
The Essence Of Bronfenbrenner's 'Ecological Theory'

If I had to choose a theory of human development that best fits my viewpoint, I would select Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory. This theory is very interesting because of its concreteness and good sense. I found that it stems from psychodynamic theory which explains similarities and differences in human's development at different ages and their abilities to solve problems and conflicts. There is a slight difference between psychodynamic and Ecological theory. According to psychodynamic theory, a person develops through overcoming barriers that are proposed by environment and society. Other words, surroundings impede a person to develop his innate or origin qualities. Whereas the Bronfenbrenner's theory explains that a person actively participates in the process of his or her social and cultural nurture; and this process is reciprocal.

Ecological theory contains four elements:

1. Microsystem that consists of people and objects in a person's proximate environment such as family members.
2. Mesosystem which makes up friends, school and neighbors; and it is closely connected to microsystem.
3. Exosystem consists of adult's institutions, such as work and social services.
4. Macrosystem makes up cultural values of a certain country, customs and traditions.

This model seems to be easy and obvious but the main reason why I found the theory more interesting is that the theory shows flexibility in direct and inverse connections. For example, a flexible schedule at the company, where a woman who has a little child operates, allows her to pay more attention to childhood care and indirectly affect the development of the child. At the same time an opportunity for mothers to dispose freely of his time usually helps her emotional balance and indirect impact on increasing productivity of women's work.

Another example is about the narrowest elements of the theory – microsystem. The family is very dynamic formation. Even for two twins we cannot state the identity of the environment because they are exposed to different requirements and different expectations, so that one of them is inevitably going to be appointed older, and the other - the younger.

Talking about the exosystem, I think, the more the family ties with social institutions, so it is more beneficial to the family and child development. In my opinion, the smaller of these relations, the more unpredictable is the situation in the family and the child's development. For example, in isolated families or in families with few personal or formal connections often have increased levels of conflicts and child maltreatment.

The broadest part of these four levels is macrosystem. It has the ability to affect all other levels. For instance, if the government of a certain country does not encourage birth and does not approve leaving to care for a child, the child will grow up in a lack of maternal attention, and the

microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem may not be sufficient to compensate for this. On the other hand, regardless of the particular external conditions, the main components of the lifestyle and attitude are stored in the subculture.

In Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, people are both the products and the creators of the environment. Life situations can be imposed to a person, and provided the result of the activity of the person. When the children get older, they change their environment and reinterpreted their experience. However, the interdependencies continue to work because which way children go depends not only on their physical, intellectual and personal characteristics, but also on how they have grown, and what they have absorbed from the environment.

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