

Analysis of the School Zoning System and its Impact on the Education System: Between Equality and Disparity

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Article History: Received on 9 November 2024, Revised on 14 December 2024,
Published on 10 January 2025

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the extent to which the school zoning system has achieved the goal of equalizing education and how this system has impacted the education gap in Indonesia. This article uses a library method that focuses on collecting and analyzing data from various written sources, both in print and digital form. This approach allows researchers to access relevant information and ideas without having to go directly to the field. Zoning can provide equal access to education by increasing student access to the nearest school, as well as increasing school participation, especially at the elementary and secondary levels. However, in its implementation, zoning has not been able to equalize the quality of facilities between schools. The zoning system also has implications for the effectiveness of learning, some schools in densely populated areas accept students beyond capacity, while schools in other areas lack students. Although the goal of zoning is to eliminate the stigma of favorite schools, the community still views schools in certain zones as better, reinforcing the gap in perception. Zoning has not fully realized social justice in education, because students from families with more resources still have advantages. Therefore, this study recommends policies to support the zoning system. The government needs to accelerate infrastructure improvements in disadvantaged schools so that the quality of education is evenly distributed. Then accelerate the improvement of teacher redistribution and training programs to ensure that all schools have quality educators. Finally, conduct periodic evaluations of the zoning system to identify and correct deficiencies in its implementation.

Keywords: Disparity, Education System, Equality, Zoning System

A. Introduction

The school zoning system in Indonesia was introduced as a strategic step to create equal access to education. This policy aims to reduce educational inequality by ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to access quality schools without being hampered by distance or socio-economic status. The government hopes that through the zoning system, the quality of education will no longer be centered in certain schools, but rather spread evenly across various regions (Rabbani et al., 2023).

The zoning system was first introduced in 2017 as part of the New Student Admissions policy. This policy was motivated by the inequality of access to education, where schools that are considered “favorite” tend to be filled with students from well-off families, while students from less well-off families have difficulty accessing quality schools. Based on data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, before the implementation of zoning, around 30% of students from low-income families were only able to access schools with minimal facilities and inadequate teacher quality. Pöder et al. (2017) said that zoning aims to ensure that every student, regardless of socio-economic background, has an equal opportunity to be accepted at nearby schools that have the potential to be of better quality.

The government hopes that the zoning system will force the distribution of educational resources, both teachers and facilities, across schools. Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology shows that since 2019 the education budget has begun to be directed to improving facilities in schools located in certain zones. For example, schools in marginalized areas have begun to receive additional funding allocations for improving laboratories, libraries, and teacher training (Setiawan et al., 2019).

According to the 2021 Zoning Evaluation report, there has been an increase in the number of students accepted at nearby schools. As many as 80% of students in big cities said they can access schools without having to travel far. Through the zoning policy, the government wants to create an inclusive and equitable education system. By limiting selection based on academic grades and prioritizing domicile, the government hopes that the quality of education will be evenly distributed, so that all students can enjoy quality education without being constrained by geographical or economic factors (Susanto et al., 2024).

However, amidst the hope for equality, various issues have emerged that have sparked debate. One of the main issues is the gap between schools in urban and rural areas. Zoning, although it has the potential to eliminate the stigma of “favorite schools”, actually emphasizes the differences in the quality of facilities and human resources between schools. For example, schools in urban areas generally have more complete facilities and more competent educators compared to schools in remote areas (Hermawan & Hakim, 2024).

The social impact of the zoning system also needs to be considered. For some families, the freedom to choose a school is not only about seeking the best quality of education, but also reflects aspirations and preferences for certain values, such as the school environment, culture, or teaching methods. Zoning changes this dynamic by requiring students to attend institutions located within a certain radius of their residence. As a result, families who have high expectations for their children’s education feel they have lost control over their educational choices (Hermawan & Hakim, 2024). In addition, in an effort to keep their children in the schools they want, some families

choose a more extreme strategy: moving. This phenomenon is called educational urbanization, where families are willing to move to certain areas in order to access schools that are considered better. This does not only happen in big cities, but also in areas with schools that have a good reputation (Musadad & Purwanta, 2023).

Data from several major cities such as Jakarta and Surabaya show a significant increase in requests for address changes ahead of the new student admission period. Some families even rent temporary accommodation or borrow relatives' addresses to meet zoning requirements. This phenomenon highlights how zoning can trigger high social mobility, but with complex consequences (Fiddini et al., 2023).

This urbanization of education also has an impact on local communities. On the one hand, areas with high-quality schools become more densely populated, which can put pressure on local infrastructure such as transportation and housing. On the other hand, less desirable areas are at risk of population decline, which ultimately affects the social and economic life of the area (Musadad & Purwanta, 2023). This phenomenon shows that the zoning system has not been completely successful in eliminating social inequality. On the contrary, in some cases, zoning actually reinforces social stratification, where families with better resources find ways to continue accessing quality education, while families with economic constraints are forced to accept the existing options without many alternatives.

On the other hand, there are challenges in implementing this policy, such as the lack of readiness of school infrastructure in certain zones, as well as the disparity in the number of students and school capacity. Many schools, especially in remote or disadvantaged areas, still face limited facilities. Data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (2022) shows that around 30% of schools in Indonesia do not have adequate basic facilities, such as sufficient classrooms, laboratories, libraries, and internet access. In the context of zoning, students who live in certain zones are forced to attend institutions with less-than-optimal infrastructure, even though the quality of education there is not comparable to schools in other zones.

Another problem that arises is the imbalance between the number of students and school capacity. In some densely populated areas, schools must accept students beyond their ideal capacity. As a result, there is overcrowding in classrooms that can reduce the quality of learning. Teachers must manage more students in one class, which has the potential to reduce individual attention to each student. Conversely, in less populated areas, there are schools that lack students. This phenomenon causes classrooms to be underfilled and school resources, such as teaching staff and facilities, to be less than optimal in their use. This imbalance shows that the distribution of students is not fully in line with the distribution of school capacity.

This inequality has a direct impact on the effectiveness of learning. In schools with excess capacity, students must learn in an environment that is less conducive due to

limited space and facilities. Classes that are too large also affect the interaction process between teachers and students, so that the quality of learning decreases. On the other hand, schools with a minimum number of students face challenges in creating a dynamic learning environment, because interaction between students is limited.

This imbalance has the potential to reduce the overall quality of education. The goal of the zoning system to create educational equality has not been fully achieved, because the quality of students' learning experiences is highly dependent on the readiness and capacity of schools in each zone. This can widen the gap in learning outcomes between students in different zones, contrary to the initial goal of the zoning policy. Periodic evaluation of the implementation of the zoning system is needed. This study aims to analyze the extent to which the school zoning system can realize the goal of educational equality and how this system impacts the educational gap in Indonesia. Through this study, it is hoped that it can provide recommendations for improving zoning policies that are more inclusive and effective.

B. Methods

This article uses the library method as the main approach in studying the school zoning system and its impact on the education system in Indonesia. Library or library research is a research method that focuses on collecting and analyzing data from various written sources, both in print and digital form. This approach allows researchers to access relevant information and ideas without having to go directly to the field.

The data collection process in this study was carried out through in-depth exploration of various relevant sources. The author utilized scientific journals, books, policy documents, and electronic articles related to the school zoning system. These sources provide a theoretical and empirical overview of the implementation of zoning, as well as its impact on educational equality and inequality. In the library method, the author's interaction with the data is direct to the text or written documents. There is no data collection through field observation or interviews. The data used is "ready to use", meaning that researchers utilize information that is already available to be processed and analyzed further. This allows researchers to construct strong arguments based on theoretical studies and previously documented findings.

This research is qualitative, which emphasizes more on the exploration and discovery of meaning from the data collected. The author does not simply collect information, but also explores deeper insights into the phenomenon of school zoning. This process involves descriptive, theoretical, and philosophical data analysis, with the aim of conveying a comprehensive understanding of the topic discussed. The analysis carried out in this study is descriptive, namely explaining the phenomenon of the school zoning system in detail based on the data obtained. In addition, the author also examines theoretical aspects, namely linking the findings to relevant educational

theories and public policies. A philosophical approach is used to explore deeper implications, such as justice in access to education and the social impact of zoning policies.

C. Results and Discussion

Zoning System

According to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, zoning is designed to eliminate the stigma of “favorite schools” and encourage equal distribution of education quality. In this system, every student is encouraged to enroll in a school located in the nearest zone. This policy aims to reduce inequality of access, so that the quality of education is not only concentrated in certain schools, but is spread across all regions. In the context of public policy, Kraft dan Furlong (2015) explain that zoning is an intervention that aims to equalize the distribution of educational resources. Zoning allows the government to ensure a more even distribution of students across schools, which in turn encourages improvements in the overall quality of education. This also reduces the burden on schools that were previously always the main choice.

From the perspective of social justice, Rawls (1971) through his theory of justice as fairness asserts that zoning policies can be seen as an effort to create equality of opportunity. Zoning ensures that children from various social and economic backgrounds have equal access to quality education, reducing the impact of structural inequalities that previously hampered certain groups. Bourdieu (1986), education is influenced by the cultural capital possessed by individuals or groups. Zoning, in this case, has the potential to reduce the dominance of certain cultural capital possessed by upper economic groups. By eliminating selection mechanisms based solely on achievement or cost, zoning provides greater opportunities for students from disadvantaged families to access equally good education.

UNESCO (2018) in its global report stated that zoning also plays a role in supporting educational decentralization. With zoning, local governments have a greater responsibility to ensure that schools in their areas are able to provide quality education. This creates a new dynamic in education management that is more responsive to local needs. In Indonesia, the implementation of zoning has had various impacts. Akhiruddin et al. (2019) highlighted that the zoning system aims to reduce the educational gap between urban and rural areas. However, challenges such as infrastructure inequality, differences in the quality of teaching staff, and community resistance to changes in student admission patterns are still obstacles.

Equal Access to Education

One of the main goals of the zoning system is to make it easier for students to access schools, especially by regulating admission based on the distance from their homes to schools. Before the zoning policy, many students had to travel long distances to reach their desired schools, which sometimes required them to move schools far from home or choose more elite schools. This added to the burden of time and costs, and affected students' concentration at school (Winarti et al., 2023).

With the zoning system, students can register for schools that are in their zone, which means that the school is closer to where they live. This policy directly reduces the accessibility problems faced by students, both in terms of distance and travel time. Fiddini et al. (2023) mention the benefits of increasing access in the zoning system including:

1. **Reduced Travel Time and Costs:** Students no longer have to spend hours commuting to school, which previously could cause fatigue and reduce their concentration in learning. Transportation costs are also lower, reducing the burden on families, especially those from families with limited economic conditions.
2. **Accessibility and Convenience:** Easier access means students can focus more on learning activities at school. In addition, families are also more at ease because their children do not have to travel long distances that are prone to danger or delays.

According to Kaffa et al. (2021), the zoning system also has a positive impact on school participation rates, which is an important indicator in evaluating the education system. By providing opportunities for students in various regions to access the nearest school and reducing selection barriers, this policy directly affects the level of student engagement and participation in education, especially at the elementary and junior high school levels. Furthermore, Kaffa et al. (2021), said that increasing school participation can be seen in several ways:

1. **Increased Attendance and Enrollment Rates:** Previously, many students were unable to continue their education due to limited school choices or transportation costs. The zoning system allows more students to enroll in schools without being constrained by geographic factors or high costs, thereby increasing enrollment rates at the elementary and junior high school levels.
2. **Equalizing Access to Education:** Zoning serves as a tool for equalizing access to education, not only limited to urban areas, but also areas that were previously difficult to reach by the formal education system. This has an impact on increasing the number of students attending school, especially in rural areas or suburban areas that previously had limited access to education.

As a result of the zoning policy, many students in areas who previously had difficulty enrolling in their favorite schools in the city center now have the opportunity to

continue their education in schools closer to where they live, which ultimately increases enrollment rates in primary and secondary schools.

Inter-School Disparities

The school zoning system, although it aims to create equal access to education, has not been able to fully address the gap between schools in urban and rural areas. Two main issues that continue to be challenges in the implementation of the zoning policy are the disparity in the quality of facilities and differences in the quality of teaching staff between schools.

The disparity in the quality of facilities between urban and rural schools is still a significant problem in the zoning system. In many urban areas, especially in large cities, schools tend to have more complete and modern facilities. Facilities such as computer labs, comfortable classrooms, adequate sports facilities, and stable internet infrastructure are found in schools in these areas. This is due to several factors, including greater funding, regional prosperity, and easier access to technology and resources.

In contrast, in many rural or peri-urban areas, educational facilities are limited. Schools in these areas lack adequate classrooms, adequate learning equipment, or even basic facilities such as clean water and sanitation. Some schools do not even have good internet access, which is essential to support learning in today's digital age. This causes a significant difference in the learning experience of students in these schools compared to schools in urban areas. According to Fiddini et al. (2023) the impact of inequality in school facilities in rural and urban areas.

1. **Limited Learning Resources:** Unequal quality of facilities can hamper the teaching and learning process, as students in rural areas cannot take advantage of the latest technology or more modern educational facilities. This exacerbates the disparity in educational outcomes between urban and rural students.
2. **Lack of Student Motivation and Engagement:** Schools that do not have adequate facilities have difficulty in attracting student interest and maintaining their engagement in the learning process.

In addition to uneven facilities, differences in teacher quality between urban and rural schools are also a major issue in the zoning system (Ariska et al., 2024). Schools in big cities generally find it easier to attract and retain quality teachers, mainly due to their more strategic location, better facilities, and greater career development opportunities. On the other hand, schools in remote or rural areas experience a shortage of quality educators, both in terms of number and qualifications.

Teachers in rural areas are faced with more difficult conditions, with less supportive facilities and having to teach a larger number of students. This causes teachers in these areas to be unable to give enough attention to each student, or even manage the class

effectively. In addition, the difficulty of accessing professional training and self-development makes the quality of education in rural areas lag behind that in urban areas.

Inexperienced or under-trained teachers can affect the quality of teaching, which in turn impacts students' understanding of the material. Students in rural areas do not get the same learning experience as students in big cities. In addition, teachers in rural areas feel under-appreciated or do not have the opportunity to grow, which results in decreased work enthusiasm and the quality of teaching provided.

Zoning, which is intended to equalize access to education and eliminate the gap between superior schools and other schools, has not been able to overcome the existing disparities between urban and rural areas. According to Aristo (2020), the main causes of this disparity include economic, geographical, and structural factors.

1. **Economic Factors:** Schools in urban areas receive greater funding, both from the central government and from the community, while schools in rural areas are more dependent on limited budgets.
2. **Geographical Factors:** The geographical location of rural schools far from city centers makes it difficult for them to obtain resources equivalent to those available to schools in urban areas.
3. **Structural Factors:** The zoning system implemented has not fully considered the quality of facilities and human resources in each zone. Therefore, although zoning guarantees more equitable access to education geographically, the quality of education remains uneven.

The disparity in the quality of facilities and teacher quality remains a major challenge in the school zoning system in Indonesia. Although the zoning policy aims to equalize access to education, the disparity between schools in urban and rural areas remains, which has an impact on the quality of education received by students. Therefore, there needs to be more attention in terms of equalizing educational facilities, as well as more equitable training and distribution of educators so that zoning can truly achieve its goal of reducing the educational gap in Indonesia.

Learning Effectiveness

One of the most obvious impacts is the imbalance between overcapacity and under capacity in certain schools, which in turn affects the quality of interactions between teachers and students, as well as the overall quality of learning. In a zoning system, schools located in densely populated areas or areas with high populations often experience overcapacity, while schools in other areas, especially those in less densely populated areas, experience a shortage of students. This imbalance can significantly affect the effectiveness of learning.

Schools in urban areas or densely populated areas often have to accept more students than they can accommodate. This is because the zoning system attempts to ensure that every student in the zone has access to education at the nearest school. As a result, these schools have very large classes, with the number of students far exceeding the ideal capacity. With the number of students exceeding capacity, these schools face limitations in terms of facilities, such as small classrooms, sports facilities, and other learning support facilities. This condition makes it difficult for teachers to provide adequate attention to each student, which has an impact on the decline in the quality of learning.

On the other hand, schools in less populated areas or rural areas experience a shortage of students. This can be due to students moving to closer or more desirable schools in urban areas. This shortage of students also impacts school operations, with schools lacking the resources to optimize learning and other activities. In schools with a shortage of students, there are challenges in creating effective classes. Some classes may be too small, making it difficult to create diverse learning dynamics.

Schools that are over capacity have difficulty providing an ideal learning environment, because with overcrowded classes, students will have a harder time getting personal attention from teachers. On the other hand, schools that are under capacity cannot optimize their potential because of the limited number of students who can participate in learning. This inequality causes the quality of education received by students to be highly dependent on the location and condition of the school. This makes the application of the principle of educational equality not fully achieved, because some schools have more resources and attention, while other schools lack both.

One of the most important aspects of the learning process is the interaction between teachers and students. This interaction becomes increasingly limited and less effective when classes have too many students, as is the case in schools that are over capacity. The quality of this interaction greatly affects how well students understand the material being taught and how far they can progress academically. In schools with overcrowded classes, the quality of teacher-student interactions decreases (Musadad & Purwanta, 2023):

1. **Divided Attention:** In a classroom with many students, teachers face the challenge of giving each student enough attention. With too many students, teachers cannot interact intensively with each individual to ensure they understand the subject matter. As a result, some students feel neglected or have difficulty following the material being taught.
2. **Difficulty in Class Management:** Crowded classes make it difficult to manage the class. With a large number of students, teachers need more time to manage discipline and ensure that each student follows the learning well. This can reduce effective time for teaching and interacting with students, which should be used to deepen their understanding.

3. **Lack of Constructive Class Discussion:** Time and space constraints also prevent group discussions or more dynamic interactions between students and teachers. The high number of students reduces the opportunity for students to ask questions, discuss, or express their opinions, which should be part of the learning process that encourages critical thinking and deeper understanding.

When teachers are unable to provide sufficient attention, students do not fully understand the material being taught. This creates a gap in understanding between students who are more responsive and those who need more time or guidance from the teacher. The lack of intense and quality interaction can also make students feel unappreciated or less motivated. This can impact their desire to actively engage in learning and lower the overall quality of education. To address the negative impacts of capacity imbalances and teacher-student interactions, some solutions that can be considered include:

1. **Restructuring the Zoning System:** Adjusting the zoning policy by considering the existing school capacity and the distribution of student population in each zone. This is to ensure that schools are not burdened with too many students.
2. **Improving Infrastructure and Facilities in Remote Areas:** The government needs to ensure that schools in areas with a shortage of students also have adequate facilities and high-quality teachers to attract more students and create balance across the region.
3. **Teacher Quality Development:** Training and professional development programs for teachers, especially those in densely populated areas or remote areas, need to be strengthened so that teaching quality remains optimal despite the challenge of an unbalanced number of students.

The impact of overcapacity and under capacity in the zoning system, as well as the decline in the quality of teacher-student interactions, can affect the effectiveness of learning in schools. This disparity in the number of students and facilities has the potential to hinder the achievement of the goal of equalizing the quality of education throughout the region. Therefore, it is important to find solutions that can balance school capacity and ensure more productive interactions between teachers and students, so that the quality of education in Indonesia can improve overall.

Urbanization of Education

The phenomenon of educational urbanization emerged as an impact of the zoning system implemented in education in Indonesia. Although the zoning policy aims to equalize access to education and reduce the gap between schools in urban and rural areas, in reality there is still a strong tendency to want access to schools that are considered superior or more prestigious, which are located in urban areas. This creates a social and educational dynamic known as educational urbanization, namely the movement of residents or families to gain access to better education, usually in more urban or urban areas (Oryzani, 2023).

One of the main impacts of zoning policies is the emergence of a phenomenon where some families are willing to move so that their children can be accepted into schools that are considered superior, which are located in the city center or more developed areas. In general, families who have more financial ability are more likely to move to areas with better-reputed schools, even though this may mean moving their entire lives to a denser or more expensive environment. Pratama et al. (2024) explain the motivation behind moving:

1. **Access to Quality Education:** Many parents believe that by enrolling their children in schools considered to be “favorite schools” in the city center or in more developed areas, their children will receive a better education and greater opportunities for future success. These schools have better facilities, better qualified teachers, and greater opportunities to develop students’ potential.
2. **Increased Social Status:** Schools that are considered superior also have high social status. Parents who are able to transfer their children to such schools feel that they have given their children the best opportunity, not only in terms of education, but also in terms of social status and the networks that can be formed there.
3. **Dissatisfaction with Schools in the Local Zone:** On the other hand, many parents feel that the schools in their residential zone do not have adequate quality, both in terms of facilities, curriculum, and teaching quality. Therefore, they prefer to take extreme steps such as moving to get access to better schools, even though this can mean additional costs and changes in lifestyle.

Not only legally moving domicile, but in some cases, parents also carry out administrative manipulation, such as using a fake address or claiming a domicile that does not match their actual place of residence, so that their children can be accepted into favorite schools. This phenomenon shows that the stigma about “favorite schools” and “superior schools” is still very strong, even though the zoning policy aims to equalize the quality of education. According to Nurfakihiswara et al. (2024), the reasons behind the use of fake addresses:

1. **Avoiding Zoning Restrictions:** In a zoning system, many schools set admission restrictions based on geographic area. By using fake addresses, parents attempt to manipulate the data so that their children can be enrolled in closer or more prestigious schools, even though they live in an ineligible zone.
2. **Concerns about the Quality of Education:** Families who feel that schools in their zone are not meeting their expectations in terms of the quality of education feel compelled to take such steps as an effort to ensure that their children receive a better education.
3. **Distrust of Educational Equity:** Distrust of the zoning system’s ability to truly equalize educational quality also drives this behavior. Families with greater financial access see zoning as a barrier to their children’s access to the quality of education they desire, and therefore seek to exploit the loopholes.

Although the zoning policy is expected to eliminate labels or stigmas against certain schools, in reality schools located in urban areas or those with better reputations are still considered “favorite schools”. In the eyes of most people, these schools are still seen as the best, despite the zoning policy which aims to equalize access to education. This urbanization of education has a wide impact, both socially, economically, and in terms of education itself. Urbanization of education tends to benefit better-off families, because they have the resources to move or carry out administrative manipulation. This further exacerbates the inequality between better-off and less-well-off families, because poorer families remain confined to schools in their zone. Moving to access favorite schools can increase population density in urban areas, which in turn can worsen infrastructure problems and the availability of public facilities. Ultimately, although the zoning policy is intended to create equality, urbanization of education instead shows that the policy has not been able to completely eliminate the stigma of favorite schools and the educational gap between cities and villages. To reduce the impact of urbanization on education, according to the author, several steps that can be taken include:

1. **Improving the Quality of Schools Across Regions:** The government must ensure that schools in all zones have adequate facilities and equal quality of teaching, so that there are no longer any striking differences between schools in urban and rural areas.
2. **Implementation of a Fairer Admission System:** To reduce address manipulation, a more transparent admission system based on educational needs in each zone should be implemented. This system can take into account other factors, such as accessibility and local needs.
3. **Encourage Inclusive Education:** The government can encourage inclusive education by providing more opportunities for students from various economic backgrounds to attend quality schools without having to rely on their geographic location or social status.

Supporting Policies Needed

The school zoning system in Indonesia is an effort to equalize the quality of education across regions, reduce the gap between schools in urban and rural areas, and ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to receive a decent education. Although this policy has had positive impacts, such as increasing student access and participation, several challenges and inequalities remain, especially related to differences in facilities, teacher quality, and diversity of school capacity. Therefore, to ensure that the zoning system can achieve the goal of equalizing education, appropriate supporting policies are needed.

One of the biggest challenges in implementing the zoning system is the disparity in facilities and infrastructure between schools in urban and rural areas. Schools in urban areas tend to have better facilities, including laboratories, libraries, more modern classrooms, and access to adequate technology. On the other hand, many schools in

remote or rural areas still lack basic facilities, such as sufficient classrooms, adequate teaching aids, or even proper sanitation.

To achieve equal quality of education, improving infrastructure is a very important step. The government must ensure that schools in disadvantaged areas receive sufficient funding to improve and renew their facilities. Some steps that can be taken include:

1. Increase the education budget for underdeveloped areas: The government can channel more budget for the construction and improvement of school facilities in more remote areas. The funds can be used for the renovation of school buildings, provision of more modern learning tools, and improvement of other facilities and infrastructure.
2. Development of information technology facilities: Given the rapid development of technology, it is important for the government to ensure that every school, both in urban and rural areas, has equal access to information technology and digital facilities. This includes not only computers or internet access, but also training for students and teachers in utilizing technology in the teaching and learning process.
3. Local needs-based school development programs: The development of school facilities should be tailored to the specific needs of each region, such as providing adequate classrooms in areas with a high number of students or creating good accessibility in areas with poor geography.

In addition to infrastructure issues, differences in teacher quality are one of the main causes of inequality in education. Schools in big cities generally have better access to quality teachers, with higher levels of qualifications and more extensive teaching experience. Meanwhile, many schools in rural or remote areas face difficulties in recruiting and retaining quality teachers. To address this inequality, equalizing teacher quality through redistribution and training programs is essential. Some steps that can be taken include:

1. Teacher redistribution program: The government can implement a teacher redistribution program that provides incentives for teachers who are willing to teach in more remote or less developed areas. These incentives can be in the form of regional allowances, opportunities for further training, or additional facilities that are attractive to teachers.
2. Continuous professional training and development: Teacher quality must be continuously improved through continuous professional training. The government can provide relevant and accessible training programs for all teachers, both those teaching in urban and rural areas. This can include training on educational technology, the latest teaching methods, and inclusive approaches to accommodate the diverse needs of students.
3. Strengthening teacher certification: To ensure that teachers have adequate qualifications, the government needs to strengthen the teacher certification

system, which ensures that teachers accepted into schools throughout Indonesia have competencies and knowledge that meet national standards.

4. Incentive and reward programs: Incentive or reward programs for teachers who excel or who teach in areas of need can increase motivation and the quality of teaching. This will also attract more quality teachers to work in areas of need.

Despite the good intentions behind the zoning policy, challenges related to its effective implementation need to be addressed. Good monitoring and evaluation are essential to ensure that the zoning system is operating in line with the goal of equalizing education. Without systematic evaluation, deficiencies in the implementation of this policy cannot be identified and corrected. Some steps that can be taken to improve zoning monitoring and evaluation are:

1. Periodic evaluation of zoning effectiveness: The government needs to conduct periodic evaluations related to the implementation of zoning policies. This evaluation can include assessing whether zoning policies have succeeded in equalizing access and quality of education, as well as identifying areas that still experience inequality. The results of this evaluation will be the basis for improving zoning policies.
2. Data collection and mapping of school needs: To ensure effective zoning implementation, the government needs to conduct data collection and mapping of needs in each zone. This mapping will help to see whether the school capacity in a zone is sufficient and whether the distribution of students is even. If there are schools that lack capacity or have excess students, the government can rearrange or provide solutions to reduce inequality.
3. Transparency and community participation: Supervision of zoning policies must involve community participation, especially parents and communities around the school. The community can provide valuable input on problems that occur in the field. In addition, transparency in the implementation of zoning will help build trust and reduce fraud or data manipulation that can harm the system.
4. Effective feedback system: The zoning system must be equipped with a feedback mechanism that allows parents, teachers, and students to report problems or obstacles they face during the implementation of the policy. This mechanism can be a discussion forum, digital platform, or regular meetings between the school and the local government.

School zoning policies in Indonesia have the potential to equalize the quality of education and provide equal opportunities for every student. However, to ensure that this policy is successful, comprehensive supporting policies are needed. Improvement of school infrastructure and facilities, equalization of teacher quality, and effective supervision and evaluation are important aspects that must be considered. With these steps, it is hoped that zoning policies can realize a more equitable and equitable education throughout Indonesia.

D. Conclusion

The school zoning system has shown some success in improving access to education, but still faces major challenges in addressing disparities between schools. Zoning can provide equal access to education by increasing student access to nearby schools, as well as increasing school participation, especially at the elementary and secondary levels. In its implementation, there are disparities between schools, zoning has not been able to equalize the quality of facilities between schools. Schools in certain areas still lack qualified educators, while schools in other zones have teachers with better qualifications. This also has implications for the effectiveness of learning, some schools in densely populated areas accept students beyond capacity, while schools in other zones lack students. In schools with overcrowded classes, teacher attention to students is reduced, reducing the quality of learning. There is a phenomenon of educational urbanization, some families are willing to move or use fake addresses to enroll their children in certain schools, indicating that the stigma of favorite schools has not completely disappeared. A significant impact in this system is the new stigma against schools in certain zones. Although the goal of zoning is to eliminate the stigma of favorite schools, the community still views schools in certain zones as better, reinforcing the gap in perception. Zoning has not fully realized social justice in education, because students from families with more resources still have advantages. Therefore, this study recommends policies to support the zoning system. The government needs to accelerate infrastructure improvements in disadvantaged schools so that the quality of education is evenly distributed. Then accelerate the improvement of teacher redistribution and training programs to ensure that all schools have qualified educators. Finally, conduct periodic evaluations of the zoning system to identify and correct deficiencies in its implementation.

E. Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all parties who have helped in the preparation of this article. Hopefully the findings of this study will be useful for the development of education.

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