

The Relationship of Quarter Life Crisis and Self Confidence with Self Disclosure in Early Adulthood University Students

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ABSTRACT: This study tests a predictive model in which quarter life crisis and self confidence are posited as key factors influencing self disclosure among Indonesian university students in early adulthood. Based on psychosocial development and communication privacy management theories, we hypothesized that a higher quarter life crisis would predict lower self disclosure, while greater self confidence would predict higher self disclosure. Using random sampling, 45 final year students or recent graduates from a large public university were surveyed online. Multiple regression analysis produced the following unstandardized model: Self Disclosure = 30.836 + 0.209 (Quarter Life Crisis) + 0.325 (Self Confidence). The overall model was not statistically significant, $F(2, 41) = 1.250$, $P = 0.231$, with a low R^2 of 0.069, explaining only 6.9% of the variance in self disclosure. The weak positive correlation between self disclosure and self confidence ($r = .15$) and moderate negative correlation between quarter life crisis and self confidence ($r = -.45$) did not translate into a statistically supported predictive model. Given the non significant result, the limited explanatory power, a small sample size ($N = 45$), and the moderate reliability of the self confidence measure, the hypothesized model is not supported. This suggests other variables are more influential and future research with larger samples and robust measures is needed to better understand the determinants of self disclosure in this population. Any practical implications for fostering self disclosure as a support strategy therefore remain speculative.

Keywords: Quarter Life Crisis, Self Confidence, Self Disclosure, Emerging Adulthood, Regression Analysis.



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INTRODUCTION

Emerging adulthood is a developmental stage often marked by significant exploration and instability, during which many university students may experience distress known as a quarter life crisis (QLC). This condition is characterized by feelings of uncertainty, selfdoubt, anxiety about the future, and fear of failure. Contributing factors include financial, career, and relational concerns. Quarter life crisis typically begins during emerging adulthood, a phase experienced by

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individuals aged 18–29 years. During this phase, individuals are expected to leave adolescence behind but have not yet entered the stage of assuming the responsibilities commonly associated with adulthood (Arnett, 2015).

The transition from late adolescence to early adulthood presents unique challenges distinct from earlier developmental stages. Individuals encounter new life aspects such as career establishment, shifts in relational status, and identity exploration. This period can be a time of searching, marked by emotional tension, social isolation, and significant lifestyle adjustments (Robinson et al., 2021). Consequently, many feel "in between" no longer adolescents, yet not fully adult (Padilla Walker & Nelson, 2022). This pivotal transition plays a crucial role in an individual's physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and emotional development toward greater maturity. During emerging adulthood, the constellation of worry, confusion, and perceived lack of direction is often termed a quarter life crisis, conceptualized as a normative consequence of this developmental transition (Berger & Chen, 2023). Adequate preparation during late adolescence can aid individuals in navigating this crisis more successfully.

Quarter life crisis is frequently experienced by individuals completing or having recently completed higher education and is often accompanied by anxiety about the future. According to Robbins and Wilner (2021), failure to effectively manage a quarter life crisis can impact self confidence, as one internal influencing factor is the appraisal of one's "hopes and dreams." Individuals frequently question their aspirations concerning future life, including their interests, potential for success or failure, and the consequences of not achieving their goals (Robbins & Wilner, 2001). Self confidence is a critical resource that can motivate individuals to pursue these aspirations; without it, individuals may become hesitant to act, potentially stalling their development (Slemp et al., 2022). Recent research confirms that diminished self efficacy and confidence are hallmark psychological correlates of quarter life distress, particularly in contexts of career uncertainty (Sari & Yıldız, 2024). Given the potential challenges of a quarter life crisis, identifying factors that can support adjustment is important. Individuals with higher self confidence may navigate a quarter life crisis more effectively due to a more positive self concept and belief in their capabilities. Conversely, lower self confidence can exacerbate negative thinking and doubts about one's potential. One potential adaptive strategy involves self disclosure, the process of sharing personal information, thoughts, and feelings with others. Theoretically, self disclosure can serve as a coping mechanism by facilitating social support, validation, and perspective taking, which may in turn reduce feelings of isolation and distress (Liu & Brown, 2021). According to Carl Magno(2011), self disclosure is the willingness to share openly with trusted individuals or groups. Incontemporary life, self disclosure occurs not only in direct interpersonal interactions but also through digital media. Recent studies suggest that authentic self disclosure, when conducted in perceived safe environments, can foster social support and potentially mitigate quarter life distress (Pang & Jiang, 2023). However, the psychological outcomes are nuanced and depend on factors such as the perceived audience and the quality of the response received. While theory suggests a potential link between self confidence, quarter life crisis, and self disclosure, the nature of these relationships requires empirical clarification. A coherent model posits that self confidence may influence an individual's propensity for self disclosure, particularly during a stressful period like a quarter life crisis. For instance, higher self confidence could predict greater willingness to engage in self

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disclosure as a proactive coping strategy. Conversely, intense quarter life crisis might be associated with lower self confidence, which could, in turn, inhibit self disclosure due to fears of negative evaluation. This study, therefore, aims to test a predictive model examining the relationships between quarter-life crisis, self-confidence, and self-disclosure among Indonesian university students. We specifically hypothesize that: (1) Quarter life crisis will negatively predict self disclosure, and (2) Self confidence will positively predict self disclosure.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational design using cross sectional survey data. This approach is appropriate for examining predictive relationships between variables and is widely used in psychosocial research investigating phenomena like quarter life crisis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The design aligns with recent studies exploring similar constructs in transitional life stages (Chen & Chen, 2024). Hypothesis testing was conducted using multiple linear regression analysis to assess the extent to which quarter life crisis and self confidence predict self disclosure. Prior to analysis, key regression assumptions including normality of residuals, linearity, homoscedasticity, and the absence of significant multicollinearity were examined and found to be tenable.

Participants were 45 university students or recent graduates (M age = 22.4, SD = 1.8) in Indonesia. The target population was students in the final year of undergraduate study or within one year of graduation, a demographic central to research on emerging adulthood transitions (Robinson et al., 2021). A combination of purposive and convenience sampling was used. Eligibility criteria included being aged 18–29, currently enrolled as a final year student or having graduated within the past 12 months, and providing informed consent. Participants were recruited through online announcements on university student forums and social media groups. While this method facilitated access to the target demographic, it constitutes a non-probability sample, which limits the generalizability of findings. The sample size, though comparable to some preliminary studies in this domain (Gunawan et al., 2022), constrains statistical power.

Data were collected via an online questionnaire comprising three established scales, along with demographic items. All scales were administered in Bahasa Indonesia. For scales originally in English, a standard translation back translation procedure was followed to ensure conceptual equivalence.

The Quarter Life Crisis Scale (Robbins & Wilner, 2001) was used. The scale consists of 15 items (e.g., "I often feel anxious about my future") rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Higher scores indicate greater quarter-life crisis severity. In this study, the scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$). Selfconfidence was measured using a 10-item scale adapted from Turner (2022). Items (e.g., "I believe I can achieve my goals") are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Never True to 5 = Always True), with higher scores reflecting higher self-confidence. The scale showed moderate reliability in the current sample ($\alpha = .69$). The Self-Disclosure Scale (Carl Magno, 2011) was employed. This 12item instrument (e.g., "I share my personal worries with close friends") uses a 5-point Likert scale (1 =

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Very Unlikely to 5 = Very Likely). Higher scores indicate a greater propensity for selfdisclosure. The scale demonstrated good reliability ($\alpha = .83$).

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27. Descriptive statistics were computed for all variables. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine bivariate relationships (Pallant, 2020). The primary analysis was a standard multiple regression, with self disclosure as the dependent variable and quarter life crisis and self confidence as simultaneous predictors. Assumption checks were performed residuals were approximately normally distributed (Shapiro-Wilk $p > .05$), scatterplots indicated linear relationships, and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below 2, indicating no multicollinearity concerns.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Final year students or fresh graduates formed the demographic basis of the study. The demographic data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Data.

Total	Status	Education	Age
45	Final Year Student/Fresh Graduate	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	20–29 years

The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. The sample consisted of 45 final year students or fresh graduates, with 32 males (71.1%) and 13 females (28.9%), all aged between 20–29 years and holding a bachelor's degree.

Table 2. Hypothetical Score Table

Variabel	Mean	Median	Standart Deviasi
Self Disclosure	50.477	49.5	5.316
Quarter Life Crisis	49.77	50.5	6.617
Self Confidence	28.386	28.5	3.895

Descriptive statistics for the main variables are shown in Table 2. Participants generally reported moderate levels of self disclosure ($M = 50.48$, $SD = 5.32$), quarter life crisis ($M = 49.77$, $SD = 6.62$), and self confidence ($M = 28.39$, $SD = 3.90$). The obtained hypothetical mean functions to categorize data for each variable, as explained in Table 3.

Table 3. Self disclosure Category Table

Category	Frequency	Percentage
high	7	15.56
moderate	32	71.11
low	6	13.33
Total	45	100

Categorization of scores (Tables 3–5) revealed that the majority of participants fell into the moderate category for all three constructs: self disclosure (71.1%), quarter life crisis (64.4%), and self confidence (66.7%).

Table 4. Quarter life Crisis Category Table

Category	Frequency	Percentage
high	8	17.78
moderate	29	64.44
low	8	17.78
Total	45	100

Table 4 indicates that 8 participants experienced high quarter life crisis, 29 moderate, and 8 low. Therefore, the quarter life crisis level among participants is categorized as moderate.

Table 5. Self confidence Category Table

Category	Frequency	Percentage
High	8	17.78
Moderate	30	66.67
Low	7	15.56
Total	45	100

Table 5 shows that 8 participants had high self confidence, 30 moderate, and 7 low. Hence, the self confidence level of participants is categorized as moderate.

Table 6. Reliability Test Results Recap

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Self disclosure	0.82
Quarter life Crisis	0.80
Self confidence	0.56

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Reliability analysis (Table 6) indicated acceptable internal consistency for self disclosure ($\alpha = 0.82$) and quarter life crisis ($\alpha = 0.80$), but marginal reliability for self confidence ($\alpha = 0.56$), which should be considered when interpreting related findings. This study use of a cross sectional design precludes causal inference. The modest sample size ($N = 45$) limited statistical power. Most critically, the measurement of self confidence demonstrated marginal reliability ($\alpha = .56$). This low reliability likely introduced substantial measurement error, which attenuates correlation and regression coefficients, potentially obscuring a true relationship between self-confidence and self disclosure. The poor reliability may stem from factors such as the translation of the scale items, a mismatch between the items and the cultural context of Indonesian students, or an insufficient number of items to stably capture the construct. Future research should employ a validated self confidence scale with established strong psychometric properties in the target population. Reporting item total statistics during scale validation can help identify and remove poorly performing items to improve reliability.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Analysis

	Estimate	Std Err	t-value	p-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%
(Intercept)	30.836	11.314	2.725	0.009	0.009	53.686
qlc	0.209	0.135	1.543	0.131	-0.064	0.482
selfc	0.325	0.230	1.414	0.165	-0.139	0.789

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether quarter-life crisis and self confidence predict self disclosure. Specifically, a standard multiple regression analysis was performed to test the hypothesis that quarter life crisis (QLC) and self confidence (SelfC) are significant predictors of self disclosure. The results indicated that the overall model was not statistically significant, $F(2, 41) = 1.250$, $p = .231$, and explained only 6.9% of the variance in self disclosure ($R^2 = .069$, Adjusted $R^2 = .024$). The unstandardized regression coefficients, standard errors, and significance tests for each predictor are presented in Table 7. The resulting regression equation was: Predicted Self Disclosure = $30.836 + 0.209(\text{QLC}) + 0.325(\text{SelfC})$. An examination of the individual predictors revealed that neither quarter life crisis ($b = 0.209$, $\beta = 0.263$, $p = .131$) self confidence ($b = 0.325$, $\beta = 0.234$, $p = 0.165$) were statistically significant individual predictors of self disclosure.

Table 8.

R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	PRESS R-squared
0.069	0.024	-0.086

Table 9.

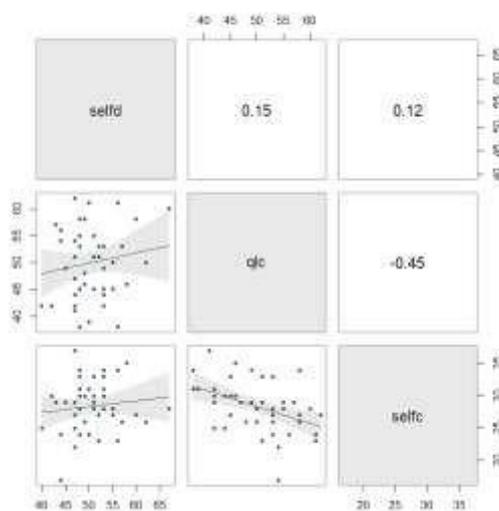
Null hypothesis of all 0 population slope coefficients:		
F-statistic: 1.250	df: 2 and 41	p-value: 0.231

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Based on the data, the obtained regression model was: Predicted Self-Disclosure = 30.836 + 0.209 (Quarter-Life Crisis) + 0.325(Self-Confidence). The overall model was not statistically significant, $F(2, 41) = 1.250$, $p = .231$, with an $R^2 = .069$. This indicates that, collectively, quarterlife crisis and self-confidence explain approximately 6.9% of the variance in self-disclosure. The remaining variance (approximately 93.1%) is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The individual regression coefficients were 0.209 for quarter-life crisis and 0.325 for selfconfidence, but neither was statistically significant ($p = .131$ and $p = .165$, respectively).

Figure 1. Variable Categorization Analysis in R Studio



Bivariate correlations were computed to explore relationships among variables. A weak positive correlation was found between self disclosure and self confidence ($r = 0.12$). Similarly, a weak positive correlation was observed between self disclosure and quarter life crisis ($r = 0.15$). In contrast, a moderate negative correlation was identified between quarter life crisis and self confidence ($r = -0.45$). This study aimed to investigate the relationships between quarter life crisis, self confidence, and self disclosure among university students in early adulthood. Contrary to expectations, the regression model was not statistically significant, and the predictors accounted for only a small proportion of variance in self disclosure. This outcome resonates with findings from Oti-Boadi et al., (2024), who also reported that generalized psychological traits often fail to directly predict specific disclosure behaviors without considering mediating situational factors. This suggests that factors beyond quarter life crisis and self confidence such as social support, personality traits, or coping strategies likely play a more central role in influencing self disclosure behaviors (Kim et al., 2022).

The weak positive correlation between self disclosure and quarter life crisis ($r = 0.15$) partially aligns with prior research indicating that individuals in distress may engage in self disclosure as a coping mechanism (Kansky & Allen, 2018). However, the strength of this relationship was minimal, implying that the link is not straightforward. The moderate negative correlation between quarter life crisis and self confidence ($r = -0.45$) supports existing literature suggesting that crisis periods can undermine self-belief (Taber, 2018; Ventura-León et al., 2024). This inverse

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relationship has been further substantiated in longitudinal studies focusing on graduate populations (Zhang & Li, 2023).

The lack of statistical significance in the regression model may be attributable to several methodological limitations. First, the small sample size ($N = 45$) likely reduced statistical power. Second, the marginal reliability of the self confidence measure ($\alpha = 0.56$) may have attenuated its observed relationships with other variables. Third, the restricted variability in participant scores (most were in the moderate range) may have limited the detection of stronger effects. Additionally, cultural factors influencing self-disclosure norms, particularly in collectivist settings, may moderate these relationships in ways not captured here (Alkhaldi et al., 2024).

Despite these limitations, the findings offer preliminary insight into the psychosocial dynamics of early adulthood. The quarter life crisis remains a relevant construct, as evidenced by its negative association with self confidence. Interventions aimed at enhancing self confidence such as coaching, mentoring, or resilience training may help mitigate quarter life distress (Santoso & Wijaya, 2024). Similarly, creating environments that encourage authentic self disclosure, whether through counseling, peer groups, or supportive digital platforms, could provide emotional relief and reduce feelings of isolation (Wang & Chen, 2023).

Future research should address the limitations of this study by employing larger, more diverse samples, using validated and highly reliable instruments, and incorporating qualitative or mixed-methods approaches to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experience of quarter life crisis. Exploring potential mediators or moderators such as social support, gender, or cultural factors could also clarify the mechanisms linking these psychological constructs (Gillen-O'Neel, 2024).

CONCLUSION

In summary, this study tested a predictive model where quarter-life crisis and self-confidence were hypothesized to influence self-disclosure among early-adulthood university students. The results indicated that, within this sample, these constructs were not significant predictors of self disclosure, and the overall regression model explained only a minimal portion of the variance. The non significant findings, alongside the modest sample size and the marginal reliability of the self confidence measure, highlight the study's methodological limitations and its limited statistical power to detect effects.

These results underscore the complexity of self disclosure behaviors. They suggest that the propensity to self disclose during a quarter-life crisis may be determined by a broader set of psychological, social, and contextual factors than those examined in the present model. For instance, future research should test more complex theoretical frameworks. Promising directions include investigating whether social support mediates the relationship between self-confidence and self-disclosure or examining if factors like attachment style or perceived social safety moderate the impact of a quarter-life crisis (Magno, 2011; Mallhi et al., 2024).

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The observed negative correlation between quarter-life crisis and self-confidence, while not part of a significant predictive model, aligns with literature describing the emotional and self-evaluative challenges of this transition period. Therefore, from a developmental support perspective, programs aimed at bolstering student well-being might consider general strategies for fostering supportive environments and strengthening self-efficacy. However, any direct application of these findings to design interventions targeting self-disclosure would be premature and requires validation through future research with more robust methodological designs, validated measures, and larger, more diverse samples.

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