



**THE NATURE OF PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD ACCORDING
TO ERIK ERIKSON'S VIEW**

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Abstract

Humans are living things whose growth and development are studied by many researchers in the world, one of whom is Erik H. Erikson who produced psychosocial theory. Erikson believes that every stage of human development is a specific psychosocial struggle contributing to personality growth. It means that the stages of one's life from birth to death are formed by social influences that interact with an organism, thus making it mature physically and psychologically. This type of research uses a type of library research that is used in the collection of information and data in depth through various literature, books, notes, magazines, other references, as well as relevant previous research results, to get answers and theoretical foundations on problems in Erikson's theory, there are 8 stages of development that develop throughout life where each stage consists of Trustt versus disbelief, Autonomiy versus shame's and doubt, Initiative versus guilt, Hard work versus inferiority, Identity versus identity confusion, Intimacy versus isolation, Generativity versus stagnation, and Integrity versus despair.

Keywords: *The Nature of Psychosocial Development, Erik Erikson*

Introduction

Early childhood is the most brilliant time that man goes through. This is because at this time people can learn everything in a relatively short time. Therefore, it is not wrong if at the early childhood education level is referred to as the golden period or golden age, where stimulation of all aspects (George, 2006) . Children have their own characteristics and children have their own world. To educate early childhood, it is necessary to have an understanding of the world of children and how the child's development process. With this understanding, it is expected that early childhood educators have a better understanding in determining the learning process or treatment of the child they are fostering. (Muharrhman, 2019) Development is important for further development tasks (Trianto, 2011). According for article 28 of the National Education System Law No. 20/2003 paragraph 1 (Hasan, 2011), which includes early childhood



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is a child who falls into the age range of 0-6 years. It is a very fundamental period that will affect the next period of development. In line with this, Erik Erikson states that the stages of development in early childhood have high implications for the stage of development in adolescence (Santrock, 2002) In the perspective of psychosocial development put forward by Erikson early childhood is in the first four stages of eight stages of human life. The first four stages occur in infancy and childhood. The four stages are as follows the infant phase (0-1 year), "trust versus suspicion", the children's phase (1-3 years) being "autonomy versus shame and doubt", playing age (3-6 years), "initiative versus feelings of guilt" and school age (6-12 years) "perseverance versus inferiority" (Alwisol, 2006).

Herliany Yusuf & Salam Al Amin (2020) states that Erik Erikson was born in 1902 in Frankfurt, Germany, to Danish parents. Before Erik was born, his parents separated and his mother left Denmark to live in Germany. When he was 3 years old, Erik became ill, and his mother took him to a pediatrician named Dr. Homberger. Erik's young mother falls in love with the doctor, marries her, and changes Erik's name to his new stepfather (George Boeree, 2006:4). The number of disorders in children such as lack of socializing, lack of initiative and a lot of silence for fear of wrongdoing in doing an action indicates the existence of psychosocial problems in the child, if the disorder continues to have a less good impact on the development of the child's personality, which is dangerous at this stage is the lack of energy that encourages the child to be active (in order to fulfill his wishes), because it experiences obstacles or failed so as to aggravate the guilt in the child. This guilt will have a less good impact on the development of the child's personality, he can be naughty or quiet (less passionate), one of the factors that can influence the occurrence of psychosocial developmental disorders of the child, namely the family environment. (Saputro & Talan, 2017)

Erik attended primary school from the age of 6 to 10 and then secondary school from the age of 11 to 18. He studied art and a number of languages. Erik doesn't like formal school, and this attitude is reflected in his grades. Instead of enrolling in college, a teenage Erikson travels around Europe keeping a diary of his experiences. After a year, he returned to Germany and enrolled in art school, was dissatisfied, and enrolled in another school. Then he traveled to Florence, Italy. He is going through a phase now called a moratorium, a period in which young people try to find themselves in their own way. such behavior was considered commonplace by German children at the time. According to psychiatrist Robert Coles, for Italians, Erikson was "a young, tall, thin Scandinavian from Scandinavian country with long blonde hair," while for his family and friends, he was a "traveller artist trying to confront himself." At the age of 25, Erikson began



teaching children at a new school in Vienna founded by Anna Freud and Dorothy Burlingham. Two years later, Erikson left Europe in 1933 and settled in Boston, becoming the city's first child analyst. The urge to wander seems firmly ingrained in Erikson. Moved again to other cities and ended up at Harvard until death picked him up. It was at Harvard that Erikson earned a professorship in 1960, having never earned a formal degree before, not even a diploma. Erikson's most important work is *Childhood and Society*. The book charts the eight stages of life and shows how they work in different ways within different cultures. Therefore, Erikson is known for his theory, namely the theory of identity development. Erikson says that we develop in the psychosocial stage, rather than in the psychosexual stage as stated by Sigmund Freud's theory. For Freud, the primary motivation's of human behavior is naturally sexual, for Erikson the main motivation of man is social and reflects a desire to connect with others. This theory of psychosocial development is one of the personality theories in psychology. Erikson believes that personality develops on several levels. One of the important elements in Erikson's psychosocial theory is the development of the ego. Ego development is a conscious feeling developed through social interaction. According to Erikson, ego development is always changing based on new experiences and information that we get in interacting with others. Erikson also believes that the ability to motivate attitudes and actions can help psychosocial development. Development in English is called development. Santrock defines development is the pattern of change that begins at conception and continues through the life (Sit, 2015) span.

The object of developmental psychology is human development as a person. In addition, psychologists are also interested in the problem of how far human development was influenced by the development of society. (Ratnawulan, 2018) Attention to developmental psychology is focused on human development as a person. Society is just a place where people develop. According to Erik Erikson as quoted by Suharto, Mulyana, & Nurwati (2018) the development of children today is not only influenced by the family environment, but the environment outside the family. According to Wong (2008) as quoted by Nehru (2018) revealed that psychosocial development is a change that occurs in personality, emotional, and social relationships.

According to Agustia, Setyaningsih, & Suharno (2020) revealed that the development of children is something that needs serious attention, especially related to mental and emotional development or called psychosocial development. Psychosocial development determines the child in behaving and making decisions in the future. Psychosocial development according to Erikson is a stage of development that includes eight stages of development, namely trust versus



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disbelief, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, and identity and message confusion (Supartini, Y., 2012: 60) as cited (Utami, Isnanda Putri, & Andini, 2020). Children who have attended school tend to develop following the environment in their school, namely their peers. There is no denying that peers have a tremendous influence on children's development both negatively and positively. Therefore parents have an important role in supervising the development of children.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used in this study is library research. Literature research is a data collection technique by conducting study studies of books, literatures, records, and reports that have to do with the problem solved. (Awalina & Purwoko, 2017)

DISCUSSION

A. Stages of Social/Psychosocial Development erik erikson

Erikson's theory (Dunkel & Sefcek, 2009:13) on psychosocial development is based on epigenetic principles, which states that development unfolds in various predetermined stages, that there is an optimal time for stage improvement, and that early stage resolution greatly influences the outcome of later stages. Based on this principle, Erikson (1950) suggests that there are eight stages or psychic crises and they become the most prominent at different times of life. According to Riyadi (2009) as quoted by Khasanah, PH, & Indrayati (2019). Development in early childhood can experience irregularities if not given stimulation, one of which is stimulation given is psychosocial development. (PH, Armitasari, & Susanti, 2018) Normal psychosocial development is that the child has a good personality, has courage, is cooperative, is able to accept opinions and beliefs in himself and others. Conversely, if the child has poor psychosocial development or meyim pang, the child will have negative traits such as not being confident, alienating and feeling inferior. The stages of development are:

1. Trust versus mistrust: infancy (first year)

Trust involves physical comfort and no fear or anxiety about the future. The trust that babies feel will be the foundation of a lifelong belief that the world will be a good and pleasant place to live. Trust in babies grows when they understand that a parent/caregiver is worthy of their trust and they also build confidence that



they are also capable of trusting others. This is reflected when the parent/caregiver disappears from his or her view, they are not anxious or angry unnecessarily because the baby believes and can tolerate the absence of the parent/caregiver. Unlike babies who consider their parents/caregivers unreliable and the baby does not trust himself when abandoned, they tend to be anxious and panicking when forced to leave as well. Erikson babies must also experience a certain distrust so that they can learn to believe through sensitivity and accuracy (Dunkel&Sefcek, 2009):

But it is crucial for babies who can get out of this stage with a balance of trust more than distrust. Because if they manage to do so, then they will develop the core power of the ego in this period: hope. Hope is an expectation that even if there is frustration, anger or disappointment, good things will still happen in the future. Hope will enable children to move forward into the outside world, welcoming new challenges (Erikson, 1982, p.60).

2. Autonomy versus doubt and shame: infancy (1-3 years)

After gaining the trust of the babysitter begins to know that their behavior is their own. They began to assert their independence, otherwise called autonomy. They realize their wishes. Autonomy emerges from within, a biological maturity that nurtures the ability of children to do things in their own way- control their own abdominal muscles, stand on their own feet, use their own hands, and so on. Shame and doubt- doubt instead, come from an awareness of expectations and social pressures. Doubt comes from the realization that he is not so powerful, so that others can control him and act better than him. If a child is severely restricted or punished, they may cause embarrassment and hesitation.

3. Initiative versus guilt: early childhood/preschool (3-5 years old)

As the child enters pre-school age, the child begins to enter a more complex social world that asks the child to think about responsibilities to their body, behavior, toys, and pets. Develop a sense of responsibility to enhance initiatives. Children have initiatives of what they want and can do, including plans and expectations. But then, they were faced with social restrictions. Uncomfortable guilt arises if the child is irresponsible and made anxious. This is why children develop self-control skills so that their initiatives can be accepted in order to keep dangerous impulses and



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fantasies under control. Erikson has a positive view at this stage that most of the guilt is quickly replaced by a sense of wanting to excel. Parents can help a child escape this stage of crisis with a full understanding of the purpose of "courage to dream and pursue valuable purposes that cannot be undermined by guilt or prohibition (1964, p.122)

4. Hard work versus inferiority: middle's and late are childhood (elementary in school age 6 years–adolescence)

Children's initiatives bring them in touch with many new experiences. As they move into middle and late childhood, they direct their energy for toward mastery of knowledge and intellectual skills. Children are more active in learning, but can give rise to inferior feelings incompetent and unproductive. Erikson here believes that teachers have like a special responsibility for the development of child activity. Teachers must "gently but firmly take the child into the adventure of discovering that one can learn to achieve something never imagined before" (Erikson, 1968, p.127)

5. Identity versus identity confusion: adolescence (10–20 years old)

There is a time when individuals are faced with self-discovery, about who they really are, where they will go in this life, many new roles and statuses of maturity—work and love for example. Parents need to allow youth to explore those roles and different paths in each role. If youth explore the role in a good way, and come to a positive path to follow in life, then positive identity will be achieved. If an identity is imposed on a teenager by a parent, if the youth do not adequately explore many roles, and if in the positive future is not yet clear, then there is confusion of identity.

6. Intimacy versus isolation: early adulthood (20s, 30s)

At this time, individuals face the task of development that is to form intimate relationships with others. Erikson describes intimacy as finding oneself and at the same time losing oneself in another person. If young adults form healthy friendships and intimate relationships with others, intimacy will be achieved, otherwise the result is self-isolation. Self-isolation is a danger that can occur at this stage. In psychopathology, these disorders can cause severe "character problems."

Young adults, born out of search and identity- are passionate and want to fuse their identity with the identities of others. He is ready for intimacy, meaning the



capacity to commit himself to concrete affiliates and partners and to develop ethical strengths to be adhered to by those commitments even though they may require various sacrifices and compromises. Instead of intimacy is isolation, it means readiness to alienate and, if necessary, damage the forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to the existence of the person concerned.

Research conducted by Christiansen and Palkovitz (1998:1) that father identity is a good predictor of generativity provides support for the role-person incorporation proposition, where a person's investment in a role can influence development. Which means, the father is very important in the relationship of the child in the face of the future, less caring children are able to make the child isolate himself.

7. Generativity versus stagnation: middle adulthood (40s, 50s)

At this stage the main concern is helping the younger generation in developing and directing life to be useful, this is called's generativity. The feeling that he did nothing to help future generations is called's stagnation. Thus, generativity is primarily a concern in shaping and guiding the next generation, although there are individuals, who through adversity or the consequences of their special and genuine talents in the other direction, do not apply this impulse to their own offspring. Generativity is one of the essential stages in both psychosexual and psychosocial lists.

8. Integrity versus despair: late adulthood (60 years and above)

In this stage, a person reflects on the past and concludes that he has lived a good life, or otherwise concludes that his life has not been put to good use. In many ways, older people can develop a positive outlook at previous stages of development. If so, the retrospective glances will bring up images of life that can be put to good use, and the person will feel satisfaction—integrity can be achieved. If an elderly person negatively shapes each stage of previous development, his retrospective glances may raise doubts or darkness—the desperation Erikson refers to. Erikson does not believe that a good solution to a stage crisis is entirely always positive. Some contact or commitment to the negative side of the crisis is sometimes inevitable. You can't trust everyone under any situation and then survive, for example. On the other hand, in healthy solutions to crisis stages, positive answers dominate.



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Failure to successfully complete a stage can result in reduced ability to complete further stages and therefore a more unhealthy personality and sense of self. However, these stages can be completed successfully at a later time. According to the theory, the successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and the acquisition of basic virtues. A basic priority is the characteristic power that the ego can use to solve the next crisis.

B. Changes in Development

Erikson to (1958, 1963), these crises were psychosocial because they involved individual psychological needs (e.g., psycho) that were contrary to the needs of society (e.g., social). According to the theory, the successful completion of each stage results in a healthy personality and the acquisition of basic virtues. A basic priority is the characteristic power that the ego can use to solve the next crisis.

The most important thing in the development of identity in adolescence especially in late adolescence is that the first time a child sees visible changes are physical, cognitive, and emotional. It comes to a point where individuals can sort out and synthesize the identity and identification of children to construct pathways that can be used to achieve maturity so as to be able to make decisions. However, during adolescence this will form the core of the individual as a human being commonly referred to by his identity.

There are 4 identity status according to Erikson's theory (Santrock, 2007:71) namely:

1. Identity Diffusion, individuals who have not experienced a crisis and have not made a commitment. There has been no decision on job choice or ideological, but no interest in the issue.
2. Identity Foreclosure, individuals who have already made a commitment, but they have not experienced a crisis. This is most common when parents force certain commitments on adolescents, usually in an authoritarian way, before adolescents have the opportunity to explore a variety of ideological or career approaches.
3. Age Identity Moratorium, individuals who are in crisis but do not have commitments, or even if they are very vague.
4. Identity Achievement, individuals who have been through crisis and have come to a commitment

CONCLUSION



As the final conclusion of the discussion above about Eric Erikson's theory that there are 8 social /psychosocial stages that will be faced by humans namely Trust versus distrust, Autonomy versus shame and doubt–doubt, Initiative versus guilt, Hard work versus inferiority, Identity versus identity confusion, Intimacy versus isolation, Generativity versus stagnation , and Integrity versus despair. The truth is that if you go through these stages, there will be a limp in life that results in the delay of a child's development.

Erikson also divides identity status into four parts, including Identity Diffusion, Identity Foreclosure, Identity Foreclosure, and Identity Achievement. These four stages look at and at the same time assess the attitude of the youth in making decisions. Children who are able to face this identity conflict will appear with a new person, who is fresh, and acceptable and vice versa if the child is unable to go through this phase then the child will withdraw or isolate himself from the environment.



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