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## THEORY AND DIVERSITY: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STAGES

Anastasiya Samsanovich

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THEORY AND DIVERSITY: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF ERIKSON'S  
PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STAGES

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Anastasiya Samsanovich

May 2021

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## ABSTRACT

Theories shape society and become a powerful influence on major social decisions. While society has changed over time, some theories—developed decades ago—have remained the same. Among them is the Psychosocial Development Theory developed in the early 1960s by German-American developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik Erikson. Because theories inform practice, it is important to assess their validity. Although widely used over the years and across many disciplines, this theory has not been adequately tested, as the body of scholarship that assesses its empirical contribution is relatively limited in scope. That is, to the researcher's knowledge, no studies have been conducted under a retrospective perspective that uses all stages of Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory. This study determined the extent to which the aforementioned theory holds true in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Using descriptive statistics and Mann-Whitney U Test on a sample of 25 participants, this study found that (1) the Eriksonian model has a 52 percent validity rate and (2) gender and race do not correlate with life satisfaction across the lifespan at the 95 percent confidence interval. These findings have implications for theory, research, social work practice, and social work education.

*Keywords:* psychosocial development theory, diversity, theory evaluation, descriptive research design, social work

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# CHAPTER ONE

## PROBLEM FORMULATION

### Introduction

Theories shape society and become a powerful influence on major social decisions. While society has changed over time, some theories—developed decades ago—have remained the same. Among them is Erikson’s Psychosocial Development Theory. In the early 1960s, German-American developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst Erik Erikson proposed eight developmental stages that represent a conflict each person will go through in life. Each stage will result in the individual achieving a positive or negative outcome after facing the conflict associated with each stage. Under this theory, individuals that have a negative outcome in one stage are then predicted to have negative outcome in the next stage as well. Specifically, individuals with negative outcomes in previous stages should not be able to achieve the positive outcome in the last stage of late adulthood. This is because obtaining the achievement or lack thereof is expected to have a significant influence on personality development, culminating in life outcomes (Salkind & Kenny, 2004).

However, this may not be true, and early criticism of this model had come out over the years that may show that Erikson’s Stages of Psychosocial Development may benefit from an update that considers a more diverse perspective. For example, legendary American feminist and psychologist Carol

Gilligan called into question the adequacy of theories that had been in use during that period by arguing that frameworks that did not consider women, people of color, or people with disabilities should be not applicable to the general population (Gilligan, 1982). This was a criticism of all popular theories developed through only one perspective from a specific group of people.

Erikson's theory discussed above does not escape the broad criticism leveled by Gilligan in her 1982 publication. It is therefore important to determine the extent to which this theory should be implemented or not. Until fully evaluated, the theory's eight assumptions cannot be taken for granted by the scientific community. In other words, helping professions such as counseling, psychology, social work, mental health, nursing, marriage and family therapy, and child development should come to grips with the fact that Erikson's theory—in its current form—is fully vetted and thus may reflect reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to understand whether Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development meet modern expectations of universal applicability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. A significant portion of the study determines whether the outcome of one life stage has any influence on the successive one and whether Erikson's model is able to consistently predict life outcomes. The research question addressed in this study is: Does Erikson's (1963) Stages of Psychosocial Development hold true in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

## Significance for Social Work

On a macro level, continuing to teach Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development in social work classes in its outdated form will mean social workers and other mental health workers will graduate with an inaccurate understanding of development. Additionally, community programs may be created and run while relying heavily on Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development. On a micro level, those working with children while relying on the model could choose treatments that are not the best options for clients. For example, a child with autism may never be able to meet the expectations in Erikson's model, but the theory should never be applied to the child in the first place because it was not created with someone on the spectrum in mind.

Similarly, those working with older adults and relying on Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development to understand aging may be at a loss on how to help someone who has failed to achieve a positive outcome in majority of the stages. An example of this could be a non-binary older adult who may be struggling with something not even represented in the stages of the Erikson's model. It would be a disservice to any clientele to implement an intervention that is based on the assumptions of a theory not been evidence-based.

Meanwhile, the Council on Social Work Education (2015) recommended that social workers use theories to inform and guide their practice. The findings in this study will contribute to social work by building upon previous research, and by providing directions for further research on the validity of the Eriksonian

model. Social work faculty, administrators, and students will have a better understanding of the extent to which life outcomes are compatible with Erikson's model.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The following chapter will analyze the 2014 study that applied Erikson's theory and its findings. Further, there will be an overview of theories guiding conceptualization. This chapter will be wrapped up with two final sections on gaps in research and a summary. In total, this part of the paper will have four sections.

#### Application of Erikson's Theory in Research

Since its inception in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Erikson's theory of psychosocial development has been used considerably over the years and across various discipline, including psychology, sociology, social work, nursing, education, and career development. However, the vast majority of the body of work on Erikson's theory has been conceptual (Batra, 2013; Caffarella & Olson, 1993; Cross, 2001; Cross, & Cross, 2017; Jenkins et al., 2005; Kerpelman & Pittman, 2018; Knight, 2017; Marcia, 2002; Maree, 2020; Munley, 1977; Salamone et al., 1993; Sekowski, 2020).

The few studies in the literature that relate, one way or another, to Erikson's work are not fully consistent with the purpose of this study. In fact, the body of scholarship that assesses the empirical contribution of Erikson's Stages

of Psychosocial Development —Akhondi et al., 2013; Bartone et al., 2007; Brown & Lewis, 2003; Markstrom, 1999; Munley, 1975; Rosenthal et al., 1981; Svetina, 2014; Timm et al., 2020; Whitbourne et al., 2009; Zuschlag et al., 1994—is relatively limited in scope. That is, to the researcher’s knowledge, no studies have been conducted under a retrospective perspective that uses all eight of the stages of Erikson’s theory on psychosocial development. Furthermore, the existing studies in the literature do not reflect the field of social. Hence, despite being broadly used in social work, Erikson’s theory has received little attention in the social work research realm. Because most the research body of the theory in question is from outside social work, the current study fills this gap by adding something to the existing literature.

### Theories Guiding Conceptualization

The guiding theory in this study will of course be Erikson’s Stages of Psychosocial Development, which had been discussed and explained in the first chapter. In addition to Erikson, the Ecological Systems and Choice Theory were used as a comparisons and secondary guides to Erikson’s theory as well as aids in the conceptualization of research ideas within the study. All three theories were used to analyze and interpret data gathered during client interviews.

Ecological Systems Theory developed by Bronfenbrenner in 1979 were used to provide different perspective of the crisis described by Erikson (1963) in his Stages of Psychosocial Development, and how a crisis can be aggravated

and caused by many different reasons. Under Bronfenbrenner (1979), there are three main levels, micro (or individual), mezzo or (community), and macro (or societal). Unlike Erikson (1963), this model identifies external factors, which the individual cannot overcome regardless of willpower, and challenges are not restricted to a specific age range (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Similarities can especially be seen between the two theories in Erikson's stage six: intimacy vs isolation for age ranges 18-40 (1963). Those that seem to be stuck experiencing isolation due to mental health issues, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder with a delayed onset, are impacted on a micro level under Bronfenbrenner (1979). Although both theories may advocate for the need to overcome isolation, under Erikson it would be necessary for the client to achieve intimacy instead and complete it during the ages of 18-40 (1963). However, under the Ecological Systems Theory, the absence of isolation does not have to be replaced with intimacy and the client does not have to be 18-40 years old to overcome it (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Same comparisons can be made in situations where isolation occurs due to a client losing an entire support system due to having outlived all family members, community members, and lifelong friends, but the isolation would be assessed on the mezzo level. Further, a client that could not access financial or housing resources, is currently homeless, and is now largely ignored by society is experiencing isolation on the macro level. If the individual has been impacted at all three levels, then each crisis at the micro, mezzo, and



macro level would need to be addressed before the treatment is completed (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Choice Theory (1999) argues that there are five basic needs that all individuals value, but that each individual prioritizes in different order (Glasser). The five needs include: survival, freedom, love and belonging, power, and fun. To some, freedom is the most important and trumps all the other needs (Glasser, 1999). Under this theory, those struggling with isolation under Erikson (1963) have love and belonging as the number one need under Choice Theory (1999). For these individuals, having every other need met does not cancel out the absence of love and belonging. Consequently, someone not feeling accepted and loved must be feeling rejected and unloved. Experiencing this later in life can be especially damaging as older individuals may internalize the reasons for being alone regardless of true cause or feel like time has run out to turn things around. In conclusion, client who cannot answer interview questions for Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development can still be asked to rank the five needs under Choice Theory to assess what high priority needs the client is missing. The information gathered can then be interpreted to apply to Erikson's theory (1963), and the same for can be done while gathering information under Ecological Systems Theory (1979).

## Need for Continued Analysis

Criticism of research practices by feminist theorists, such as those described by Eagle and Riger (2014) or Gzranka (2016), lead to an improvement in how research is conducted and how participants are chosen. This also forced research to become more inclusive and more applicable to the general public. The newly and better developed research methods gave the appropriate consideration to the importance of race, gender, disability status, and sexual orientation which paved the way to including other important social factors as these became better understood (Eagle & Riger, 2014). Despite Feminist Theory making research come far in terms of applicability, it is the purpose of this paper to analyze if a more critical analysis of classical theories is needed. This is due to how much time had passed after core theories had been developed, integrated into school curriculums, and added to social work practice compared to how relatively recent diversity had been incorporated into research. Specifically, more analysis is needed for theories, models, and frameworks being utilized within social work practice.

### Critical Analysis of Erikson's Theory with the Theory Evaluation Scale

To assess the quality of Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development, the researcher used Joseph and Macgowan's Theory Evaluation Scale (TES). As its name indicates, the TES is a measure that evaluates theories based on nine criteria: coherence, conceptual clarity, philosophical assumptions, historical

development, testability, empiricism, limitations, client context, and human agency (Joseph & Macgowan, 2019). The TES has been used to analyze several theories, including empowerment (Joseph, 2020a), social justice (Joseph, 2020b), and poverty attribution (Stoeffler and Joseph, 2020).

Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development scored 25 on the TES, with a maximum score (5 points) (for coherence, conceptual clarity, philosophical assumptions, and historical development, but lowest score (1 point) for the other five criteria. According to Joseph and Macgowan (2019), a score of 25 indicates that the theory is of good quality. However, Stoeffler and Joseph (2020) argued that any theory that lacks empirical evidence should be considered of poor quality, regardless of the overall score. Hence, Erikson's theory has good overall quality, but little to no empirical support in the literature.

### Summary

Exclusion of people of color, women, and individuals with disability in research was something heavily criticized by feminist theorists and authors of color. As the pressure increased, new methods of conducting research became developed. Research resulting in claims of universal application had become expected to have large, diverse sample sizes. Despite this, core theories that are part of almost every curriculum related to mental health or development had never been reviewed for actual universal application in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Theories such as Ecological Systems Theory and Choice Theory seem to explain life

outcomes in a way that is more applicable to diverse populations in modern times, but no changes have been proposed Erikson's theory to address this. The current study intends to examine whether there is a need for this and why.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

Analysis of the literature in the previous chapter has shown that there is limited research in application of Erikson's model on diverse populations, which means there is a greater need for research on this topic. This chapter will be divided into seven parts consisting of discussing study design, sampling, data collection and instruments, procedures, protection of human subjects, data analysis, and summary.

#### Study Design

This study took a descriptive design toward determining the validity of Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development. This study was originally set to embrace a mixed-methods design with both quantitative and qualitative portions. However, with considerations to COVID-19 precautions, the researcher did not conduct one-on-one interviews as originally planned. Instead, the researcher converted interview questions into a questionnaire or survey that can be distributed with less physical, human interaction. With its qualitative portion dropped due to unanticipated circumstances, the study became purely quantitative.

## Sampling

This study used non-probability sampling with the ideal age of participant being 55+. Researchers utilized online forums (Reddit, Facebook, etc.) to reach target population. Researchers sought out and made postings on online forums that have a high concentration of older, diverse members. Out of 100 submissions, only 25 have been selected to be included in this study. Participants who did not answer all questions or did not complete survey accurately have been excluded from the 25 selected samples. Agreement for participation and distribution to be obtained from online forum moderators when necessary.

## Data Collection and Instruments

Quantitative responses from participants were collected by means of a questionnaire, which contained two sets of questions: demographic questions (see Appendix C) and survey questions (see Appendix A). The demographic questions pertained to variables as thus: gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, veteran status, education level, employment status, disability status, time spent incarcerated or in being in the foster care system, and active duty status.

The survey questions were consistent with the purpose of the study. These questions targeted specific life stages, using appropriate wording and scaling tactics. The questions were developed specifically for this study,

modified for mass distribution from questions intended for one-on-one interviews, under the guidance of the research supervisor. Outside of this, the researcher reviewed and revised the questions for clarity and purpose based on feedback from other faculty.

The questions target ages adapted from Erikson's (1963) stages as seen in Table 1 below. Each stage requires individuals to either have a positive experience or overcome a struggle, resulting in obtaining the achievement. Failing to overcome the struggle or having a negative experience will result in failing to obtain the achievement. Regardless, moving through each stage will be important to the development of an individual's personality, which in turn influences life outcomes (see Table 1).

Table 1: Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Life Stages</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Achievements vs. Failure to Achieve</b>
1	Infancy	0-23	Trust vs. Mistrust
2	Toddlerhood	2-4	Autonomy vs. Shame/Self-Doubt
3	Early Childhood	5-8	Initiative vs. Guilt
4	Middle Childhood	9-12	Industry vs. Inferiority
5	Adolescence	13-19	Identity vs. Role Confusion
6	Young Adulthood	20-39	Intimacy vs. Isolation
7	Middle Adulthood	40-59	Generativity vs. Stagnation
8	Late Adulthood	60+	Ego Integrity vs. Despair

Therefore, participants with a significant number of negative experiences could be expected to have negative outcomes in the final stage. Scoring scale survey

allows participants to choose from responses that correspond with either obtaining achievements or failing to obtain achievements. This creates an opportunity to analyze whether stage outcomes have influence on other stage outcomes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The researcher distributed the survey through online forums.

### Procedures

A posting was made on online forums with a brief explanation that there is a need for 55+ participants in a study, with a link to the Qualtrics survey. No identifying information is collected during completion of the survey. Life stages receiving a score of 4 or below are categorized as having negative outcome for that life stage. Life stages receiving a score of 5 or above are categorized as having a positive outcome for that life stage. The last, late adulthood stage is used as the final indicator of a participant's life outcome and will be compared to the outcomes of the earlier stages. Samples with inconsistent scoring (some positive and some negative outcomes) indicate that Erikson's model does not hold true. Samples with consistent scoring indicate that Erikson's model does hold true.

### Protection of Human Subjects

Identities will remain unknown throughout study. In the informed consent section participants selected either "Yes" or "No". Selecting "No" immediately



sent the participants to the disqualification page where participants are provided an explanation on why the survey has ended and how the survey can be restarted if this was a mistake. Any submissions containing confidential information have either been deleted or had answers omitted and redacted prior to publication. The California State University San Bernardino Institutional Review Board approved this study during the 2020-2021 academic year (please see Appendix D).

### Study Variables

In this study, there are two dependent variables: satisfaction across the lifespan (continuous variable calculated from childhood) and validity of the theory (valid vs not valid). There are two independent variables: race (white vs non-white) and gender (male vs non-male). These two independent variables relate to the diversity aspect of the study. All of the other demographic variables would serve as control should there is a statistically significant relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variables.

### Data Analysis

The data collected were exported to SPSS for statistical analysis. Responses to survey questions were evaluated based on whether the participant failed or completed the achievement associated with the question. The responses to survey questions by participants were analyzed individually and as

a whole to assess for the model's predictive abilities on life outcomes. The researcher used IBM SPSS software, Version 26.0, to calculate descriptive statistics. Due to low sample size and non-normal distribution, non-parametric analysis will be required. Researcher ran Mann-Whitney U Test (binary independent variable; ordinal, interval, or scale variable) to check the following hypotheses:

#### Race Hypothesis

$H_0$  = There will be no statistically significant difference in life satisfaction among seniors based on race.

$H_1$  = There will a statistically significant difference in life satisfaction among seniors based on race.

#### Gender Hypothesis

$H_0$  = Gender will not affect life satisfaction among seniors at the statistically significant level.

$H_1$  = Gender will affect life satisfaction among seniors at the statistically significant level.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

This chapter covers an analysis of whether the results match the prediction made by the researcher, whether research goals had been achieved, and a discussion of the obstacles encountered. To accomplish this, this chapter will be divided into five parts: demographics, results, limitations, discussion, and conclusion.

#### Demographics

The target population for this study was individuals who are 55 years old or older. Of those who completed the survey, 25 individuals had filled it out completely and met the age criteria. A significant number of the participants are in the 55-59 age range (64%) as shown in Table 2 below. Most of the participants are white, and the non-whites consist of 20% African American, 8% Native American, 12% Asian, and 12% other. Nearly half of the participants are male with the rest consisting of female (40%) or other (12%). The sexual orientation of majority of the participants is heterosexual, with 12% being bisexual and 12% other. Of the 25 participants, 36% are veterans or currently serving, 32% are individuals with disabilities, and 72% have a college degree or higher. Lastly, 44% are currently employed full-time, and 8% served time in Juvenile Hall or prison.

Table 2

Sample demographic characteristics (N = 25)

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<b>Age</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
55-59	16	64
60+	9	36
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
White	14	56
Non-White	11	44
<b>Gender</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Male	12	48
Female	10	40
Other	3	12
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Heterosexual	19	76
Non-heterosexual	6	24
<b>Military Status</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Veteran	8	32
Currently Serving	1	4
<b>Disability Status</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Has a Disability	8	32
<b>Education Level</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Master's or PhD holder	6	24
College Graduate	12	48
<b>Employment</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Full-time	11	44
<b>Incarceration History</b>	<b>N (25)</b>	<b>% (100)</b>
Prison	1	4
Juvenile Hall	1	4

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## Results

Results of the analysis are provided in Figure 1 and Table 3 below. Figure 1 displays the extent to which Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development Theory holds true in the twenty-first century. As demonstrated in Figure 1, the analysis generated mixed results, with the theory having only a 52 percent validity rate. That is, of the 25 participants in the study, slightly over half passed through the eight stages of development as Erikson predicted. The other half did not follow Erikson's patterns of development from childhood to late adulthood.

**Figure 1 displaying the validity percentage of Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development Theory**

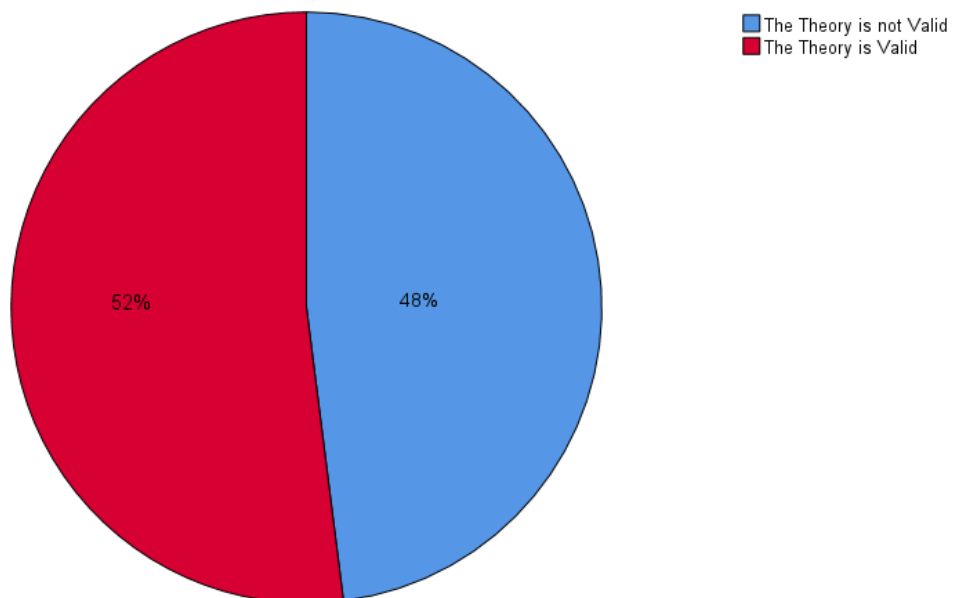


Table 3 below depicts the Mann-Whitney U Test results for the relationship between race, gender and life satisfaction among seniors. As seen here, the study independent variables (race and gender) did not correlate with the dependent variable (life satisfaction across stages) at the 95% confidence interval. In other words, the Mann-Whitney U Test result of ( $Z = -.772, p = .440$ ) for race and ( $Z = -.301, p = .763$ ) for gender showed no statistically significant relationships between the predictors and the outcome variable. Hence, this study fails to reject the null hypotheses that there will be no statistically significant difference in life satisfaction among seniors based on race and on gender.

*Table 3*

Mann-Whitney U Test result for the effect of race and gender on life satisfaction across the lifespan

<b>Variables</b>	<b>2-tailed <math>\alpha^*</math></b>	<b>Z-Score</b>
Race	.440	-.772
Gender	.763	-.301
*Alpha level ( $p < .05$ )		

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Summary

Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development is a well-known and accepted theory on personality development. The purpose of this study was to apply quantitative methods to analyze whether Erikson's theory is still valid in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Confirming whether theories are valid is important for informing social work practice and upholding the integrity of the field. A lack of literature related to this study highlights its importance for scholars and researchers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Using descriptive statistics, this study found mixed results for the theory with regard to validity.

#### Implication for Theory, Research, Social Work Practice and Education

The findings in this study have implications for theories, research, social work practice, and social work education. The findings of this study show that, despite being a well-accepted and respected theory, Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development may benefit from further validity and reliability testing. The findings also indicate that a review for applicability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of other classical theories is necessary. Further, this study has implications for research. Classical theories are not often tested for reliability or validity. By taking the bold step toward appraising the validity of Erikson's theory, this study contributes to

the literature on theory evaluation. This research also expands the literature by being a reference point for future work on theory validity. In other words, the uniqueness of this study can inspire scholars and researchers toward replicating its findings.

Furthermore, the findings of this groundbreaking study carry implications for social work practice as well. If a question is raised on whether on a theory's reliability and validity, then social workers must also ask if that theory should be used to inform practice. Erikson's theory is used to predict personality development and life outcomes. However, using a model that may have inconsistent results could be detrimental to clients.

Moreover, the findings have implications for social work education. This theory is included in many social work curricula, especially across human behavior and social environment courses. Such blind acceptance of a theory by the profession of social work could be a disservice to the student body. In fact, virtually no efforts have been made toward evaluating Erikson's psychosocial development theory before this study was conducted. Perhaps, the field of social work relies on its members (professors, administrators, students, etc.) to prove theories right or wrong. This study is a step in this direction. Social work educators can use the findings of this study to bring context into the reliability, validity, and applicability of Erikson's theory in in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



## Limitations and Recommendations

Several limitations had been encountered in the actual administration of the survey. Having to change from in-person, one-on-one interviews to online surveys made it more difficult to find participants that fit the age criteria. Many of those who had participated in the survey provided only partial answers and/or skipped the written portion of the survey. Due to this, the study had to be changed from hybrid method to quantitative. The number of participants in this study that had been minorities, women, or part of other marginalized groups was low despite efforts made by the researcher to recruit members of these populations. Additionally, the sample size in this study is relatively small. This limits the researcher to descriptive statistics and the use of non-parametric analysis procedures. Although a good fit for small and not-normally distributed data, the Mann-Whitney U Test applied in this study is not a strong data analysis technique.

To address the limitations stated above, a list of recommendations for future research has been created. To be statistically significant, the sample size should be increased by recruiting more participants. More efforts should be made to recruit participants not just locally but internationally. Where applicable, future research should attempt to use a mixed-methods research design to assess both quantitative and qualitative elements related to Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development. Significant efforts should also be made toward the adoption of parametric means of data analysis.

## Conclusion

Despite the limitations listed above, this study has contributed to reducing the gap in research in this area of topic. This study assessed for deficits and gaps that emerge in the application of Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Specifically, researchers examined whether Erikson's model predicts life outcomes accurately and consistently for the participants of this study. Regardless of the small sample size, results showed Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development predicted accurate outcomes in only about half of the cases. Due to this, it was important to evaluate whether Erikson's theory can be considered reliable in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. With the findings showing a roughly 50 percent validity rate, the theory in question is neither supported nor denied. The results are mixed.

However, more studies need to be conducted before a conclusion can be made on whether the theory can benefit from modification. The study should be replicated to have more diverse participants once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted as this will allow for in-person interviews, increase accessibility, and address other limitations referenced earlier in the paper. While this study utilizes quantitative methods, possibilities for use of mixed methods should be explored for future adaptations of study. Moving forward, social worker perspectives will be beneficial to the development of methods to reduce incompatibilities within the model.

APPENDIX A  
SURVEY

**1. On a scale of 1 (lowest) through 10 (highest), how would rate your overall satisfaction with your childhood?**

Highly Dissatisfied Highly Satisfied

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**2. On a scale of 1 (lowest) through 10 (highest), how would rate your overall satisfaction with your adolescence?**

Highly Dissatisfied Highly Satisfied

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**3. On a scale of 1 (lowest) through 10 (highest), how would rate your overall satisfaction with your young adulthood (20-39)?**

Highly Dissatisfied Highly Satisfied

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. On a scale of 1 (lowest) through 10 (highest), how would rate your overall satisfaction with your middle adulthood (40-59)?**

Highly Dissatisfied Highly Satisfied

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**5. On a scale of 1 (lowest) through 10 (highest), how would rate your overall satisfaction with your current life (60+)?**

Highly Dissatisfied Highly Satisfied

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(Created by Joseph & Macgowan, 2019)

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are asked to participate is designed to examine the application of Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development on a diverse population. This study is being conducted by Anastasiya Samsanovich, a graduate student, under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Rigaud, Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB). This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at CSUSB.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the study is to examine the application of Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development on a diverse population.

**DESCRIPTION:** Participants will be asked nine questions pertaining to specific stages in life. The stages will cover toddlerhood, adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood.

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in the study is totally voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the study or discontinue your participation at any time without any consequences.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your responses will remain confidential and data will be reported in group form only.

**DURATION:** It will take 5 to 10 minutes to answer the questions.

**RISKS:** Although not anticipated, there may be some discomfort in answering some of the questions. You are not required to answer and can skip the question or end your participation.

**BENEFITS:** Participating in the study will contribute to our knowledge in this area of research and encourage more research into diverse populations.

**CONTACT:** If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Dr. Joseph  
rigaud.joseph@csusb.edu

**RESULTS:** Results of the study can be obtained from the Pfau Library ScholarWorks database (<http://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/>) at California State University, San Bernardino after July 2021.

I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in your study, have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

- Yes
- No

APPENDIX C  
DEMOGRAPHICS

**Demographics**

**1. What is your age? (or age of the person this is being filled out for)**

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-59
- 60+

**2. Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino or none of these?**

- Yes
- None of these

**3. Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American        | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/>         |

**4. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe:

**5. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?**

- Heterosexual (straight)
- Homosexual (gay)
- Bisexual
- Pansexual



- Asexual
- Prefer not to say
- Other:

**6. Select all that apply to you:**

- Veteran
- Person with a disability
- College Student
- College Graduate
- High School Graduate
- Previously incarcerated or served time in prison
- Spent time in Juvenile Hall
- Full-time employee
- Part-time employee
- Master's degree or PhD holder
- Spent time in foster care system
- Active-duty military
- None of these

APPENDIX D  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER



January 4, 2021

**CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**  
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination  
Status: Determined Exempt  
IRB-FY2021-103

Rigaud Joseph Anastasiya Samsanovich  
CSBS - Social Work  
California State University, San Bernardino  
5500 University Parkway  
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Rigaud Joseph Anastasiya Samsanovich:

Your application to use human subjects, titled "Theory and Diversity: A Mixed-Methods Study of Erickson's Psychosocial Development Stages" has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of CSU, San Bernardino. An exempt determination means your study had met the federal requirements for exempt status under 45 CFR 46.104. The CSUSB IRB has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk and benefits of the study to ensure the protection of human participants. Important Note: This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit the Office of Academic Research website for more information at <https://www.csusb.edu/academic-research>.

You are required to notify the IRB of the following as mandated by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and CSUSB IRB policy. The forms (modification, renewal, unanticipated/adverse event, study closure) are located in the Cayuse IRB System with instructions provided on the IRB Applications, Forms, and Submission webpage. Failure to notify the IRB of the following requirements may result in disciplinary action. The Cayuse IRB system will notify you when your protocol is due for renewal. Ensure you file your protocol renewal and continuing review form through the Cayuse IRB system to keep your protocol current and active unless you have completed your study.

- Ensure your CITI Human Subjects Training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study.
- Submit a protocol modification (change) if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study.
- Notify the IRB within 5 days of any unanticipated or adverse events are experienced by subjects during your research.
- Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system once your study has ended.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at [mgillesp@csusb.edu](mailto:mgillesp@csusb.edu). Please include your application approval number IRB-FY2021-103 in all correspondence. Any complaints you receive from participants and/or others related to your research may be directed to Mr. Gillespie.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

*Nicole Dabbs*

Nicole Dabbs, Ph.D., IRB Chair  
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

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