

ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENTAL TASK INVENTORY RESULTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR EMPATHY LEVELS AMONG TENTH-GRADE STUDENTS

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Abstract. This research is motivated by the prevalence of bullying and declining social care among adolescents, while empathy studies based on developmental task profiles remain limited. This study aims to describe the developmental task profile of Grade X students and analyze its implications for empathy levels. A descriptive quantitative survey approach was employed, involving 70 Grade X students of MANU Putra Buntet Pesantren selected through total sampling. Data were collected using the High School Developmental Task Inventory (ITP) and processed with Developmental Task Analysis (ATP) software version 3.5, and descriptive statistics were computed. Results showed an average developmental level (TP) of 4.59, placing students in the Self-Awareness-to-Conscientiousness stage transition. The highest achievements were Awareness of Responsibility (4.69) and Social Role (4.68), whereas the lowest were Emotional Maturity (4.49) and Religious Life Foundation (4.50; item 1-1 TP = 3.37). The discussion indicates that students possess strong cognitive and social empathy, evidenced by maturity in peer relationships. However, affective and moral-spiritual empathy remain moderate to relatively low due to weaknesses in emotion regulation and religious internalization. Overall, students' empathy levels range from moderate to high. In conclusion, developing adolescent empathy requires holistic guidance and counseling services focusing on strengthening religiosity and emotional maturity.

Keywords: Development Task Inventory (ITP), empathy, adolescents, guidance and counseling, emotional maturity

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental period marked by complex biological, cognitive, social, emotional, and moral changes. During this phase, students are expected to accomplish various developmental tasks, such as building healthy social relationships, developing personal responsibility, forming a self-identity, and internalizing moral and religious values. Successful completion of these tasks is an important indicator of positive character development, including empathy, a key social-emotional competency of the twenty-first century.

However, social phenomena indicate that adolescent empathy continues to face serious challenges. The prevalence of bullying, verbal aggression, cyberbullying, hate speech on social media, and limited concern for others' psychological conditions suggests problems in students' empathy development. Reports show that bullying remains a significant issue in schools and affects adolescents' mental health, social relationships, and psychological development. A large-scale study involving more than 95,000 students found that bullying experiences were strongly associated with increased risks of emotional problems, anxiety, depression, and behavioral disorders among adolescents (Zhao et al., 2023).

In the digital era, challenges in the development of empathy have become increasingly complex. Intensive social media use is not always accompanied by the ability to understand other

people's perspectives and feelings. Research in Indonesia indicates that social media use has varied associations with adolescent empathy development; therefore, systematic efforts by educational institutions are needed to strengthen students' social-emotional competencies (Meuthia et al., 2023). This phenomenon demonstrates that the development of empathy cannot be separated from an educational process that addresses students' development comprehensively.

Empathy is an individual's ability to understand, feel, and respond appropriately to others' emotional states. It consists of a cognitive dimension, namely the ability to adopt another person's perspective (perspective taking), and an affective dimension, namely the capacity to share another person's emotional state. Empathy plays an important role in shaping prosocial behavior, cooperation, social concern, and the prevention of aggressive behavior. Recent research shows that the development of adolescent empathy is closely related to emotion regulation and cooperative behavior. Adolescents with good empathy and emotion regulation tend to display more positive social behavior than those with poor emotion regulation (Martínez-Velázquez et al., 2024).

Within guidance and counseling, empathy does not emerge suddenly; rather, it develops through the attainment of various developmental tasks. Several aspects measured by the ITP, such as the foundations of religious life and ethical behavior, emotional maturity, self-acceptance, responsibility awareness, and maturity in peer relationships, are conceptually related to the development of empathy. Individuals with emotional maturity and positive self-acceptance tend to be better able to understand others' emotional conditions and demonstrate prosocial behavior. Widyastuti and Savitri found that empathy mediates the relationship between self-compassion and prosocial behavior among Indonesian adolescents (Widyastuti & Savitri, 2023).

Although empathy has been widely studied, most previous research has focused on its relationship with emotion regulation, prosocial behavior, mental health, or social media use. Martínez-Velázquez et al. examined the relationships among empathy, emotion regulation, and cooperative behavior in adolescents (2024). Luczejko et al. investigated the role of emotion regulation in the development of empathy among children and adolescents (2024). Widyastuti and Savitri examined empathy as a mediator of prosocial behavior among Indonesian adolescents (Widyastuti & Savitri, 2023). In contrast, studies of empathy based on students' developmental task profiles using the ITP, particularly in *Madrasah Aliyah* or senior high school settings, remain relatively limited.

Based on the ITP analysis conducted with tenth-grade students, several developmental aspects, including the foundation of religious life, emotional regulation, self-acceptance, and preparation for family life, obtained relatively lower scores than social and career-related aspects. These findings indicate a need to examine more deeply the relationship between students' developmental task profiles and their empathy.

The novelty of this study lies in its analysis of students' empathy using a developmental-task approach based on the ITP. Unlike previous studies that generally measure empathy directly using empathy scales, this study uses developmental task profiles to identify students' potential and needs for empathy development. It also integrates developmental, social-emotional, and religiosity perspectives in explaining the formation of empathy among secondary school adolescents.

This study aimed to describe students' developmental task profiles based on ITP results and to identify aspects of developmental tasks with implications for the development of empathy. The study is therefore expected to contribute theoretically to the development of empathy research based on developmental tasks.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive quantitative approach with a survey method. This approach was selected to obtain an objective description of students' developmental task profiles based on the ITP results and to identify their implications for students' empathy development needs. Descriptive research aims to portray phenomena systematically, factually, and accurately without administering a particular treatment to participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Through this approach, the data were analyzed to describe students' level of developmental task attainment in each aspect and subsequently interpreted using adolescent development theory and the concept of empathy as a basis for formulating guidance and counseling service recommendations.

The participants were tenth-grade students at Madrasah Aliyah Nahdlatul Ulama (MANU) Putra Buntet Pesantren who completed the ITP. The data collection yielded 70 respondents. Total sampling was used, meaning that all students who participated in the ITP assessment were included as research participants. This technique was selected because the population was relatively limited and the researchers could reach all members.

The instrument used was the senior high school version of the Developmental Task Inventory (ITP), developed by the Guidance and Counseling Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI). The ITP measures developmental task attainment across eleven aspects (Hasibuan, n.d.; Intan Repita Sari et al., 2024):

1. Foundation of religious life;
2. Foundation of ethical behavior;
3. Emotional maturity;
4. Intellectual maturity;
5. Responsibility awareness;
6. Social roles as a man or woman;
7. Self-acceptance and development;
8. Behavioral independence in economic matters;
9. Career insight and preparation;
10. Maturity in peer relationships;
11. Preparation for marriage and family life.

Data were collected by administering the ITP to all respondents. The instrument was administered collectively in accordance with the procedures established by its developers. The collected data were then processed using Developmental Task Analysis (ITP) software version 3.5 to generate group developmental profiles and distributions of developmental aspects, and to identify the highest- and lowest-scoring items in each group (Papilaya et al., 2022).

Data analysis used descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation, and developmental-level profiles for each aspect. The ITP results were then interpreted using theoretical perspectives on the development of adolescent empathy. A standardized instrument, the ITP, supported data validity and was developed and widely used in guidance and counseling services in Indonesia. In addition, the interpretation drew on developmental task theory, empathy theory, and relevant empirical findings, thereby strengthening the study's conceptual validity (Hasibuan, n.d.; Intan Repita Sari et al., 2024).

RESULTS

Based on the group analysis of the ITP results from 70 tenth-grade students at MANU Putra, the mean developmental level (DL) was 4.59, with a standard deviation of 0.09 and a coefficient of variation of 3.36%. These results indicate that, in general, students' development was at the Self-

Aware (SDI) stage progressing toward the Conscientious (SAK) stage. In ITP theory, a DL score of 4 represents the Self-Aware stage, whereas a score of 5 represents the Conscientious stage. Therefore, most students were able to understand themselves, began to demonstrate social responsibility, and started to consider the consequences of their behavior, although not all had reached optimal developmental maturity.

The average response-consistency score was 4.16 out of 11, with the largest share of responses at scores 4 and 5. This indicates that most students responded relatively consistently; therefore, the measurement results can be considered sufficiently representative of the group's developmental conditions. The analysis revealed variations in attainment across the eleven developmental aspects.

Table 1. Indicator of Developmental Task Inventory (ITP)

Aspect	DL
Foundation of religious life	4.50
Foundation of ethical behavior	4.65
Emotional maturity	4.49
Intellectual maturity	4.56
Responsibility awareness	4.69
Social roles as a man or a woman	4.68
Self-acceptance and development	4.61
Behavioral independence in economic matters	4.66
Career insight and preparation	4.63
Maturity in peer relationships	4.64
Preparation for marriage and family life	4.49

Based on these data, the highest-scoring aspects were Responsibility Awareness (4.69) and Social Roles as a Man or Woman (4.68). Conversely, the relatively lowest scores were found for Emotional Maturity (4.49) and Preparation for Marriage and Family Life (4.49).

Highest-Scoring Item Analysis

The highest-scoring items included:

1. Social roles as a man or woman (item 6-3; DL = 5.27)
2. Responsibility awareness (item 5-2; DL = 5.19)
3. Maturity in peer relationships (item 10-1; DL = 5.17)
4. Responsibility awareness (item 5-3; DL = 5.09)

These findings indicate that students had a fairly good understanding of social roles and personal responsibility, as well as the ability to establish social relationships with their peers.

Figure 1. Highest-Scoring Group Items

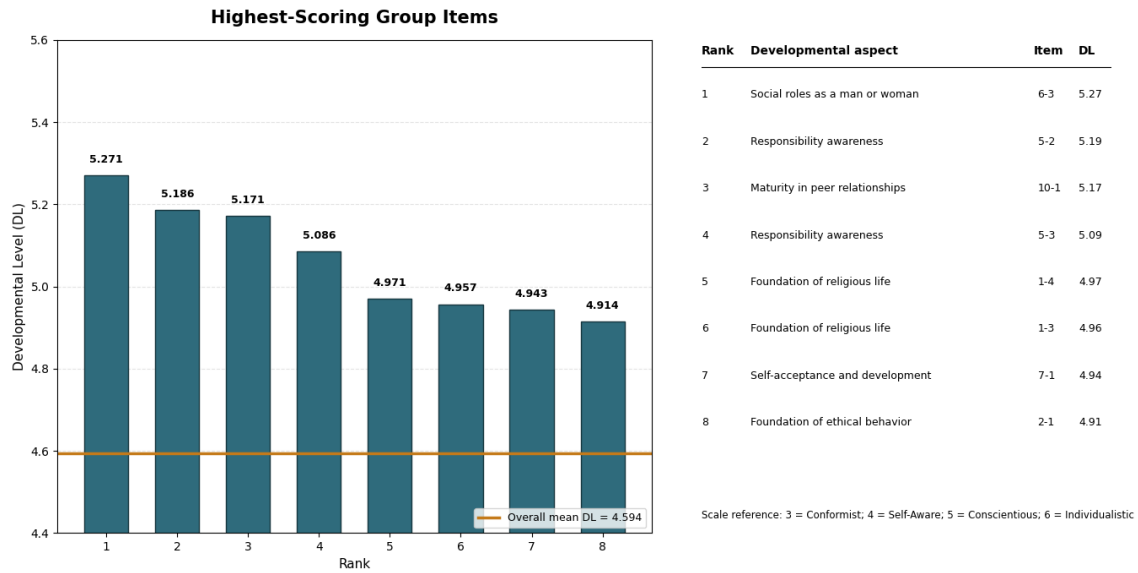
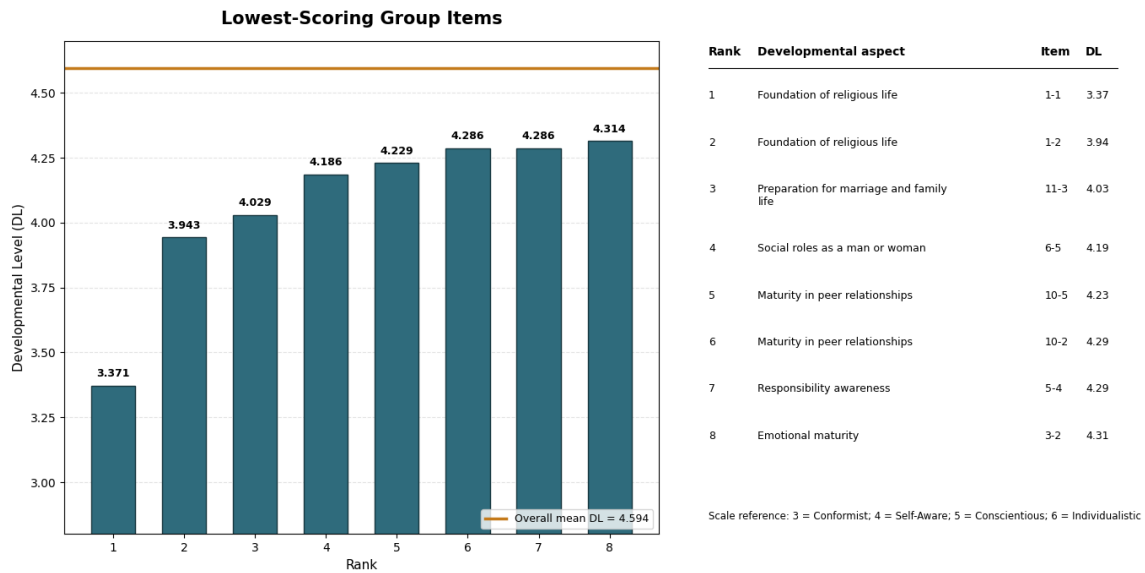


Figure 2. Lowest-Scoring Group Items



Lowest-Scoring Item Analysis

The lowest-scoring items included:

1. Foundation of religious life (item 1-1; DL = 3.37)
2. Foundation of religious life (item 1-2; DL = 3.94)
3. Preparation for marriage and family life (item 11-3; DL = 4.03)
4. Social roles as a man or woman (item 6-5; DL = 4.19)
5. Maturity in peer relationships (item 10-5; DL = 4.23)

These results indicate that some students still require support in internalizing religious values, developing mature interpersonal relationships, and preparing to perform social roles more responsibly.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that tenth-grade students at MANU Putra had generally reached the Self-Aware stage and were progressing toward the Conscientious stage. At this stage, individuals begin to understand themselves more objectively, consider social norms, and develop responsibility for their decisions. This finding is consistent with Loevinger's developmental theory, which underpins the construction of the ITP and posits that middle adolescents begin to shift from a conformity orientation toward more mature self-awareness.

The high score for responsibility awareness indicates that students were able to understand academic and social obligations. Responsibility awareness is an important foundation for prosocial behavior because it helps individuals consider the effects of their behavior on others. Students with a strong sense of responsibility tend to show greater concern and social sensitivity.

Similarly, the high score for social roles as a man or woman indicates that students understood the social norms prevailing in their environment. Understanding social roles helps individuals adapt to their social environment and build more effective interpersonal relationships.

Nevertheless, the low score for the foundation of religious life requires particular attention. The low scores on several religiosity items suggest that some students had not fully internalized religious values in daily life. Religiosity is an important factor in moral development, self-control, and prosocial behavior.

In addition, the relatively low score for emotional maturity indicates that students continued to experience difficulties in managing emotions, understanding their own feelings, and responding adaptively to social situations. During adolescence, emotional instability is a common developmental characteristic due to biological, psychological, and social changes.

Implications of the ITP Results for Tenth-Grade Students' Empathy Levels

1. A Weak Foundation of Religious Life Has Implications for Lower Prosocial Empathy

From the perspectives of developmental psychology and Islamic education, religiosity encompasses not only religious rituals but also values such as compassion, social concern, mutual assistance, and respect for others. Individuals who have strongly internalized religious values tend to display higher empathy and prosocial behavior. Therefore, strengthening religiosity may enhance students' social concern.

The ITP results indicate that Foundation of Religious Life was the lowest-scoring aspect. This condition suggests that students may be able to interact socially but may not yet have a sufficiently strong value base to understand and share others' emotional states.

Recent research indicates that religiosity is positively associated with empathy, helping behavior, and social concern among adolescents. Moral and spiritual values help individuals develop perspectives on others' needs and increase their likelihood of acting prosocially (Steinvik et al., 2024).

2. Emotional Maturity as a Major Predictor of Empathy

The relatively low score for this aspect indicates that some students still had difficulty recognizing and managing emotions. This condition may hinder their ability to understand others' feelings because empathy begins with the ability to understand one's own emotions (self-awareness). Consequently, students may be less sensitive to their peers' difficulties, react impulsively, and be less able to demonstrate emotional concern.

Recent research shows that adolescents with good emotion regulation have higher levels of empathy, are more cooperative, and are better able to develop healthy social relationships. In contrast, difficulty regulating emotions may hinder the ability to understand other people's perspectives and feelings. Martínez-Velázquez et al. (2024) found that emotion regulation contributes significantly to the development of empathy and cooperative behavior among adolescents.

3. Strong Peer Relationships Indicate Good Empathic Potential

The analysis showed that Maturity in Peer Relationships received a high score. Theoretically, peer relationships are a primary context for the development of empathy during adolescence. Through daily interactions with peers, adolescents learn to understand other people's perspectives, needs, and emotions.

Longitudinal research shows that increases in empathy are positively associated with increases in prosocial behavior and the quality of social relationships during adolescence (Carrizales et al., 2021). Therefore, the high score for peer relationships in the ITP results indicates that students have a fairly good foundation for social empathy. However, their affective and moral-spiritual dimensions still need strengthening.

4. Self-Acceptance Is Associated with the Ability to Understand Others

In social-emotional development theory, individuals who can accept themselves tend to find it easier to accept others' differences. Conversely, individuals who experience internal conflict often have difficulty understanding other people's perspectives.

Recent research shows that empathy is closely associated with psychological resilience (emotional resilience), self-efficacy, and adolescent mental health. Adolescents with better self-acceptance demonstrate higher levels of empathy (Wang et al., 2024).

When all empathy-related aspects are analyzed in an integrated manner, the following profile emerges:

Table 2. Empathy Component

Empathy Component	ITP Indication
Cognitive empathy	Fairly good
Social empathy	Good
Affective empathy	Moderate
Spiritual-moral empathy	Relatively low
Prosocial empathy	Moderate

Therefore, students' empathy can be categorized as moderate to high. However, it has not yet reached an optimal level because weaknesses remain in religiosity, emotion regulation, self-acceptance, and ethical behavior.

The ITP analysis shows that students possessed relatively good social abilities, especially in the maturity of peer relationships, social roles, and career orientation. These findings indicate positive potential for developing empathy, as healthy social interaction is a prerequisite for understanding others' perspectives and feelings. Nevertheless, the low scores for the foundation of religious life, emotional maturity, and self-acceptance indicate that empathy development was not yet fully optimal.

Theoretically, empathy develops through the integration of cognitive, affective, and moral capacities. Adolescents with good emotion regulation are better able to understand others' emotional states and demonstrate prosocial behavior. Martínez-Velázquez et al. (2024) showed that emotion regulation contributes to the development of empathy and cooperative behavior among adolescents. Wang et al. (2024) also found that empathy plays an important role in

strengthening adolescents' psychological resilience and mental health (Martínez-Velázquez et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024).

The consistently low scores for the foundation of religious life across all groups demonstrate the need to strengthen spiritual and moral values in guidance and counseling services. Well-internalized religious values can serve as the basis for social concern, compassion, and helping behavior, which are concrete manifestations of empathy. Therefore, developing religious, value-based guidance and counseling programs through psychoeducation, modeling, and Uswatun Hasanah is relevant for comprehensively improving students' empathy (Steinvik et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the ITP analysis of tenth-grade students across four groups, students' developmental levels were generally in the fairly good to good categories, with mean scores ranging from 4.57 to 4.63. The highest-achieving aspects included social roles as a man or woman, maturity in peer relationships, intellectual maturity, career insight and preparation, and behavioral independence in economic matters. These findings indicate that students had relatively good abilities to interact socially, establish peer relationships, and plan their academic and career futures.

Nevertheless, several developmental aspects remained relatively low, particularly the foundation of religious life, emotional maturity, self-acceptance and development, the foundation of ethical behavior, and preparation for marriage and family life. These aspects are closely related to the formation of empathy because they provide a foundation for understanding, feeling, and responding appropriately to others' emotional states.

From an empathy perspective, the findings indicate that students had fairly good potential for social and cognitive empathy, as reflected in the high scores for peer relationships and social roles. However, affective and moral-spiritual empathy had not developed optimally due to weaknesses in religiosity, emotion regulation, and self-acceptance. Thus, students' empathy levels can be categorized as moderate to high, but they still require strengthening to develop more comprehensively.

This study also demonstrates that developmental task profiles obtained through the ITP can be used to identify students' needs for empathy development. Lower-scoring developmental aspects can be prioritized when designing guidance and counseling programs, particularly group guidance, psychoeducation, group counseling, and modeling techniques that integrate religious values and exemplary behavior.

Overall, this study emphasizes that empathy is influenced not only by students' social abilities but also by their emotional maturity, religiosity, self-acceptance, and moral foundations. Therefore, empathy development should be undertaken holistically through task-based guidance and counseling services so that students can become individuals with social concern, emotional sensitivity, and positive character in their personal, social, and academic lives.

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