

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model paper



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As a child develops, the surroundings and people they interact with can have an impact in their development. Bronfenbrenner is a developmental psychologist who created the bioecological model of human development. The purpose of Bronfenbrenner's model is to analyze the different connections humans make in the process of socialization. The bioecological model consists of four main areas “ in which relationships and interactions take place to form patterns that affect human development” (Berns, 2013, 2010).

The patterns that are formed from the relationships and interactions being created can be either positive or negative influences that can affect human development. The first system is the microsystem; in this system children are directly affected by the interactions they encounter “ in a particular small setting” (Berns, 2013, 2010). For instance, family, school, peers, media, and their community are part of a child's microsystem. The second system is the mesosystem; in this system the mesosystem is reflected in the microsystem due to the connections it creates with the child's small settings.

An example of this can be the child's community collaborations which influences the child's development. The third system is the exosystem; in this system the settings in which the child is not directly involve, yet the child is still affected in their microsystem. For instance, the child's parents' work can affect the child do to financial problems or stressed. The fourth system is the macrosystem; in this system “ the society and subculture to which the developing person belongs, with particular reference to the belief system, lifestyles, patterns of social interaction, and life changes (Berns, 2013, 2010).

For example, being part of a religion influences your life and therefore your human development as well. Indeed, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model depicts the human development in these four basic structures. This essay will explain my own reflection of my childhood and the influences from each of the ecological systems. Microsystem: As Berns states, "the family is the setting that provides nurturance, affection, and a variety of opportunities... the primary socializer of the child in that it has the most significant impact on the child's development" (Berns, 2013, 2010).

In my case, my biological mother was not able to provide "nurturance, affection, and a variety of opportunities" and therefore affected my development. My mother's inability to provide these essential elements affected my stability in my life. Berns explains that "this early disadvantage will persist and even worsen as the child progresses through school unless intervention, such as that provided by some quality child-care programs, can modify the opportunities at home and in school" (Berns, 2013, 2010). My personal stability worsened as I developed, but it was able to get modified at some point in my life due to my adoption.

My adopted parents were able to provide those essential elements and therefore helped me establish a normal stable life. Further, Bern claims that "teachers encouraged the development of various skills and behaviors by being role models and by providing motivation for children to succeed in learning" (Berns, 2013, 2010). My ninth grade teacher, Miss. Dotson influenced my life directly. She was able to provide motivation in my life in the sense of being able to succeed in my learning in order to attend college and receive good grades.

She became my role model and I wanted to be just like her, a teacher. I began to realize that having an education was essential as my life developed because without one, my life would be a disappointment. Due to her support and motivation, I was able to become the student that I am today. Moreover, Bern states that “ the community, or neighborhood on a smaller scale, is the main setting in which children learn by doing” (Berns, 2013, 2010). Growing up, I did not live in the safest community which influenced my views of where I lived.

I remember that the only thing I wanted to do was to move to a safer place. The noises of sirens and police caused fear in me and I did not want to conform to continue living in an environment like that. As I grew older, I knew that I wanted to move away as soon as I was able to. When I had the chance to do so, I did and I was able to experience a safer community and a better life. From this, I learned that the communities we reside in can have significant influences in our lives. Mesosystem: Schools ability to bring forward guest speakers can have influences in the students.

For instance, while attending an ASB camp, I was able to meet this great guest speaker who influenced my own life. I may not remember his name, but I do remember the words he said that inspired me to change my life around. He was the product of abusive parents and although he went through some hardships while growing up, he decided to change his life around and not end up in drugs, gangs, or any kind of trouble. His speech thought me that although I was abused; I had the chance and power to change my life around too.

I was able to become a successful young woman in my academic development and I am still striving for the best. What I learned from this experience was that guest speakers and schools connection to my life was very influential in my development. Having the opportunity to attend my fifth grade field trip-science camp, I realized that it had an impact in my development. Being away from home for a couple of days, made me realize how important the care of my family was at that time. Going to school for a couple of hours a day was different than being away from home for a couple of days.

The interrelationship between my family, the school, and the field trip was interesting because I did not know how it felt to be away from my family. The realization of this instigated me to appreciate both my family and my school more than I thought I did. As Bern states, “ the more numerous the qualitative links or interrelationships between the child's microsystems, the more impact they have on socialization” (Berns, 2013, 2010). Therefore, the impact of appreciation of my microsystem also made an impact in my socialization skills as to what situations to appreciate at certain times.

After leaving my house for college, I had to move in with one of my aunts in San Diego. Although I was no longer living at home, I still visit my family. During this change, I had to cope with two different life styles. For instance, living with my aunt I had different duties and responsibilities that I did not have at home. However, when both families got together I knew how to behave in both scenarios. This experience helped me understand behavior in my life. I no longer behave one certain way because I developed new behaviors depending on the setting I was in. Exosystem: As Berns states, “
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the exosystem refers to settings in which children are not active participants, but that affect them in one of their microsystems” (Berns, 2013, 2010). In my case, my father's job was something that affected me. For instance, his stress level was always high and therefore he tended to be upset most of the time. Also, he did not have enough play time with me like I would of like to. Although I never went to his job, it still affected my development.

I remember while growing up, my sister and I tended to avoid my father since we did not have that connection with him like we did with our mother because she was a homestay wife. As seen, parent's jobs can have major impacts in a child's microsystem. Another example that also affected my microsystem was school budget cuts. Although I was not directly involved with the school board, their decisions affected my microsystem. For instance, my freshman and sophomore year of high school the school did not hire a professional cheer coach due to budget cuts.

This affected our ability to learn new techniques and therefore compete. During this time, we had to teach ourselves what we knew and the overall performance of our squad was not to the standards of a high school cheerleading team. From this, I learned that outside decisions of our school board really had an impact in our school, but most importantly us, the students. Furthermore, social services impacted my life in the sense of the process of my adoption. For instance, having to go through the hardships of getting adopted was already a struggle, but the process itself was even harder.

In addition, I remember just wanting to have a family to love and care for me, yet I had them in front of me and I could not be with them. Social services were not something I directly had a connection with, yet they still impacted my development throughout those years. During that time, my emotions were unstable because I knew the family that was trying to adopt me loved me, but the process was too long to wait for. Macrosystem: Berns explains that “ the fourth basic structure is viewed as patterns, or sets of instructions, for exosystems, mesosystems, and microsystems” (Berns, 2013, 2010).

For instance, when I started my freshman year of college, I was persuaded into joining a sorority on campus. When experiencing the different things that one has to do in order to be part of their subculture, I notice that I was beginning to develop new beliefs, different social interactions, different lifestyle, and most importantly my life was changing dramatically. These changes were beginning to affect my other systems. The person I was becoming was someone I did not expect to be and therefore, I decided to drop out of it and enjoy the person that I truly am.

Another example that was part of my exosystem was when I was part of my high school cheerleading squad. Being part of this subculture I developed a whole new lifestyle. I remember saying that cheer was what I woke up to, did most of the day, and dreamed all night about. It sure was not easy being a cheerleader since I also had to manage my academic achievement and my role as a daughter. At times, cheerleading affected my ability to communicate with my parents because I would leave early in the morning and did not get back home till about eight or nine o'clock at night.

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As seen, our macrosystem can have significant influences in our other systems due to its connection it creates. As a Latino woman, we identify ourselves with our race and culture. We share similar characteristics and beliefs that other races and cultures don't. Due to this, being Latino is part of my macrosystem. Growing up I knew my family was different than some of my classmate's families. For instance, some of my classmates did not speak Spanish and did not eat the same things that I did. Also, they did not celebrate the same things I did. For this reason, my race made me different and I learned to appreciate who my family and I were.

Conclusion: Indeed, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model depicts the four systems that help our human development. Overall, I learned that depending on the child's life, their socialized abilities can either be broken or created, but at the end each interaction they make affects the socialization skills they develop throughout their lives. Reflecting upon the different systems and how they directly impact one's life, has changed my views in the way socialization takes part in our lives and how I develop new interactions with others in my development as a human being.