

Original Article

Emotional Self-Awareness and Quarter Life Crisis in Final Year of Undergraduate Nursing Students

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ABSTRACT

Background: A quarter-life crisis is when individuals experience an emotional crisis with negative feelings toward the future. Many responsibilities and demands on fourth-year students affect their psychology. A person with good self-awareness makes it easier to control emotions, read the surrounding situation, not be easily affected, and focus on himself. This study aims to analyse the relationship between self-awareness and quarter-life crisis in the final years of undergraduate nursing students.

Methods: This research design is correlational with a cross-sectional approach. The sample in this study was 87 people, which was the whole population (Total Sampling). The research instrument used a self-awareness questionnaire and a quarter-life crisis questionnaire—data analysis using the Spearman Rank.

Results: The study results showed that most respondents (55.2%) had sufficient emotional self-awareness, and most (52%) experienced a moderate quarter-life crisis. Analysis using the Spearman Rank test obtained a p-value of 0.018 with an error level of $\alpha = 0.05$, meaning that there is a relationship between emotional self-awareness and quarter-life crisis with a strong category strength ($r = -0.54$)

Conclusion: Some factors affect self-awareness, namely thoughts, feelings, knowledge behaviour, environment, and quarter-life crisis internal factors such as identity exploration, expectations, and religion, while external factors such as romantic relationships, work, family, and friends. Self-introspection strategies can increase self-awareness. Dealing with a crisis is not comparing yourself with others, communicating with parents, or finding professionals if the problem is getting complicated.

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Introduction

In the life cycle, humans experience a process of development both physically and psychologically. They are starting from childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. A quarter-life crisis is a period of uncertainty and self-discovery that individuals experience at age 20 to 30. In this period, individuals experience an

emotional crisis with fear and worry about their future, including career, relationships, and social life (Nabila et al., 2020). During the transition from adolescence to adulthood, individuals have begun to explore themselves, solve their problems, live independently from their parents, and form social relationships (Afnan et al., 2020). The many choices presented by the



external environment and confusion about how to deal with deciding which one feels appropriate tend to create stress. Individuals must compete better to survive, which causes young adults to become stressed and burdened. One of the causes of a quarter-life crisis in final-year students is generally demands from parents regarding what steps they will take in the future and academic problems.

Students who decide to enter a particular college or educational institution hope to succeed in a particular field according to their studies. As time goes by, students are required to want to learn new things quickly. So many students work in ways that do not match what they learned in their formal education ([Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022](#)). Quarter-life characteristics experienced by students are also caused by various difficulties such as difficulties in completing the final thesis assignment, demands on the length of time required to complete their education, career concerns, and other demands. After graduating, they face various choices between continuing their studies to a higher level and looking for work, romantic relationships, and social roles towards others ([Nabila et al., 2020](#)). External factors causing the quarter-life crisis in students related to living expenses, college financing, and other financing related to economic aspects with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Indonesian economy ([Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022](#)).

Someone with good self-perception will find it easier to control their emotions. In addition, they will be able to read the situation around them better, understand other people more efficiently, and understand other people's hopes or expectations ([Akhnaf et al., 2022](#)). Self-awareness is a state or condition where a person can know himself as well as

possible, namely awareness of thoughts, self-judgment, and emotions. Students need to increase their self-awareness as they are vulnerable to experiencing the quarter-life crisis phase. Such as the freedom to determine one's destiny according to individual abilities and responsibility for the anxiety experienced ([Fortuna et al., 2022](#)).

Based on a survey conducted by First Direct Bank in 2017 of 2,000 millennial respondents in the UK, 56% of individuals are in a quarter-life crisis. ([Asrar & Taufani, 2022](#)). Nearly 60% reported that individuals questioned their situation due to environmental pressures. Financial difficulties are the second cause of the quarter-life crisis. More than 30% of individuals in a quarter-life crisis spend more money than they earn ([Afifah, 2023](#)). In the results of a preliminary study conducted in June 2022, researchers conducted interviews about self-awareness and quarter-life crisis with eight final-year students. The results showed that eight students felt depressed when completing their final assignment in the eighth semester, eight students were worried about the future, five students were worried about not being able to complete the final assignment in a timely manner, five students were hesitant about continuing their profession, eight students often had difficulty in making decisions about relationships, seven had been in a phase of despair, four students had doubts about individual strengths and weaknesses, two students had hurt themselves or self-harm.

Final-year students often experience various negative feelings such as confusion, sadness, guilt, and anger towards themselves and the conditions they are experiencing, as well as feeling depressed and losing hope about their future. If this feeling is not handled well, it will result in a

quarter-life crisis ranging from frustration to depression and other psychological disorders (Huwaina & Khoironi, 2021). One of the efforts that can be made to minimise the incidence of quarter-life crises in students is increasing self-awareness. Self-awareness is a reciprocal relationship between mental life and physical processes and psychological processes related to life goals, emotions, and cognitive processes. Self-awareness can be a process of self-reflection where, with this reflection, the individual can consciously focus his thoughts on himself and demand it in making decisions about himself (Fortuna et al., 2022). Self-awareness can be increased in four ways, namely self-talk (talking to yourself), seeking information with yourself, seeing the other side of yourself from other people, increasing open-self (being open about yourself), listening to feedback from other people about yourself (Aslami et al., 2021). From the description above, researchers are interested in researching "The Relationship between Self-Awareness and Quarter Life Crisis in Final Years of Undergraduate Nursing Students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri."

Methods

The design of this research is correlational with a cross-sectional approach. The research was conducted at Karya Husada College, Kediri, in January 2023. The population of this research was all students at the end of the semester pursuing a bachelor's degree in nursing, totalling 87 students. The sample in this study involved 87 respondents using a total sampling technique. The independent variable is self-awareness, and the dependent variable is a quarter-life crisis, measured using a questionnaire. A questionnaire was used to measure self-awareness variables with parameters consisting of aspects of self-awareness,

namely emotional self-awareness, accurate self-awareness, and self-confidence. Questionnaire to measure quarter-life crisis Consisting of parameters of indecisiveness in decision making, hopelessness, negative self-evaluation, being trapped in difficult situations, anxiety, depression, worry about relationships, and interpersonal relationships. The research data were then analysed and tested using Spearman Rho with $\alpha < 0.05$. Ethical Clearance Number of Letter : 231/EC/LPPM/STIKES/KH/1/2023.

Results

The research results on the characteristics of respondents, according to Table 1 below, show that almost all respondents (95.4%) are aged 20-23 years, and almost all respondents (79.3%) are female. Almost all respondents (88.5%) are Muslim, almost all respondents (97.7%) are not married, most respondents (6.68%) live in boarding houses/contrasts, almost half of the respondents (31%) his father's job is as a farmer and almost half of the respondents (43.7%) their mothers do not work. Regarding income, the results showed that most respondents (54%) had a total monthly income of 3,000,000-4,000,000 rupiah for fathers and mothers. The overall distribution of respondents (100%) received motivational support from parents, the majority of respondents (60.9%) found it easier to understand information through social media, the majority of respondents (63%) managed their emotions by keeping busy with themselves and almost half of the respondents (34.5%) channelling emotions through worship.

The results of research regarding the identification of self-awareness variables described in Table 2 show that the majority of respondents (55.2%) had a sufficient

level of awareness, (27.6%) almost half of the respondents experienced a high level of self-awareness and a small number of respondents (17.2%) level of self-awareness is good. The results of identifying the quarter-life crisis variable according to Table 3 show that most respondents with a

moderate quarter-life crisis level were (52%). Meanwhile, almost half of the respondents had a high level of a quarter-life crisis (31%), and a small portion of respondents had a mild level of a quarter-life crisis (16.1%).

Table 1 Frequency Distribution of Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency	%
Age		
20-23 years old	83	95.5
24-27 years old	3	3.4
28-30 years old	1	1.1
Gender		
man	18	20.7
woman	69	79.3
Religion/Belief		
Islam	77	88.6
Hindu	1	1.1
Konghucu	0	0
Kristen	9	10,3
Budha	0	0
OtherReligion	0	0
Father's Employment Status		
Does not work	4	4.6
Farmer	27	31
Trader	7	8
Self-employed	22	25.3
Private employees	8	9.2
Civil servants/TNI/Police	14	16.1
Retired	4	4.6
Mother's Employment Status		
Does not work	38	43.7
Farmer	9	10.3
Trader	7	8
Self-employed	15	17.2
Private employees	3	3.4
Civil servants/TNI/Police	14	16.1
Retired	1	1.1
Total monthly income of parents		
<Rp 1.000.000	13	14.9
Rp 1.000.000 – Rp 2.000.000	17	19.5
Rp 3.000.000 – Rp 4.000.000	47	54.0
> Rp 4.000.000	10	11,4
Get Motivational Support From Parent		



Respondent Characteristics	Frequency	%
Yes	87	100
No	0	0
Managing Emotions		
Looking for busyness with yourself	55	63.2
Looking for Busyness in the Crowd	32	36.8
Channeling Emotions		
drinking Alcohol	1	1.1
Self-Harm	4	4.6
Pray	30	34.4
Culinary	19	21.8
Enjoying Nature	15	17.2
Artistic Creativity	2	2.2
Sport	4	4.5
Academic Creativity	4	4.5
Discussion/Chat	8	9.1
Total	87	100

Table 2 Frequency distribution of self-awareness

Self Awareness	Frequency	%
Not Enough	24	27.6
Enough	48	55.2
Good	15	17.2
Total	87	100

Tabel 3 Distribusi Frekuensi *Quarter Life Crisis*

<i>Quarter Life Crisis</i>	Frequency	%
Low	27	31
Moderate	46	52
High	14	16.1
Total	87	100

Discussion

Identify self-awareness in students.

Based on research conducted, the results showed that the majority of respondents (55.2%) had sufficient self-awareness. Self-awareness is a deep understanding of emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and needs as motivation to do or act according to self-awareness. So, people with good emotional intelligence recognise how feelings affect themselves and others and will be able to know what

they do and why they do it ([Umami & Rosdiana, 2022](#)). There are three aspects of self-awareness, namely emotional self-awareness (recognising emotions) and accurate self-assessment (accurate self-recognition, self-confidence) ([Syarafina, 2019](#)).

Based on the research results, the most dominant statement in emotional self-awareness (knowing emotions), namely, most respondents (65.51%), stated that they were still happy if they saw a friend



was happy even though I was sad. The most dominant statement in the aspect of accurate self-assessment is that almost half of the respondents (48.27%) disagree with the statement that I am angry if other people judge that I have more shortcomings than advantages. The most dominant statement in the self-confidence aspect is that (48.27%) of respondents remain confident despite their weaknesses. This study's Factors that influence self-awareness are age, parental motivational support, learning media, and managing emotions.

The first factor that influences self-awareness is age. Almost all respondents (95.4%) were aged 20-23 years, where this age entered the early adulthood period, namely the transition from adolescence to adulthood, marked by the search for self-identity. Various problems also arise with increasing age in early adulthood. Early adulthood is a transition period from dependence to independence from an economic perspective, freedom to determine oneself, and a more realistic view of the future. A person who is classified as early adulthood is in the stage of a warm, close, and communicative relationship with or not involving sexual contact. If he fails in the form of intimacy, then he will experience what is called isolation (feeling excluded from other people, lonely, blaming himself for being different from other people). Adolescence and early adulthood are periods where physical strength is prioritised over rational strength in solving problems ([Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022](#)).

The second factor that influences self-awareness is social support. All respondents (100%) received motivation from their parents. Support will increase self-confidence and motivation to face problems ([Asrar & Taufani, 2022](#)). Family social support enables families to function

with various intelligence and resourcefulness, improving their health and adaptation in life. Good family social support will increase an individual's self-confidence because the individual will feel cared for, motivated, loved, and able to face difficult situations and obstacles. ([Rahma & Rahayu, 2018](#)).

The third factor is managing emotions. Most respondents (63.2%) are looking for busyness with themselves, and almost half (36.8%) are looking for busyness with a crowd. Writing a thesis is a nightmare for most students. There is an opinion that writing a thesis is complex, and there is a perception that lecturers make it difficult for their students to graduate, worry about literature, punctuality, and poor emotional management, which prevent students from completing their thesis. Students who manage their emotions well tend to avoid stress, anxiety, and despair ([Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022](#)). When it comes to controlling emotions, individuals have their ways. The way the individual's personality also influences an individual controls emotions. Compared to extroverts, who tend to be more open and introverted individuals who are more oriented towards themselves, introverted individuals who are closed are not necessarily good at controlling their emotions. They do not always keep whatever they feel to themselves or never seem to express their emotions. Emotions can be seen through expressions when communicating. The expressions shown are positive and negative. There are several expressions shown that do not match his emotions. Some individuals are good at hiding emotions behind facial expressions. This causes differences in emotions from those felt and shown. The difference between emotions that are felt and shown is an individual's effort to control emotions. These efforts are made based on many

factors, including acceptance in social circles, wanting to look good, and not wanting others to know about their condition.

The fourth factor is the distribution of emotions; there are two types: positive and negative behaviour. Negative behaviour, such as a small number of respondents (4.6%) hurting themselves and a small number of respondents (1.1%) drinking alcohol. Not all students can overcome every problem well; students who are unable to overcome various problems that arise will be easily influenced and become vulnerable to falling into negative things, including drinking alcohol. Most of the students who consume alcoholic drinks can usually be seen at nightlife venues (cafes, mini markets, and clubs/discotheques). In early adulthood, some individuals stop thinking about how their lifestyle will influence their health later in adulthood. Students consume alcohol because alcohol is the easiest to obtain to relieve stress and escape from problems or forget all the problems they are facing ([Manuhutu & Soetjningsih, 2022](#)). This type of alcohol dependence is a psychological dependence that appears in individuals who always imagine, think, and plan about being able to enjoy alcoholic drinks. Physiological dependence is a condition of dependence that is characterised by a tendency to withdraw (hunger/thirst for alcohol). The sensation of hunger or thirst encourages individuals to consume alcoholic beverages immediately. Thus, people who experience physiological dependence on alcoholic beverages will find it difficult to stop or be prohibited from consuming them ([Paramita et al., 2020](#)).

Of the students who carried out positive activities, almost all respondents (94.2%) included religious activities, culinary activities, nature activities, artistic creativity, sports, academic creativity, and

discussions. When students can manage their emotions well, the risk of experiencing stress, anxiety, and despair is lower compared to students who cannot manage their positive emotions well. Managing positive emotions needs to be done so that the actions taken lead to positive things and have the character of being severe, responsible in managing yourself, and open to the ideas and opinions of other people. When managed well, positive emotions make a person more enthusiastic, happy, confident, and optimistic ([Puspita, 2019](#)). Individuals who can manage emotions will be more capable of handling emotional tension and will be better able to face and resolve conflicts effectively.

Identifikasi Quarter Life Crisis Pada Mahasiswa

Based on research conducted, the results showed that the majority of respondents had a moderate level of a quarter-life crisis, namely (52%). Meanwhile, almost half of the respondents had a high quarter-life crisis (31%), and a small portion had a mild quarter-life crisis (16.1%).

A quarter-life crisis is a phase where an emotional crisis occurs in individuals in their 20-30s. The emotional crisis that occurs in individuals in the quarter-life crisis phase includes feelings of helplessness, unsure or doubting one's abilities, isolation, and often fear anxiety. About future failure ([Riyanto & Arini, 2021](#)). The impact of the quarter-life crisis is stress and the feeling that one's life is less stable because what the individual wants does not match what is imagined. The individual has planned something that he wants, but the situation is not as expected or planned; this arises because expectations are too high and are the opposite of reality. Individuals during difficult times will be motivated to seek a new understanding of self and words

and look for new ways to face various life challenges ([Herawati & Hidayat, 2020](#))

Based on the research results, it was found that the majority of respondents (56.32%) were hesitant to make decisions because they were worried that they would make a mistake in deciding on a career direction. Most respondents (67.81%) experienced despair because they felt dissatisfied with their current life. Most respondents (57.41%) experienced a positive self-assessment and were able to overcome various challenges in life. Most respondents (60.91%) were not trapped in a situation because they had several dreams and knew how to make them come true. Nearly half of respondents (47.12%) are not worried about the future because they feel their lives will go well. Most respondents (56.32%) felt pressured but still had targets and appreciated every process. Most respondents (57.47%) were worried about interpersonal relationships and tried to resolve problems when there was a dispute with their parents.

The factors influencing this research's quarter-life crisis are age, gender, beliefs, and parents' income. The first factor is age (95.4%), 20-23 years, where this age enters the early adulthood period, namely the transition from adolescence to adulthood marked by the search for self-identity. Various problems also arise with increasing age in early adulthood. Early adulthood is a transition period from dependence to independence from an economic perspective, freedom to determine oneself, and a more realistic view of the future. Someone who is classified as early adulthood is in the stage of a warm, close, and communicative relationship with or does not involve sexual contact. If he fails in the form of intimacy, he will experience isolation (feeling excluded from other people, lonely, and blaming himself for being different from other people)

([Herawati & Hidayat, 2020](#)). Adolescence and early adulthood are times when physical strength is prioritised over rational strength in solving problems.

In the quarter-life crisis, there is a second factor, namely religion (88.5%), (8%) Christian religion, (2.3%) Confucian religion, and (1.1%) Hindu religion. When individuals enter this age, they will usually become critical and question the religion they have adhered to since childhood. This question relates to whether the religion he has adopted is the best and right religion for him and whether obedience to religion affects his life ([Huwaina & Khoironi, 2021](#)). Individuals also begin to question whether spirituality or religiosity influences a person's morals and behaviour in society. These questions arise because of doubt and because, at this age, individuals begin to seek justification regarding religion or beliefs according to their values. They are no longer influenced by the religion or beliefs held by their family or those closest to them.

In the quarter-life crisis, there is a third factor: where you live. Most (67.8%) respondents live in boarding houses/contracts. A free life in a boarding house area will reduce feelings of care between residents. Social awareness will decrease because individuals will not know each other ([Setiawan & Milati, 2022](#)). This creates an apathetic society and a free life that can violate social norms in the area. In a quarter-life crisis, there are several aspects, namely uncertainty in making decisions, feelings of hopelessness, negative self-judgment, being trapped in difficult situations, anxiety, pressure, and worries about establishing interpersonal relationships.

In the fourth quarter life crisis factor, a small percentage (14.9%) had parents' income <1,000,000, (19.5%) parents' income was 1,000,000 – 2,000,000, (54%)

parents' income was 3,000. 000-4,000,000, (11.5%) parents' income >4,000,000. A person's motivation to continue their education is influenced by two factors, namely internal and external. Socioeconomic conditions and economic status are components of social class, referring to the level of family income and source of income. Income that is sufficient for family needs, including improving education.

Analysis of the Relationship between Self-Awareness and Quarter Life Crisis in Students

Based on statistical tests using the Spearman rank test to determine the relationship between self-awareness and quarter-life crisis in undergraduate nursing students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri, a substantial correlation value was obtained (- 0.54) with a p-value of 0.014 at a significant level ($\alpha = 0.05$). , then H1 is accepted, and it can be concluded that there is a relationship between self-awareness and quarter-life crisis in undergraduate nursing students at STIKES Karya Husada Kediri with a negative relationship, meaning that the lower self-awareness, the higher the quarter-life crisis.

Based on the results of research on self-awareness, the most dominant aspect is emotional self-awareness (recognising emotions); the majority of respondents (65.51%) stated that according to the statement, I am still happy when I see my friends are happy even though I am sad. Meanwhile, in the quarter-life crisis, the most dominant aspect was the aspect of despair; the majority of respondents (66.66%) stated that they believed that my efforts so far would bear fruit.

Self-awareness is a person's principal capital in carrying out their duties and roles in daily life. Understanding yourself is a necessary condition before starting the

process of understanding others ([Fluerentin, 2012](#)). The introspection strategy is one way to raise awareness for students to dare to correct themselves about the activities they have carried out ([Lestari et al., 2022](#)). Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognise feelings or emotions in oneself and others, motivate oneself, and manage or manage emotions well in relationships with others. ([Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022](#)). Someone with good self-perception will find it easier to control their emotions. Additionally, they can read the situation around them better and understand other people more easily ([Syarafina, 2019](#)). In this way, individuals will not be easily carried away by external influences, and individuals will not experience stress and despair. If someone has good self-awareness, the individual will avoid the quarter-life crisis. Individuals will focus and position themselves and will remember the various forms of rights and obligations that are their responsibilities.

Conclusion

This research concludes that almost all respondents experienced a sufficient level of self-awareness. Almost all respondents experienced a quarter-life crisis at a moderate level. The level of self-awareness is related to the quarter-life crisis in Bachelor of Nursing Students, where the higher the self-awareness, the lower the risk of a quarter-life crisis.

Authors Contributions

Authors 1 and 2 worked together to prepare articles, from research proposals to collecting research data, analysing data, discussing research results, and preparing research journal articles.

Conflicts of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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