



Quartel Live Crisis in Students and Causative Factors

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Receive: 11/02/2024

Accepted: 11/02/2024

Published: 01/03/2024

Abstract

Student's reactions to the adult phase can be diverse. The sheer number of choices that come from the external environment and the complexity of choosing the best one often create pressure. The purpose of this study is to determine the quarter-life crisis (QLC) in final-year students at UKI Toraja and reveal the factors that trigger the emergence of the condition. This research is descriptive and quantitative. The subjects of his research were final year students starting from semester 6 which amounted to 99 people. The results showed that the categorization of Quarter Life Crisis in final year students of UKI Toraja, is as follows: as many as 15 (15.15%) students fall into the high category, 82 (82.83%) students fall into the medium category, and 2 (2.02%) are in the low category. Through the calculation of the average score of each aspect of measurement achievement, the factors causing QLC were identified sequentially from the highest to the lowest aspects, namely aspect 7 (disconnection), aspect 3 (feeling anxious), aspect 1 (anxiety in making decisions), aspect 5 (negative self-assessment), aspect 6 (being stuck in a difficult situation), aspect 4 (depressed), and aspect 2 (worrying in interpersonal relationships).

Keywords: *Quartel Live Crisis, Students, Causative Factors*

Introduction

The transition from adolescence to adulthood is a significant period in a person's life. During this time, individuals begin to explore themselves, gain independence, develop personal value systems, and form interpersonal relationships (Papalia, 2014). The transition from late adolescence to early adulthood is often characterized by intense changes and explorations in terms of romance, career, and worldview.

College students are individuals who are in the early stages of adulthood. This period is referred to as an important time because of the changes in emotions and varied behavior (Stapleton, 2012). Individual responses to adulthood can vary. The large number of choices that come from the external environment and the struggle to make the right choice often result in pressure (Efnie, 2020). Individuals who are unable to respond well to the various challenges they face during their developmental stage can experience several psychological problems, feel unstable due to

uncertainty, and even experience an emotional crisis, known as a quarter-life crisis.

Quarter Life Crisis is a period of emotional crisis experienced by individuals when entering the quarter phase of life, characterized by feelings of helplessness, doubts about self-ability, feelings of isolation, and frequent worries, including anxiety about potential future failures (Ferani et al., 2023). The phenomenon of Quarter Life Crisis is often felt by individuals in their 20s, including feelings of confusion when facing situations that do not match their expectations. Despite this, some individuals begin to feel this crisis at a younger age, such as 17 years old, or even at a more mature age, which is between 30 to 40 years old.

Individuals who are students, especially those in the final year, increasingly feel a responsibility for their future. According to (Tasaufi, 2020), over time, individuals begin to get greater demands and pressure from the environment when facing adolescence to adulthood. Anxiety, fear, and worry are often common experiences for

college students because they are now associated with preparing to achieve their dreams, and goals, and find a job. Some of them also feel worried about the process of completing college (Ramadhani & Mahmudiono, 2021)

A survey conducted by (Iqomah et al., 2023) regarding the Quarter Life Crisis revealed that the main challenges experienced by individuals in this phase are related to identity issues, internal pressures, feelings of uncertainty, and depression. In addition, concerns about work, romantic relationships, and financial aspects are also important concerns in this crisis, as mentioned by (Herawati & Hidayat, 2020). Academic stress is one of the sources of stress factor among adolescent. Stress condition will trigger cortisol reaction process which associated with unhealthy eating behavior.

Faced with this crisis, many students sometimes make inappropriate decisions in dealing with problems, which can eventually lead to increased suicides. Research conducted by Izza, 2023 revealed that 48% of college graduates who enter the workforce experience high levels of anxiety related to aspects of social support from friends and family, depression, anxiety, life satisfaction, romantic relationships, and their outlook on the future. The results of (Ferani Amira Salsabila et al., 2023) show that each experiences a different quarter-life crisis, with most of the problems faced, namely anxiety about the future. Nugsria et al., 2023 shows that the higher the emotional intelligence one has, the higher the quarter life crisis experienced by an individual who is in early adulthood.

Based on data from the Ministry of Health in 2018, around 6.2% of students experienced depression to think of suicide. Dr. dr. Carla Raymondalexas Marchira, a mental medicine expert from UGM, explained that suicidal impulses often arise due to pressure to graduate quickly, so as not to have to face the status of a dropout student (DO). Suicidal impulses can also arise from a very strong feeling that a student is no longer able to bear the burden or pressure of life that is subjective, which involves personal perception, self-assessment, personal meaning, and expectations for the future, as mentioned by BCC Indonesia in 2019. This suggests that individuals who are in the early phase of adulthood are particularly vulnerable to crisis.

Research on the Quarter Life Crisis has become an increasingly crowded topic in recent years. However, very few research sources specifically explore this phenomenon in Torajan

society. This research is expected to provide a deeper and relevant understanding of the Quarter Life Crisis in students, as well as explore the causative factors. The findings of this study will be preliminary data describing the Quarter Life Crisis in college students as well as the factors that play an important role in this phenomenon. The data will make a valuable contribution to the development of solutions that can help students overcome the Quarter Life Crisis. This is related to the importance of guidance and support programs to students in facing this challenge.

Method

Types of Research

This research is a descriptive quantitative study that aims to describe the average level of *quarter-life crisis* in college students and the causative factors.

Research Subjects

This research was conducted at the UKI Toraja campus, with a population consisting of final-year students who were actively enrolled from semester 6 to semester 8. Population is defined as a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects that have special qualities and characteristics that have been determined by researchers to be studied which will then conclude (Nurdin I, 2019). The research sample was selected using *probability sampling* techniques with a *simple random sampling* approach. Simple random sampling is a technique of randomly sampling members from a population without considering the strata that may exist in the (Sugiyono, 2014). In this study, a sample of 99 students was used.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection in this study was carried out using the *Quarter Life Crisis* instrument consisting of aspects (Permatasari, 2021; Rahimah et al., 2022) namely:

1. Concerns in decision-making
2. Worry about interpersonal relationships
3. Feeling anxious
4. Depressed
5. Negative self-assessment
6. Getting stuck in a difficult situation
7. Despair

The instrument will be made in the form of a questionnaire that will be given to the research subject. Furthermore, interviews will be conducted as support to dig deeper into the results of the questionnaire.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data that has been obtained by researchers will be processed using statistical methods because it is in the form of numbers. In this study, quantitative descriptive analysis techniques will be used using percentages. Here are the steps of the data analysis technique:



Result and Discussion

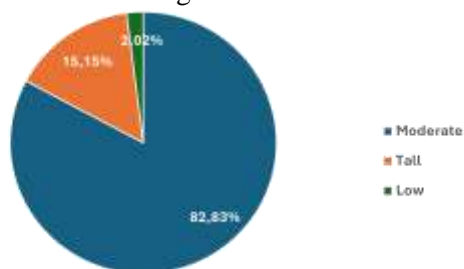
An overview of the level of *quarter-life crisis* in final-year students can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Respondents' Quarter Life Crisis Rate

Score interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
$X \geq 45$	Low	2	2.02
$30 \leq X < 45$	Moderate	82	82.83
$X < 30$	Tall	15	15.15
Total		99	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Diagram 1. Quarter Life Crisis Rate Percentage Categorization



Based on Table 1 and Diagram 1, the majority of final-year students experienced a quarter-life crisis at a moderate level, which was 82 students or 82.83%. A total of 15 students (15.15%) were in the high category, and 2 students (2.2%) were in the low category. Thus, it can be concluded that the largest percentage of final-year students

who experience a quarter-life crisis is in the medium category, which is 82.83%.

Furthermore, based on the calculation of the average (mean) score of quarter-life crisis from 99 respondents, an average score of 39 was obtained. From these results, it can be seen that the average respondents in this study fall into the medium category.

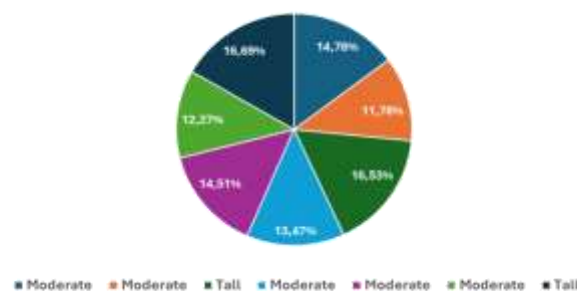
Then, the data is analyzed using descriptive techniques by categorizing and calculating the average score for each aspect presented in the following table:

Table 2. Categorization of Causative Factors

Score Interval	Category	Score	Factor Identification	Percentage (%)
$X \geq 297$	Tall	306	Despair (Aspect 7)	16,69
	Tall	303	Feeling anxious (Aspect 3)	16,53
$198 \leq X < 297$	Moderate	271	Decision-making anxiety (Aspect 1)	14,78
	Moderate	266	Negative self-assessment (Aspect 5)	14,51
	Moderate	225	Getting stuck in a difficult situation (Aspect 6)	12,27
	Moderate	247	Depressed (Aspect 4)	13,47
	Moderate	216	Worry in interpersonal relationships (Aspect 2)	11,78
$X < 198$	Low	-	-	-

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Diagram 2. Percentage of Quarter Life Crisis Aspect Dominance



Based on Table 2 and Diagram 2 above, aspects that are in the high category are aspect 7, namely hopelessness with a total score of 306 or 16.69%, and aspect 3, namely feelings of anxiety with a total score of 303 or 16.53%. Meanwhile, aspects that are in the medium category are aspect 1, namely indecision in making decisions with a total score of 271 or 14.78%, aspect 5, which is a negative assessment of oneself with a score of 266 or 14.51%, aspect 6, which is stuck in a difficult situation with a total score of 225 or 12.27%, aspect 4, which is feeling depressed with a total score of 247 or 13.47%, and aspect 2, namely worry in

interpersonal relationships with a total score of 216 or 11.78%.

Quarter-life crisis (QLC) is a common phenomenon in individuals in the age range of 18-29 years, which includes the transition period from education to the world of work and early adulthood. The characteristics of individuals who are in the QLC phase include confusion, too many choices, difficulty in making decisions, feelings of hopelessness, and anxiety (Putri, 2023). The high QLC rate among final-year students is a reflection of the great challenges they face during this critical transition to adult life.

Based on research data, there were 15 respondents in the high QLC category. Research shows that final-year students often experience quarter-life crises, which are periods of developmental crisis that commonly occur at the age of 18-30 years. This crisis is characterized by feelings of uncertainty, confusion, and high stress associated with transitioning to the adult world and professional responsibilities (Agarwal et al., 2020; Ferani Amira Salsabila et al., 2023).

Furthermore, based on the category grouping, 82 respondents were in the medium QLC category. Although some final-year students may experience a high degree of QLC, most of them often experience QLC at a moderate level. It reflects the ongoing adaptation and handling of the challenges they face in transitioning into adult life. Research of (Condinata et al., 2021) describes psychological distress among emerging adults, finding that most subjects had moderate levels of psychological distress on the dimensions of depression and anxiety. In fact, according to (Robinson, 2019) the quarter-life crisis is not entirely a bad condition, but can instead be a positive experience for individuals to develop into better conditions.

As for the low category QLC, 2 respondents are in this category. Low QLC rates in final-year students can be explained by factors such as academic satisfaction, strong social support, and good life balance. With support from various sources and the ability to overcome the challenges faced, final-year students can maintain their psychological balance during this transition period (Hofmann et al., 2014)

Based on the table of the order of aspects of the highest dominating the occurrence of QLC, namely the aspect of feeling hopeless. Individuals feel that what is done is only in vain and feel failed in living life causing a sense of hopelessness. Final-year students often experience high academic pressure, including demands to achieve good results

in exams, assignments, and major projects. Failure or inability to meet academic expectations can result in feelings of hopelessness and loss of hope for academic and career futures (Ekpenyong et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the aspect that occupies the second position in the high category is the aspect of feeling anxious. The existence of excessive feelings of worry makes individuals feel disappointed, lonely, and inferior to depression (Putri, 2023). This study by (Vogel et al., 2014) highlights the relationship between social comparison through social media and anxiety levels. College students who frequently compare themselves to others on social media tend to experience higher levels of anxiety.

Individuals who are in early adulthood often face developmental tasks that involve extensive exploration. This process is an important part of their developmental journey. However, this exploration often leads to emotional instability. As a result of this exploration, some individuals may feel excited and energized, while others may experience a sense of anxiety, pressure, or even hopelessness. This sustained emotional response can have negative impacts in the long run, such as increased stress levels and risk of depression. As a result, this emotional state can give rise to what is known as an emotional crisis at the age of a quarter-century or quarter-life crisis.

Furthermore, the factor that contributes to the moderate QLC level in final-year students in forming QLC variables at a moderate level is indecision in making decisions. At this age, individuals begin to be faced with a variety of decisions that raise questions about the risks associated with the choices they make. Therefore, it is not uncommon for individuals to feel doubtful. This state of doubt can be managed by religiosity. This is outlined in a study by (Habibie et al., 2019) which states that constancy in religious practice will affect the way individuals cope with situations of indecision. Individuals who have solid life principles and strong resilience tend to be better able to handle pressure and confusion.

The negative self-assessment aspect came in second place as a moderate category factor. Negative self-assessment plays a dominant role in determining moderate QLC levels in final-year students. It reflects feelings of lack of self-esteem, dissatisfaction with oneself, and a tendency to critically evaluate oneself (Sowislo & Orth, 2013; Orth et al., 2018). Following research from (Amalia, 2021), that individuals who have negative self-acceptance will show dissatisfaction with

themselves and no longer accept themselves as they are because they want to be different people. Individuals who are in this condition will feel ashamed, afraid of exclusion and feel that others are better. So he will feel disappointed in himself and isolate himself from the social environment.

Next is the aspect of being stuck in a difficult situation. This aspect is the second lowest aspect, which is a condition where individuals feel in difficult situations related to determining life goals. This reflects the experiences of those who feel trapped in difficult or complex conditions or problems. Students feel they don't have an effective plan or solution to address the problems they face. Feelings of being trapped in difficult situations can increase when they feel they have no control or a clear way out of the problem.

The next factor is a sense of pressure. This reflects the experiences of those who feel burdened by heavy emotional, psychological, or social distress. This feeling creates the perception of individuals that they are always faced with constant problems and burdens. As a result, individual activities become disrupted and do not run optimally (Sumartha, 2020).

The last is the aspect of concern about interpersonal relationships. This aspect occupies the last place in the medium category. Concerns arise can be related to relationships between friends, family, and couples. This indicates that anxiety and uncertainty in relationships with others become the important aspects that influence emotional crises in college students. Social pressure to maintain good relationships and meet social expectations in terms of friendship, romance, or interpersonal communication can also cause anxiety and tension in relationships. Students who feel unable to meet these standards may experience more serious QLC.

Furthermore, (Izaguirre & Calvete, 2017) shows that changes in interpersonal relationships, such as breakups or family conflicts, can trigger feelings of depression and anxiety in college students. This suggests that changes in relationship dynamics may contribute to emotional crises.

Conclusion

Based on research results which show that the majority of final year students at UKI Toraja experienced a Quarter Life Crisis (QLC) in the moderate category with aspects of despair as the main factor, accompanied by feelings of anxiety, hesitation in making decisions, negative self-assessment, getting stuck in a difficult situation, depressed, and worry in interpersonal relationships.

Researchers hope that future research can explore the effectiveness of various psychological interventions, such as counseling and life skills training programs, in reducing QLC and related aspects such as hopelessness, anxiety, and negative self-evaluation.

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