students. Through the change of perspective, each student attempts to justify their change in behaviour from the previous semesters.

**Keywords:** quiet quitting; individual motivation; individual engagement.

**Reference** to this paper should be made as follows: Barron, K. and Chou, S.Y. (2024) 'A future population of mediocracy', *Int. J. Teaching and Case Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp.293–306.

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## **1 Introduction**

Doha Chakraborty could not believe she was waiting for her final class period to start before she officially retired. Although Doha had thoroughly enjoyed teaching the Landman Senior Seminar (BUSI 4366) undergraduate course at South Asian Pacific University, the pending retirement was something she gladly welcomed. Doha taught the course for nearly 20 years and was a contract landman for over 30 years. Every year, Doha felt improved concerning the quality of students seeking to be a landman in the future. Before jumping in and discussing each student, a little backstory of the program is necessary.

## **2 The Landman Program**

The Landman Program at South Asian Pacific University was one of five accredited programs available to those interested in the career path in the South Asia. The program allotted 20 students each year, with class sizes ranging from five to ten. Consequently, making the program very competitive and offering an immense amount of one-on-one support by faculty. Doha had been a certified landman working in the oil and gas industry for over 30 years. Her primary duties included: negotiating titles, drafting oil and gas mineral leases, and establishing mineral ownership. However, Doha's most robust quality resided in her ability to establish correct mineral ownership among multiple landowners. Many landmen within the industry preferred negotiating titles and drafting oil and gas mineral leases. Ultimately the lack of interest in establishing correct mineral ownership made Doha very valuable in the industry. Thus, her most robust quality allowed Doha to teach the last course students would take before graduating.

It is important to note that for students to be enrolled in Doha's course, they had to maintain a 3.5 cumulative grade point average (GPA) and have fewer than ten unexcused absences in the entire program. The standards for admittance into the course were noted as rigorous and many students had to retake prior classes to raise their GPA. However, if a student had more than ten unexcused absences in the program, they would be asked to sit out one academic term before seeking admittance into the course. Many critiqued the standards as being harsh and unattainable. In contrast, the program prepped students for the oil and gas industry. Many students would gain external positions for large oil and gas companies, but gaining in-house employment took years of experience and industry connections. Thus, the ability to effectively manage time and remain above average competency in the future were crucial for longevity in the industry.

## **3 Landman Senior Seminar (BUSI 4366)**

Landman Senior Seminar (BUSI 4366) was the official course title. The course covered in-depth topics on mineral ownership. Much of the course focused on developing the reading and interpreting of legal documents. Reading and interpreting legal documents that pertained to mineral ownership took much work for beginner and seasoned landmen. However, Doha's particular background had deemed the landman an expert. Fall 2023 class would only consist of five students. Although this would be one of Doha's smaller

classes, she was very excited because she knew each student personally and had watched their progress through the program.

**Table 1** Summary of students and their work experiences

<i>Student name</i>	<i>Experience</i>
Brock	<p>Brock maintained exceptional knowledge regarding contract negotiation.</p> <p>Brock was always eager to learn new skills and frequently stopped by Doha's office for input and guidance.</p> <p>Brock was time oriented and Doha always noted him sitting in prior courses early.</p>
Manny	<p>Manny possessed advance knowledge drafting oil and gas mineral leases.</p> <p>Manny was a quiet student who stopped by Doha's office frequently seeking career advice.</p> <p>As Doha walked through the hallways in the university, she always noted Manny remained after class to ask questions.</p>
Cooper	<p>Cooper display advanced knowledge in mineral calculations. The student takes a special interest in the topic and explored the topic prior to the course.</p> <p>Cooper is a leader in the classroom. Doha has observed him taking charge of group projects in the past and delegating tasks.</p> <p>Cooper displays effective time management skills. Previous instructors discussed Cooper submitting assignments prior to the deadline.</p>
Zacharie	<p>Zacharie maintains above average organisation skills. Doha has observed him on multiple occasions organising his assignments and course information.</p> <p>Zacharie is a quick learner. Multiple times Zacharie has stopped by Doha's office seeking clarity on topic that he was unable to understand the first time.</p> <p>Zacharie is an active listener. Multiple times Doha has passed in the hall to hear Zacharie request a further explanation or reassurance given his understanding of a topic.</p>
Kevin	<p>Kevin is a highly driven student. Kevin has stopped by Doha's office many times seeking advice on how to land a job post-graduation.</p> <p>Kevin is an excellent researcher. Many times, Doha has witnessed him in the library searching for answers. The skill is further justified by other faculty members.</p> <p>Kevin is driven to maintain his 4.0 GPA upon graduation.</p>

On a side note, much of the faculty was able to develop close relationships with the students in the Landman Program, given the small size of the program. Additionally, many students had stopped into Doha's office for career advice and help in other courses. Noting the connection and familiarity of the upcoming class, Doha's enthusiasm and expectations were extremely high. Noting the enthusiasm and expectations, Doha thought it would be a good idea to briefly jot down each student and his individual experience with each one. In addition to Doha's experience, each student is noted in Table 1.

#### **4 First day of class**

Doha got to class an extra 30 minutes early. She hoped he could catch some of the students early and chat with each one. However, to her surprise, each of the five students

arrived within a minute or two before the beginning of class. Doha received each one with a welcoming smile and handshake. Interestingly, none of the five students seemed to share her enthusiasm for the final course in their Landman Program. Chalking the behaviour up to senioritis and hoping the behaviour would dissipate, Doha began each class by reviewing the syllabus with the students.

The body language, demeanour, and lack of engagement presented while Doha progressed through the syllabus discouraged Doha immediately. Aiming to turn the first round, Doha decided she would allow students to leave a few minutes early but encourage anyone wanting to talk to remain after class. Following the already presented tone, none of the students remained after chatting with Doha. As Doha gathered her things from the classroom, she noticed that Zacharie, who usually is very organised, left his copy of the syllabus behind. Doha decided to hold onto the copy, as Zacharie would ask the next class period for the left-behind syllabus. However, the day never came when Zacharie asked for his left-behind copy of the syllabus. Ironically, the behaviour exhibited by each of the once-considered exceptional students steadily began to decline from that day forward.

#### *4.1 Brock*

By midsemester, Brock maintained a B average. Brock's attitude towards the course was indifferent. His once-prevalent knowledge of contract negotiation was rarely exhibited or demonstrated in front of the class. New skills are of little interest to Brock, and he rarely stops by Doha's office. Additionally, Brock was more than ten minutes late to class on various occasions.

Striving to change Brock's behaviour, Doha decided to engage him after class one day. Doha shared with Brock that she knew of an oil and gas company that focused on contract negotiation, and she could give Brock a good recommendation. Doha reiterated that Brock would need to build his current knowledge base regarding contract negotiation and be punctual to class. Additionally, Doha extended the offer for Brock to stop by her office anytime to discuss landman topics, that the door was always open. Brock thanked Doha for her potential recommendation and left the classroom.

As Brock exited the classroom, he began weighing the benefits of Doha's possible job lead. One obvious benefit was that the recommendation might secure a job in a very competitive job market. In contrast, Brock was tired of school and ready to enter the industry. He did not think further building his knowledge base regarding contract negotiation or not hitting the snooze button was worth the recommendation. Eventually, after graduation, he would land a job, and until then, he would move back home with his parents.

#### *4.2 Manny*

Manny was the only student who displayed interest periodically throughout the semester. As noted, Manny had advanced knowledge of drafting oil and gas leases. Specifically, he was familiar with the proper terminology and industry language constituting a water-tight oil and gas lease. Ensuring water-tight leases was essential in the oil and gas industry. Often times land, owners would try to back out of the contract when the industry presented volatility. Without the proper terminology and industry language, some landowners could back out of their leases, causing the oil and gas company to lose

money. The skill set Manny possessed was unique, and Doha had hoped Manny would share his expertise with the class as the semester progressed.

During the semester, Doha noted that Kevin's primary weakness pertained to utilising the correct terminology to ensure a water-tight oil and gas lease. Several times Doha approached Kevin during an in-class assignment and informed him that he could remain after for further clarification and guidance. Although Kevin initially appeared appreciative of the gesture, he never remained after class. After much thought, Doha considered that Kevin might not want to be viewed by his classmates as needing additional help. After all, Kevin was the only student who maintained a 4.0 GPA through the entire Landman Program to date. Aiming to integrate a different approach, Kevin was assigned a rather complex assignment that dealt primarily with drafting a water-tight oil and gas lease.

Doha then informed the class that they would be working in groups. Given the odd number, Doha knew if she could pair Kevin with Manny and that, Manny would be willing to help Kevin. Therefore, Doha automatically stated that Kevin and Manny would be paired, and the remaining classmates (e.g., Cooper, Brock, and Zacharie) would work as a group of three. Spurred with excitement to watch, Manny jumped in and offered Kevin some pointers, Kevin stood by anxiously. Ironically, both students non-verbally acknowledged one another and proceeded to work independently.

Determined to keep the assignment from going to waste, Doha casually walked by and asked Manny if he had an opportunity to show Kevin some of his techniques when drafting and water-tight oil and gas lease. Manny promptly replied that it appeared as though Kevin did not need his techniques, as he was close to being done with the assignment. As Doha walked off, Manny thought briefly of asking Kevin if he could help him. However, Manny had many other things to complete after class. The sooner he could submit the assignment, the quicker he could start other things. Besides, Manny thought, what was there to gain by helping Kevin other than cutting into his time?

### 4.3 *Kevin*

Kevin watched Manny leave the classroom and submit his group assignment. He shook his head and was confused by his classmates' behaviour. Throughout the four-year Landman Program, Kevin had gone above and beyond what was required in the classroom. Specifically, he had always ensured that he was the first to volunteer once he was done with his work if other students needed help or assistance. After all, Kevin was the only student who maintained a 4.0 GPA. For example, last semester, he recalled Cooper struggling in petroleum fundamentals. Kevin had to note that the course was rigorous and heavy. Falling behind in the class was easy to do and hard to correct. The course met twice for an hour. Kevin can recall needing close to ten hours outside of class to complete the coursework and prepare for the exams. He once was unsure whether he could make the grade needed for his perfect GPA. Ultimately, the fear motivated him to spend his small evening free time utilising the university library.

One night, he ran into Manny in the library and noted that he was studying for the upcoming exam in petroleum fundamentals. It appeared that Manny must have fallen very far behind in the class because Mr. Gilmore, the course instructor, was there with Manny helping. Mr. Gilmore was a well-known man with many industry connections and was very well respected. He had only been able to teach petroleum fundamentals every other semester because he was so heavily sought out for his expertise as a landman.

Mr. Gilmore had made a notable impression on Kevin. Nonchalantly Kevin approached the duo and made casual conversation. In the meantime, Mr. Gilmore's phone rang, and he had to step away.

While Mr. Gilmore was away, Kevin asked Manny why he was at the library that evening. Manny quickly informed him of his struggle with the course and inability to keep up with the coursework. In contrast, Kevin was up at the library that evening to casually review for the exam to ensure he could maintain his GPA. Mr. Gilmore appeared again and began gathering his things. He quickly stated that he had an emergency at home and needed to return and apologised repetitiously to Manny. Kevin quickly took the opportunity to tell Mr. Gilmore that he had no problem helping Manny catch up with his coursework and would also help him review for the pending exam. Mr. Gilmore shook Kevin's hand and told Manny Kevin he was his top student and was in great hands. Kevin remained with Manny until the librarian asked them to leave and assisted with finishing his coursework.

The next class period Mr. Gilmore asked Kevin to remain after class. Following the closing of the lecture, Kevin gathered his backpack and approached Mr. Gilmore's desk. Mr. Gilmore quickly shook Kevin's hand and thanked him for helping Manny when he had to leave abruptly. Kevin told Mr. Gilmore that helping Manny was not a big deal, and he was glad to assist. As Kevin began to walk away, Mr. Gilmore called him back. To Kevin's surprise, Mr. Gilmore offered to serve as a reference for Kevin post-graduation. Kevin exited the classroom, wholly elated and honoured to have such a reference.

#### *4.4 Zacharie*

As Zacharie sat down at his home desk to finish the group assignment, he could not complete it in class, and he began to look for the course syllabus. He was trying to remember whether the next exam was in a week or two weeks. Fretful and fearful, he continued to comb through his binder. However, he never found his copy of the course syllabus. Zacharie was not surprised he had lost yet another vital course document. The duration and intensity of the Landman Program had left Zacharie in his final semester unmotivated and completely disorganised. Ironically, Zacharie did not care and felt he just wanted to survive.

On a side note, Zacharie needed more energy to remain after class and chat with Ryan. The previous semesters Zacharie had dedicated an immense amount of time after class asking for help and building a rapport with his instructors. Specifically, Zacharie had not only remained after class to ask questions, but he additionally made a point to listen in class actively. Students may nod off during class or casually glance at their phone, but not Zacharie. A pen was always in his hand with an open notebook jotting down key takeaways. Cell phones were a non-issue for him, and the device remained on the dashboard of his car parked in the university parking lot. He was often the first to raise his hand and answer a question. Such behaviour built strong relationships with the previous course instructors. The strong relationships allowed Zacharie some slight leeway when he encountered an unforeseen circumstance mid-way through last semester. Although Zacharie harboured some very noble student characteristics, he enjoyed living on the risky side in his free time. Zacharie was an avid skateboarder and had been all his life. One Sunday evening, Zacharie suffered a gnarly crash at the local skatepark that would render him needing surgery to repair his gruesomely twisted ankle.

After the initial shock of the injury wore off and he was in route to the local hospital, Zacharie quickly realised the unforeseen event would force him to miss his courses. Nevertheless, missing tomorrow was more than just missing a typical scheduled class. Zacharie would miss his opportunity to sit in and listen to one of the greatest landmen ever to work in the industry, who was appearing as a guest speaker in his land management class. The instructor for the land management class was a retired land broker named Dr. Knight. Zacharie had built a strong relationship with Dr. Knight and considered him more like a mentor. The close relationship was supported when Dr. Knight gave Zacharie his cell phone number and told him to reach out if he ever wanted to talk land business over coffee. Digging through his pocket, he pulled out his cell phone and dialled Dr. Knight.

Dr. Knight was surprised to hear his phone chime away in the other room and quickly got out of his rocker to go and answer it. Upon answering the call, he immediately recognised Zacharie's voice and asked if everything was ok. Dr. Knight was brought up to speed regarding Zacharie's unforeseen event. Entirely concerned and distressed, Dr. Knight wanted to know how he could help Zacharie. Zacharie openly voiced his concern about missing the guest speaker scheduled for tomorrow's class. However, Dr. Knight informed Zacharie to be reassured that he would get to class early, record the speech, and email it later for him to watch. Once at ease, the two cordially ended the call. Unable to sit back down and relax, Dr. Knight went to his home computer and decided to check his email. An email from Cooper had just come through. Dr. Knight opened the email and noted Cooper requested more information on tomorrow's guest speaker. Cooper was always an assertive student in class, and Dr. Knight knew nothing more about the young man. Closing the email, he decided to reply during office hours tomorrow.

#### *4.5 Cooper*

Cooper sat in front of his computer monitor with a gaze of frustration. He had e-mailed Dr. Knight over two hours ago. Although he had no personal relationship with the instructor, Cooper was a leader in his class. Noting the leadership behaviour displayed, Cooper felt a sense of entitlement. Specifically, Cooper volunteered to take the leadership role in projects or a class setting without hesitation. Many times, the behaviour had resulted in positive acknowledgment by his instructors. As such, Cooper could not understand why the same sense of acknowledgment with urgency was not rendered to himself.

A deep sigh drew Cooper away from the computer monitor into his room. As he lay there and reflected upon his past semesters at South Asian Pacific University, the memories of being prepared and leading his classmates put a smile back on his face. Cooper relished helping others complete collective tasks and serving in charge. Ironically, Cooper possessed exceptional leadership skills and was often provided compliments on his leadership by classmates. One challenging thing when assuming such a role was the infringement on his time. Sometimes, Cooper had to stay up all night to ensure his work was completed outside of his leadership duties. In contrast, Cooper could not recall another student who exhibited such urgency to lead or take charge. However, those students who did not volunteer to be a leader still received high praise in their courses. Cooper could not help but think the time had come for him to focus on himself individually.



## 5 Walking away

Doha packed her belongings out of her classroom and casually placed them in a box. The semester had ended with little to no change. Completely discouraged by the student's behaviour, Doha felt retirement was not soon enough. Doha could not help but think that with more time in the semester, she might have been able to change the students' behaviour back to what was witnessed initially.

As Doha shut her classroom door for the final time, she ran into Dr. Knight. Dr. Knight reached to shake Doha's hand and thank her for her service to the University's Landman Program. Doha accepted the acknowledgment, and before Dr. Knight disappeared into the abyss, Doha asked if Dr. Knight had noticed a change in behaviour among the students. Dr. Knight said he had not noted anything specific, and Doha briefly recalled some of the changes within the course. Not shaken by the information, Dr. Knight asked if any students failed the course. Surprised by the question, Doha quickly shook her head and stated that everyone passed the course. Dr. Knight patted Doha on her shoulder and told her not to worry if everyone passed; she had done her job.

## 6 Discussion questions

- 1 Noted within the case are viable examples of social exchange theory (SET), leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation, and the conservation of resource (COR) theory. Identify the portion within the case that depicts each theory and explain how the identified portion depicts the noted theory.
- 2 Quiet quitting is a new behaviour being presented within the business world. Many sceptics argue that individuals who satisfactorily meet in-role expectations but no longer engage in extra role behaviours are not quiet quitters. While others view the abandonment of the previous extra role behaviours as quiet quitters. Regardless of your stance on the topic define the term quiet quitting. Critically think and determine whether any behaviour presented by the five students in the case could be considered as quiet quitting.

### *Learning outcomes*

The primary teaching objectives of the case are to:

- 1 Provide students with the application skills needed to identify the various theories presented in the case.
- 2 Explain to students possible behavioural patterns associated with quiet quitting.
- 3 Describe to students the application of motivation and behavioural theories in promoting employee engagement.

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## Teaching notes

### Case study summary

Doha is a veteran landman in the oil and gas industry who plans to retire upon finishing teaching her final course at South Asian Pacific University. Although she has high aspirations and expectations for the students coming into her class, Doha quickly notes that each student's behaviour has altered in a different direction. In particular, the five noted students are executing the bare minimum. The display of such behaviour is troublesome to Doha primarily because she has single-handedly witnessed each student's willingness to exceed the bare minimum. Additionally, each begins to reflect upon their behaviour in comparison to their past behaviour. All the said behaviour baffles Doha and leaves her to reflect upon the changes noted.

*Teaching objectives*

The primary teaching objectives of the case are to:

- 1 Provide students with the application skills needed to identify the various theories presented in the case.
- 2 Explain to students possible behavioural patterns associated with quiet quitting.
- 3 Describe to students the application of motivation and behavioural theories in promoting employee engagement.

*Case description*

The primary matter for this case resides in the notion of theory application. Specifically, the case provides scenarios depicting particular behaviours that allow students to diagnostically determine the theory in which the behaviour represents. The case setting is Doha, a veteran landman in the oil and gas industry, who is witnessing various unwanted behaviours presented by her students. The behaviours are troubling to Doha because the students went above and beyond in their previous courses. Currently, the behaviour displayed in the case does not reflect students' willingness to exceed the bare minimum. Adding validation to Doha's concerns, she had previously developed a table containing each of the incoming students and examples of their willingness to exceed the bare minimum. Following the conclusion of the course Doha ends her departure with an interesting conversation.

*Target audience*

The case contains a moderate difficulty level, and is designed for upper-level undergraduate students who are management and/or business majors. Additionally, this case may be used by MBA students. It is suggested that the case be used in an organisational behaviour, leadership, or human resource management course.

*Suggested teaching approaches and timeline*

The case is created to be delivered in a one-hour class session. Prior to beginning the case, the instructor is encouraged to brief themselves on the noted theories as well as quiet-quitting behaviours.

**Table 2** One-hour session

<i>Task</i>	<i>Time</i>
1 Open class with discussion centred upon in-role and extra-role behaviours	30 minutes
2 Poll the class asking if anyone has heard of quiet quitting	15 minutes
3 Ask the class to identify behaviours associated with quiet quitting	15 minutes

*Suggested answers to student discussion questions*

- 1 Noted within the case are viable examples of SET, LMX theory, Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation, and the COR theory. Identify the portion within the case that depicts each theory and explain how the identified portion depicts the noted theory.

*Social exchange theory*

SET provides the fundamental premises for individuals to understand the complex dynamics during social exchanges better. Specifically, the theory supplies the groundwork for societal transactions and relationships (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Said differently, a vital concept of the SET posits that quality social interactions typically commence based on reciprocity (Oparaocha, 2016). Thus, reciprocity further acts as a liaison between quality social interactions, psychological contracts, and mutual obligations (Colquitt et al., 2013).

- *Case insert:* "Doha shared with Brock that he knew of an oil and gas company that focused on contract negotiation, and she could give Brock a good recommendation. Doha reiterated that Brock would need to build his current knowledge base regarding contract negotiation and be punctual to class. Additionally, Doha extended the offer for Brock to stop by her office anytime to discuss landman topics, that the door was always open. Brock thanked Doha for her potential recommendation and left the classroom."
- *Explanation:* The SET posits that individuals make decisions based on a specific action's apparent costs and rewards. The case notes that Doha recognised that Brock was disengaged and executed an attempt to alter his displayed behaviour. Doha immediately offered the rewards that could originate for Brock if he were to build his current knowledge and be punctual to class. However, as noted in the case, Brock weighed the reward compared to the associated cost and decided against building his current knowledge and being punctual to class.

*LMX theory*

LMX theory provides valuable insight into the interconnectivity and complexity presented within leader-follower relationships. Specifically, LMX makes two significant theoretical contributions. First, LMX's central tenant centres on a leader's relationship with followers (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Thus, the main tenant provides a theoretical premise for leader and follower relationships to be better predicted. Second, the LMX theory notes that leaders have a different relationship quality with all of their noted followers (2012). The LMX is crucial in predicting workplace behaviours (i.e., employee satisfaction and job performance) (Banks et al., 2014). Moreover, the LMX is essential when aiming to eliminate detrimental organisational outcomes that are often spurred due to dysfunctional employee behaviour (Martin et al., 2016).

- *Case insert:* "Dr. Knight was surprised to hear his phone chime away in the other room and quickly got out of his rocker to go and answer it. Upon answering the call, he immediately recognised Zacharie's voice and asked if everything was ok.

Dr. Knight was brought up to speed regarding Zacharie's unforeseen event. Entirely concerned and distressed, Dr. Knight wanted to know how he could help Zacharie. Zacharie openly voiced his concern about missing the guest speaker scheduled for tomorrow's class. However, Dr. Knight informed Zacharie to be reassured that he would get to class early, record the speech, and email it later for him to watch. Once at ease, the two cordially ended the call. Unable to sit back down and relax, Dr. Knight went to his home computer and decided to check his email. An email from Cooper had just come through. Dr. Knight opened the email and noted Cooper requested more information on tomorrow's guest speaker. Cooper was always an assertive student in class, and Dr. Knight knew nothing more about the young man. Closing the email, he decided to reply during office hours tomorrow."

- *Explanation:* The LMX theory posits that a leader will maintain a unique relationship with each individual within their working environment. The LMX further notes that a leader's overall effectiveness remains highly influenced by the leader's overall quality with an individual. Noted with the case is a more robust quality relationship presented between Dr. Knight (e.g., leader) and Zacharie (e.g., follower). Dr. Knight executes a decision based on the quality of his and Zacharie's relationship that further benefits Zacharie. In contrast, Dr. Knight lacks urgency or attention when dealing with one of Zacharie's classmates. The reaction is tied to the lower-quality relationship Dr. Knight maintains with the other student.

### *Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation*

Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation assumes that individuals execute decisions based on maximising personal outcomes to ensure maximum pleasure and minimum pain (Vroom, 1964). The central tenants of Vroom's expectancy theory focus on three core concepts (e.g., expectancy, instrumentality, and valence) which combine to create a motivational force within an individual (Zboja et al., 2020). The theory has been applied to various industries, from the beauty care industry to the hotel industry (Pearson and Hui, 2001; Chiang and Jang, 2008).

- *Case insert:* "Cooper sat in front of his computer monitor with a gaze of frustration. He had e-mailed Dr. Knight over two hours ago. Although he had no personal relationship with the instructor, Cooper was a leader in his class. Noting the leadership behaviour displayed, Cooper felt a sense of entitlement. Specifically, Cooper volunteered to take the leadership role in projects or a class setting without hesitation. Many times, the behaviour had resulted in positive acknowledgment by his instructors. As such, Cooper could not understand why the same sense of acknowledgment with urgency was not rendered to himself."
- *Explanation:* Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation posits that an individual's perception of what they expect to receive is based upon the strengths of their efforts. Thus, a reasonable assumption is that when an individual engages in increased extra-role behaviour, they will be rewarded more. The reward might include being given preference by the leader who observed the increased extra-role behaviour displayed. Within the case, Cooper expects a more urgent response from Dr. Knight. The perception of being deserving of an urgent response originates from his personal belief that always volunteering as a leader should render a reward.

### *CORs theory*

The CORs theory posits that individuals are motivated to protect their current resources and strive to acquire new ones (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Resources can be different things to individuals (e.g., objects, conditions, and other entities that hold value to individuals) (Hobfoll, 1988). As such, individuals tend to view losing resources as more detrimental than gaining new ones (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Thus, a reasonable assumption when applying the COR theory is that an individual will intrinsically determine when deciding whether what is being attained is worth what is being given up.

- *Case insert:* “Manny quickly informed him of his struggle with the course and inability to keep up with the coursework. In contrast, Kevin was up at the library that evening to casually review for the exam to ensure he could maintain his GPA. Mr. Gilmore appeared again and began gathering his things. He quickly stated that he had an emergency at home and needed to return and apologised repetitiously to Manny. Kevin quickly took the opportunity to tell Mr. Gilmore that he had no problem helping Manny catch up with his coursework and would also help him review for the pending exam. Mr. Gilmore shook Kevin’s hand and told Manny Kevin he was his top student and was in great hands. Kevin remained with Manny until the librarian asked them to leave and assisted with finishing his coursework.”
  - *Explanation:* The COR theory is a motivational theory that describes an individual’s behaviour. Specifically, the theory depicts how motivated an individual is to maintain their resources or give up their resources to achieve more significant gain. Kevin is motivated to help Manny better understand the course work within the case. The displayed motivation stemmed from the perception that giving up his study time to help Manny would increase Kevin’s current set of resources.
- 1 Quiet quitting is a new behaviour being presented within the business world. Many sceptics argue that individuals who satisfactorily meet in-role expectations but no longer engage in extra role behaviour are not quiet quitters. While others view the abandonment of the previous extra role behaviours as quiet quitters. Regardless of your stance on the topic define the term quiet quitting. Critically think and determine whether any behaviour presented by the five students in the case could be considered as quiet quitting.

### *Quiet quitting*

Quiet quitters are overwhelmingly populating the current workforce. Quiet quitting can be regarded as an individual striving to separate their personal life from their work life. Conceptually, quiet quitting is viewed as an employee’s attempt at disengaging from their workplace to recreate a healthy work-life balance. Individuals may display silent, non-compliant, avoidant behaviours to recreate a healthy workplace balance. Non-compliant behaviours may resemble an individual being resistant to new responsibilities, while avoidance behaviours may resemble individuals avoiding extra-role behaviours. For instance, an individual exhibiting non-compliant behaviour may not engage in all necessary procedures before deeming a work-related task complete. Such behaviours may include not taking the extra time to ensure a product is high quality or of upmost functionality.

On the other hand, an individual aiming to avoid extra-role behaviours is unwilling to help others within the organisation. The avoidance of extra-role behaviours can originate in the form of not volunteering to help on new projects. However, quiet quitting can extend far beyond non-compliant and avoidance behaviours into absolute disengagement from job duties. In extreme cases of quiet quitting, individuals may physically report to work while going out of their way to not perform primary job duties necessary to assist with daily organisational functioning.

**Table 3** Summary of students' quiet quitting behaviours

<i>Student</i>	<i>Quiet quitting behaviour</i>
Brock	Brock was uninterested in advancing the current knowledge set and being punctual to class.
Manny	Manny was uninterested in assisting Kevin gain a greater understanding of creating a watertight oil and gas lease during group work.
Kevin	Kevin is a unique example. Kevin displayed a willingness to go above and beyond pertaining to assisting Manny. However, in the beginning of the case, Kevin did fall into the group of arriving just on time for the start and not remaining after.
Zacharie	Zacharie was uninterested in retrieving supplemental course documents that aid in student success.
Cooper	Cooper is another unique example. Cooper displayed his willingness in past semesters to volunteer as a leader. However, his perception of Dr. Knight's lack of urgency in his email may influence Cooper's future behaviours. Additionally, in the beginning of the case, Cooper did fall into the group of arriving just on time for the start and not remaining after.