

QUARTER-LIFE CRISIS IN EARLY ADULTHOOD IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL TO FATHER INVOLVEMENT

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Abstract: Quarter-life crisis in early adulthood is directly proportional to father involvement. Early adulthood is a transition period from adolescence to adulthood, where individuals face many new things and experience significant life changes. This study aims to determine the relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City. This study uses a quantitative correlational approach with the Product Moment analysis technique. The sample in this study consisted of 225 people, obtained using the non-probability sampling technique through the cluster sampling method. Data was collected using the Father Involvement and Quarter-life Crisis measuring instruments. The study showed a significant negative relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis with a correlation coefficient (r) -0.585. Thus, the higher the level of father involvement, the lower the quarter-life crisis experienced by early adults in Padang City. So otherwise.

Keywords: Father involvement, quarter-life crisis, early adulthood

Abstrak: Hubungan *Father Involvement* dengan *Quarter-life Crisis* pada dewasa awal di Kota Padang. Dewasa awal merupakan masa transisi dari remaja menuju dewasa, yang dimana pada masa ini individu dihadapkan dengan banyak hal baru dan mulai mengalami perubahan yang signifikan di dalam hidupnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui hubungan *father involvement* dengan *quarter-life crisis* pada dewasa awal di Kota Padang. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif korelasional dengan teknik analisis *Product Moment*. Sampel pada penelitian ini terdiri dari 225 orang yang diperoleh berdasarkan teknik *non-probability sampling* melalui metode *cluster sampling*. Pengumpulan data dilakukan menggunakan alat ukur *Father Involvement* dan *Quarter-life Crisis*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat hubungan negatif yang signifikan antara *father involvement* dengan *quarter-life crisis* dengan nilai koefisien korelasi (r) sebesar -0.585. Dengan demikian, dapat diartikan bahwa semakin tinggi tingkat *father*

involvement maka akan semakin rendah tingkat *quarter-life crisis* yang dialami oleh dewasa awal di Kota Padang. Begitupun sebaliknya.

Kata kunci: *Father involvement, quarter-life crisis, dewasa awal*

INTRODUCTION

One of the stages of human development is early adulthood, which occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 (Arnett, 2000). Individuals in early adulthood experience many changes, including starting new things in life, such as reading without parents, working, or getting married and having children. This follows the view of Liu et al. (2023), who stated that early adulthood is a critical period in life because, at this time, individuals leave their homes to go to college, work, or start a family. In early adulthood, individuals must carry out their developmental tasks, such as exploring themselves in the social environment, solving personal problems, and starting to determine plans (Manurung, 2023). Individuals can explore and learn many things about themselves when entering early adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Some aspects often explored during early adulthood include career or work, relationships with peers, education, and life partners (Nash & Murray, 2010). Doing much exploration can lead to instability in early adulthood (Korah, 2022). This happens because when individuals explore themselves, they tend to experience changes in their lives, both

positive and negative. In carrying out this self-exploration, early adults experience many changes in their lives, and these changes cause individuals to feel unstable (Arnett, 2015). Individuals who experience instability in their lives due to too many choices and experience continuous changes can experience a crisis known as the quarter-life crisis.

In 2001, Alexandra Robbins and Abby Wilner introduced the term quarter-life crisis, which is defined as an identity crisis caused by life instability during the transition phase to adulthood. This transition phase in the 20s is a shock to many individuals because they feel unprepared to enter adulthood, so they have feelings of anxiety about the future (Robbins & Wilner, 2001).

A quarter-life crisis is a phenomenon often experienced by individuals in early adulthood. In Padang City itself, researchers have surveyed 50 early adulthood individuals and found that, on average, they experienced a quarter-life crisis with various forms of anxiety. The anxieties felt include anxiety about education (68%), anxiety about work/career (64%), anxiety about finances

(46%), anxiety about relationships with family (16%), anxiety about relationships with peers (12%), and anxiety about romantic relationships (22%).

Based on the survey results, it can be concluded that the conditions experienced by early adulthood in Padang City are related to anxiety about education, work, finances, and interpersonal relationships. This opinion follows Fischer (2008), who said that feelings of worry in individuals experiencing a quarter-life crisis include social life, relationships, and career/work.

The signs of individuals experiencing a quarter-life crisis, according to Robinson et al. (2013), are feeling fear of failure, not knowing their goals in the future so they are unable to make decisions, feeling dissatisfied with the achievements they have made, and tend to compare themselves with others, and feeling unwilling for their teenage years to end. This is caused by instability in life due to too many choices and experiencing continuous changes during the transition process from adolescence to adulthood (Robbins & Wilner, 2001). Quarter-life crisis can also occur due to the individual's unpreparedness for the changes experienced during the transition to adulthood.

A quarter-life crisis can hurt an individual's mental health. Based on the results of

Sepsita's research (2024), it was found that mental health disorders in individuals experiencing a quarter-life crisis are often characterized by feelings of panic, frustration, stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression, and even the desire to end their lives. This can happen because of challenges and problems related to social life, education, and the future. Thus, individuals in early adulthood need external support when facing a quarter-life crisis, especially parental support.

According to a survey by researchers, 46% of subjects said that parental support was very important when they experienced a crisis. According to García-Mendoza et al. (2017), parents must be involved in an individual's life during the transition to adulthood because it can improve the individual's adjustment. In line with this, Habibie et al. (2019) stated that parental involvement can help individuals feel more prepared and adjust to the quarter-life crisis. The involvement of mothers and fathers is equally important for early adults.

Father involvement is a theory first proposed by Lamb et al. in 1985 (Sanjaya et al., 2022). Father involvement is defined as the direct involvement of a father in positive activities with children, providing warmth and responsiveness to children, controlling

children, indirect social and material care, and responsibility in meeting children's needs (Pleck, 2012).

Father involvement positively impacts child development and can influence children's attitudes in the future (Beaton & Doherty, 2007; Septiningsih et al., 2019). According to Allen and Daly (2007), father involvement has a positive impact on the life satisfaction of early adults, minimizing symptoms of anxiety and depression, reducing emotional stress and psychological stress, reducing negative expressions such as fear and guilt, avoiding behavioral problems, having a higher sense of social competence, and having a high level of happiness. In addition, father involvement can also help early adults complete their developmental tasks well so they can overcome challenges during the exploration phase (Alfajati & Tresnawaty, 2024). According to Bronte-Tinkew (2007), father involvement can help early adults make decisions about the future related to career, work, and education (Feliciana & Nurdibyanandaru, 2019). Thus, during the quarter-life crisis, individuals need a father's involvement. Early adults whose fathers are not involved or are also called fatherless will have a negative impact when they are adults. Based on the results of research by Fajarrini and Umam (2023), it was found that

fatherlessness can cause children to have low self-esteem as they get older. In addition, based on the research results by Iskandar and Kertamuda (2023), it was found that fatherlessness hurts the development and self-concept of children, affecting their behavior as adults.

In men, father involvement is very important because it can help individuals recognize and identify themselves as men (Kimani & Kombo, 2010). Therefore, the negative impact of fatherlessness on men is very large; it can cause early adult men to have a same-sex sexual orientation. The results of research by Azhari et al. (2019) found that fatherlessness is one of the reasons why early adult men become homosexual. This can happen because, to replace the figure of a father, early adult men try to seek attention from their male friends (of the same sex) (Iskandar & Kertamuda, 2023).

Meanwhile, the negative impact of fatherlessness on early adult women, based on the research results of Mukhallisa et al. (2023), is that it makes individuals feel lonely, lose role models, have difficulty making decisions, and experience obstacles in socializing. This is in line with the findings of Junaidin et al. (2023) in their research that fatherless women tend to find it difficult to establish healthy relationships with others,

especially with the opposite sex. The urgency of this study is that individuals who enter the early adult development stage tend to experience an identity crisis, especially when individuals feel unprepared to face the challenges and changes that occur with age (Robbins & Wilner, 2001). In early adulthood, individuals must carry out their developmental tasks, such as exploring themselves in the social environment, solving personal problems, and determining plans (Manurung, 2023). Some aspects that early adults often explore include relationships with peers, education, life partners, and careers or jobs (Nash & Murray, 2010). However, much exploration can cause feelings of instability in early adulthood (Korah, 2022). This instability can cause individuals to experience a quarter-life crisis. Individuals who are in the quarter-life crisis phase tend to have feelings of fear of failure, are unable to make decisions because they do not know what they want to do in their lives, are unhappy with their achievements, and often compare themselves to others (Robinson et al., 2013). So, in facing the difficulties and challenges in this quarter-life crisis phase, what is really needed by early adults is father involvement. This is because the involvement of a father can increase an individual's courage in facing the future

(Fajarrini & Umam, 2023) and can help individuals make decisions about the future related to career, work, or education (Bronte-Tinkew, 2007; Feliciana & Nurdibyanandaru, 2019). Based on the various negative impacts of fatherlessness, as explained above, the involvement of a father has a significant impact on the level of quarter-life crisis in early adulthood. Various studies have shown that individuals whose fathers are not involved (fatherless) can have a negative impact on social skills, feel lonely, lose role models, have difficulty making decisions, and experience obstacles in socializing. Where the things felt by individuals who experience fatherlessness are signs of a quarter-life crisis. Based on the literature study that the researcher has conducted, it was found that there have been many studies discussing the phenomenon of the quarter-life crisis. However, there has been no specific research on the relationship between father involvement and a quarter-life crisis. So, based on this background, the researcher is interested in researching the topic "*Quarter-life crisis in early adulthood is directly proportional to father involvement*".

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is a quantitative correlational study intended to determine the relationship

between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City. Quantitative research focuses on analyzing data in the form of numbers obtained from the measurement process and processed through statistical analysis techniques (Azwar, 2017). The correlational approach is intended to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between various variables (Azwar, 2017).

The variables in this study consist of father involvement as an independent variable and quarter-life crisis as a dependent variable. The father involvement variable is measured using the father involvement instrument adopted from a measuring instrument compiled by Indira (2021) based on Pleck's theory (2010), which consists of 23 items. Furthermore, the quarter-life crisis variable is measured using the quarter-life crisis instrument adopted from a measuring instrument compiled by Agustin (2012) based on Robbins and Wilner's theory (2001), which consists of 25 items.

This study's subjects consisted of 225 early adults in Padang City, who were obtained based on non-probability sampling techniques through the cluster sampling

method. Data collection was conducted online via Google Forms.

Based on the validity test results, two father involvement items and three quarter-life crisis items were dropped, with reliability values of 0.918 on the father involvement measuring instrument and 0.945 on the quarter-life crisis measuring instrument.

The data analysis technique used in this study was the Pearson Product Moment correlation test, which was intended to determine the relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City. According to Winarsunu (2009), the Product Moment correlation test aims to calculate or determine the relationship between two variables, both of which are interval data. Data analysis in this study was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study involved 225 early adults in Padang City. The following table describes the subjects in the study, grouped based on gender, age, educational status, and domicile.

Table 1. Subject Data Based on Gender and Age

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	68	30.22
Female	157	69.78
Age		
18 years	16	7.11
19 years	26	11.56
20 years	30	13.33
21 years	38	16.89
22 years	55	24.44
23 years	24	10.67
24 years	27	12
25 years	9	4

Table 1 shows that the total number of subjects was 225 people, consisting of 68 people (30.22%) male and 157 (69.78%) females. The subjects in this study were early adults with an age range of 18 to 25 years, namely 16 people (7.11%) aged 18 years, 26 people

(11.56%) aged 19 years, 30 people (13.33%) aged 20 years, 38 people (16.89%) aged 21 years, 55 people (24.44%) aged 22 years, 24 people (10.57%) aged 23 years, 27 people (12%) aged 24 years, and 9 people (4%) aged 25 years.

Table 2. Categorization of Quarter-life Crisis Data

Formula	Score	Category	F	%
$X > M + 1.5 SD$	$X > 104$	Very High	29	12.89
$M + 0.5 SD < X \leq M + 1.5 SD$	$86 < X \leq 104$	High	29	12.89
$M - 0.5 SD < X \leq M + 1.5 SD$	$67 < X \leq 86$	Medium	94	41.78
$M - 1.5 SD < X \leq M - 1.5 SD$	$49 < X \leq 67$	Low	57	25.33
$X \leq M - 1.5 SD$	$X \leq 49$	Very Low	16	7.11
Total			225	100

Table 2 shows that the subjects in this study generally have a level of quarter-life crisis in the medium category, namely 94 people (41.78%). Furthermore,

there were 57 people in the low category (25.33%), 29 people in the high and very high categories (12.89%), and 16 people in the very low category (7.11%).

Table 3. Categorization of Father Involvement Data

Formula	Score	Category	F	%
$X > M + 1.5 SD$	$X > 84$	Very High	67	29.78
$M + 0.5 SD < X \leq M + 1.5 SD$	$70 < X \leq 84$	High	57	25.33
$M - 0.5 SD < X \leq M + 1.5 SD$	$56 < X \leq 70$	Medium	75	33.33
$M - 1.5 SD < X \leq M - 1.5 SD$	$42 < X \leq 56$	Low	14	6.22
$X \leq M - 1.5 SD$	$X \leq 42$	Very Low	12	5.33
Total			225	100

Table 3 shows that, generally, the subjects in this study have a level of father

involvement in the medium category, namely 75 people (33.33%). Furthermore,

there is a very high category with a total of 67 people (29.78%), a high category with a total of 57 people (25.33%), a low category

with a total of 14 people (6.22%), and a very low category with a total of 12 people (5.33%).

Table 4. Results of the One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Normality Test

		Unstandardized Residual
N		225
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.000
	Std. Deviation	16.8108
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.040
	Positive	.028
	Negative	-.40
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.600
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.865

Based on Table 4, the Asymp is known. Sig. (2-tailed) value in this research data is

0.865, normally distributed because it has an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value > 0.05.

Table 5. Linearity Test Results

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	F	Sig
<i>Linearity</i>	32885.223	1	32885.223	145.138	.000

The assumption of the results of the linearity test in this study is assessed by comparing the Sig. Linearity value with the Alpha value (0.05), the data can be

identified as linear if it has a Sig. Linearity value <0.05. Thus, based on the results of the linearity test in Table 5, the Sig is

known. The linearity value is 0.000. The data in this study is linear.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results

	Father Involvement	Quarter-life Crisis
Pearson Correlation	1	-.585
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	225	225

Based on the results of the hypothesis test in Table 6, it is known that the relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City obtained a correlation coefficient value of $r = -0.585$ with a significance level of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). Thus, it can be concluded that H1 is accepted and H0 is rejected. Based on the results of the hypothesis test, it is also known that there is a significant negative or non-unidirectional relationship between the two variables. This means that the higher the level of father involvement, the lower the level of quarter-life crisis, and vice versa; the lower the level of father involvement, the higher the quarter-life crisis.

Discussion

This study analyzes the relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang

City. Based on the study's results, early adulthood in Padang City mostly has the same level of father involvement and quarter-life crisis, which is in the medium category. However, based on the hypothesis test results, it was found that father involvement has a significant negative correlation with a quarter-life crisis. So the higher the level of father involvement, the lower the level of quarter-life crisis; vice versa, the lower the level of father involvement, the higher the level of quarter-life crisis experienced by early adulthood in Padang City.

Father involvement is the direct involvement of a father in positive activities with children, providing warmth and being responsive to children, monitoring and controlling children's activities, indirect social and material care, and responsibility in fulfilling children's needs (Pleck, 2012).

Father involvement plays an important role in early adulthood individuals, namely when making decisions about the direction of their lives related to decisions about careers, jobs, and education (Bronte-Tinkew, 2007). So that father involvement can minimize the problems individuals face when experiencing a quarter-life crisis.

This study focuses on early adulthood with an age range of 18 to 25 years, which, according to Robbins and Wilner (2001), in the 20s is a time of crisis caused by life instability during the transition process to adulthood. Individuals who are in the quarter-life crisis phase tend to feel confused in making decisions, feel hopeless, depressed, anxious, trapped in difficult situations, judge themselves negatively, and worry about establishing interpersonal relationships (Robbins & Wilner, 2001). The unidirectional relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in this study is supported by the results of other studies examining the relationship between social support and quarter-life crisis conducted by Oktaviani and Soetjningsih (2023), which found that the higher the social support, the lower the level of a quarter-life crisis. Furthermore, research by Fitri and Lukman (2023) found that there was a unidirectional

and significant relationship between family social support and a quarter-life crisis. Thus, family social support, including father involvement, can impact the quarter-life crisis experienced by early adults.

Based on additional analysis of the specific relationship between father involvement and aspects of a quarter-life crisis, there was a fairly strong and significant negative correlation between father involvement and each aspect of a quarter-life crisis.

The negative correlation between father involvement and the aspect of "hesitant in making decisions" can be interpreted as indicating that if early adulthood has good father involvement, then their hesitation in making decisions will be reduced. This finding is supported by the theory of Bronte-Tinkew (2007), which states that father involvement can help early adults make decisions about the direction of life, whether related to career, work, or education.

Furthermore, the negative correlation between father involvement and the aspects of "hopelessness", "negative self-assessment", "trapped in a difficult situation", "anxious", and "depressed". It can be interpreted that if a father is not involved in early adulthood, then the individual tends to have poor psychological

conditions. This opinion is in line with Slaughter (2018), who stated that individuals whose fathers were involved in early adulthood tend to have good well-being and mental health. In addition, the results of the analysis in this study are also supported by the findings of Allen and Daly (2007), namely that father involvement is positively correlated with overall individual life satisfaction, minimizing symptoms of anxiety and depression, reducing emotional distress and psychological distress, fewer negative expressions such as fear and guilt, avoiding behavioral problems, having a higher sense of social competence, and having a higher level of happiness.

The negative self-assessment felt by individuals experiencing a quarter-life crisis is usually like feeling low self-esteem. The low self-esteem felt by early adults can also be caused by the father's involvement. This is in line with the opinion of Fajarrini and Umam (2023), who stated that individuals whose fathers are not involved will have low self-esteem as adults. This is supported by the findings of Azahra (2021) in her research that father involvement is positively correlated with early adult self-esteem. Thus, it can be interpreted that the higher the level of father

involvement, the higher the level of self-esteem felt by early adults, thereby reducing the quarter-life crisis they experience.

Feeling trapped in a job that is not liked is one example of a difficult situation experienced by early adults who experience a quarter-life crisis. In this case, father involvement is very much needed by early adults because it can improve individual adjustment in the world of work. This is supported by the findings of Kirana (2023) that father involvement is positively and significantly correlated with work adaptability in early adulthood. Thus, father involvement can positively affect individual adjustment in the world of work, which can also reduce the quarter-life crisis in early adulthood.

The last analysis found that father involvement was negatively correlated with "worry about interpersonal relationships". Early adults who do not have father involvement tend to find it difficult to have positive relationships with others, both with friends, partners, and other people around them. This is supported by the findings of Allen and Daly (2007), namely that father involvement can affect the socialization abilities of early adults and can increase the individual's capacity to relate to others.

Based on the results of this study, it was found that most subjects experienced a quarter-life crisis in the medium category, with a level of father involvement in the medium category. This can be interpreted as the fact that early adults in Padang City have been able to adapt quite well when facing the quarter-life crisis phase, which is supported by the presence of father involvement. Thus, it can be concluded that father involvement can affect the level of a quarter-life crisis in early adults in Padang City. The limitations of this study are that the research data is self-reported and collected online, so researchers cannot know whether the subjects gave honest answers; it is also possible that the subjects gave answers that were not serious or were considered better (faking good). Thus, the limitations in this study are a concern in interpreting the research results and can be used as consideration if further research is carried out.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study and the results of the hypothesis test regarding the relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City, it can be concluded that, in

general, the level of father involvement in early adulthood in Padang City is in the medium category, namely 33.33%. Furthermore, in the very high category with a total of 29.78%, the high category with a total of 25.33%, the low category with a total of 6.22%, and the very low category with a total of 5.33%.

Furthermore, it is also known that the quarter-life crisis experienced by early adults in Padang City is in the medium category, namely 41.78%. Furthermore, in the low category, with a total of 25.33%, in the high and very high categories, with a total of 12.89% each, and in the very low category, with a total of 7.11%.

Based on the hypothesis test, it was found that there was a non-unidirectional and significant relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City. This can be interpreted as the higher the level of father involvement, the lower the level of a quarter-life crisis, and vice versa: the lower the level of father involvement, the higher the level of a quarter-life crisis.

Suggestion

Based on the results of the study and data analysis on the relationship between father involvement and quarter-life crisis in early adulthood in Padang City, the researcher

suggests that the research subjects be open about the problems and difficulties they feel when experiencing a quarter-life crisis in their parents, both fathers and mothers because based on the findings of this study it can be seen that father involvement can affect the level of quarter-life crisis experienced by early adulthood. Furthermore, for researchers who are

interested in researching father involvement, the researcher suggests that they research early adult subjects and can connect with other relevant variables. In addition, the researcher suggests that further research be conducted to determine the influence of the father involvement variable on the quarter-life crisis.

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