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PSY: 441

Erikson's Essay Ques.

Describe The life of Erikson

Erikson grew up with his mother and stepfather in Germany, at first his mother was living in Denmark. While she was pregnant with Erik his natural father who was not Jewish, abandoned his mother before he was born, Erik never met him. His mother met his stepfather in Germany, who was her doctor, they fell in love and got married, they were both Jewish. Erik's physical appearance was different, he looked more like his father who was of Scandinavian descent, Erik eventually found out the truth about his heritage and took the surname Erikson. Erik attended primary school for four years and high school for four years as well. He was not sure what occupation he wanted to choose, his stepfather wanted him to become a physician, Erik was not interested and instead he tried at being an artist, however he did not continue with it. He met Sigmund Freud's daughter Anna Freud, he was introduced into their circle of friends. He was trained by Anna Freud as a child analyst and was fully accepted by the psychoanalytic group surrounding Freud. Erikson was still not sure if he wanted to work as a psychoanalyst, but still had the interest to paint and draw. He began to observe that children's dreams and play involved visual images that later translated into words in therapy, he also noticed a connection between psychoanalysis and art. Finally Erikson began thinking seriously about a career as an analyst, because he had gained a set of

new responsibilities. His theory deals with psychosocial development and identity. He is best known for his theory; The 8 Stages of Psychosocial Development. Erikson was married and fathered three children, he died at 92 years of age.

Oral -Sensory Stage: Basic trust versus mistrust.

Oral sensory stage is developed during the first stage of life. An infant lives and loves through its mouth. The infant depends on his/her mother for overall care, and the mother's attitude towards her care for her child is structured by the society in which she lives. If the community is not high in standard conditions of motherhood, the result will turn out to be a caretaker who resents her role; on the other hand if there is praise on the moral excellence of motherhood within the society, the mother's attitude is likely to be enjoyable and constructive. The infant's basic trust towards its mother will likely develop if the mother's love and interaction is consistent. This will help the infant's senses to identify the mother by her face, her touch, the sound of her voice, and her smell, this interaction process between both of them builds ego strength.

Muscular- anal stage: Autonomy versus shame and doubt.

This stage occurs during the second and third years of life, this is the stage when the child's muscles begin to mature, the child can begin to exercise control over them. Having to control their anal sphincter muscles is important for this period during which the child is in training to use the toilet on their own, so to eliminate waste materials in the right manner, that is appropriate by society. Erikson noted that in some cultures, the parent left the responsibility to the older children to take the toddlers out to the bushes to carry out the elimination function. The toddlers learn from following the behavior of

the older children. Conflicts can occur in society if the pattern is not followed to be clean and rules are not obeyed by the children, this will lead to a power struggle between parents and children. The parents demands during this stage can cause shame and doubt in the children concerning their ability to make strong judgments and to develop control over their lives. Eventually the toddlers will have a sense of independence if they can resolve conflicts during the second stage of life.

Locomotor-genital stage: Initiative versus guilt.

This stage of ego development is from ages 4 and 5. If conflicts have been resolved successfully in the previous stage, the children feel that they have made progress in their own right. This third stage is the first step for the children to find out what kind of people they may be suitable to be. At this stage they want to know about their parents, their friends and the environment in which they live. Their developing bodies allow them to move around more freely to seek out more contact with others outside of their family circle. They can now play with other children, relate to each other, and ask questions about different things. They also imagine and have fantasy about seeing themselves as being adults. They now start to show concerns with sexual matters at this stage. If children are severely punished for their fantasy in their concern towards the parents of the opposite sex, this action causes them to develop a sense of guilt. However if the parents are understanding with the children's actions and accept it as social activities, the children will grow up with a sense of purpose.

Latency- stage: Industry versus inferiority.

This stage occurs from ages 6 to 12, during this stage children become quiet in sexual desires and feelings, they turn from home to school life, regardless if their school is in a classroom or out in the open. They begin to start learning new skills and making things. Children's sense of industry starts to develop, and they are learning how to finish jobs. At this stage teachers become significant to them, by causing them to be acquainted with new things , and preparing them for the future and with careers that they can choose from. However, if children are not learning as they think they should, they begin to develop feelings of inferiority. If there was no resolution of conflicts in the preceding stage, this can be a reason for their failure to gain understanding. According to Erikson's view, he stated that parents can help the children with these feelings by taking the time in preparing them for the severity of the school's surroundings and encourage them to be trustworthy to others. Teachers can play a big role in helping the children to develop a strong ego. Society would benefit from teachers who are trustworthy and encouraging, and who will also stress out what children can do. This would create a confident result and help to prepare the children to be capable for their position as workers later in life.