

# Enhancing Educational Services through the Implementation of the PPDB Zoning Policy in Indonesia

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## Abstract

*The research method used was descriptive qualitative using in-depth interviews and observation techniques with school principals, teachers, education offices and the community. The results show that the implementation of the zoning system policy in both cities/districts has been implemented and has an impact on the service satisfaction felt by the community in zoning learner admissions. The zoning system also helps students in blind-spot areas gain access to schools optimally. The zoning policy implementation analysis in this study uses a six-indicator approach, namely: setting policy standards and objectives; use of resources; characteristics of implementing organizations; attitudes of implementers; and socio-economic and political conditions. The results of the analysis between the implementation of the zoning system as an effort to improve education are that the zoning system sets standards through the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 1 of 2021 and Ponorogo District Government Regulation No. 26 of 2022 and Malang City Government No. 5 of 2021. The use of resources is carried out to optimize the implementation of this zoning policy. Schools and education offices play a full role as implementing organizations and have fixed and unique characteristics. The two implementers coordinate with each other and determine the attitude of excellent service to the community in implementing the zoning system. From the entire set of implementation elements and theoretical models, policy implementation is directly influenced by social, economic and political conditions.*

**Keywords:** Zoning System, Education Equity, Policy Education.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial part of the public sector. The government and state are committed to ensuring that educational services are provided fairly and equitably to meet the needs of all citizens (Khozin et al., 2020). One way to serve the broader community is by strengthening educational governance through national education policies and regulations (Gupta, 2019). Public services offered by the government must include three main functions: public service, development implementation, and social protection for citizens (Hermawan, 2023). Therefore, when assessing an educational service, it must meet the policy criteria for public services in the SERVQUAL context (Aboubakr & Bayoumy, 2022).

The quality of educational services is defined as excellence (Peters and Waterman, 1982) based on alignment with established objectives, mainly set by the government. Parasuraman et al. (1994) assess quality based on "the degree of congruence or incongruity between customers' expectations and their perceptions of the service organization's performance." Thus, all educational institutions must strive to achieve and maintain high standards of performance to compete effectively in the education market (Suherni et al., 2023). Proper governance and formulation of education policies aimed at achieving national education goals can be documented and planned in the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN). To achieve these goals, it is essential to identify and address strategic issues and challenges in the education sector. One such challenge is ensuring the equitable distribution of quality education (Lie, 2023).

Equal distribution of quality education can be seen from the extent to which education can be easily reached by the wider community (Sahira, 2023). One step in realizing educational equality is by improving the system for accepting new students or what is usually called PPDB. In educational management, students are one of the input instruments in schools (Setiawan, 2021). Therefore, student input management is specifically regulated to facilitate student input process services (Demmans et al., 2020). In this case, the government as the regulator

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formulates regulations for admitting students through reformative policies, especially in the public service bureaucracy (Sumartono & Hermawan, 2020), especially the education sector, in the form of a zoning system with the Minister of Education Regulation Number 14 of 2018.

The ministerial regulation aims to create a PPDB system that is objective, transparent, accountable and without discrimination (Education Service, 2023). The zoning system policy is expected to reduce and eradicate segregation or grouping of favorite and non-favorite school castes in the education sector (Widyana, 2021). This regulation has been strengthened again with an update to Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 1 of 2021. This regulation aims to regulate and guarantee the acceptance of new students in an objective, transparent, accountable, non-discriminatory and fair manner in encouraging increased access to educational services (Raharjo et al., 2020). The regional government also takes part in implementing the student admission program using the zoning system (Mustari et al., 2021). For example, the Ponorogo Regency Regional Government drafted Ponorogo Regent Regulation Number 36 of 2022 regarding the determination of ceilings and quotas for Admission of New Students.

The quota for the zoning route is 50 percent, achievement is 30 percent, affirmation is 15 percent, the route for health workers and the transfer route for parents is 5 percent, and a special quota for the route is given to medical personnel, paramedics, and all health workers and other supporting personnel for their dedication, struggle, sincerity and hard work in handling Covid-19 in the Region, a maximum of 7 percent of the quota for the affirmative route. The Malang City Government also supports the Admission of New Students (PPDB) through a zoning system which is embodied in Malang Mayor Regulation Number 12 of 2020. In this regulation it is explained that the zoning route has a capacity of 50% for each school. The rest of the affirmation route is given a quota of 15%, the parent/guardian transfer route is 5%, and the achievement pathway is 30%. In the school zoning route, it prioritizes the closest distance between the prospective student's domicile and the school (Anjarwati, 2020). This zoning system policy aims to distribute quality and equal educational services in various regions in Indonesia. The PPDB zoning system is also expected to eliminate the notion of favorite and non-favorite schools.

This zoning system policy will certainly enable schools to accept students equally both in terms of academic and non-academic abilities (Rahma et al., 2021). By equalizing student input, it is hoped that there will be an acceleration in equal distribution of school quality. It is hoped that the zoning policy will also have an impact on improving the quality of teachers in order to improve the quality of education. If teachers have quality competencies, it is hoped that they can produce quality students as well (Wahyuni et al., 2022).

Even though the zoning system has been implemented in the Student Admissions process in Indonesia, in implementation there are several obstacles and problems of its own. One of the problems with the zoning system is that there is a disparity between the number of prospective students and the number of schools in several areas. Apart from that, another problem is the lack of strict supervision of the system, resulting in fraud occurring in the PPDB zoning system. However, amidst the problems of the zoning system, several studies have proven that zoning programs have an impact on the learning stages and characteristics of students in schools (Setiawan & Rahaju, 2021). Supported by the results of other research, accepting new students using this zoning system is able to have an impact on the even distribution and distribution of students in all schools in the city of Surabaya (Savitri & Rahaju, 2021).

Starting from the problems and successes of the Zoning system, in-depth studies and research are needed to analyze broadly through ideal policy theory in order to see the implementation of these policies (Newig & Koontz, 2014). Judging from the aim of integrating the theory of the Van Meter and Van Horn models, namely the zoning system towards the aim of equal distribution and optimization of educational services for the wider community. The educational service in question is how the Zoning system is able to accommodate the needs of students and parents in getting access to proper education (Jimenez et al., 2007).

## METHODOLOGY

The research method employed in this study uses a qualitative approach (Hammarberg et al., 2016). This approach involves an analytical understanding process based on methods used to analyze situations related to

the phenomenon of conflict between social groups and its management, as described by Huberman (2014). Specifically, a descriptive qualitative method was selected.

The descriptive qualitative method aims to explore detailed and in-depth information regarding the implementation of the PPDB (New Student Admission) zoning system. This method helps understand how the zoning system contributes to improving educational services for the broader community. By using this qualitative approach, researchers can obtain a comprehensive picture of the issues at hand by directly collecting data in the field (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This approach ensures that the data collected is rational and natural, reflecting actual conditions.

Data collection for this research involved conducting in-depth interviews with various stakeholders involved in implementing the PPDB zoning system, including school principals, teachers, parents, and students (Nurhasanah et al., 2021). These interviews provided rich and detailed perspectives from each informant, allowing the researchers to grasp the dynamics and complexities of the phenomenon under study. The data analysis techniques used in this research encompass data processing, interpretation, analysis, and interactive data coding, following the model proposed by Miles et al. (2014). which includes the following stages:

**Data Collection:** Collect relevant data through in-depth interviews and direct observation in the field.

**Data Reduction:** Selecting, focusing and simplifying data to facilitate further analysis.

**Data Presentation:** Presenting data in an organized form making it easier to draw conclusions.

**Drawing Conclusions:** Drawing conclusions based on the data that has been analyzed and verifying these conclusions with additional data if necessary.

By using this approach and method, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution in understanding and overcoming problems related to the implementation of the PPDB zoning system, as well as providing useful recommendations for improving educational services for the community.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The distribution and number of state schools in a city/district also influences the distribution and equal distribution of access to education. Within the scope of a large and dense area, the Malang City Government regulates the number and distribution of state schools in each sub-district in Malang City. Below is the distribution of schools in Malang City:

**Table 1**Number of State Elementary Schools, State Middle Schools, and State High Schools distribution in Malang City

Subdistrict	Number of elementary schools	Number of junior high schools	Number of high schools
Klojen	19	27	18
Blimbing	45	20	5
Kedungkandang	45	18	6
Lowokwaru	46	23	13
Sukun	42	19	6

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

The PPDB Zoning system policy is considered to be able to help improve education services. This improvement in service can be seen from the policy effect which means that schools no longer experience favorite and non-favorite clustering (Widyana, 2021). Regarding the labeling of favorite or non-favorite status, this is the full responsibility of each school to develop its institution to become a favorite school. The PPDB Zoning system helps equalize student input in each school. Where student input is one of the school-based management instruments which also determines the educational process and output later (Mulyani, 2020). With good procedures and distribution of input, schools will easily map out learning models and management. For this reason, the PPDB Zoning system is expected to provide an even distribution of the composition of student input, thereby providing equal opportunities for all levels of society with their various abilities and academic intelligence (Jordan, 2010).

The Malang City Government through the Education Office has set the Zoning PPDB ceiling at 50%. Apart from that, there is a quota for the PPDB affirmation pathway of 15%, the parent/guardian assignment transfer pathway of 5%, and the achievement pathway of 30%. Two state school principals in Malang City explained that the different quota numbers for each entry route make it easier and more supportive for this Zoning PPDB. Where prospective students who have good academic abilities are given priority to enter through the achievement route, so that optimization occurs for other prospective students who are within the furthest radius can still enter through the zoning route (Wendler et al., 2012). Likewise, the affirmation route can be used by prospective students with certain conditions and prospective students in blind spot areas or areas that do not have schools.

In line with the implementation of the PPDB Zoning system in Ponorogo Regency, where the radius of the zoning system for schools is 9-10 kilometers from schools in one sub-district. For sub-districts that do not have state schools, especially at the state senior high school (SMA) level, as is the case in Sawoo, Pudak, Ngebel, Mlarak and Bedegan sub-districts, the school and the Education Office coordinate regarding the zoning radius of each school. This means that schools in sub-districts with a number of eligible state high school schools propose to the Education Office regarding radius rules and which areas can be included in the school's zoning (Roblee, 2017). Below is a brief map of the distribution of the number of state schools spread across all sub-districts in Ponorogo Regency:

**Table 2. Number of elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools distribution in Ponorogo Regency**

Subdistrict	Number of elementary schools	Number of junior high schools	Number of high schools	Subdistrict	Number of elementary schools	Number of junior high schools	Number of high schools
Sukorejo	32	2	0	Ponorogo	25	6	2
Sooko	20	2	1	Ngrayun	48	7	1
Slahun	36	3	1	Ngebel	17	3	0
Siman	19	1	1	Mlarak	23	1	0
Sawoo	39	5	0	Kauman	23	2	1
Sampung	31	3	1	Jetis	19	2	1
Sambit	23	3	1	Jenangan	32	2	1
Pulung	37	3	1	Jambon	21	2	1
Pudak	8	1	0	Bungkal	26	2	1
Ponorogo	25	6	2	Balong	27	2	1
Badegan	20	2	0	Babadan	28	2	1

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2023

The criteria for implementing public service policies are examined from policy standards and targets, resources, characteristics of implementing organizations, communication between implementing organizations and activists, attitudes of implementers, and the economic, social and political environment (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975; Aarons et al., 2011).

### Service Standards and Targets

Several schools in implementing this zoning policy still refer to Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 1 of 2021 which is then combined with regional government regulations, both Regency/City. By combining these two regulations, the implementation of PPDB remains on the right track, both from a managerial perspective, mapping quota numbers, and committee supervision of the new student registration process. The school also formed a committee to implement the admission of new students with this zoning system policy (Gasella & Damayanti, 2020). With good cooperation from the service committee and school, the implementation of this zoning system policy can run well.

The service target in implementing the PPDB Zoning system is to improve and equalize access and quality of educational services (Meirinawati et al., 2023). Detailed technical standards for educational services are contained in Minister of Education and Culture Regulation number 32 of 2018. These technical standards are indicators or minimum standards for educational services. The principles of educational service standards in Article 3 of Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 32 of 2018, namely based on suitability of

authority; availability; affordability; sustainability; measurability; and target accuracy. PPDB with the Zoning System is considered appropriate and in accordance with the principles of affordability and measurability. Standards in service are also defined as certainty of a minimum level of service (Hermawan, 2023). This means that in implementing the PPDB zoning system there are minimum standards that must be served by schools and the government to the community. This service standard is reflected in the community's affordability in obtaining clear PPDB information on the Zoning system.

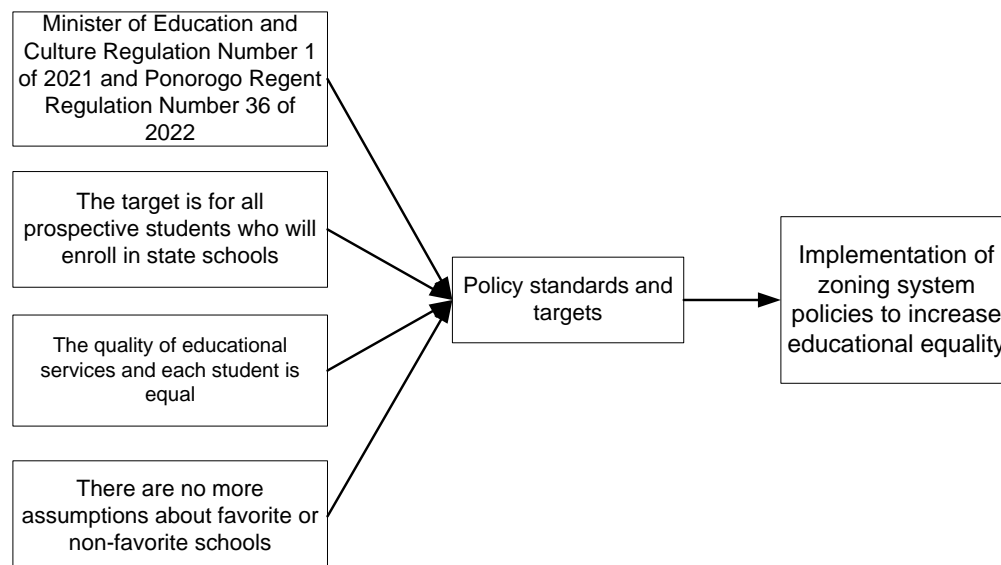
In the Zoning system, of course, each school is asked to formulate the distance or radius for each zone or region (Marini, 2019). In the PPDB Zoning route, it has been regulated in the Regulations and Technical Instructions for the implementation of PPDB in East Java, if applicants/prospective students exceed the school ceiling quota, the acceptance of students is based on the following order:

Distance from the nearest domicile to the destination school

Age of prospective students, where if the distance between the closest domicile and the destination school is the same then the ranking is based on the age of the older prospective student

Time of registration, if the domicile of the destination school and the age of the prospective new student are the same, then they are ranked based on the time of registration.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the standards and targets of the Zoning system services have been met by the existence of statutory regulations at both the ministerial and regional government levels which clearly regulate how the standards for implementing the Zoning System PPDB are so that they are right on target, namely equal distribution of the number of students (Oktafiana et al., 2019). Students receive educational services and access closest to where they live, which means they fulfill the requirements for good educational accessibility (Khadowmi, 2019). This is of great benefit so that children who do not receive social welfare due to the marginalization of certain groups, receive rights and access to quality education. With the technical provisions for priority admission of students to this zoning system, it can break the chain of school dropout rates for marginalized communities around the school. so that marginalized communities can more easily access education and can improve their standard of living. Below is an image of the standard coding analysis chart and policy targets:



**Figure 1.** Standard Coding Analysis Chart and Policy Targets

Source: Primary data processed, 2023

## Resources

The success of an educational service policy implementation is very dependent on the ability and process of utilizing available resources (Saharuddin & Khakim, 2020). In order to support the implementation of Zoning system policies, there are resources that must be optimized to support the success of the program, including:

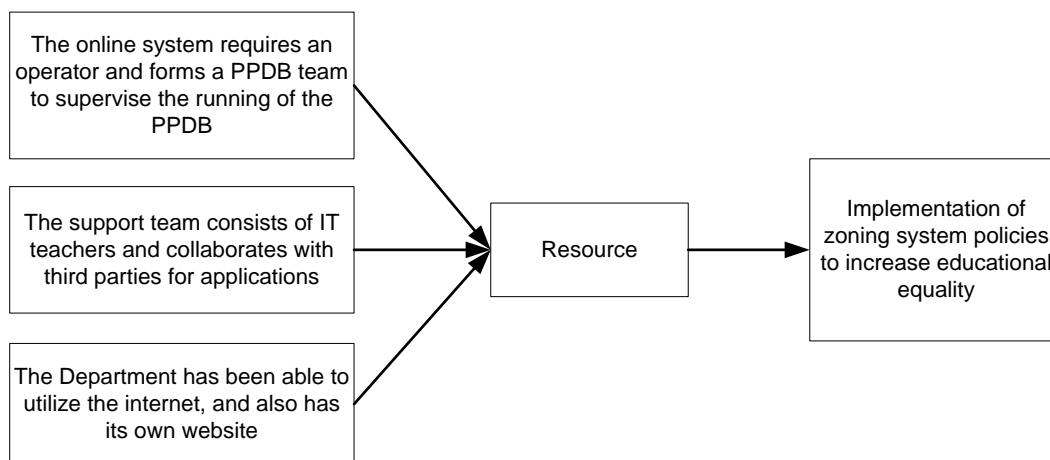
### Human Resources (HR)

The role of HR in the PPDB Zoning system process is important. The human resources who have the most influence in the PPDB Zoning system process are the School Principal, the PPDB Team or Committee and the Education Service. With good cooperation between the HR components, the Zoning PPDB process starting from planning, determining and implementing PPDB in each school can run well. Several schools in Ponorogo Regency

### Technology Resources

Utilization of technological resources will certainly help the process of implementing a program/policy. The PPDB zoning system is implemented using an online or online system. Implementation of the PPDB Zoning system, starting from announcements, scheduling to the selection process, is carried out through the PPDB website which is easily accessible to everyone. So that accountability and transparency in education services is achieved in this PPDB Zoning system. Apart from information technology in the form of websites, 2 research site cities utilize GPS Visualizer technology which is used to determine and ensure the correctness of data on the distance between students' homes and schools.

Resources in the model policy (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975) have an important role in supporting the PPDB policy of the Zoning system to carry out its functions well and effectively (Hartawan & Kosasih, 2023). School principals, the PPDB Committee and the Education Office communicate and work by utilizing technology via the internet network and managing social media effectively so that the wider community can easily obtain accurate information regarding the PPDB Zoning system processes and procedures. Technology is used for the process of determining and checking the actual conditions and distance between students' homes/domiciles and schools in the PPDB zoning system. The following is an illustration of resource coding analysis:



**Figure 2.** Resource Coding Analysis Chart

Source: Primary data processed, 2023

### Characteristics of the Implementing Organization

The success of a policy implementation is influenced by the content of the policy and the implementation environment, the implementation environment consists of organizational implementation (Sos, 2020). Implementation in implementing organizations consists of implementing bodies or members who are fully responsible for implementing policies (Smith, 1973). The implementing organizations in the Zoning system policy program are schools and the City/Regency Education Office. Each of these organizations certainly has

its own role and function. Schools as implementers of the Zoning program are tasked with serving all community needs, both information needs and service needs in accessing education easily (Maier et al., 2017). Schools in Ponorogo Regency and Malang City collect data regarding the condition of the area around each school. Another task is to provide adequate resources to optimize the running of the Zoning PPDB system. The City/Regency Education Department has the task of acting as a facilitator in implementing the PPDB Zoning system. Where the Education Office socializes the Technical Guidelines and prepares applications that support and assist the implementation of the Zoning PPDB. Apart from that, the Education Department functions as a supervisor of the implementation of the Zoning PPDB. The supervisory function plays an important role for the community (Weiss-Dagan et al., 2018), so that it can bridge community voices regarding fraud that occurs in the PPDB Zoning system.

### **Communication Between Organizations and Implementing Activists**

The organizational communication criteria carried out by policy implementers contain three important dimensions, namely the transmission or method of conveying information, the clarity of the information conveyed, and the consistency of the policy subject which is the object of information and communication which must be clear and correct (Waugh, 1991). In the implementation of the PPDB Zoning system, apart from being supported by the Human Resources component, Policy Standards and Targets, the Implementing Organization; Good communication is also needed between the organization and implementing activists. If the implementing organization and activists are bridged by good communication patterns, then the programs contained in the Zoning system policy will be realized according to their goals and objectives. In implementing the Zoning PPDB system, the Education and School Department often communicates with the DPRD to optimize and evaluate the implementation of the Zoning PPDB. Apart from establishing effective communication with the Government, appropriate communication must also be carried out through outreach to the community. The committee carried out outreach to the community regarding the zoning system policy by going directly to each area so that all parents of prospective students could understand. Socialization is carried out through various media, including direct socialization through schools and sub-districts, or regional coordination. Apart from that, socialization is also carried out through online media such as websites or social media which can be accessed by all parents of students.

### **Attitude of Implementers**

The attitude of implementers in a policy has an important impact on the effectiveness of policy implementation. The attitude of implementers is an interpretation of the commitment, continuity and honesty of policy implementers to carry out program obligations properly and correctly (Winarno, 2008). The implementers of the PPDB zoning system policy consist of the PPDB Committee formed by the school, the Education Service, and the School as an educational service provider institution. Schools in both Malang City and Ponorogo Regency carry out the PPDB process while still implementing humanist values, having integrity and providing excellent service to the community. The school forms a committee that can directly serve the community who are experiencing problems and socialize the PPDB Zoning system process well. Schools remain on track with government regulations, both central and regional, so that implementation is carried out on purpose and on target. The attitude of the Malang City and Ponorogo Regency Education Services is also to accommodate all community needs regarding this zoning system.

### **Economic, Social and Political Environment**

Environmental influences influence policy effectiveness. The environment in question is not merely a physical environment but is seen from the socio-political and economic dimensions and influences of a country/region (Dunn, 2015). Every policy is influenced by attitudes or environmental conditions both from an economic, social and political perspective. The influence of the economic, social and political environment, the community's response to the PPDB zoning system policy has given rise to 2 opinions, namely there are people who agree or are pro and there are also people who feel disadvantaged or against this zoning system policy. From the interviews that have been conducted, people who agree understand that the purpose of the zoning system itself is to increase educational equality, as well as to improve the quality of students in each school.

This zoning system policy also eliminates the notion of favorite and non-favorite schools so that the quality of schools also increases. also becomes even. As for the assumptions of people who do not agree or oppose, they give the opinion that if there are students who are outside the desired school zone, they will not get a quota at the desired school. This is not an obstacle but requires deeper socialization carried out by the school. Schools also play a role in equalizing perception and understanding by proving that all schools are favorite schools so that all student input will receive equal education and learning services.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion, it is concluded that the PPDB Zoning system policy effectively addresses educational inequality, particularly the segregation and division between favored and non-favored schools. The PPDB Zoning system policy provides students in underserved areas with the opportunity to register at schools within a predetermined radius, thereby reducing school dropout rates among marginalized communities.

From the perspective of policy implementation, this study examines six variables. Firstly, policy standards and targets aim to equalize the quality of education, making it easier for marginalized communities to access education and improve their standard of living. Secondly, resources, including human resources and technological resources, support school principals, PPDB committees, the Education Office, parents, and the community in optimally implementing the PPDB Zoning system. Thirdly, the characteristics of implementing organizations, namely schools and the Education Department, coordinate to create an effective and humane zoning system. Fourthly, communication between implementing organizations and activists ensures consistent perceptions and activities that facilitate the implementation of PPDB with zoning. Fifthly, the attitude of implementers in schools and the Education Department is committed to providing adequate services for the zoning system policy. Lastly, the economic, social, and political environment influences the success of the PPDB Zoning system policy, as reflected in community opinions.

This study has several limitations. Firstly, it focuses only on the implementation of the PPDB Zoning system within a specific time frame and geographical area, which may not reflect broader national trends. Secondly, the study relies on qualitative data, which may be subject to biases and may not capture the full complexity of the policy's impact. Lastly, the frequency of data collection being limited to once a year may not provide a comprehensive view of the policy's long-term effects.

Future studies should consider a broader geographical scope to determine if the findings are consistent across different regions. Additionally, incorporating quantitative data alongside qualitative insights could provide a more robust analysis of the PPDB Zoning system's impact. Longitudinal studies that track the policy's effects over multiple years would offer a deeper understanding of its long-term implications. Further research could also explore the perspectives of different stakeholders, such as students and parents, to gain a more holistic view of the policy's effectiveness and areas for improvement.

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