

**T.C.
SAKARYA UNIVERSITY
INSITUTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS SCIENCES**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN
INDONESIA: “THE CASE OF RAUDHATUL ATHFAL”**

Fadiyah MUKHSEN

MASTER DEGREE THESIS

Thesis Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mahmut ZENGİN

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**“This thesis was defended hybrid on 21/06/2022 and was unanimously
accepted/~~not accepted~~ by the jury members whose names are listed below.”**

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Fadiyah MUKHSEN

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THE PREFACE

Nothing can be said, except praise in only to Allah who has given us His mercies, blessings, and guidances so that the writer can complete her responsibilities in writing this Master Degree Thesis as a final research that is expected to be useful for people. And may prayers and peace be always upon the Prophet Muhammad sallahu 'alayhi wa sallam who has guided us from the wrong path to the right path. The author would like to express his gratitude for all the enthusiasm and support for all those people:

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Fadiyah MUKHSEN

21/06/2022

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ABBREVIATION

RA	: Raudhatul Athfal
TK	: Taman Kanak-kanak/Kindergarten
Kemenag	: Kementrian Agama/Ministry of Religious Affairs
Kemendikbud	: Ministry of Education and Culture
IGRA	: Ikatan Guru Raudhatul Athfal/Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association
SD	: Sekolah Dasar/Elementary School
SMP	: Sekolah Menengah Pertama/Junior High School
SMA	: Sekolah Menengah Atas/Senior High School
F	: Female

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ABSTRACT
Title of Thesis: Early Childhood Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia: “The Case of Raudhatul Athfal”
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<p>Religion and education are related to the countries’ policies and ideologies; it differs from country to country. In short, the system of religious education in a country depends on the state ideology. Based on data from PEW Research Center, Indonesia got the first rank as the home for the world’s largest Muslim populations where there are about 203.000.000 Muslim live in Indonesia. In Indonesia, religious education is not just allowed, but farther it is necessary and compulsory in both public and private schools from Kindergarten until university degree as well.</p> <p>This study aims to offer a closer look at the Islamic religious education for early childhood in Islamic-based kindergartens or Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia. In this context: curriculum, textbooks, teaching methods, activities, the policies, qualifications of the teachers, the views and opinions of the teachers, as well as the challenges and problems at Raudhatul Athfal were examined and evaluated. This study used qualitative methods and purposive sampling for selecting the study group. Interview and documentation methods were used for data collection. The interview session were done by interviewing and asking some questions to the Raudhatul Athfal teachers based on the interview form, while documentation were done using literature review from academic books, international publications, and the state constitution. The data from interviews with participants and literature were analyzed using the content analysis method.</p> <p>The most important finding of this study is that Islamic religious education for early childhood in Raudhatul Athfal has received very good attention and support from various parties, but even so, Raudhatul Athfal cannot be separated from various kinds of problems and challenges such as curriculum problems, teacher qualifications, the misunderstandings about the <i>calistung</i> / reading, writing, counting tests that occur between Kindergarten and Elementary School in Indonesia, and many more. The results of this study are expected used as a media for sharing experiences, implementations, and realities happened in Raudhatul Athfal, then also can be used as a basis for evaluations of Islamic early childhood education and as a reference for regulatory authorities in drafting regulations for Islamic early childhood education in Indonesia.</p>
Keywords: Preschool, Religious Education, Raudhatul Athfal, Early Childhood, Indonesia

ÖZET

Başlık: Endonezya’da Erken Çocukluk Dönemi İslami Din Eğitimi: “Raudhatul Athfal Örneği”

Yazar: Fadiyah MUKHSEN

Danışman: Doç. Dr. Mahmut ZENGİN

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Din ve eğitim, ülkelerin politikaları ve ideolojileri ile ilişkilidir; ülkeden ülkeye farklılık gösterir. Bir ülkedeki din eğitimi sistemi, devletin ideolojisine bağlıdır. PEW Araştırma Merkezinden alınan verilere göre yaklaşık 203.000.000 Müslüman Endonezya’da yaşamaktadır. Endonezya dünyanın en büyük Müslüman nüfusuna sahip ülkesidir. Endonezya’da din eğitimi anaokulundan üniversiteye kadar hem devlet hem de özel okullarda zorunludur.

Bu çalışma, Endonezya’daki İslami temelli anaokulu Raudhatul Athfal tarafından verilen erken çocukluk dönemi İslami din eğitimi incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu kapsamda: Raudhatul Athfal’daki müfredat, ders kitapları, öğretim yöntemleri, etkinlikler, eğitim politikaları, öğretmenlerin nitelikleri, öğretmenlerin görüşleri, Raudhatul Athfal’daki zorluklar ve sorunlar incelenmiş ve değerlendirilmiştir. Bu nitel çalışmada örnekleme seçimi için amaçlı örnekleme tekniği kullanılmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında görüşme ve dokümantasyon yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Görüşmeler, Raudhatul Athfal öğretmenleriyle görüşme formundan sorular sorularak gerçekleştirilmiştir ve dokümantasyon akademik kitaplardan, uluslararası yayınlardan ve eyalet anayasasından literatür taraması kullanılarak yapılmıştır. Katılımcılarla yapılan görüşmelerden ve literatürden elde edilen veriler tanımlayıcı analiz yöntemi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın en önemli bulgusu, Raudhatul Athfal’da erken çocukluk için İslami din eğitiminin çeşitli kesimlerden çok iyi ilgi ve destek gördüğü, ancak buna rağmen, müfredat sorunları, öğretmen nitelikleri, Endonezya’daki Anaokulu ve İlkokul arasında meydana gelen calistung/ okuma, yazma, ve sayma testleri hakkındaki yanlış anlamalar gibi pek çok sorunla karşılaştığıdır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçlarının, Raudhatul Athfal’da meydana gelen deneyimlerin, uygulamaların ve gerçeklerin paylaşılması için bir iletişim aracı olarak, İslami erken çocukluk eğitiminin değerlendirilmesi için bir temel olarak ve taslak hazırlamada düzenleyici kurumlar için bir referans olarak kullanılması beklenilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Okul Öncesi, Din Eğitimi, Raudhatul Athfal, Erken Çocukluk, Endonezya

INTRODUCTION

When seeing or hearing the word of education, most of the people might think that education is learning in school or college. Actually, a perspective like that is not fully wrong because it is a fact that schools or colleges are formal institutions for learning or getting education. However, we cannot forget the fact that education is not only occurring in school but also occurs all the time in our life and we may not be conscious of its happening.

Etymologically, the word "education" comes from the Latin word '*educatio*'. The definition of education is very diverse, from definitions of dictionaries to definitions from educational experts and philosophers. Actually, there is no definite definition of education, because experts also provide different perspectives and definitions of education. It is possible to find a wide variety of definitions in domestic and foreign literature. However, here we want to take a general definition of education, in the most general sense, education is the process of raising people according to their specific goals or it is also defined as "deliberate acculturation process". Fidan mentioned that life-long unconscious learning as "informal education" and the purposeful learning as "formal education" (Fidan, 2012). According to the American philosopher John Dewey, education can take place under the guidance of others, but it is also possible on a self-taught basis/autodidact (Dewey, 2001). Moreover, based on the Indonesian National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003: the types of education are divided into three: formal, non-formal, and informal education. In fact, these types of education are not only found in Indonesia, but also worldwide.

Formal education is commonly divided into stages such as pre-school, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, university, internship, etc. Several governments and international laws have recognized rights to education. At the international level, the right to education is reflected in international law in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ and articles 13² and 14³ of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

¹ Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 26:
"Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages...."

Talking about education, it is not complete if we do not discuss religious education as well because just like education itself, Religious Education is the subject of much global debate. Religious education, as an aspect of education, raises crucial questions about the purpose of education in shaping individual identity, character, and conscientious beliefs, and it is one of the ‘*battlefields*’ between religion and certain ideologies or political streams (Davis & Miroshnikova, 2013).

Just as the rights to education are arranged in the international laws, so is the right to religious education. Freedom of religion or belief is guaranteed by Article 5 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief explained that there are religious rights at stake, which implicate rights and duties discussed herewith, for example; the right of parents or legal guardians to bring the child up based on their religion or belief; the right of the child to religious education in accordance with the will of parents, and the right not to be compelled to receive education against their wishes.⁴ (United Nations Human Right, 1981)

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms....”

² International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights Article 13:

“The right of everyone to free education (free for the primary level only, and the progressive introduction of free education for the secondary and higher levels).....”

“Education is seen both as a human right and as an indispensable means of realizing other human rights.”

³ Article 14, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights:

“Requires those parties which have not yet established a system of free compulsory primary education to rapidly adopt a detailed plan of action for its introduction within a reasonable number of years.”

⁴ Article 5 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief:

1) The parents or, as the case may be, the legal guardians of the child have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief and bearing in mind the moral education in which they believe the child should be brought up.

2) Every child shall enjoy the right to have access to education in the matter of religion or belief in accordance with the wishes of his parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, and shall not be compelled to receive teaching on religion or belief against the wishes of his parents or legal guardians, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

3) The child shall be protected from any form of discrimination on the ground of religion or belief. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood, respect for freedom of religion or belief of others, and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

4) In the case of a child who is not under the care either of his parents or of legal guardians, due account shall be taken of their expressed wishes or of any other proof of their wishes in the matter of religion or belief, the best interests of the child being the guiding principle.

5) (United Nations Human Right, 1981) Practices of a religion or belief in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development, taking into account article 1, paragraph 3, of the present Declaration.

A different perspective on the situation of Religious Education can be explored by highlighting the main aims of Religious Education or general directions of teaching. The main aims of religious education are generally divided into three based on The Pedagogical Theory of Michael Grimmit: 'learning religion', 'learning about religion', and 'learning from religion'. 'Learning religion' refers to a narrow confessional approach, an introduction to a specific faith tradition or teach/doctrines about one religion. Then 'learning about religion' refers mainly to the transmission of knowledge about religions and its meaning for its believers. In addition, 'learning from religion' should enable pupils to widen and deepen their understanding of both what lies at the heart of religions and their interpretation of the human condition. (Grimmit, 1975)

Based on The Routledge International Handbook of Religious Education, Silvio Ferrari points out in his regional essay on Religious Education in the European setting; there are three models of Religious Education that European countries have: (Silvio Ferrari, 2013)

1. Disallowing religious education within the formal curriculum in schools operated by the state;
2. Providing non-denominational teaching about religions; and
3. Providing denominational teaching of religion for prevailing religion(s) within the country.

In addition to that model that mentioned before, the fact is that some countries apply the mix model. The model of religious education in each country is influenced by ideology, culture, religious views and many other factors that exist in that country. The division of religious education models can be classified according to several aspects, such as the division of religious education models based on the curriculum approach, religious education models based on the relationship between state ideology and religious education, religious education models based on cognitive, affective and behavioral (attitude) aspects.

In terms of curriculum approach, there are two models: (Arslan, 2019)

- 1) Confessional Model

In this Confessional model, students are taught a specific religion in general. The Confessional Model is an approach to Religious Education, which aims to examine a single-religion model, associate it with beliefs and be a follower. This model is often called the Traditional Model. This model has two types:

a) Single Religion model, all students at school are taught only one religion, this model can be seen in Ireland and Italy.

b) Parallel Single Religion model, in this model, the school teaches on various religious subjects (according to the religion in the country), students will study only one religious subject, that is, the profession of religion. Examples of countries implementing this system are Germany and Nigeria.

1) Non-Confessional model

In this model, the school will teach only one religion lesson to all students (regardless of their religion), and the given religion class will learn all religions in general; this model is not learning religion but learning from religion. The country that applied this model is England.

In terms of the relationship between Religious Education and state ideology, there are four models: (Nuryatno, 2014)

1) First, when the ideology is secular, Religious Education is banned in public schools, but not in private schools. This implementation can be seen in the United States, France, Japan, South Korea, China, Mexico, Hungary, Czech, Uruguay, and Cuba. Those countries make separation of state and religions. Consequently, no teaching of or about religion is offered in public schools, they only offer Moral Education lesson. But Religious Education lessons can be given in the private religions-based schools.

2) Second, although the state ideology is secular, the majority of the population has certain religious traditions (e.g. Catholic), Religious Education is allowed in public and private schools. This app can be seen in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Republic of Turkey, Poland, Spain, Italy, Colombia, Chile, and Peru. These countries usually implement a denominational system, where religious education is obligatory and as a part of the public school curriculum accordance with the principles laid down by the relevant religious society. But we can see the different implementation of the Republic

of Turkey; this state ideology is secular with Muslim majority people. Religious culture and ethics knowledge courses are compulsory in Turkey. And there is no right of exception without Jews and Christians. But besides compulsory Religious culture and ethics knowledge courses, there are elective courses for religious education which are optional depending on parents or students' demand.

Notable is the case of the former Soviet Union, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan, two countries that have chosen a secular ideology, but their populations are predominantly Muslim; they do not allow religious education to be taught in public schools.

3) Third model is that when state ideologies belong to certain religions such as Islam, Religious Education, they are not only allowed but also needed as part of the public school curriculum. In this case, Religious Education refers specifically to Islamic education, which indicates that Religious Education in public schools means Islamic education. This is what happened in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Malaysia, which keep Islam as the official state religion.

4) Fourth model is where the state ideology is neither secular nor religious, like Indonesia, where Religious Education is not only permitted but required in public and private schools as well. However, the Religious Education content in the fourth model relates not only to Islamic teachings but also to other religions recognized by the Indonesian state.

In terms of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral (attitude aspects), there are three models: (Sterkens & Yusuf, 2015)

1) Mono religious education

Cognitively, the mono-religious model provides knowledge and insight into the religion that is believed. Affectively, the mono-religious model wants to increase a person's interest and involvement in the religion he adheres to. In terms of behavior, he intends to foster motivation to participate in the religious practices of the religion concerned. This model only focuses on one particular religion. However, this does not mean total disregard for other religions. Other religions can be discussed from the perspective of the religion concerned with the aim of confirming the religious tradition (content) they adhere to.

2) Multi religious education

This model emphasizes the need to negotiate with religious plurality. Cognitively, it intends to make a person familiar with many religions. Affectively, this model wants to foster interest in studying other religions. Behaviorally, this model tries to create a respectful attitude towards people from other religions.

This model contains information about various religious traditions; each religion is not approached from the perspective of other religions but is described according to its own way (content). This model emphasizes the accumulation of information about various beliefs, values and rituals of various existing religious traditions.

3) Interreligious education

The inter-religious model focuses on dialogue between adherents of different religions. This model seeks to express the uniqueness of each religious tradition, and at the same time, evaluates the plurality of religions positively. Affectively, it strives for effective communication between one's religion and various other religious traditions. Behaviorally, he wants to cultivate an attitude of respect and willingness to engage in inter-religious dialogue. This model approaches the different religions from the point of view of certain religions and the (content) of other religions. He is taught by internalizing the religion concerned while clarifying other religions through the dialogue method.

From the explanation of the conditions and models of religious education above, it can be concluded that Religious education is a complex phenomenon. It exists in nearly all countries in the world. There are different traditions, concepts, and approaches. Each approach to religious education has its own biography and history shaped by interplay of different factors like Image of religion in society, relationship between state and religion, education system, and finally yet importantly is the state ideology that also plays a major role in the implementation of religious education in a country.

Discussing the issue of religious education in the world is indeed very interesting and endless. The implementation of religious education in some countries, in their formal or non-formal institutions is usually divided by a level. For example; in formal education institutions\schools, the levels are generally divided into kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school or even university level. Moreover, in non-formal institutions it is usually divided by age or skill level, such as religious education classes for early childhood, children, adults, etc.

There is one of the famous and interesting Arabic proverbs, which is still related to the level of education, “*Learning as a child is like writing on the rock, and learning as an adult is like writing on water*”. This proverb means that if we learn from our early age, it will be as easy as writing on a stone, but if learning begins after adulthood/old age it will be difficult like writing on water. It can be concluded that the best time for learning or starting education based on that proverb is to start at an early age. This proverb is so interesting because it talks about the importance of learning from an early age and as interesting as the issue of religious education.

Therefore, we feel interested in discussing more about religious education in early childhood. Because we also found many evidences showing that experiences in early (birth until age 8) and middle childhood (ages 6 to 12) are extremely important for a child’s healthy development and lifelong learning. How a child develops during this time affects future cognitive, social and emotional, language, and physical development, which in turn influences school readiness and later success in life (Shonkoff JP, 2009). This places yet again another core responsibility on early childhood educators to ensure that children appreciate diversity and specifically related to religion and culture.

Moreover, for the theme and location of this research, it will focus on discussing how religious education in early childhood especially in *Raudhatul Athfal*/Islamic based Kindergarten in Indonesia. Indonesia which is the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world (219.960.000 Muslim population) has *Pancasila* as their state ideology.⁵

Subject of the Study

As we have discussed in the introduction part, in this thesis we will examine further about early childhood islamic religious education in Indonesia. The reasons we chose this country for further research are first, even though this country is a Muslim-majority countries, the system of religious education is not only about Islam, but Indonesia give religious education lessons for all students based on their own religion in early childhood both in formal institutions and non-formal institutions. The second reason is that the author is an Indonesian that is currently living and continuing her Master’s

⁵ Data based from Research by PEW Research Center, April 2, 2015, “The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections 2010-2050”

degree in Turkey, therefore this would be a good opportunity to further research about early childhood islamic religious education so international reader include the readers from Turkey can have information about Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia.

First, we will briefly see the ideology and the condition of Religious Education in Indonesia. Indonesia, the ideology of the Indonesian Republic is *Pancasila*.⁶ Different state ideologies contribute to different religious education practices. Religion plays an important role in the state as the state ideology with *Pancasila* in Indonesia. Since the beginning of Indonesia's independence in 1945, the existence of Religious Education especially Islamic education in schools has been debated. After going through several decades of phases since the beginning of Independence of the Republic of Indonesia, nowadays Indonesian government has included Religious Education into the national curriculum and obliges Religious Education in public and private schools. Religious Education implementation in Indonesia is dynamic, depending on the regime that governs the country.

In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 20 of 2003 relating to the National Education System, article 12, Point 1 (a) states "*Every student in an education unit has the right to: (a) receive religious education with his or her own belief/religion and be taught by a teacher with the same belief/religion.*" This means that all students hold the rights to receive Religious Education in public and private schools.

In Indonesia, early childhood education began to receive official attention from the government since the post-independence era of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945. Before the independence era, in the Dutch and Japanese colonial era, education began in elementary school with the aim of getting a workforce who could read, count, and write. After the independence of the Republic of Indonesia, "*primary education*" no longer starts at the elementary school level, but 1 year earlier before elementary school and it is called Kindergarten level (Saerozi, 2009). The Law of the Republic of Indonesia

⁶ *Pancasila* is neither a secular nor an Islamic ideology, but somewhere between the two. The Indonesian founding fathers chose this ideology because it could be a meeting point between two different ideologies: Islam and secular ideology. The name of *Pancasila* has a secular nuance, but its principles include religious nuance, especially the first principle of "Faith in One God", and this first principle becomes the basis of the other four principles: humanity, unity in diversity, democracy and justice.

Number 4 of 1950 concerning the Basics of Education and Teaching in Schools provides a solid juridical basis for Kindergarten education efforts.⁷

After a long history, current education for early childhood is very diverse, some are formal, and some are non-formal. For early childhood education in a formal form in Indonesia, it is known as Kindergarten under the Ministry of Education and *Raudhatul Athfal (RA)*, based on the Decree of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 367 of 1993 concerning Raudatul Athfal, it was determined that Raudatul Athfal was a kindergarten with the characteristics of Islam organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.⁸ Religious education lessons are also a compulsory subject at the kindergarten level⁹ (Government Regulation of The Republic Of Indonesia No. 55, 2007), for public kindergartens under the ministry of education, religious lessons are taught based on the confessional parallel single religion model (learning religion), in this model the school provided various religious subjects (according to the religion in the country), students will study only one religious subject based on their own religions and beliefs. Whereas at the *Raudhatul Athfal* level which has special Islamic characteristics or we can call it a special Muslim kindergarten, Islamic religious education subjects are provided with a confessional system or doctrine (learning religion) so that religious education is delivered to children in a more detailed form.

Starting from the background of the problems that discussed before, this study will examine the situations of early childhood religious education in a country with largest

⁷ Chapter V About Types of Education & Teaching, Article 6. According to the type, education and teaching are divided into: a)kindergarten education and teaching, b)primary education and teaching, c)secondary education and teaching, and d)high education and teaching.

⁸ Article 28 which consists of six (6) paragraphs, where in paragraph (3) it is clearly stated that "Early childhood education in the formal education path is in the form of Kindergarten (TK), Raudatul Athfal (RA) or other equivalent forms. " Then in paragraph (1), it states, "Early childhood education is held before the basic education level."

⁹ Government Regulation Of The Republic Of Indonesia Number 55 Year 2007 Concerning Religious Education And Religious Education Chapter II Religious Education.

Article 3:

1) Every education unit at all channels, levels and types of education is obliged to provide religious education.

Article 4:

1) Religious education in formal education and equality education programs shall at least take the form of religious subjects or courses.

2) Every student in an educational unit at all lines, levels and types of education has the right to receive religious education in accordance with his / her religion and is taught by educators of the same religion.

3) Every education unit provides a place to carry out religious education.

Muslim population in the world; Indonesia. That is why *Early Childhood Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia: “The Case of Raudhatul Athfal”* was chosen as the title of this study. The main aim of this study is to find out the implementation and challenges of early childhood religious education (*Raudhatul Athfal*) in Indonesia.

The basic research questions and points of action in the thesis study can be specified as follows:

1. How is the brief history of religious education, religious education institutions, and preschool education in Indonesia?
2. How are the educational policies and the teachers qualifications of the preschool religious education (*Raudhatul Athfal*) in Indonesia?
3. How is the implementation and challenges of the curriculum, textbooks, teaching method, and activities of preschool religious education (*Raudhatul Athfal*) in Indonesia?
4. How Raudhatul Athfal teachers evaluate religious education processes in the school?

Aim of The Study

1. To know the brief history of religious education, religious education institutions, and preschool education in Indonesia.
2. To know the educational policies and the teachers qualifications of the preschool religious education (*Raudhatul Athfal*) in Indonesia.
3. To get information about the implementation and challenges of the curriculum, textbooks, teaching method, and activities of preschool religious education (*Raudhatul Athfal*) in Indonesia.
4. To get information about Raudhatul Athfal teachers’ perspective of religious education processes in the school.

Importance of The Study

1. Academically, this study is expected to contribute for giving perspective to early childhood Islamic religious education teachers in Raudhatul Athfal so that future educators can better understand the conditions and challenges they will face.

2. In practical terms, this study can be used as a basis and evaluation for interested parties.

3. From a policy standpoint, this research can be used as a reference for regulatory authorities in drafting regulations for early childhood religious education.

4. From the interview session with the Raudhatul Athfals' teachers, this research can be used as a media/communication tool for sharing experiences, implementations, realities, and also evaluations of religious early childhood education in Indonesia based on the teachers' point of view.

Method of The Study

1. Research Model

In general, the types of research models are grouped into two, namely quantitative and qualitative research methods. Based on the objectives that want to be achieved, qualitative research will be used as the research model of this study.

2. Study Group

In qualitative research, there are various sampling techniques that using to select the participants/study group. The two most popular sampling techniques are purposeful and convenience sampling because they align the best across nearly all qualitative research designs. There are additional sampling techniques, such as snowball and quota sampling, but the majority of qualitative researchers utilize one of the sampling techniques described above.

Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for selecting the participants of a research. This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). In addition to knowledge and experience, Bernard (2002) and Spradley (1979) note the importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive, and reflective manner.

The participants determination technique used in this research is purposeful sampling, the sampling technique of data sources with certain considerations. This particular consideration is for example the person who is considered to know best about what we

expect about research. This technique includes people who are selected on the basis of certain criteria made by researchers based on research objectives.

The criteria for participants to be selected in this study are teachers (man/woman) at Raudhatul Athfal/Islamic-based Kindergarten in Indonesia with a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience. Due to the pandemic situation, interviews were held with 9 Raudhatul Athfal teachers who met the necessary qualifications and volunteered through online platforms. Information about the participating teachers is given in this table below:

Table 1: Characteristics of Participating Teachers

Code	Gender	Education And Graduate Department	Age (Year)	Teaching Experiences (Year)	Position at School
T1	F	Bachelor Degree - Early Childhood Education	27	8	Teacher and IT (Operator)
T2	F	Bachelor Degree – Islamic Education	43	12	Headmaster and teacher
T3	F	Bachelor Degree - Early Childhood Islamic Education	22	3	Homeroom Teacher
T4	F	Bachelor Degree - Early Childhood Education	25	3	Homeroom Teacher
T5	F	Diploma II – Computer System	44	10	Headmaster and teacher
T6	F	Bachelor Degree –	55	30	Headmaster

		Islamic Education			and teacher
T7	F	Bachelor Degree - Early Childhood Education	37	14	Homeroom Teacher
T8	F	Bachelor Degree – Islamic Education	41	18	Homeroom Teacher
T9	F	Bachelor Degree - Early Childhood Education	22	2	Teacher

Source: Created by the Author.

3. Data Collection

Qualitative data collection aims to collect data textually in order to analyze the findings in a study. Qualitative data is textual or non-numeric and usually includes mostly images, videos, text, and words written or spoken by people. Qualitative data collection methods are exploratory and usually focus more on obtaining information and understanding the underlying reasons by digging deeper.

In this research, interview and documentation method will be used for data collection. Interview session will be done by interviewing and ask some questions to religious teachers of *Raudhatul Athfal* in Indonesia to know teachers' perspective about the implementation and challenges of religious education in *Raudhatul Athfal*. The questions was approved by the Ethic Institutions with the decision numbered "18" taken at the meeting of the Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee of Sakarya University, dated 03.11.2021 (numbered 39/18 - the letter number: E-61923333-050.99-77700). So, the questions are eligible and and declared not violate the code of ethics. For interview section, volunteer teachers were interviewed online used Zoom Meeting between March – April 2022, each lasting 60 – 90 minutes, then the video and audio recordings of the interviews were taken with the permission of the teachers. And the documentation were done using literature review from academic books, international publications, and state constitution.

4. Data Analysis

There are two data analysis processes in qualitative research, descriptive and content analysis. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) define the content analysis method as “a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of materials for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases” (p. 155). Content analysis review *forms of human communication* including books, newspapers, and films as well as other forms in order to identify patterns, themes, or biases. The method is designed to identify specific characteristics from the content in the human communications. The researcher is exploring verbal, visual, behavioral patterns, themes, or biases.

Data analysis in this study will use the descriptive analysis method to analyze the data obtained from interviews with participants who are included in the study group. Other data will be taken by using literature review from academic books, international publications, and state constitution.

Descriptive analysis method consists of four stages: (1) Creating a Framework for Descriptive Analysis, (2) Processing Data According to Thematic Framework, (3) Identifying Findings, (4) Interpreting Findings. (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008)

In this context, after the data were processed in accordance with the thematic framework created based on the interview questions, the findings were defined and interpreted. Findings were presented, where necessary, supported by direct quotations, coded to provide information about teachers' genders, ages, education and graduate department, year of professional experiences as a teacher and the position at school they work at.

Limitation of the Study

As Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) said, ‘*there is never enough time to do any study*’, therefore the focus should be narrowed to specific cases. This thesis discusses religious education for early childhood especially in Islamic-based Kindergarten/*Raudhatul Athfal* in Indonesia.

In Indonesia, religious education in formal education from kindergarten until university is parallel confessional model, which students have the rights to get religious education in accordance with their own religions and beliefs. Schools are also required to provide religious lessons and teachers according to the six recognized religions in the country.

However, this study will only be limited to Islamic religious education given to Islamic Kindergartens/*Raudhatul Athfal* in Indonesia, which is not included for religious education other than Islam.

Then, this thesis only focuses on religious education for early childhood, even though based on research early childhood age is from birth until age 8, but in this research, what we mean by early childhood will refer to children aged 4-6 years only. The institution we will discuss is only *Raudathul Athfal* or Islamic kindergarten, which is under the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Indonesia. The Public kindergartens under the Ministry of Education or other school/institutions are not included in the scope of the thesis. All the teachers that will be interviewed are pre-school religious education teachers.

Lastly, the limitation of this study lies in the fact that most areas of the world are hit by the Covid-19 virus, which has limited almost all industries in the world, including the education sector in this year. As we know, Indonesia implements a policy that formal education (schools and universities) must implement learning and teaching remotely or online from the year of 2020. Due to the impact of Covid-19, researchers will not be able to make direct observations in schools; this research will only be limited to distance interviews.

Study Structure

This thesis is structured as follows:

The first chapter provides general information of the country, just like information on demographics, ideology and religions in Indonesia. Then it will also discuss the history of religious education, the institutions of religious education, and history of preschool Education in Indonesia.

Chapter 2 discusses the implementation of early childhood religious education in Indonesia. In this chapter, we will introduce in more detail about the curriculum including the textbook, teaching method, teacher qualifications, practices, and Religious Education policies in Indonesia.

Chapter 3 discusses the findings and discussion of the research. The answers from the interviewed teachers will be shown in this part. And analysis from the authors about the condition of religious education in Indonesia also will be written here.

In addition, the last part will be the Conclusion part, this section will present the results and conclusions of the research conducted.

Last but not least, the bibliography will be written using the rules of APA style (American Psychological Association) 6th edition.

CHAPTER I: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

1.1. General Information about Indonesia

Indonesian society demographically and sociologically is a manifestation of a pluralistic nation. The hallmark of this pluralistic nature is the diversity of cultures seen from differences in language, ethnicity, culture, race, and religion as well as other cultural habits.

Indonesia, officially the Republic of Indonesia is a country in Southeast Asia, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. It is the world's largest island country, with more than 17.000 islands, and at 1.904.569 square kilometers (735.358 square miles), the 14th largest by land area and 7th in the combined sea and land area.¹⁰ (*Pustekkom Kemdikbud/ Center for Communication and Information Technology of Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, 2017*)



Picture 1: The Map of Indonesia

Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/maps/indonesia-map/> Access Date 02/11/2021

Based on BPS/Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, in 2010 Indonesia had 633 ethnic/tribal groups. The Javanese are the largest ethnic group with a proportion of

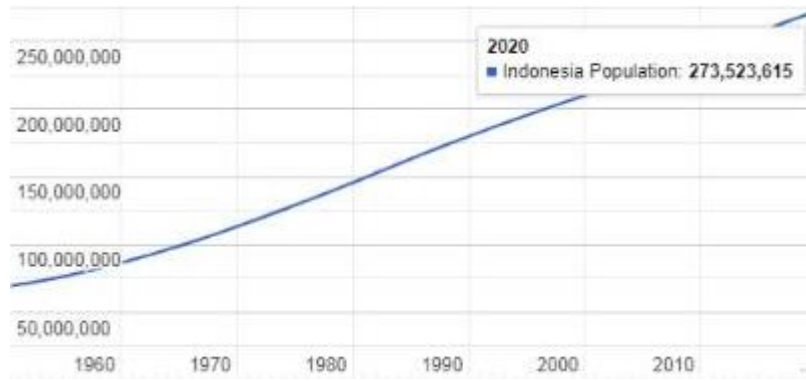
¹⁰ According to the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 137 of 2017 dated December 29, 2017, Indonesia has 34 provinces with a total area of 1.91 million square km. The province with the largest area is Papua, which reaches 319 thousand square km, followed by Central Kalimantan with an area of 154 thousand square km in second place. The province with the smallest area is DKI Jakarta (the Special Capital City Region of Jakarta), which is only one-fifth of the area of the easternmost province of Indonesia (Papua Province).

40.05 percent of the total population of Indonesia. Occupying the second position is the Sundanese with 15.50 percent. Furthermore, other ethnic groups have a proportion below five percent of Indonesia's population. (BPS/Indonesian Central Statistics Agency, 2010)

In terms of language, the official language is Indonesian, and this is a compulsory subject taught in schools, from elementary school to tertiary education. (Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 24, 2009)¹¹ People speak one of several hundred languages and local dialects, and of all these, Javanese is the most widely spoken language of the largest ethnic group.

The Ministry of Education and Culture's Language Development and Development Agency (Ministry of Education and Culture) has mapped and verified 652 regional languages in Indonesia. This number does not include dialects and sub dialects. Several international institutions have also taken part in mapping languages in Indonesia, such as the International Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) with the Ethnologies project and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) with the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger program. However, due to methodological differences, the number of languages that were mapped by these institutions also differed. The Summer Institute of Linguistics stated that the number of languages in Indonesia is 719 regional languages and 707 of them are still actively spoken. Meanwhile, UNESCO has only listed 143 regional languages in Indonesia based on the status of the vitality or vitality of the language. (*Badan Bahasa Kemendikbud/* Language Development Agency of the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018). In 2020 Indonesia's population is **273,523,615** people based on Worldometer elaboration of the latest United Nations data.

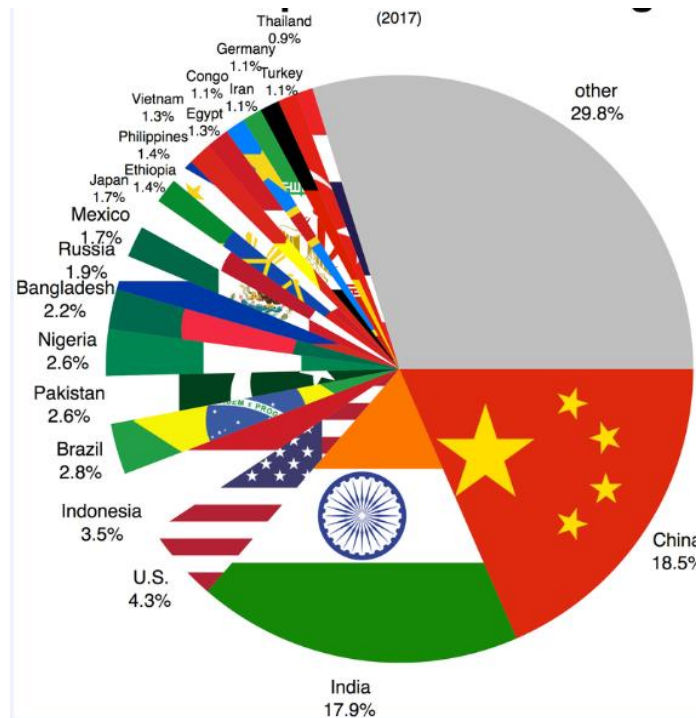
¹¹ The Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 24 of 2009 concerning The Flag, Language, Symbol Of The Country, and The National Anthem, specifically in Chapter III Articles 25-45.



Graphic 1: Indonesia Population

Source: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/indonesia-population/> Access Date 07/11/2021

Indonesia also occupies the 4th country with the most population in the world (3.5% of the world's population) after China, the United States, and India.



Picture 2: World Population Percentages

Source: https://eco-ventures.in/world_population.html Access Date 07/11/2021

Indonesia is a secular democratic country that has a Muslim-majority population. The Indonesian constitution guarantees all people in Indonesia the freedom of worship, each according to his or her own religion or belief. It also stipulates that the state shall be based upon the belief in "the one and only God" (a condition which also forms the first

principle of Pancasila, the Indonesian state philosophy and ideology introduced by the first president of Indonesia Soekarno in 1945). (Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia article 29 paragraphs 1 and 2, 1945)¹²

In Indonesia, with Pancasila as the state ideology, religion plays an important role in the country. Even the constitution gives freedom of religion; the government officially recognized only six religions: Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. (UU PNPS No. 1 Tahun 1965/ Decree of the President of the Republic of Indonesia No. 1 Year 1965)¹³

Based on data from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as many as 236.53 million people (86.88%) are Muslims, 20.4 million people (7.49%) are Protestant Christians, 8.42 million people (3.09%) are Catholic Christians, 4.67 million or 1.71% are Hindus, 2.04 million people or 0.75% are Buddhists, 73.02 thousand people (0.03%) are Confucians and 102 .51 thousand people (0.04%) adhere to other faiths/religions. The natives of the Indonesian archipelago originally practiced indigenous animism and dynamism, beliefs that are common to Austronesian people. They worshipped and revered ancestral spirits, and believed that supernatural spirits (Hyang) might inhabit certain places such as large trees, stones, forests, mountains, or sacred sites. (Dukcapil/Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2021)

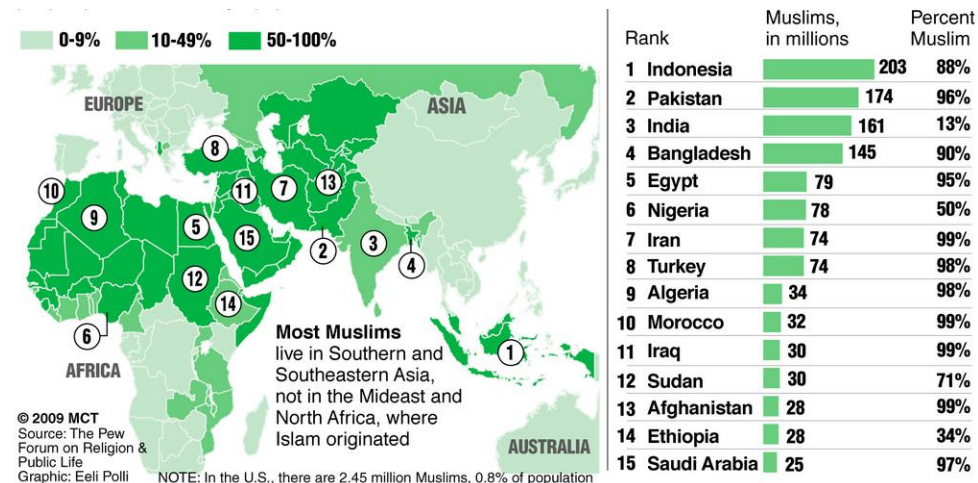
Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim-majority country with the majority being Sunnis (99%). The Shias and Ahmadis respectively constitute 1% (1–3 million) and 0.2% (200,000–400,000) of the Muslim population. Almost 10% of Indonesians are Christians, while the rest are Hindus, Buddhists, and others. Most Hindus are Balinese, and most Buddhists are Chinese Indonesians. (International Religious Freedom Report, 2008)

¹² The 1945 Constitution Article 29 Paragraphs 1 and 2 are as follows:

(1) The state is based on the One Godhead.

(2) The state guarantees the independence of each resident to embrace their own religion and worship according to their religion and beliefs.

¹³Decree of the President of the Republic of Indonesia No. 1 Year 1965 Paragraph II Article I: The religions embraced by the population in Indonesia are Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism.



Picture 3: Largest Muslim Populations in the World

Source: <https://www.muslim.org.au/> Access Date 08/11/2021

Although the majority of Indonesians are Muslims, Indonesia does not identify itself as an Islamic state. Instead, it identifies itself as a religious state, seeking to accommodate all of the six recognized religions.

1.2. History of Religious Education in Indonesia

Since the beginning, Religious Education, especially Islamic religious education has been supported by the state, as evidenced by the inclusion of Religious Education into the national education curriculum. However, the implementation of Religious Education in Indonesia is very dynamic, depending on the regime that rules the country. The implementation and development of Religious education in public schools both public and private after Indonesia's independence is divide into three phases, namely;

1. The first phase from 1946 – 1965; that is, as a phase of laying the foundation of religious education in public schools. This phase can be said as the beginning phase of the implementation of Religious Education.
2. The second phase from 1966 – 1989; that is, after the General Session of MPRS/1966, TAP MPRS No. XXVII/MPRS/1966 which in article 1 stipulates religious education to be a subject in schools from elementary schools to universities.
3. The third phase since 1990 – present; that is, after the enactment of the National Education System Law (Law No. 2 of 1989) in which religious education as one of the subjects that must be given at every type, path, and level of education.

In Indonesia, Religious Education was only in public schools, but after the issuance of Law No. 2 of 1989 on the National Education System, Religious Education was mandatory in public and private schools, from elementary schools to higher education. However, private schools on the basis of certain religions have no obligation to conduct religious education subject from other religions. This policy is strengthened by the issuance of government regulation No. 29/1990 which states that schools based on certain religions are not required to teach other religions, for example, Catholic-based schools are not obliged to provide religious lessons other than Catholic religious lessons. (Indonesian Government Regulation No. 29, 1990)

1.3. Religious Education Institutions in Indonesia

There are several articles in Law no. 20 of 2003 which allude to Islamic education institutions. In this regulation, there are at least three things related to Islamic education.

In article 1 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 20 of 2003 states that formal education is a structured and tiered education pathway consisting of basic education, secondary education, and higher education. Non-formal education is a path of education outside formal education that can be implemented in a structured and tiered manner. Informal education is a path of family and environmental education.

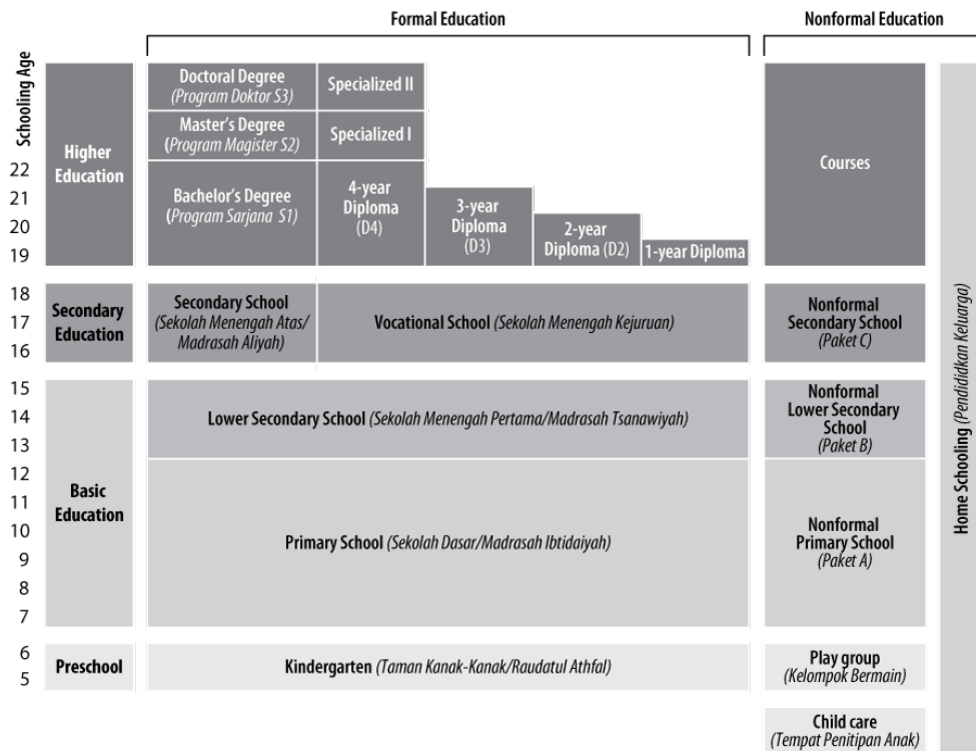
Formal Islamic education in Indonesia is carried out in madrasahs, madrasah institutions are one of the formal educational institutions that are recognized as being equal to school education institutions, and their position is also emphasized as schools that are characterized by the Islamic religion. The existence of Islamic education institutions as formal institutions is stated in Article 17 that Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) is equivalent to Elementary Schools (SD) and or other equivalent forms. Then Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) is equivalent to Junior High Schools (SMP) and or other equivalent forms. Regarding secondary education, it is stated in article 18 that Madrasah Aliyah Secondary Education (MA) or Vocational Madrasah Aliyah (MAK) is equivalent to Senior High School (SMA), Vocational High School (SMK), and or other equivalent forms. Meanwhile, Article 20 states

that higher education can be in the form of an Academy, Polytechnic, College, Institute, or University.

As with other levels of education, early childhood education in Indonesia is also divided into three channels, namely formal, non-formal and informal, this is confirmed in the Education System Law. The formal education pathway is held at Kindergarten (TK), Raudhatul Athfal (RA) with a range of children aged 4-6 years.

Furthermore, Article 26 states that non-formal education is provided for members of the community who need educational services that function as a substitute, enhancement, and/or complement to formal education in order to support lifelong education. The non-formal education unit consists of course institutions, training institutions, community study groups, and non-formal early childhood education channels held in Playgroups (*Kelompok Bermain*) with children aged 2-4 years and similar educational units. The results of non-formal education can be valued as equal to the results of formal education programs after going through an equivalence assessment process by an institution appointed by the Government or local government with reference to national education standards.

Article 27 states that informal educational activities carried out by families and the environment take the form of independent learning activities. Furthermore, in the informal education pathway, it is held at Child Care (Taman Penitipan Anak) with ages ranging from 3 months to 2 years, or other forms of the equivalent with an age range of 4-6 years (Suyadi & Ulfah, 2013, p. 21)



Picture 4: Formal and Non-Formal Education in Indonesia

Source: <http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/timss2015/encyclopedia/countries/indonesia/> Access Date 09/11/2021

1.4. Religious Education in Indonesian's School

Once again, Indonesia supports Religious Education, and not only permitted but also required, in public or private schools. In the Draft Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 20 of 2003 relating to the National Education System, article 12, Item 1 (a) states *"Every student in an education unit has the right to: (a) receive religious education with his own beliefs and be taught by a teacher with the same faith."* This means that all students hold the right to receive Religious Education in public and private schools.

The national language used in education throughout the country is Indonesian, both public schools and Madrasas. (Banks, 2009). In Indonesia, all students must receive Religious Education, from elementary school to tertiary education, and schools are required to provide it. However, the number of hours varies from school to school; it depends on the type of school, whether it is a state school, madrasa, private school, or private school based on religion. (Constitutions of Republic Indonesia, 2003)

Because Islam is not a state ideology, the contents of Religious Education in schools are not only Islamic teachings, but also Christianity (Protestantism and Catholicism), Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. However, each religion is taught separately based on students' faith and taught by religious teachers. So, there are many types of Religious Education, for examples: Religious Education for Islam, Religious Education for Catholicism, Religious Education for Protestantism, Religious Education for Hinduism, and Religious Education for Buddhism.

The division of religious class classes will be carried out based on the religion listed on the student's identity card, because the administrative requirements when registering for a formal education institution are to fill in complete personal data (including explaining the religion adhered to) or submit an identity card where the identity card in Indonesia has a religion column that explains religion of the identity card holder. Religious teachers at formal educational institutions in Indonesia are teachers who actually work full time as religious teachers at the school (not people taken from outside the school), some teachers graduate from different religious department will teach religious lessons in the schools.

1.4.1. Time Allocation for Religion Lesson in School

In this session, we will discuss what lessons are given in Indonesian schools and the allocation of time per lesson as well as the allocation of time for religious education lessons in public schools and in Islamic faith-based schools (Madrasah). The following is an example of a curriculum at Elementary School and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic-based Elementary School):

Table 2: Public Elementary School Curriculum

Subjects		WEEK TIME TEACHING - LEARNING (... Class)					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Group A							
1	Religion and Moral Education	4	4	4	4	4	4
2	Pancasila and civic education	5	5	6	4	4	4
3	Indonesian Language	8	9	10	7	7	7
4	Mathematics	5	6	6	6	6	6
5	Natural Sciences	-	-	-	3	3	3
6	Liberal arts	-	-	-	3	3	3
Group B							
8	Cultural Arts and Crafts (including local content)*	4	4	4	5	5	5
9	Physical education and health (including local content)	4	4	4	4	4	4
Weekly Time Allocation Amount		30	32	34	36	36	36

Source: https://simpuh.kemendikbud.go.id/regulasi/permendikbud_68_13_lampiran.pdf Permendikbud,

“Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 10/11/2021

Table 3: Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah Curriculum (Islamic Based - Elementary School)

SUBJECTS		WEEK TIME TEACHING - LEARNING (... Class)					
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Group A							
1	Islamic Education						
a	Quran Hadiths	2	2	2	2	2	2
b	Faith and Moral Education	2	2	2	2	2	2
c	Fiqh/Islamic Jurisprudence	2	2	2	2	2	2
d	Islamic History	-	-	2	2	2	2
2	Pancasila and civic education	5	5	6	5	5	5
3	Indonesian Language	8	9	10	7	7	7
4	Arabic language	2	2	2	2	2	2
5	Mathematics	5	6	6	6	6	6
6	Natural Sciences	-	-	-	3	3	3
7	Liberal arts	-	-	-	3	3	3
Group B							
8	Cultural Arts and Crafts	4	4	4	5	5	5
9	Physical Education and Health	4	4	4	4	4	4
Weekly Time Allocation Amount		34	36	40	43	43	43

Source: https://simpuh.kemenag.go.id/regulasi/permendikbud_68_13_lampiran.pdf Permendikbud,

“Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 10/11/2021

Based on the table it can be concluded that there are differences in the time of studying Religious Education in public schools and madrasas. Religious education in public schools is only 4 hours / week (religious studies are adjusted to the religion of each student, for example if a student is Hindu then he or she will get a Hindu Religious

Education lesson, etc.), while for madrasa approximately 8 hours / week for subjects related to Islamic religious education + Arabic lessons are given 2 hours / week. Group A is a subject that gives more competency orientation to cognitive and affective aspects while group B is a subject that emphasizes more on the affective and psychomotor aspects.

The following is an example of a curriculum at Junior High School and Madrasah Tsanawiyah (Islamic-based Junior High School).

Table 4: Junior High School Curriculum Structure (Public School)

SUBJECTS		WEEK TIME TEACHING - LEARNING (... Class)		
		VII	VIII	IX
Group A				
1	Religion and Moral Education	3	3	3
2	Pancasila and civic education	3	3	3
3	Indonesian Language	6	6	6
4	Mathematics	5	5	5
5	Natural Sciences	5	5	5
6	Liberal arts	4	4	4
7	English Language	4	4	4
Group B				
8	Cultural Arts (including local content) *	3	3	3
9	physical education and health (including local content)	3	3	3
10	Crafts (including local content)	2	2	2
Weekly Time Allocation Amount		30	38	38 ¹⁴

Source: https://simpuh.kemenag.go.id/regulasi/permendikbud_68_13_lampiran.pdf Permendikbud,

“Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 10/11/2021

¹⁴ Permendikbud, “Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English)

Table 5: Madrasah Tsanawiyah Curriculum Structure (Islamic Based – Junior High School)

Subjects		Week Time Teaching – Learning (... Class)		
		VII	VIII	IX
Group A				
1	Islamic Education			
	a Quran Hadiths	2	2	2
	b Faith and Moral Education	2	2	2
	c Fiqh/Islamic Jurisprudence	2	2	2
	d Islamic History	2	2	2
2	Pancasila and civic education	3	3	3
3	Indonesian Language	6	6	6
4	Arabic language	3	3	3
5	Mathematics	5	5	5
6	Natural Sciences	5	5	5
7	Liberal arts	4	4	4
8	English Language	4	4	4
Group B				
9	Cultural Arts	3	3	3
10	Physical education and health	3	3	3
11	Handicrafts	2	2	2
Weekly Time Allocation Amount		46	46	46 ¹⁵

Source: https://simpuh.kemendikbud.go.id/regulasi/permendikbud_68_13_lampiran.pdf Permendikbud, “Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior

¹⁵ Ibid.

High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 10/11/2021

Based on the table it can be concluded that there are differences in the time of studying Religious Education in public schools and madrasas. Unlike in Elementary Schools, Religious Education in the first public school has a smaller number of hours which is only 3 hours / week (religious studies are adjusted to the religion of each student, for example if a student is Hindu then he will get a Hindu Religious Education lesson, etc), while for madrasa approximately 8 hours / week for subjects relating to Islamic education + Arabic lessons are given 3 hours / week.

The structure of compulsory subject groups in the SMA / MA curriculum is as follows:

Table 6: Senior High School Curriculum Structure (Public School)

Subjects		WEEK TIME TEACHING - LEARNING		
		(... Class)		
Group A (Compulsory)		X	XI	XII
1	Religion and Moral Education	3	3	3
2	Pancasila and civic education	2	2	2
3	Indonesian Language	4	4	4
4	Math	4	4	4
5	Indonesian History	2	2	2
6	English language	2	2	2
Group B (Compulsory)				
7	Cultural Arts (including local content) *	2	2	2
8	physical education and health (including local content)	3	3	3
9	Crafts (including local content)	2	2	2
Group C (Specialization)				
I. Specialization in Mathematics and Natural Sciences				

1	Math	3	4	4
2	Biology	3	4	4
3	Physical	3	4	4
4	Chemistry	3	4	4
II. Specialization in Social Sciences				
1	Geography	3	4	4
2	History	3	4	4
3	Sociology	3	4	4
4	Economy	3	4	4
III. Specialization in Language and Culture				
1	Indonesian Language and Literature	3	4	4
2	English Language and Literature	3	4	4
3	Other Foreign Languages and Literature	3	4	4
4	Anthropology	3	4	4
IV. Elective and Deepening Topics				
	Cross Rate Options and/or Deepening Rates	6	4	4
Hours of classes per week		42	44	44 ¹⁶

Source: https://simpuh.kemenag.go.id/regulasi/permendikbud_68_13_lampiran.pdf Permendikbud,

“Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 10/11/2021

¹⁶ Permendikbud, “*Lampiran Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 68 Tahun 2013 Tentang Kerangka Dasar Dan Struktur Kurikulum Sekolah Menengah Atas/Madrasah Aliyah*”, page 9.

Table 7: Madrasah Aliyah Curriculum Structure (Islamic Based – Senior High School)

Subjects		Week Time Teaching - Learning			
		(... Class)			
Group A (Compulsory)		X	XI	XII	
1	Islamic Education				
	a	Quran Hadiths	2	2	2
	b	Faith and Moral Education	2	2	2
	c	Fiqh/Islamic Jurisprudence	2	2	2
	d	Islamic History	2	2	2
2	Pancasila and civic education		3	2	2
3	Indonesian Language		6	4	4
4	Arabic language		4	2	2
5	Mathematics		4	4	4
6	Indonesian History		2	2	2
7	English language		2	2	2
Group B (Compulsory)					
7	Cultural Arts		2	2	2
8	Physical education and health		3	3	3
9	Labor and Entrepreneurship		2	2	2
Group C (Specialization)					
I. Specialization in Mathematics and Natural Sciences					
1	Math		3	4	4
2	Biology		3	4	4
3	Physical		3	4	4

4	Chemistry	3	4	4
II. Specialization in Social Sciences				
1	Geography	3	4	4
2	History	3	4	4
3	Sociology	3	4	4
4	Economy	3	4	4
III. Specialization in Language and Culture				
1	Indonesian Language and Literature	3	4	4
2	English Language and Literature	3	4	4
3	Other Foreign Languages and Literature	3	4	4
4	Anthropology	3	4	4
IV. Specialization in Islamic theology				
1	Tafsir / Commentary	2	3	3
2	Hadith	2	3	3
3	Fiqh - Usul Fiqh/Islamic Jurisprudence – Principle of Islamic Jurisprudence	2	3	3
4	Theology	2	2	2
5	Morality	2	2	2
6	Arabic language	2	3	3
V. Elective and Deepening Topics				
	Cross Rate Options and/or Deepening Rates	6	4	4
Hours of classes per week		51	51	51 ¹⁷

Source: https://simpuh.kemenag.go.id/regulasi/permendikbud_68_13_lampiran.pdf Permendikbud,

“Attachment of Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 68 of 2013 concerning the Basic Framework and Curriculum Structure of Elementary, Junior, and Senior High Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah, Tsanawiyah, and Alawiyah”, page 7. (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 10/11/2021

¹⁷ ibid

Based on the table it can be concluded that there are differences in the time of studying Religious Education in public schools and madrasas. Religious Education in Senior High Schools has a number of hours of religious instruction which is 3 hours / week (religious studies are adjusted to the religion of each student, for example if the student is Hindu then he will get a Hindu Religious Education lesson, etc.), while for Madrasah Aliyah with majors (Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Languages) approximately 8 hours / week for subjects related to Islamic education, whereas for students who majored in religion, the total number of Islamic subjects in a week is 14 hours.

1.5. History of Preschool Education in Indonesia (*Taman Kanak kanak*/TK/*Kindergarten* and *Raudhatul Athfal/RA*)

The history of early childhood education in Indonesia can be traced through 3 periods, namely during the National movement during the Dutch colonial era (1908 – 1941), the Japanese colonial period (1942 – 1945), and the period after Independence.

1) Period during the National Movement During Dutch colonialism (1908-1941)

In the Dutch colonial period there were 2 types of schools implemented, namely European Large School (ELS) and *Froebel School*. However, the school is still limited to children of Dutch and other European nations only. For local Indonesian children there are still very few who are given the opportunity to attend the school, except the children of nobility.

The orientation to get cheap labor has encouraged the Dutch colonial government to organize education from elementary school level only. And especially for local Indonesian children, the target of school is only makes the local Indonesian children literate (know how to read, write, and count), so that they can be ruled easily. Therefore, the political agenda of the Dutch Colonial Government through Governor-General J.B. Van Heutz in 1907 was to organize a new type of school namely Village School (*Volks School*). This public school only reached until the third grade and at the same time designated as a mass education that is open to all local children so that the Dutch government can obtain cheap and easy-to-order labor. (Anzar, 2007)

Then at the time of the National awakening that began with the establishment of the Budi Utomo Youth Movement on May 28, 1908, then Indonesian youth realized the importance of early childhood education. Awareness of the importance of children's

education was realized by establishing Bustanul Athfal (Islamic Kindergarten) in 1919 by the Aisyiyah women's union in Yogyakarta. Then in 1922 Ki Hajar Dewantara, after his exile in the Netherlands for two years, he found Taman Lare or Kindergarten. (Directorate of History and Traditional Values, 1993)

2) Japanese Colonial Period (1942-1945)

The entry of Japan in 1942 as the colonizer of the Indonesian nation apparently brought changes to the development of early childhood education, previously Dutch-patterned into Japanese-patterned or changed from the Kindergarten education system to the Nippon system. Japan seeks to incorporate idealism into the souls of Indonesian children. Many children's lesson materials including games, singing, and stories are replaced with Japanese songs and stories. The condition does not bring improvement for the Indonesian nation. But it puts pressure so that social, economic, political conditions, including education are increasingly uncertain. At the end, the quantity and quality of education decreased and suffered setbacks. Even some preschool educational institutions more like Daycare Centers, because they do not organize educational programs in a planned and systematic manner. This condition continues, because Japan does not have a good attention to the world of education in Indonesia, especially for early childhood education. Until finally the Japanese left Indonesia due to its defeat in world war II. (Aiko, 2015)

3) Period After Indonesian Independence

After Indonesia's independence in 1945, the Commitment of the Indonesian nation to the world of education is increasingly blazing to show its existence as an independent nation. Public and government attention to education, especially early childhood education is increased so the quality of education becomes better. Since the issuance of Law No. 4 of 1950 which contains the principles of education and teaching, the position of early childhood education institutions is getting stronger. Through this law, the Indonesian government officially recognizes the existence of Kindergarten as one component of the National education system. As an effort to reach the goals of the law, the teachers began to follow the education and training organized by the government and private, the government also provides opportunities to study abroad, such as to Australia, America, and New Zealand. These efforts have a positive impact on the

development of preschool education in Indonesia. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996)

Shortly after independence, the Indonesian government increasingly pays attention to early childhood education, evidenced by the existence of preschool educational institutions mentioned in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 27 of 1990 paragraph 1 which states: *“The form of pre-school education unit shall include kindergarten, playgroup, child care, and other forms determined by the Minister”*.¹⁸

Although in this government regulation has not included the name of Raudhatul Athfal but the institution Raudhatul Athfal has been known as Bustanul Athfal in Muhammadiyah schools or by the name of Islamic kindergarten in other institutions. The first mention of Raudhatul Athfal's name was found in education law number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. In article 28 it is stated as follows, in paragraph 3: *“Early childhood education in the form of formal education in the form of kindergarten, Raudatul Athfal (RA), or other equivalent forms.”*¹⁹

¹⁸(2) Kindergarten is on the school's educational path.

(3) Play and Child Care Groups are located on the outside school education pathway.

(4) Kindergarten students are children aged 4-6 years.

(5) The duration of education in kindergarten is 1 year or 2 years.

¹⁹ (1) Early childhood education shall be conducted before the primary education level.

(2) Early childhood education may be conducted through formal, non-formal, and/or informal education channels.

(3) Early childhood education in the form of nonformal education in the form of playgroups (KB), day care parks (TPA), or other equivalent forms.

(4) Early childhood education in the form of informal education in the form of family education or education organized by the environment.

(5) Provisions on early childhood education as referred to in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) shall be further regulated by government regulations.

CHAPTER II: THE IMPLEMENTATION OF *RAUDHATUL ATHFAL*/ ISLAMIC KINDERGARTEN IN INDONESIA

2.1. The General Information of *RA/Raudhatul Athfal* in Indonesia

Raudhatul Athfal, abbreviated as RA, is a term for Islamic-based kindergartens in Indonesia. The name Raudhatul Athfal is taken from Arabic; Raudhah means garden, while Athfal means child. Raudhatul Athfal or RA is a formal education level for early childhood (ages 4-6 years) (Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia, 2010)²⁰ which is equivalent to a general kindergarten. (Law of the Republic of Indonesia, 2003)²¹

The difference between RA and TK are in terms of students, public kindergartens/TK, which is under the Kemendikbud (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan)/Ministry of Education and Culture accept students with various religious backgrounds, and it is managed professionally by teachers incorporated in the IGTK/Ikatan Guru Taman Kanak-Kanak or (Kindergarten Teachers Association), while RA which is under the Kemenag (Kementerian Agama)/Ministry of Religious Affairs is only specifically for students who are Muslim. On the other hand, RA/Raudhatul Athfal is managed professionally by teachers incorporated in the IGRA/Ikatan Guru Raudhatul Athfal (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association).

Education and the lessons taught in the general kindergarten/TK are usually general knowledge. While for RA/Raudhatul Athfal, they also add the basics of Islamic knowledge. In Indonesia, taking TK (Kindergarten)/RA level is mandatory. Because TK (Kindergarten)/RA is a formal education before *SD (Sekolah Dasar)*/Elementary School) level. (Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia, 2010)²²

²⁰ Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 66 of 2010 Article 1 Paragraph 5:

“Raudhatul Athfal, from now after abbreviated as RA, is a form of early childhood education unit in the formal education path that organizes educational programs with the specificity of Islam for children aged 4 (four) years to 6 (six) years.”

²¹ Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, Seventh Part "Early Childhood Education" Article 28 paragraph 3:

"Early childhood education in a formal education is in the form of Kindergarten (TK), Raudatul Athfal (RA), or other equivalent forms."

²² Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 17 of 2010 in article 66 paragraphs (1):

"TK/RA learning programs and other equivalent forms are developed to prepare students to enter the elementary schools, Islamic elementary schools or equivalent forms."

"Raudhatul Athfal is the foundation for students to get the best basic knowledge before continuing to a higher level of education." (Saiful Mujab, 2020)²³

2.2. The Data of RA/Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia

Like other formal schools in general, RA are also spread across 34 provinces in Indonesia. The following table is the data on the number of TK and RA in Indonesia by province.

Table 8: Number of Education Unit Data (TK and RA Schools) Per Province

No.	PROVINC E	KINDERGARTEN			RAUDHATUL ATHFAL			TOT A L
		PUBLI C	PRIVAT E	TOTA L	PUBLI C	PRIVAT E	TOTA L	
1	D.K.I Jakarta	77	1,903	1,980	0	1,043	1,043	3,023
2	Jawa Barat	154	9,176	9,330	0	7,272	7,272	16,602
3	Jawa Tengah	171	13,979	14,150	0	4,819	4,819	18,969
4	D.I. Yogyak arta	48	2,102	2,150	0	253	253	2,403
5	Jawa Timur	179	18,477	18,656	0	7,350	7,350	26,006
6	Aceh	503	2,237	2,740	0	350	350	3,090

²³Speech by Saiful Mujab as Head of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of DKI Jakarta Province at the official opening of the Technical Guidance for Strengthening the Competence of Headmasters of Raudhatul Athfal. (26/02/2020). **Source:** <https://dki.kemenag.go.id/berita/raudhatul-athfal-adalah-pondasi-awal-pendidikan-madrasah> Access Date 21/01/2022

								0
7	Sumatera Utara	199	2,877	3,076	0	1,993	1,993	5,06 9
8	Sumatera Barat	111	2,410	2,521	0	429	429	2,95 0
9	Riau	135	2,300	2,435	0	557	557	2,99 2
10	Jambi	89	1,324	1,413	0	279	279	1,69 2
11	Sumatera Selatan	135	2,134	2,269	0	522	522	2,79 1
12	Lampung	107	2,980	3,087	0	660	660	3,74 7
13	Kalimantan Barat	151	732	883	0	176	176	1,05 9
14	Kalimantan Tengah	120	1,866	1,986	0	161	161	2,14 7
15	Kalimantan Selatan	130	2,385	2,515	0	359	359	2,87 4
16	Kalimantan Timur	95	1,366	1,461	0	131	131	1,59 2
17	Sulawesi Utara	96	1,663	1,759	0	164	164	1,92 3
18	Sulawesi Tengah	97	1,964	2,061	0	124	124	2,18 5
19	Sulawesi Selatan	272	4,299	4,571	0	741	741	5,31 2
20	Sulawesi Tenggara	220	1,824	2,044	0	228	228	2,27 2

21	Maluku	128	764	892	0	85	85	977
22	Bali	129	1,457	1,586	0	114	114	1,700
23	Nusa Tenggara Barat	166	1,895	2,061	0	673	673	2,734
24	Nusa Tenggara Timur	259	1,362	1,621	0	133	133	1,754
25	Papua	137	656	793	0	28	28	821
26	Bengkulu	91	1,036	1,127	0	163	163	1,290
27	Maluku Utara	122	566	688	0	71	71	759
28	Banten	94	2,407	2,501	0	1,471	1,471	3,972
29	Kepulauan Bangka Belitung	83	292	375	0	51	51	426
30	Gorontalo	140	673	813	0	44	44	857
31	Kepulauan Riau	81	620	701	0	175	175	876
32	Papua Barat	49	392	441	0	57	57	498
33	Sulawesi Barat	80	719	799	0	156	156	955
34	Kalimantan	23	161	184	0	26	26	210

	Utara							
35	Overseas	7	2	9	0	0	0	9
TOTAL		4,678	91,000	95,678	0	30,858	30,858	126,536

Source: Data from Ministry Of Education and Culture

https://referensi.data.kemdikbud.go.id/index21_tkra.php Access Date 10/05/2022

From the data above, we can see that not even one Raudhatul Athfal (RA) has a public status, all Raudhatul Athfal (RA) in Indonesia are still private (not a public school).

“The mechanism for establishing a public RA has been stated in the Minister of Religion Regulation No. 14 of 2014 concerning the Establishment of Madrasahs and Nationalization. All requirements for conversion are very easy, except for the requirement about land area, which is minimum 1000 square meters for maximum 54 students and so on. This is the problem, especially in the big cities; it is so hard to find large land/area in the big cities. This requirement is not effective. So there needs to be a slight revision in these rules.” (Ibnu Salman, 2019)²⁴

“Currently RA is owned by a foundation, so the standards are still different. But RA has a fundamental difference with TK (Kindergarten), which is RA have Islamic religion characteristic. So even all RA in Indonesia is not a public school, but this Islamic characteristic that makes RA grows rapidly.” (Nurhattati Fuad, 2019)²⁵

Although none of the RAs has a public status, from the table above, we can see that the interest of parents in sending their children to RA is quite high, as evidenced the total of RA are 30,858 units spread across 34 provinces in Indonesia, which is 31% of the total number of general kindergarten/TK in Indonesia (total TK are 95,678 units).

²⁴ Ibnu Salman, Researcher at the Jakarta Religious Research and Development Center, in the Discussion Seminar on the Preparation of the Raudhatul Athfal Academic Manuscript at the Grand Cemara Hotel, Jakarta on April 16, 2019. **Source:** <https://blajakarta.kemenag.go.id/berita/tantangan-penegertian-raudhatul-athfal> Access Date 02/06/2022

²⁵ Nurhattati Fuad, Researcher from Universitas Negeri Jakarta/State University of Jakarta, in the Discussion Seminar on the Preparation of the Raudhatul Athfal Academic Manuscript at the Grand Cemara Hotel, Jakarta on April 16, 2019. **Source:** <https://blajakarta.kemenag.go.id/berita/tantangan-penegertian-raudhatul-athfal> Access Date 02/06/2022

2.3. The Qualification of *Raudhatul Athfal's* Teachers in Indonesia

In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 14 of 2005 states that “what is meant by teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in formal education such as in early childhood education, primary education, and secondary education.” (Law of the Republic of Indonesia, 2005)²⁶

The teaching profession is often underestimated by some people, but actually the teacher has very heavy tasks. As stated Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, the goals of the Republic of Indonesia are (Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, 1945):²⁷

- 1) Protect the entire Indonesian nation and all of Indonesia's bloodshed
- 2) Promote the general welfare
- 3) Enrich the life of the nation
- 4) Participate in carrying out world order based on freedom, eternal peace, and social justice.

Therefore, the teachers are not only responsible to their students or school but also responsible to the state. Teachers take a very important role in actualizing the goals of national education; enrich the life of the nation. This is the reason that the competence and qualifications of the teachers must always be improved in order to keep up with the times and technologies.

In Law no. 14 of 2005 chapter IV Article 8, the first part on “Teacher Qualification, Competence, and Certification”, it is written that several things that must be owned by teachers in Indonesia:

- 1) Academic Qualifications

According to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 16 of 2007, there are several standards of academic qualifications and teacher competence in all

²⁶ UU RI/Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers Chapter I General Provisions Article 1

²⁷ Preamble of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, 4th Paragraph

formal school (early childhood, primary, secondary level). The academic qualification for teacher in formal school is at least graduate from diploma four (D-IV) or bachelor (S1) in the related field.

Further on the standard of teacher academic qualifications in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia which states that early childhood education teacher academic qualifications: (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2014)²⁸

a) Have a Diploma four (D-IV) or Bachelor (S1) diploma in the field of early childhood education, and other education relevant to the early childhood education system, or psychology obtained from an accredited study program. Especially for RA teachers, a minimum of a diploma four (D-IV) or bachelor (S1) graduate from the PGRA/Raudhatul Athfal Teacher Education department is required. (Regulation of the Minister of National Education, 2007)

b) Have an Early Childhood Education Professional Teacher Education certificate from an accredited university or Raudhatul Athfal Teacher Professional Education certificate for RA teachers.

2) Teacher Competency Standards

Based on the Indonesian Government Regulation of 2005 states that: the competencies that teachers at the early childhood, primary and secondary education levels, including kindergarten and RA teachers are²⁹:

a) Pedagogic Competence

Pedagogic competence is the ability to manage student learning which includes understanding students, designing and implementing learning, evaluating learning outcomes, and developing students to actualize their various potentials.

b) Personality Competence

²⁸ Number 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education Chapter VII Article 25 Paragraph 1

²⁹ Government Regulation (PP) No. 19 of 2005 which regulates National Education Standards Chapter VI concerning Standards for Educators and Education Personnel, Part One concerning Educators, Article 28 Paragraph 3,

Personality competence is the personality of an educator who is steady, stable, mature, wise, and authoritative, becomes a role model for students, and has noble character.

c) Professional Competence

Professional competence is the ability of educators in mastering learning materials broadly and deeply that allows them to guide students in obtaining the specified competencies.

d) Social Competence

Social competence is the ability of educators to communicate and interact effectively with students, fellow educators, education staff, parents/guardians of students, and the society.

3) Educator Certificate

One of the requirements to become a professionally recognized teacher is to have an educator certificate. However, this requirement is not mandatory, someone with a minimum D4 or S1 graduate majoring in education/non-education (without an educator certificate) can also work as a teacher. This also applies to RA; teachers in RA are also not required to have an educator certificate.

An educator certificate is only an added value for a teacher to be recognized professionally and also to get other benefits such as getting additional salary allowances, professional allowances, etc. Teachers who have received an educator certificate are usually called certified teachers.

Educator Certificates for Teachers are obtained through professional education programs organized by universities that have accredited educational personnel procurement programs, both organized by the Government and the Community, and determined by the Government. To get this educator certificate, teachers must pass an educator competency test in the form of a portfolio assessment. The portfolio assessment in question is an acknowledgment of the teacher's professional experience in

the form of an assessment of a collection of documents that describe (Government Regulation of The Republic of Indonesia, 2008)³⁰:

- a) Academic Qualifications;
 - b) Education and training;
 - c) Teaching experience;
 - d) Learning planning and implementation;
 - e) Assessment from superiors and supervisors;
 - f) Academic achievement;
 - g) Professional development work;
 - h) Participation in scientific forums;
 - i) Organizational experience in the field of education and social affairs;
 - j) Awards, relevant to the field of education.
- 4) Physically and Spiritually Healthy

A teacher is required to be physically and mentally healthy, so the teacher can carry out the duties as an educator properly. Physical health is health related to someone's body or it can also be called a person who is free from diseases. Teachers are field officers that must contact directly with the students every day. Especially for teachers at the early childhood education level (TK/RA) it is very important to be physically healthy, because children are usually more susceptible to contracting diseases, teachers who suffer from diseases for example infectious diseases will certainly be very dangerous for students.

While spiritual health is a person's mental health related to a healthy mind without psychological disorders. A teacher is required to be spiritually healthy, especially teachers at the early childhood education (RA) level. RA teachers must build a good mood so that the learning process can be fun for children, especially for early childhood children like RA students, because the learning system in RA is more dominant in games than the material.

- 5) Having the Ability to Support the Actualization of The National Education Goals

³⁰ Government Regulation of the Republic Of Indonesia Number 74 of 2008 Concerning Teachers Article 12

A teacher is required to have the ability to support the goal of national education; enrich the intellectual life of the Indonesian nation. The abilities and qualifications have been regulated in the laws of the Republic of Indonesia.

2.4. The Data of Schools, Teachers, and Students in RA Indonesia

After discussing what qualifications are needed to become a teacher, then we will discuss the number of schools, teachers, and students of Raudatul Athfal (RA) under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This following data are taken from the official website of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. (Central Bureau of Statistics Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020)

Table 9: The Data of Schools, Teachers, and Students in RA by Province in Indonesia (2020/2021)

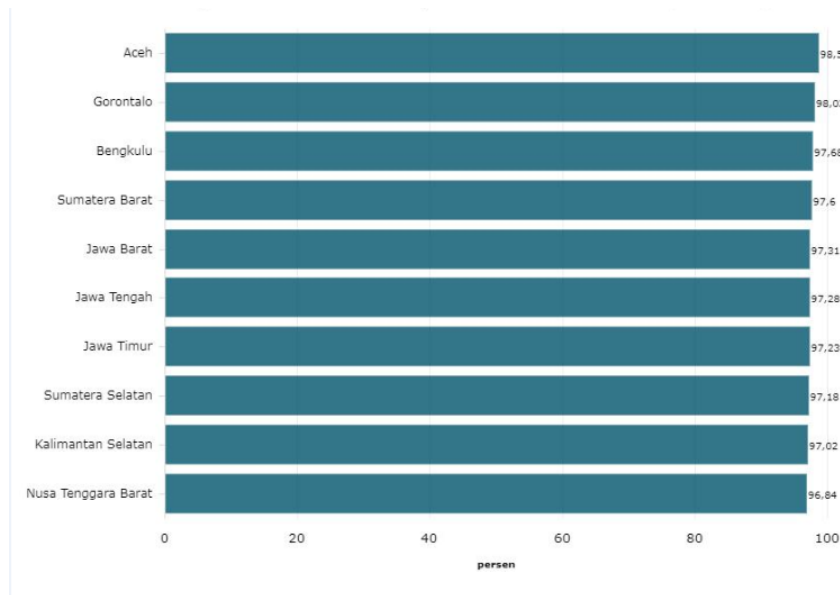
<i>Province</i>	Number of Raudhatul Athfal Schools	Number of Teachers Raudhatul Athfal	Number of Students Raudhatul Athfal
Aceh	323	1.929	15.627
Sumatera Utara	1.892	7.664	81.727
Sumatera Barat	416	1.430	14.080
Riau	538	2.491	22.630
Jambi	274	1.166	10.990
Sumatera Selatan	492	2.241	21.120
Bengkulu	139	627	5.101
Lampung	649	2.950	34.817
Kepulauan Bangka Belitung	48	249	2.783
Kepulauan Riau	177	747	6.638
DKI Jakarta	1.005	4.170	32.589
Jawa Barat	7.146	28.537	271.913

Jawa Tengah	4.746	17.032	228.276
DI Yogyakarta	248	1.069	10.686
Jawa Timur	7.242	29.359	310.447
Banten	1.427	6.286	64.052
Bali	112	571	5.939
Nusa Tenggara Barat	648	3.112	33.311
Nusa Tenggara Timur	131	469	4.929
Kalimantan Barat	174	789	7.663
Kalimantan Tengah	156	812	8.618
Kalimantan Selatan	351	1.681	17.578
Kalimantan Timur	127	598	4.967
Kalimantan Utara	27	183	1.381
Sulawesi Utara	159	470	5.781
Sulawesi Tengah	114	403	4.379
Sulawesi Selatan	703	2.477	24.067
Sulawesi Tenggara	225	871	8.944
Gorontalo	44	229	2.806
Sulawesi Barat	150	602	5.918
Maluku	82	329	3.256
Maluku Utara	68	285	3.039
Papua Barat	54	216	2.666
Papua	26	111	1.230
TOTAL	30.113	122.155	1.279.948

Source: https://www.bps.go.id/indikator/indikator/view_data_pub/0000/api_pub/SmNxWnFzemevcUkvdndUbTJGc2RQdz09/da_04/1 Access Date 02/06/2022

From the data above, we can see that all provinces in Indonesia (a total of 34 provinces) have an Islamic-based kindergarten (Raudhatul Athfal/RA) with a very varied number of schools, teachers and students. The province with the highest number of Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia is Jawa Timur/East Java Province which has around 7,242 Raudhatul Athfal.

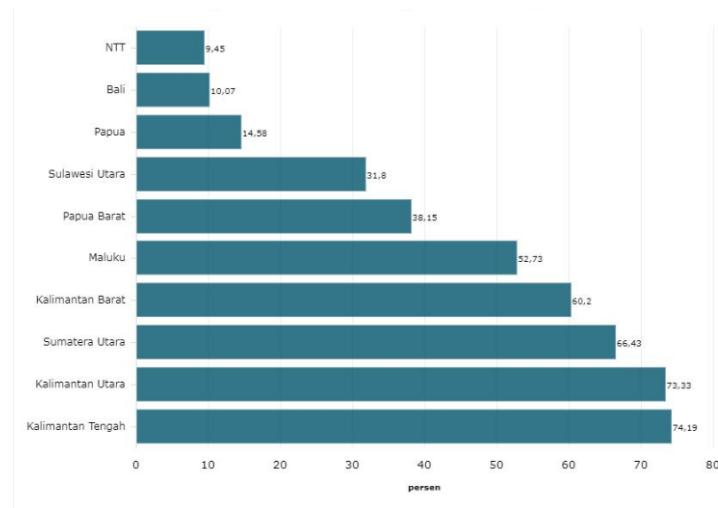
However, if we look at the data sourced from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (December 2021 data), the province of Jawa Timur/East Java which has the highest number of RA is not the province with the largest Muslim population in Indonesia. The largest Muslim population in Indonesia is in the province of Aceh, the total Muslim population in Aceh is 5.27 million people, or reaching 98.57% of the total population of 5.35 million people, but the province of Aceh only has a very small number of Raudhatul Athfal which is only about 323 Raudhatul Athfal. Meanwhile, Jawa Timur/East Java province, which has the highest number of RAs in Indonesia, only ranks 7th as the largest Muslim population in Indonesia, with a Muslim population of 97.23%.



Picture 5: The 10 Provinces with the Largest Percentage of Muslim Populations in Indonesia

Source: <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/02/14/10-provinsi-dengan-persentase-muslim-terbesar-tahun-2021> Access Date 17/06/2022

Then the lowest number of RA is found in the provinces of Papua and Kalimantan Utara/North Kalimantan. Papua Province only has a total of 26 RAs, while Kalimantan Utara/North Kalimantan Province only has a total of 27 RAs. This is actually reasonable because these 2 provinces are included in the top 10 categories as the provinces with the smallest percentage of Muslim population in Indonesia.



Picture 6: The 10 Provinces with the Smallest Percentage of Muslim Populations in Indonesia

Source: <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2022/02/15/10-provinsi-dengan-persentase-muslim-terkecil-tahun-2021> Access Date 17/06/2022

However, if we look at the data sourced from the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (December 2021 data), the province with the smallest Muslim population in Indonesia is the Province of East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), with 9.45% Muslims of the total population. The total population in NTT Province reaches 5.49 million people and the total Muslim population is only 518.92 thousand people. However, even though NTT Province is the province with the smallest Muslim population in Indonesia, this province has a total of 131 RAs, where the number of RAs is more than Papua and North Kalimantan Provinces.

Papua Province which has the lowest number of RAs in Indonesia (a total of 26 RAs) is the province with the 3rd smallest Muslim population in Indonesia, the percentage of the population who are Muslim in this province is only around 14.58% or 627.58 thousand people. Meanwhile, North Kalimantan Province which has the least number of

RA no.2 in Indonesia (total 27 RA) is the province with the smallest Muslim population no.9 in Indonesia, the percentage of the population who is Muslim in this province is only about 73.33% or 511.87 thousand souls.

So, from the data listed in the table above, we can conclude that one of the factors that influence the development of the number of RA in Indonesia is the number of Muslim population in each region/province, but it cannot be denied that it is not always the province with the largest Muslim population will have the highest number of RA in Indonesia, and vice versa. The number of RA really depends on the community needs and policies of each province and region.

2.5. Legal Basis, Characteristics, Curriculum, Content, Scope, and Textbooks of *Raudhatul Athfal*

2.5.1. Legal Basis of Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum in Indonesia

According to Law Number 20 of 2003³¹ concerning the Indonesian National Education System, the curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the objectives, content, and learning materials and the methods used as guidelines for implementing learning activities to achieve specific educational goals (Habe & Ahiruddin, 2017). Furthermore, the law on the Indonesian national education system emphasizes that the curriculum is developed with the principle of diversity to allow the adjustment of educational programs in academic units to the conditions and peculiarities of the potential that exists in the region and the characteristics desired by students.

Early childhood education is education that focuses on physical growth (fine and gross motor coordination), intelligence (thinking power, creativity, emotion, and spirituality), social-emotional (attitudes and behavior), religious education, language, and communication, in accordance with uniqueness and stages of development that are passed by early childhood (Agustina et al., 2019).

Raudhatul Athfal, as an Islamic-based Early Childhood Education unit in Indonesia under the guidance of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, must have differences with early childhood education in general. Raudhatul Athfal focuses on child development,

³¹ Law of the Republic of Indonesia number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, chapter I: General Provisions, Article 1 Paragraph 19.

transformation, and internalizing of Islamic spiritual values. The quality standard of Raudhatul Athfal lies in the religious values inherent in all components of Raudhatul Athfal, including educators, education staff, parents, and a conducive environment. Considering the urgency of Raudhatul Athfal in the formation of the character of child development, the Raudhatul Athfal education unit needs to develop correctly. For this reason, Raudhatul Athfal is an early childhood education institution and an embryo of moral education for the younger generation and the introduction of Islamic values in children from an early age.(Direktorat KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019)

2.5.2. Characteristics of Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum

Raudhatul Athfal, as an early childhood education institution with Islam character, must have different curriculum characteristics from other early childhood education institutions. The characteristics of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum are as follows (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019)³²:

1) Based on Islamic values

The basis for developing Islamic values is the Al-Quran and Hadith. Al-Quran as a source of Islamic thought provides a lot of educational inspiration that needs to be developed philosophically and scientifically, this development is needed as a basic framework in building an Islamic education system. Allah the Almighty gives His instructions in the Qur'an Surah An Nahl verse 64:

"And We have not sent down to you the Book (the Quran) except that you may explain to them what they dispute and be a guide and a mercy to the believers."

Based on the verse above, the implementation of education at Raudhatul Athfal must always refer to the Al-Quran. The position of Hadith in Islamic life and thought is crucial because, in addition to strengthening and clarifying various issues in the Qur'an, it also provides a more concrete rationale regarding the application of various activities that must be developed within the framework of the life and life of Muslims. Therefore,

³² Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum concerning Characteristics of Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum Page 9 – 10.

the Prophet's Hadith is used as the basis for the development and implementation of education, including early childhood education at Raudhatul Athfal Indonesia.

2) Pay Attention to Aspects of Child Development

The Raudhatul Athfal's curriculum is structured to meet the growth and development needs according to the child's age level (age appropriateness) and in line with the potential interests and characteristics of the child as the uniqueness of the child's individual development (individual appropriateness).

3) Pay Attention to the Fundamental Values of Life as a Nation and State in Indonesia

In life as a nation and as a state, Indonesian must adhere to 4 pillars of the country: Pancasila³³, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia³⁴, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika³⁵. Therefore, the Raudhatul Athfal's curriculum must accommodate the needs of these four pillars in education.

4) Build Faith and Morality

Education is how a person acquires knowledge, develops attitude skills, or changes attitudes. Therefore, Raudhatul Athfal has a very strategic function and role in fostering and developing moral values.

The Raudhatul Athfal curriculum as a reference and guideline for developing the learning process should be based on the formation of morality. That is, the process of implementing learning that takes place at Raudhatul Athfal must refer to the values of morality.

5) Bring Out the Uniqueness of the Institution

³³ Pancasila is the official, foundational philosophical theory of Indonesia. It is composed of five principles:

1. Belief in the one Almighty God
2. Justice and civilized humanity
3. The unity of Indonesia
4. Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations among representatives
5. Social justice for all of the people of Indonesia

³⁴ The 1945 State Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (Indonesian: Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945, UUD '45) is the basis for all laws of Indonesia.

³⁵ Bhinneka Tunggal Ika is the official national motto of Indonesia, which means "Unity in Diversity." The motto refers to the unity and integrity of Indonesia, a nation consisting of various cultures, regional languages, races, ethnicities, religions and beliefs.

The guidelines for implementing the Raudhatul Athfal curriculum adapt the existing National Standards for Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Education Curriculum by adjusting the strengthening of the implementation of Islamic education values and the peculiarities of the institution as a hallmark of Raudhatul Athfal. This is a consequence of realizing the uniqueness of Raudhatul Athfal as an early childhood education unit with Islamic characteristics.

2.5.3. The Curriculum and Textbook of Raudhathul Athfal

Unlike other levels of formal education such as elementary school, junior high school, or high school whose curriculum and study load consists of various specific subjects such as physics, economics, etc., the Raudhathul Athfal curriculum does not have subjects like other levels, but only focuses on 6 aspects called scope of aspects of early childhood development which are specially designed for early childhood. The following are 6 scopes of aspects of early childhood development that must be developed in every lesson at Raudhathul Athfal (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019)³⁶:

- 1) Religious and Moral Values
- 2) Physical-Motoric
- 3) Cognitive
- 4) Language
- 5) Social Emotional
- 6) Art

The Raudhatul Athfal curriculum structure includes learning taken in one level of education for 1 – 2 years starting from class A (0 Small) to class B (0 Large) depending on the age and needs of students. A (0 Small) class is for 4 – 5 years children and B (0 Large) is for 5 – 6 years children. The period of study at Raudhatul Athfal is a minimum of 1 year or 2 semesters.

Almost all Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia use textbooks as learning materials, this textbook is issued by the IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association) in each

³⁶ Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter III Standards for the Development of Raudhatul Athfal Children, Point B: Scope of Developmental Standards.

district, so different districts also have different books published. Every RA is required to buy this textbook as an instrument in teaching students at RA. Almost all guide books use Indonesian as the language of instruction, except for the international standard Raudhatul Athfal which uses English/Arabic guidebooks.



Picture 7: Tutorial Books for Raudhatul Athfal

Note: The translation of the title of the book above

Diri Sendiri: Myself, Keluargaku: My Family, Lingkunganku: My Environment, Binatang: The Animals, Tanaman: The Plants, Kendaraan: The Vehicle, Negaraku: My Country.

Source: <http://gindaersigit.blogspot.com/2017/12/buku-lka-ra-raudatul-athfal.html> Access Date 01/03/2022

The books used are in accordance with the themes that will be discussed in the table below. Daily learning at Raudhatul Athfal uses themes to teach the students about the 6 scopes (the 6 aspects of early childhood development that must be developed in every lesson) that mentioned before. There are approximately 8 themes that will be studied for 2 semesters by RA students. The details about the themes taught in Raudhatul Athfal are generally as follows:

Table 10: Learning Theme at Raudhatul Athfal (1st Semester)

No	Theme	Sub Themes	Time Allocation
1	I'm God's Servant	My Self	1 week
		My Body	2 weeks
		My Hobby	2 weeks
2	Sakinah Family	My Family Members	2 weeks
		Family Member Profession	1 weeks
3	My Environment	My Home	2 weeks
		My School	1 week
		My Mosque	1 week
4	God's Animals	Sacrificial Animals	1 week
		Pet Animals	2 weeks
		Insect	1 week
		Beasts	1 week
Total			17 weeks

Source: Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 3489 of 2016 Concerning Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 14/11/2021

Table 11: Learning Theme at Raudhatul Athfal (2nd Semester)

No	Theme	Sub Themes	Time Allocation
1	God's Plants	Fruit	2 weeks
		Vegetable	1 week
		Decorative Plants	1 week
		Medicinal Plants	1 week
		Tubers	1 week
2	Vehicle	Vehicles on Land	2 weeks
		Vehicles on Water	1 week

		Vehicles in the Air	1 week
3	Universe	Natural Things	2 weeks
		Sky objects	1 week
		Natural Symptoms	2 weeks
4	My Country	My homeland	1 week
		Tourist Attraction	1 week
Total			17 weeks

Source: Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 3489 of 2016 Concerning Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 14/11/2021

Besides the learning theme, the Ministry of Religious Affairs also sets the Child Development Achievement Level Standard for Raudhatul Athfal level education units. This standard is a follow-up guide to the Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum Guidelines. Achievement Level Standard is a criterion regarding the abilities achieved by children in all aspects of development and growth, including aspects of religious and moral values, physical-motor, cognitive, language, socio-emotional, and art.

Furthermore, the Education unit in RA is expected to refer to these standards in developing standards for content, process, assessment, educators and education personnel, facilities and infrastructure, management, and financing in the management and implementation of early childhood education. The following table will explain in more detail about the standard level of student achievement in Raudhathul Athfal, by age group (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019)³⁷:

2.5.4. The Content and Scope of Learning at Raudhatul Athfal

The content of learning at Raudhatul Athfal is learning material that contains values (attitude), skills, and knowledge given to students through games. Furthermore, the scope of learning content at Raudhatul Athfal is a limitation of learning material that

³⁷ Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter III Standards For The Development Of Raudhatul Athfal Children, Point E Development Program and Level of Achievement of Age Development 4-6 Years.

educators must understand in carrying out the learning process. The scope of learning content at Raudhatul Athfal consists of³⁸:

- a) Islamic Religious Education;
- b) Mathematics Learning;
- c) Language and Literacy Learning;
- d) Science Learning;
- e) Art Learning;
- f) Social Learning; and
- g) Technology Learning.

The following table will explain in more detail about the scope of learning and content of the scope in Raudhathul Athfal:

Table 12: The scope of learning and content of the scope in Raudhathul Athfal

No.	The Scope of Learning	Content of the Scope
1	Islamic Religious Education	Faith;
		Morals;
		Qur'an-Hadith;
		Worship
		Islamic story.
2.	Learning Mathematics	Recognize the concept of numbers;
		Patterns and relationships;
		Geometry and understanding of space;
		Measurement;
		Data collection and presentation.
3.	Language and Literacy Learning	Improved vocabulary and language
		Sound awareness

³⁸ Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter IV Learning Content at Raudhatul Athfal.

		Letters and words
		Understanding the meaning of spoken and written language
		Understanding of books and texts
		Literacy as a source of fun.
4.	Science Learning	Knowledge of the physical body
		Knowledge of living things
		Knowledge of nature and the environment
		Scientific investigation for early childhood
5.	Art Learning	Music and movement arts
		Fine arts (visual art)
		Drama/role playing (theatre/performing art).
6.	Social Learning	Place and geography
		People/community around
		People and environment
		People and the past
7.	Technology Learning	Awareness of technology
		Fundamentals of using technology
		Technological tools
		How to use technology

Source: Minister of Religion Decree no. 792 concerning Guidelines for Implementation of the Raudhathul Athfal Curriculum (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 14/11/2021

From the table above, we can see that although learning at Raudathul Athfal is thematic or based on the theme and also carries the concept of playing while learning, but there are 7 aspects that must be a concern for teachers when teaching students, these aspects are called the content and scope of learning, which is aspects that at least must be understood by students. For example: the scope of science learning, there are several content of the scope like knowledge of the physical body, like at least students at age 4

– 6 years can understand which body parts are intimate and private areas and which body parts can be seen by the public so the students know the limit. Another example is that students are also taught knowledge about living things and nature so that children can distinguish between living things such as humans and animals, and which nature and the environment we must care for, and so on.

So the essence of this point is: at Raudathul Athfal students are also taught about life skills, by providing knowledge and growing a sense of awareness of what things need to be known, realized, and take care of as human beings. Of course, this is all explained to the students in simple language that is easily understood by early childhood ages.

2.5.5. Contents of the Learning Program at Raudathul Athfal

After discussing the 7 scopes of learning content at Raudhatul Athfal above, a more detailed discussion will lead to a scope that is in accordance with the research theme, namely Learning Islamic Religious Education at Raudathul Athfal.

1) Learning Islamic Religious Education, including³⁹:

a) Aqidah/Faith

Teaching aqidah means teaching and learning about aspects of trust to students. The essence of this teaching is about the Pillars of Faith and the Pillars of Islam.

b) Akhlak/Morals

Moral teaching is a form of teaching that leads to the habituation of noble character in students' lives, namely honesty, courtesy, tolerance, independence, responsibility, and humility.

c) Al-Quran and Hadith

Teaching Al-Quran and Hadith is teaching that aims to make students recognize and pronounce the hijaiyah letters and mention the arguments and hadiths related to the stories of the Prophets and Apostles that are adapted to the level of students.

d) Worship

Worship teaches about all forms of daily worship and procedures for its implementation for students, such as following ablution movements, prayer movements, and recognizing prayer readings with adult guidance.

³⁹ Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter IV Learning Content at Raudhatul Athfal.

e) Islamic Story

The purpose of teaching Islamic history is to know the stories of prophets and apostles so that participants can know and love Islam.

To find out the details about the scope of the development of Islamic Religious Education in RA, it is necessary to take a closer look at it which is contained in the table (attached to the appendix part). In the attached table, it has been explained in the very details form about the Child Development Achievement Level which is divided into 2 groups: the group of ages 4-5 years and ages 5-6 years.

So, these 2 age groups will be taught the same topic (for example in the contents of Aqidah/Faith, topic of Asmaul Husna), however the minimum expectation for the students' ability is different, it depends to the child's age group. For example: the minimum competency targeted for children aged 4-5 years is know at least the ten of Asmaul Husna, while for children aged 5-6 years is mention at least the ten of Asmaul Husna. It can be concluded that the contents of the learning program discusses in detail what things are taught at Raudathul athfal and what are the minimum expectations that can be achieved by students (for more detailed information, please refer to the table in the appendix).

2.6. Raudhatul Athfal's Teaching Method and Activities in Indonesia

2.6.1. Raudhatul Athfal's concept learning

Before discussing the teaching methods and activities carried out at Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia, we will first look at the concept of learning at Raudhatul Athfal. Learning is an interactive process between educators and children in a learning environment. Learning is the management of what, who, why, how, and how well questions about learning. Draft learning at Raudhathul Athfal emphasizes on (Direktorat KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019)⁴⁰:

a. Aspects of Child Development

Learning in Raudhathul Athfal must pay attention to aspects of child development. Play life and phases of physical and psychological development in children need to orient learning activities.

⁴⁰ Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter V Learning Process.

b. Characteristics of Islamic character

Following the characteristics of Raudhatul Athfal, which emphasizes the cultivation of Islamic character education, the first fundamental concept is based on the Al-Quran and Hadith as a reference for the development of Islamic values.

c. 21st Century Skills in Learning

Learning that adapts to the development of times, namely the 21st century, but still following the basics of Islamic faith and morals and adapted to the character of early childhood development.

2.6.2. Raudhatul Athfal's Learning Model

The learning model is a design or design that describes the process of detailing and creating environmental situations that allow children to interact in learning so that changes occur in children. Learning models in Raudhatul Athfal include (Kemenag RI, 2016)⁴¹:

1. Classical Learning Model

The classical learning model is a learning pattern in which, at the same time, all the activities are carried out by all children in the same class (classically). This learning model is the earliest model used in pre-school education, with learning facilities that are generally very limited and pay little attention to children's interests. Along with the development of theory and learning models, this model has been abandoned.



Picture 8: Classical Learning Model at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

⁴¹ Decree of The Director General of Islamic Education no. 3489 of 2016 concerning Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum.

2. Group Learning Model

The learning model based on groups is still widely used by Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia, but the development of learning models is constantly evolving. Now many Raudhatul Athfal is using more varied learning models. The group-based learning model is a learning pattern in which children are divided into several groups; usually, children are divided into 3 (three) groups, and each group carries out different activities. In one meeting, children can complete 2-3 activities in turn.



Picture 9: Group Learning Model at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <http://www.raalhanif.sch.id/Pembelajaran-Metode-Sentra/> Access Date 01/03/2022

3. Learning Center Model

A learning center model is a learning approach in which the learning process is carried out in a 'circle' and play center. The circle is when the teacher sits with the child in a circular position.



Picture 10: Learning Centre Model at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

4. Area Learning Model

The Area Model facilitates children's activities individually and in groups to develop all aspects. Each child has several activities that use different tools and materials. All

children can choose which area best suits their interests. Area-based learning models provide more opportunities for students to choose or carry out their activities according to their interests.

Area learning uses ten areas: worship area, blocks, language, drama, mathematics, science, music, art/fine motor skills, sand and water, reading, and writing. Learning areas in interest-based learning include:

a) Worship Area

The tools provided in this area are Mosque mockups, pictures of prayer procedures, pictures of procedures for ablution, prayer rugs, prayer clothes, headscarves, iqra books, hijaiyah letter cards, prayer beads, juz 'amma, the Quran, and so on which include tools for playing the five pillars Islam from Shahadah to Hajj.



Picture 11: Worship Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

b) Beam/Block Area

The tools provided in this area are blocks of various sizes and colors, logos, lotto of a kind, lotto pairs, geometric pieces and plywood of various sizes and colors, geometric squares, manufactured vehicles (sea, air, and land), traffic signs, patterned cubes, toothpicks, cubes of various sizes and colors, matches, sticks, ice cream sticks, balls of various sizes and colors, used boxes, and so on.



Picture 12: Block Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <http://www.raalhanif.sch.id/Pembelajaran-Metode-Sentra/> <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

c) Counting/Mathematics Area

The tools provided in this area are number symbols, geometric pieces, number cards, seashells, puzzles, number concepts, game cubes, counting trees, mushroom board, long and short, thick and thin, bottle caps, pencils, beads, fruit drawings, rulers, tape measure, notebook, foam puzzle (numbers), calendar, number drawing, pegboard, clock, picture cards, pair cards, worksheets, and so on.



Picture 13: Mathematics Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://anggunpaud.kemdikbud.go.id/berita/index/20200518141858> <https://www.paud.id/menata-ruang-belajar-di-dalam-indoor/> Access Date 01/03/2022

d) Sciences area

The tools provided in this area are various kinds of animal pictures, pictures of animal reproduction, pictures of plant growth processes, seeds (corn, peanuts, green beans, rice), shells, stones / gravel, sand, sponges, magnets, microscopes, glass magnifiers, pipettes, measuring tubes, cake scales, actual scales, measuring cups, color mixing glasses, color shades, tape measure, rulers, fine coarse objects (stones, bricks, sandpaper, iron, wood, cotton, etc.), objects to identify various flavors (sugar, coffee,

tamarind, vinegar, salt, syrup, chili, etc.), various spices (shallots, garlic, pepper, coriander, candlenut, galangal, bay leaf, ginger, turmeric, cumin, etc.).



Picture 14: Sciences Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

e) Music Area

The tools provided in this area are flute, chestnut, small organ, tambourine, rattle, triangle, ukulele, woodblock, kulintang, angklung, violin, piano, harmonica, drum, tambourine, and so on.



Picture 15: Music Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

f) Language Area

The tools provided in this area are storybooks, art pictures, word category cards, names of the days, hand puppets, stage puppets, flannel boards, business cards, month business cards, student magazines, newspapers, various pictures according to themes.



Picture 16: Language Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

g) Reading and Writing Area

The tools provided in this area are library books, notebooks, colored pencils, pencils, letter cards, word cards, drawing cards, and so on.



Picture 17: Reading & Writing Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

h) Drama Area

The tools provided in this area are student beds and dolls, small cupboards, small tables and chairs, guest tables, dolls, clotheslines, scrubbers, irons, oversized clothes, towels, used make-up, perfume, combs, stoves, frying pan, mockup, plates, spoons, forks, glasses, cups, teapots, shopping baskets, knife toys, mortar and pestle, bowls, bags, shoes/slippers, shoe racks, mirrors, mixers, blenders, toothbrushes, toothpaste, telephones, army and police clothes, doctors' clothes, and so on.



Picture 18: Drama Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <http://www.raalhanif.sch.id/Pembelajaran-Metode-Sentra/> Access Date 01/03/2022

i) Sand/Water Area

The tools provided in this area are sandbox/water tank, small aquarium, small bucket, dipper, scratching fork, bottles, plastic, water canister, plastic cup, liter of water, funnel, small shovel, sand filter, drain, sand molds/molds various shape agers, plant sprinklers.



Picture 19: Sand & Water Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> <http://www.raalhanif.sch.id/Pembelajaran-Metode-Sentra/> Access Date 01/03/2022

j) Art and Motor Area

The tools provided in this area are drawing tables, chairs for sitting participants, crayons, colored pencils, pencils, chalk, charcoal, drawing books, folding paper, newsprint, glue, scissors, colored paper, wrapping paper, waste paper, waste materials.



Picture 20: Art & Motor Area at Raudhatul Athfal

Source: <https://www.mij.sch.id/galeri/> Access Date 01/03/2022

2.7. Raudhatul Athfal's Learning Methods

A suitable method is needed to realize learning that instills Islamic character values. In addition to the story method, simple projects, field trips, questions and answers, demonstrations, assignments, there are other types of methods that can be applied and are under Islamic teachings, namely⁴²:

a. Conversation Method (*hiwar*), divided into:

The dialogue/conversation method, which in Arabic is called "*hiwar*" has long been used, Prophet Muhammad also used to use this method. Actually in Islam, this method is known to the Prophet Muhammad in teaching religion to his people. He often use dialogues / asks questions to provide religious understanding to to his followers. There are several types of *hiwar* methods, including:

1. *Hiwar khitabi* (dialogic conversation);
2. *Hwar washi* (descriptive conversation);
3. *Hiwar qishashi* (narrative conversation);
4. *Hiwar jadali* (dialectical conversation); and
5. *Hiwar Nabawi* (conversations used by the Prophet in educating friends)

b. Story Method (events)

Islam recognizes human nature to like stories that significantly impact feelings.

1. The method through similes (proverbs)

⁴² Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter V Learning Process, Part E. Learning Method.

The parable method means explaining the parable in a speech, to explain something and the content that reveals the good and the bad. (Surah Al-Baqarah: 26)

2. Practice Method and Experience

One of the methods used by the Prophet Muhammad in educating his companions is the method of training or habituation. The Messenger of Allah said to them, "Indeed, I did that so that you would follow me and learn my prayers." The method of practice and experience is often called the trial and error method.

3. Practical Methods for Memorizing

Prophet Muhammad taught the essential prayers and verses of the Qur'an to the Companions in a practical way. Then, the Messenger of Allah recited it and repeated it in front of them, accompanied by listening to the verse and prayer to get rectification. The practical method for memorizing is intended to instill good morals in the child's soul to grow into an istiqamah/steadfast and happy because the child can feel successful with his behavior and work.

4. The method of wisdom and advice (ʿIbrah and Mau'idzah)

The method of wisdom (ʿIbrah) is a condition that allows students as learners from concrete knowledge to abstract knowledge. While the method of advice (Mau'idah / al-Wa'du), namely giving advice and warnings about goodness and truth in a way that touches the heart and inspires to practice it, as in the section Surah Al-Baqarah: 232: *"That is what is advised to those who believe among you in Allah and the Last Day."*

2.7.1. Raudhatul Athfal's Learning Implementation

Integrated thematic learning is carried out in the opening, core, and closing stages. In the core activities, all learning activities include observing, asking questions, gathering information, reasoning, and communicating (scientific approach), which is oriented to 21st-century learning by prioritizing the values contained in the teachings of Islam. Learning implementation activities include⁴³:

a. Opening Activities

⁴³ Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter V Learning Process, Part H. Learning Implementation.

Opening activities are carried out to prepare students physically and psychologically to participate in the learning process. This activity is related to discussing the sub-themes that will be implemented. Some of the activities that can be done include marching, greeting, praying, memorizing Asmaul Husna, telling stories, or sharing experiences that provide motivation.

b. Core Activities

Core activities provide sufficient space for students to take the initiative, be creative, critical, and independent according to their talents, interests, and needs. The core activities are carried out with a scientific approach by observing, asking questions, gathering information, reasoning, and communicating, integrated with the values of Strengthening Character Education, Literacy, and the 4C (Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity and Innovation) and wrapped in religious and moral values. This core activity is based on aspects of child development and pays attention to the principles of Islamic character development.

c. Closing Activities

The Closing activities are activities that are calming. Some things that can be done in closing activities include:

- 1) Make simple conclusions from the activities that have been carried out, including the moral messages to be conveyed and associated with Islamic teachings as well as children's opinions regarding the substance according to the values of the activities that have been passed;
- 2) Advice that supports good habits associated with Islamic teachings;
- 3) Reflection and feedback on activities that have been implemented;
- 4) Make calming activities such as singing, rhyming, and telling stories that are uplifting and have an Islamic nuance;
- 5) Inform the lesson plan for the next meeting; and
- 6) Pray as gratitude to Allah the Almighty.

If we summarize into a table, the implementation of learning at Raudhathul Athfal is as follows:

Table 13 The implementation of learning at Raudhathul Athfal

Development Program	Activities	Development Program and Study Load
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious and Moral Values • Physical-Motoric • Cognitive • Language • Social Emotional • Art 	Opening Activities	15 minutes
	Core Activities	105 minutes
	Closing Activity	15 minutes
Total Student Study Load Time/Day		135 minutes/2.25 hours

Source: http://simpuh.kemenag.go.id/regulasi/dj_3489_16.pdf Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education no. 3489 of 2016 concerning Raudhatul Athfal curriculum (Translated into English version)
Access Date 14/11/2021

2.8. The Uniform of RA/Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia

Another thing that makes RA different from the general kindergarten/TK is the school uniform. The regulation regarding school uniforms is actually written in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, but in this regulation, there are no rules regarding school uniforms for students at the early childhood level; the rules are only for students at the Primary and Secondary Education level. (Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2014)⁴⁴

Although there are no standard rules from the government regarding the obligation to wear uniforms at the level of early childhood education (TK/RA), in practice, TK/RA schools in Indonesia have implemented uniforms for their students. Kindergarten/RA

⁴⁴ Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 45 of 2014 concerning School Uniforms for Students at Primary and Secondary Education Levels (Elementary School / Extraordinary Elementary School (SD / SDLB), Junior High School / Extraordinary Junior High School (SMP / SMPLB)), High School/Extraordinary High School (SMA/SMALB), and Vocational High School/Extraordinary Vocational High School (SMK/SMKLB), for public and private schools).

student uniforms in Indonesia have various designs according to the characteristics and policies of each school. The uniform used by RA students is a uniform that according to the Islamic rules:

- 1) For female students: long skirt/trousers, long-sleeved shirt, and headscarves.
- 2) For male students: long trousers and a long-sleeved shirt.

The uniform, which is based on Islamic rules, is required for RA students and all teachers and staff at RA. While in the TK (Kindergarten)/other non-Islamic schools, the students and teachers have the freedom to choose whether they want to wear a regular uniform (short shirt/skirt/pants) or a uniform that is in accordance with their religious rules.

Usually, RA has several types of uniforms, depending on each school's policy. The following are examples of 3 types of RA student uniforms; general uniforms, batik uniforms, and sports uniforms.



Picture 21: General Uniforms of RA Students

Source: <https://rumahseragam.co.id/model-seragam/seragam-muslim-anak-tk/> Access Date 22/11/2021



Picture 22: Batik Uniforms of RA Students

Source: <https://rumahseragam.co.id/model-seragam/seragam-muslim-anak-tk/> Access Date 22/11/2021



Picture 23: Sport Uniforms of RA Students

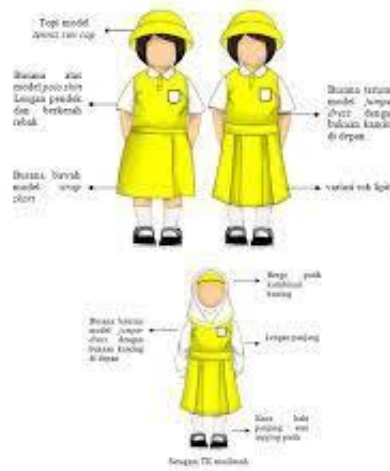
Source: <https://rumahseragam.co.id/model-seragam/seragam-muslim-anak-tk/> Access Date 22/11/2021

From the pictures above, we can see that the RA school uniform follows Islamic religious rules. However, the RA uniform has many variations in models and colors. The choice of a uniform model depends on the policies of each RA. For comparison, here are the uniform illustrations for students of general kindergarten.



Picture 24: Uniforms for Male Students of General Kindergarten/TK

Source: <https://journals.itb.ac.id/index.php/sostek/article/view/6847/4556> Access Date 22/11/2021



Picture 25: Uniforms for Female Students of General Kindergarten/TK

Source: <https://journals.itb.ac.id/index.php/sostek/article/view/6847/4556> Access Date 22/11/2021

As discussed earlier, in public schools (non-religious schools), students and teachers can choose whether to wear a general uniform or according to their religious regulations. This is also written in the Regulation of The Minister of Education and Culture of The Republic Of Indonesia Number 45 Of 2014: The provisions for school uniforms as referred to in paragraph (1) point D are as follows: *“Typical school uniforms are regulated by each school while still giving each citizen the freedom and right to practice their respective religious beliefs.”*

CHAPTER III: THE VIEWS OF TEACHERS ABOUT EDUCATION IN RAUDHATUL ATHFAL

Islamic-based schools such as Raudhatul Athfal have developed quite rapidly in Indonesia in the last few decades. This can be seen from the increasing number of Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia and also the number of students who have increased from year to year (data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia). In recent years, quite a lot of parents prefer to send their children to Islamic schools such as Raudhatul Athfal, Madrasas, or Islamic boarding schools. This is because parents feel that their children will have general knowledge as well as Islamic religious knowledge if they are sent to Islamic-based schools. Moreover, according to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, it was found that the religiosity of the Indonesian people increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, with 81 percent of respondents feeling that their religiosity had increased during the pandemic. This could be a factor in the development of Raudhatul Athfal or Madrasas in Indonesia in recent years.

In this chapter, we will discuss many things related to Islamic religious education for early childhood which is applied in Kindergartens characterized by Islam in Indonesia or better known as Raudhatul Athfal. The material for this discussion is mostly sourced from interviews with Raudhatul Athfal teachers from various cities in Indonesia. We will focus on the views/opinions of interviewees who have years of experience teaching at Raudhatul Athfal, even some teachers have taught for dozens and decades at Raudhatul Athfal. Therefore, we want to see the real conditions, challenges, and problems that occur in the field (in Raudhatul Athfal) from the point of view of the teachers where they do have direct experience with every condition and policy in Raudhatul Athfal.

We will focus on discussing several things such as students, teachers, parents, curriculum, to current government policies. There are many main points discussed, such as: the age of students, learning systems and materials, Islamic religious materials, learning time allocation, opinions of teachers, non-Muslim students, curriculum, textbooks, learning activities and methods, policies, physical condition schools,

expectations of parents, qualifications to become an RA teacher, challenges in RA, and many other things related to the implementation of RA in Indonesia.

As a country with the largest Muslim population in the world and also with the highest level of religiosity in the world, it is not surprising that the statements and opinions of most of the teachers are certainly very pro-Islamic and Islamic religious education in Raudhatul Athfal educational institutions. The following are details of the opinions of interviewees regarding Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia.

3.1. The Average Age of the Students at Raudhatul Athfal

In the interviews conducted for this study, the first question we asked the interviewees was, "What is the average age of students in Raudhatul Athfal?" Almost all interview participants answered that the average and ideal age of Raudhatul Athfal students was 4-6 years, but one teacher answered that some students were still three years old in her school. As stated by the following interview participants:

"In terms of early childhood education, the children's ages are from 0-6 years old. There are two different levels in our school: Play Group (PG) and Raudhatul Athfal (RA). Play Group is for 2-3-year-olds, and for Raudhatul Athfal, we divided into two groups based on their ages, namely group A and B. Group A for children aged 4-5 years and group B for children aged 5-6 years." (T4)

"Most of the children are 4-6 years old, but some are still three years old. The students who are three years old are still in group A. Group B is specifically for those aged 5-6 years." (T9)

The majority of the answers from these teachers is just the same with the Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia 2010, which states that Raudhatul Athfal or RA is a formal education level for early childhood (ages 4-6 years). However, from one teacher's answer, there was also a statement that some students were still three years old in RA, but of course this is a specific case, where not all RA in Indonesia have students who are less than 4 years old. In addition, several teachers who graduated from the Early Childhood Education Department also explained that in Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal: schools usually divide students into two classes based on age, namely Group A for ages 4-5 years and Group B for ages 5-6 years. Moreover, the general public is familiar with Group A and Group B or Class A and Class B. However, if we

look at Child Education's Early Age science, the actual term is not Group A or Group B but Study Group A and Study Group B. As stated by the following interview participants:

"In our school, there is Group A with 15 children, 4-5 years old. Group B with 15 children aged 5-6 years. Actually, in the world of lectures majoring in Early Childhood Education, there is no term for group A or group B, but the correct term is Rombe (Rombongan Belajar) or Study Group in English, so study group A or study group B, but the public are used to the term of group A or group B." (T7)

In addition, several teachers also complained about the education system in Indonesia, which was considered confusing; the ideal age for students to enter the Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal is 4-6 years or the equivalent of 2 years of learning. So ideally, children start entering Raudhatul Athfal at the age of 4 and graduate at the age of 6. However, the requirements to enter elementary schools, especially public elementary schools, are required students to be at least seven years old. So students who graduate from Raudhatul Athfal at the age of 6 are usually forced to repeat Raudhatul Athfal 1 more year because they have not entered the minimum age criteria to enter public elementary schools. However, the regulations for this minimum age of students not applicable in private elementary schools. As stated by the following interview participants:

"In Kindergarten and Raudhatul Athfal, there are two groups divided by age, namely Group A and Group B. Group A is 4-5 years old, and Group B is 5-6 years old. However, the problem is that the requirements for entering the public elementary schools are that students must be at least seven years old. So if students graduate from Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal at the age of 6.5 years old, they usually have to repeat Kindergarten level later ." (T1)

From the interviewees' answers, it can be understood that the level of education for early childhood in Indonesia is divided into two, namely the Play Group (PG) level and Kindergarten or equivalent. The class division is divided based on the age of the child, namely Play Group (PG) for children aged 0-3 years and Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal for children aged 4-6 years. Students are divided into two classes at the

Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal level based on their age, namely class A for ages 4-5 years and class B for ages 5-6 years.

Furthermore, the problem related to the age of students that often occurs at the Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal level is students graduate from Raudhatul Athfal at the age of 6 years. However, the minimum age requirement to enter the next level: elementary schools, especially public elementary schools, is that students must be at least seven years old; this is in accordance with the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture concerning the acceptance of new students in Kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, high school, vocational high school, or other equivalent forms. In Chapter I, the general provisions of the second part of article 6 paragraph 1: "The requirements for prospective students are new to grade 1 (one) elementary school or other equivalent forms, aged: a. 7 (seven) years; or b. at least 6 (six) years on July 1 of the current year." So often, students who graduate under the age of 7 from Raudhatul Athfal have to repeat another year to fulfill the requirements to enter public elementary schools. However, this only applies to public elementary schools and does not apply to private elementary schools, so kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal graduate students under seven can directly enroll in private elementary schools.

3.2. Learning System and General Learning Materials at Raudhatul Athfal

Analysis of this question is needed to determine the learning system applied and whether Kindergartens with Islamic characteristics such as Raudhatul Athfal teach general knowledge material (other than Islamic religious material) to their students. We ask, "Does Raudhatul Athfal provide general lessons (besides Islamic religious lessons)? Please explain what lessons are provided in this school and the allocation of learning time each week?"

When the answers to the questions were examined, it was revealed that the material taught at Raudhatul Athfal was not only religious, but there was also general knowledge material called thematic learning or learning based on themes. Furthermore, all interview participants or teachers of Raudhatul Athfal gave the same answer to this question, as presented by them below:

“Yes, there is a general lesson, namely thematic lessons. The total two semesters have 11 themes; usually, the themes change every month, the examples of the themes are like the theme of my environment, my profession, my plants, myself, etc.” (T2)

Moreover, the interviewees’ answers found that the learning system at the Raudhatul Athfal level in Indonesia is very different from other school levels such as Elementary School, Junior High School, or Senior High School. If at other formal school levels, such as Elementary School, there are many subjects, such as Mathematics, English, etc., but it is different from the learning system in Raudhatul Athfal. Based on the Decree of the Director-General of Islamic Education Number 3489 of 2016 Concerning Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, the learning system at the school level for early childhood in Indonesia uses a thematic system, namely learning based on themes by stimulating six aspects of early childhood development. So every day, there will be no Mathematics or English subjects, but there will be learning themes, for example, themes about myself, my family, my environment, etc. This thematic learning is the general knowledge material (beyond Islamic religious knowledge) that is taught. And all interview participants or teachers Raudhatul Athfal gave the same answer to this question, as presented by them below:

“Actually, in Raudhatul Athfal, there are no subjects like other schools such as elementary school, junior high school, etc. We only refer to 6 aspects of child development, and the learning we provide is called thematic learning: learning based on themes, for example, the theme of self, family, etc.” (T1)

The total themes given for two semesters are 11 themes, with five themes in semester 1 and 6 themes in semester 2; this is stated in the Decree of the Director-General of Islamic Education Number 3489 of 2016 Concerning Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum. The themes contained in the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum are the same as those found in general Kindergartens (non-Islamic-based schools). The difference is that the theme used in Raudhatul Athfal only adds Islamic values; for example, in Public Kindergarten, the theme is family, but in Raudhatul Athfal, it will be a Sakinah Family or an Islamic Family, as stated below:

“Yes, I mentioned earlier that thematic learning is based on themes. In 1 semester, there are usually 5-6 themes; for example, the theme is Myself, I am a Servant of Allah, My

Identity, Environment, Halal food and Drink, My country, Sakinah/Islami family, etc.” (T7)

“If in elementary school, it is true there are subjects/lessons. However, in Raudhatul Athfal, there is thematic learning. So learning for the core material is based on the theme. In the 1st semester, there are five themes, and in the 2nd semester, there are six themes.” (T3)

So it can be said that thematic learning is often considered general material learning. However, the themes and content taught in the lessons are still embedded with Islamic values according to the characteristics of Raudhatul Athfal, which is an Islamic institution, as stated below:

“But even though the learning is based on the theme, we still associate it with Islam, for example, in the theme of food and drink; we usually insert the hadith prohibiting eating while standing, etc.” (T7)

“On the thematic learning, we also put the Islamic content. Our schools usually insert verses from the Koran or hadith.” (T8)

In addition to thematic learning, the teachers also conveyed the primary purpose of learning at Raudhatul Athfal, namely to stimulate six main aspects of early childhood development: aspects of religion and morals, physical motoric, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art, as conveyed below:

“We teach six aspects of religion and morals, physical motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and art. Besides religious material, we also have sports and arts. Because our learning principle is: learning while playing and playing while learning.” (T6)

“Yes, there is a general lesson called thematic learning which means learning according to the theme that adapts to the six aspects of early childhood development. For example, let us say the theme is about myself; there will be jogging/gymnastics/running activities involving children’s physical and motoric aspects. Then for the artistic aspect, we can fill it with Islamic songs, and for the emotional, social aspect we teach children to get used to sharing, queuing, etc.” (T4)

For the average duration of this thematic learning, all interview participants conveyed the same thing, which is 1 hour per day, and the primary material taught to students was an introduction to reading, writing, and counting or (Calistung: baca, tulis dan hitung in Indonesian language) such as conveyed below:

“Yes, there are also general lessons using themes, for example, the theme of transportation, so for half an hour of the core activity, we will discuss themes which include an introduction to reading, writing, and counting.” (T9)

“Yes, there is. One hour in thematic learning, namely learning based on the theme, usually in the core material we learn calistung or reading, counting, and writing. Furthermore, we also teach based on themes, for example, the environment (how to recognize trees, houses, etc.), profession, family, etc., while still inserting Islamic material. We usually insert verses from the Koran or hadith.” (T8)

Several teachers also expressed their complaints about learning at the Raudhatul Athfal level. Ideally, students at the level equivalent to Kindergarten should not be taught reading, counting, and writing. However, there is a reading, counting, and writing test as one of the requirement to enter elementary school. In fact, character education should be the priority in early childhood learning (kindergarten/RA), not reading, counting, and writing. As stated by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education and Culture Didik Suhardi, in a dialogue with the Bunda - Early Childhood Education in Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Saturday (16/2/2019).

"Character education must be priority at the level of early childhood education, not reading, counting, and writing. For entering elementary school, there should be no reading, counting, and writing tests, because education at the early childhood education level institution is not to teach reading, counting, and writing.”

Actually, the awareness of the Indonesian people towards preschool education is already high, but currently there is a misunderstanding of educational practices at the level of Early Childhood Education and Elementary School. Because when Elementary Schools require reading, counting, and writing ability for prospective elementary school students, automatically early childhood education institutions (kindergarten/Raudhatul Athfal) will also be forced to teach reading, writing, and counting to the students. The Ministry of Education and Culture has tried to straighten this out by making a circular

letter to elementary schools so as not to impose reading, writing, and counting tests for prospective elementary students, but until now the reality is that there are still many elementary schools which requires reading, writing, and counting tests as a requirement to enter elementary school, such as stated below:

“So, for Raudhatul Athfal, we have to achieve six aspects as stated in the curriculum, there are cognitive aspects, etc. In addition to religious material, we have general material in class for 1 hour, namely cognitive activities of introducing reading, writing, and counting. Calistung (reading, writing, and counting) should not be taught at the Kindergarten level, but we introduce it without giving pressure or a target; calistung (reading, writing, and counting) at Raudhatul Athfal is only a provision for entering elementary school later.” (T5)

From the teachers' answers, it can be understood that the learning system in Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia is very different from other school levels. In Kindergarten or Raudhatul Athfal, the learning system uses thematic learning or learning based on themes as the core activity for the Kindergarten level. Especially for Raudhatul Athfal, the themes used are Islamic themes that are in accordance with the institution's characteristics. The allocation of this thematic learning varies for each Raudhatul Athfal; the average application is 30-60 minutes.

Moreover, the obstacles that often occur at the Raudhatul Athfal level are: the curriculum and the government forbid teaching reading, writing, and counting in early childhood because the education system in early childhood is “playing while learning” by targeting six aspects of early childhood development as listed in Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter III Standards for the Development of Raudhatul Athfal Children, Point B: Scope of Developmental Standards. “The following are six scopes of aspects of early childhood development that must be developed in every lesson at Raudhathul Athfal: Religious and Moral Values, Physical-Motoric, Cognitive, Language, Social-Emotional, and Art.” (Directorate of KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019)

However, the reality is that almost all elementary schools have reading, writing, and counting tests as mandatory tests to enter the elementary school level. This reality is

what makes Raudhatul Athfal teachers confused. Because if children are not taught to read, write, and count, it will make their school alumni unacceptable at the elementary school level. Furthermore, make their school is considered inferior by the community because it will be judged that the school cannot produce intelligent and quality graduates.

Actually this problem is contrary to Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010, articles 69 and 70⁴⁵. The government regulation is regulated to enter elementary school or equivalent not based on reading, writing, arithmetic, or other tests but based on age, residence location, and registration time. Even if there are reading, writing, and arithmetic tests, that test is only a reference for teachers to determine students' abilities for initial mapping and make it easier for teachers to develop lesson plans in the future, not a consideration for student graduation. However, what happens in some schools in Indonesia is very different; there are still many elementary schools that accept students based on reading, writing, and arithmetic tests.

3.3. Islamic Religious Learning Materials and Allocation of Learning Time at Raudhatul Athfal

Raudhatul Athfal is a Kindergarten with Islamic characteristics under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. With the characteristics of Islamic institutions that have become the identity of Raudhatul Athfal, there are certainly various kinds of Islamic religious material taught at this school. We ask the teachers, "Which Islamic religious lessons do you teach at this school? Could you please explain what subjects are taught and the allocation of learning time?"

⁴⁵ Government Regulation No. 17 of 2010, article 69, paragraphs 4 and 5, and article 70:

Article 69:

(4) SD/MI or other equivalent forms are obligated to accept citizens aged 7 (seven) years to 12 (twelve) years as students up to the limit of their capacity.

(5) Acceptance of students in grade 1 (one) SD/MI or other equivalent forms is not based on tests in reading, writing, arithmetic, or other forms of tests.

Article 70:

(1) If the number of prospective students exceeds the capacity of the education unit, the selection of students in SD/MI is based on the age of the prospective students, with priority from the oldest.

(2) If the age of prospective students, as referred to in paragraph (1), is the same, then the determination of students are based on the distance from which the prospective students live closest to the education unit.

(3) If the age or distance of residence of the prospective student and the academic unit as referred to in paragraphs (1) and paragraph (2) are the same, then the student who registers earlier will be prioritized.

From the answers given by the teachers, we can conclude that all teachers agree that from the beginning to the end of the lesson, all the material taught is Islamic religious material, as stated below:

“All activities from beginning to the end are about the Islamic Religion, such as morning habits, prayer services, etc. Every day we have a routine of 1 hour reciting the Koran and memorizing short letters in juz 30. There are 3 hours of study time, 2 hours it’s all for the material of the Islamic religion.” (T5)

“Indeed, every day what we teach is about Islam...” (T2)

“Everything we teach from the beginning until the end of the class is Islamic religious material...” (T3)

“All activities from entering class to going home are related to the Islamic religion...” (T1)

“In Raudhatul Athfal, we are focused on learning the Islamic religion because 0-6 years is the golden age. Children’s motor skills are emphasized on memorizing short letters of the Koran, Asmaul Husna, daily prayers, and hadiths.” (T6)

The Islamic religious material taught also varies, but from the answers of the interview participants, almost all teachers convey the same thing. They teach memorization of short letters in the Koran, hadith, daily prayers, aqidah, Islamic stories and worship practices: such as prayer, ablution, tayammum, etc. Religious material is usually delivered through an activity called the daily routine every morning before entering the core learning or thematic learning that we discussed earlier, as explained below:

“There are 5 Islamic religious materials that we teach here at Raudhatul Athfal, namely: Aqidah, Quran and Hadith, Morals, Worship, and Islamic stories....” (T7)

“In our school, there are many Islamic religious materials, such as worship practices (prayer, ablution, tayammum) and memorizing short letters. We also teach the daily prayers such as prayer for eating, praying when entering and out of the bathroom, praying when rains come, looking in the mirror, visiting the sick, etc. There is also the aqidah that teaches Allah is one, and then there is the Sirah, the life history of the prophet Muhammad, and finally, there are hadith and morals....” (T4)

The total duration of learning time at Raudhatul Athfal is 3 hours or 180 minutes, with lessons starting from Monday - to Friday, Saturday and Sunday are national holidays. Some schools start from 07:30 – 10:30 am, but some start from 08:00 – 11:00 am. For the arrangement and allocation of time, each school has its regulations.

If we take a conclusion from the teachers' answers, the first activity carried out is morning habit which consists of memorizing and repeating the memorization of the Quran, hadith, prayers etc. This activity takes about 30-60 minutes, then enter the core learning, namely thematic learning based on the theme for 60 minutes, rest for 30 - 45 minutes and closing activities in the form of Islamic religious material for 30 - 60 minutes. The duration of each school course varies according to each school's policy, as stated below:

“Our schedule is from Monday to Friday starting at 7:30 - 10:30 am. At 7:30 in the morning, we are accustomed to lining up while doing muraja'ah (repeating the memorization of the Koran and prayers), then we start going to class at 8 am. Then we start the core activity, namely thematic learning, for about 1 hour; after that, we take a break to eat and go home. For daily habits, our activities are memorizing the Koran (surah al-Fatihah until Al-Maun), muraja'ah or repeating the memorization of the Koran, daily prayers (such as prayer for eating, riding a vehicle, leaving the house, prayer for waking up, entering the mosque). We also taught hadith (our target is ten hadiths, such as Muslims are family, heaven on the soles of the mother's feet, do not criticize, etc.), we also teach the values of character and the examples of it .”(T1)

“In our school, there are many Islamic religious topics such as worship practices (prayer, ablution, tayammum), memorizing short letters, and daily prayers. There are some daily prayers such as prayer for eating, praying when entering and out of the bathroom, praying when rains come, looking in the mirror, visiting the sick, etc. There is also the aqidah that teaches Allah is one, then there is the Sirah, the life history of the prophet Muhammad, and finally, there are hadith and morals. Every day before entering the core activities, there is a routine program of approximately 30 minutes. Then after that, 30 minutes of core activities or thematic learning, then 15 minutes of rest + private muraja'ah (repeating the memorization of the Koran and prayers, one teacher guiding one student), it continued again to the core activity for 30 minutes and the last 15

minutes of closing activities, preparation for going home and evaluating today's lesson". (T4)

"In Raudhatul Athfal, we are focused on learning the Islamic religion because 0-6 years is the golden age. Children's motor skills are emphasized in memorizing short letters of the Koran, Asmaul Husna, daily prayers and hadiths. At our school, the class starts from 07:30 – 10 am. 07:30 – 08:00 the activity is the opening; we get used to reading al-Fatihah, aqidah, parents' prayers, reading prayers, etc. 08:00 – 08:30 for memorizing short letters of the Koran 08:30 – 09:30 lessons according to the theme. Then 09:30 – 10:00 is the time for rest, eat, and go home." (T6)

In addition to the Islamic religious materials that have been presented above, several teachers also conveyed that although the religious material we teach looks a lot for early childhood, we present it in a fun way that is adapted to the character of early childhood, as conveyed below:

"There are a lot of Islamic lessons in our school, such as aqidah, recitations and memorizing the Koran, fiqh, etc. But the lesson is delivered in a fun way, such as through songs, games, etc. For example, for memorizing the asmaul husna, we use song to introduce it to the children." (T5)

It can be understood from the interviewees' statements that from the beginning of the class to the end of the class, the material taught to students at Raudhatul Athfal is very dominant in the material of the Islamic religion. These things are similar to what is stated in (Directorate of KSKK Madrasah et al., 2019): the characteristics of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum are as follows, which must be based on Islamic values. The basis for developing Islamic values is the Al-Quran and Hadith. Al-Quran is a source of Islamic thought and provides a lot of educational inspiration that needs to be developed philosophically and scientifically; this development is needed as a basic framework in building an Islamic education system.

We can even say that all the materials taught in RA contain Islamic religious values. Started from morning habituation material in memorizing the Koran and hadith, daily prayers, worship practices, and Islamic stories to the core material, namely thematic learning using Islamic themes with a total time allocation is 3 hours/180 minutes per day, starting from Monday – Friday.

3.4. Dominant Islamic Religious Materials in the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum

From the previous answers of the teachers, we can see that indeed at Raudhatul Athfal, all the lessons taught are related to the religion of Islam. However, among the many Islamic religious lessons or materials taught to students, we want to know which subjects are the most dominant or become the teachers' priorities in teaching at Raudhatul Athfal. We asked, "Which Islamic subjects are dominant in the curriculum? And how do teachers find the intensity and distribution of the subjects?"

In addition to knowing the most dominant Islamic religious subjects, this question aims to determine how these subjects' intensity and distribution are to students. From the answers given by the teachers, it can be concluded that the majority of teachers said that the most dominant Islamic religious material is tahfidz (memorizing the Koran); the tahfidz program in question is a program to memorize the Koran in the last chapter or chapter 30, as stated below this:

"Tahfidz or memorizing the Quran." (T6)

"In our school, the Tahfidz program or memorizing the Quran is more dominant." (T4)

"At school, we are more inclined to memorize, such as memorizing short letters, hadith and daily prayers". (T1)

"In our school, the most dominant program is the tahfidz program/memorization of the Koran." (T3)

"Our flagship program is in tahfidz or memorizing short letters from the Koran" (T5)

"Tahfidz or memorizing the Quran and daily prayers". (T8)

"We focus more on Tahfidz or memorizing the Quran." (T9)

Teachers find the intensity and distribution of the tahfidz program through reports from parents or even students themselves who tell a lot to their teachers. For example, students tell stories that they have memorized like Surah al-Fatihah or even tell that yesterday before eating, they read the prayer before eating that the teacher at school has taught. And it is common for parents to report to the teacher either verbally or via WhatsApp that their children can already remind parents if parents do some mistakes

such as eat while standing, etc. Parents also report that their children also can follow the Asmaul Husna reading, etc.

“We got reports from parents that children can practice memorizing the Koran and the prayers at home, for example when they want to eat, their children read meal prayers at home, etc.” (T1)

“When we teach the children the prayer for eating at school, usually later when they have memorized, they will tell the teacher that yesterday at home, before eating, they read the prayer taught at school.” (T8)

Some teachers say that memorizing the Koran at their school uses a fun method for early childhood, namely the method of memorizing the Koran along with its meaning and movements.

“We teach memorization with the Yahqi method, which is memorizing the Quran along with its meanings and movements. Not only memorizing the Koran but also other Islamic material such as the 5 Pillars of Islam, we teach it with movement.” (T3)

Some use the one day one verse method to make it easier for early childhood to remember, as stated below: “Our tahfidz or memorizing Koran program’s system is one day 1 verse. This method is easier for early childhood students.” (T5)

The teachers also realized that not all students’ abilities were the same in memorizing the Koran; therefore, schools usually set a minimum target of memorizing but do not force children’s abilities, as stated below:

“Our target is that children can memorize short letters in juz 30 of the Koran, but even though we have a target, we do not force children to memorize everything we teach, back again to each child’s ability.” (T4)

“Not all children’s abilities are the same, so the level of memory of each child is different; some are already very far from memorizing letters at taqwil and al-falaq.” (T5)

However, one teacher’s answer is very different and attracts the writer’s attention; this teacher admits that her Raudhatul Athfal is not the same as other Raudhatul Athfal. If other Raudhatul Athfal prioritizes memorizing the Koran or short prayers, her Raudhatul Athfal prioritizes character values, as stated below:

“In other cases, Raudhatul Athfal is usually dominant in the tahfidz program or memorizing the Koran; in our school, it is dominant in character planting but still teaches memorizing the Koran. Because our principle is that we want to give children an understanding of religion first and shape their character. At early age like this, we don’t want to be too harsh on children regarding religion; when they reach puberty, we will emphasize their religion.” (T2)

This teacher said that they still teach the students to memorize the Koran and other Islamic religious material, but character values are prioritize in daily learning at Raudhatul Athfal. Because they believe that early childhood children is a great imitator, they want to instill character values first in children, then after that the school will provide Islamic religious material and memorize the Koran.

“Because young children are good imitators, they will more imitate the parents or adults around them. That’s why in our school, we think it’s more effective to instill children’s character first. Then set a good example (for example, we can’t tell our children to recite the Koran if we haven’t recited the Koran ourselves, etc.) and then a religious routine program as suggested. Like what we discussed earlier, the point is that we want our children to have etiquette before they know it. Because today there are many people whose religious knowledge is high, but their manners are low. So, first adab/character, and then religious knowledge.” (T2)

The main purpose of Raudhatul Athfal is for children to have good ethics or character before studying religion. Because nowadays, many people have high religious knowledge but do not have good ethics/character.

From the answers given by the interview participants, we can conclude that Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia teaches Islamic religious sciences such as Aqidah/Faith, Morals/Morals, Al-Quran and Hadith, Worship, and Islamic Story; this is in accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum, Chapter IV Learning Content at Raudhatul Athfal.

We can see that most Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia prioritizes memorizing the Koran and short letters. This tahfidz program (memorization of the Koran) is the flagship program of their school. However, there is some Raudhatul Athfal that is very different;

they prioritize introducing values character or adab first towards children. After the children are considered to have a good Islamic character, they will continue memorizing the Koran or other Islamic religious material. Ideally, character education cannot be separated from Qur'an education (Islamic religious education) because there are character values in the Qur'an. Character education cannot only be taught in one subject but must be integrated with all teaching materials. Quran education material in schools should be one of the supporting character education.

3.5. Teachers' Opinion about Teaching Islamic Religious Values to Early

Childhood

We also asked what the RA teachers thought about teaching Islamic religious values to early childhood because early childhood still did not know many things in this world, including religious values. Therefore we ask the following question: "What do you think about teaching Islamic content to preschool children?"

From the answers of the teachers, it can be seen that almost all teachers are pro or even very supportive of teaching Islam in early childhood, as stated below:

"In my opinion, it is very important to teach Islam to early childhood, even as much as possible we introduce children from the womb about the religion of Islam. (T1)

"In my own opinion, as a teacher and school principal, teaching Islamic religious lessons to early childhood is very good for an introduction to their religion." (T2)

"It doesn't matter at all; it's good as long as it follows Islamic law; indeed, the children still do not have obligation to follow the Shari'a, but this is a good habit.(T5)

These three teachers support Islamic religious learning in early childhood to introduce their religion. Even the first teacher said that parents should teach their children about religious values even from the womb.

We can see the attitude of teachers who are pro of learning religion in early childhood from the statement given, this teacher seems to agree with T2, which states that children should be given stimulation from the womb about Islamic religious values because it is stated in the Koran, as stated:

“As a teacher of Raudhatul Athfal, the introduction of religion to early childhood, in my opinion, is very good because children are in their golden age. As explained in Koran, children have to be taught religious values by giving stimulation even though they are still in the mother’s womb. Because we know that society is now very liberals, if parents don’t care, usually children are only given to watch YouTube, so it’s important to introduce religion to children. (T3)

Then the next teacher also stated the same thing, but this time, she illustrated that early childhood is like white paper according to the tabula rasa theory; parents and adults are tasked with coloring the white paper.

“I agree to teach Islam in early childhood because according to tabula rasa theory, early childhood is like a white paper; it is the duty of parents or adults to shape children’s character and morals....” (T4)

Even this teacher said that early childhood is like a statue or puppet which we can easily shape however we want. Therefore, parents must be careful in providing stimulation to children aged 4-6 years, and it is advisable to stimulate Islamic religious values or teachings in children during this golden age.

“The age of 0-6 years is a golden age; children develop very rapidly in those 4-6 years, so adults must be more careful to provide stimulation to children because children unconsciously record what they see. Children at that age are like statues/puppets, if we want to move them anywhere, the children will obey, so it’s still very easy to shape their characters. So we as parents must be smart in providing stimulation, especially the stimulation in the cultivation of religious characters and values. (T4)

Then the next two teachers stated that if children have been taught religious values from an early age, then other good things will also follow, and God willing, the children will become good people in the future. As stated below:

“ In my opinion, it is very good that we teach Islamic religious material from an early age because if it is taught early, God willing, it will be embedded in the heart later when the children grow up.” (T7)

“It’s very good to teach Islam from an early age to children because, in my opinion, if the child’s religion is already good, God willing, other things will also follow.(T9)

Then one of the teachers also stated that currently, many parents are more interested in sending their children to religious-based schools. This can be seen in the rapid development of Islamic religious-based schools such as Raudhatul Athfal, madrasas, and Islamic boarding schools.

“I think it’s good to instill religious values early. Nowadays, parents’ average interest is in sending their children to religious schools, so Raudhatul Athfal and madrasas are growing rapidly. Because public awareness of the importance of religious education for children has increased, it can also be seen that children who are sent to boarding schools are also increasing.” (T6)

And then, to know deeper into information about what religious values are taught at RA, we continue with the question, “Is it an education based on religious knowledge or teaching values? What are the situations in RA or your school?”

From the answers given by the teachers, all teachers stated the same thing: in RA, they taught Islamic religious values and also character education/moral values, as stated:

“We teach both for learning; there is religious knowledge and character/moral learning because the Ministry of Religious Affairs curriculum focuses on Islamic religious values, while the additional curriculum from the Ministry of Education has characteristic values.” (T1)

“We teach both the science of religion and moral values. (T2)

“For the material, we teach the character and values of the Islamic religion.” (T3)

“The material taught is religious values and character/morals.” (T4)

“We teach religion + character, so there is a curriculum about character, but we associate that character with Islamic religious values.” (T5)

“We teach character values such as being independent, creative, and responsible.” (T7)

“We teach Islamic religious values and character values because the character is also included in the curriculum.” (T8)

“What we teach are both religious values and character. We also have nine pillars of character in the curriculum: honest, independent, obedient, polite, etc.”(T9)

From the interview participants' answers, we can see that they 100% support Islamic religious learning for early childhood. And this things is very common for local Indonesian people. Most Indonesians will support Islamic religious learning in schools, even though religious learning begins very early.

This may be because the Indonesian people are proven to be very religious, attaching importance to religious values and worship. This is evidenced by research conducted by the PEW Research Center on July 20, 2020. The survey on "The Global God Divide" was conducted in 34 countries. Based on the results of the survey: nearly all Indonesian respondents (96 percent) surveyed stated that belief in God is necessary to be moral and have good values. The survey results place Indonesia alongside the Philippines as the two countries with the highest percentage of citizens (96 percent) who equate belief in God with having good values. (PEW Research Center, July 20, 2020, "The Global God Divide")⁴⁶

Most Indonesians also deemed religion, God, and prayer to be an important part of their lives, at 98 percent, 91 percent, and 95 percent of respondents. "Over time, the importance of religion in Indonesia has not changed. This makes it one of the most religiously devout public," The survey confirmed that it was important for Indonesians to define themselves along religious lines, with "religiously unaffiliated people" like agnostics and atheists rarely found in the country. So maybe this survey can also be one of the basic reasons that most Indonesian people easily accept religious learning from an early age. The people are religious and attach great importance to worship.

3.6. Non-Muslim Students in RA

Indonesia is a democratic country with six official religions, namely Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. To find out if there are non-Muslim students who attend Islamic-based ra or Kindergarten, we ask questions: "This is an Islamic-based kindergarten, right? Are there any non-Muslim students here?"

⁴⁶ Full version can be accessed here: https://www.pewresearch.org/global/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/07/PG_2020.07.20_Global-Religion_FINAL.pdf. Access Date 08/05/2022

Moreover, we also asked the possibility that if there were non-Muslim students, what would the RA school do by asking a follow-up question: “And if there is, does the school provide religious lessons other than Islam?”

From the answers given, we can see that none of the RAs have a history of having non-Muslim students, not even RAs who want to accept non-Muslim students. As stated below:

“There is not any.” (T2)

“All the students and teachers here are Muslims; there has never been a non-Muslim.” (T6)

“There is no, and we cannot accept; as long as I teach here, there has never been a non-Muslim student.” (T5)

“Does not exist and never was.” (T7)

“So far, there has never been.” (T8)

Some teachers even said that even if there were non-Muslim students, it would be impossible because all the learning given to RA students from the beginning to the end of class was based on Islamic religious values.

“So far, we do not have one. Even if there are non-Muslim students, our school will not accept them and not be willing to teach religious material other than Islam. Because we could say that from the beginning until the end, all the material that we teach is the Islamic religion.” (T1)

The teachers also explained that even if non-Muslim students were in RA, their school was not willing to teach religious values other than Islam.

“There is no non-Muslim student; it cannot be. Because, from the beginning of the lesson to the end of the lesson, we only teach Islamic religious values; we do not teach the values of other religions besides Islam.” (T4)

The teacher then also explained that most of the people in his city were Muslim, but only a few were not Muslim.

“In this city, there are very few non-Muslims, so there are no non-Muslim students in our school, and even mosques are everywhere here.” (T3)

Furthermore, the last teacher gave a wiser answer: if there are non-Muslim students, usually they will go to Kindergarten based on their respective religions; for example, in the area where she live, there are several Kindergartens based on religion, such as Christian Kindergarten or Catholic Kindergartens.

“There have never been non-Muslim students because, for example, the non-Muslim children can go to other Kindergartens, such as Catholic Kindergartens, because there are also Christian Kindergartens or Catholic Kindergartens.” (T9)

So from all the answers given, we can conclude that no RA is willing to accept non-Muslim students, and they will not even give lessons other than Islam at RA because RA is an Islamic-based kindergarten.

According to Indonesian law, religious education in schools is an obligation. The Indonesian government strongly supports freedom of religion and obtaining religious knowledge at school; therefore, it is not difficult for Indonesian people to find schools that support their religion and beliefs. This reason is one of the reasons why there are no non-Muslim students in RA because non-Muslim students can easily enter other schools that support their religion.

3.7. Curriculum and Textbook of RA

To find out the curriculum and textbook used by RA, we ask the following questions “What curriculum does your school use? Is it based on the Ministry of Religious Affairs or the Ministry of Education and Culture? Could you please explain the curriculum in Raudhatul Athfal?”

From the answers given, we can see that the curriculum used in RA is the curriculum of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as stated below:

“The curriculum follows the Ministry of Religious Affairs.” (T1)

“The Raudhatul Athfal curriculum has always been from the Ministry of Religious Affairs” (T2)

“Our curriculum uses the K13 curriculum from the Ministry of Religious Affairs” (T3)

“The Curriculum K13 from the Ministry of Religious Affairs” (T6)

One teacher said that actually, the curriculum from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the curriculum from the ministry of education was the same, only if the curriculum from the Ministry of Religious Affairs always added religious values in learning, as stated below:

“Raudhatul Athfal uses the curriculum from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The curriculum of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the ministry of education is the same, but in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, we add religious values, for example, if the regular Kindergarten curriculum is called my family, but in Raudhatul Athfal be a sakinah family.” (T5)

And then, one of the teachers also said that, for the Kindergarten or RA level, the curriculum given was only the master curriculum; for implementation, it would be adjusted to the character of each school. As stated below:

“The curriculum is from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but it is adjusted to each institution for its implementation because we are only given the master curriculum. After that, we have to adjust the curriculum based on the character of each institution. In my sub-district here, there are 26 Raudhatul Athfal, but each Raudhatul Athfal has a different learning process.” (T7)

Then to find out the textbooks used in RA, we also asked a follow-up question in the form of “What textbook does your school use? Is it based on the Ministry of Religious Affairs or the Ministry of Education and Culture? Could you please explain about the textbook in Raudhatul Athfal?” From the answers given, we can see that the textbooks used in RA are textbooks from IGRA or the RA teacher association. As stated below:

“For textbooks, usually 1 district has the same textbooks from the Raudhatul Athfal teacher association (IGRA).” (T1)

“we are obliged to buy books from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association). (T5)

“the book is from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association). (T6)

“For our textbooks, there are teacher and student handbooks or LKS (student worksheets) from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association).” (T7)

“The book is from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association) West Java province.” (T8)

“The textbook is from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association).” (T9)

One teacher said that in the past, textbooks for TK or RA could be purchased from anywhere (depending on each school’s policy).

“in the past, textbooks were legal to buy from anywhere, but now textbooks must be purchased from the Raudhatul Athfal teacher association (IGRA). (T2)

One of the teachers also said that books from IGRA must be purchased by RA every semester. Because learning at RA is thematic learning, the number of books that must be purchased is in accordance with the number of themes per semester.

“the book is from the Raudhatul Athfal (IGRA) teacher association, and we are obliged to buy the book because IGRA prepares the book every new semester. Since learning at Raudhatul Athfal is thematic, the book is also thematic according to the theme. According to the theme, there are five books per semester in semester one, and in the second semester, there are six books.” (T3)

Then there was a statement from one of the teachers that caught my attention because it was so different from other teachers. This early childhood education graduate teacher expressed his disapproval of early childhood learning using textbooks, as stated below:

“As a teacher, I rarely use books. Do you want to know why? Because in my opinion, in early childhood ages, the students will get bored quickly if they only read books because the duration of concentration for early childhood is a maximum of 15 minutes. Children prefer concrete activities such as experiments. For example, if we introduce elephants to children through books, it is only 2D pictures that are not real, but if we take children directly to the zoo to see elephants in real life, it is 3D real, and children will like it more.” (T4)

Even this teacher also said that private TK/RA schools, which are more expensive, usually do not recommend learning using books.

“Even if the well-known and expensive private Islamic schools usually do not recommend learning using books for early childhood, books are boring and unreal for

early childhood. The curriculum is good, but in Indonesia, changing the curriculum too often makes it difficult for teachers, especially senior teachers who are old.” (T4)

So, we can conclude that the curriculum used by RA is the curriculum of the Ministry of Religious Affairs; this is following the Decree of the Director-General of Islamic Education Number 3489 of 2020, which states that the one that regulates the Raudhatul Athfal (RA) curriculum is the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

Furthermore, for textbooks, all RAs are required to buy textbooks from the Raudhatul Athfal (IGRA) teacher association in each district and textbooks for each district are different because each district has its own IGRA. Students must purchase this textbook at RA, and most of the RA in Indonesia use textbooks from IGRA as a teaching reference.

3.8. Teachers’ Opinions about The Curriculum and Textbooks of RA

After getting information about the sources of the curriculum and textbooks used at RA, then we want to explore more information about the opinions of teachers regarding the curriculum and textbooks at RA, both in terms of content and design; therefore, we ask questions in the form of: “As a teacher here, what do you think about the curriculum and textbooks, how do you find the textbooks in terms of content and design, what are the main deficiencies in teaching materials?”

From the answers given by the teachers, it can be seen that the responses of the teachers regarding the curriculum and textbooks are very diverse. Some teachers think that the curriculum and textbooks are good and fine.

“I think the curriculum is good because it provides religious values, and the books are also good; there are no complaints about books at our school.” (T9)

“In my opinion, the textbook, both content and design, is fine; it follows the curriculum. The curriculum is also good....” (T2)

Two teachers say that the curriculum is good, but the textbook is too easy for 4-6-year-olds. So the result is that the children finish the tasks in the book too quickly, and then the teachers are forced to make additional worksheets for the students.

“The design is good, but the content, in our opinion, is too easy for children aged 4-6 years, so the students finish their worksheets so fast because it is too easy, so the teacher has to make additional worksheets themselves.” (T5)

“I think the curriculum is good, but the book is too easy according to the teachers here. For example, in grade B children’s books, it is just thickening the letters, even though the children’s ability is already in writing letters stage.” (T8)

“In my opinion, books from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association) are not very good. Indeed, the book is in accordance with the theme, but the contents are too easy for Raudhatul Athfal’s children. The contents were like thickening letters, drawing lines, etc., so the children quickly finished their books. In the end, the teacher had to make their additional worksheets because the material in the books had finished.” (T3)

From the statements of 3 teachers above, we can see that teacher 5 stated that the design of the textbook at Raudhatul Athfal was good but the content was considered too easy for children aged 4-6 years. Then the next teacher also agreed with teacher 5 that the curriculum was already good but the textbook was too easy for children. And the last teacher also had the same opinion as teacher 5 and teacher 8 that the content in the textbook was too easy, as evidenced by the students being able to do the assignments in the books very quickly so the teachers were forced to make additional worksheets.

Then two other teachers also revealed that, in fact, the curriculum and textbooks from the Ministry of Religious Affairs were good, as stated below:

“In my opinion, the textbook, both in terms of content and design, is fine; it is in accordance with the curriculum. The curriculum is also good because the master curriculum is from the Ministry of Religious Affairs....” (T2)

“The curriculum is good...” (T3)

“I think the curriculum is good...” (T6)

“In terms of books, each district is different, but I think the books from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association) are good, in accordance with the curriculum and children’s development.” (T7)

However, the teachers also revealed that the problem was the implementation of the curriculum. Because in Indonesia, the implementation of learning in RA depends on each school adjusting to the characteristics and characteristics of the RA.

“The curriculum is also good because the master curriculum is from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but its implementation depends on each school. So each school has a different application. For example, my school is more concerned with inculcating character in children. However, in other schools, the focus is more on memorizing the Koran/tahfidz material.” (T2)

“The curriculum is good, but its implementation completely depends on the respective institutions.” (T3)

Then other teachers also complained about the many books that had to be bought, which had a bad impact on the creativity of the teachers. Teachers who use textbooks a lot as teaching media will be less creative.

“...the problem is too many books to buy; we are obliged to buy three types of books from 3 different sources. The impact makes teachers less creative because teaching only uses the book as a teaching material, rarely uses other creative media.” (T6)

Then some teachers convey their complaints about the curriculum in Indonesia, which is always changing.

“For the curriculum, Indonesia is famous for changing the curriculum; for example, in 2020-2021, we use the KTSP curriculum until now, we are still using the KTSP curriculum (Education Unit Level Curriculum). However, now there has been more socialization that in 2022 it will be replaced with a new curriculum called the Independent Learning Curriculum....” (T7)

Then this teacher also added a statement that there is no problem with frequent curriculum changes because the teaching materials are more or less the same; the problem lies in the administration.

“Raudhatul Athfal does indeed follow the curriculum from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but the practice can be adjusted according to each institution. So it does not matter because the content is more or less the same even though the curriculum changes....” but at the most, if the curriculum change is difficult, it is the teacher. After

all, changing the curriculum means changing administration, so teachers have to learn administration from the beginning again.” (T7)

Moreover, the answer from the last teacher looks very different from the previous teacher’s because this teacher is very contra/disagrees with the use of textbooks as learning media for early childhood.

“For books, because I used to study early childhood education, I strongly disagree with early childhood learning using books. Because the concept of learning in early childhood is playing while learning, but if you use a book, it means learning. Early childhood must be stimulated with 3-dimensional objects, namely concrete objects, not only 2-dimensional books.” (T4)

So, the conclusion is that most teachers say that the curriculum for RA is good. However, it is no secret that the curriculum in Indonesia changes so often that it makes teachers confused and have difficulty completing administration. For textbooks, we can conclude that the answers from the teachers varied greatly; some said that the textbooks were in accordance with the curriculum and were fine, but some complained that the contents of the textbooks were too easy for children aged 4-6 years, this variation answer is very reasonable and understandable because the textbook for each RA is different, adjusted to the IGRA of each district.

3.9. Activities and Learning Methods in RA

After knowing the curriculum and textbooks used at RA, we wanted to explore more by asking what activities and learning methods were used by RA teachers to teach Islamic religious values to students. Therefore we asked questions in the form of “For Islamic religious education lessons, what activities and learning methods are used in this school?” From the answers given by the teachers, some answered that they usually used the central and classical methods.

“...the method we use is usually the central method. So the teacher gives an example, and then the students imitate....” (T1)

“...There is also a classical method, namely by dividing groups, for example, there are four tables with four colors in a class, so the children are grouped into red groups, yellow groups, etc.” (T3)

“For learning methods, we usually use the central and classical methods. (T4)

“Usually we use the Classical method, one teacher holds eight children. Play activities while learning, as comfortable as possible, learning activities inside and outside the classroom, singing, games, etc. (T6)

“We usually use the classical method, so all the children gather into 1 room. So group A and B are joined; later, the teacher will guide them to memorize the daily prayers and short letters from the Koran..” (T7)

“As we discussed earlier, using the central method” (T9)

Then from the answers of the teachers, we can see that the most common method used to teach children to memorize the Koran and prayers is by imitating the teacher, as stated:

“the teacher gives an example, and then the students imitate..” (T1)

“For the learning activities, as we have mentioned earlier, the point is that teachers give the examples, and then the children follow and then we practice together.” (T4)

“Usually, our method is imitating the teacher. (T8)

Another teacher gave the same answer, so the teacher gave an example, and the students would follow it, for example, in memorizing the Koran:

“Usually when memorizing the Koran, the teacher will give an example, and the students will follow what the teacher says, so on and until the children memorize it.” (T5)

“For example, to memorize the Koran, teachers usually give an example, and then the children follow it.” (T8)

“The teachers will give examples, then the children imitate, one day it is only 1 verse we repeat until the children can remember and memorize the verse.” (T7)

“...the students sit in a circle, and the teacher reads the recitation of the Koran, and the children follow. .” (T9)

The thing that is most often experienced by teachers when they are practicing memorizing the Koran is that the children will be silent first (because they have never memorized this verse before). Gradually they will follow the reading of the Koran:

“...Maybe at first when the teacher reads the Koran, they will be silent, but after a while, they will follow themselves and memorize it even though they still recite it wrongly. Just like the practice of worship, prayer, and ablution, the teacher gives an example, and then the children follow.” (T9)

If the students have memorized the verses of the Qur’an, they will repeat the memorization in front of the teacher.

“...If the students have already memorized, they will go to the teacher to practice what they have memorized. The teacher usually exemplifies all activities, then the students imitate.” (T5)

In addition, there are also learning methods using videos, for example, Islamic learning videos or audio of the Koran:

“...There is also learning through Islamic learning videos....” (T5)

“...While children are practicing writing, we open audio murotal (recitation of the Koran), so they write with their hands, but their ears listen to the Koran.” (T8)

Some teachers also said that they focus more on practice than material; therefore, usually, teachers practice and then students follow suit because ages 4 -6 years are easier to imitate from other people.

“We put more focus on non-monotonous learning, not only with the material but also with practice. For example, in prayer and ablution, the teacher gives an example with a demonstration, and then the children follow it because it is easier for children to imitate other people. We also often divide groups and name the group with the name of an animal, for example, a group of cats, birds, etc.” (T3)

One very different answer can be seen from a teacher because of the difference in priority goals set at her school; her school’s methods and learning techniques are slightly different. This school tends to provide more stimulation and motivation, as explained in detail by the following teacher:

“Our method is more to provide stimulation and motivation to children. For example, to make the children pray calmly, most of the teachers of other Kindergartens/Raudhathul Athfal will shout and chase their children, telling them to pray. However, in our school, we provide more stimulation and motivation to children. For example, to invite the

children to pray, we give an initial step by asking who wants to join the prayer with the teacher? When they all answered: me! Then the teacher will say, but there is one condition. The condition is that the prayer must be calm like the adult people praying in the mosque, are there adult people who pray while running? Later the children began to imagine how the adult people or their fathers prayed in the mosque because the children imitated what they saw and experienced. After that, the children will also be invited to pray with a good call, such as let us pray, Mr. Ustadz and Ustadzah or Mr. Hajj and Mrs. Haja, so that the children feel as if they are the good people they aspire to be. No bad language. (T2)

Then the interesting thing is, that this RA school implements a point reward system without punishment, as explained below:

“Then also apart from that, there is a point reward system at our school. It is just a reward without punishment; for example, the calmest and most solemn in prayer will get a reward from Allah and points from the teacher. The points are collected, and the one who gets the most points will get a trophy from the school at the end of the semester (when distributing report cards); all parents were asked to bring gifts for their children. Later the children were called one by one and given gifts from their parents, so they all felt they were rewarded for their discipline.” (T2)

From the answers given by the teachers, we can conclude that the majority of RA teachers use classical and central methods in teaching. Furthermore, imitation activities are usually carried out in teaching Islam to children. The teachers will practice first, and the students will imitate it, so it continues to be repeated until the children can memorize the Koran themselves or practice worship. Such as prayer, ablution, etc.

However, judging from the answer of 1 teacher who has a big goal to character education, the author can say that the methods and learning activities implemented in RA depend on the characteristics of each school. RA, who has a big goal to produce students who can become tahfidz / memorize the Koran, will usually use practical and imitating methods. However, RA who prioritize educating children's character will usually try to provide a lot of positive stimulus and motivation to children to form good characteristics or morals before studying religious knowledge.

This is very reasonable because the characteristics of the RA itself are that each institution has its uniqueness and character. This is in accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Religion Number 792 of 2018 concerning Guidelines for the Implementation of the Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum concerning Characteristics of Raudhatul Athfal Curriculum Page 9 – 10. Therefore, RA has the right to freely implement learning in his school in accordance with the goals of each school, whether the big goal is to become a hafiz of the Quran or instill character from an early age, etc. That is why there are differences in activities and learning methods in RA.

3.10. The Different Policies in RA

Indonesia is an archipelagic country and the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, with a total of 30,858 RA. Therefore, we wanted to know whether policies differ from one RA to another, so we gave this question to the teachers “Is there a policy regarding early childhood religious education in your school that is different from the policies in other schools or cities in Indonesia?”

From the answers given by the teachers, we can see that the majority said that there seems to be no policy that is too different from one RA to another in Indonesia (except the policy on curriculum implementation, which we discussed in the previous point. As stated by interview participants :

“No, it is just the same with other schools.” (T7)

However, two teachers revealed that maybe different situations or policies exist in determining religious holidays and the learning system during the corona.

“It is not too different, but for example, if it is Eid al-Adha, we have a three-day tasyrik holiday in public kindergartens that are no holiday like that, and there is no tasyrik day off.” (T1)

“The difference is that there are other schools whose learning is still 100% online during corona. For our school, starting from this second semester, it will be 100% offline. Then in our school, the students are placed in 2 different classes according to their respective abilities.” (T5)

So we can conclude that the actual RA policy in Indonesia is more or less similar to that of other schools, the most important difference being the policies regarding the learning system during the pandemic and religious holidays.

3.11. Physical Condition of RA in Indonesia

In addition to curriculum and teaching methods, we also want to know the actual physical conditions of the RA schools; therefore, we ask the question: "How about the physical conditions of the schools? How do you evaluate it based on the conditions and design of the school?"

From the answers from the teachers, we can see that the physical condition of each RA is different; some of them are in a slightly dangerous school for children who are too active at an early age.

"...However, there are some sharp corners, for example, doors and windows, so it is quite dangerous for children. There were students whose hands were hit by sharp corners of the window in the past, so it was a little less safe if we were not careful." (T1)

"..The physical condition of the school is not good because the roof has started to leak a bit...." (T8)

However, the majority said that the physical condition and design of the school had been designed to be as safe as possible and as cheerful as possible to adapt the character for early childhood.

"I think the physical condition and design of our school are good enough to suit the cheerful character of early childhood." (T2)

"Thank God for our school just finished renovation three years ago; the design was adjusted to the cheerful early childhood." (T1)

"The wall designs are painted plain white, not drawn so that the children can paste their creations or pictures; the children's paper works pasted on the plain walls. I think it is safe and not dangerous for other physical conditions, the yard is quite wide and wide, and there is also a game set for children." (T3)

"..everything is safe and good, suitable for early childhood, even it is completed with indoor and outdoor classes." (T4)

"The building is safe, designed according to cheerful children; there is a playground too." (T5)

"there is nothing in the physical condition of the school that poses a danger to children. The school's colorful design matches the cheerful character of the children." (T7)

"but our building is designed in attractive colors. The building is not too big but enough for the children to move; there is already a fence, so it is safe for children; children can play without leaving the fence." (T9)

Several RAs do not have their own buildings, so the buildings used are rented buildings.

"We do not have our building yet; it is still a rental building." (T9)

"The building is a rental, and the land is narrow" (T6)

For the total rooms owned by RA schools, on average, the teachers answered that there were a total of 3 rooms, namely class A, class B, and the teacher's room. However, some schools also have a playground and multipurpose room.

"For our school, Alhamdulillah, the building is still new; there are three rooms. Class A, Class B and teacher's room, the yard is quite wide, and there is also a game set for children." (T3)

"it is completed with indoor and outdoor classes." (T4)

"there is a playground too." (T5)

"but there is a playground." (T6)

"Actually our school has four classes, 1 class A, 1 class B, one playgroup class and one teacher's room..... We already have a playground for children and a spacious multipurpose room for praying and even playing soccer/futsal ." (T8)

So the conclusion is that the physical conditions of schools are very diverse, some already have their buildings, but some are still renting buildings. Moreover, the factor of this school building is one of the factors that greatly affect the status of the school, whether this RA can become a public or private RA.

In Indonesia, there has not been 1 RA with the status of a public school; all RA in Indonesia are still private. Furthermore, according to Ibnu Salman (Researcher at the Jakarta Religious Research and Development Center), one of the biggest reasons there

is no public RA in Indonesia is the lack of land. The requirement to become a public RA must have land with a minimum area of 1000 square meters for a maximum of 54 students. There is not one RA in Indonesia that has land according to the Ministry of Religious Affairs requirements.

3.12. Parents' Expectations of RA

Then we also want to know the expectations or expectations of parents who send their children to study at RA; therefore, we ask questions in the form: "What are the students' parents' expectations from this school? Does the school meet these expectations? Does the school curriculum match the parents' expectations?"

From the answers given by the interview participants, it can be seen that almost all parents are satisfied with the knowledge given at RA and have met their expectations, as stated:

"I think our school already meets the parents' expectations" (T1)

"From the parents' feedback, they are amazed by their children's ability who can read and memorize the Koran" (T3)

"In my opinion, it meets the expectations of parents; parents are happy that their children can memorize the Koran." (T5)

"In my opinion, it is in line with the expectations of parents." (T6)

"I think it is in line with the expectations of parents." (T7)

Then if we looking for deeper information from the answers of the interview participants, we can see that almost all parents have the same expectation, which is that they want their children to know religious knowledge from an early age and memorize the Koran.

"Parents usually expect their children to know religion from a young age." (T1)

"In my village, there is a public Kindergarten, and there is also Raudhatul Athfal, but parents are more interested in Raudhatul Athfal because Raudhatul Athfal students are usually smarter than Kindergarten students, especially in terms of memorizing the Koran." (T3)

"Most parents' expectations are their children can become hafiz/memorizers of the Quran. In my opinion, it is in accordance with our school curriculum because our flagship program is the tahfidz program/memorizing the Quran." (T4)

"The student parents here expect their children to be pious and become children who know their religion from an early age." (T5)

"because parents here usually want their children to know their religion from an early age and be independent, for example, if the parents can just leave their children during the lesson time (no need for waiting for them from the beginning until the end of the class), it means the school already success to make the students independent." (T7)

"In Raudhatul Athfal, the parents hope that the children can memorize the Koran and have the similar quality of memorizing and reading the Koran as our school alumni. Usually, our alumni are excellent and make it through to popular elementary schools. So, in my opinion, Raudhatul Athfal is in line with their parents' expectations. However, it is common for some parents to complain because their children are different or cannot memorize like other friends. Sometimes, they often blame the teacher even though we all know that there must be good cooperation between parents and teachers." (T8)

"Parents expect that their children can receive religious knowledge from an early age, and I think our school has met their parents' expectations; it can be seen from the parents' reports that their children have made much progress, for example, if the parents eat standing up, the children will remind them because the children have been taught at school that you cannot eat while standing, etc." (T9)

Satisfactory educational outcomes from RA, which became the main factor in parents' decisions to send their children to RA, were the alumni factor and the ability of RA students who were good in the field of religion, especially in the field of tahfidz Quran.

"In Raudhatul Athfal, the parents hope that the children can memorize the Koran and have the similar quality of memorizing and reading the Koran as our school alumni. Usually, our alumni are excellent and make it through to popular elementary schools." (T8)

“the children here, on average, are very quick, they can memorize short letters in 1 month usually and about three months for a long letter like Surah al-A'la, and I think it can be included in the category of short and fast time to memorize the Koran.” (T4)

And some parents report that they are satisfied with what their children already know about religious knowledge.

“...it can be seen from the parents' reports that their children have made much progress, for example, if the parents eat standing up, the children will remind them because the children have been taught at school that you can't do not eat while standing, etc.” (T9)

Moreover, some RAs had to reject some prospective students because there were many students that enthusiasts, but the maximum quota from these schools did not match the number of applicants.

“Our school has a lot of fans, which means many parents want their children to get an education here, but unfortunately, we have to reject some students because the student quota is already full.” (T1)

However, of course, not all parents are satisfied with their children's achievements. Some parents complain to the teachers. From the answers given, complaints occur because many parents often compare their children's abilities with the abilities of other children, even though each child has different abilities, which cannot be generalized.

”However, some parents complain because their children's abilities are not the same as their friends usually this type of parents are the one who compares too much about their children's abilities with other children. However, we all know that every children's abilities are different. So their child is pressured to study, scolded, so they feel pressured and do not enjoy the learning process.” (T3)

Some parents even blame the teachers because their children's abilities are not the same as other children in general.

“but it is common for some parents to complain because their children are different or cannot memorize like other friends, sometimes they often blame the teacher even though we all know, to get the optimal result, there must be good cooperation; between parents and teachers.” (T8)

If we review again, children only study in RA for approximately 3 hours; the rest of the time is at home with their parents. Therefore, the informants said that everything would be in accordance with the parents' expectations if there are good cooperations between the teachers and parents.

"everything will meet their expectations as long as there is good cooperation between teachers and student parents because teachers in schools already teach as well as possible, but in fact, children spend more time at home, so they must be guided by the parents too." (T5)

So from the information above, we can conclude that the average expectation of parents to send their children to RA is that their children can be able to know Islamic religious knowledge from an early age and can memorize the Koran. However, some parents still give complaints because the child's ability does not match their expectations, even though achieving these expectations requires good cooperation between teachers and parents.

3.13. Qualifications to Become a RA teacher

Then we also asked some questions about the requirements and qualifications to become an RA teacher in Indonesia, "What are the qualifications to become a teacher of Islam in Raudhatul Athfal in general? Are the qualifications the same in every city in Indonesia or different for each region?"

When viewed from history, there were no special requirements and qualifications to become a TK/RA teacher in the past. Graduates from any major can become a TK/RA teacher and get their rights as a teacher.

"In the past, all majors and levels were allowed to perform as Raudhatul Athfal teachers and received certification allowances." (T8)

However, the current regulations, based on official regulations from the government contained in the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, 2014 Law Number 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education Chapter VII Article 25 Paragraph 1: "The RA teachers must have

minimum a bachelor's degree and the degree is majoring in the Bachelor of PAUD (Early Childhood Education) or PIAUD/Early Childhood Islamic Education".⁴⁷

"In general, it is recommended to be linear with the profession, namely Bachelor of PAUD (Early Childhood Education)." (T1)

"Ideally, a bachelor of kindergarten teacher education or a raudhathul athfal education graduate." (T2)

"Ideally, the teacher must have a Bachelor's Degree in PAUD/Early Childhood Education, PG TK/Kindergarten Teacher Education or PIAUD/Early Childhood Islamic Education." (T3)

"Must be a graduate of Level of PAUD/Early Childhood Education." (T4)

"Ideally, you should have a Bachelor's Degree in PAUD/Early Childhood Education." (T5)

"Currently, it must be linear; it must be a Bachelor of PAUD/Early Childhood Education." (T6)

"Mandatory to graduate from Level of Bachelor, if possible, from the Department of PAUD/Early Childhood Education, PG TK/Kindergarten Teacher Education or PIAUD/Early Childhood Islamic Education." (T7)

"They should have graduated with a Bachelor of PAUD/Early Childhood Education." (T9)

However, the reality turns out to be different; not all TK/RA teachers are from PAUD/Early Childhood Education graduates, and the backgrounds of the teachers are very diverse because teacher acceptance depends on each school's policies.

"but in our school, many have different majors like me, who graduated not from PAUD Department." (T2)

⁴⁷ (Have a Diploma four (D-IV) or Bachelor (S1) diploma in the field of early childhood education and other education relevant to the early childhood education system or psychology obtained from an accredited study program. Especially for RA teachers, a minimum of a diploma four (D-IV) or bachelor (S1) graduate from the PGRA/Raudhatul Athfal Teacher Education department is required. (Regulation of the Minister of National Education, 2007)

“But we all know that there are many Raudhatul Athfal teachers from non-linear majors.” (T3)

”...but it depends on each school’s policy. ...” (T4)

“But there are four teachers in our school, and all of them are not from the PAUD/Early Childhood Education department. I, as the principal, only graduated with Diploma II majoring in computers.” (T5)

“Apart from those departments (graduate of PAUD Department), it is okay to become a teacher at Raudhatul Athfal.” (T7)

“In our school, the teachers are graduates of Bachelor of PAI/Islamic religious education, and the principal is a graduate of Bachelor Level of Da’wah. However, there are still teachers who graduate from high school too.” (T8)

Even though the reality is not in accordance with government regulations, RA teachers who do not meet the qualifications can still become teachers at RA. However, these teachers cannot get the same facilities as RA teachers meet the qualifications from the government.

“if it is linear so that teachers can participate in certification and get transportation money from the ministry, if it is not as linear, people can become a Raudhatul Athfal teacher but cannot get the allowance.” (T1)

“...but about five years ago, only teachers with a Bachelor’s degree as linear as PAUD/Early Childhood Education were allowed to receive certification allowances.” (T8)

Then we tried to ask the reason behind the few RA teachers with linear majors. Several teachers explained that not all universities in Indonesia provide this major, so Indonesia only has a few PAUD/Early Childhood Education department graduates.

“If we look at the reality, many Raudhatul Athfal teachers / Kindergartens are not from the Early Childhood Education department because the campuses that provide the Early Childhood Education major in Indonesia are few. Moreover, there are not too many enthusiasts on my campus; there was only 1 class in my batch.” (T4)

Furthermore, not everyone can become a TK/RA teacher because it takes a very patient heart to educate children, especially children at an early age.

“If you want to be a teacher at Raudhatul Athfal/Kindergarten, you must have sincere intentions because it is difficult to become a Kindergarten teacher if you do not want to, even if you are a graduate of Early Childhood Education.” (T5)

From the description above, we can conclude that the Indonesian government already has its standards and qualifications to become a TK/RA teacher. However, the reality is very different; not all TK/RA teachers have a relevant diploma in work. People who do not have the relevant diplomas can still become TK/RA teachers but cannot have the facilities (such as salaries, transportation fees, etc.) like other qualified teachers.

3.14. Challenges of the Teachers in Raudhatul Athfal

To find out what challenges RA teachers face in the teaching and learning process, we ask them this question, "Are there any challenges in Islam's teaching and learning process that you feel as a teacher of Raudhatul Athfal? Moreover, maybe this is a challenge to teach Islamic religious lessons to early childhood students who are very young and may not know much about everything, especially religion. You can explain the problems and challenges you face while teaching Islam to students!"

From the teachers' answers, it can be seen that, on average, the teachers did not find such a big challenge or problem.

"God willing, there are no significant challenges. Alhamdulillah, we get good students who obey us." (T1)

"Actually, I think that when children are instilled with character, we as teachers are no longer difficult to teach them because they become obedient." (T2)

"For me, there is no big problem." (T4)

"In my opinion, The challenges are not too much.." (T8)

Then from the teachers' explanations, we can see that the problems that are the highlight of the teachers are different. Some convey problems with the characteristic of the children, the contribution of parents, and also the problem of teacher salaries, etc.

"Our problem is that the children are most difficult to obey, so we usually move them to join in the prayers. For example, maybe at first, they are forced, but after a while, the students will follow themselves because something that is forced will eventually become a habit." (T1)

Teachers also explain that it is difficult to explain things related to the Islamic religion that does not make sense to young children, such as explaining angels and other unseen things.

"Actually, I think that when children are instilled with character, we as teachers are no longer difficult to teach them because they are more obedient. The most challenge for children is how we teach religious subjects to children. For example, when explaining evil angels are guards at the gates of hell, their characteristics are red eyes, etc., some children say, "wow, like my father, his eyes are red because he likes to stay up late, is my father an angel?" Things like that are hard to explain." (T2)

Some teachers also complained that the biggest challenge was not the children but the parents. Some parents are not cooperative, and even parents do not care and do not guide their children at home.

"There are challenges and difficulties, but the biggest challenge is when parents do not care about their children. If the parents can be invited to cooperate, God willing, the child's development will also be good." (T3)

"In my opinion, the biggest challenge is from parents themselves, sometimes there are parents who do not guide their children anymore at home so their children are difficult to develop, because at school it is only 3 hours, if you do not repeat the material at home, for example, memorizing prayers, then the child will forget. So in our school, God willing, there will be no significant challenges, only the challenges from parents." (T5)

Even some teachers also said that the problem was from the personality or mentality of the teachers. So this is a challenge to find the right method and way to teach early childhood children who have different characters and abilities.

"For me, there is no big problem. However, it is more of a challenge as a teacher to set targets because the real target is not targeting their children but targeting me as a

teacher, like what I should teach because every child's behavior is different. So, the teacher as a facilitator should have to adjust the children's attitude. For example, some children are difficult to memorize the Koran, but they are good in other aspects. So, as a good teacher, we should not demand and force children to memorize, but we should introspect ourselves; maybe the method we use is not suitable for the children." (T4)

Then also, what has become an open secret for public is: it needs a high level of patience to become a teacher in early childhood. As we know that each child's ability is different, so to deal with the different characteristic of these children, teachers need a high level of patience, as stated by several teachers:

"There must be many challenges, of course, but the point is that being a Raudhatul Athfal teacher must be so patient and painstaking because children usually seem like they do not care, but it turns out that even though they look like they do not care, they can understand and memorize prayers, etc. quickly because their brains subconsciously record what they hear and see, their memory is also still strong because they are in the golden age stage." (T6)

"In my opinion, The challenges are not too much, but maybe the most difficult, if you meet a child who has difficulty memorizing, that type of child, will stay silent during memorizing the Koran program; usually their enthusiasm is only when they are practicing sports or other activities. So we have to be more patient in educating them, but in my opinion, as long as the teacher is more patient and the parents can work well together, children at this age will be easier to guide. Due to reports from parents, it turns out that even though the child is silent in class while memorizing, it turns out that at home, they can memorize the letters taught at school because unconsciously, their ears hear, then their brain records what they hear." (T8)

"In my opinion, the biggest challenge is the teacher's mentality because we must be patient to educate early childhood the teacher. Because children sometimes do not want to obey; for example, it takes half an hour to ask them to pray because some children run here and there. Even when praying, managing them is very difficult, but that is normal for ages 4- 6 years. So that is what I think is the biggest challenge for me in educating early childhood." (T9)

Even some teachers also have to deal with problems in the surrounding environment, like convincing the authorities to help their schools financially.

"In my opinion, in terms of teaching Islam, there are no significant challenges; in fact, I enjoy teaching children at an early age. The most challenging is convincing people that our institution has quality in both religion and education. And then to convince the authorities to want to help our schools because, in 2018 – 2019, all the teachers here were never paid because there were no funds for our schools. Now there is a salary but just a little because we are honorary teachers. Being a teacher of Raudhatul Athfal for honorary teachers like us is not a job that makes money to survive every day, just a job to do charity. Teachers like me rely on farming for daily survival." (T7)

Then we also asked what solutions could be used to solve the problems and challenges that have been presented previously. Therefore we asked the question: "From your point of view as a teacher of Raudhatul Athfal, is there any solution to solve the problems that you have mentioned earlier? May we start from the simplest step that you or your fellow teacher can do in reality?"

From the answers given, we can see that teachers and schools have their way of solving these problems, as stated:

"If the child is not honest, we usually give advice and real examples. For example, if children are fighting, we will consult with their parents to find a solution. However, my students are usually introduced to heaven and hell, so their behavior can be controlled and warned that they cannot enter heaven if they do something bad." (T1)

Some schools also hold home visits when their children cause problems at school.

"Usually, if the children are not guided by their parents, we will do a home visit, and we will find out first what the problem is. We will advise the parents by understanding and explanations because all children are smart; maybe they just do not pay attention." (T3)

Furthermore, one of the teachers also explained that the school and parents already have meetings to evaluate programs so that teachers and parents can contribute together to educating children.

“At the beginning of every semester, there is an evaluation program, and we invite parents to meet and report on their child's progress. If there is a problem, we find a solution together, and we also synchronize our teaching methods and materials with parents via WhatsApp group. For example, today, there are learning materials prayer for eating, then in the WhatsApp group we will announce it so that the parents are at home to guide again for the prayer at home.” (T5)

So, from the answers given, we can conclude that the teachers admitted that they did not get too much challenges. Some even admitted that they enjoyed their profession as RA teachers. The challenges faced by teachers are different; some have challenges from the characteristics of the students, some have problems with themselves, and some have problems with parents who do not contribute to the progress of their children to the problem of salary and facilities given to teachers.

According to Dr. Nurul Anam, M.Pd., in the article titled "Various Problems Of Education And Learning in Paud TK/RA Education Institutions in Indonesia,":

“The main solution that must be done to overcome problems in the implementation of early childhood education is: all of the various elements (government, schools, parents, and the community) must cooperate, so the implementation of education and learning in TK/RA educational institutions will be carried out effectively and efficiently.”

Moreover, according to the author, the solution presented by Dr. Nurul Anam was very appropriate because, from the interviews, many teachers complained that there was a lack of cooperation between various parties, such as the government and parents. Even the interview participants have expressed their opinion on an alternative solution to the problem, like the mandatory cooperation between all parties, considering that RA students are early childhood and must have guidance from adults at school and at home.

3.15. Knowledge of Early Childhood Education Systems in Other Countries

Then we also wanted to find out whether the informants who worked as RA teachers knew information about the early childhood education system in countries other than Indonesia. Therefore, we asked, “Have you ever read or received information about the Islamic religious learning system for early childhood education abroad (countries other than Indonesia). If so, which country, and could you please share a little bit of the

information about the system and challenges of early childhood religious education in that country!”

From the answers given by the teachers, we can see that the majority of teachers do not know any information about the early childhood education system in other countries.

“Never heard of it before.” (T1)

One interviewee answered that she did not know about this information either. However, she knew that early childhood teachers are usually given a higher award than in Indonesia (in terms of salary and other facilities).

“Never, but as far as I know, overseas teachers are given higher awards.” (T5)

Moreover, one of the teachers also said that she has a friend who lives in Japan with her husband and children, so she knows a little about early childhood education in Japan.

“There is a friend of mine who lives in Japan. As far as I know. In Japan, character instilling in children is very strong and followed by practice; for example, when early childhood children go home from school, their parents no longer pick them up because they have been taught to be independent at an early age.” (T2)

So from the answers of the interviewees, it can be concluded that most of the teachers are still unfamiliar with the early childhood education system abroad; what they know is that overseas most of the systems are more advanced, and the teachers are more prosperous than in Indonesia.

3.16. Training for Teachers of RA

To find out what training or seminars RA teachers have received, we asked, “How about the in-service training of teachers, do you like the training like that? If yes, what subjects is it, and how often is it done?”

From the answers given, we can see that, on average, teachers always receive training from the Ministry of Religious Affairs or their respective regional IGRAs. However, training is very rarely given during the corona period, even if any training is carried out online.

“...before the pandemic was more than five times a year. However, during the pandemic, the training was only held at the end of 2021; there have been 3x online training.” (T1)

“During the coronavirus, there was usually training online only. Before the coronavirus, there was more training; in 1 year, teachers could attend 2-3 times of training.” (T3)

“As long as a pandemic, training has never existed; there are only online workshops. However, before the pandemic, there was much training.” (T4)

“There is training at least once a year, depending on the city.” (T5)

“Since the pandemic, the training has been online.” (T6)

“There were more teachers training before the pandemic, but there was no training at a pandemic.” (T7)

“Quite often, usually held by the IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association) or sub-district IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association). Usually, the training provided by IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association) in my city in Bekasi coincides with the day we take our allowances, so it is all about completing the administration and teacher training. Within one year, at least 2-4 x training provided.” (T8)

“Every year, there are 1-2 times..” (T9)

Then the actual training material is very diverse, ranging from training for school principals and operators to classroom teachers. Moreover, there is also training on curriculum, teaching materials, etc.

“Non-religious training, such as training about curriculum, is often held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The training materials are usually about learning curriculum (K13/current curriculum), operator training, etc.” (T1)

“The training is a necessity; when the teacher reports a new problem, the training will be held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs or IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association). It is usually training about the curriculum or teaching materials.” (T2)

“The materials were various, for example, the development of learning media, curriculum, etc.” (T3)

“Usually, the material is about the curriculum, teaching system, how to tell stories to children, teaching methods, etc.” (T5)

“There are many pieces of training; some are for classroom teachers, the principals and IT (Information Technology) staff. The materials are usually about curriculum, literacy, teacher performance, etc.” (T6)

“...However, now we have started the new normal era. We have started to join the teacher training again with training materials on origami folding, hadith and movement training, training on making APE (educational game tools), administrative training, curriculum, etc. If it is calculated, maybe one year there is a minimum of about 4-5 times of training.” (T7)

“Recently, we have had training on how to fill out electronic report cards, how to educate children, and how to be a fun and professional teacher.” (T1)

“..the materials are the curriculum, introduction to children’s characteristics, etc. Teacher training is usually held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, social services, or other kindergartens.” (T9)

So the conclusion is that training for RA teachers is often given in different quantities depending on each city’s government. The training materials are also very varied; for example, the training materials for school principals, homeroom teachers or operators are different, adjusted to the existing position and needs.

3.17. The Teachers’ Opinions about the Islamic Religious Education System for Early Childhood in Indonesia

To find out what the teachers think about the Islamic religious education system for early childhood in Indonesia, we asked the question, “In your opinion, is the Islamic religious education system for early childhood in Indonesia good enough or not? If it is not good enough yet, may you please explain a little about which side you think is not optimal and still needs to be improved? Maybe you can compare Indonesia’s early childhood religious education system with the other countries you have mentioned!”

The teachers stated that the Islamic religious education system for early childhood in Indonesia was good. However, they also conveyed some of their complaints in different fields. For example, the first interviewee expressed her opinion about the number of students that she judged to be too many in her class, making it difficult for teachers to supervise the students.

“In my opinion, the System is good; the curriculum is also good because it is very pro to our religion. I think the provision of religion is very necessary; as much as possible, we equip it from an early age. However, maybe in terms of the number of students in my class, I think there are too many students in my class, there are more than 20 students in my class, ideally, a maximum of 15 classes with one person with two teachers, because it is not easy to teach and manage young children.” (T1)

Then the next teacher also said that the system, materials, etc. are all good, but the facilities and performance of teachers in RA were still lacking.

“System, materials and all kinds are good. The K13 curriculum that is currently being used is already good. However, in my opinion: in Indonesia, the facilities for Kindergarten/ Raudhatul Athfal are still minimal; for example: for thematic learning, there should be many media, not just books, so we need Raudhatul Athfal teachers who are creative and not lazy. However, some of Raudhatul Athfal’s teachers are lazy and not creative, so sometimes they only use books, rarely creating creative educational media.” (T2)

Then the next interview participants also revealed that whether Indonesia’s education system is good depends on the region because the environment has an important influence on the development of children.

“In my opinion, it depends on the region in Indonesia. If the environment is religious, the children will usually be good too. If the area is less religious, children’s development is usually also affected because children are reliable imitators; they imitate what they see. I agree with teaching Islam to early childhood because it is very important.” (T3)

The community and the surrounding environment and even the RA teachers themselves are influential examples for children because children are great imitators.

“Actually, the curriculum is quite good, but sometimes the person who gives an example is not good, for example, the teacher who does not cover his hair with hijab outside school or the parent who gives an example of not praying at home, so the children imitate the behavior of the person because the children in that age is a great imitator.” (T5)

Some say that the education system in Indonesia is uneven/not same for all RA, because implementation depends on each RA, so each RA certainly has a different implementation method.

“In my opinion, Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia is less compact because the curriculum is indeed from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, but its implementation depends on each school, so different schools have different methods and materials taught; you have to rely on the quality of teachers even though as we know each person’s competence is different.” (T4)

Moreover, some teachers also complained about the Indonesian government’s frequent changes to the curriculum.

“...When it comes to the government’s frequent changes to the curriculum, I am not the only one who complains about it; many teachers complain about it.” (T6)

Then some teachers also strongly agree with the PAUD system in Indonesia, which supports Islamic religious learning in early childhood.

“The System in Indonesia is very good because we are used to providing religious education from an early age. If it is not given early, when will it be? Because educating children with Islamic religious material cannot be instant and self-taught, it must be taught early.” (T6)

“In my opinion, in Indonesia, it is good because the government supports providing Islamic religious education from an early age. Because we know now that the era of globalization brings many negative impacts, it is also important to introduce religion to children from an early age.” (T7)

Even religious education in early childhood is considered very good because children’s brains are very good at recording knowledge at an early age.

“In my opinion, it is very good to teach religion to children because early childhood brains are still fresh, still golden age, so whatever we teach, even though sometimes there are children who seem to ignore us, but without realizing their ears and brain are recording, their memory is still very strong, so it should be taught knowledge that is useful for the future, for example, religious knowledge, it is very easy and good.” (T9)

Furthermore, the last teacher said that religious education at RA is much better than at other schools because RA provides more intense knowledge of the Islamic religion than other schools.

“For some schools, like international schools in Indonesia, religious education is not as much as Raudhatul Athfal. So, in Raudhatul Athfal, it is pretty good because we have taught early childhood about morals, worship practices, memorization, etc.” (T8)

So from the answers of the teachers, it can be concluded that all teachers agree, and even the Indonesian government strongly supports the provision of Islamic religious education for early childhood. However, interview participants also expressed varied opinions about Indonesia’s Islamic religious education system, such as curriculum issues, environmental issues that affect RA students, etc. This is reasonable because there are around 30,858 RAs are spread across 34 provinces in Indonesia⁴⁸; therefore, each teacher or school’s problems must be different.

3.18. Suggestions and Criticisms for Early Childhood Education in Indonesia

Then the last question we asked the interviewees was, “Are there any suggestions, constructive criticisms, or hopes for early childhood religious education in Indonesia in the future?” The answers given by the teachers were varied, ranging from policy issues regarding Calistung (reading, writing, and counting) to teacher welfare issues.

The first teacher gave critics of the Calistung problem (reading, writing, and counting), which tends to confuse and create a dilemma for RA/TK teachers.

“Maybe it is the Calistung problem (reading, writing, and counting) because it is confusing; at the Kindergarten level, it is forbidden to teach Calistung (reading, writing, and counting), but to enter the elementary school, children have a Calistung test (

⁴⁸ Source: Data from Ministry of Education and Culture

reading, writing, and counting tests). So we, as teachers of the Kindergarten / Raudhatul Athfal level, feel confused. Maybe in the future, the curriculum on Calistung (reading, writing, and counting) can be improved so it will not confuse the Kindergarten teachers.” (T1)

Then the next teacher hopes that Indonesians in the future will not only prioritize memorizing the Koran for children but can also be more concerned with character education.

“I hope that in the future, the Indonesian people can be more aware that inculcating character values is very important for early childhood. So, people will not only prioritize religious values . From what I see, parents today only want their children to become tahfidz or memorize the Koran but often forget to teach their children about adab or morals and character.” (T2)

The teacher further emphasized the importance of the media used and the creativity of the teacher in teaching early childhood who tend to be bored more easily, and the urgency of using technology in modern teaching.

Maybe the teacher can create more creative lessons because the child prefers fun learning. If we only use the book from IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association), I think it is too monotonous, so kids get bored faster. However, the problem is that not all of Raudhatul Athfal’s teachers are young and understand technology for making fun lessons. Yes, many of Raudhatul Athfal’s teachers are very old now and do not understand the technology, so the problem is there.” (T3)

The teacher further hopes that in the future, the positions of TK/RA teachers can be filled by people who are graduates of related majors who are more aware of the psychological condition of early childhood children and the challenges of early childhood education in Indonesia.

“Actually, most Indonesian people have just realized that the golden age of children is very important. In the past, many thought that children in Raudhatul Athfal were only taught to sing, even though singing is stimulation that we provide according to 6 aspects of early childhood development. I hope that early childhood education in Indonesia can be filled with teachers who are in accordance with their majors so that they understand more about early childhood conditions and the welfare of teachers is prioritized.” (T4)

The teacher then explained how she felt sorry for today's young children, where many parents do not pay attention to their children because they are busy working.

"The curriculum is good, my hope is at least parents can set aside time to guide their children, children should not be given cellphones all the time, so many children have no memory with their parents because their parents are too busy, for example, if a boy is asked do you ever played soccer or kite with your father? However, usually, the answer is "never", because the father is busy. Furthermore, I think it is so sad." (T5)

Like the previous teacher, this T6 teacher also explained that the important thing in early childhood learning was the contribution and support from parents at home.

"To educate early childhood, the most important thing is to emphasize the problem of memorization, but children will not be able to memorize if the routine programs from parents do not support it. The habit of memorizing the Koran should not just stop at school; it requires good cooperation between teachers and parents." (T6)

And then this teacher expressed her complaint about the very low salary of TK/RA teachers in Indonesia. This very low salary affects teachers' performance in schools because teachers can not only work in schools but also have to think about other jobs to make money.

"From me, I hope that the government can pay more attention to honorary teachers. How can education in Indonesia progress if the teachers are teaching and thinking about what to eat tomorrow, whether there is money or not? Sometimes teachers are also invited to a meeting to discuss children's educational games, but how to we can think about it since if we want to buy rice (the main Indonesian food) for tomorrow, we still have to think ten times. How do you want to move forward if the teacher still thinks about is there money and food for tomorrow? Honorary teachers should not be underestimated because we can also become better teachers." (T7)

Then the T8 teacher also conveyed her criticisms and suggestions regarding textbooks for RA children, which were considered too easy. She also expressed her hope that Indonesian children would still be able to have the freedom to obtain religious knowledge at school with the government's support and the cooperation of their parents.

“For textbooks, it should be revised so that the material is not too easy; at least there are levels and significant differences for children in groups A and B. I hope that Indonesian children will still be able to receive good religious education, and there will also be cooperation between teachers and parents. If the cooperation between teachers and parents is well established, Indonesian children will be better in terms of morals or character. For Koran memorization, it will develop as they get older and will continue, but for morals/characters, it must be instilled from an early age. However, the character referred to here is a character that is in accordance with Islamic teachings.” (T8)

Then the last teacher expressed his hope that the competent institutions would hold more competitions and give rewards to RA children because it is one of the tricks to make children more enthusiastic about learning at school.

“From my point of view, I hope that the Ministry of Religious Affairs or other institutions that educate early childhood will often give rewards to children; for example, in our area, there are often competitions such as prayer competitions, adhan competitions, Quran memorization competitions, etc. If the students know there is a competition, they will be more enthusiastic about learning, so they will be more motivated to learn because there is a competition/event.” (T9)

From the answers given by interview participants, we can conclude that each teacher has different suggestions and criticisms regarding early childhood education in Indonesia. It seems that the teachers convey based on the problems in their schools.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia as a country with the largest Muslim population in the world pays very serious attention to religious education in formal educational institutions. This is evidenced by the compulsory subject of religious education at all levels of formal education, from kindergarten to university level. However, although the majority of Indonesia's population embraces Islam, the religious education system applied in formal schools is not only about Islam because Indonesia is not a country that adheres to Islamic ideology. The ideology of the Indonesian state is *Pancasila* which means neither a secular nor an Islamic ideology, but somewhere between the two. Therefore, the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia states that Indonesia is a secular democracy country that guarantees freedom of worship for all people who live in Indonesia according to their respective religions or beliefs.

The Indonesian government also gives the right to all students to receive religious education lessons in accordance with their religion and are taught by teachers who have the same religion, for example, students who adhere to Buddhism will only be given Buddhist education lessons and taught/guided by Buddhist teachers. However, the right to access religious education in formal schools is only limited to 6 religions recognized by the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, namely Islam, Protestant Christianity, Catholic Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. The reality is that there are some Indonesians who do not believe in one of the 6 religions, but because religious subjects are compulsory subjects in schools that cannot be replaced with other subjects, students who follow other religions (other than the 6) recognized religions) is forced to choose one of the subjects of the 6 religions as a graduation requirement.

This research focuses on studying Islamic religious education in early childhood (4-6 years) in Indonesia which is given at Raudhatul Athfal. Raudhatul Athfal is a formal educational institution that is equivalent to a kindergarten, although it is equivalent to a kindergarten in general, RA has very strong Islamic characteristics. We can see this from the curriculum and learning materials for RA students. School curricula in Indonesia generally follow the curriculum of the ministry of education and culture, but RA as an Islamic-based formal school follows the curriculum published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia.

As if it is a trend, currently the interest of parents to send their children to Islamic schools (including Raudhatul Athfal) is increasing. This can be seen from the confessions of interviewees who work as teachers of Raudhatul Athfal, many interviewees admitted that Raudhatul Athfal was forced to reject many students because the number of applicants was more than the school quota, some RAs also had to accept more students than the number of students maximum quota. This shows the high enthusiasm of Indonesian parents to send their children to RA. But from a teacher's point of view, of course this is a problem too. Too many students in 1 class make it difficult for teachers to handle all students, especially RA students are children aged 4-6 years.

In addition, there are many things that become our highlight from the results of this research, such as the learning system in RA is thematic learning, namely learning based on themes. And also all learning materials or topics at RA are very dominant in Islamic religious values and doctrines, so during Monday - Friday for approximately 180 minutes / day, students will be taught all Islamic religious materials based on themes, such as memorizing the Koran and Hadith, Islamic stories, worship practices (practice of prayer, ablution), and much more as described in previous chapters.

What's interesting about this research is the fact that the majority of RAs in Indonesia put a high priority for memorizing the Koran. This is along with the expectation of the parents sending their children to RA, parents choose to send their children to RA with the aims that their children can know more about religion and to memorize the Koran or hadith, because the ability of memorizing Koran consideres as one of the indicator of success. Children that have ability to memorize Koran makes parents and teachers proud and also makes RA graduates/alumni seen as outstanding students.

However, from the results of interviews, we found that there was some RA that did not prioritize memorizing the Koran, but this RA really emphasized the cultivation of character education in early childhood. Based on this RA, after children achieve the good values or character, they will be taught education Religion, such as memorization, etc., because memorizing the Koran can continue to develop as children become adults, but character education is very important to be instilled from an early age. However, because the majority of parents in Indonesia believe that memorizing the Koran is very

important and they are still very unfamiliar with character education, this effect the parents' interest to send their children to those RA which priority the character education. This things shows that some people or parents in Indonesia still do not understand and even are not aware of the importance of instilling character in children from an early age.

Another problem and challenge that we found from this research is the issue of curriculum and textbooks, many teachers complain about the government that changing the curriculum very often and it is a fact that the Indonesian government changes the curriculum very often. Then for textbook problems, RA in Indonesia uses different textbooks, this is because the textbooks are issued by the district IGRA (Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association), so in other words each district has its own textbook. This textbook has received a lot of criticism from teachers, many teachers think that the material in this textbook is too easy for RA students.

Then if we refer to the law, one of the requirements to become an RA teacher is a diploma IV graduate or a bachelor diploma from the department of early childhood education / early childhood Islamic education. But if we look at the results of the study, there are very many RA teachers who do not have these qualifications. Currently, there are still many RA teachers who are only high school graduates or undergraduate graduates but with departments that are not in line with their fields. When we tried to confirm this reason to RA teachers who has academic diploma that match with the qualifications, the teacher stated that one of the reasons is that there are not many universities in Indonesia that provide courses in early childhood education / early childhood Islamic education and also very few people who put interest in the department. This is considered reasonable because the Indonesian peoples' stigma of the graduates of early childhood education / early childhood Islamic education, many people considered that the graduates from this department are "only" will teach singing to children and even if we look at the salary side, RA teachers are still far from perfect. prosperous. This is what we also found from the confession of one of the interviewees, that the challenge in undergoing the profession as an RA teacher is that this profession is not to make money, but only to serve the community because almost all RA teachers have other jobs to make extra money.

In addition, the challenge that is very often complained by teachers and also has indeed been a problem between the Kindergarten and Elementary levels is the problem of *calistung* or reading, writing, and counting. Officially the Ministry of Education and Culture prohibits to teach reading, writing, and counting in Kindergarten or RA-level schools, even they also prohibits Elementary Schools from making reading, writing, and counting tests as a requirement for entering the elementary school. But, what happens is the majority of Elementary schools in Indonesia still require a reading, writing, and counting test as one of the requirement for entering the 1st grade of the Elementary schools. This is a dilemma for RA teachers. If teachers want to follow government regulations then they do not have to teach reading, writing, and counting to students, but if they are not taught the then RA will be considered as a not successful school because it cannot produce alumni who are meet the entry requirements for primary school.

In general, it can be said that Islamic religious education for early childhood in Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia received great support from various parties such as the government and society and won the trust of parents. But like formal educational institutions in general, of course Raudhatul Athfal has various kinds of complex problems and challenges as described previously. Therefore, to obtain a better Raudhatul Athfal and produce outstanding students and quality teachers, of course it requires cooperation from all parties such as the government, parents, teachers, students, and the surrounding community.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Standards for Developmental Achievement of Children Aged 4-6 Years Group

No.	Scope of Development	Child Development Achievement Level	
		4-5 years old	5-6 years old
1.	<p>Religious and Moral Values</p> <p>Quran Surah Al-Anbiya: 32 and Luqman: 13, 17, 18, and 19</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Know at least the ten of Asmaul Husna. 2) Know the pillars of faith. 3) Know the pillars of Islam. 4) Imitating the prayer movements in the correct sequences. 5) Imitating the pronunciation of short prayers related to daily life. 6) Imitating the pronunciation of thayyibah sentences. 7) Get to know the five names of Ulul Azmi. 8) Get to know the ten names of angles. 9) Recognize the sound of adhan and iqamah. 10) Recognize personal and environmental hygiene. 11) Recognizing good/polite or bad behavior. 12) Saying and returning greetings. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Mention at least the ten of Asmaul Husna. 2) Mention the six Pillars of Faith. 3) Mention the five Pillars of Islam. 4) Perform the prayer movements in the correct sequences. 5) Saying short prayers related to daily life. 6) Saying thayyibah sentences. 7) Mention the five name of Ulul Azmi. 8) Mention the ten names of angels. 9) Reciting the adhan and iqamah. 10) Conduct personal and environmental hygiene habits. 11) Get used to behaving well /

		13) Imitating the pronunciation of the short surah in the Quran.	polite. 12) Recognize religious holidays. 13) Respect (tolerance) with adherents of other religions. 14) Recite short surah in the Quran.
2.	Physical-Motoric	4 – 5 years old	5 – 6 years old
a.	Gros Motoric Skills The Messenger of Allah said: <i>"Teach your children archery, swimming and horseback riding."</i> (Hadith narrated by Thabrani) Surah Al-Jumuah: 9-10	1) Following the movement of prayer, ablution, animals, and trees blown by the wind, airplanes and so on as gratitude for Allah's creation. 2) Follow the hanging movement by starting with the basmala reading. 3) Imitating the jump motion and run by coordinated (relay) in an orderly manner. 4) Throw and capture something. 5) Imitating the balance movements. 6) Kick and capture ball. 7) Follow the movement of hand and foot in the form of dance. 8) Squat down to pick up objects from the floor. 9) Walking in place, jumping up and down 10) Glide, creep, crawl, roll and	1) Perform body movements, prayer movements, and ablution in a coordinated manner to train flexibility, balance, and agility and so on. 2) Coordinate eye-foot-hand-head movements in imitating dance or gymnastics. 3) Move the right and left hands in carrying out an activity. 4) Perform personal hygiene activities (practice bathing, brushing teeth, washing hands, and washing feet)

	Surah Al-Baqarah: 110	walk in zig zag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Perform anticipatory/balance movements (walking on the catwalk). 6) Demonstrate kicking the ball in a directional manner. 7) Play in the outdoor area using traditional game tools or games. 8) Jump two or three times with one leg in a straight line. 9) Catching, throwing, kicking and bouncing the ball. 10) Paddle and drive a wheeled. 11) Climbing stairs, climbing trees and climbing toys in the playground. 12) Jump as high as five cm, then land with two feet together.
b.	Fine Motor Control Surah Al-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Holds pencil properly between thumb and two fingers. 2) Draws vertical, horizontal, curved, left/right slanted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Wearing and tying shoelaces, buttoning clothes properly and neatly.

	<p>Baqarah: 60</p> <p>Surah Al-'Alaq: 4-5</p>	<p>lines, and circles.</p> <p>3) Trace the pentagon and add three parts in the human image.</p> <p>4) Imitating the image of a square.</p> <p>5) Imitating the manipulative movements to produce a form using various media.</p> <p>6) Imitation by showing self-expression through creating art using various media.</p> <p>7) Following hand movements that use smooth muscles (picking, stroking, pinching, flapping, twisting, and squeezing).</p> <p>8) Weighing according to age level.</p> <p>9) Measure height according to age level.</p> <p>10) Touching on objects that have different surfaces.</p> <p>11) Coloring Islamic nuanced pictures with their favorite colors.</p> <p>12) Move the finger to follow the shape of the letter / use finger movements through finger games.</p> <p>13) Wear the students' own shoes, clothes, pants properly.</p> <p>14) Run and stop on command.</p> <p>15) Utilize game tools outside</p>	<p>2) Make and cut something according to the pattern.</p> <p>3) Build towers of 10 squares or more and other construction toys.</p> <p>4) Draw something that is meaningful to the child and can be recognized by others (drawing boxes, circles, drawing according to examples).</p> <p>5) Drawing of people, along with hair and nose.</p> <p>6) Write letters, Arabic numbers, and numeric numbers through the dotted sheet according to the letters/numbers.</p> <p>7) Use cutlery properly.</p> <p>8) Cut the simple shapes according to the pattern.</p> <p>9) Eat with cutlery properly.</p> <p>10) Paste the image exactly.</p>
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		<p>the classroom.</p>	<p>11) Express yourself through detailed drawing gestures.</p> <p>12) Create drawings based on vertical, horizontal, curved left/right, left/right slanted, and circles.</p> <p>13) Draw and trace the shapes that have been prepared by the teacher.</p> <p>14) Coordinate the eyes and hands to perform the movement complex (eg movements and songs).</p> <p>15) Perform manipulative movements to produce a shape using various media (playing with plasticine).</p> <p>16) Express theirself by creating art using various media (skills from used materials, patchwork, cardboard, natural materials and</p>
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			<p>others).</p> <p>17) Demonstrate hand movements that use smooth muscles (picking, stroking, pinching, flapping, twisting, and squeezing).</p> <p>18) Form objects or things from clay: cakes, snakes, and simple animals.</p> <p>19) String small wooden beads in thread.</p> <p>20) Move to the beat and rhythm of the music.</p>
c.	<p>Health and Safety Behavior</p> <p>QS Al-Ankabut: 45</p> <p>Added more specific verses</p>	<p>1) Imitating clean and healthy living behavior.</p> <p>2) Get used to eating clean, healthy, nutritious, and halal-labeled food.</p> <p>3) Follow parents and teachers orders' to protect theirself from dangerous objects, people, and situations.</p> <p>4) Toilet training with guidance.</p>	<p>1) Behave and understand clean and healthy living.</p> <p>2) Choose clean, healthy and nutritious food.</p> <p>3) Can anticipate danger by protecting theirself and/or notifying an adult when something dangerous happens.</p> <p>4) Toilet training independently.</p>

3.	Cognitive	4-5 years old	5-6 years old
a.	<p>Learning and Problem Solving</p> <p>Surah Al-Baqarah: 164</p> <p>QS Ar-Rum: 8</p> <p>QS An-Nahl: 44</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Recognizing an object of various shapes found in the surrounding environment. 2) Courage to ask the things they want to know. 3) Experiment with materials through new ways when the first method doesn't work and keep trying to repeat. 4) Applying new information or new vocabulary in an activity or interaction. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Observe attentively and look for information relevant to the similarities and differences. 2) Courage to ask questions with 5W+1H on things the students want to know related to the sub-themes being studied and polite. 3) Find alternative solutions to a problem. 4) Re-completing unfinished tasks with responsibilities. 5) Finding a new experience against what is learned through play.
b.	<p>Logical Thinking</p> <p>Surah Al-Baqarah: 242</p> <p>Surah Ali</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Match one set of objects to another set of objects. For example, pairing glue and scissors with paper and the objects to be cut or pasted. 2) Recognizing the number of objects created by Allah through counting. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Uses a one-to-one relationship as a way to compare two sets of objects. For example, pair the number of seats with the number of children.

	<p>Imran: 191</p> <p>QS An-Nur: 1</p> <p>QS Al-Ankabut: 43</p> <p>Surah Al-A'raf: 184</p> <p>Surah Al-Baqarah: 219</p>	<p>3) Use comparative words related to number, size, shape, texture, weight, color, speed, and volume/content.</p> <p>4) Recognize the 8 basic colors.</p> <p>5) Know simple concepts (big-small, in and out, up and down, open and close).</p> <p>6) Sorts objects by five size or color series.</p> <p>7) Get to know the concept of numbers 1-10 through playing / songs.</p> <p>8) Count the number of objects 1-10 through playing.</p> <p>9) Recognize common and uncommon two-dimensional shapes (kites, parallelograms, stars, etc.)</p> <p>10) Remembering / repeating 2 or 3 different objects in the same thing.</p> <p>11) Distinguish simple shapes.</p> <p>12) Draw the relationship between objects with geometric shapes that are common and not common with the child's environment (star fruit split into a star shape, etc.).</p> <p>13) Comparing the concepts of big-small, many-little, long-short, light-weight, low-height between one object and another.</p>	<p>2) Mention the number of objects created by God or human-made in one unit.</p> <p>3) Understand and use measurement words and standard measuring tools, for example using unit blocks to measure the length of the playing mat.</p> <p>4) Give examples of more complex concepts.</p> <p>5) Sort objects by size from smallest to largest or vice versa.</p> <p>6) Get to know the concept of numbers 1-20 through playing / songs.</p> <p>7) Count the number of objects 1-20 through playing.</p> <p>8) Recognize 3-dimensional geometric shapes (cube, cone, tube, etc.) through concrete objects.</p> <p>9) Begins to</p>
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		14) Mention objects in the house.	<p>understand various geometric shapes to create symmetrical shapes, such as bread splitting/concrete objects.</p> <p>10) Comparing the concepts of big-small, many-little, long-short, light-weight, and high-low with non-standard units.</p> <p>11) Understand the sequence of daily routine activities.</p> <p>12) Associate recognized signs with daily routines.</p> <p>13) Discuss simple stories that heard/seen before.</p> <p>14) Repeat the story that has been told by the teacher.</p> <p>15) Comparing objects at home with objects at school.</p>
c.	Introduction to the Social, Natural, and Technological	<p>1) Understanding direction and position from one place to another.</p> <p>2) Recognizing and knowing the equipment / attributes</p>	<p>1) Connecting one place to another in the environment.</p> <p>2) Understand the roles and jobs</p>

	<p>Environment</p> <p>Surah Al-A'raf: 56</p> <p>Surah Al-Jasiyah: 13</p> <p>Surah Ali Imran: 191</p>	<p>related to the work of the people around.</p> <p>3) Recognize the relationship between humans and the environment.</p> <p>4) Know the rules.</p> <p>5) Observing using the five senses of natural objects in their environment.</p> <p>6) Recognize social phenomena that occur in the play environment, school, and home.</p> <p>7) Know the technology and information contained in the environment.</p>	<p>including equipment/attributes and tasks performed in the job.</p> <p>3) Shows mutual need behavior between self and the environment.</p> <p>4) Understand and follow the rules that apply in his environment.</p> <p>5) Mention natural, social and impact events.</p> <p>6) Perform simple experiments on natural events using simple tools and equipment.</p> <p>7) Carry out activities using technology according to its function safely and responsibly.</p>
d.	<p>Symbolic Thinking</p> <p>Surah Al-A'raf: 176</p>	<p>1) Recognize letters and sounds through symbols.</p> <p>2) Recognize the symbols of objects/institutions/professions.</p> <p>3) Get to know the rooms in the school / school location through the floor plan.</p> <p>4) Using substitute objects or</p>	<p>1) Says, writes letters and sounds through symbols.</p> <p>2) Connecting the symbol with an institution/profession.</p> <p>3) Understand the map of the location</p>

		<p>body movements to represent real objects.</p> <p>5) Coloring or building a construction that represents something specific in its environment.</p>	<p>of schools and homes.</p> <p>4) Understand the roles and jobs including equipment/attributes and tasks performed in the job.</p> <p>5) Draw / complete the picture or build a construction that represents something specific in the environment.</p>
4	Language	4-5 years old	5-6 years old
a.	<p>Understanding language</p> <p>Surah Al-`Alaq: 1</p>	<p>1) Recognize vocabulary according to the theme.</p> <p>2) Recognizing repetitive rhymes and phrases.</p> <p>3) Recognizing various sounds.</p> <p>4) Mention vocabulary related to new knowledge conveyed in the theme through play.</p> <p>5) Recognize and follow two-step instructions.</p> <p>6) Identify the characters in the story/events.</p>	<p>1) Mention the words/sentences in the poem.</p> <p>2) Hearing and repeating separate sounds in words; Play with sounds to create new words.</p> <p>3) Understand simple language concepts.</p> <p>4) Reading and following instructions takes more than two steps.</p> <p>5) Retell the events in the story.</p>

b.	<p>Expressing Language</p> <p>Surah Al-Baqarah: 33</p> <p>Surah Ar-Rahman: 1-4</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Able to say their own and their parents' name. 2) Use longer sentences (5-6 words) to communicate. 3) Ask according to their knowledge. 4) Answer questions spontaneously. 5) Ask to understand more deeply. 6) Respond to friends' comments in a series of dialogues. 7) Say the thayiba sentence with the correct tartil. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Able to mention their home address, family members, parents' occupations and so on. 2) Use more complex sentences to express ideas and feelings. 3) Make inquiries with 5W + 1H. 4) Answer questions in detail and clearly. 5) Asking complex questions step by step to gain a deeper understanding. 6) Initiate and/or expand the conversation to build a dialogue. 7) Understand the meaning of the sentence thayiba.
c.	<p>Literacy</p> <p>Surah Al-'Alaq: 1-5</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) View books with adults or friends. 2) Demonstrate general knowledge of how writing produces things. 3) Recognize vowels and consonants through playing songs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Shows enjoyment of familiar books. 2) Knowing every word spoken and written. 3) Start stringing letters into words. 4) Read words and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4) Recognizes and names many letters. 5) Match letter sounds and letter symbols. 6) Understand that there are ways to write that convey messages. 7) Write the letters that are known, especially the letters in the name itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> short sentences. 5) Write letters and words. 6) Arrange words with games. 7) Retelling a story includes details and draws connections between events. 8) Write to convey a message.
5	Social Emotional	4-5 years old	5-6 years old
a.	<p>Self-awareness</p> <p>Surah Ali Imran: 139</p> <p>QS An-Nur: 32</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Follow activities according to schedule and daily routine. 2) Show gratitude by enthusiastically participating in activities. 3) Imitate thayibah sentences with a good and correct attitude. 4) Respect parents, teachers and friends. 5) Regard teachers, parents and friends as positive learning resources and models. 6) Feeling nice to be around other people. 7) Happy to share and wait their turn. 8) Nice to hear stories. 9) Be able to explain their own feelings and the causes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Keep up with schedule and routine changes that have become habituation. 2) Gratitude is shown with enthusiasm, discipline, order, responsibility in learning, and playing. 3) Say the thayiba sentence according to its function. 4) Able to tell the truth. 5) Doing, completing assignments and not cheating on their friends' work.

		<p>10) Express their needs and desires verbally without being aggressive.</p> <p>11) Begins to be able to manage oneself (emotions, thoughts, and behavior) with guidance when in trouble.</p> <p>12) Observe and taking care for their own toys, and not damage other people's toys.</p> <p>13) Can manage oneself (emotions, thoughts, and behavior) when in trouble.</p> <p>14) Obey the rules.</p>	<p>6) Understand the rules at school, at home, and in the play environment.</p> <p>7) Know the difference between adults (family members, friends, and teachers) who can help and strangers who cannot.</p> <p>8) Happy to share, waiting for their turn, and happy to help others in need.</p> <p>9) Listening to parents, teachers, friends who are talking (training not to be impulsive).</p> <p>10) Able to manage feelings gradually.</p> <p>11) Take control, defense (defensive) actions to avoid quarrels over possible struggles for rights.</p> <p>12) Can manage their own self (emotions, thoughts, and behavior) when in</p>
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			trouble. 13) Show a positive self-image
b.	Sense of responsibility for self and others. Surah Ali Imran: 104	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Complete various tasks with the help of adults. 2) Use self-help skills and participate in tasks without being reminded. 3) Returning used play equipment to its place. 4) Understand and follow class procedures without prompting. 5) Understand and follow class rules with guidance. 6) Enjoy playing with peers. 7) Understand his classmates and playmates. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Carry out and complete tasks without the help of adults and be able to explain the task. 2) Understand the importance of self-help skills and their role in creating a healthy environment. 3) Began to take responsibility for the maintenance of the classroom environment. 4) Follow and understand the purpose of class procedures. 5) Follow and understand class rules. 6) Ask for information. 7) Discuss in groups, through hearing opinions, expressing ideas, and so on.
c.	Prosocial	1) Able to adapt to enter a	1) Maintain a friendly

	<p>behavior</p> <p>Surah Al-Baqarah: 261-267</p> <p>QS Al-Hujurat: 10</p>	<p>group and play cooperatively.</p> <p>2) Demonstrates increased awareness that humans may have different feelings towards the same situation.</p> <p>3) Shows sympathetic behavior.</p> <p>4) Sharing toys and inviting other children in response to friend requests.</p> <p>5) Able to provide alternative solutions to problems by seeking adult help when needed.</p> <p>6) Get to know the cultural characteristics in the surrounding environment</p> <p>7) Know the area of residence and school.</p> <p>8) Expressing emotions according to social behavior / emotional form.</p>	<p>relationship with at least one other child.</p> <p>2) Recognize what others want or need.</p> <p>3) Demonstrate empathetic behavior.</p> <p>4) Care for the environment, nature and society.</p> <p>5) Respect differences in ethnicity, religion and opinion.</p> <p>6) Engage in the discussion process to reach an agreement.</p> <p>7) Recognize the characteristics of culture and life outside the environment.</p> <p>8) Recognizing and enjoying using the work of their own nation (love of domestic products).</p> <p>9) Controlling emotions according to social behavior /</p>
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			emotional form. 10) Appreciate the work of others (not criticizing others).
6.	Art	4-5 years old	5-6 years old
a.	Children are able to enjoy various strains of songs or sounds Surah Luqman: 6 Surah Yusuf: 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Express by imitating simple works of art in front of other children or people. 2) Performing more diverse artistic activities according to the rules/characteristics. 3) Appreciate other children's artwork, for example by clapping hands and praise. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Making works of art according to their creativity, for example the art of music, visuals, motion and dance that they produce and are produced by other people. 2) Combining various ideas and works of art according to children's creativity. 3) Appreciate other children's artwork by providing new ideas.
b.	Interested in art activities Surah Ali Imran: 185 Surah Lukman: 20 and 31	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Choose the appropriate type of song (Islamic songs). 2) Sing alone. 3) Using imagination to reflect feelings in a role. 4) Distinguish between fantasy and reality. 5) Using behavioral dialogue and various materials in telling a story. 6) Express movements with 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Sing the song the students like with the right attitude. 2) Sing with the group. 3) Using various musical instruments to imitate a certain rhythm or song. 4) Play a simple

		<p>varying rhythms.</p> <p>7) Draw objects around.</p> <p>8) Forming based on the object they saw (example: with plasticine or clay).</p> <p>9) Describing something (such as an animal) with a rhythmic expression (example: the child tells the elephant with certain movements and expressions).</p> <p>10) Combine different colors when drawing or coloring.</p> <p>11) Color the picture with their favorite color.</p> <p>12) Create images according to their imagination.</p>	<p>drama.</p> <p>5) Using dialogue in a role according to the story.</p> <p>6) Expresses movements with rhythm with two or more variations.</p> <p>7) Draw a variety of different shapes.</p> <p>8) Making works like real shapes with various materials (paper, plasticine, blocks and others).</p> <p>9) Describe something with a variety of expressions.</p> <p>10) Drawing with various materials and methods.</p> <p>11) Create colors in pictures and explain them.</p> <p>12) Able to provide an explanation of the results of image creation according to their imagination.</p>
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Source: <https://dki.kemenag.go.id/media/laws/3-191031102125-5dba53357aa63.pdf> Minister of Religion Decree no. 792 concerning Guidelines for Implementation of the Raudhathul Athfal Curriculum (Table has been translated into English) Access Date 14/11/2021

Appendix 2: Ethics Committee Approval Document

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 05.11.2021-77700



T.C.
SAKARYA ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Etik Kurulu



Sayı : E-61923333-050.99-77700
Konu : 39/18 Fadıah MUKHSEN

05.11.2021

Sayın Fadıah MUKHSEN

İlgi : Fadıah MUKHSEN 27.10.2021 tarihli ve 0 sayılı yazı

Üniversitemiz Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Etik Kurulu Başkanlığının 03.11.2021 tarihli ve 39 sayılı toplantısında alınan "18" nolu karar ile Fadıah MUKHSEN'in başvurusu uygun görülmüş ve karar örneği ekte sunulmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Abdulvahit İMAMOĞLU
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Etik Kurulu
Başkanı V.

Ek: Karar Yazısı (1 Sayfa)

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

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Bilgi için: Hanife Babacan
Uyvacı: Birim Evrak Sorumlusu



KARAR

18. Fadiah MUKHSEN'in " Endonezya'da Erken Çocukluk Dönemi Din Eğitimi / Early Childhood Religious Education in Indonesia " başlıklı çalışması görüşmeye açıldı.

Yapılan görüşmeler sonunda Fadiah MUKHSEN'in " Endonezya'da Erken Çocukluk Dönemi Din Eğitimi / Early Childhood Religious Education in Indonesia " başlıklı çalışmasının Etik açıdan uygun olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verildi.

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Articles and Papers	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Mukhsen, Fadiyah. (2021). Religious Education System in Japan. 6. Uluslararası Öğrenci Sempozyumu (UDEF) 2020. (Page: 228 – 242)2. Mukhsen, Fadiyah. (2022). Religious Education in Indonesia. 7. Uluslararası Öğrenci Sempozyumu (UDEF) 2021. (Page: 140 – 161)	