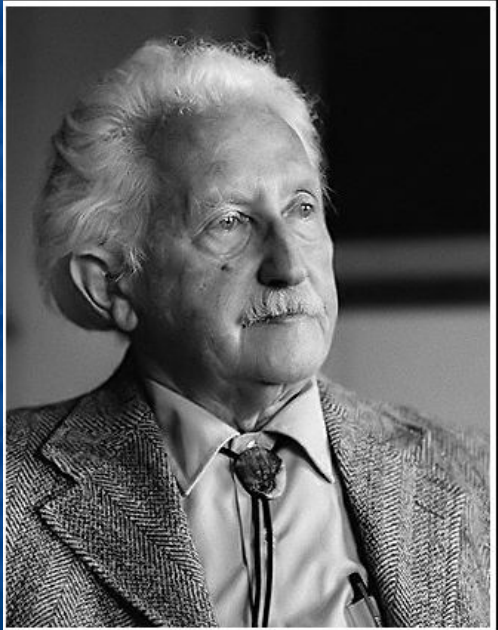


Psychology and Human Development

Lecture 9. Psychosocial Development according to Erik Erickson (1902-1994)



1. A life-span approach to development.
2. Erickson's stages of psychosocial development.
3. Evaluation of the theory.

Erickson's views on social development.

Erik Erickson was a committed follower of Sigmund Freud but he had his own views on psychoanalytic theory.

Main ideas:

- To form social relationships with other people in life, a child has to form secure attachment with his mother.
- This attachment is very important during the first few years of life
- Psychosocial development is seen in 8 stages from birth to death – a life span approach.

A life-span approach short description.

- 8 stages
- Each stage presents a crisis
- If the crisis is successfully met, the person progresses to the next stage
- If the person does not develop the required capacity, there will be problems of varying degrees of severity later on.

Erickson's stages of psychosocial development.

	Age	Stage	Developmental task	Resolution
I	0-1	Trust vs mistrust	Feel secure	Hope
II	2-3	Autonomy vs shame and doubt	Gain independence	Will
III	4-5	Initiative vs Guilt	Explore environment	Purpose
IV	6-11	Industry vs Role confusion	Manipulate objects	Competence

V	Adolescence	Identity vs Role confusion	Form positive self-concept	Fidelity
VI	Young adulthood	Intimacy vs Isolation	Form social relationships	Love
VII	Middle adulthood	Generativity vs self-absorption	Develop concern about world	Care
VIII	Old age	Integrity vs despair	Achieve personal fulfillment	Wisdom

(0-1) Trust vs Mistrust

It is a struggle: who to trust and who not to trust.

Baby has needs – food, warmth, security.

He has to learn who will provide what they need. Learning who to trust allows the infant to develop a sense of security.

Children with a strong sense of trust and security develop the confidence to engage with and explore the world.

If infants are loved, they will develop trust for the future. If their life is uncertain, they will develop fear and suspicion of others.



(2-3)Autonomy vs shame and doubt.

During this stage the child learns to carry out tasks without the mother's help and learns to doubt their abilities (which are new).

Encouragement and firm supportive guidance of the parent can help the child develop the skills needed to eat less messily and achieve a strong sense of autonomy (self-confidence for meeting the challenges of growing up). If the parent subjects the child to ridicule and shame, the child develops a strong sense of shame and doubt (suspicious and pessimistic)



(4-5) Initiative vs Guilt (play stage)

Developing the power to begin projects on their own.

Children imitate the actions of their parents in this stage.

If parents punish initiatives ☐ losing confidence, developing guilt feelings.



(6-11) Industry vs Inferiority

Children have to learn industry, competence, and persistence at activities which they master.

They learn to be members of society, who must cooperate with others and channel aggression in acceptable ways (such as in sports). If they do not master the tasks given to them, or severely criticized, they will experience a sense of failure (inferiority)



(11-18) Identity vs role confusion

Who am I?

They may imitate other people, including parents, friends, even teachers.

If these behaviors are conflicting □ identity crisis and they must modify their imitations. They must begin to decide what they want to do in life.



(18-35) Intimacy vs Isolation

The challenge of integrating one's whole life with that of smb else □ marriage. If a person does not learn to relate intimately with smb else, he may face isolation and loneliness throughout life.



(35-60) Generativity vs Self-absorption.

The challenge is one of establishing goals, commitment, and lasting attachments that permit reasonable productivity. The adult is concerned for his family and with contributing to the world. When the person feels that his own life is the only thing matters ☐ self-absorption or stagnation.



(60- death) Integrity vs Despair.

Individuals must learn to accept life as it was lived, with its disappointments as well as its joys. They need to face death bravely in this final stage.

Otherwise, they face despair of believing they are no longer useful and may have indeed missed life altogether.



Evaluation of the Theory.

- 1) Both Freud and Erickson believed that we progress through a series of stages in infancy, which must be completed for the development of a psychologically healthy personality.
- 2) The theories explain why we exhibit certain behaviors under stress and consider that the early family experience of a child predicts their future social and psychological outcome.

Seminar questions:

1. Give a short description of a life-span approach by E. Erickson.
2. What does a baby have to learn during the 1 year of life?
3. When and how can a child learn to be autonomous?
4. What is important to do and not to do during Initiative vs Guilt stage?
5. Why do children need to learn industry during 5 year period?
6. What is the developmental psychosocial task for adolescents and how they achieve it?
7. What will happen to a person who will fail to learn to relate intimately with people?
8. Describe a middle age crisis.
9. What should old people learn to reach wisdom?
10. Why do people exhibit certain behaviors under stress according to Freud and Erikson?