

HOTS Questions in Improving the Quality of Moral Faith Learning in Private Aliyah Madrasah, Bantul, Yogyakarta

Rusmayadi¹, Rusiyem², Rudik Handoko³

¹Universitas YPIB, Majalengka

²Universitas Sains Al-Qur'an, Wonosobo

³Sekolah Tinggi Islam Blambangan, Banyuwangi

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.xxxx/xxxx>

*Correspondence: Rusmayadi

Email: roesfarismumtaz@gmail.com

Received: March 07, 2025

Accepted: March 07, 2025

Published: March 09, 2025



Copyright: © 2024 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to find out how the role of HOTS questions in improving the quality of moral beliefs learning in Private Aliyah Madrasah, Bantul, Yogyakarta on students' critical thinking and analysis. The research method used in this article is a qualitative method with a case study approach. This method is suitable for analyzing in detail the difficulties experienced by educators and students during faith learning. Data collection was carried out through open communication with educators and students of Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta. The findings in this study show that students experienced a significant improvement in their ability to think critically and analytically. They are also more active in participating in discussions, more able to ask in-depth questions, and better able to understand different arguments in the context of learning. The limitations of this study are only conducted in Private Aliyah Madrasah, Bantul, Yogyakarta, so the results may not be fully generalizable for other madrasahs with different contexts. Further limitations are that the data generated from interviews and observations may not cover all perspectives of students and teachers.

Keywords: HOTS, Moral Beliefs, Learning, Character Education

Introduction

Human Resources (HR) are required to have three important abilities. The three important abilities include critical skills, creativity in the form of thinking, and understanding problems. These three abilities are referred to as HOTS (*Higher Order Thinking Skills*) abilities. The most important thing that needs to be done is to help the younger generation develop critical thinking, creative thinking, and survival skills in order to solve problems (Sani et al., 2020).

In general, in the field of education, HOTS can be applied because of the student's ability to maintain a high level of target and raise it further. As a result, some countries use HOTS as a non-evaluative component of classroom instruction (Masduriah, 2020; Musrikah, 2018). *Higher Order Thinking Skills* (HOTS) It was first introduced by Susan M. Brookhart, an author from Dusquance University, in a book titled "*How to Assess Higher-order Thinking Skillss in Your Classroom*" (Sofyan, 2019). In this book, Susan M. Brookhart defines the model as a tool for critical thinking, knowledge transfer, and problem-solving.

Through this literature, it can be concluded that HOTS is a high-level analysis. This is because the process of gathering information is related to complex problem-solving and involves analysis, evaluation, and hypothesis formulation (Dilah, 2023). In education, the instruments that can be used to improve high-level skills are through instruments that are based on HOTS and are not limited to just remembering or referencing without conducting analysis (Ariana & Bestary, 2018). In the field of education, HOTS will certainly be used to strengthen student confidence.

Learning evaluation should make students must be able to think critically. This is very much needed by the development of the times, especially in the current 21st century (Yoke et al., 2015). In education, critical thinking skills will be achieved through the medium of HOTS questions, so it is very important for teachers to understand in order to stimulate children's thinking skills (Ichsan et al., 2020). HOTS questions have a very important role because they can affect the accuracy and speed as well as the sharpness of students' thinking levels and increase the effectiveness of learning (Ramdiah et al., 2019). Through HOTS questions, students are also able to think creatively and be able to solve problems (Harta et al., 2020). Thus, it can be said that HOTS questions are one way to improve students' thinking skills and improve the quality of learning.

The quality of learning will certainly increase if students are able to achieve learning goals well. Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta is one of the schools that has implemented HOTS questions based on students' sharpness, but in its implementation whether learning with HOTS is able to improve the quality of learning at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta is not fully known. This is because there has been no research that discusses this problem in the learning carried out at Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta. Therefore, through this research, the researcher will try to reveal how the role of HOTS problem-based learning in Private Aliyah Madrasah, Bantul, Yogyakarta is able to improve the quality of student learning, but this research is only limited to learning Akidah Akhlak.

Methodology

The type of research used in this study is qualitative research with a research approach through case studies. Qualitative research is a type of research that examines an event and its development, where the data collected is informational for example information about curriculum vitae and other matters related to the research topic (Pohan, 2007). Qualitative research is also sometimes interpreted as a research whose results are in the form of text or description, but sometimes it can also be in the form of words that come from the mouth of a person who is asked for information (Lexy, 2005).

In a shorter sense, a case study is something that makes researchers have to explore a case or phenomenon in a certain activity, then the researcher will collect data in detail and depth using data collection procedures (Creswell, 1998). The case study approach is preferred in qualitative research, this is as Patton said that the depth of a qualitative research comes from case studies (Patton, 1991).

In this study, a case study was carried out to study the schools that will be used as research sites, namely: Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta. The samples in this study are: PAI teachers, and students of Private Madrasah Aliyah, Bantul, Yogyakarta. In more detail, each indormant is assigned the following code:

Table 1 List of Research Informants

Report	Code
PAI Teacher	R1
Student 1	A1
Student 2	A2
Student 3	A3
Student 1	B1
Student 2	B2

The data collection technique used in this study is through 3 ways, namely: Observation, Interview, Documentation. The data analysis is carried out by covering several stages, including: *Data Reduction*, in this stage the researcher summarizes the results of the interview, *Data Display* in this stage the researcher presents data with clear and interesting descriptions then ends with *Conclusion Drawing/Verification* which is the process of drawing conclusions (Milles & Huberman, 2014).

Result and Discussion

Learning Moral Beliefs

Learning is closely related to learning and teaching. In the learning process, there must be those who teach and those who learn. Hamalik emphasized that the meaning of learning is never separated from the meaning of learning (Hamalik, 2011). Learning is also interpreted as a process or way that makes a person able to learn (Pusat Pembinaan Pengembangan Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2006).

Akidah comes from the Arabic word "aqd" which means binding, meaning to bind the heart to it. Faith is what a person believes, faith is the act of the heart which is often said to be the heart's trust in his learning in everything, some experts also often define faith as a view or a conclusion of a doctrine that is believed by a person's heart (Fauzan, 2016).

The word akhlak comes from the Arabic language, namely *khalaqa* which means to create or create. Morals in Arabic discussion are the plural form of the word "*khuluqun*" which means ethics or character (Bisri, 1999). According to Muhammad Husain Abdullah revealed that morals are traits that are recommended by Allah to be possessed by every Muslim in every activity he carries out. These qualities can be seen in the behavior of a Muslim when he performs worship, interacts socially (muamalah), and carries out various other activities (Abdullah, 2001).

Through the various definitions above, it can be concluded that learning moral beliefs is a learning process that is oriented towards the trust of a person's heart and also related to a person's nature, this will be reflected through a combination of good social interaction funds and good faith in carrying out worship and relating to God. A good faith and morals possessed

by an individual will make him more loved and easier to interact with the people around him because an individual's faith and morals show his attitude of belief and temperament that can be felt by others (Ginanjar & Kurniawati, 2017).

Learning faith and morals that can show a person's beliefs and temperament is considered quite important to achieve the goals of their learning. Moral beliefs which are the scope of Islamic Religious Education must always strive to make a student able to understand, appreciate and even realize his learning in daily life (Syafrin et al., 2023). Through learning faith and morals, a student will be formed his beliefs and temperament in living a good life, this is then said to be the purpose of the implementation of learning.

HOTS Questions in Improving the Quality of Learning

The method of giving HOTS questions in learning is a fairly high-level learning. HOTS questions are a method of achieving a higher accuracy when compared to simply stating facts, or establishing a problem. In the HOTS question method, students are sought to be able to think critically and solve problems given in questions in the form of question granules (Nugroho, 2018). HOTS problem-based learning is characterized by activities in the curriculum that encourage students to become creative thinkers and improve their ability to analyze, evaluate, and create, this in Bloom's Taxonomy is known as the level of thinking level in the cognitive realm (Suyatno et al., 2023).

Thinking level activities will certainly take place during the learning process. A learning process that presents information for students to understand and then uses it as analysis material and is developed to achieve the goal (Thobroni, 2016) is an activity that involves a high level of thought. This high-level thinking process makes the provision of HOTS questions highly recommended to be given to students because it involves analytical skills in solving difficult problems (Tanujaya, 2016). Thus, it can be said that the problem-solving process will be stimulated during the learning process before the questions are given, this aims to make students accustomed to thinking and analyzing.

HOTS aims to involve students' thinking more critically and creatively to solve given problems. A student who has high-level thinking skills must be able to analyze, connect, unravel and be able to interpret problems in order to obtain a new idea and new ideas. HOTS is a series of cognitive thinking in Bloom's Taxonomy that is at the level of analyzing, evaluating, and creating (Saraswati & Agustika, 2020). At the cognitive level of the Bloom Taxonomy, we can know if the goal of HOTS is to make students more creative.

In giving HOTS questions, of course, a teacher cannot give them carelessly. There are several characteristics that must be met so that the questions given can be said to have reached the HOTS level. The characteristics that are intended and must be met according to the Ministry of Education and Culture are as follows:

1. Measure high-level thinking skills.
2. Divergent (allows for different answers).
3. Use multipresentation.
4. Based on Contextual Problems.
5. Using various forms of questions (Setiawati et al., 2019).

The characteristics of HOTS questions that are well fulfilled will make students able to think critically and creatively. The effectiveness of HOTS questions in improving the quality of learning is also studied by many researchers, for example research conducted by Abdul Razak who said that HOTS questions improve students' literacy skills (Razak et al., 2021) or research conducted by Ruth Angelya which states that the use of HOTS questions has a significant influence on students' cognitive learning outcomes (Hutapea et al., 2022). This generally shows that there is an influence of HOTS questions on students' thinking skills.

Learning Moral Beliefs at Private Aliyah Madrasah, Bantul, Yogyakarta

Learning moral beliefs is the learning of behavior and efforts that are made consciously to prepare students in meaningful learning, and provide experiences for students. Morals are the basic foundation of a self-character. So that becoming a person with good morals will later become part of a good society as well. Morals in Islam also have absolute value because the perception between good and bad morals has a value that can be applied to any condition. This is in accordance with human nature which places morality as the keeper of human existence as the most noble creature (Ahmad Syafi'i, 2005).

In learning moral beliefs related to faith and behavior, students' ability to activate their critical minds is very necessary. Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta, in the implementation of moral beliefs learning has implemented HOTS questions both in discussions and in the details of exam questions, this is sought so that students are able to have critical reasoning and get a learning experience that is in accordance with expectations.

According to the R1 informant, the application of HOTS questions in the subject of faith is very important in education, where the topics offered are not monotonous, the example given in activating critical reasoning is through the phenomena that occur around us today, in the interview session he gave an example of the phenomenon of the rain handler which had gone viral some time ago for him this is related to faith so that students must be able to think critically and question this phenomenon in aspects This can also be used as a subject for discussion, especially if students actively follow the news and have knowledge from the various books they read (R1, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

Furthermore, the application of HOTS learning will also improve the quality of student learning, according to the teacher who acts as an informant, he has long invited students to discuss various problems that require critical power in answering them, this makes students more hone their communication and reasoning skills in answering the questions given, of course, this also makes them will read more books (R1, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

The same thing was also conveyed by all students who participated in the learning of the Moral Faith, they stated that in learning there are a lot of questions that require reasoning in answering them, both in exam questions and in questions given as learning discussions, students feel that if they do not find the answer to this question directly in the book by reading, they are required to understand the content of the reading they read, then they relate it to The question being asked (B2, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

In dealing with HOTS questions, of course, the desired answer is often not found directly if you do not understand the content of the reading in a complex way. This makes some students overwhelmed in participating in learning which is considered very difficult for them, this is also conveyed by students who are informants with a narrative that states that learning faith with teachers who use questions like this will be very difficult (A3, personal communication, October 15, 2024), However, students generally expressed their love for this learning because it was wrong and true and not "pakem", they were free to elaborate on the various answers they had in the description question sheets given during the exam (A2, personal communication, October 15, 2024), As for the difficult ones if the questions are multiple-choice because they often misunderstand and are often deceived (B1, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

In developing HOTS questions, of course, the teacher's ability to string words into the details of the question is very much needed, so that it does not become a multi-interpretation in understanding the desired meaning of the question. The obstacle experienced by teachers in developing HOTS questions is the incompatibility of what the teacher intends with what is the student's understanding in answering the questions, this is often found when the exam is different from the face-to-face discussion which runs more flexibly (R1, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

The difficulty of an educator in developing HOTS questions is not a new thing, this is often complained about by teachers in developing problems that are integrated with the Bloom Taxonomy (Pratiwi et al., 2019) Although HOTS is the type of assessment and learning that Santa recommends (Munah & Ramlah, 2020) Still, such problems often occur. Students of Madrasah Aliyah Swasta, Bantul, Yogyakarta also agreed that in interpreting this HOTS question they sometimes misinterpret the meaning so that it results in the wrong answer they choose, but this is certainly different if it is a descriptive question, (A1, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

Furthermore, in improving learning, the researcher found facts in the field if students slowly improve the quality of faith learning value from year to year, the researcher found that the report of the value of one class started from class X until the class is now in grade XII the score is increasing (Peneliti, 2024), However, the assessment cannot be shown because it is a confidential school document that must be kept private. Furthermore, this was also conveyed by the teacher that students by being given questions and learning that HOTS felt to increase their knowledge because they competed in discussions to answer and they were also getting used to analyzing questions (R1, personal communication, October 15, 2024).

Conclusion

The application of HOTS questions is very important in faith education to develop students' character and morals. The application of HOTS can improve the quality of faith education even though there are shortcomings, such as poor student understanding and teachers' difficulties in making questions that are not multi-interpreted. However, in general, the implementation of learning with HOTS questions both in exams and discussions has been able to improve students' abilities.

References

- Abdullah, M. H. (2001). *Studi Dasar Pemikiran Islam*. Pustaka Thariqul Izzah.
- Agung, wijaya. (2024, October 15). Hasil wawancara dengan siswa MAS [Personal communication].
- Ahmad Syafi'i, M. (2005). *Kuliah Akhlak (7th ed.)*. LPPI.
- Ariana, Y., & Bestary, R. (2018). *Buku pegangan pembelajaran berorientasi pada keterampilan berpikir tingkat tinggi*. Kemendikbud. Kemendikbud.
- Ayuna, D. (2024, October 15). Hasil wawancara dengan siswi MAS [Personal communication].
- Bisri, A. (1999). *Kamus IndonesiaArab, Arab-Indonesia Al-Bisri*. Pustaka Progresif.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Tradition*. Sage publications.
- Dilah, S. (2023). PERAN PEMBELAJARAN IPA BERBASIS HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS (HOTS) DI SD KELAS TINGGI ERA SOCIETY 5.0. *Pendas : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 8(2), Article 2. <https://doi.org/10.23969/jp.v8i2.10022>
- Fatimah, Z. (2024, October 15). Hasil wawancara dengan siswi MAS [Personal communication].
- Fauzan, S. (2016). *Kitab Tauhid-1*. Darul Haq.
- Ginanjari, M. H., & Kurniawati, N. (2017). Pembelajaran Akidah Akhlak dan Korelasinya Dengan Peningkatan Akhlak al-Karimah Peserta Didik. *Edukasi Islami: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6(02), Article 02. <https://doi.org/10.30868/ei.v6i12.181>
- Hamalik, O. (2011). *Proses Belajar Mengajar*. Bulan Bintang.
- Harta, J., Rasuh, N. T., & Seriang, A. (2020). Using HOTS-Based Chemistry National Exam Questions to Map the Analytical Abilities of Senior High School Students. *Journal of Science Learning*, 3(3), 143–148. <https://doi.org/10.17509/jsl.v3i3.22387>

- Hutapea, R. A., Sijabat, A., & Sitinjak, E. K. (2022). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Problem Based Learning Berbasis Hots Terhadap Hasil Belajar Kognitif Fisika Siswa SMA negeri 5 Pematang Siantar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Konseling (JPDK)*, 4(6), 3839–3848. <https://doi.org/10.31004/jpdk.v4i6.8831>
- Ichsan, I. Z., Rahmayanti, H., Purwanto, A., Sigit, D. V., Irwandani, I., Ali, A., Susilo, S., Kurniawan, E., & Rahman, M. M. (2020). COVID-19 Outbreak on Environment: Profile of Islamic University Students in HOTS-AEP-COVID-19 and PEB-COVID-19. *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Tarbiyah*, 5(1), 167–178.
- Indra, setia. (2024, October 15). Hasil wawancara dengan siswa MAS [Personal communication].
- Lexy, J. M. (2005). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Masduriah, H. (2020). Pengaruh penggunaan model pembelajaran PBL terhadap keterampilan HOTS siswa SD. *Prosiding Konferensi Ilmiah Dasar*, 2(0), Article 0.
- Milles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis, A Methods Sourceboo* (R. Tjeptjep, Trans.; 3rd ed.). Sage publications.
- Munah, S. M., & Ramlah, R. (2020). Analisis Buku Teks Siswa SMP Kelas VIII Pokok Bahasan Teorema Pythagoras Ditinjau dari Taksonomi Bloom. *Prosiding Sesiomadika*, 2(1d), Article 1d. <https://journal.unsika.ac.id/sesiomadika/article/view/2559>
- Musrikah, M. (2018). Higher Order Thingking Skill (Hots) untuk Anak Sekolah Dasar dalam Pembelajaran Matematika. *Martabat*, 2(2), 339–360. <https://doi.org/10.21274/martabat.2018.2.2.339-360>
- Mustofa, R. (2024, October 15). Hasil wawancara dengan guru MAS [Personal communication].
- Nugroho, A. (2018). *Higher Order Thinking Skills*. PT Gramedia Widiasarana.
- Patton, M. Q. (1991). *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. Sage publications.
- Peneliti, O. (2024). Hasil Observasi Peneliti pada rapor siswa IPA 1 kelas X hingga XII.
- Pohan, R. (2007). *Metodologi Penelitian Pendidikan*. Lanarka Publisher.
- Pratiwi, S. N., Cari, C., & Aminah, N. S. (2019). Pembelajaran IPA Abad 21 dengan Literasi Sains Siswa. *Jurnal Materi dan Pembelajaran Fisika*, 9(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.20961/jmpf.v9i1.31612>
- Pusat Pembinaan Pengembangan Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. (2006). *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Balai Pustaka.
- Ramdiah, S., Abidinsyah, Royani, M., & Husamah. (2019). Understanding, Planning, and Implementation of HOTS by Senior High School Biology Teachers in Banjarmasin-Indonesia. *International Journal of Instruction*, 12(1), 425–440.
- Razak, A., Santosa, T. A., Lufri, L., & Zulyusri, Z. (2021). Meta-Analisis: Pengaruh Soal HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skill) Terhadap Kemampuan Literasi Sains dan Lesson Study Siswa Pada Materi Ekologi dan Lingkungan Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Bioedusiana: Jurnal Pendidikan Biologi*, 6(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.37058/bioed.v6i1.2930>
- Sani, M. M. R., Meha, A. M., & Nenotek, S. A. (2020). Penerapan Model Siklus Belajar 5E Untuk Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berpikir Tingkat Tinggi (HOTS) Siswa di SMP Adhyaksa 2 Kupang Tahun Ajaran 2018/2019. *Jurnal Sains Dan Edukasi Sains*, 3(1), 15–23. <https://doi.org/10.24246/juses.v3i1p15-23>
- Saraswati, P. M. S., & Agustika, G. N. S. (2020). Kemampuan Berpikir Tingkat Tinggi Dalam Menyelesaikan Soal HOTS Mata Pelajaran Matematika. *Jurnal Ilmiah Sekolah Dasar*, 4(2), 257. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jisd.v4i2.25336>
- Setiawati, W., Oktavia, A., Yoki, A., Reisky, B., & Pudjiastuti, A. (2019). *Buku penilaian berorientasi higher order thinking skills*. Direktorat Jenderal Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.

- Sofyan, F. A. (2019). IMPLEMENTASI HOTS PADA KURIKULUM 2013. *INVENTA: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 3(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.36456/inventa.3.1.a1803>
- Suyatno, Juharmi, I., & Susilowati, W. W. (2023). Teori Belajar & Pembelajaran Berorientasi Higher Order Thinking Skills. K-Media.
- Syafrin, Y., Kamal, M., Arifmiboy, A., & Husni, A. (2023). Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam. *Educativo: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 2(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.56248/educativo.v2i1.111>
- Tanujaya, B. (2016). Development of an Instrument to Measure Higher Order Thinking Skills in Senior High School Mathematics Instruction. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(21), 144–148.
- Thobroni. (2016). Belajar dan Pembelajaran Teori dan Praktik. Ar-Ruzz Media.
- Yoke, S., Hasan, N., Jangga, R., & Kamal, S. N.-I. M. (2015). Innovating with HOTS for the ESL Reading Class. *English Language Teaching*, 8(8), Article 8. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n8p10>