

## Quarterlife Crisis in Young Adults: Challenges, Impacts, and Adaptation Processes

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### Abstract:

*Quarterlife crisis is a phenomenon commonly experienced by individuals in the transition from adolescence to adulthood, characterized by uncertainty in career, social relationships, and life goals. This study aims to analyze the factors influencing quarterlife crisis among young adults and its impact on psychological well-being. The research employs a quantitative approach with a survey method. The study sample consists of 200 respondents aged 18–30 years, selected using purposive sampling technique. Data were collected through an online questionnaire that includes a quarterlife crisis scale and a psychological well-being scale based on Ryff's model. The results indicate that most respondents experience a moderate to high level of quarter life crisis, particularly those in the early stages of their careers. Additionally, a significant negative relationship was found between quarter life crisis and psychological well-being, specifically in terms of self-acceptance and life purpose. These findings suggest that quarterlife crisis can lower psychological well-being but may also serve as an opportunity for personal growth if managed properly. The implications of this study highlight the importance of psychological and social support in helping individuals navigate quarter life crisis to enhance their psychological well-being. Future research is recommended to expand the sample scope and explore more effective intervention strategies for managing quarter life crisis.*

**Keywords:** Adulthood transition, personal growth, psychological well-being, quarterlife crisis

## 1. Introduction

Early adulthood is a developmental stage filled with significant challenges and changes. According to Hurlock (2008), early adulthood ranges from 18 to 40 years, during which individuals begin to face various social, emotional, and new responsibilities. During this stage, individuals often experience a Quarterlife Crisis (QLC), a psychological condition characterized by feelings of confusion, anxiety, and a loss of direction in facing the future, particularly regarding career, social relationships, and self-identity.

The phenomenon of quarterlife crisis is increasingly relevant in the modern era, where social pressures and expectations on individuals are rising. Quarterlife crisis typically occurs between the ages of 18 and 25, a phase where individuals experience identity exploration, emotional instability, and pressure from their environment to quickly find their life purpose. Previous research indicates that the highest levels of anxiety related to quarterlife crisis occur in individuals who have recently graduated from college and entered the workforce (Nicole & Carolyn, 2010; Afnan et al., 2020). This suggests that the transition from adolescence to early adulthood presents significant challenges for individuals in achieving life stability.

Although various studies have discussed quarterlife crisis, there is still a research gap in understanding the factors that influence it and its impact on different aspects of life. Some previous studies have only highlighted quarterlife crisis as a common phenomenon but have not thoroughly explored how individuals can effectively cope with it (Robinson & Wright, 2013). Additionally, prior research has tended to focus on specific age groups without considering social, cultural, and psychological factors that play a role in the dynamics of quarterlife crisis.

This study aims to further analyze the factors influencing quarterlife crisis in young adults and its impact on psychological well-being. With a more comprehensive approach, this study is expected to provide new insights into quarterlife crisis and strategies that individuals can apply in facing the challenges of transitioning to adulthood.

## 2. Method

This study aims to analyze the factors influencing quarterlife crisis in young adults and its impact on psychological well-being. To achieve this goal, the research employs a quantitative approach with a survey method as the primary data collection technique. The research design used is descriptive quantitative to obtain an overview of the level of quarterlife crisis experienced by young adults and the factors contributing to this phenomenon. The study population comprises individuals aged 18–30 who are in the transition phase from adolescence to early adulthood. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, with participants meeting the criteria of having experienced uncertainty in career, social relationships, or life goals. The total sample consisted of 200 respondents from various regions in Indonesia.

The questionnaire was distributed online through digital platforms to reach a broader range of participants. Before filling out the questionnaire, respondents were informed about the research objectives and asked to provide informed consent. The questionnaire consisted of three main sections: demographic data (age, gender, education level, and employment status); a quarterlife crisis scale measuring uncertainty, anxiety, and confusion in facing early adulthood using a Likert scale (1–5); and a psychological well-being scale based on Ryff's model (1995) with six main dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, life purpose, and personal growth. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to illustrate the respondents' distribution and the level of quarterlife crisis experienced. Furthermore, regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between quarterlife crisis and psychological well-being. Data analysis was performed using statistical software such as SPSS to ensure valid and reliable results.

### 3. Results

This study aims to identify the factors influencing quarterlife crisis in young adults and measure its impact on psychological well-being. The data analysis results indicate that most respondents experience a moderate to high level of quarterlife crisis. Among the 200 respondents, 65% reported experiencing confusion regarding life purpose and career, while 30% experienced uncertainty in social relationships. Descriptive analysis shows that quarterlife crisis is more dominant among individuals in the early stages of their careers compared to those with stable jobs. Additionally, regression analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between quarterlife crisis and psychological well-being ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that higher levels of quarterlife crisis are associated with lower psychological well-being. The most affected dimensions of well-being were self-acceptance and life purpose, suggesting that individuals experiencing quarterlife crisis tend to struggle with self-evaluation and future planning.

These findings reinforce previous studies stating that the transition to early adulthood presents significant psychological challenges. Quarterlife crisis plays a role in lowering individuals' well-being but can also serve as an opportunity for personal growth if addressed with the right coping strategies. The implications of these findings highlight the importance of psychological interventions and social support in helping individuals navigate quarterlife crisis and achieve better psychological well-being.

### 4. Discussion

The results indicate that quarterlife crisis is a common phenomenon among young adults and negatively impacts psychological well-being. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that career and social life uncertainty are the primary triggers of quarterlife crisis. Research by Robinson & Wright (2013) also found that individuals experiencing quarterlife crisis tend to have higher levels of anxiety and depression than

those who do not.

The study further adds new insights by identifying that individuals in the early career stage are more vulnerable to experiencing quarterlife crisis than those with stable jobs. This suggests that economic stability and clarity of life direction significantly contribute to an individual's psychological well-being. Additionally, quarterlife crisis was found to be negatively correlated with psychological well-being, particularly in self-acceptance and life purpose.

## 5. Conclusion

This study aimed to analyze the factors influencing quarterlife crisis in young adults and its impact on psychological well-being. The findings confirm that most respondents experience moderate to high levels of quarterlife crisis, especially those in the early career stage. Quarterlife crisis negatively affects psychological well-being, particularly in self-acceptance and life purpose. However, if managed well, it can serve as an opportunity for personal growth. Future research should expand the sample scope and explore interventions that can help individuals effectively manage quarterlife crisis.

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