



Establishment State Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan: A Critical Policy Analysis of Early Childhood Islamic Education

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Abstract

Keywords:

State Raudhatul Athfal; Early Childhood Islamic Education; Education Policy Analysis; Quality of Education.

This study is grounded in the importance of providing quality early childhood education. Quality early childhood education has a positive impact, namely maximizing children's growth and development and preparing them to enter the elementary school level. One of the efforts to provide quality education is the establishment of Raudhatul Athfal by the government through state Raudhatul Athfal. At the same time, in Indonesia, including West Kalimantan, to date there has not been a single state Raudhatul Athfal. Raudhatul Athfal managed by the state is intended to ensure that the quality of Islamic early childhood education is measurable, standardized, and equitable. This study aims to explore the expectations of teachers and students regarding the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal, as well as to examine the responses and policies of the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the district/city level in West Kalimantan related to the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation, and documentation. The key informants of the study consist of officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Kalimantan, Raudhatul Athfal teachers, and students of Early Childhood Islamic Education (Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini/PIAUD). This study concludes that the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan as an effort to implement quality Islamic early childhood education still has a long way to go due to the absence of policies from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Kalimantan regarding this issue, even though at the same time the encouragement and aspirations of teachers, alumni, students, and early childhood education activists for state Raudhatul Athfal are very strong.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pentingnya penyelenggaraan pendidikan anak usia dini berkualitas.

Raudhatul
Athfal Negeri;
Pendidikan
Islam Anak
Usia Dini;
Analisis
Kebijakan
Pendidikan;
Kualitas
Pendidikan;

Pendidikan anak usia dini berkualitas akan memberikan dampak positif, yaitu memaksimalkan tumbuh kembang anak dan menyiapkan anak memasuki pada jenjang sekolah dasar. Diantara ikhtiar penyelenggaraan pendidikan berkualitas adalah diselenggarakannya Raudhatul Athfal oleh pemerintah melalui RA negeri. Pada saat yang sama, di Indonesia, dan termasuk Kalimantan Barat, hingga saat ini belum ada satupun RA negeri. RA yang dikelola oleh negara adalah untuk memastikan kualitas pendidikan Islam usia dini terukur, terstandar dan setara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi ekspektasi guru dan mahasiswa terkait pendirian RA negeri, sekaligus menggali respon dan kebijakan Kementerian Agama Kab/Kota di Kalimantan Barat terkait pendirian RA negeri. Riset ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Teknik pengambilan data menggunakan wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Informan kunci penelitian yaitu: pejabat di kementerian agama Kalimantan Barat, guru RA dan mahasiswa PIAUD. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan pendirian RA Negeri di Kalimantan Barat sebagai ikhtiar pelaksanaan pendidikan Islam anak usia dini berkualitas masih harus menempuh jalan panjang disebabkan tidak adanya kebijakan Kementerian Agama Kalimantan Barat terhadap hal tersebut, padahal pada saat yang sama, dorongan dan aspirasi guru, alumni, mahasiswa dan pegiat pendidikan anak usia terhadap RA negeri sangat kuat.

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1. Introduction

Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia mandates the state to both develop and administer a national education system. Through the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the state is institutionally involved in the governance of religious education, encompassing Islamic higher education institutions, Madrasah Aliyah, Madrasah Tsanawiyah, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, Raudhatul Athfal, as well as Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). The total number of educational institutions at the Raudhatul Athfal (RA), Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI), Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs), and Madrasah Aliyah (MA) levels that are managed by or under the coordination of the Ministry of Religious Affairs amounts to 54,335 schools, excluding higher education institutions and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). This figure represents a substantial scale of responsibility. However, of this large number, less than 10 percent hold the status of state schools. At the MI level, only 6.55 percent are state MI; at the MTs level, 8.13 percent are state MTs; and at the MA level, 8.56 percent are state MA (BPS-Statistics Indonesia 2023). Notably, at the Raudhatul Athfal level, the proportion

of state institutions is 0 percent, meaning that there is not a single state RA. These data reveal a clear policy imbalance in the approach of the Ministry of Religious Affairs toward RA-level educational institutions. Given that Raudhatul Athfal constitutes an integral part of the Islamic education system, policies concerning Raudhatul Athfal should receive the same level of affirmative support and recognition as other educational units under the Ministry's authority.

Furthermore, when referring to and comparing the existing conditions of kindergarten (*Taman Kanak-kanak/TK*) institutions under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (*Kemendikdasmen*) of the Republic of Indonesia, as of 2021 there were 91,367 TK institutions nationwide. Of this total, 4,550 were state kindergartens, officially designated as State Model Kindergartens (*TK Negeri Pembina*). These data indicate that, at the same level of education, governmental policy affirmation differs between ministries. While under the Ministry of Religious Affairs there is not a single Raudhatul Athfal institution with state status, under *Kemendikdasmen* the proportion of state kindergarten institutions has increased steadily over time. Specifically, the percentage of state TK rose from 4.2 percent in 2019, to 4.55 percent in 2020, and further increased to 4.98 percent in 2021 (BPS-Statistics Indonesia 2024).

In West Kalimantan Province, there are 186 Raudhatul Athfal (RA) institutions, all of which are privately managed. These 186 RA serve a total of 7,864 students, with 826 teachers. The RA institutions are distributed across all regencies and municipalities in West Kalimantan, with the highest concentration located in Kubu Raya Regency. Meanwhile, for kindergartens (*Taman Kanak-kanak/TK*) in West Kalimantan under the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (*Kemendikdasmen*), there are 705 TK institutions, of which 150 are state Model Kindergartens (*TK Negeri Pembina*) (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2024). These local data from West Kalimantan further corroborate the national pattern, indicating that the governance of Raudhatul Athfal by the Ministry of Religious Affairs remains insufficiently affirmative.

In Indonesia, the existence and contribution of Raudhatul Athfal (RA) have spanned more than seven decades. The first Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia is commonly reported to have been established in 1954 by the Islamic Education Foundation (*Yayasan Pendidikan Islam/YPI*) in Jakarta. Meanwhile, according to Junus as cited in Muhammedi (2017), the term Raudhatul Athfal was first introduced during the Grand Conference of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) held on 23–26 February 1954. The conference paid particular attention to early childhood education and deliberately introduced a term distinct from *Taman Kanak-Kanak*, which was used within the Muhammadiyah movement. However, the author encounters difficulties in locating comprehensive literature that definitively documents the first emergence of Raudhatul Athfal as a

formal educational institution. The researcher also found, based on documents from *Kemendikdasmen* concerning the Raudhatul Athfal Charter issued by the Department of Religious Affairs (now the Ministry of Religious Affairs), that Raudhatul Athfal had already been established on 1 January 1953. This institution was named Darul Athfal Cokroaminoto 1 and was founded in Semarang Village, Banjarnegara subdistrict, Banjarnegara Regency, Central Java Province (See: <https://file.data.kemendikdasmen.go.id/sk/112074-611022-22476-137918498-834999281.pdf>).

Even prior to Indonesia's independence, early childhood education had been developed through the Muhammadiyah organization in the form of Bustanul Athfal, which has been managed under 'Aisyiyah since 1919 in Yogyakarta, initially known as Froebel Kindergarten (*Taman Kanak-Kanak Froebel*) (Khomaeny, 2019). In light of this historical trajectory, it is reasonable to consider a more direct role of the state, through the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, in the management of early childhood Islamic education through state Raudhatul Athfal. State involvement through RA Negeri may be understood as part of a broader commitment to ensuring the provision of quality early childhood education.

At the global level, UNICEF has designated 2030 as a target year for ensuring access to high-quality early childhood education (Raikes et al., 2023; Rao et al., 2021). This initiative aligns with a substantial body of scientific evidence indicating that quality early childhood education leads to improved academic achievement in formal schooling, reduced school dropout rates, lower levels of criminal behavior, and increased individual income over the life course. High-quality early childhood education services serve as a guarantee that children are adequately facilitated and provided with positive stimulation, enabling them to optimally achieve all domains of development, including physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and religious and moral values (Gea et al., 2025; Hamzah et al., 2023; Herman et al., 2025; Puji Safitri et al., 2025; Ramadani et al., 2025; Sapendi & Suratman, 2024; Sulaiman et al., 2024; Suratman, 2021). Furthermore, quality early childhood education prepares children to successfully navigate the transition into formal primary education. Numerous studies demonstrate that children's readiness at the primary school level is largely determined by their experiences in preschool educational institutions (Inayati et al., 2025; Luo & Yuan, 2025; Suratman & Rahnang, 2021; Ulfah et al., 2021, 2023; Yuliani Santoso, 2005). Based on these analyses and research findings, the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal emerges as a necessary measure, both in West Kalimantan and in other provinces across Indonesia. Establishing or converting Raudhatul Athfal into state institutions represents a means by which the state can ensure, standardize, and regulate the quality of early

childhood education provision, particularly within the context of early childhood Islamic education.

Regarding the importance of establishing state Raudhatul Athfal, several studies have addressed this issue. Juju Saepudin (2017), for instance, reveals that Raudhatul Athfal has continued to develop in response to community needs, despite the fact that to date the Ministry of Religious Affairs has not established any model or state Raudhatul Athfal, comparable to the model kindergartens under the Ministry of Education and Culture. The services provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs remain limited to regulation, curriculum development, teacher assistance, and infrastructural support, which are still constrained in scope. In addition, a study by Salman & Widodo (2020), indicates that policy regulations concerning Raudhatul Athfal have not received adequate attention, particularly due to the absence of Raudhatul Athfal institutions with state status. The lack of state status for RA institutions represents, on the one hand, a policy condition that is inequitable and uneven within the domain of preschool education. The derivative implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Renstra Kemenag*) 2015–2019 is Ministerial Regulation (PMA) No. 14 of 2014 on the State Conversion of Madrasah. However, in practice, there has not been a single Raudhatul Athfal institution granted state status. Ideally, through the state conversion of Raudhatul Athfal institutions, efforts to improve the quality of RA education would be supported by clear benchmarks, particularly in comparison with equivalent institutions such as kindergartens (*Taman Kanak-Kanak/TK*).

The research conducted in this study builds upon and extends previous studies in this field. The findings provide empirical and academic evidence demonstrating that the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal constitutes an urgent and pressing need, both for West Kalimantan and for Indonesia more broadly. The results of this study hold significant policy relevance, as they may be further developed into an academic policy paper supporting the establishment of the first state Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia under the authority of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal by the Ministry of Religious Affairs would fulfill the principles of equity, utility, and justice, generating positive impacts for Muslim children in Indonesia, teachers, students, and parents.

2. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The selection of this approach and method is aligned with the research theme adopted in this study. The research is naturalistic in nature and seeks to describe relevant facts concerning the importance of establishing state Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan. The urgency of establishing state Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan is constructed based on empirical evidence derived from the expectations and

aspirations of the general public, teachers, students, and early childhood education advocates in the region. The study elaborates on the extent of these expectations and positions them as policy-driving evidence for the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Kalimantan. Furthermore, the research describes the existing conditions of Raudhatul Athfal institutions. This mapping is intended to identify whether any of the existing RA institutions meet the requirements for status conversion into state institutions.

Data collection techniques in this study include interviews, observation, and documentation (Barnawi & Jajat Darojat, 2018; Bungin, 2005; Hamzah, 2022; Strauss & Corbin, 1997). The interview technique is employed to obtain data related to public expectations and policy responses of the Ministry of Religious Affairs across West Kalimantan concerning the state conversion of Raudhatul Athfal. Observation is used to collect data on the existing conditions of Raudhatul Athfal institutions throughout West Kalimantan. Furthermore, the documentation technique is applied to gather data in the form of official documents, including legal documents and other relevant records. The research informants consist of community leaders, heads of Raudhatul Athfal institutions, RA teachers, students of the Early Childhood Islamic Education (*Pendidikan Islam Anak Usia Dini*/PIAUD) program, as well as officials of the Ministry of Religious Affairs across West Kalimantan. Subsequently, the collected data are analyzed using the following procedures: data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, trustworthiness is established through triangulation techniques and prolonged engagement in the field (Miles et al., 2014).

3. Result and Discussion

The Rationale for Establishing State Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan

Early childhood education constitutes the most fundamental foundation for building the quality of a nation's human resources. It is during this stage that a child's character, moral values, spirituality, and basic patterns of thinking are formed. In Indonesia, Raudhatul Athfal (RA) represents an Islamic early childhood education institution with a specific mandate to instill values of faith (*iman*), piety (*taqwa*), and noble character from the earliest stages of life. However, to date, all existing RA institutions continue to be managed by communities, religious organizations, and private foundations, with none holding state status (Saepudin, 2017; Salman & Widodo, 2020).

From a juridical perspective, the constitutional mandate is in fact explicit. The Preamble of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms that one of the fundamental purposes of the state is to educate the life of the nation. Furthermore, Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution obliges the state to administer a national education system aimed at enhancing faith, piety, and noble character (Idris et al., 2022).

The state therefore bears responsibility for investing in sectors with long-term impacts, and early childhood education constitutes one of the most strategic forms of such investment (Duncan & Magnuson, 2013; Esping-Andersen, 2008).

From a more practical perspective, the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal would contribute to ensuring higher-quality educational provision. High-quality early childhood education, in turn, significantly enhances children's developmental capacities. State RA would function as educational institutions that prepare children to be ready for the next level of education, namely primary school. This argument is supported by the findings of Lynch & Vaghul (2015), which emphasize that high-quality early childhood education services generate substantial benefits not only for children, but also for families, education systems, and society at large. In the United States, children who have access to quality early childhood education are better prepared to transition into primary education (Lynch & Vaghul, 2015; Magnuson et al., 2004; Unicef, 2019).

The presence of state Raudhatul Athfal also serves as a means for the state to ensure that the quality of Islamic early childhood education is equitable, measurable, and aligned with national standards. With state status, Raudhatul Athfal institutions are able to provide certified educators, an adaptive curriculum, adequate facilities and infrastructure, and inclusive educational services for all children, including those from socioeconomically disadvantaged families. Based on interviews with one of the informants, the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal is regarded as having strategic significance within the current governmental context. Even after nearly 80 years of Indonesia's independence, not a single Raudhatul Athfal has been officially inaugurated as a state institution (based on an interview with a Raudhatul Athfal teacher in West Kalimantan, June 2025). Therefore, should this initiative be realized during the leadership period of President Prabowo Subianto and the Minister of Religious Affairs, Prof. Dr. Nasaruddin Umar, M.A., it would represent a historic milestone and a monumental educational legacy. The establishment of the first State Raudhatul Athfal in Indonesia would symbolize the state's commitment to preparing a generation characterized by Qur'anic values, academic excellence, moderation, and global competitiveness from an early age.

In terms of educational service provision, in 2024, Raudhatul Athfal (RA) institutions in West Kalimantan served a total of 7,864 children. When compared to the number of children enrolled in kindergartens (TK), which reached 39,417 students, this figure appears relatively small. However, this discrepancy is largely attributable to the substantially higher number of kindergartens, including state kindergartens managed by the government. Nevertheless, the enrollment of 7,864 children represents a significant figure, indicating the substantial contribution of Raudhatul Athfal in providing early childhood education grounded in Islamic values. This number also serves as an indicator of the high level of public trust in RA as a preferred option for early childhood education.

To manage this number of learners, West Kalimantan is supported by 826 RA teachers. The majority of these educators hold private (non-civil servant) status, while only a small proportion are employed as civil servants (ASN/PNS/PPPK). The limited number of ASN teachers in RA is primarily due to the restricted availability of recruitment quotas designated for RA teachers through both CPNS and PPPK pathways.

Based on interviews with officials at the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) Office of Sintang Regency, it was revealed that over the past five years, no ASN recruitment proposals have been submitted for RA teachers. A similar situation applies to almost all Kemenag offices at the regency and municipal levels across West Kalimantan. The main reasons for the absence of such proposals include the nonexistence of State Raudhatul Athfal, the lack of bottom-up proposals from RA institutions or the Indonesian Raudhatul Athfal Teachers Association (*Ikatan Guru Raudhatul Athfal/IGRA*), and the absence of formal directives from higher-level leadership.

Based on interviews and survey responses, all RA teachers, alumni, and students of the PIAUD program Study expressed a strong expectation for the availability of ASN (civil servant) positions in future government recruitment processes. To date, RA teachers and PIAUD graduates have predominantly applied for ASN teaching positions under the Ministry of Education and local governments, particularly for state kindergarten (*TK Pembina Negeri*) teacher formations. All Raudhatul Athfal institutions currently operate under private status. Consequently, the entire financial responsibility for school operations rests with foundations and local communities. The primary sources of funding for RA include student tuition fees (*Sumbangan Pembinaan Pendidikan/SPP*), school operational assistance, and third-party donations. However, these funding sources remain insufficient to meet the operational needs of RA institutions. Tuition fees collected from students vary widely but generally remain at a low level. Survey findings indicate that the highest monthly tuition fee charged by RA institutions is approximately IDR 150,000 per child, while the lowest is around IDR 35,000 per month. The determination of tuition fees is adjusted to the economic capacity of parents. At the same time, the majority of parents who enroll their children in RA come from low-income households.

Expectations and Aspirations of Teachers and University Students Toward State Raudhatul Athfal

The existence of Raudhatul Athfal (RA) has become an integral part of the history of early childhood education in Indonesia, particularly in shaping generations with intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual competencies. However, along with societal changes and the growing demands of global education, new expectations have emerged regarding the role of RA. Based on interviews and Google Form surveys conducted with teachers, alumni, and university students, their expectations regarding the implementation of RA can be categorized as follows. *First*, RA is expected to expand and be established in every region of Indonesia. Access to education constitutes a fundamental right of every child, including access to education that integrates religious values aligned with the cultural context of Indonesian society.

Second, RA is expected not only to expand in terms of quantity but also to demonstrate high educational quality across all dimensions. Such quality includes a modern and contextual curriculum, professional and certified educators, and adequate facilities and infrastructure that support early childhood development. In addition, RA is expected to continuously develop child-friendly, holistic, and developmentally appropriate learning approaches, rather than focusing solely on academic achievement or rote memorization. Islamic values should be conveyed through role modeling, habituation, and meaningful learning experiences, rather than merely through verbal instruction.

Third, there is a strong expectation that, in the future, each district and municipality in Indonesia will have at least one state Raudhatul Athfal. State RA are viewed as a tangible expression of the state's direct commitment to the provision of Islamic early childhood education and are expected to function as models, reference institutions, and centers for quality development for other Raudhatul Athfal.

Policies of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of West Kalimantan Regarding State Raudhatul Athfal

In West Kalimantan, there are 969 madrasah institutions, consisting of 69 state madrasah and 900 privately managed madrasah. At the Madrasah Aliyah level, there are 19 State Madrasah Aliyah (MAN) and 154 Private Madrasah Aliyah. At the Madrasah Tsanawiyah level, 322 madrasah are privately managed, while 29 operate as State Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTsN). At the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah level, there are 424 private madrasah and 23 State Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MIN). These madrasah institutions are distributed across all districts and municipalities in West Kalimantan. The total number of 969 madrasah serves 131,629 students across all levels, from Ibtidaiyah and Tsanawiyah to Aliyah. Specifically, there are 23,644 students enrolled at the Aliyah level, 46,557 students at the Tsanawiyah level, and 61,428 students at the Ibtidaiyah level. Overall, the 131,629 students across all levels are served by 12,142 teachers, consisting of 2,534 teachers at the Aliyah level, 4,555 teachers at the Tsanawiyah level, and 5,050 teachers at the Ibtidaiyah level.

The quantitative data presented above reflect the combined contribution of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the community in providing Islamic education services for the people of West Kalimantan. Based on these data, it is evident that community-managed madrasah significantly outnumber state institutions in terms of the number of institutions, teachers, and students served. Consequently, the responsibility for the management and financing of Islamic education services is borne predominantly by the community. However, these figures also reveal a concerning disparity, particularly at the pre-school level. Notably, there is no state Raudhatul Athfal (RA) in West Kalimantan. Despite the existence of 186 RA institutions serving 7,864 students and supported by 826 teachers, all of these institutions remain privately managed, underscoring a critical gap in state involvement in early childhood Islamic education.

Based on interviews with several informants from the Ministry of Religious Affairs, to date, during their tenure, they have neither

proposed the establishment of new state Raudhatul Athfal nor the conversion of private Raudhatul Athfal into state Raudhatul Athfal. According to the information obtained, at the same time, they initiated the establishment of state Madrasah Aliyah, Tsanawiyah, and Ibtidaiyah, coordinating with local government authorities for land grants, regional budget allocations (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah/APBD*), and other support for these initiatives. However, at no point did they raise or promote the agenda of establishing Raudhatul Athfal with state-run status.

Based on the interviews, officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the district and city levels consider that the regulations regarding the establishment of state RA are still legally constrained, as RA is regarded as a form of non-formal education under Law No. 23 of 2003 on the National Education System (*Sistem Pendidikan Nasional/SISDIKNAS*). This argument can, however, be challenged on legal grounds, as Ministerial Regulation of Religious Affairs (PMA) No. 14 of 2004 on the Establishment of State Madrasah explicitly includes the RA level. Moreover, there is factual evidence that the Ministry of Education maintains a significant number of state kindergartens (TK Negeri) distributed across almost every district in Indonesia, indicating that their establishment is legally valid and does not violate the law.

Another challenge, according to officials from the Ministry of Religious Affairs at the regency and city levels, is that they have never received instructions from their superiors to initiate the establishment of state RA. This reflects a bureaucratic and highly structural mindset among these officials, who do not actively consider field realities or public aspirations, but instead wait for policy directions from above. At the same time, based on interviews with IGRA administrators, RA teachers, and PIAUD program students, they have never formally proposed this agenda either. These components, as noted by the researcher, have remained passive, awaiting guidance from higher authorities. The factual conditions above indicate that the stakeholders within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in terms of policy, have not been sufficiently affirmative toward Islamic early childhood education. Within their paradigm and awareness, early childhood education is not yet regarded as equally urgent as education at the Ibtidaiyah, Tsanawiyah, and Aliyah levels. Nevertheless, based on meetings and discussions with the researcher, some district and city-level Ministry officials have shown intentions to address the issue of Islamic early childhood education through several measures: raising the issue in official meetings to prioritize it, bringing it to higher authorities at the Regional Office (Kanwil), exploring the possibility of converting private RA into state RA, and considering teachers and PIAUD alumni by allocating civil servant (ASN/PNS) and government contract (P3K) positions in the recruitment process.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan, as an effort to implement quality Islamic early childhood education, still faces a long journey due to the lack of

clear policies from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Kalimantan regarding this agenda. Specifically, the study finds that the rationale for establishing state Raudhatul Athfal in West Kalimantan includes the following: *first*, establishing state Raudhatul Athfal is a mandate guaranteed by the constitution; *second*, the government has a moral and political responsibility to ensure that Islamic early childhood education services are of high quality; *third*, the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal aligns with the continuity of Indonesia's national education design; *fourth*, state Raudhatul Athfal serves as a mechanism for the state to ensure that the quality of Islamic early childhood education is equitable, measurable, and standardized; and finally, the establishment of state RA represents a form of fair state affirmation in the implementation of national education. The urgency of establishing state Raudhatul Athfal is further supported by the fact that Raudhatul Athfal, and especially state Raudhatul Athfal, can play a crucial role in supporting children's growth and development according to developmental tasks, that early childhood is a critical foundation to prepare children for primary education, ensuring they are ready for the next level, and that RA represents an authentic form of Islamic education that emerges from the needs of Indonesian society. Raudhatul Athfal integrates values of faith, piety, and noble character into the learning process in a contextual, child-friendly, and holistic manner, making state Raudhatul Athfal a necessity. Furthermore, the expectations of the community, Raudhatul Athfal teachers, alumni, and PIAUD program students regarding the establishment of state RA in West Kalimantan include the hope that Raudhatul Athfal will be operated by the government, that there will be a proportional allocation of civil servant (ASN/PNS) or government contract (P3K) positions in the teacher recruitment process, and, on a broader scale, that the government will be more sensitive and responsive to issues concerning Islamic early childhood education. However, the Ministry of Religious Affairs in West Kalimantan has not yet established a program or prioritized the agenda for the establishment of state Raudhatul Athfal.

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