SLO 3: Developmental Context

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the multiple environmental contexts in which children grow and develop, and will be able to analyze systems that support children’s well-being.

As I entered my first courses in child developmental class I had very little knowledge about children’s developmental context. For instances, I thought that the only factors that influence the child was the immediate family and culture background. However, that wasn’t the case, I began to understand that the developmental context includes of multiple factors that influence the child well-being such as the family, school, community, culture, laws, historical and time. I was able to explore and understand children developmental context through two assignments that were developed in my higher education courses, which were a literature review in Parental Barriers and School Involvement Associated with Child Anxiety and Interpersonal Relationships and a reflection on family interviews.

The one thing that helped me understand about children’s developmental context is the theory of ecological systems by Urie Bronfenbrenner. This theory helped guide my comprehension about the overall development of the child and how it affects the child. The ecological model consists of five systems, which are microsystems, mesosytem, exosystem, macrosystem, and the chronosystem. I was able to increase my knowledge of developmental context and apply it to the literature review that my partner and I conducted. This literature review was about the obstacles of parent’s involvement in school that affected the child anxiety and interpersonal relationships. My partner and I had to look at the links between home and school, between peer group and families (microsystem and mesosytem), the parent’s workplace and obstacles (ecosystems), the values and culture of the family (macrosystem), and the change or consistency of the child environment (chronosystem) to help us understand the affects of the child school performance, anxiety and interpersonal relationship.

The second assignment that helped me develop my understanding of developmental context was a reflection on family interviews. This paper focused on two family backgrounds and their experience about their children and partner. After reflecting on what I learned in class about families and when I interviewed these families, I was able to understand how separation between parents can affect the child development (microsystem), the relationships that children build with both parents in different environments (mesosystem), the discipline and values that children are getting (macrosystem), the parent’s flexibility to spend time with their children (macrosystem), and how all of this is going to affect the children in their later years (chronosystem).

Of all the things that I learned in this area that surprises me the most is how resilience children who come from an environment where all of these systems are in poor conditions are able to overcome their obstacles and break the cycle of their family. These children are able to achieve these because they have protective factors and motivation that helps them move forward. Being a life-long learner, I will continue to use the ecological model and keep up to date research on theory and methods on developmental context because in order to understand the whole child and help the child with their needs, we need to be able to understand all the factors that are influencing this child. What I have appreciated throughout my learning is not be judgmental child on the first impression because you don’t know their situation and background that is affecting this child to be this certain way. Instead I, will do my best to help and understand the child by looking at their developmental context.

I showed my understanding of children developmental context in a Child Developmental course called Research Methods in which I conducted my literature review. This literature review was a semester assignment and I was able to do it with a partner. Our focused on this literature review was on the obstacles of parent’s involvement in school and the affects it had on children anxiety and interpersonal relationships. We gather articles and data from multiple resources that supported our main findings. This assignment demonstrated the development context of the child by looking at the child micro, exosystem, and macrosystem.

In a course called Seminar in Family Relations, I was able to do a reflection on family interviews. I had to interview two families that were different from each other. I gave them a survey about their demographics and consents to sign. Also I asked the two family questions about their children and the partner who they had the child with. I recorded their answers on a tape recorder. I then transcribed all their information into a document. I related all their answers to the material I learned in class. This assignment was great because it really helped me understand the short term and long term affects that children have on divorce, separation, and/or cohabiting.