

CHAPTER II

QUARTER-LIFE CRISIS AND PSYCHOLOGY HUMANISTIC

A. Phenomenon of Quarter Life Crisis

1) Quarter Life Crisis

The term quarter-life crisis was first introduced by Alexandra Robbins and Abby Wilner, as explained in their book titled *"Quarter-Life Crisis: The Unique Challenges of Life in Your Twenties,"* published between the 1990s and early 2000s. According to Robbins, the quarter-life crisis is a condition experienced by individuals who have completed their university education. The period following graduation often referred to as the "fresh graduate" phase is a stage that triggers anxiety, which can lead to stress, restlessness, panic, helplessness, and feelings of doubt.¹ The quarter-life crisis refers to a state of confusion about oneself, in which individuals begin to question their career choices and personal identity. Some respond to this phase by quitting their jobs, postponing career decisions, experiencing depression, or facing anxiety disorders. Robbins also explains that the quarter-life crisis is a feeling of being trapped by life choices a phenomenon that commonly occurs during the stage of emerging adulthood.²

Emerging adulthood is a developmental stage that extends beyond adolescence into early adulthood, typically between the ages of 18 and 29.³ During this stage, individuals often begin to reassess critical aspects of their lives, such as career paths, educational choices, lifestyle, romantic relationships, and their sense of self. This

¹ Alexandra Robbins Abby Wilner, *Quarter Life Crisis: The Unique Challenges of Life in Your Twenties* (London: Penguin Publishing Group, 2001), 3.

² Ajat Hidayat dkk, "Quarter-Life Crisis Phenomenon (Views and Solution According To Islamic Psychology)," *Al-Ittihad: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Hukum Islam* 10, no. 1 (2024), 4.

³ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, "Emerging Adulthood: Understanding the New Way of Coming of Age.," *American Psychological Association*, 2006, 3.

period often becomes a deep point of reflection, where individuals feel the need to evaluate whether the decisions they have made so far align with their personal goals and life expectations.

However, if not managed properly, the quarter-life crisis can increase the risk of mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, or loss of self-confidence. Social pressures and unrealistic expectations often worsen the situation, making individuals feel trapped or incapable of meeting both their own and society's expectations. It is important to understand that the quarter-life crisis is not a sign of weakness, but rather a natural part of the human life journey. With proper support from family, friends, or professionals individuals can transform this crisis into an opportunity to rediscover their life direction, establish clearer priorities, and build a more meaningful life. Therefore, approaches that focus on personal development, stress management, and emotional support are essential to help individuals navigate this phase more effectively.⁴

The quarter-life crisis is a struggle experienced by many young adults when confronted with an uncertain future related to career, identity, relationships, family, and friendships. It is a period in human life between adolescence and adulthood generally between the ages of 18 and 30 marked by confusion, anxiety, and emotional crises such as sadness, isolation, and fear of failure.⁵ Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that the quarter-life crisis is a phase of identity crisis or anxiety about the future, experienced by individuals transitioning from adolescence into adulthood.

⁴ Diana Putri Arini, "Emerging Adulthood: Pengembangan Teori Erikson Mengenai Teori Psikososial Pada Abad 21," *Jurnal Ilmiah PSYCHE* 15, no. 1 (2021), 18.

⁵ Siti Hasmah Fazira dkk, "Faktor Penyebab Quarter Life Crisis Pada Dewasa Awal," *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling* 5, no. 2 (2023), 1349.

The quarter-life crisis is a common and natural condition, as nearly every individual goes through this stage. It is not inherently negative; in fact, if individuals become aware of it, they can use the opportunity to explore themselves more deeply, be more cautious about future choices, and avoid being trapped by societal stereotypes and negative perceptions about this term especially expectations placed on individuals at certain ages.

The introduction of the term quarter-life crisis is also accompanied by several common characteristics that may indicate an individual is experiencing it, including: (1) Feeling unsure about personal desires and life goals (2) Achievements in their 20s not meeting expectations (3) Fear of failure (4) Unwillingness to let go of childhood or adolescence (5) Fear of making the wrong decision, and (6) A tendency to compare oneself to others, leading to feelings of inadequacy and worthlessness.⁶

2) Phase in Quarter-Life Crisis

According to the theorist Robinson, he states that there are four phases in the quarter-life crisis as follows:⁷

a. Locked in phase (Stuck inside)

The first phase is Locked in. In this phase, it has not entered the crisis period. In the locked in phase, this can cause feelings of negative frustration, starting to leave work and lack of trust in life and choices in life and self-identity.

b. Phase Separation (Separating)

⁶ Olivier C. Robinson Gordon R. T. Wright, Jonathan A. Smith, "The Holistic Phase Model of Early Adult Crisis," *Journal of Adult Development* 20, no. 1 (2013), 28.

⁷ Robinson Oliver, "Emerging Adulthood Early Adulthood and Quarter Life Crisis," *Emerging adulthood in: Europeantext*, 2015. 10.

In this phase, the individual begins to be in a period of emotional crisis. Dissatisfaction, and stress in phase one leads to the individual's motivation to separate itself from the structure of life. The main component in this second phase is the form of resignation, termination of employment, or leaving the relationship. In this phase the individual will involve the three components and take active steps to get out of his commitment, and that is why the individual separates himself from the structure of life.

b. Exploration Phase (Exploration)

In this third phase, individuals begin to enter the phase of self-exploration and begin to try various options and then after the second phase is over and after the emotional turmoil begins to subside, each person may have a specific strategy and have a role to be able to actively commit and explore, try new things, and find an identity that can be integrated and a new life structure.

c. Resolution Phase (Resolution)

In this fourth phase, he began to dedicate himself to his newly experienced self-identity as his internal motivator. Each individual expresses their deepest emotions in terms of external roles and is accompanied by a sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment. This can also give them greater control over daily activities that are more beneficial for their future before the crisis phases of life appear.

3) Quarter-Life Crisis Factors

The factors that affect the quarter-life crisis do not suddenly appear in individuals. There are several general tendencies that affect the condition. There are several internal and external factors that influence the quarter-life crisis, among others:

a) External Factors

Internal factors that affect the quarter-life crisis, as follows:

- 1) Identity exploration, that is the process of searching for an individual to enter the next life, questioning the purpose of life.
- 2) Instability, changes caused by lifestyle that require individuals to always be prepared for situations that do not fit their plans.
- 3) Become focused on yourself, start learning to be independent and take your own Decisions and be responsible for those Decisions.
- 4) The feeling between, the level of a person who at that time has not yet met the criteria of adulthood but is no longer a teenager.
- 5) The age of possibility, a stage filled with hopes and dreams for the future but there is concern that what is planned is not appropriate.

b) Internal Factors

Internal factors that affect the quarter-life crisis, as follows:

1. Friendship, love, and family relationships, individuals begin to question when they are ready to get married, in family relationships they are old enough to burden their parents, in friendship relationships they will question how they find true friends.

2. Work life and career, there is confusion in individuals between choosing a job that suits their passion or a job that is just a demand.
3. Challenges in the academic field, individuals begin to question whether the academic field they pursue can support their career in the future or even vice versa.⁸

B. Humanistic Psychology Theory

1) Understanding Humanistic Psychology

In the Popular Science Dictionary, the term "humanistic" comes from the word human which means related to humans or the human way of life. Humane means humane. Meanwhile, humanities refers to fields of knowledge that include philosophy, ethics, art, history, and language. A humanist is an adherent of humanism, which is a doctrine that emphasizes the importance of human values and interests. Humanism in the Renaissance era is rooted in Ancient Greek culture, while modern humanism focuses more on humans exclusively.⁹

In other words, humanistic is an approach that emphasizes the achievement or development of human potential to the maximum, which is known as the term self-actualization.⁴⁰ Thus, humanistic can be understood as an attitude or view based on human values or everything related to human aspects.¹⁰

Humanistic psychology is a trend in psychology that is based on the principle of existentialism, which is a view that rejects the assumption that humans are completely determined by hereditary or environmental factors. This trend

⁸ Ajat Hidayat, "Quarter-Life Crisis Phenomenon.....", 8.

⁹ Moh. Safrudin, *Integrasi Konsep Mahabbah Al-Tustari dan Psikologi Humanistik Abraham Maslow* (Kendari: SulQa Press, 2023), 47.

¹⁰ Pius A. Partanto dan M. Dahlan Al-Barry, *Kamus Ilmiah Popular* (Surabaya: Arloka, 1994), 234.

emphasizes that each individual has the freedom to make choices, take action, and shape their own destiny and existence.¹¹

Humanistic psychology tries to see people's lives as people see their lives. They tend to hold an optimistic perspective on human nature. They focus on the ability of humans to think consciously and rationally in order to control their biological desires, as well as in reaching their maximum potential. In a humanistic view, humans are responsible for their lives and actions and have the freedom and ability to change their attitudes and behavior.¹²

2) History of Humanistic Psychology

Humanistic psychology emerged around the 1950s and 1960s in the United States. as a reaction to psychoanalysis and behaviorism.¹³ The behaviorism approach developed by BF Skinner and John Watson focuses on behavior that can be observed and measured objectively. Meanwhile, the psychoanalytical approach introduced by Sigmund Freud emphasizes the subconscious mental dynamics. However, these two streams are judged not to be able to describe the entire complexity of human experience. In response to these limitations, humanistic psychology pioneered by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers.¹⁴

The development of humanistic psychology was influenced by the social and cultural situation in the 1960s, which was marked by various major changes in society, such as the emergence of the civil rights movement and the anti-war movement. This condition encourages individuals to explore their identity and fight

¹¹ Husama dkk, *Belajar dan Pembelajaran* (Malang: UMM Press, 2018), 115.

¹² Syarifuddin, "Teori Humanistik Dan Aplikasinya Dalam Pembelajaran Di Sekolah," *Tajdid: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman dan Kemanusiaan* 6, no. 1 (2022), 107.

¹³ Sukardjo dan Ukim Komarudin, *Landasan Pendidikan, Konsep dan Aplikasinya* (Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 2009), 63.

¹⁴ King, "Psikologi Umum: Sebuah Pandangan Apresiatif".

for social justice. Humanistic psychology is also present as a vehicle for individuals to find their identity and express themselves in a broader and meaningful way. Its development accelerated with the establishment of the Journal of Humanistic Psychology by Anthony Sutich in 1961, as well as the holding of the Old Saybrook Conference in 1964 which was attended by key figures such as Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Rollo May.¹⁵

3) Figures of Humanistic Psychology and their Thoughts

a. Abraham Maslow

Abraham Harold Maslow or commonly known as Abraham Maslow was born on April 1, 1908 in New York. he is known for his contribution to the birth of self-actualization views. He died on July 8, 1970 in California at the age of 62. Abraham Maslow is an American psychologist known as one of the main pioneers of humanistic psychology. He is also a theoretician who provided great contribution and inspiration in the development of personality theory.¹⁶

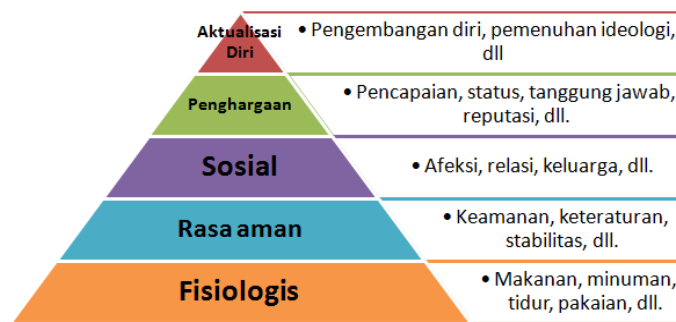
Abraham Maslow completed his secondary education at Boys High School Brooklyn before going on to the City College of New York, following the advice of his father who hoped Maslow would become a lawyer. Although he had time to study law, Maslow realized that the field did not suit his interests. Finally, he decided to quit and transfer to Cornell University, he took introductory psychology from Titchener. Maslow has an extraordinary contribution in the field of psychology. He came up with many new ideas and collaborated with famous figures of psychology. He also became one of the

¹⁵ Sukmayasa dan Dkk, "*Psikologi Humanistik (Implementasinya Dalam Pendidikan)*", 10.

¹⁶ Supratinya, *Mazhab Ketiga Psikologi Abraham Maslow Oleh Frank G. Goble* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2010), 28.

important figures in the development of humanistic psychology so that he was nicknamed as the Father of Humanistic.¹⁷

In Abraham Maslow's humanistic theory, he proposed that a person's behavior is basically aimed at fulfilling hierarchical needs.¹⁸ In his theory, Maslow has an idea or thought called Hierarchy of human needs. Hierarchy of human needs is a concept that describes the level of needs that must be met to achieve self-actualization. This process starts from the most basic needs, which are physiological needs, until reaching the highest, which is self-actualization.¹⁹ Abraham Maslow divides these needs into five levels:²⁰



Gambar 2.1 Tingkatan Teori Humanistik Abraham Maslow

- 1) Physiological Needs (physical and biological needs) are basic needs to maintain life, such as eating, drinking and other needs. The drive to fulfill this physical need encourages a person to act and do a job with greater enthusiasm and effort.
- 2) Safety and Security Needs (safety and security needs) is a need at this level that focuses on a sense of security and protection.

¹⁷ Muhammad Zulfa Alfaruqy, *Sejarah Dan Aliran Psikologi* (Semarang: Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Diponegoro, 2021), 199.

¹⁸ Andi Setiawan, *Belajar dan Pembelajaran* (Ponorogo: Uwais Inspirasi Indonesia, 2018), 89.

¹⁹ Alfaruqy, "Sejarah Dan Aliran Psikologi....", 200.

²⁰ Mavatih Fauzul 'Adziima, "Psikologi Humanistik Abraham Maslow," *Jurnal Tana Mana* 2, no. 2 (2021), 89.

- 3) Affiliation or Acceptance Needs (social needs) which is an important need to interact with other people and be accepted in the group and the surrounding community. Normally, humans tend not to want to live alone in isolated places, but always need social relationships and existence in groups.
- 4) Esteem or Status Needs (the need for appreciation) is the need to get recognition or appreciation from the social environment. This need often arises because of achievement or performance, although this is not always the case. It is also important for leaders in an organization to understand that the higher a person's position in the organization, the greater the expectations for their performance. Performance and status are often reflected in various symbols that describe a person's position.
- 5) Self-Actualization this level is the highest level where this level is the need to optimize all one's abilities, skills, and potential in order to achieve a very satisfactory performance. This need reflects the full achievement of one's potential. The desire to meet these needs can vary from individual to another.

b. Carl Rogers

Carl Ransom Rogers or commonly referred to as Carl Rogers was born in Oak Park, Illinois on January 8, 1902. He died on February 4, 1987. Carl Rogers is a famous figure for his development in the approach to psychotherapy called person centered therapy or therapy centered on the client or individual. Rogers was raised by strict Christian fundamentalist parents where Rogers was treated like a villain throughout his childhood and adolescence. At the age of 22, Rogers broke away from the fundamentalist influence of his parents after attending a Christian student conference in China.

Rogers was educated at the University of Wisconsin, Union Theological Seminary in New York, and Columbia University, and earned a Ph.D. in psychology in 1931. He held positions at the Rochester Guidance Center, Ohio State University, the University of Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin. In 1947, Rogers was elected president of the APA. Then, in 1956, he together with Wolfgang Kohler and Kenneth Spence received the APA Distinguished Scientific Contribution award. Rogers' famous books include *Client-Centered Therapy* (1951) and *On Becoming a Person* (1961).²¹

Rogers' theory of humanistic psychology can be applied in character analysis, especially related to self-actualization, while on the other hand, humanistic psychology can also be used to analyze traditions in community groups. Rogers revealed that humanistic psychology plays a more important role in motivating oneself and improving and developing self-concept, while Maslow's humanistic psychology is more directed at basic human needs.²²

Rogers explains that human behavior is formed based on self-concept that develops through various life experiences. Humans naturally have a tendency to actualize themselves according to their desires. In addition, many individuals adopt a consumptive lifestyle, where self-actualization is often realized through the possession of certain items.

In general, human behavior aims to fulfill their needs, but this still refers to three important elements in personality dynamics.²³

²¹ Alfaruqy, "Sejarah Dan Aliran Psikologi.....", 203.

²² Nugraha Arif Karyanta, "Self-esteem pada Penyandang Tuna Daksa," *Jurnal Wacana Psikologi* 5, no. 9 (2013).

²³ Wiwik Setiyani, "Implementasi Psikologi Humanistik Carl Rogers Pada Tradisi Lokal Nyandran di Jember Gemarang Kedunglanggar Ngawi," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 12, no. 1 (2017): 234.

1. Positive reception (positive regard): A person feels satisfied when he receives positive attention from others, and at the same time feels happy when he can give positive attention to others.
2. Self-consistency and congruence: Organisms function to maintain consistency (consistency or conflict-free state) in self-perception, as well as ensure that there is congruence between self-perception and life experience.
3. Self-actualization: Different from Freud's view that sees the organism as an energy system that is transferred and stored, Rogers sees the organism as an entity that continues to move forward. The purpose of behavior is to achieve self-actualization, which involves a basic tendency to meet the needs of self-preservation (maintenance) and self-development (enhancement).