Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development

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Among one of the most influential psychologists in history, Erik Erikson was one of them. He was an ego Psychologist who worked on the theory of evolution. His argument created a central environment on the Psychosocial development of an individual from their birth (infant) to their death (65 or older). There are eight stages which occur throughout the age of an individual, and upon each stage's successful completion, the resultant will be an individual with a healthy personality and inclusion of the fundamental intrinsic worth in their code of conduct. However, in the case of non-completion of the stages, this can result in a reduction in healthy personality qualities, and a bitter self (Patrick H. Munley, 1977). But, these stages can somehow, be resolved later in life. In this paper, the eight stages of Erikson’s Theory which elaborate the psychosocial development in an individual will be discussed.

Following are the eight stages which are mentioned with the stages of life and psycho

Social Crisis.

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| **Age of the Individual** | **Crisis** |
| Stage 1: Birth - 1.5 years | Trust vs. Mistrust |
| Stage 2: 1.5 - 3 years | Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt |
| Stage 3: 3 - 5 years | Initiative vs. Guilt |
| Stage 4: 5 – 13 years | Industry vs. Inferiority |
| Stage 5: 13 – 21 years | Identity vs. Role Confusion |
| Stage 6: 21 - 39 years | Intimacy vs. Isolation |
| Stage 7: 40 - 65 years | Generativity vs. Stagnation |
| Stage 8: 65 and older | Ego Integrity vs. Despair |

**Stage One: Trust vs. Mistrust**

This stage starts from the birth stage and lasts until 18 months (1.5 years). The priority of

the kid at this stage should be starting to trust others, particularly those who are taking care of their basic needs like a mother. As the babies are new to the world, from their point of view, the newer world can be threatening. This threatens precautiously can be replaced by a sense of trust if they are replaced by an extreme level of care and that depends on it. This makes them secure around those who are taking care of their basic needs. The first person that lies in this area is their parents. However, it is as per the expectation that it’s the responsibility of the parents that they are bound to take care of their children and their fundamental needs. (RE, 1988).

**Stage Two: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt:**

During this stage, which ranges from 18 months to 3 years, children are to make sure

that they have learnt the fundamental ways to take care of themselves. This might include feeding themselves or changing themselves. At this stage, if they are not being taught and learnt to take care of their basic needs, and still they continue the habit of extreme dependency on others to take care of them, there would be a sense of shame in him seeing other kids developing a sense of self-dependence in them (RE, 1988)

**Stage Three – Initiative vs. Guilt:**

As the children are growing up, at this stage ranging from 3 to 5 years, the children are bound to do explore things and practice some of them on their own. They are more likely to practice concepts that are introduced in the school and expected to practice them in their real life. But in the meanwhile of doing so such a practice, they may fail, and in the end, they will ask help and assistance from others. This raises a sense of guilt in them. (RE, 1988)

**Stage Four: Industry vs. Inferiority**

At the fourth stage, which ranges from 5 to 13 years, their level of self-awareness and matureness increases. They become appealable and understanding of the logical reasoning, scientific facts, and other brief concepts that are being taught in the school. They are more likely to become competitive, and they should be able to do the things what other children can do as well. When raised through a sense of consciousness and making appropriate efforts to perform a particular task, this develops self-confidence in them. In the case of not being able to do so, they feel inferior to others. (RE, 1988)

**Stage Five: Identity vs. Role Confusion**

During this stage, youngsters are more likely to have extraordinary development in their sexual identities, due to which they tend to find meaning in their lives. As a result in the transition from childhood to adult, they experience an identity crisis. (RE, 1988)

**Stage Six: Intimacy vs. Isolation**

This stage comes for the adults that are in their 30s.Adults develop a sense of fear and worry about finding their right partner. In the case of not being able to do so, they get worried that they would spedn the rest of their lives alone. They are more likely to experience intimacy and loneliness at this stage. (RE, 1988)

**Stage Seven: Generativity vs. Stagnation**

Adults who are in their 40s and 50s are more likely to find a highly developed sense of meaning in their work. At this point, they are fond of the feeling to contribute something meaningful to society. If they fail to perform this, they feel unproductivity and stagnation in society. (RE, 1988)

**Stage Eight: Ego Integrity vs. Despair:**

People at this stage are more than their 60s and are mostly retired individuals. At this stage, it is essential for them to have a sense of accomplishment and feel that they have accomplished something in their lives especially significant in their younger years. They must feel content after looking back into their lives. However, if they haven’t done anything, they experience despair. (RE, 1988)

**References:**

Patrick H. Munley. (1977). Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and career development. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 261-269.

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**References**