

# The outline for urie bronfenbrenners children and young people essay

[Family](#), [Children](#)



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BUSTER**

Urie Bronfenbrenner ecological systems theory explains how people and the environment influence on children's growth and development. The basic concepts of Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory

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## **The basic concepts of the theory**

Urie Bronfenbrenner theory is based on ecological theory, which is focusing on environmental factors (Santrock, 2011). The Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is explained how natural environments can be a big influence to the development of persons. In other words, the development of persons can be affected by the surroundings from home to the wider context such as culture. Bronfenbrenner stated that there were many different levels and types of environment effects that might affect how a child grows and develops (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). There are the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. The microsystem refers to the interactions between a person and the people surroundings him or closes to him. To put in differently, it is the small and immediate environment where the person lives in for instance a person's family, school, peers, neighborhood play area and work. The second of Bronfenbrenner's environmental layers is the mesosystem. The mesosystem is defined as the relationship or connection between different parts of the microsystem like the relationships between family and teachers, family and

peers, and teachers and religious group. Next is the exosystem. The exosystem level has the less interaction or may not have it all between the children or adolescents and the other people or places but they may affect the development of the person herself, for instance parents' work environments, extended family members and neighborhood. Last but not least is the macrosystem. Bronfenbrenner defines that the macrosystem consists of cultural, subcultural, or social class context (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). It is wide, and the largest level in this theory but still it has a great influence to the person. The macrosystem includes the economy, government, wars, the relative freedoms and cultural values. Therefore, the persons can get the positive and negative impact from this level. Finally is the chronosystem. The chronosystem is about how the pattern of individual's life is changing over time depending on the environmental events. Besides, the environmental changes caused by cognitive and biological changing that occur at the puberty as well as the age of the individual.

## **How the Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory apply to child development**

Family, teachers and community members play important role in raising children with applying values and customs to socialize them so they can contribute something to the society. From the views of Barbour, Barbour and Scully (2011), children develop some attitudes by observing actions, hearing words and surmising the feelings of significant others in their environment. At this point, family, peers and religious group are located in the Bronfenbrenner's innermost environmental layer, or microsystem. It means people in the microsystem are the major influence of the child especially at

the early age. Children's perceptions and behaviors can be developed early from home and the direct interactions take place in the microsystem like the interaction between a child and parents, siblings, teachers and peer group. Besides, the good environment and better encouragement to the child will affect how better the child will grow up (Oswalt, 2008). According to Oswalt (2008), " Each child's special genetic and biologically influenced personality traits, what is known as temperament, end up affecting how others treat them". Another case is how some parts in microsystem having the connections or interrelationships among them like parents, teachers and peers. For example, a child's parents have a good relationship with teachers will have a major influence on children's learning and acceptance of school. Also parents and teachers support the children's interest and the competition that they participate. As a result, it will help the child's overall growth. The child might feel confident about her talent and ability consequently will affect her performance in study and have good relationship with other people. This kind of interaction between different parts of the microsystem is called the mesosystem. . According to the Shaffer and Kipp (2010), Bronfenbrenner argues that development of a child will be effective if the connections between microsystems are strong and supportive. Conversely, if the connections are non-supportive, it can produce trouble on child. For the third environmental layer or exosystem, this may not have contact with the child but might affect the development of the child. As an illustration, parents' work environment. If both parents have their own careers, it might cause the conflict between the caring for children and the responsibility at the workplace. The conflict is largely happened to the

mother because beside responsibility for children, they also have full participation at the workplace. Therefore, this will give the impact to the children and the time for family interaction will decrease, increased dependence on child care and fewer choices in recreation. As a result the family will have less information about the children's activities and the children only depending on her friends who can be good or bad friends. Oswalt (2008) states that the child at home can possibly be affected by a parents experience at work. Then, another environment is about the larger context called the macrosystem. For example, the family role in culture, how children should be treated, what they should be taught and the goals they should achieve. The styles of interaction within family will reflect the roles expected of children (Barbour, Barbour & Scully, 2011). For instance, in most European American families encourage their children to go outside and find and establish other relationship. While in Asian families' cultures, they pay respect for elders and the children are expected to be family oriented and encouraged to work hard for the family. To sum up, very family has different styles in raising their children and from that it will influence their behavior. Lastly is the chronosystem. The chronosystem is about how the feeling, perceptions and attitudes of child can be changed over time. This model includes a temporal dimension (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). It is focusing on the ecological context of development or the transformation of the child can influence the way that development is likely to take (Shaffer & Kipp, 2010). For instance, when the child is found out he is an adopted child, he will feel rejected and abandoned. He will have low self -esteem and struggle with identity development issues. This event may affect the child for a few years,

but after he has grown up, the curiosity, sensitivity and the rebellious are becoming less and the interaction with family will be more stable. After all, the environmental factors like age, cognitive and biological changing play a major role in human development.

### **How the Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory apply children in preschool and early primary levels**

Normally children are only exposed to the family at home until they are placed in day care, preschool classes and begin their formal schooling. When they grow up, there are more exposures from many sources to them. In the microsystem, family is one of the factors that affect children in development. Furthermore, family plays important role to the physical development of children in aspect of education and family income. Family who has good education and good income usually has awareness with their diet. Therefore, parents will model healthy eating habits for their children, who are also dependent what food is put in the table. When the child gets enough nutrition in his diet, he will develop well. Besides that, environmental factors like family and peers also affect the social development of child. For example, when a child is shy, aside from inherited characteristic from a parent, it also can be caused from interaction between parents and child. Sometimes, parents are having less interaction with the child and the parents don't even speak to each other. It will affect the social development of child, however, the difficulty to have appropriate sociality with peers will decrease after he enters the school. It can be concluded that, parents can influence the social actions of child but it will change after being exposed to the peers, hence surely can be influential factor to the development of child.

The interaction between people in the microsystem is essential for the development of child in the aspect of emotional development. For instance, family-teacher relationship that many people overlooked the importance of this relationship especially the teachers that only focus on to their relationship with children only. Children in the school always feel insecure, difficult to accept criticism, or punishment and unadaptable. Therefore, parents and teacher should work together for child's growth and development. Teacher can know the family background of the child and their culture. Furthermore, it is really important for teacher to maintain the children's culture since cultural identity and family connectedness are critical emotional health. In addition, both teacher and parents can discuss the children's problem in school and together helping to solve the problems that may have lifelong consequences. Also, when their relationship is good, they can inform one another and the information might be useful and has lifelong effects on the child. Invite families to the social events in school and hold a parent-teacher conferences are some of the ways to build the partnership. On the whole, this relationship can provide support to children and build children's emotional health. Next we proceed to the level where children do not make any contact with these people and places but still have an effect on them. This level is the exosystem. Parents' workplaces and mass media can be a largely affected to the children in term of emotional problems and cognitive development. Parents nowadays usually spend their time at work more than at home with their children. It will result in having less time to spend with children. They don't have time to know their children's activities, they can't control their children and they don't have time to help their

children in developing important skills. Stress at work also influences the children because they might release their stress by resting and sleeping at home and lead to have less interaction with children. So then, the emotional problem will be faced by children because don't have bond with parents. Studies have shown children who are given plenty of attention and love usually less have emotional problems than those who do. Besides that, mass media also influences the development of children. Children can develop and acquire the cognitive development from the good television shows. For example Blue's Clues, Dora the Explorer, Go Diego Go!, and The Smurfs. Moreover, another electronic media source is internet that also contributes the cognitive development of children. It provides children to solve problems, practice skills and creativity, and widen their knowledge base (Barbour, Barbour & Scully, 2011). For instance, practice chess, puzzle word and creative writing. But, as long as parents monitor their children from accessing inappropriate websites, internet can be a rich resource for children's lives. The next layer of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is the macrosystem. Government plays a big role to the development of children. What government can do is enacting the law for protecting the children hence to ensure the well-being of development of children. The examples of the law are Education Act 1996 [Act 550] and The Compulsory Education Act. Both are related to the compulsory for parents to make sure their children attend preschool and primary school. Preschool Education is for all children to improve their necessary skills at the early age and the programmes are provided by Government in rural and urban area. The purposes are to develop basic communication skills, and characters, moral values, doing



physical activities for good health and improve critical thinking skills through senses. Besides, the Education system in preschool emphasizes on nine elements for children development like Malay language, English language, Islamic education, moral studies, civics education and children's physical development. From the policies, personal development and the socialization process can be acquired by children and can affect children positively.

## **Summary**

Children acquire many things from surroundings for their development and they depend on how good and bad of their environmental are. Adult people should know their roles as parents, teachers and societies to the development of children. Although they affect the children's growth and development in some ways, their behaviors and viewpoints also affect their perceptions and attitudes. However, adult also can be influenced by children. The family is the major influence in the systems because they are the most trusted by children. So it is essential for family to stress on the development of children in the elements of physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. The place also like home, is supposed to be the suitable place for children to develop with more tools provided and more interaction with children. Even though some environment is out of family's control, but they can do their best to develop their children necessities' skills for their lifelong consequences.