

Early childhood cognitive and emotional development essay examples

[Law](#), [Evidence](#)



Introduction

Every child is unique and develops differently in their environment. There are milestones described as normative signs of the developmental process every child should undergo according to Meggit (2006). These are only general characteristics that vary depending on every child and the kind of care. The analysis can be done through observation of the child's interaction with the environment and selected medical tests. Many theorists have tried to explain the process of child development but, only a few have been regarded as influential over the years (Thomas, 2011). In a child's development, there are three main domains; cognitive skills, socio-emotional skills and language development (Santruck, 2011). I have carried out a study of my virtual child Levent's progress in these domains from 0-3 years old.

Language skills

Language development is a gradual process that should not be rushed. According to Piaget's theory, the quality of a child's language improves with his schemas or mental structures development. The child should develop an understanding of the language concepts from easy to complex, concrete to abstract at his own pace. I can facilitate this development through engaging him in conversations and asking questions that require long answers. This will necessitate him to explore his vocabulary content thus expanding it. Incorporation of technologically advanced equipment such as televisions, videos and the internet will also prove useful in making the experience interesting (Meggit, 2011).

Cognitive skills

According to Berk (1996), cognitive development entails the child's conception of himself and the environment around him. This focuses on his ability to find solutions to the challenges he faces through the power of reasoning. Levent's cognitive development was tested by observation and the Bayley Scales of Infant Intelligence at nine months. At this age, his digestive system could handle new foods; this contributed to the provision of nutrients responsible for brain cell development. His acquisition of knowledge was basic, and he could perform motor skills like; crawling, standing and sitting. By eleven months his curiosity level increased; he move around touching everything he could find. He was aware of how to use his toys; shook the rattle and stacked the blocks. He was potty trained and could identify various objects around him. His problem solving skills were below average as I observed him struggle to copy shapes and solve picture puzzles. This is evidence of poor development of spatial skills.

He exhibited good use of his gross muscles and had a concentration span of 15 minutes. An improvement in problem solving skills and the ability to follow instructions was noted at two and a half years old but, he still had challenges in spatial activities. Attention span and muscle use were also average at this level. I noticed that by age 3, his understanding of quantitative aspects was excellent. Levent learnt through the discovery of new things. It is crucial to note that the provision of various puzzles, painting and drawing activities have not had much effect on the development of his spatial skills (McDevitt et al. 2013). It is necessary to explore other means and activities of making improvements in this area.

Piaget elaborates that the development of a child's cognitive skills is dependent on the rate of mental structure development. The more complex they become the better he is able to understand his environment and perform activities. Providing Levent with activities that allow him to explore will facilitate this.

Social-emotional domain

A child's ability to understand his emotions and urges will help him in accommodating other people's needs (Meggit, 2011). This domain affects both the cognitive and language development domains. The pediatric report at nine months showed that Levent seemed shy and cautious when around unfamiliar people and situations. This is evidence of separation anxiety a common characteristic at this age. He however, seemed to relax and explore the environment whenever I was around. By 11 months, this anxiety was still evident and he constantly sought attention from the people he viewed as 'safe'. My mood changes seemed to rub off on him, forcing me to act happy whenever I was around him.

Levent's fear of strangers shows his inability to overcome conflict and develop trust. This is the most important part of Levent's life as its effects go until adulthood. I should handle it with care and ensure he develops self-confidence and a sense of autonomy according to Erikson's psychosocial characteristics (Berk, 1996). This will help him learn how to make choices on his clothes, toys and food without fear. According to Freud's psychosocial theory, it is crucial for me not to make his toilet training too strict or lax; this will determine his personality development. This will ensure he does not

develop excessive characteristics such as the need for perfection or disorganization. The early childhood specialist advised me to keep him in one pre-school and ensure interaction with other children by inviting them over for play dates.

Influence of environmental factors on development

Various theorists explore the effects the environment has on the development process of a child. According to Bronfenbrenner's theory, three types of the environment have effect on development directly or indirectly (Thomas, 2011). In Levent's life, Microsystems evident through my presence, caregivers and colleagues at school influence how he behaves. The behavior he develops also affects how others treat him. Activities such as parent-teacher conferences are part of the mesosystem which also has an effect on his development through decisions made on ways to teach them and cater for their needs. Exosystems include people and things he may not be indirect contact with but still affect his development (White et al., 2005). These may include my experience at work, a promotion or loss of employment. These will affect how I provide for his needs and in turn affect his overall development.

A child's development is multidimensional thus efforts should be made to ensure he develops in every aspect; social, moral, intellectual and psychological (Bee & Boyd, 2010). Caregivers and parents should work together in understanding the child's unique needs. Through this, we will cater for these needs in the home and school. When this is made possible, Levent and every child will develop the confidence to explore the

environment and enjoy learning through interaction (McDevitt et al., 2013). The first years of a child's life are the most crucial ones; there is a need to build a strong foundation (Meggit, 2011).

Reference

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