

Physical, Intellectual, and Moral Development of First-Grade Students at State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang

Aseptianova

Universitas Muhammadiyah Palembang, Indonesia

Email: novazalili@gmail.com

Keywords:

Physical; Intellectual;
Emotional; moral.

Abstract

Child development during the early elementary school period is a crucial stage that determines children's future learning abilities, social adaptation, emotional stability, and moral behavior. First-grade students experience significant changes in physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral aspects as they transition into a structured educational environment. However, differences in individual characteristics, learning abilities, social interaction, and emotional regulation require comprehensive understanding to provide appropriate educational support. This research aims to describe the physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development of first-grade students at State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang. This study employed a qualitative descriptive research approach involving 20 first-grade students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through direct classroom observations, teacher interviews, and documentation analysis. The collected data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to identify developmental patterns and individual characteristics among students. The results indicate that most students demonstrated positive intellectual development, particularly in responding to learning activities, reading skills, and basic numeracy abilities, although several students still required additional guidance. Emotional development showed variations, with some students demonstrating good discipline, responsibility, and social interaction, while others needed support in emotional control and confidence building. In terms of physical and psychomotor development, most students showed appropriate motor skills, creativity, and coordination abilities. The findings also reveal that teacher guidance and parental involvement play important roles in supporting children's holistic development. This research concludes that early identification of students' developmental conditions is essential for implementing adaptive learning strategies that accommodate individual differences and promote optimal child growth.

INTRODUCTION

Elementary school students are children who are still in the development stage. Intellectual. Intellectual/cognitive aspects are aspects that must be developed in children. Therefore, parents and teachers need to understand this aspect of intellectual development. Development is a process of change (Hariani et al., 2022) Dynamics of intellectual and creative development in elementary school children: The roles of environment, parents, teachers, and

learning media. This includes physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional aspects. These changes occur from birth throughout life.

Elementary school children, typically aged 6-12, are in a category that experiences drastic mental and physical changes. Children in the early grades of elementary school are in the early years. This early childhood period is a short but crucial period for a child's development. Therefore, during this period, all of a child's potential needs to be encouraged so that it can develop optimally (Goodway et al., 2019). Characteristics of the development of children in the first, second, and third grades of elementary school are usually characterized by physical maturity, body control, and balance (Butenko et al., 2017; Moseichuk et al., 2020). They can now jump alternately, ride a bicycle, catch a ball, and develop hand-eye coordination to hold a pencil and scissors. Furthermore, children's social development, especially in the early grades of elementary school, includes showing their gender identity, competing with peers, having friends, sharing, and becoming independent. (Anwar, Zain 2021)

The emotional development of children aged 6-8 years includes the ability to express reactions to others, control emotions, separate from parents, and begin to learn about value concepts such as right and wrong (Kaizar & Alordiah, 2023). The development of intelligence in early elementary school children is demonstrated by their ability to serialize and group objects, their interest in numbers and writing, their increased vocabulary, their enjoyment of talking, their understanding of cause and effect, and their growing understanding of space and time. Elementary school children are in a category that experiences many drastic changes, both mentally and physically. (Anwar, Zain 2021)

Child development during elementary school encompasses various aspects, including cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and language (Lestari et al., 2026; Rizky et al., 2025). While each child experiences unique development, there are several general developmental milestones that can be recognized in elementary school children, namely children aged 6 to 12 years. Physically, during this age, children experience rapid physical growth, and fine and gross motor skills continue to develop. Cognitively, children during this period acquire higher cognitive abilities. Socially, children understand and engage in more complex social interactions. During this period of emotional development, children learn to better manage their emotions, identify, and express feelings more appropriately (Fatimah, Enung, 2010).

Previous research has demonstrated that physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development are fundamental components influencing children's educational success. Santrock (2004) explains that child development involves continuous changes in physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional aspects throughout life. Furthermore, Anwar and Zain (2021) highlight that elementary school children experience substantial developmental changes requiring appropriate stimulation from teachers and parents. Research by Fatimah (2010) also emphasizes that elementary-age children develop increasingly complex cognitive abilities, social relationships, and emotional regulation skills. These findings indicate that understanding students' developmental conditions is necessary for creating learning environments that accommodate individual differences.

Several empirical studies indexed in academic databases such as Google Scholar and Scopus have investigated child development from different perspectives (Boateng et al., 2024). Research on early childhood development has shown that supportive teacher-student relationships, parental involvement, and learning environments significantly influence

children's cognitive and socio-emotional outcomes. Studies related to character education also indicate that moral development in early childhood is strongly shaped by habituation, role models, and social experiences (Aravantinos et al., 2024). Meanwhile, research on psychomotor development highlights the importance of physical activities and creative learning approaches to improve children's motor coordination and confidence. Nevertheless, many previous studies tend to examine developmental aspects separately rather than investigating physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral dimensions simultaneously within a specific elementary school context.

The existing research gap indicates that comprehensive assessments of early elementary students' developmental profiles remain limited, particularly in Indonesian public elementary schools (Hernández-Torrano, 2020). Most previous studies focus on academic performance, literacy improvement, or specific developmental domains, while fewer studies explore the interaction between cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and moral development within the same group of first-grade students. In addition, variations among individual students regarding learning ability, emotional characteristics, discipline, social behavior, and family background require deeper investigation. The study conducted at State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang addresses this gap by examining multiple developmental dimensions among first-grade students through direct observation and teacher perspectives.

The urgency of this research is strengthened by the fact that early identification of children's developmental conditions can help teachers and parents provide appropriate educational support. Differences in developmental levels among students may influence classroom participation, learning achievement, social relationships, and psychological well-being. Without proper understanding, students who require additional support may experience difficulties in adapting academically and socially. Therefore, research focusing on first-grade students' developmental characteristics is important to provide evidence-based information for teachers, parents, and educational policymakers in developing adaptive learning strategies.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach that examines physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development simultaneously within the context of first-grade elementary education. Rather than evaluating only academic achievement, this research provides a broader understanding of children's developmental conditions through qualitative observation and teacher-based interpretation. The research also highlights individual differences among students, showing that each child has unique strengths and challenges requiring personalized educational approaches. This perspective contributes to strengthening child-centered education practices, particularly in early elementary classrooms.

Based on these considerations, the purpose of this research is to identify and describe the physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development of first-grade students at SDN 38 Palembang. Specifically, this research aims to explore students' cognitive abilities, emotional maturity, social behavior, moral characteristics, and psychomotor skills as fundamental aspects of child development. The research also seeks to understand how teachers support students' developmental processes through classroom practices, collaboration with parents, and adaptive learning approaches. Through this objective, the study provides empirical evidence regarding the developmental conditions of early elementary students.

This research contributes theoretically and practically to the field of elementary education. Theoretically, the findings enrich discussions regarding holistic child development

by providing an integrated perspective on physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral growth during the early elementary stage. Practically, the results provide valuable information for teachers, schools, and parents to design appropriate interventions and learning strategies based on students' developmental needs. Furthermore, this research can serve as a reference for future studies examining child development, early education practices, and strategies for improving the quality of elementary education in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design to explore and describe the physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development of first-grade elementary school students. The research population consisted of all first-grade students at SDN 38 Palembang during the even semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. The research sample involved 20 first-grade students who were selected using a purposive sampling technique, considering that the students represented diverse developmental characteristics in terms of cognitive ability, emotional responses, social behavior, discipline, and psychomotor skills. The selection of participants was based on the research objectives, namely obtaining comprehensive information regarding the developmental conditions of early elementary students. In addition, the research involved the first-grade homeroom teacher as a key informant who provided supporting information regarding students' learning behavior, classroom interaction, and developmental progress.

The research instruments consisted of observation sheets, teacher interview guidelines, and documentation records. Observation instruments were developed based on four main developmental indicators: physical development, intellectual development, emotional development, and moral development. The observation focused on students' learning activities, communication patterns, motor skills, discipline, emotional regulation, and social interactions. The interview guidelines were used to obtain deeper information from teachers regarding students' developmental characteristics and the strategies implemented to support their growth. The validity of the research instruments was ensured through content validity, conducted by aligning the indicators with relevant child development theories and expert judgment. Data reliability was maintained through source triangulation and technique triangulation, comparing information obtained from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and documentation. These procedures were implemented to ensure that the findings accurately represented students' developmental conditions.

Data collection was conducted through direct classroom observation, semi-structured interviews with the homeroom teacher, and documentation analysis. The research procedure began with preparation, including determining research objectives, developing instruments, and obtaining research permission from the school. The next stage involved collecting data by observing students' daily classroom activities and conducting interviews with teachers regarding students' physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development. The collected data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which involved data organization, coding, identification of developmental themes, interpretation of findings, and drawing conclusions. The analysis process was conducted manually with the support of qualitative data management software such as NVivo (if required) to assist in organizing and categorizing qualitative information. The final stage involved presenting the findings

descriptively to explain the developmental characteristics of first-grade students and the role of teachers and parents in supporting optimal child development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Development

No	Student name	Cognitive development	Affective Development	Development Psychomotor	Weakness
1.	Al Path.	Reading skills: Good but still need to learn more about reading and imagining. Quite good.	The child is responsible for caring for his friends. Discipline: Arrive on time, have good attendance	Able to write or draw with a pencil	Likes to chat, so sometimes assignments are not finished, even though the writing is quite neat. Likes to forget the bottom of the book.
2	Aldi	The child is able to follow the lessons well. The assignments are completed quickly. Reading: fluent Counting: Very good	Discipline: Arrive on time, good attendance	Fluent reading skills and being able to write or drawing with a pencil	likes to join in on friends' conversations while studying. gets angry easily
3	Alya	The child is smart and critical However, Alya's child is easily sensitive. assigned tasks are completed quickly. Lack of confidence, writing is neat. Reading: Very fluent Counting: already able	Discipline: Arrive on time and have good attendance	Able to move hands when pointing to words or writing	If the child doesn't bring his things, he doesn't want to replace them with other things.
4	Anindita Keisha	Ana is able to complete assignments quickly, her writing is neat. Read: Very smooth Counting: already able	Good child, responsible, homework is completed well. Discipline comes on time, good attendance.	Able to do simple gymnastics or dance movements the writing is neat.	his fear is excessive. If a friend has a job to do, he starts to worry. a little less careful in answering questions.
5	Aniska	The tasks given are always completed His son I really like fine arts lessons. Reading skills: Fluent in counting: able to	Discipline: Arrive on time Good attendance, Aniska is a bit quiet,	Fluent reading skills and being able to write or drawing with a pencil	writing is a bit slow If a bad mood comes the work/task is not finished

6.	Az zofati	can already recognize letters, read, and still spell. Numeracy skills: not yet able to subtract and add it's still not right	The child is naughty, likes to bring toys, is a little dishonest, his handwriting is not neat, his assignments are completed but his answers are not quite right. He communicates well, likes to chat. His assignments/homework are rarely done.	able to write or drawing with a pencil, running and playing football	Not yet fluent in reading and counting, the child likes to play, rarely does assignments/homework.
7.	Az-zahrah	The child's assignments are given to him to complete but he is slow, his writing is quite neat. He is not yet able to analyze the questions. He likes the art of reading the most: he is quite fluent, but still spells. Counting: Good enough.	The child is confident, Discipline: good attendance arrive on time	able to write or drawing with a pencil	like to forget under the book
8	Flower	The child's writing is not neat, he is slow in calculating, and he is not focused. Reading: Fairly fluent/still spelling counting: not yet able to	The child is quiet, lacks self-confidence. The assignments given are never completed. Discipline: Arrives on time. Good attendance.	able to write or drawing with a pencil and cutting the pattern precisely	The child is quiet, lacks self-confidence, and the tasks given are never completed.
9	Lauren	The child's assignments are completed but he is slow in writing . Reading: not yet fluent but already knows the letters. Counting: Good enough	The child is quiet, the assignments are completed but he is slow in writing,	able to write or drawing with a pencil and cutting the pattern precisely	Do you like communicating with friends? Do you like doing assignments/homework? Less
10	M. Fabian Haikal	The child has completed the assigned task but still needs guidance. Lack of parental attention. Reading: recognizes letters,	Fabian Communication is lacking Discipline/ Neatness: Rarely comes in Late	running and playing football	Homework/Assignments Rarely Gathered

		reading is not yet fluent. counting: enough			
11	Meisyah	This child is capable of learning, but a little slow, Reading: Fairly fluent Counting: Good enough the tusa is neat	Communication with friends is a little lacking, easily offended. Discipline: Often comes late	Able to cut patterns precisely	The child is less communicative and easily offended
12	Achievement	The child has completed the assigned task but still needs guidance. Read: Recognizes letters, not fluent yet Counting: Good enough	His son is independent, quiet, completes the tasks given but still needs guidance, cries easily and does not dare if asked to come to the front. Discipline/attendance: often absent.	Likes drawing	Homework is often done by parents
13.	Muhammad Rizal	The child's assignment was done well, reading skills: good / fluent arithmetic: fluent Neat writing	Quiet child, socializes well with friends, good attendance discipline	running and playing football	The child is quiet
14.	Muhammad Rizky	the assigned task was completed on time. read: Know letters, not yet fluent in reading Good writing	Likes to play pranks on friends. Attendance discipline: Good live with Aunt - Mother is dead	Able to cut patterns precisely	The child is not yet fluent in reading
15	Nazwa Malika	Task completed well. reading fluency: fluent counting: fluent.	The child is quiet, often leaves his/her textbooks behind, gets angry easily. Discipline: Often comes in late for homework, often forgets to do it, is not with his/her grandmother/grandfather.	Able to cut patterns precisely	He often forgets his textbooks at school and gets sulky easily.
16	Rajendra Ahmad	The assigned task was completed but a little late. I have a cough/asthma. read: fluent / but slow	Discipline: Good	Able to cut patterns precisely	The child is a little slow to complete the lesson assignments

		Counting: fluent			
17	Rea Amanda	the task was completed well. the writing was quite good/nice. The writing was done but read: fluent count: quite smooth.	The child is quiet, easy to get along with friends, Discipline often comes without notice and especially on Saturdays	Able to do simple gymnastics or dance movements the writing is neat.	His son often doesn't come to school, especially on Saturdays.
18	Rizkiyah Jihan	Smart kids, neat writing, Assignment: completed well, read smoothly	His son is polite and has good attendance.	Able to do simple gymnastics or dance movements the writing is done neat.	
19	Sofie Marwa	The assignment was given to taste but still needs guidance. The writing is quite neat, Reading: Fairly fluent count: Enough	Hambel children, with broman-broman Good communication, good attendance and discipline	Able to do simple gymnastics or dance movements the writing is done	Still need guidance in writing
20	Zaki	The task is completed, but we still need guidance. reading: not fluent but already knows letters counting: less	A talkative child, who is still trying to write, discipline: Good / arrives on time	running and playing football	Still need guidance in reading, still lacking in arithmetic, also still lacking

1. **Cognitive development** in State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang especially in grade 1 the homeroom teacher said that on average they were good at answering questions significantly both orally and in writing but there were some students who showed difficulties in reading and arithmetic but the teacher still tried hard so that each student could follow the lesson well and comfortably the teacher emphasized a collaborative approach namely by involving parents and peers and supporting students' cognitive development for example The collaborative approach involves parents in learning activities at home, such as helping students work on projects or reading together, while peers play a role in group work at school to complete assignments. This collaboration strengthens students' understanding through emotional and cognitive support from their immediate environment.

In early childhood cognitive development, children are in the concrete operational stage, enabling them to solve concrete problems. The brain-muscle play

method for elementary school children is at the end of the pre-operational stage and the beginning of the concrete operational stage. (Susila Ari 2024)

Teachers are second parents at school, meaning their role is strategic in providing role models for the application of moral values among students. Because role models are a fundamental principle in learning. A thousand words are worth nothing compared to a single example. For example, regarding politeness in speech, even though the concept of politeness in speech has been cognitively mastered.

2. Affective Development

The affective development in State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang is generally good, especially in grade 1 students, but there are some who are still unstable here, the teacher directs and emphasizes more so that some children who are still unstable can be better in developing their attitudes in the school environment and home environment by means of Habituating Positive Values and Attitudes Involve students in activities that emphasize empathy, cooperation, and discipline. Because the habituation of positive values and attitudes through activities that emphasize empathy, cooperation and discipline is important because it can build emotional understanding, empathy helps students understand the feelings of others so that they prefer social interaction and can also develop social skills here, cooperation trains students to communicate, respect the opinions of others and work in teams, important skills in the school and community environment, then there is encouraging the habit of being responsible, discipline teaches students to obey the rules and be responsible for the behavior they do to help independence and firmness of attitude by getting used to these values, students can grow into more positive and more stable individuals in controlling emotions.

Affective development is related to feelings, emotions, value systems, and attitudes. This reflects acceptance or rejection of something. Affective abilities begin with simple things, such as observing complex phenomena that are internal to the individual. Emotions that occur in late childhood are almost the same as those in early childhood. The difference lies in the types of situations that can trigger these emotions and the ways in which children express them. These changes are the result of expanding experiences and learning as a child matures. This is accompanied by increasing physical size, and children can express anger through moodiness, grumbling, and various harsh expressions (Grossman & Ehrenreich-May, 2020). The emotions experienced by children are often unpleasant, so during this period, a period of imbalance occurs, making the child's emotions difficult to deal with. This is largely influenced by the environment and physical characteristics. (Angesti Nugrahen 2022)

3. Psychomotor development

Here in terms of psychomotor skills at State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang, namely the development of skills is good, imagination is good, abilities are good but there are some children who are not good in their skills and also cannot draw but here the homeroom teacher or teacher emphasizes to some students who cannot draw by providing gradual learning, the teacher provides basic skills and drawing exercises in stages so that children do not feel burdened or during art and culture lessons, the teacher also accompanies children who experience difficulties personally to understand their needs and also here the teacher involves creative media such as simple pattern images

of circles, triangles, stars or interesting and colorful images to stimulate motor skills and imagination of grade 1 students of State Elementary School (SDN) 38 And also the teacher collaborates with parents of students here the teacher asks parents to support their children to practice skills at home in a fun way

The psychomotor domain is concerned with the ability to act, which consists of six aspects, namely reflex movements, basic movement skills, perceptual abilities, harmony, accuracy, complex movement skills and expressive and interpretive movements (Budiaman 2021).

Psychomotor development refers to physical movement related to mental development (Abate et al., 2020). Psychomotor development is the development of control over bodily movements through coordinated activities between the central nervous system, peripheral nerves, and muscles (Mas & Riera, 2017). Psychomotor development is divided into two stages: gross and fine psychomotor skills. Gross psychomotor skills are body movements that use large or most of the child's muscles, or the child's own maturity. Fine psychomotor skills are abilities related to physical skills involving small muscles (Cucu Sutianah 2021).

Each child varies in abilities, behavior, discipline, and needs. Alya and Anindita excel in reading and math, while Az-zofati and Muhammad Rizky require guidance. Zaki and Rizky are active and sociable, while Bunga and Lauren are more reserved. Alya is easily offended, and Raihan lacks confidence in speaking in public. Aldi and Muhammad Rizal are disciplined in arriving on time, but Fabian and Rea are often late. Nazwa and Al Path often forget to bring books or assignments. Anindita and Rizkiyah complete assignments independently, while Sofie and Fabian require guidance. Aniska and Az-zahrah excel in art, and Muhammad Rizky and Nazwa live with guardians. Teachers and parents need an adaptive approach to ensure each child's potential develops optimally.

CONCLUSION

The development of first-grade students at State Elementary School (SDN) 38 Palembang encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Cognitively, the majority of students were able to answer questions well, although some still had difficulty reading and arithmetic, so teachers implemented a collaborative approach involving parents and peers. In the affective aspect, some students had demonstrated good behavior, but some were still unstable, so teachers focused on fostering positive values such as empathy, cooperation, and discipline to build social and emotional skills. From a psychomotor perspective, physical skills and imagination were mostly well developed, although some students required basic training and gradual guidance, with the support of teachers and parents at home. Collaboration between the school and family environment is important so that each student can develop optimally according to their potential.

REFERENCES

- Abate, M., Pallonetto, L., & Palumbo, C. (2020). *The effectiveness of motor activity on psychomotor development in school-aged children*.
- Angesti. (2020). *Lagu visual tentang pencegahan Covid-19 untuk anak sekolah dasar*.

- Sukabumi: CV Jejak Anggota IKAPI.
- Anwar, Z. (2021). *Strategi pengembangan nilai-nilai agama dan moral pada anak usia dini*. Cirebon: Penerbit Insania.
- Aravantinos, S., Lavidas, K., Voulgari, I., Papadakis, S., Karalis, T., & Komis, V. (2024). Educational approaches with AI in primary school settings: A systematic review of the literature available in Scopus. *Education Sciences*, 14(7), 744.
- Boateng, S. L., Penu, O. K. A., Boateng, R., Budu, J., Marfo, J. S., & Asamoah, P. (2024). Educational technologies and elementary level education—A bibliometric review of Scopus indexed journal articles. *Heliyon*, 10(7).
- Budiaman. (2021). *Filsafat pendidikan Islam*. Medan: Kebebasan Berkarya.
- Butenko, H., Goncharova, N., Saienko, V., Tolchieva, H., & Vako, I. (2017). Physical condition of primary school children in school year dynamics.
- Cucu, S. (2021). *Perkembangan siswa*. Jawa Timur: Penerbit Qiara Media CV.
- Fatimah, E. (2010). *Perkembangan psikologi (Perkembangan siswa)*. Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia.
- Goodway, J. D., Ozmun, J. C., & Gallahue, D. L. (2019). *Understanding motor development: Infants, children, adolescents, adults*. Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Grossman, R. A., & Ehrenreich-May, J. (2020). Using the unified protocol for transdiagnostic treatment of emotional disorders with youth exhibiting anger and irritability. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 27(2), 184–201.
- Hariani, M., Masnawati, E., Aliyah, N. D., Mardikaningsih, R., Djazilan, M. S., Darmawan, D., & Kurniawan, Y. (2022). Dynamics of intellectual and creative development in elementary school children: The roles of environment, parents, teachers, and learning media. *International Journal of Service Science, Management, Engineering, and Technology*, 1(1), 33–37.
- Hernández-Torrano, D. (2020). Mapping global research on child well-being in school contexts: A bibliometric and network analysis (1978–2018). *Child Indicators Research*, 13(3), 863–884.
- Kaizar, V. O., & Alordiah, C. O. (2023). Understanding the role of play in promoting cognitive, social, and emotional development in school children: Implications for counsellors and evaluators. *University of Delta Journal of Contemporary Studies in Education*, 2(1), 138–152.
- Lestari, H. A. S. A., Rinnanik, R., Ramadina, E., & Biduri, F. N. (2026). Analyzing cognitive development in elementary-aged children and its implications for teaching and learning strategies. *Jurnal Pendidikan Humaniora*, 11(3), 1.
- Mas, M., & Riera, C. (2017). Systematization of the psychomotor activity and cognitive development. *Educational Psychology*, 24, 38–41.
- Moseichuk, Y., Zoriy, Y., Kostashchuk, O., Kanivets, T., Nakonechnyi, I., Koshura, A., Potop, V., Yarmak, O., & Galan, Y. (2020). Age peculiarities of the development of coordination abilities in children of primary school age in the process of physical education.
- Rizky, M. S., Latipah, E., Naura, A. A., Haq, M. A., & Shiddiq, B. A. (2025). An examination of student development: The psychological, physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, sexual, and language dimensions. *Linguanusa: Social Humanities, Education and Linguistic*, 3(2), 126–138.
- Susila, A. (2024). *Metode permainan otak untuk anak sekolah dasar*. Bandung: Nilacakra.