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Behavior Management Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills; An Analysis of Learning Innovation

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Abstract : *The complexities of life issues require thinking skills that go beyond mere application of learned knowledge. Learners should be more creative in generating solutions to the problems they encounter in their daily lives. Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) are implemented at School through an internalized learning system manifested in the form of activities, programs, and behavioral patterns within the boarding school environment. This effort aims to shape students' character, develop their knowledge and insights, enhance motivation, encourage positive, creative, critical, and independent thinking behaviors. Therefore, this research aims to understand the forms and impacts of learning innovation based on Higher Order Thinking Skills. This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically a case study design. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. The findings of this research indicate that: 1) the innovation in the learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is carried out through behavioral patterns, doctrinal patterns, development of Furudhul 'Ainiyah, and organizational cultural patterns. The impact of the innovation in the PAI learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) includes high motivation to engage in positive activities and a strong desire to become independent and accomplished individuals.*

Keywords : *Behavior Management; Higher Order Thinking Skills; Learning Innovations.*
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INTRODUCTION

The problems of Islamic education system in educational institutions include a teacher-oriented learning system, religious knowledge and understanding of students acquired through rote memorization and information transfer rather than discovery-based learning and intensive mentoring (Mundiri & Ningtias, 2019). For many, our familiarity with Islamic boarding schools is limited to their outward appearance, such as simplicity, unstructured buildings, absolute obedience of students to their scholars, and some teachings from classical medieval texts. This indicates that there are issues in the existing learning system in Islamic institutions.

Innovating the learning system is a suitable step to address various issues in the education process in general, particularly in learning. Thus, an innovative learning system can be implemented by educators to address weaknesses in the learning process, aiming to achieve optimal outcomes. Considering this, it is important for Islamic boarding schools to establish specific policies to bring about significant changes, preparing a generation capable of facing potential challenges in the future (Dinni, 2018). This is achieved through the innovation of a PAI (Islamic Education) learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) are crucial for students because real-life problems are complex, unstructured, intricate, new, and require thinking skills that go beyond mere application of learned knowledge (Saptono et al., 2020). Students need to be creative in generating solutions to challenges they might face in society. The innovation of a PAI learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills implemented at this Islamic boarding school allows the institution to maintain its traditional learning system while also embracing positive new elements needed in this era of modernization (Hardika, 2012). This signifies that Islamic institutions, as a traditional educational institution, possesses resilience through various reforms and modernization efforts while confronting the global landscape, even as modernization and globalization continue to advance rapidly (Alam, 2020).

HOTS empowers students to construct precise and effective arguments for rational decision-making and solutions. High-level thinking skills are necessary for students to engage with 21st-century learning models, open, modern, and global communication and technology, dynamic participation in companies or institutions, and of course, navigating complex situations in daily life. Furthermore, The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2001) formulates academic content comprising 3Rs (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic) and 4Cs (Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Collaboration, Communication, and Creativity-Innovation) which underpin high-level thinking abilities (Saptono et al., 2020).

The teaching system always goes through and follows three stages: the analysis stage (determining and formulating objectives), the synthesis stage (planning the process to be undertaken), and the evaluation stage (assessing the first and second stages) (Abdullah & Omar,

2022; Banks, 1995). An educational institution that can provide a comprehensive experience of this is the boarding school model. This is because the education in a boarding school model not only provides explanations but also sets examples of daily actions that are appropriate, from waking up to going to sleep (Masruroh & Bz, 2022). Moreover, the deep-rooted culture and traditions of boarding schools strongly ensure the cultivation of discipline, hard work, mutual trust, and respect. The education in the boarding school model has been passed down through generations for approximately 800 years.

Therefore, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) instruction must align with the fulfillment of the four pillars of education as set forth by UNESCO, which are to direct learning to know (students have an understanding of Islamic teachings and knowledge), learning to do (students, as servants of Allah, are capable of performing worship as guided by the Prophet), learning to be (possessing a good Muslim personality), and learning to live together (respecting and valuing fellow believers and those of different religions) (Munawwaroh & Putri, 2024; Suwaid & Hafizh, 2010).

The problems within Islamic education have encompassed three aspects: firstly, misdefining religion. Secondly, the paradigms employed in religious learning. Thirdly, the objectives of religious education. Religion is often limited to rituals and recitations, whereas in-depth understanding of religion encompasses the entirety of human behavior in life. This behavior shapes the integrity of a person with noble character based on faith in God and personal accountability in the hereafter (Mundiri et al., 2021). The paradigm used in religious education within schools/madrasas has not been comprehensive, as it is still substantively oriented, focusing solely on textual study without integrating it with moral objectives that provide timeless ethical guidance. Thus, a paradigm shift is necessary, transitioning from this substantive approach to an inclusive perspective that is open to all aspects, recognizing the imperfections in human beings. Additionally, a pluralistic paradigm should be embraced, acknowledging that diversity is inevitable. The third issue lies in the misdirection of the objectives of religious education. The essence of religious education in schools/madrasas lies in purifying, reminding, and awakening the inherent nature of each individual, thereby reactivating the primordial disposition to influence and guide one's thought patterns and actions.

Furthermore, the research findings also indicate that the implementation of Islamic religious education exhibits a high level of dependency. It is influenced by facilities, school conditions, family, students, and how teachers perceive the curriculum. Based on these issues, innovation in the Islamic religious education learning system is highly necessary. One of these innovations involves the integration of the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) approach, which is an effort to shape a child's character and personality. It provides a new alternative

within the Islamic religious education learning process, enabling solutions to be found for these issues and the desired objectives to be realized.

METHOD

The research approach employed in this study utilizes a qualitative method, also known as naturalistic research. Therefore, the qualitative approach used in this research aims to provide a clear and detailed description of the innovation in the Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). The research type is a case study. This research focuses intensively on a specific subject that is studied as a case. Case study data can be collected from all relevant parties, meaning that data in this study are collected from various sources. This study is considered a case study because it seeks to describe a background, a specific object in detail and depth. A case study is used to understand and find meaning behind data to discover truths, including empirical sensual, empirical logic, and empirical logic truths. Case study research might lack depth if it is only focused on certain phases or specific aspects before obtaining an overall understanding of the case. Conversely, a case study would lose its significance if it's solely directed towards obtaining a general overview without uncovering something or several specific aspects that need to be studied intensively and in-depth.

The researcher's presence and involvement in the field are highly prioritized in qualitative research because data collection must take place in real situations. According to the qualitative approach used, the instrument employed to collect data is the researcher themselves, acting as the key instrument. In this study, the primary data sources are words and actions, i.e., the words and actions of the observed and interviewed individuals. Therefore, data is gathered through observation and questioning. The desired data are related to the general problem focus concerning the innovation of the PAI learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

To gather the required data, the researcher uses techniques like participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Once the data is collected, it is analyzed to arrive at conclusions using Miles and Huberman's data analysis technique, which includes data reduction, data display, and verification (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction and data presentation are two analysis components that can be performed simultaneously during field data collection. After data reduction is presented or data displays are created, the next step involves drawing conclusions or verification capable of addressing the research problem. Data validity checks are also conducted to identify non-credible data, using techniques like prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, referential adequacy, negative case analysis, detailed description member checks, audit trail, and credibility audit.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Innovation Form of Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

Based on observation results, documentation, and interview outcomes regarding the form of Innovation in the PAI Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), it was found that the Innovation in the PAI Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is; a) pattern of student habits. The character formation through Islamic boarding schools begins with positive habits such as a simple lifestyle, healthy living patterns, and others. These habit-building exercises are intensive efforts to create an environment (stimulus) as the source of behavior emergence, which is often highlighted by individuals as the internalization process of environmental norms and values, leading to maturity and optimal personality development. Based on the Trilogi and Panca awareness of students, the innovation form of the PAI learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is then developed into patterns of habits, programs, and student activities, including; habituation of worship spirit, habituation of healthy living, habituation of simple living, and habituation of independence and collaboration (Yee et al., 2015).

Internalization is a deep process of internalizing religious values combined with educational values as a whole, aiming to merge within the personality of learners, resulting in their unified character or disposition. In psychological terms, internalization means the integration of attitudes or the merging of behavioral standards, opinions into one's personality. Freud believed that the superego or the moral aspect of personality originates from the internalization of parental attitudes. In the process of internalization related to student development, there are three stages that occur; a) stage of value transformation. This stage is a process carried out by educators to convey good values; b) stage of value transaction: A stage of value education through two-way communication or interaction between students and educators that is reciprocal, and; c) stage of transinternalization. This stage goes much deeper than the transaction stage. In this stage, communication isn't only verbal but also involves mental attitudes and personality. Thus, in this stage, personality communication plays an active role (Yee et al., 2015).

The stage of indoctrination involves the teacher using emotional approaches and role modeling. It is the duty of the teacher to instill new ideas/correct values. In this stage of indoctrination, only one value of truth is recognized, and there are no other alternatives. All students must accept this truth without questioning its essence. The indoctrination pattern of the Trilogi and Panca Kesadaran (Three Pillars and Five Awarenesses) of students, developed in the form of programs and student activities, aims to foster and enhance the character and potential of students according to their individual talents and interests. This indoctrination pattern shapes human awareness for the students. It promotes the awareness to develop their human potential, whether it be spiritual, intellectual, emotional, or physical

potential. This principle is embodied in the Trilogi and Panca Kesadaran of the students, along with the emphasis of various rules and regulations within the institution. Consequently, the values instilled in the students, in the form of positive aspects, have led many alumni to become actively engaged in public domains.

Meanwhile, the pattern of instructional indoctrination in the effort to create Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) among students is based on the Trilogi and Panca Kesadaran Santri, which constitute the philosophical foundation of the school. As mentioned in the Profile book, there are five awarenesses and five imperatives that students must possess, both during their education and after returning to the community. These five aspects are better known as the Panca Kesadaran Santri (Five Awarenesses) and Trilogi Santri (Three Pillars of Students). Indoctrination is understood as: a) the imparting of teachings or instilling of a doctrine, b) deep teachings without criticism or instruction in a certain doctrine, viewing the truth from a particular perspective only (Mundiri & Bariroh, 2018).

The education of values in an indoctrinative form and the emphasis usually appear in the form of instilling moral values of the 'Bag Of Virtues' that students must master and practice, without considering the child's internal psychological development and historical development (Olsen, 2019). Its application takes the form of formalism, authority, repetitiveness, and textualism. Methodologically, the teaching is summarized in rigid exemplification methods, mechanistic habituation, punishment, and reward.

Although this method is criticized by proponents of Liberal/Progressive Philosophy for disregarding human freedom in choosing the moral values they wish to develop, as it does not align with the Western educational approach that highly upholds individual freedom values, this criticism is not well-founded, as human existence requires it. Whether realized or not, this method is widely used in various societies, particularly in the inculcation of religious and cultural values. Therefore, early introduction to good and bad values is crucial. The methods used must be appropriate and aligned with child psychology development.

Gus Dur's Islamic educational paradigm, which is flexible and requires Islamic boarding schools to be responsive to the phenomena of modernity, emphasizes that these institutions should synergize with the changing times and have an inclusive and flexible nature. Gus Dur's intellectual perspective was greatly influenced by Classical Islamic education (pesantren) and Modern Western education. Culturally, Gus Dur traversed three layers of culture. First, he interacted with the world of the pesantren, which is hierarchical, closed, and formalistic. Second, the open and robust Eastern world. Third, the liberal, rational, and secular Western culture. This presents a challenge for pesantren because of the impact of modernity on one hand and the failure to accommodate the rapidly changing demands of society on the other. Therefore, according to him, there is no other way but to

undertake 'dynamicization', which is the effort to progressively enhance quality to keep Islam relevant and acceptable (Wahid, 2001).

The development pattern of Furudhul ‘Ainiyah is one of the innovations in the PAI (Islamic Education) system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) at schools, aimed at training students to consistently observe the obligations of Furudhul ‘Ainiyah, which are individual obligations for everyone. The idea is that knowledge should be beneficial when balanced with worship and practical application. The development of Furudhul ‘Ainiyah involves how someone can be useful to others, how they find meaning in their role and utility for their community and environment, regardless of their profession or expertise. Furudhul ‘Ainiyah forms the foundation for knowledge development. The development of Furudhul ‘Ainiyah implemented at Islamic institutions involves an integrative approach between Pesantren education, Madrasah Diniyah institutions, and formal educational institutions. This means there's a mutual support and complementation process between education at the Pesantren and the formal educational institutions. This approach ultimately leads to a formal Diniyah Education, which is currently in the process.

From the presentation, it is clear that the PAI (Islamic Education) learning system for students is crucial in order to understand the teachings of Islam in a simple and comprehensive manner. This understanding can then serve as a guide for their life and actions, including their relationship with Allah, society, the environment, and help shape their character with noble ethics in line with Islamic teachings. Integration is a renewal that leads to a complete and unified whole. Formal education is the education provided in schools (elementary, secondary, and tertiary levels). Meanwhile, Diniyah education is a classical form of education that aims to provide additional knowledge of Islamic religion to students. So, the integration of Diniyah and formal education is the process of combining Diniyah education with formal education within an educational institution, in this case, the Islamic boarding school, with the aim of equipping students with religious and general knowledge skills.

The emergence of the idea of knowledge integration is driven by the dualism or dichotomy between general knowledge on one side and religious knowledge on the other. Husni Toyyar proposed several models of knowledge integration, including: a) IFIAS model (international federation of institutes of advanced study), b) Malaysian Islamic Science Academy (ASASI) model, c) Islamic World View model, d) Islamic Knowledge Structure model, e) Bucaillisme model, f) classical philosophy-based knowledge integration model, g) Sufism-based knowledge integration model, h) Fiqh-based knowledge integration model, i) Ijmali Group model, j) Aligargh Group model, k) Islamic Modernization model, l) Neo-Modernization model, m) Knowledge Islamization model.

The process of integration goes through various stages, including: interpersonal integration, which involves the interdependence among individuals; social integration, which involves the interdependence of socio-economic elements; and cultural interaction, which is the functional dependence of cultural elements. This is acknowledged due to human limitations. Therefore, to fulfill all these needs of life, humans must collaborate and work together for the survival of humanity itself. According to Astrid, integration is a process involving several phases: a) accommodation, b) cooperation, c) coordination, d) assimilation. Integration, as both a process and outcome of social life, aims to establish a state of cultural homogeneity (Abdullah & Omar, 2022; Listrianti & Mundiri, 2020). When homogeneity is achieved, the group's survival is ensured. In this relationship and effort, assimilation is the stage closest to ideal integration. The assimilation process is not one-way, but rather a two-way process involving both those being integrated and the groups/members integrating themselves.

Meanwhile, organizational culture is a manifestation of assumptions held and implicitly accepted by a group, determining how the group perceives, thinks, and reacts to its diverse environment (Crossan et al., 2022; Hidayah, 2022). Organizational culture is a shared pattern of assumptions used for problem-solving and internal integration, taught to new members as the correct way to understand, think about, and feel these issues. Organizational culture consists of two main elements: idealistic elements and behavioral elements; a) Idealistic elements. Idealistic elements are inherent in the owners in the form of doctrines, life philosophies, or individual values of the founders or owners of the organization. These are usually formally stated in the organization's vision and mission statements; b) Behavioral elements. These are elements that become visible on the surface through daily behaviors and other forms such as organizational design and architecture. These elements are easily observable and interpreted, although sometimes not the same as the interpretation of those directly involved in the organization. The easiest way to identify organizational culture is by observing how members of the organization behave in their routines, and; c) Interconnection between idealistic and behavioral elements (Schein, 2004). The two elements, idealistic and behavioral, are not separate entities; they are an inseparable unity. The interconnection of these elements forms the culture. However, the behavioral element is more susceptible to change since it directly interacts with the external organizational environment (Heaperman & Sudweeks, 2021). On the other hand, the idealistic element rarely changes due to its hidden nature.

2. The Impact of Innovation in PAI Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

Based on the research data presented in the above exposition, the impact of implementing the Innovation in PAI Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills

(HOTS) is that students are more motivated to engage in positive activities, enhance their achievements, exhibit a high level of dedication, and develop critical and innovative thinking.

a) High Motivation

Every human being has needs that arise, and the level of enthusiasm depends on individual interests. Abraham Harold Maslow introduced the "Hierarchy of Needs Theory" to address the hierarchy of human needs. Maslow identified a sequence of increasing needs, including physiological needs, safety and job security needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. As observed from the impact felt by students due to the Innovation in PAI Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), they become more motivated to engage in positive activities. This can be seen in their daily adherence to the rules of the pesantren, even though it may be challenging. Their high motivation stems from their aspirations for future success and hopes for blessings from the kiyai (Islamic scholars) and the pesantren. Through the monthly tausiah (spiritual advice) delivered by the pengasuh (spiritual leader) and the routine study of kitab kuning (traditional Islamic texts) every morning and evening, positive effects are instilled in the students as a form of character education. Ustadzah Maknunah stated that the tausiah from the pengasuh and sharing with the pesantren's administrators motivate the students to engage in activities and follow the rules of the pesantren.

Motivation theories proposed by experts are divided into three categories; a) Need-based theories of motivation; b) Humanistic theories, and; c) Behavioristic theories (Rosi et al., 2022). Need-Based Theories suggests that humans are not content with fulfilling only one need; they are satisfied only when all their needs are met. Even when all needs are satisfied, they will pursue new needs. To fulfill these needs, individuals are motivated to achieve their desired outcomes, leading to temporary satisfaction. This cycle continues until the highest needs are satisfied (Jiang et al., 2021). Humanistic theory believes that there is only one motivation, which arises from the individual. This motivation is intrinsic to the individual at all times and in all places. What matters most, according to this theory, is respecting and valuing individuals as beings with potential and a desire to learn. Behavioristic theory contends that motivation is controlled by the environment. Motivated behavior occurs when the consequences of the behavior evoke emotions of pleasure or displeasure. If the consequences result in pleasure, the behavior becomes reinforced, but if they evoke displeasure, the behavior is abandoned (Prasetyono et al., 2018).

Martin Handoko lists six motivation theories, such as cognitive theory, hedonistic theory, instinct theory, psychoanalytic theory, equilibrium theory, and drive theory (Handoko, 1992). Cognitive theory based on rationality, humans are free to choose and

determine their actions, whether good or bad. Human behavior is determined solely by their thinking abilities. The more intelligent and educated a person is, the better their actions will be, and they consciously engage in actions to fulfill their needs. In hedonistic theory, all human actions, whether conscious or unconscious, driven by external or internal forces, fundamentally seek pleasurable experiences and avoid painful ones. Instinct theory posits that biological forces inherent since birth drive a person to act in certain ways (Hani, 2001). This biological force seems to compel an individual to behave in specific ways, approaching stimuli in specific ways. Psychoanalytic theory is a development of the instinct theory (Mundiri & Manshur, 2020). It acknowledges inherent forces within each individual, guiding and directing their behavior. Equilibrium theory that human behavior occurs due to an imbalance within the individual. In other words, humans always want to maintain equilibrium within themselves. And the last one is drive theory. This theory is essentially similar to the equilibrium theory but emphasizes a different aspect. While the equilibrium theory stresses the state of imbalance that creates a need to be fulfilled, the drive theory focuses on the factors that drive behavior (Hani, 2001).

Through the explanations of the theories above, it can be concluded that every human behavior and activity is driven by motives, desires, forces, and imbalances within individuals. These concepts then manifest as activities in accordance with the individual's will. Ultimately, these actions aim to fulfill life's needs and make decisions.

b) Independence

One of the impacts of the innovation in PAI learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is the development of independence among students. Students can solve the problems they encounter by learning through the organizational culture of the pesantren, both within the pesantren and in schools. This can be observed through the guidance provided by the administrators in the pesantren, which does not make students dependent, but rather encourages independence through guidance, mentorship, and support from their mentors in managing finances, conducting daily activities, and interacting with peers. This demonstrates that students' characters can develop well through the learning process within the pesantren system.

Character education does not merely aim to understand values, but to internalize these values within oneself to form a unique character or personality (Muhaimin, 1996; Mundiri, 2011). Independence can be realized through the learning process, imparting life skills to students, teaching leadership, entrepreneurship, and maintaining a proactive way of life instead of relying on instant solutions. Independence is an essential attitude for an individual to possess, ensuring that they do not always rely on others. This attitude can be instilled in individuals from a young age (Gallardo-Vázquez et al., 2020). In schools,

independence is crucial for students in the learning process. In the field of education, it is often referred to as self-directed learning. This attitude is necessary for every student to discipline themselves and take responsibility. According to Muhammad Ali and Muhammad Asrori, independence is defined as an internal strength within individuals and is acquired through individuation, which involves the realization of one's identity and the process towards perfection. Figures like Hamzah B. Uno define independence as the ability to direct and control one's own thinking and actions, without emotional dependence on others. In essence, an independent individual can work alone, takes responsibility, is confident, and does not rely on others (Uno, 2006).

c) Achievement

The presence of the Innovation in PAI Learning System based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in [place name] has a positive impact on the students. With their inherent motivation, the students possess great potential that allows them to explore knowledge and their individual capabilities. Through the learning system at the pesantren, the students achieve remarkable accomplishments. One example is the existence of rewards for those who excel, starting within the pesantren. Teachers and administrators at the pesantren consistently provide rewards to students who abide by the pesantren's regulations, exhibit high intellectual capacity, and demonstrate proficient skills. For instance, awards are given to exemplary students who win the General Champion of Pekan Madaris, recognition to the best organizers pesantren, and so on.

Butler and Winne state that learning based on self-regulation involves an individual's active effort to achieve planned learning goals using strategies that engage cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills (Andriani et al., 2018). Learning based on self-regulation entails self-management in the learning process, incorporating metacognitive abilities, motivation, and active behavior. The innovation of the PAI learning system based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) certainly receives criticism, feedback, and suggestions from various parties (Nugroho, 2011). However, these are essential for the pesantren to continually improve its services for the students, their parents, and the community, aligning with the founders' aspirations and the leadership's vision. This way, students can become rational actors in their respective communities, capable of managing their resources and potential for noble purposes, thereby fostering collective behavior that upholds humanistic values in society (Ahmadi, 2005; Hidayah et al., 2024).

Learning outcomes are divided into four categories; a) Knowledge, in the form of information, facts, ideas, beliefs, procedures, laws, rules, standards, and other concepts; b) Skills, in the form of the ability to analyze, reproduce, create, organize, summarize, generalize, think rationally, and adapt; c) Habits and skills, in the form of behavioral

habits and skills in utilizing all abilities, and d) Attitudes, in the form of appreciation, interests, and considerations (Nugroho, 2011).

From the above perspectives, it can be concluded that learning achievement is the result of a student's efforts, achieved through the mastery of knowledge, skills, habits, and attitudes after undergoing the learning process, which can be substantiated by test results. Learning achievement is an essential aspect for students to understand the capabilities they have acquired through the learning process.

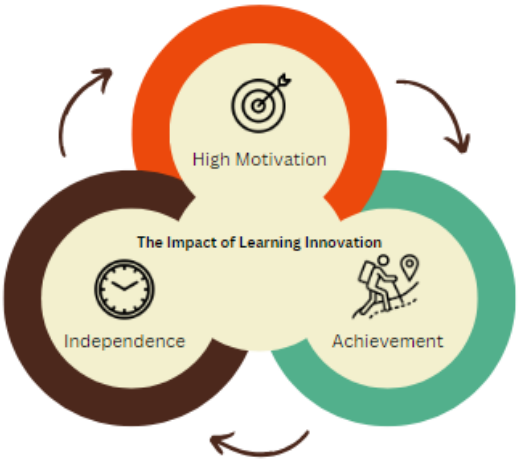


Figure 1: The Impact of Learning Innovation

Based on the research findings regarding as figure 1, that the impact of implementing the Innovation in PAI Learning System Based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), it can be concluded that this innovation has a significant positive impact on students. This impact includes increased student motivation, the development of independence, and high academic achievement. The implementation of the HOTS-based PAI learning innovation enhances student motivation. High motivation is driven by aspirations for future success and hopes for blessings from the kiyai (Islamic scholars) and the pesantren. Through monthly tausiah (spiritual advice) and regular study of kitab kuning (traditional Islamic texts), positive effects are instilled in students as a form of character education. Motivation theories, such as need-based theories and humanistic theories, suggest that humans are motivated to achieve their goals and seek satisfaction through their efforts (Arar & Nasra, 2020; Rosi et al., 2022).

The innovation also promotes the development of independence among students. They can solve problems they encounter by learning through the organizational culture of the pesantren. Independence is instilled through guidance from pesantren administrators, which encourages students to be self-reliant in managing finances, daily activities, and interactions with peers. Independence is a key aspect for students to take responsibility for their learning and in their lives. The most visible impact is high

academic achievement. Motivated and independent students tend to achieve better grades and demonstrate superior skills. In the context of self-regulation-based learning, students actively strive to achieve their learning goals through self-management, metacognitive skills, motivation, and active behavior. This means that students learn to manage their own learning and develop critical and innovative thinking skills. The HOTS-based PAI learning innovation has a significant impact on increasing student motivation, fostering independence, and achieving high academic success. This enables students to develop as higher-quality individuals and become rational actors in their communities. Consequently, education focused on character and achievement is strengthened, ultimately positively influencing society.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the innovation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning based on Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) is implemented through four interconnected strategies: habituation, indoctrination, the development of Furudhul 'Ainiyah, and the strengthening of organizational culture. These strategies collectively foster students' learning motivation, character development, and academic achievement, demonstrating that HOTS-oriented learning can be effectively integrated with the values and traditions of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). The findings further indicate that successful educational innovation extends beyond instructional methods and requires the alignment of curriculum, educators, students, learning resources, assessment practices, institutional support, and the hidden curriculum. Such integration creates a learning environment that not only develops higher-order thinking skills but also nurtures moral values, independence, and lifelong learning competencies.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing discourse on HOTS-based learning by demonstrating that constructivist learning principles can be contextualized within pesantren education through value-based pedagogical practices. Practically, the findings provide guidance for educational leaders and teachers seeking to integrate critical thinking, character education, and Islamic values into innovative learning systems. Future research is encouraged to examine the effectiveness of this innovation across different educational contexts and to employ mixed-methods or quantitative approaches to evaluate its long-term impact on students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes.

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