ABSTRACT: This study explores the perspectives and implementation of social constructivism in the context of Islamic Education learning in State Senior High Schools in Palu City. The research method applied is a qualitative multi-case study. Data was gathered through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis. Interviews involve two school principals and fifteen Islamic education teachers from two State Senior High Schools. The data was then analyzed using thematic analysis. This study found that the paradigm of the school principals demonstrates an understanding and support that needs improvement to delve into and precisely support the theory of social constructivism in the teaching of Islamic religious education. Nonetheless, the school principals also exhibit awareness of the significance of applying the principles of social constructivism in the context of Islamic education. In both schools, the teachers still need to understand social constructivism thoroughly. The teaching practices still rely on lecture methods as the primary approach, leading to the teacher's role primarily focused on imparting information, with collaborative learning implemented as question-and-answer sessions and group discussions. Limitations in assigning collaborative tasks and projects result in the potential for developing the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) among students, which needs to be fully optimized. The concept of scaffolding is only provided to students who inquire; thus, the principles of social constructivism in learning still need to be fully optimized. This study concluded that academics have the opportunity to enrich their knowledge, education practitioners can improve teaching skills, and policymakers can design more effective educational strategies and programs. Joint efforts are needed to enhance the understanding and implementation of social constructivism in Islamic Education learning in State Senior High Schools in Palu City.

KEYWORDS: Social constructivism, collaborative learning, Islamic education

I. INTRODUCTION

To face the challenges of educational quality, which require a learning approach that is more adaptive and responsive to the dynamics of global change, constructivism theory is the focus of attention (Applefield, Huber, & Moallem, 2000). This theory marks a learning paradigm that prioritizes the active role of students in forming their knowledge. In constructivism, learning is seen as a process in which students receive information and actively build their own knowledge through experience and interaction with the surrounding environment (Cooperstein & Kocevar-Weidinger, 2004). Constructivism theory began to develop in 1980 with learning principles that allow students to build understanding according to their needs and aspirations. In constructivism, the learning process is considered an action that forms knowledge, produces understanding, interprets and designs ideas. Learning is regarded as an active activity that involves students' interpretation of the results of their interactions with the surrounding environment.

In Indonesia, efforts to improve the quality of education are reflected in continuous curriculum updates. Education units are starting to shift the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum (K13) to the Independent Learning Curriculum. Interestingly, the 2013 Curriculum and freedom-to-learn paradigms align with the principles of constructivism theory. Curriculum changes in Indonesia have undergone 11 changes, including the 1947, 1968, and 2013 Curricula, all adopted the concept of constructivism with a philosophy prioritizing human liberation.

The shift from the 2013 curriculum to the freedom-to-learn Curriculum shows the adaptation of Indonesian education to current developments and societal needs. The constructivist philosophical view is closely related to the principles in the "freedom-to-learn" concept issued by the Minister of Education and Culture (Aviram, 2000). Both emphasize giving freedom to teachers and students to explore the world of knowledge. In their implementation in the world of education, both also place similar emphasis on the process of acquiring knowledge. Students not only act as recipients of knowledge transfer from teachers but also become individuals who actively use their creative ideas to explore and discover knowledge. In constructivist philosophy, learning is a collaborative...
process where students interact actively with the subject matter and the surrounding environment (Prawat & Floden, 1994). Like the "freedom-to-learn," this philosophy encourages students' independence, motivating them to explore, ask questions, and participate more proactively in learning. The similarities between this concept and the philosophy of constructivism emphasize the importance of developing students as independent and creative learners who can go beyond the limitations of conventional learning. Constructivism is a perspective regarding the learning process which states that acquiring knowledge begins with the emergence of cognitive conflict (Limón, 2001). This conflict can only be overcome through self-understanding, and in the end, students will build knowledge through their experiences resulting from interactions with their environment. In the constructivist approach, cognitive conflict is between existing knowledge and new information obtained, encouraging students to seek more profound understanding. The constructivist learning process illustrates that students play an active role in forming their knowledge. They are passive recipients of information and active constructors in designing meaning and building ideas. Cognitive conflict, as an initial stage in learning, triggers self-reflection, which leads to the search for solutions through experience and interaction with the environment. Cognitive constructivism theory and social constructivism theory are two theories that have become the focus of attention of many educational figures, who see them as very relevant theoretical foundations capable of answering complex questions regarding children's learning and cognitive development (Adams, 2006). Although both agree that knowledge is the result of an active constructive process by the learner, there are significant differences between them.

In the educational context, the emphasis on social constructivism has significant implications. Teachers not only act as transmitters of information but also as facilitators who create a learning environment that facilitates social interaction and collaboration between students. By adopting this approach, learning becomes not only an internal individual process but also open to the influence of the social environment, enriching students' understanding through dialogue, discussion, and collaboration. In this context, scholars emphasize the need to change teachers' teaching approaches to make them more exciting and entertaining (Smith & Van Doren, 2004). In addition, the role of teachers has shifted from simply conveying knowledge to students to becoming facilitators, motivators, inspirers, mentors, idea generators, creative individuals, team leaders, and empathetic figures. This is important because if not, technology can replace the role of the teacher.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Constructivism Paradigm in Learning

Constructivism is a perspective on how humans acquire knowledge, emphasizing forming rather than conveying and storing knowledge (Novak, Mintzes, & Wandersee, 2005). Constructivism emphasizes that knowledge results from a person's thinking and construction. Constructivism is generally a branch of psychology, sociology, science, and learning theory philosophy. The influence of this theory in education can be seen from its perspective on understanding learning as the formation of knowledge from experience through joint activities, reflection, and interpretation. So, constructivism views the process of forming knowledge in humans as the result of mental activity supported by learning experiences. Constructivism considers that knowledge does not come from outside the human mind (it is not something given from nature) but comes from everyday observations and experiences (active formations of humans themselves), and this formation always occurs when reorganizing because there is a new understanding. So, knowledge in constructivism theory is tentative (can change). Knowledge is not merely an objective representation of natural phenomena (Grimm, 2010). Phenomena or objects are objective, but the observer's subjectivity influences the observation and interpretation of a phenomenon.

expression: “God is the creator of the universe, and humans are the masters of creation.” He explains that “knowing” means “knowing how to make something.” This means that someone will only know something if they can explain what elements makeup that something. God can understand this universe because only he knows how to make it and what he made it from; meanwhile, people can only learn something that he has constructed (Polkinghorne, 2001). However, constructivist theory in education emerged and developed in this theory of constructivism was first discovered by an Italian epistemologist named Giambattista Vico in 1710 with his philosophical the 1980s as a criticism of previous learning theories, shifting the popularity of the behaviorist theory paradigm (1960), which was the learning approach at that time. The statement that learning is not a manifestation of a stimulus-response relationship, but learning requires self-regulation and the formation of conceptual structures through reflection and abstraction. Several assumptions are present between these two theories, namely that constructivism is considered as generative learning (the act of creating meaning from what is learned), then this theory is not something new, but what we have gone through in our lives so far is a collection and development of experience after experience so that based on this assumption, knowledge is dynamic. At the same time, the behavioristic school understands the nature of learning as a mechanical activity between stimulus and response.

The development of constructivism theory, especially in education, has become an approach that has given rise to many new strategies and innovations in learning. Constructivism in learning emphasizes that students' understanding is built actively, creatively, and productively through interaction with previous knowledge and meaningful learning experiences (Grabinger & Dunlap, 1995). Meanwhile, learning in constructivism is genuinely a student effort to create meaning from what is learned. They
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must be active and creative in processing information and building meaningful understanding. Scholars explained that constructivist learning provides opportunities for students to create and develop their knowledge of the topic being taught to become more active and think about what to do, produce, and learn. According to constructivism, the learning process and interactions in the classroom aim to strengthen the knowledge and understanding that students have built. Constructivism assumes that students come to school with ideas, beliefs, and views that need to be verified by educators. The task of educators in constructivist learning is to emphasize understanding and eliminating misunderstandings, as well as solving problems in the context of students. Constructivism explains that knowledge will be formed through a process of mutual influence between previous learning and new learning by comparing new information with existing understanding.

**B. Social Constructivism**

Social constructivism generally emphasizes the social context of learning and that knowledge is built and constructed jointly (mutually). It also emphasizes engagement with others. This will open up opportunities for students to evaluate and improve their understanding by meeting individual thoughts with other people's thoughts and participating in a collaborative search for understanding.

Social constructivism was developed by Lev Semenovich Vygotsky, who stated that knowledge and cognitive development are formed through internalization/mastery of social processes (Rannikmäe, Holbrook, & Soobard, 2020). Vygotsky was a Russian psychologist who lived at the same time as Piaget. He was born on 17 November 1896 in Orsha and died at 37 on 11 June 1934. However, his theories and works were not widely read in England until the 1970s, and only then were they influential in North America.

Piaget's theory of constructivism and Vygotsky's constructivism show a significant conceptual shift, changing the learning paradigm from focusing on the individual to emphasizing collaboration, social interaction, and sociocultural activities (DeVries, 2000). In Piaget's constructivist approach, students are considered active knowledge constructors who change, organize, and reorganize the knowledge and information they already have. In this context, the role of educators is crucial, as they are expected to provide support so that students can explore and develop their understanding independently.

On the other hand, Vygotsky's constructivism emphasizes the role of social interactions in the formation of knowledge. Vygotsky believed that students construct knowledge through interactions with other people, and the knowledge gained is not only influenced by these interactions but also by the cultural context in which students find themselves, including language, beliefs, and skills. Thus, educators in the context of Vygotsky's theory are expected to create various opportunities for students to learn through interactions with educators and peers to construct knowledge together. As confirmation of the differences between Piaget's and Vygotsky's views, Orlando Lourenço put forward the conceptual differences between Piaget and Vygotsky in his journal:

> In short, whereas Piaget’s theory continuously revolves around the subject’s autonomy when she confronts her physical and social environment, Vygotsky’s thinking turns around the subject’s heteronomy as she is confronted with the existing diverse social structures.1

Orlando Lourenço highlights that Piaget's theory revolves around the subject's autonomy in dealing with its physical and social environment (Herminingsih, Askar, Nurdin, & Saguni, 2022). At the same time, Vygotsky's thinking focuses on the heteronomy of the subject when interacting with various existing social structures. Vygotsky emphasizes interpersonal (social), cultural-historical, and individual factors as the key to human development. In Vygotsky's perspective, essential human mental functions have a biological foundation, but to develop these cognitive functions, humans need the role of society and culture. This shows that effective education must consider social and cultural factors in shaping students' understanding and knowledge.

**III. METHODOLOGY**

This study uses multi-case study qualitative methods. In qualitative research, the use of theory is only a guide, so the research focus is on the facts in the field (Nurdin & Pettalongi, 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2016). The data was collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis at the research site (Rusli, Hasyim, & Nurdin, 2021; Rusli & Nurdin, 2022). This research was carried out in Bada district, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The choice of location for this research was based on the uniqueness of local customs and local wisdom values within the area.

This study was conducted in two State Senior High Schools in Palu City, Indonesia. Data was gathered through field observation, in-depth interviews, and written material analysis. The interviews involved two school principals and fifteen Islamic religious teachers from the schools. Data was analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which begins with open coding, iterative coding, and finally, theoretical coding to build theoretical constructs from the data. Before analysis, the data was transcribed, and the results

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of the transcripts were consulted with the participants to obtain their consent (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022; Nurdin, Stockdale, & Scheepers, 2014). The data analysis used a deductive thinking technique, interpreted as a research procedure that produces deductive data from the interviews and field notes. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis from Strauss and Corbin (1998). The analysis started with open, axial, and selective coding. The final result of the data analysis is themes found from the data as practiced by Nurdin (2018).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The principal's paradigm of social constructivism in learning

The school principal's paradigm of social constructivism in Islamic Religious Education learning in Palu City Senior High Schools is a crucial aspect that needs to be understood to explore the implementation and influence of learning methods in the religious education environment. This chapter thoroughly examines the views and attitudes of school principals towards the social constructivism approach as a learning model centered on students and social interaction in the classroom. The school principal's paradigm of this learning method was examined by collecting qualitative data from in-depth interviews with school principals at State Senior High School 1 Palu and Yadika Palu Vocational School. Through careful analysis, this section provides insight into how educational leaders view social constructivism. By understanding the school principal's paradigm of social constructivism, this research hopes to make a meaningful contribution to developing educational policies that are more inclusive and oriented towards students as active agents in the learning process.

Islamic religious education, as an essential component in the national education curriculum, has a strategic role in shaping the character and morals of students. At the high school level, achieving the goals of religious education is not only related to mastery of teaching material but also involves developing a deep understanding of religion and its application in everyday life. The social constructivism approach emerged as an appropriate alternative to increase the effectiveness of Islamic Religious Education learning, citing collaboration and social interaction that facilitate an active and meaningful learning process for students. Although many studies support the benefits of a social constructivist approach to learning, its use in schools is often influenced by the paradigm of the principal, who guides and determines the direction of education in schools.

The school principal's paradigm analyzed provides an overview of the level of understanding, support, and implementation of social constructivism in the context of Islamic religious learning. Apart from that, this analysis also identifies inhibiting factors that can influence the application of this theory in State Senior High School 1 Palu so that it can provide deeper insight into the challenges faced by school principals in implementing a social constructivist approach in Islamic religious learning in State Senior High School 1 Palu.

B. School principals' understanding of the social constructivism approach

Research at State Senior High Schools in Palu is seen as a theory having a paradigm that supports the effectiveness of learning outcomes, as stated by one of the school principals as follows:

In my opinion, social constructivism is a theory with an approach that wants learning not only to be teacher-centered but that students are also actively involved in learning and can learn from sources other than teachers, which can be from social activities in the community or social media which are currently in use. Nowadays, knowledge can be accessed anywhere. However, implementation must also be supported by existing resources. Suppose the resources cannot implement theories that can stimulate students to explore knowledge; for example, a teacher does not master the substance and teaching materials. In that case, it won't be easy to implement them.

Based on the interview results, the principal understands social constructivist learning well. The statement that this theory emphasizes the active role of students in learning, not just their dependence on the teacher, reflects the essence of social constructivism. Social constructivism promotes the concept that learning is not only limited to the transfer of knowledge from teachers to students but involves students actively in building their own understanding.

Furthermore, the statement that students can gain knowledge from various sources, including through social interaction and social media, shows a strong understanding of how social constructivism emphasizes the importance of experience and social interaction as a source of learning. This shows awareness that learning does not only occur in the classroom with the teacher as the only source of knowledge but can occur through various contexts in students' lives.

In this context, school principals believe that learning can occur outside the classroom, such as in social interactions with friends or through exploring information sources on social media. This understanding is very relevant to the social constructivism approach, which emphasizes the importance of learning rooted in personal experience and social interaction in building a more profound understanding. In addition, the results of this interview not only illustrate a good understanding of the principles of social constructivism but highlight the challenges that need to be overcome in implementing them, including resources and teacher competence. This is a realistic and relevant understanding, considering that resources such as facilities, learning materials, and technology must be available to create a learning environment that is adequate within the framework of social constructivism.
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With this support, social constructivism can be more straightforward and effective. The importance of teachers' understanding of the substance of the material and curriculum was also highlighted in this interview. A teacher who does not master the teaching material will find it challenging to facilitate student-centered learning. This shows the principal's awareness of the critical role of teachers in implementing social constructivism. Overall, the statement reflects a good awareness of the principles of social constructivism in the learning context and an understanding of the challenges that may be faced in implementing them.

C. School Principal Support for Social Constructivism

Social constructivism is an approach to learning included in the educational curriculum, both the 2013 Curriculum and the freedom-to-learn curriculum. This approach has principles that align with modern education's goals. These principles include the understanding that learning is more effective when students actively construct their knowledge through social interaction and collaboration with others. In other words, social constructivism assumes that learning occurs not only through the absorption of information but also through the active process of students building their understanding through dialogue, reflection, and practical experience.

Observing this concerning the development of social constructivism in learning, especially in Islamic religious education lessons, the principal pinned his hopes on the Islamic religious education teacher himself, as he expressed as follows:

_“In curriculum development, we are in the process of and always make revisions to the 2013 curriculum content, and I give full authority to subject teachers to be creative. If there are things that need to be simplified or added, please do so, and I emphasize these revisions in the evaluation process.”_

The interview results illustrate that the principal gives full authority to subject teachers to innovate in designing a curriculum responsive to global demands. However, it is essential to realize that the development of social constructivism in Islamic Religious Education learning does not only refer to curriculum revision alone. The principal needs to be actively involved in supporting this social constructivism approach. He expressed a positive view and full support for this approach, as he said:

_“In every evaluation meeting, I always emphasize to teachers to continue to innovate. Not only that, I also provide them with training by presenting trainers, which is carried out twice a year. Other support can also take the form of learning facilities, which we provide are quite complete, but again, implementing this theory also requires supporting human resources.”_

The opinion above reflects the school principal's support for innovation and teacher training while also confirming the availability of learning facilities. However, it is necessary to analyze whether this support is following the principles of social constructivism in the learning process. Aspects of innovation and training, school principals show awareness of the importance of teacher professional development. Social constructivism emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and personal experience, and training can be an effective means of helping teachers acquire new skills and knowledge. Therefore, this support aligns with the principles of social constructivism, which places students in an active role in learning.

The availability of complete learning facilities is also recognized as a step that supports social constructivist learning. This theory emphasizes the importance of experience and social interaction as a source of knowledge. By providing adequate learning facilities, teachers and students can experience better learning following the concept of social constructivism. Furthermore, the statement regarding supporting human resources highlights the critical role of teachers in implementing social constructivism. The principal realizes that human resources, including teachers' understanding and skills in applying the social constructivism approach, are critical in successfully implementing this theory.

Overall, the school principal's support is in accordance with social constructivism. Steps such as encouraging innovation, organizing training, providing learning facilities, and emphasizing the role of human resources reflect a good understanding of the principles of social constructivism. This creates a learning environment that supports social interaction and the development of students' knowledge following the social constructivism framework.

D. Implementation of Social Constructivism in Islamic Religious Education Learning

Islamic Religious Education in Upper Secondary Schools has a vital role in shaping the character and morals of students, as well as developing their understanding of Islamic religious teachings. One learning approach that is increasingly recognized and implemented in educational contexts is Social Constructivism. Social constructivism emphasizes social interaction, collaboration, and learning through shared experiences as effective means for understanding concepts and values in religious subjects. In the context of Palu City, which has rich social and cultural diversity, implementing Social Constructivism in Islamic Religious Education learning in Senior High Schools is an exciting aspect to research. This research examines and analyzes how far social constructivism is implemented in Islamic Religious Education learning in two high schools in Palu City. Through an understanding of social constructivism, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction, collaborative learning, and cultural context in teaching and learning, this research tries to reveal how this concept is applied in Islamic religious education learning in these schools.

E. Implementation of Collaborative Learning in Islamic religious education learning

Collaborative learning is an approach that centers on the idea that students learn better when they actively participate in group discussions, collaborate on projects, and interact with their peers. When learners share their ideas, views, and experiences, they hone
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their own understanding and contribute to the collective construction of knowledge. They also expand their understanding of the subject being studied, gain deeper insight, and build social skills that are important in real life. In Islamic religious education learning at State Senior High School 1 Palu, collaborative learning can be observed from the expression of one Islamic Religious Education teacher as he stated:

First, I entered the class by giving my views on the material we discussed. After that, I allowed the students to discuss with their classmates and asked them to write their own opinions on the topic of discussion. Yesterday's topic was "Muslim fashion," and I saw they differed in understanding. Then, I took over the learning and explained the material from the limits of their knowledge to the core material.

The basic concept of collaborative learning is that students learn better when actively discussing and collaborating with their peers, which allows them to construct knowledge together and broaden their understanding (Mardatillah, Pettalongi, & Nurdin, 2023). However, based on the above interviews, Islamic religious education learning in Palu City High School, it is seen that teachers provide opportunities for students to discuss the topics discussed, which is an excellent first step in encouraging collaborative learning. However, there are indications that after the discussion, the teacher takes over the learning and explains the core material. In an ideal approach, the teacher would act as a facilitator during group discussions, guiding students to participate and exchange views actively. Teachers can utilize differences in students' understanding to support joint learning, not just as boundaries that must be overcome.

Apart from that, students differed in understanding after the discussion. This follows the principles of social constructivism, which states that learners have unique experiences and perspectives that can contribute to the collective construction of knowledge. However, teachers do not motivate students to discuss more actively and explore differences in their understanding. One Islamic religious education teacher stated that collaborative learning practices have not been fully implemented in Islamic religious education learning, as follows:

I have been teaching at State Senior High School 1 Palu for eight months, and my primary education is not Islamic religious education, so I am a layman regarding learning methods. However, in learning, I most often use the lecture method; as for the discussion method, I only apply it occasionally. I am less satisfied with the discussion/collaborative method when applied in learning because you can see that during presentations, students are not used to using their language to make other people understand. Hence, the presentation model is like reading a book. So, I prefer to use the lecture method, and at the end of the explanation, I will ask them, "Did you understand or not?" from this method, I can measure their level of understanding.

Based on the interview results above, the teacher noted that even though he had been teaching for eight months, his educational background, outside the Islamic religious education field, had influenced his preference for the teaching method he chose. In this case, teachers are more likely to use the lecture method as the primary learning approach, reflecting a transmission approach where the teacher acts as a leader who conveys information. This approach makes students tend to be passive listeners, and this approach may not be practical in facilitating deep understanding and problem-solving.

In this regard, the shift in the 21st-century learning paradigm emphasizes the need to involve students in their learning actively. This paradigm recognizes that students are not just passive recipients of information but active agents in constructing their knowledge (Nurdin, 2023). 21st-century education highlights the importance of developing critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving skills that are relevant in real life (Dwyer, Hogan, & Stewart, 2014). More interactive learning methods, such as discussions, collaborative projects, and simulations, support the development of these skills by allowing students to actively participate, talk, and think critically about the subject matter.

In Islamic religious education learning at State Senior High School 1 Palu, the teacher's efforts to apply discussion/collaborative methods occasionally reflect efforts to integrate a more interactive learning approach in the religious learning process (Alamsyah, Pettalongi, & Nurdin, 2023). However, his dissatisfaction with the results reveals the challenges that may be faced in adapting this approach. According to social constructivism theory, discussion and collaborative methods support the joint construction of knowledge and understanding. Students are invited to participate in speaking and actively sharing their perspectives. However, in this case, the teacher felt that the students needed to be more skilled in using their language to explain concepts to others during the presentation, which resulted in a monotonous presentation and seemed like reading a book.

This reflects the need to develop students' speaking and communication skills as an integral part of a collaborative learning approach (OXFORD, 1997). This involves proper training and guidance. Additionally, teachers can consider using techniques such as providing constructive feedback, good modeling, and clearer guidance to help students with their presentations. Social constructivism theory considers the interaction between students in collaborative learning an essential means of building shared understanding. Therefore, teachers must consider approaches that facilitate more effective student communication, such as providing group assignments that encourage active discussion or using technology to facilitate online collaboration if necessary. With appropriate efforts to overcome these obstacles, collaborative learning approaches in Islamic religious education can be more effective in supporting in-depth understanding and development of students' social skills following the principles of social constructivism in the context of religious learning.
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V. CONCLUSIONS

Social constructivism forms a strong foundation for Islamic religious learning in Palu City High Schools. Through social interaction, collaboration, and direct experience, students can develop a deeper and more relevant understanding of the teachings of the Islamic religion. In the context of Islamic religious education in senior high schools in Palu, school principals have a positive experience of social constructivism. They recognize the importance of this approach, which emphasizes student activity and learning from various sources, including community social activities and social media. However, they also realize that implementing social constructivism requires adequate resource support, especially regarding teacher knowledge and skills.

School principals also provide concrete support for social constructivism by giving creative authority to teachers, emphasizing the evaluation process, innovation, teacher training, and providing learning facilities. However, the obstacles faced include limited Islamic religious education teachers. However, the principal provided positive support for applying social constructivism theory. Support for social constructivism is realized through flexibility in developing learning methods, training, guidance, support for using learning media and increasing communication between teachers and school principals.

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