Chapter 9 Review

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This chapter gives thoughtful details about the developmental stages in personality and identity in different phases of life. By elaborating the psychobiography of Martin Luther King, the most important figure in the history of civil rights, authors describe the need to study psychological individuality. Luther experienced an identity crisis when he decided to become a monk. Erikson elaborates the issue which lies in the psychological individuality during a certain period in the life of a person. A highly influential theory of personality development was developed by Erikson, which describes the eight stages of development. Each of the stage described by him is characterised by the critical psychosocial dilemma which he based on the psychosexual theory of Freud. Interpersonal relationships and social context is something which impacts the development at different stages of human life (McAdams, 1994).

 The development in the childhood years is the foundation of the first four stages of Erikson's theory. It gives an insight into the development stages of infants and helps understand the underlying patterns of that. The first stage is, trust vs. mistrust, and in this stage, infants start developing some bonding with their caretakers. The next stage is when the child develops an autonomous sense of self. In the third stage of development, children try to conform to their own viewpoints. The fourth stage, which usually takes place while schooling, when they start understanding social roles.

 In the fifth stage, the individual enters adolescence, and this stage is referred to as role vs. identity. This age is marked with the emergence of genital sexuality. Different questions appear in the mind of an adult regarding his identity and role as he is exploring different options. After he is able to make successful consolidation, the next stage occurs which is intimacy vs. isolation. At this stage, the adults start making relationships and bonds with others. After this stage, next comes generativity vs. stagnation that is the seventh one in identity development (McAdams, 1994). Generativity begins as the individual realizes different cultural demands and respond to it. This is the stage of midlife in which man and women try to fulfill what is expected of them. This stage is also marked with the birth of new things for the good of future generations. Those who are high in this generativity become responsible parents, take part in the community services and other religious activities, and then the last stage comes, that is ego integrity vs. despair. At this stage, the old people try to accept whatever life has awarded to them.

 Along with identity development, the chapter gives an overview of the way ego and of self develops in different stages of life. Loevinger's theory of ego elaborates stages through which ego develops. As the person is born, they do not have any sense of subjective self; at this stage, casual ego is developed when one is 18 months old. This sense of self moves from the impulsive stage to the socialized stage of conformity as the individual grows through adolescence and adulthood. At this stage, they seek social approval and acceptance. From stage one to four, self-evaluated standards get replaced with the concrete rules and facts. Subjective self becomes differentiated in the next stage, and the higher stages are characterized with self-actualization and self-fulfillment. Another point of understanding is that female score higher than ego development as compared to males. Overall the chapter makes a huge contribution in developing insight and knowledge about the way identity, and ego develops in different stages of life usually mentioned as childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age (McAdams, 1994). This knowledge can be very helpful in understanding individual behavior in life stages.

# References

McAdams, D. P. (1994). Developmental Stages and Tasks. In D. P. McAdams, *The person: An introduction to personality psychology.* Harcourt Brace College Publishers.