



## The implementation of Raudhatul Athfal (RA)'s emergency curriculum towards post-covid-19 pandemic: a case study of RA Al-Akhyar in East Cilandak, South Jakarta

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** *RA encounters the challenge of curriculum adjustment during the Covid-19 pandemic. The RA Emergency Curriculum Guide as a reference requires adjustments to be implemented according to RA's circumstance.*

**Purpose:** *The purpose of this study is to find out the implementation of the Emergency Curriculum at RA Al-Akhyar South Jakarta, in the learning process towards the post Covid-19 pandemic.*

**Design and methods:** *This study uses a qualitative approach with research procedures involving observation, interpretation and reporting of research results descriptively. The research subjects are RA Al-Akhyar in South Jakarta and the Principal of RA Al-Akhyar. Research subjects are determined by purposive sampling technique. The research instruments are observation and interviews. Observations are conducted to determine the implementation of the curriculum at RA Al-Akhyar, while interviews are conducted to understand the perspective of the research subjects on curriculum implementation at RA Al-Akhyar.*

**Results:** *The results of the study show that during the pandemic, the learning time starts earlier. During the pandemic, the learning method focuses on three (3) methods or their combinations, namely; (1) inquiry learning; (2) project-based learning; and (3) problem-based learning. Utilization of Information Technology and the environment around students is well perceived. During the pandemic, the effectiveness of the material for clean and healthy living behavior, as well as literacy and life skills content is increasing. Meanwhile, the students' activeness in the learning process is perceived as decreasing.*

**Keywords:** *: Emergency curriculum, Raudhatul Athfal, Covid-19 Pandemic, RA Al-Akhyar*

### Introduction

Religious education is one of the foundations in building national character. Religious education is not only through the family and the surrounding environment but also educational institutions both formal and informal. In Indonesia, formal religious education starts from an early age. Education for early childhood is based on National Education Law number 20 of 2003 which indicates that Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a part of the National Education System. Minister of Education and Culture Regulation number 18 of 2018 concerning the provision of ECE services also shows that ECE is a child's right that needs to be considered by all elements, both government and society.

Minister of Education and Culture Regulation number 18 of 2018 article two (2) states that ECE services for ages of four (4) to six (6) years consist of Kindergartens (KG)/ Raudhatul Athfal (RA)/ Bustanul Athfal (BA), and the equivalents (Kemendikbud, 2018). In the scope of Islamic religious education, Islamic-based ECE is Raudhatul Athfal (RA) as stated in chapter 1 of the introduction in the of Minister of Religious Affair Decree number 792 of 2018, and it is under the Ministry of Religious Affair. It was further stated that RA has characteristics not only for aspects of child development but also internalization of Islamic spiritual values in children (Ministry of Religious Affair, 2018). Therefore, RA has a strategic role in shaping the morale of the nation's generation and introducing Islamic values from an early age.

RA's role in ECE, like other education levels in Indonesia, encounters extraordinary challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic. Education field are required to accept the digital ecosystem in the teaching and learning process. It is not only the institutions that must be prepared for these changes, but the teachers and students are also required to adapt. One of the necessary adjustments is related to the curriculum. Sarinah, et al explained, curriculum is a set of plans and arrangements regarding objectives, content, learning materials, and methods used as guidelines for learning implementation (Sarinah et al., 2018). Based on this explanation, as a guideline for the learning process, curriculum adjustment is one of the big challenges in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government realized the worries of administrators, teachers, parents and students in the education field, especially at the RA level. Therefore, in June 2021, the Ministry of Religious Affair through the Director General of Islamic Education Decree number 2994 of 2021 issued an Emergency Curriculum Guide for RA. The meaning of the Emergency Curriculum is the curriculum in RA unit level which is compiled and implemented by the unit during an emergency period by taking into account the rule of applicable regulations and the limited conditions of each education unit during an emergency period (Ministry of Religious Affair, 2021). It is further explained in the guide, what is meant by an Emergency Period is a disaster emergency condition due to disease outbreaks, natural disasters, riots and et cetera (Ministry of Religious Affair, 2021). Based on this understanding, RA in Indonesia is expected to make curriculum adjustments that refer to the RA Emergency Curriculum guide.

The RA Emergency Curriculum Guide as a reference in curriculum adjustments surely requires further steps, namely the implementation of curriculum adjustments. The condition of vulnerability level to the spread of Covid-19 in each region in Indonesia is indeed one of the factors in differences of adjustment for RA's emergency curriculum. The imposition of Restrictions Towards Community Activities (PPKM) is one of the benchmarks in the implementation of learning activities that impact the adjusted curriculum model.

One of the areas that susceptible to Covid-19 is the capital city of DKI Jakarta. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 to October 2022, there have been 1.44 million confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Jakarta (DKI Jakarta, 2022). However, the control of Covid-19 in the Java-Bali region, including Jakarta, is at PPKM level 1 at the moment, in accordance with the Minister of Home Affairs number 45 of 2022 (Mutiarasari, 2022). This shows that Jakarta's condition is better, and surely it affects the activities in the educational environment, especially RA. RA administrators are gradually returning to their activities towards the post-Covid-19 pandemic.

Then, the question is how RA, especially those in Jakarta, go through the transition towards the post-pandemic time, especially in the implementation of the emergency curriculum for the teaching and learning process. Therefore, this study aims to determine the implementation of the emergency curriculum in RA. This discussion is expected to enrich

academic studies related to the implementation of the emergency curriculum in the RA level. The results of this study can be used as part of a portrait of the learning model in RA based on emergency curriculum as a reference for further relevant studies.

### Methods

This study aims to determine the implementation of the Emergency Curriculum in RA's learning process towards the post-Covid-19 pandemic. This research method uses a qualitative approach. This method is chosen because of two factors; (1) considering the aim of the research topic in accordance with the nature of qualitative research that focuses on quality, in this case curriculum development; (2) qualitative methods have research procedures that are in accordance with the research focus. Ali explained that qualitative research procedures descriptively involve observation, interpretation and reporting of research results (Ali, 2018). As for the determination of RA and research subjects are chosen using purposive sampling technique. This considers the RA's profile and location, as well as the subject's understanding of the Emergency Curriculum. The subjects of this research are the headmaster and teachers of RA Al-Akhyar, South Jakarta. The research instruments used are observation and interview techniques. Ali explained that the observation technique places the researcher at the center of research data construction. Research data is obtained from the observations of the researcher, while the interview technique is a way to obtain or verify the information (Ali, 2018). Therefore, in this study interviews are conducted to reconstruct the understanding from the research subject's perspective on the emergency curriculum implementation at RA Al-Akhyar, while observations are conducted to construct the researcher's understanding of the implementation.

### Findings & Discussion

#### Profile of RA Al Akhyar

RA Al Akhyar is a private education unit in ECE level located on Jalan Benda Kemang, Gang Masjid Number 60, Cilandak Timur, Pasar Minggu, South Jakarta. This RA obtained an establishment decree in 2013, and then received an operational permit based on SK AHU-00117624.AH.01.04 in 2016.



RA Al-Akhyar has a National School Identification Number (NPSN) 69884101 and Madrasah Statistics Number 101231740261. The legality of RA Al-Akhyar which is completed and recorded in the Education Management Information System (EMIS) of Islamic Education of the Ministry of Religious Affair shows that as an educational institution, RA Al-Akhyar is managed properly with good administration.

#### RA Emergency Curriculum

Curriculum is a set of lesson plans. In the RA scope, based on the attachment to Ministerial Decree number 2944 of 2021 concerning guidelines for the implementation of the RA

curriculum, it is stated that the curriculum consists of; (1) RA's learning achievement standards; (2) RA's learning content; (3) learning process; (4) and assessment of student development (Ministry of Religious Affair, 2021). The four aspects of this curriculum in the Emergency Curriculum are based on the principles; (1) flexible, which means adapting to the needs and conditions of an emergency both in terms of development and implementation; (2) diversification, which means accommodating diversity, both socio-cultural backgrounds and students' abilities; (3) inclusive, that is free from discrimination learning; (4) based on students' needs, which means it is prepared and developed according to the abilities, talents, interests and needs of the child; (5) active participation, which means that the teaching and learning process activities involve the participation of parents of students both at RA, home and the surroundings (Ministry of Religious Affair, 2021).

The learning process in the Emergency Curriculum is based on eleven (11) principles, namely; (1) safe, meaning paying attention to the safety, security and mental health of students; (2) meaningful, the intention is to provide learning experiences to students in accordance with their growth and development without burdening them with demands to complete the curriculum achievements; (3) essential, focusing on aspects of child development, character building, life skills, literacy, and clean and healthy living behavior; (4) inclusive, the learning is according to characteristics of the students; (5) varied; (6) communicative and interactive; (7) playing; (8) flexible; (9) creative and innovative; (10) exemplary; and (11) adaptive (Ministry of Religious Affair, 2021). These principles then need to be developed as a method, media and learning resources in the teaching-learning process in the Emergency Curriculum.

### **Emergency Curriculum Implementation in RA Al-Akhyar**

Mulyasa explained that the curriculum can be seen through three dimensions; (1) as a body of knowledge; (2) as a system; and (3) as a plan (Mulyasa, 2012). In the context of developing the Emergency Curriculum in RA, it is necessary to understand these three dimensions. As a body of knowledge, the concept of the Emergency Curriculum is based on disaster situations. Thus, in this dimension, what to be studied from the Emergency Curriculum is the idealistic principle regarding learning models that are conceptually practical and adaptive in times of disaster. Next in the system dimension, what to be considered from the Emergency Curriculum is how the implementation of the curriculum is systematically linked to other relevant components in disaster mitigation or management. Furthermore, from the dimensions of the plan, it is necessary to know whether the learning outcomes from the implementation of the Emergency Curriculum are relevant to the level design and type of education.

Hamalik explained that in implementing the emergency curriculum, the involvement of the teacher is necessary, because the teacher is the main executor in emergency curriculum planning (Rofiq & Arifin, 2021). Based on Hamalik's opinion and the understanding the three dimensions of the curriculum and the context of the principles of the Emergency Curriculum, this research focuses on implementation within the scope; (1) duration of learning time; (2) Learning Methods; (3) Learning Media; (4) Learning Materials; and (5) the involvement or participation of teachers, parents and students in learning. These five (5) scopes are elaborated into forty (40) questions in a structured interview.

The results of interviews and observations of RA Al-Akhyar show that there is a change in the implementation of the emergency curriculum. The first change is from the learning time. For more details, see Table 1, the result conclusion of the interview data related to the duration of learning.

Table 1 Learning Time of RA Al-Akhyar

| Learning Time       | Before Covid-19 | During Covid-19 |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Offline Learning    | 5 times a week  | Never           |
| Online Learning     | Never           | 5 times a week  |
| Learning Duration   | 3 hours         | 2 hours         |
| Learning start time | 08.00-11.00 am  | 07.00-09.00 am  |

In the learning duration table, it shows that the change from offline to online learning due to Covid-19 has affected the duration and learning time. The duration of learning time after Covid-19 is 1 hour less than before Covid-19. The start time of learning also changes to 1 (one) hour earlier. Changes in the time and duration of this study based on interviews and observations that are conducted with the following considerations; (1) the endurance and eye health of students to carry out online learning; (2) supporting facilities for cell phones and internet quota; (3) the readiness of parents and students.

The implementation of the emergency curriculum at RA Al-Akhyar also had an impact on the learning methods used. The conclusions from the interviews and observations can be seen in table 2 of the learning method.

Table 2. RA Al-Akhyar's Learning Method

| Learning Methods       | Before Covid-19 | During Covid-19 |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Play Based Learning    | Applied         | Not Applied     |
| Discovery Learning     | Applied         | Not Applied     |
| Inquiry Learning       | Applied         | Applied         |
| Project-Based Learning | Applied         | Applied         |
| Problem-Based Learning | Applied         | Applied         |
| Thematic Learning      | Applied         | Not Applied     |

The learning method in RA Al-Akhyar have a focus change in the learning method. The application of learning methods which before Covid-19 used six (6) or a combination of the six became more focused on only three (3) methods or their combinations. The three methods are; (1) inquiry learning; (2) project-based learning; and (3) problem-based learning. Considerations for changing the focus of the method are; (1) media and learning environment limitations; (2) guides or teachers who can guide the implementation of the Play Based Learning method, Discovery Learning Method and Thematic Learning Method. However, the learning method used does not affect perceptions of the use of technology and the surrounding environment in learning at RA Al-Akhyar. This can be seen in table 3 Learning Media.

Table 3 Learning Media of RA Al-Akhyar

| Learning Media                                   | Before Covid-19 | During Covid-19 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Information Technology Utilization               | Adequate        | Adequate        |
| Environment around Children/Students Utilization | Adequate        | Adequate        |

In table 3, it can be seen that the learning media at RA Al-Akhyar are perceived as adequate, both in the use of Information Technology and the environment around students. However, based on observations and interviews, it is known that there has been a change in the use of the environment as a learning medium, which was originally the environment around the students, that is the RA Al-Akhyar school environment, which became the house of each student.

Adjustments in time, methods and learning media certainly affect the effectiveness of learning materials scope to students. The results of observations and interviews show that there are dynamics in the effectiveness of delivering material in learning. The results can be seen in table 4 on the effectiveness of learning materials at RA Al-Akhyar.

Table 4. The Effectiveness of RA Al Akhyar Learning Materials

| The Effectiveness of Learning Materials | Before Covid-19 | During Covid-19 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| Aspects of child/student development    | Sufficient      | Sufficient      |
| Character Building                      | Sufficient      | Sufficient      |
| Character Coaching                      | Sufficient      | Sufficient      |

|   |              |                   |
|---|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Life Skills</b>                        | Insufficient | Sufficient        |
| <b>Literacy</b>                           | Insufficient | Sufficient        |
| <b>Clean and healthy living behaviour</b> | Sufficient   | Highly Sufficient |

In table 4 it appears that there has been an increase in the material content of clean and healthy living behavior to become highly sufficient from previously sufficient. In terms of literacy and life skills, before Covid-19 was insufficient into sufficient. This shows that there is a material re-focus. Furthermore, the four previous aspects also affect the level of involvement, both from students, teachers and even parents. In table 5, the learning activeness of RA Al-Akhyar is seen.

Table 5 Learning Activeness of RA Al-Akhyar

| <b>Learning Activeness</b>   | <b>Before Covid-19</b> | <b>During Covid-19</b> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Teachers' Involvement</b> | Active                 | Active                 |
| <b>Students' Involvement</b> | Very Active            | Active                 |
| <b>Parents' Involvement</b>  | Active                 | Active                 |

The results of interviews and observations in table 5 show that Covid-19 has an impact on the level of students' activeness, from very active to active. Thus, Covid-19 contributes negatively to the learning activeness in RA Al-Akhyar.

## Conclusion

This research focuses on the implementation of the Emergency Curriculum in RA Al-Akhyar. The research focuses on five (5) scopes, namely; time, method, media, material, and learning activeness. The research results were obtained through a qualitative method with data collection instruments through observation and structured interviews with the headmaster of RA Al-Akhyar.

The results of the study show that there is change in the implementation of the emergency curriculum in RA Al-Akhyar according to the mentioned five scopes. At the time, during the pandemic there is a reduction in study time and a change in starting time that is earlier than before the pandemic. On the method side, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the focus changed into three (3) methods or their combinations, namely; (1) inquiry learning; (2) project-based learning; and (3) problem-based learning. Meanwhile, the utilization of Information Technology and the students' surrounding, both before and during the pandemic, the perception is still good. The results of this study also show that during the pandemic there is an increase in the effectiveness of material content for clean and healthy living behavior, as well as literacy content and life skills. As for activeness, the students' activeness is perceived as decreasing.

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