

Internalisation Of Constructivism Theory In Islamic Religious Education Learning

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Abstract. *The internalisation of constructivism theory in the learning process highlights the main problems that are still often encountered in the world of education, namely the tendency of PAI teachers to position students as passive recipients of knowledge and conventional ways of learning. This research uses the literature study method by examining various scientific sources related to constructivism theory and its implementation in learning. The results showed that constructivism in PAI places students as active subjects who construct knowledge through experience and interaction, while the teacher acts as a facilitator who guides the critical and reflective thinking process. This approach has advantages in encouraging independence, creativity, and deeper understanding in students, but also faces challenges in the form of time requirements, teacher readiness, and limited resources in large classes. This research confirms the importance of applying constructivism to create meaningful learning that is relevant to learners' needs, while recommending the need for teacher training and adjustments to the learning environment so that this approach can be implemented optimally.*

Keyword: *Learning, Constructivism, Islamic Education*

INTRODUCTION

Learning is essentially an active process undertaken by learners, not an activity that is imposed or unilaterally assigned to them. In this framework, learners act as constructive agents who actively process information and construct meaning, rather than passive recipients of external stimuli or objects of indoctrination. Therefore, the role of educators is not enough to transmit knowledge directly, but must encourage learners to independently build understanding through deep cognitive engagement. Ideal learning activities include active participation of learners in various stages, such as formulating problems, developing solutions, evaluating these solutions, asking critical questions about the results obtained, and observing and analysing the work of peers (Hasan, 2021). Thus, learning that is oriented towards knowledge construction through the active participation of students

will produce a deeper and more meaningful understanding, as well as support the internalisation of concepts more fully and (Saputra & Muqowim, 2024).

Islamic Religious Education is one of the subjects that functions to shape the character of students to have a religious personality and noble character. In its implementation, Islamic Religious Education is not enough to be delivered textually and dogmatically. Rather, an approach that is able to build students' understanding thoroughly and contextually is needed. Some of today's problems are the preparation of an educator who is the owner of knowledge and must transfer his knowledge to students often ignores the strategies or methods used for the process of transferring knowledge (Hawwin Muzakki, 2021). Religion today is not only something that is considered normal, in many educational institutions that implement religious education patterns as a means of shaping the personality and character of students, this is reflected in the number of schools that have begun to adapt religious activities in the implementation of their learning. Islamic Education should not only aim to provide religious knowledge as a basis for students in life more deeply to form a critical and reflective character in order to face the daily reality, sadly when the method or approach used is still conventional without integration with other learning theories, this triggers a gap in cognitive and affective responses between students which results in poor results from teaching and learning activities (Mandar & Sihono, 2025).

Conventional learning models where students tend to be positioned as passive objects in the learning process are still found in many educational practices in various institutions. In a traditional classroom environment, the teacher's dominance is one-way, where the process of delivering material is done directly without a balanced interaction space. This approach is based on the assumption that knowledge is static and absolute, which must be mastered by students as a whole without the need for a critical attitude or reassessment of the information provided by the teacher (Masgumelar & Mustafa, 2021).

In this framework, the teacher's role is more orientated towards information transfer, while learners are placed as recipients of knowledge who are not given the opportunity to explore concepts through discussion or critical reflection. As a result, analytical thinking and scientific thinking skills that are essential for the development of science literacy are often neglected. In addition, the assumption that all learners have a uniform background knowledge and equal understanding ability is also a weakness of this approach, because it ignores the diversity of individual learning characteristics and needs (Hawwin Muzakki, 2021).

The approach to learning is considered as a way to maximise the process of knowledge transfer carried out by educators which includes various aspects that are considered based on the needs and abilities of students. Referring to the old way of learning initiated by Ki Hajar Dewantara as the Father of Indonesian Education, the use of students' mindset as a good way of learning. The term constructivist is commonly used to describe this way of learning where students are asked to respond based on their critical thinking and teachers become facilitators for learning activities (Nasional, 2020).

METHOD

This research was conducted using the literature study method, which traces and reviews various reference sources that discuss constructivism learning theory and its application in the learning process. The aim is to find the connection between various existing thoughts and formulate the essence of the theory. Data was collected from a variety of sources, both print such as books and scientific journals, as well as from digital sources that can be accessed online. The type of data collected is qualitative, in the form of quotations of opinions or research results from relevant authors and used as study material in this study. The data analysis process is carried out through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The data reduction stage was carried out by selecting information that was considered relevant for further analysis. The information that has been filtered is then presented in the form of a concise description to facilitate understanding. The final stage in the form of drawing conclusions is based on the meaning of the data that has been arranged systematically (Fauzi, 2022).

FINDINGS

1. Theory

Broadly speaking, a theory can be understood as a set of propositions that are logically connected and organised according to certain syntactic rules. The relationship between these propositions allows the theory to explain and predict various phenomena that can be observed empirically. In other words, theory is the result of systematic thinking that is organised based on the principles of logic and rationality, so that it can be accepted reasonably by the scientific community in general. According to Snelbecker, theory building is not only important, but also a crucial element in the advancement of psychology and education. Without a clear theoretical foundation, it is difficult for both fields to develop and solve the various problems that arise in them. Based on this view, it can be understood that theory plays a central role in education.

Through the existence of theory, the direction and development of education can run systematically and purposefully. Conversely, the absence of theory in educational practice is very likely to hinder the progress that should be achieved (Marliyah, 2021).

Snelbecker Snelbecker argues that theory has an important role in helping to solve various problems that arise in the field of education. Given the complexity and number of challenges faced, both within the realm of education and outside of this context, a theoretical framework is needed that can provide appropriate solutions. Thus, it is clear that theory is not just a conceptual idea, but a strategic foundation that is needed to encourage progress and renewal in the world of education (Suparlan, 2019).

2. Constructivism in Learning

Constructivism learning theory means that learning is not just an activity that a person undergoes, but an active process in which individuals build and compose their own knowledge through their personal experiences. According to Tran Vui, constructivism is an approach to learning that is based on the direct experience of each individual. In this context, constructivism theory provides space for everyone to develop their pre-existing knowledge and skills. The term "constructivism" itself comes from the English to construct and its Latin root *construere*, which means to arrange or form a certain structure. Constructivism also teaches that a person who is learning can fulfil their own needs through active efforts to find what is needed, with support from the surrounding environment. This approach emphasises the importance of learner involvement in discovering and transforming complex information into simpler forms, until finally the information really becomes part of their own understanding (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024).

The view of constructivism states that knowledge is formed through the active involvement of individuals in building their framework, which is born from direct interaction with their environment. This cognitive process occurs when a person organises his experiences into a structure of understanding that he forms himself. The framework of understanding is not fixed, but needs to be updated and adjusted continuously with the dynamics of the environment in which the individual is located. Over time, knowledge develops through this process of continuous adjustment. In the constructivist approach, learning is understood as an active process, where learners take the lead role in shaping their understanding. They are required to take responsibility for the learning process. Therefore, the full involvement of students, both in the form of creativity and learning activities, becomes very important so that they are able to

build their thinking skills independently. The learning process in this framework also emphasises the importance of social interaction, such as discussions between students, as a means to jointly find solutions to various problems encountered in learning activities (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024).

3. Figures of Constructivism

According to Vygotsky, the learning process is a developmental stage of understanding that moves from spontaneous understanding to the mastery of more systematic and scientific concepts. This idea underpins the sociocultural approach, which emphasises that learning activities are strongly influenced by the social and cultural context in which individuals find themselves. In this view, understanding is formed through a person's active involvement in various social practices that apply in their environment. Activities such as classroom discussions, group work, and daily interactions are considered part of structured cultural experiences, which allow individuals to build their knowledge through these social processes (Luthfiyani et al., 2025).

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, is an important figure who contributed greatly to the development of constructivism theory. He argued that the process of knowledge formation occurs through two main mechanisms: assimilation and accommodation. In this process, a person integrates new information into their pre-existing knowledge and adjusts their thinking structure to better understand the environment. One of the main ideas in Piaget's theory is that children's thinking abilities develop through certain stages that differ at each age. Each stage reflects a distinctive way of thinking according to their level of development. Piaget also strongly emphasises the importance of children's direct involvement in learning experiences, because it is through real experiences that they can build a deeper understanding of the world around them (Suparlan, 2019).

John Dewey, an American philosopher and educator, is widely known for his thoughts on education based on direct experience. He argued that the ideal learning process should depart from the concrete experiences of students and be closely related to their real-life situations. Dewey believed that deep understanding would be achieved if students were actively involved in learning activities, for example through explorative activities, problem solving, or hands-on practice (Saputra & Muqowim, 2024).

According to Shymansky, constructivism is an approach to learning that emphasises students' active involvement in the process of building their own understanding. In this approach, students do not only act as recipients of information, but are also required to find the

meaning of the material they learn by connecting it to their prior knowledge or experience. This approach provides ample opportunities for learners to explore and understand concepts in depth, and apply them in everyday life. Thus, constructivism not only encourages mastery of the material, but also fosters the ability to think critically, creatively, and real application of theory in the surrounding environment (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024).

DISCUSSION

1. Constructivism in Learning

The term constructivism is rooted in the word constructive, which according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary means building, repairing, and fostering. In English, the word constructive refers to something that is constructive (the one who builds). In psychology, constructive refers to the process of forming new ideas (thoughts that produce new conclusions). Meanwhile, in the philosophy of education, constructivism is interpreted as an effort to create a modern cultural system. In terminology, constructivistic theory is an approach that focuses on shaping thinking to produce fresh and cutting-edge ideas or conclusions.

The theory of constructivism has been widely recognised in education. However, before understanding its application in more depth, it is important to know its theoretical basis first. The essence of constructivism is the process of building. In the context of educational philosophy, constructivism is a step to form a cultured life order in accordance with the times. Therefore, constructivism is seen as a theory that emphasises the formation of understanding and the ability to learn actively. Through an approach that fosters the spirit of building, students are expected to be more actively involved in the learning process (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024).

Knowledge formation requires active involvement from learners. They need to think critically, formulate concepts, and give meaning to what they are learning. However, the most decisive factor for successful learning still comes from the students' own motivation and intention to learn. On the other hand, the teacher acts as a facilitator in the constructivistic approach, not as a direct contributor of knowledge. The teacher's main task is to assist and guide students in building their own understanding. Therefore, teachers need to have a deep understanding of how students think and learn. In the view of constructivism, the process of acquiring knowledge does not solely take place in one direction from teacher to student. Instead, students are required to be actively and

cognitively involved in forming their knowledge structure, according to their level of intellectual development.

Constructivistic learning models emphasise the importance of process, giving students the freedom to explore knowledge, and encouraging them to form understanding through personal experience. In this approach, learners are at the centre of learning and they are given the space to develop their skills and take responsibility for their learning outcomes. Hands-on experiences, such as experiments in the laboratory or open discussions in the classroom, become the core elements of learning. This experiential learning approach allows students to adapt to various situations through direct involvement, which then generates new ideas as a result of reflection on the experience. Therefore, it is important to create a learning environment that is authentic, socially meaningful, and encourages students to actively construct their knowledge through a creative and imaginative process (Azzahra et al., 2025).

2. Principles of Constructivism

According to Wheatley's view in constructivistic learning theory, there are two main ideas that influence how people learn. Firstly, learners acquire knowledge either actively or passively through their cognitive structures. Secondly, their thought processes are formed and developed through their own real experiences. Meanwhile, Twomey Fosnot explains that constructivism rests on four important foundations. Firstly, the learning process is strongly influenced by the prior knowledge that individuals already have, which will then be adjusted to new ideas that arise. Secondly, learning is an active process of discovering and shaping ideas. Thirdly, learning involves revisiting old ideas that may be replaced by new understandings. Fourth, deeper understanding occurs when there is opposition or incompatibility between old ideas and new ideas, so that students are encouraged to form more relevant conclusions (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024).

In Wray and Lewis' view, there are four main principles underlying this theory in the context of learning. Firstly, students need to have basic knowledge before understanding new material, and need to be helped to connect old knowledge with new clearly. Secondly, social interaction and group discussion play an important role in learning, and the extent of teacher involvement needs to be regulated. Thirdly, while relevant learning contexts are important, it is also important to realise that what the teacher considers relevant may not

necessarily be relevant to learners. Fourth, learners should be encouraged to continuously realise and develop their reflective thinking skills. (Azizah Siti Lathifah et al., 2024).

In order for the learning process to be truly meaningful, a learning approach is needed that not only conveys material, but is also able to foster new ideas and encourage significant changes in learners. One of the characteristics of effective learning is when students are actively involved in learning activities, feel curious, and enjoy the process of creating and building their own understanding. In practice, teachers need to understand the principle that learning will be more effective if learners learn through direct experience (learning by doing), not just by listening to explanations. The essence of constructivistic theory is that learners are considered to truly understand a material when they are able to teach it back to others. In other words, mastery of material is not only measured by how much information is received, but by the extent to which students are able to internalise and share that understanding with the surrounding environment (Azzahra et al., 2025).

3. Scope

Constructivism emerged in response to new demands in education, which wanted students to be actively involved in designing and initiating their own learning process. In the view of constructivists, the reality of everyday life shows that knowledge is actually within the individual who is trying to understand something. Knowledge cannot simply be transferred from a teacher's mind to a student's mind. Each student must interpret the material provided based on his or her personal experience. As asserted by Lorsch and Tobin (1992), the learning process involves adjusting the information received with the experiences that students already have. Therefore, constructivism rejects the concept that knowledge can be transferred directly from one person to another.

Instead, each individual is responsible for the processing of the information he or she acquires, and from there a new understanding is formed. Knowledge is not only the result of internal processes, but also formed in social interactions carried out in the learning environment. For this reason, the constructivistic learning approach emphasises the importance of students' ability to build their own understanding. Each learner needs to be able to activate their psychological and mental potential so that the learning process becomes meaningful and develops according to their individual abilities and experiences (M. Mulyadi, 2022).

The essence of this theory lies in the view that knowledge is actively constructed by individuals based on experience, rather than being passively received from outside. Therefore, learning does not only focus on the end result in the form of material mastery, but rather emphasises the internal processes experienced by learners as they construct meaning. The scope of constructivism includes how to think, how to understand information, as well as how students adapt new knowledge to pre-existing understanding. In addition, this theory places students as the main subject in the learning process, so the role of the teacher shifts to a facilitator or companion who helps students explore knowledge independently. Learning within a constructivistic framework also includes the importance of social context, collaboration, reflection and exploration in the learning process. Thus, constructivism not only includes cognitive aspects, but also involves affective and social aspects in the formation of knowledge (Zahroh, 2023).

4. Cons and Cons of Constructivism Learning

In the view of constructivism, teachers and students are involved together in creating knowledge, interpreting meaning, seeking deeper understanding, being critical, and making judgements on the information obtained. The learning process aims to help individuals develop the right way of thinking by providing space for them to think independently (M. Mulyadi, 2022). The advantages of internalising the theory of constructivism are as follows

Firstly, the teacher is not the only source of knowledge in the learning process. The role of the teacher is more as a guide or facilitator who provides direction and provides various learning tools for students. Secondly, students are expected to be active and creative learners. Third, meaningful learning is when students do not just passively receive information, but are able to connect it with their own life experiences, whether obtained from friends, family, mass media, or from the surrounding social life. Fourth, students are given space for freedom in learning. Fifth, each individual has a different way of learning, and this difference must be respected and used as a basis in assisting their learning process. Sixth, teachers play a role in designing experiences that encourage the formation of new knowledge, while students focus on how to solve problems and make decisions based on the knowledge they build themselves (Azzahra et al., 2025).

The advantages that arise from the theory applied can have a positive impact on the learning process carried out, however, there are some shortcomings in the view of constructivism, including first, students are directed to develop material based on experience

so it takes a relatively long time to be meaningful second, the teacher acts as a facilitator who requires being ready with various solutions to student problems of course the teacher must be truly professional third, this view emphasises that the environment has an important role in learning from experience so how to create a good environment needs to be studied in depth fourth, adaptation to the transformation of approaches in learning so that both teachers or students are said to be equally learning based on experience (Azzahra et al., 2025).

5. Internalisation of Constructivism in Islamic Education

Nowadays, Islamic Religious Education is echoed as a subject that has an impact on the personality and daily life of students, it is inseparable from how teachers direct students and the integration of various theories in learning. A concrete example of the internalisation of constructivism is the discovery learning model where students are required to develop knowledge and exploration of the material obtained so that the ability to think critically and respond to stimulus can be well developed.

The ability to think critically can be done through discussions about issues in society, religious moderation and textual understanding of the material. These activities can be complemented by projects such as religious dramas, making material animations and short films, in the view of constructivism, some of these strategies can trigger critical reactions from students based on experience because they do not just understand contextual material but also practice according to events so that the reaction to the stimulus in the form of student projects explores to expand understanding of the material (Mandar & Sihono, 2025).

The application of constructivism theory in PAI learning provides a new strategy for teachers in delivering knowledge, not only through conventional methods but students are directed to be more interactive and active instead of just listening to explanations. Something interesting is the view that PAI as a dogmatic subject in the presence of constructivism provides a deep and contextual understanding to students, critical thinking has the effect of readiness for students to face the real world reality. This arises because the habit of analysing and exploring lessons based on experience makes students able to adjust daily events and relate them in a religious context, so that in the future it is hoped that students will be able to face the challenges of the times with good personality and morals according to religious guidance.

CONCLUSION

Constructivism is a learning theory that views that knowledge is not simply given by teachers to students, but is built by students themselves through experience, interaction, and active involvement in the learning process. In this approach, students are encouraged to think critically, connect new knowledge with previous experience, and play an active role in finding and interpreting information. The teacher in this case functions as a facilitator who helps students develop understanding, not just as a single source of information. The advantages of constructivism lie in its ability to foster learning independence, creativity and critical thinking skills in students, so that learning becomes more meaningful and relevant to real life. However, this approach also has its drawbacks, such as requiring more time and preparation, and not always easy to implement in classes with large numbers of students or students who are not used to learning independently. Nonetheless, constructivism remains one of the most effective approaches for building deep understanding and 21st century skills in learners. In education, constructivism theory asserts that learning is an active activity where learners construct their own knowledge through experience, social interaction and critical reflection.

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