

## Analysis of Education Quality Through Zonational Admission, Review of Academic and Non-Academic Aspects

Asep Mudzakir, Siti Zulaikha, Suryadi

Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta, 13220, Indonesia

e-mail: [asepmudzakir@mhs.unj.ac.id](mailto:asepmudzakir@mhs.unj.ac.id), [siti-zulaikha@unj.ac.id](mailto:siti-zulaikha@unj.ac.id)

\* Corresponding Author.

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City through the implementation of the zoning-based New Student Admission (PPDB) policy, focusing on both academic and non-academic aspects. The zoning-based PPDB policy is expected to enhance educational equity by providing fairer opportunities for students to access nearby schools. This research employs a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and relevant document analysis. The research informants included teachers, students, and parents at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City. The findings indicate that the zoning-based PPDB policy has a positive impact on the quality of education in non-academic aspects, particularly in terms of student diversity and the improvement of social skills. However, from an academic perspective, several challenges were identified, such as significant disparities in students' competency levels, which affect the teaching and learning process in the classroom. Additionally, this policy presents new challenges for teachers in adapting instructional methods to meet the diverse needs of students. Although improvements in non-academic aspects have been observed, overall educational quality still requires adequate policy support and resources to address academic disparities. The findings of this study contribute to the understanding of the impact of the zoning-based PPDB policy on education quality and provide recommendations for improving more comprehensive educational services.

**Keywords:** Education Quality, Zoning-Based PPDB, Educational Equity.

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### Introduction

The New Student Admission or Penerimaan Peserta Didik Baru (PPDB) system based on zoning is a policy aimed at ensuring equitable access to education for all Indonesian citizens, regardless of their socio-economic background. This system is regulated under the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 51 of 2018, which mandates that students attend schools located near their place of residence. The policy seeks to reduce disparities in educational quality between "favorite" schools and other public schools (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018). The zoning system is designed to

provide more equitable educational opportunities and to enhance the overall quality of education across different regions (Herawati, 2020).

However, despite the noble objectives of this policy, its implementation has faced numerous challenges and controversies. A study conducted by Setiawan (2020) revealed that the zoning policy has affected the diversity of students' academic backgrounds within schools, creating new challenges for teachers in adapting their teaching methods. Significant differences in academic abilities within a single classroom can hinder the achievement of equitable academic performance, particularly in schools that were previously recognized for their academic excellence. Teachers are required to address the diverse capabilities of students and adjust their instructional approaches accordingly (Mardiana, 2019).

On the other hand, the diversity of social backgrounds within a school has also shown positive effects on non-academic aspects, such as social skills, collaboration, and empathy among students. According to Lestari (2021), students in schools with greater social diversity tend to develop better social skills, as they learn to adapt and cooperate with peers from different backgrounds. Extracurricular activities, for instance, serve as an important medium for fostering social skills and promoting community engagement among students, thereby supporting their overall character development (Yusuf, 2019).

In addition to its positive impacts, concerns have also been raised regarding the equitable distribution of school resources, particularly in regions that still lack adequate facilities and qualified teaching staff. Rizal and Putri (2020) noted that the effort to equalize access to education through the zoning system has not been fully supported by an even distribution of facilities, resulting in persistent variations in the quality of educational services among schools. These challenges affect schools' ability to meet uniform educational standards across different areas.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the impact of the PPDB zoning policy on the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City by examining two main aspects: academic and non-academic. This study is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how the zoning policy contributes to promoting educational equity, as well as the challenges encountered in its implementation, thus serving as a foundation for improving future educational policies.

## Literature Review

### 1. The PPDB Zoning Policy

The PPDB zoning policy in Indonesia was introduced as an effort to promote equitable access to education for all social groups. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture No. 51 of 2018, the zoning policy aims to provide equal opportunities for students to enroll in nearby schools without being hindered by their social or economic status. A study by Herawati (2020) in the *Journal of Educational Policy and Administration* indicates that the policy was designed to minimize disparities in educational access, which had previously been predominantly enjoyed by so-called "favorite" schools. Thus, the zoning policy is expected to reduce educational inequality between schools and across regions.

The primary objective of this policy is to achieve equity across all schools, as described in the study by Rahayu and Anwar (2019) in the *Journal of Education and Policy*. However, its implementation in the field has not always proceeded smoothly. Common challenges include the lack of public awareness regarding the policy and the limited infrastructure in certain regions, both of which hinder

its effective execution. These limitations affect the overall effectiveness of the zoning policy, preventing the full realization of the intended educational equity.

The impact of zoning on the education system has been varied. According to research by Wahyuni (2021) in the Journal of Educational Management, the policy has had a positive effect by increasing classroom heterogeneity. Students from diverse socio-economic and academic backgrounds now learn together, which is expected to enrich their social experiences. On the other hand, zoning has also presented challenges for teachers, who must adapt their teaching methods to accommodate a wide range of academic abilities among students. One negative impact observed is the decline in the average academic performance of schools previously labeled as "excellent," due to significant disparities in students' academic capabilities. This indicates that while the zoning policy aims to promote equity, greater attention must be given to its implementation challenges and its impact on educational quality.

## 2. Quality of Education

The quality of education can be defined as the attainment of educational standards that encompass key elements such as inputs, processes, and learning outcomes. Beeby (1966), in *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries*, asserted that educational quality should not be assessed solely based on final outcomes or academic achievements, but also on the entire educational process and the supporting factors involved. Sugiyono (2018), in the Journal of Education, further emphasized that quality education represents a balance between academic and non-academic aspects, both of which play crucial roles in shaping students' character and personality development. This highlights that quality education refers not only to academic success but also to the ability of students to grow as individuals with strong character and social skills.

Indicators of educational quality encompass various aspects that can be measured through multiple methods. Firdaus (2020), in the Journal of Educational Evaluation, proposed that important indicators for assessing educational quality include exam results, students' cognitive abilities, and their social and emotional development. In addition to academic factors, Firdaus also noted that student participation in extracurricular activities serves as a significant indicator of educational success in fostering student personality development. Participation in non-academic activities helps students cultivate skills such as teamwork, leadership, and responsibility, which are not always reflected in academic results.

The zoning policy also influences educational quality by expanding opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to access equitable education. According to Hidayat and Saputra (2021) in the Journal of Education and Public Policy, the zoning system offers students from various socio-economic environments the opportunity to attend institutions that may have previously been inaccessible to them. Nevertheless, the policy faces challenges related to the persistent inequality in school facilities and infrastructure. This gap results in varying educational quality depending on the condition and resources of each school. These findings indicate that although the zoning policy aims to promote educational equity, challenges in providing adequate facilities remain significant obstacles to achieving equal educational quality across all schools.

### 3. Academic Aspects in Secondary education

The academic aspect of secondary education has become a major focus in the implementation of the zoning policy, given its impact on student achievement and the learning process. According to research conducted by Setiawan (2020) in the Journal of Secondary Education, the zoning policy has led to varying levels of academic ability within individual classrooms. This diversity in students' academic backgrounds presents challenges for teachers during the learning process, as they must adapt their teaching methods to address the needs of both high-achieving and lower-achieving students. Consequently, teachers are required to employ more flexible and responsive teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of their students.

To address the wide range of academic abilities within classrooms, differentiated instruction strategies have become increasingly important. Mardiana (2019), in the Journal of Inclusive Learning, emphasized that differentiation approaches are crucial for accommodating students' varying ability levels. This approach allows teachers to tailor their teaching methods more adaptively, enabling each student to learn according to their capacity. For instance, teachers may provide more advanced material for higher-achieving students while offering additional support for those who require more intensive assistance. Through these strategies, it is expected that the learning process can proceed more effectively, even in classrooms with significant differences in academic ability.

Although zoning policies have successfully increased access to education for a broader range of students, challenges in improving academic achievement persist. Pratama and Kurniawan (2018), in the Journal of Teaching and Education, noted that one of the main obstacles to enhancing academic achievement is the imbalance in school facilities and students' learning motivation. While zoning expands opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to access education, it does not automatically guarantee an improvement in academic performance. Disparities in school resources within the same region such as inadequate educational materials and insufficient infrastructure hinder the learning process and the equitable achievement of academic outcomes. Therefore, sufficient infrastructure and resources are crucial to ensuring that the zoning policy not only promotes equal access but also guarantees that the quality of education received by students is truly equitable across all schools.

### 4. Non-Academic Aspects in Secondary Education

Non-academic aspects in secondary education play a crucial role in shaping students' character and developing their social skills. According to Hasan (2017) in the Journal of Educational Psychology, education aims not only to enhance academic abilities but also to mold students into individuals with integrity, strong character, and the ability to collaborate with others. Through non-academic activities, such as extracurricular programs and character development initiatives, students learn the social skills necessary for everyday life and to contribute positively to their social environment. The development of these non-academic aspects becomes an essential element in forming well-rounded students who are prepared to face future challenges.

The zoning policy also positively impacts non-academic aspects by fostering social diversity within classrooms. Lestari (2021) in the Journal of Sociology of Education found that zoning encourages interaction among students from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds, which in turn enhances their social skills. This diversity in the classroom enables students to learn to adapt to one another, appreciate differences, and build cooperation. Thus, zoning not only promotes equal access

to education but also creates a socially rich learning environment that benefits the development of students' social skills and openness.

Furthermore, extracurricular activities in schools play an important role in supporting students' personal development outside of academics. Yusuf (2019) in the Journal of Self-Development stated that extracurricular activities help students develop leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Zoning allows more students from diverse backgrounds to participate in extracurricular activities that were previously more accessible to those in "prestigious" schools. With zoning, students' access to these activities becomes more equitable, enabling more students to benefit from non-academic experiences that support character development and interpersonal skills. Overall, zoning plays a significant role in opening opportunities for students to grow both academically and non-academically, creating an inclusive school environment that supports comprehensive personal development for all students.

## 5. Theory of Equal Access to Education

The theory of equal access to education emphasizes the importance of efforts to reduce disparities in education. Coleman (1966) in Equality of Educational Opportunity states that equal access to education is key to providing all students with equal opportunities, regardless of their social or economic background. This theory is supported by Ainley (2019) in the International Journal of Education, who highlights that equal access is a fundamental step in creating a fair educational system. In this context, the zoning policy aims to reduce educational gaps by directing students to attend institutions close to their homes. This is expected to reduce disparities between "prestigious" schools and schools in less developed areas.

However, despite the fact that zoning has helped increase access, disparities in education quality still exist, particularly between urban and rural schools. Rizal and Putri (2020) in the Journal of Education Policy mention that the difference in school quality remains a significant challenge in efforts to achieve equity. Zoning plays a role in expanding educational opportunities for students in various regions, but this step still requires further support so that every school can meet an equal standard of quality. Schools in urban areas generally have more comprehensive facilities and more experienced teachers compared to those in rural areas, which ultimately creates significant differences in learning outcomes.

The main challenge in achieving equitable access to education is not only related to the zoning policy itself but also to the distribution of educational resources. Kurniawan (2021) in the Journal of Educational Challenges notes that although zoning helps improve access, schools with limited resources still face difficulties in providing quality education services. Schools with limited facilities often cannot meet optimal educational standards, particularly in terms of the availability of laboratories, libraries, and other learning aids. This shows that equal access cannot be achieved solely through the zoning policy but also requires serious attention to the distribution of resources so that every school has adequate facilities. Therefore, in order for equal access to truly improve the overall quality of education, continuous efforts are needed to provide equal resources across all schools.

## 6. Theory of Social Justice in Education

The theory of social justice in education emphasizes the importance of providing equal access to education for all individuals as a fundamental right that must be respected and guaranteed. Rawls (1971) in *A Theory of Justice* states that fair access to education is a crucial component of social justice, where every individual, regardless of their social or economic background, has the right to equal opportunities in education. This concept is particularly relevant in the context of the zoning policy for new student admissions (PPDB), which, according to Sudirman (2019) in the *Journal of Social and Education*, represents a tangible implementation of social justice in education. Zoning directs students to attend the closest schools, thus providing more equal opportunities for students in various regions to access quality education.

Beyond access to education, social justice also relates to the distribution of school resources. Ratri and Nugraha (2020) in the *Journal of Educational Management* emphasize that social justice in education can only be achieved if each school has adequate and equal resources. While zoning aims to distribute students more evenly across schools in various regions, in order for social justice to be fully realized, the distribution of resources such as learning facilities, educators, and other supporting infrastructure must also be carefully considered. Schools located in underdeveloped areas often have more limited facilities compared to schools in urban areas, which means that students attending these schools may not receive the same learning experience as those in schools with more comprehensive facilities.

Therefore, although the zoning policy has helped in equalizing access, achieving true social justice in education still requires more equitable distribution of facilities and infrastructure. With fair distribution, every school, regardless of its location, will be able to provide quality educational services to all students, supporting the creation of broader social justice within the educational system.

## 7. Social and Psychological Impacts of the Zoning Policy on Students

The zoning policy in education not only impacts academic aspects but also has psychological effects on students who must adjust to a new school environment. According to research by Hidayati (2021) in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, the transition of students to new schools through the zoning policy can cause adaptation stress, especially for those who were previously accustomed to their old environment. This adaptation process involves adjusting to new friends, teachers, and school culture, which may differ from what they are used to. However, despite the pressure of adapting, many students also report an improvement in their social skills as a result of interactions with new friends from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. This enriches their experiences and teaches them communication and empathy skills that are useful in everyday life.

Additionally, the diversity of backgrounds among students resulting from the zoning policy also influences their social identity and learning motivation. Nursalim (2018) in the *Journal of Multicultural Education* states that this diversity provides students with the opportunity to learn to accept differences and improve their cross-cultural communication skills. With friends from different backgrounds, students are exposed to a broader and more complex perspective, which helps them in forming a more inclusive and tolerant social identity. Furthermore, this diversity can also increase their motivation to learn, as students are motivated to engage in healthy competition and learn together with peers who have different viewpoints and values.



Overall, the zoning policy has complex psychological impacts on students, both in terms of adaptation and the development of their social identity and learning motivation. Although there are initial challenges in adjustment, interactions with diverse peers provide valuable experiences and support the development of social skills and cross-cultural understanding.

### Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because it is suitable for exploring in-depth the impact of the zoning system policy (PPDB zonasi) on the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City, particularly in academic and non-academic aspects. By using a case study, the researcher can understand the specific context of the school and explore the experiences and perspectives of informants regarding the implemented zoning policy (Creswell, 2014).

The research location is SMA Negeri 1 Serang City. This school was selected because it is one of the secondary schools in the area that implements the zoning policy, and it has a diverse student population in terms of both academic and socio-economic backgrounds. As a representative public school, SMA Negeri 1 Serang City is an ideal location to examine how the zoning policy impacts the quality of education across various aspects.

The participants in this study include various stakeholders involved directly in the implementation and impact of the zoning policy at the school: teachers, students, parents, and the school principal. Teachers, as participants, are expected to provide information about the challenges in the teaching process in a heterogeneous classroom and the impact of zoning on the teaching methods they apply. Students will provide perspectives on their experiences related to the diversity of classmates, the development of social skills, and academic achievement. Parents are involved to understand their views on the zoning system and its impact on the quality of their children's education. Meanwhile, the principal is selected as an informant to provide insights into the school's internal policies in accommodating the zoning system. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on their relevance to the issue being studied and their ability to provide in-depth information on the topic (Patton, 2015).

Data for this study was collected through several methods, including in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, students, parents, and the principal to explore their perceptions, experiences, and views regarding the zoning policy and its impact on academic and non-academic aspects. Semi-structured interviews were chosen so that the researcher could explore information in depth while maintaining flexibility in the questions (Kvale, 2007). Observations were conducted during several class sessions and extracurricular activities to directly observe the interactions among students from diverse backgrounds, focusing on the social dynamics in the classroom and student involvement in non-academic activities. Additionally, documentation related to school policies, student profiles, academic achievement data, and student participation in non-academic activities was analyzed to complement the data obtained from interviews and observations. This documentation serves as secondary data that can strengthen the primary findings of the study (Bowen, 2009).

Data analysis was performed using thematic analysis techniques (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis steps included initial coding, where data from interviews, observations, and documentation were coded to identify emerging initial themes. Subsequently, key themes related to the quality of

education in academic and non-academic aspects, challenges in implementing zoning, and the social impact of the policy were identified and grouped. Afterward, the grouped data were interpreted to provide an in-depth understanding of the impact of zoning on the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City. This analysis process was carried out iteratively, continually revising and re-examining the themes to ensure that the analysis accurately and comprehensively reflected the data.

To ensure data validity, this study uses data triangulation techniques, which involve gathering information from various sources such as teachers, students, parents, and the school principal to obtain diverse perspectives on the zoning policy (Patton, 2015). Additionally, the results of the interviews and observations were confirmed back to participants through a member-checking method to ensure the accuracy and alignment of the data with their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

This study also adheres to the principles of research ethics. Each participant was provided with clear information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study and the assurance of data confidentiality. Participants were given the freedom to stop or withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Through this research methodology, it is hoped that a comprehensive picture of the impact of the PPDB zoning policy on the quality of education at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City, particularly in academic and non-academic aspects, can be obtained.

## Results

The zoning policy at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City, based on interviews, observations, and documentation, has had a significant impact on the quality of education, particularly in terms of student distribution, diversity of backgrounds, and academic achievement. One of its impacts is a more even distribution of students from various areas, making classrooms more heterogeneous both socially and culturally. Teachers stated that this diversity adds dynamics to the classroom and brings challenges in accommodating the needs of each student. Students also felt this change, with many new friends from different regions providing them with new experiences in social interaction. Parents also viewed this diversity positively, as their children could socialize with peers from different backgrounds, enriching their social experiences.

In terms of academic achievement, the zoning policy has led to a greater variation in students' academic abilities. Teachers mentioned that these differences in ability affect the teaching methods used, as they have to adjust their teaching to accommodate different levels of student ability. Students also felt this, as they learned to work better with classmates who have different abilities. To address this, the school developed more flexible teaching methods, such as project-based learning and group discussions, which help students understand the material according to their needs. Parents also noticed a change in the teaching methods, which were more diverse and easier for their children to understand.

Non-academic aspects were also influenced by the zoning policy, particularly in the development of students' social skills. The diversity of classmates had a positive impact on students' ability to collaborate and appreciate differences. Teachers encouraged students to interact more through group , while students found it easier to socialize with peers from different backgrounds. Students' participation in extracurricular activities also increased, especially those related to culture and the arts, due to the new ideas brought by students from various regions. Parents saw their children becoming more involved in these activities, thanks to the new friends and diverse interests.



However, the zoning policy also presents challenges, particularly in terms of equity in facilities and school resources. With the increase in the number of students, facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, and libraries became limited, which affected the comfort of learning. Teachers and the principal agreed that facilities need to be improved to support better education quality. The principal stated that although facilities have improved, there are still challenges in meeting the need for adequate classrooms.

Additionally, zoning also affects the psychological aspects of students, especially in terms of social adaptation in a more heterogeneous environment. Teachers and the principal paid special attention to activities that support students' social integration, so they could feel accepted in the new, more diverse environment more quickly. Students also felt more comfortable socializing with peers from different backgrounds after some time adapting. Tolerance and the development of students' social identities also increased, as this diversity gave them the opportunity to learn to appreciate differences.

Overall, the zoning policy has had a positive impact on the diversity and distribution of students, but it has also raised challenges in classroom management and facilities. Teachers, students, parents, and the principal recognize the need for periodic evaluations of this policy to ensure that the positive impacts can be continually improved, especially in terms of equity in facilities and resources.

### **1. The Impact of Zoning on Education Quality at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City**

Observation results: The PPDB zoning policy at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City significantly affects the distribution of students based on their place of residence, which impacts the diversity of students' backgrounds, both academically and socioeconomically. In line with Herawati's (2020) research, the zoning system allows students from various economic backgrounds and academic abilities to access schools that were previously only available to high-achieving students from distant locations.

Explanation: This increase in diversity has a positive impact on non-academic aspects, particularly in developing students' social skills. However, challenges were also observed in managing heterogeneous classrooms, requiring extra effort from teachers to accommodate the varying learning needs of students. According to Mardiana (2019), teaching in classrooms with diverse academic backgrounds requires a differentiated approach so that each student can develop optimally.

### **2. The Impact of Zoning on Academic Achievement**

Observation results: The implementation of zoning has impacted students' academic achievement due to the variation in ability levels within a single class, which often results in a decrease in the average academic performance compared to before. Setiawan (2020) shows that significant differences in academic ability can hinder the achievement of uniform academic standards in the class. At SMA Negeri 1 Serang City, teachers reported difficulties in aligning the curriculum to suit the academic abilities of all students.

Explanation: This challenge was also highlighted by Pratama and Kurniawan (2018), who emphasized that the diversity of abilities within the class requires teachers to develop more flexible and varied methods. Zoning increases heterogeneity, but without adjustments in teaching methods and support from resources, students' academic quality becomes uneven and requires special attention from the school and government policies.

### 3. Impact on Non-Academic Aspects: Social Skills and Collaboration

Observation results: Zoning has made a positive contribution to the development of non-academic skills, particularly social skills and collaboration among students. The diversity of students' backgrounds creates a rich environment for social interaction, enabling students to learn to understand and collaborate with each other. These findings align with Lestari's (2021) research, which found that social diversity through zoning facilitates better social skills among students, including adaptability and empathy.

Explanation: Extracurricular activities at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City have also seen an increase in participation, as more students from various regions now have access to join these activities. Yusuf (2019) emphasized that extracurricular activities support the development of students' character and social skills. Therefore, the zoning policy plays a crucial role in opening opportunities for students to engage in personal development in a more comprehensive manner.

### 4. Challenges in the Equal Distribution of Resources and School Facilities

Observation results: Although zoning has successfully improved students' access to nearby schools, there are still gaps in resource distribution across schools. SMA Negeri 1 Serang City faces limitations in adequate learning facilities to accommodate the increasing number of students. According to Rizal and Putri (2020), educational equity not only requires an even distribution of students but must also be supported by the availability of balanced facilities and infrastructure in each school.

Explanation: This study found that without adequate support in terms of facilities, it is difficult for schools to provide high-quality educational services, both academically and non-academically. Kurniawan's (2021) research emphasized that equitable policies, such as zoning, must be balanced with improvements in resources to ensure that education quality is maintained and meets the needs of all students.

### 5. Psychological Impact and Social Identity of Students

Observation results: Zoning has an impact on students' psychology, particularly in terms of social adaptation in a heterogeneous school environment. This change brings positive effects in expanding social identity and enhancing tolerance among students, although some students initially experience difficulties in adapting. Hidayati (2021) revealed that interactions with peers from diverse backgrounds enhance students' social adaptation skills.

Explanation: This finding is also supported by Nursalim (2018), who stated that diversity in the school environment influences students' motivation to learn and fosters mutual respect among them. At SMA Negeri 1 Serang City, students learn to accept differences and improve their cross-cultural communication skills, which are an important part of inclusive education.

## Discussions

SMAN 1 Serang City has successfully implemented the national curriculum. Based on observations, teachers demonstrate a strong command of subject matter and have begun to utilize technology in the learning process. However, interviews with teachers indicate that continuous professional development is still highly necessary to enhance their teaching competence. On the other

hand, students perceive the learning process as effective but express a desire for more innovative and engaging teaching methods.

According to Prastowo (2018), a relevant curriculum must adapt to students' needs, including the integration of technology as a core component. He emphasizes that technology-based learning can broaden access to learning resources and enhance students' ability to apply technology in solving real-world problems. In alignment with this, Sumarni (2019) argues that the implementation of innovative instructional methods, such as Project-Based Learning (PjBL), can significantly improve students' critical and collaborative thinking skills, preparing them to better navigate global challenges.

The academic services provided at SMAN 1 Kota Serang are considered highly adequate. One of the main indicators is the presence of a well-equipped library that effectively supports students' academic needs. The library offers a wide collection of books, journals, and access to digital resources, enabling students to engage in research and self-development activities. Moreover, the existence of well-maintained computer and science laboratories further strengthens the quality of teaching and learning at the school. According to Prof. Dr. Anwar Syahrir, an education expert from the Indonesia University of Education, "High-quality academic facilities are the foundation for creating a conducive learning environment and supporting students' academic success."

Widyastono (2020), in his study *"The Role of Academic and Non-Academic Services in Student Development,"* underscores the importance of holistic academic and non-academic services in shaping an educational environment that fosters both character and skill development. He emphasizes that the integration of academic and non-academic components, coupled with effective communication between schools and parents, is essential in producing students who are not only intellectually competent but also possess strong character and sound social skills.

Dr. Andi Rahmat, an education expert from the State University of Jakarta, asserts that "The zoning policy has significant potential to reduce disparities in access to education. By distributing students evenly based on geographic location, schools can better represent the diversity of their surrounding communities." He further notes that this diversity not only enriches the learning experience but also promotes tolerance and intercultural understanding.

The zoning policy also plays a significant role in creating a more inclusive learning environment at SMAN 1 Kota Serang. With students coming from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, the school strives to foster a socially and academically inclusive atmosphere. Students feel that the policy provides equitable opportunities to learn and interact with peers from various environments, thereby enriching their overall educational experience.

Nevertheless, one of the major challenges encountered in implementing the zoning policy is the management of heterogeneous classrooms. Classes composed of students from a wide range of social, economic, and academic backgrounds require more flexible and differentiated instructional strategies. The school principal noted that teachers must be equipped with specialized training to effectively address classroom diversity, as well as pedagogical methods tailored to meet varied learning needs.

### Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that the PPDB zoning policy has a positive impact on the quality of education, particularly in non-academic aspects. This positive impact is evident in the development of students' social skills and their increased participation in extracurricular activities. However, in academic aspects, the zoning policy presents several challenges, particularly related to aligning the

diverse abilities of students within a single class and the limited school facilities available. These challenges highlight the importance of equitable distribution of educational resources across all schools and the adjustment of teaching methods to accommodate the varying abilities of students. This study confirms that the equitable distribution of resources and adaptive teaching strategies are essential to ensure more equal educational quality for all students, regardless of their background or place of residence. These findings are expected to serve as a strong foundation for improving zoning policies in the future and for the ongoing enhancement of educational services at SMA Negeri 1 Serang City.

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