

Erik Erikson Theory

Erik Erikson (1950, 1963) in his book 'Child and Society' describes his theory. Erikson's theory is neo-Freudian and is the most effective and organized. Erikson's theory lays stress on rational, conscious ego processes in personality development. In his theory, development is viewed as a life long process, and ego identity is granted a central place in this process. His concept of identity crisis of adolescent-age has drawn considerable attention. Erikson argues that young people must generate for themselves a central perspective and a direction that can give them a meaningful sense of unity and purpose. He describes eight stages of

personality development on psychosocial basis. Erikson thinks that personality develops throughout life and not only in adolescent age. He emphasized on the effect of social interaction over personality development. He is of the view that, his personality development is controlled is his relation with the readiness of personality development. His personality develops more and more as he interacts with as many number and type of personalities.

The eight-stage described by Erikson are as follows and the crisis he faces in these stages are also given together:

- ① first-year of life: Oral sensory Stage; Crisis - Trust versus Mistrust.
- ② Second year: Muscular and anal Stage; Crisis - Autonomy versus Doubt.
- ③ Third to fifth year: Locomotor genital Stage; Crisis - Initiative versus Guilt.
- ④ Sixth year to start of Puberty: Latency; Crisis - Industry versus Inferiority.

- ⑤ Puberty and Adolescence; Crisis - Identity versus Confusion.
- ⑥ Early adulthood; Crisis - Intimacy versus Isolation
- ⑦ Young and middle adulthood; Crisis - Intimacy Generativity versus Self absorption
- ⑧ Mature adulthood; Crisis - Integrity versus Despair

Psychodynamic theories face strong criticisms from many quarters. The major criticisms are as follows:

- ① The theories are largely based on case studies; they lack a rigorous scientific basis
- ② They use small and atypical individuals as samples for advancing generalisations.
- ③ The concepts are not properly defined, and it is difficult to submit them to scientific testing.
- ④ Freud has used males as the

prototype of all human personality development. He overlooked female experiences and perspective.