

# The Implementation of School Zonation System in Yogyakarta

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**Abstract** -The Yogyakarta Special Province has implemented school zonation system for student's school admission. The policy has raised various responses from communities that need to be well studied to find best inputs upon impacts of such a policy. This study aims at revealing the responses of the Yogyakarta people on the implementation of the school zonation system and investigating the strength and weakness of such an implementation. The researchers interview 10 teachers, 10 school principals, and 10 parents that the researchers conveniently met them. In addition, the researchers also administer document analyses to triangulate the data. The findings indicated that communities showed varied responses both positive and negative ones. The positive responses revealed that excitement of the parents on the distance between their home and schools, yet they were also complaint on their failure to send their children to their intended school. The findings also disclosed some strength and weakness of the programs based on the perception of participants of this study.

**Keywords:** school zonation systems, school zonation implementation, impacts of school zonation.

## Introduction

Yogyakarta has been famous as a student city in Indonesia (Bernas, 2018; Ramdhani, Istiqomah, & Ardiyanti, 2012). Such a name raises not accidentally, yet it possesses a historical background of its significant roles in the process of Indonesian state establishment (Kahin, 2000). The awareness of Yogyakarta leader in the education field is excellent as indicated by the establishment of the first university in Indonesian in 1946, one year after Indonesian declared its independence, is called Universitas Gajah Mada (Ramdhani et al., 2012).

Various schools that adopted the modern educational system also have been founded in Yogyakarta, *Muhammadiyah School*, *Tanam Siswa* and *Sarekat Islam School*. Muhammadiyah school was established by Kyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan in 1918 in Kauman Yogyakarta which the school was named previously Qismul Arqa, which is currently named *Madrasah Mu'allimin Muhammadiyah* (Aulia, 2019). *Taman Siswa* was established by Ki Hajar Dewantoro, the first Indonesian Education Minister in 1922 while *Sarekat Islam* school was initiated by HOS Cokroaminto that was founded in 1912 as the oldest school in Yogyakarta (Ramdhani et al., 2012)

In current educational development, Yogyakarta still exposes its essential position in Indonesia educational domain. It is signified by the existence of about 132 higher education institutions that provide educational services for students from

all over Indonesia. Both public and private universities in Yogyakarta are ranked in the first class in terms of their quality based on Indonesian accreditation standards (Ramdhani et al., 2012). The students who study in Yogyakarta also derive from almost all Indonesian regions, even a lot from overseas. Such conditions make Yogyakarta deserved named as a student city.

Currently, Yogyakarta has just implemented a new policy dealing with the educational system, school zonation, or school zoning. The policy deals with the process of students' enrolment is determined based on the distance between the school and students' home (Mandic et al., 2018; Pöder, Lauri, & Veski, 2017). The policy puts students, parents, and other school stakeholders to have limited choices to register to certain schools that trigger numerous responses from the people of Yogyakarta. This paper aims to reveal the responses of Yogyakarta people towards the policy that is newly imposed.

## Literature Review

### *School zonation in Indonesia*

School zonation is zoning students to enroll in a particular school that is closed to their house. The term school zonation is used interchangeably with school zoning. These two terms are commonly utilized to represent the circumstance where students from certain areas are only admitted applying to be students their zoning regions. To implement school zoning in Indonesia, all local government shall refer to Indonesian Ministry Regulation no 17, 2017. This regulation has regulated that 90 % students of one school must derive from students who become indigenous inhabitants in zonation areas. Additional 10 percent quota is to accommodate special high-achiever students as big as 5 percent and to assist students who should follow their parents who move from one place to another due to the working demand or due to natural disasters 5 percent. As a piece of evidence that students live in an intended zonation, they should show bring their *Kartu Keluarga* (Family Registry Document) that is newly issued at most six months before school admission processes.

Indonesian Ministry Regulation No. 17, 2017 mentions that the area of zonation system for the schools is legalized by the local government. This considers the local governments know better the available capacity of the schools to accommodate students in their administration. The regulation also counts the border condition between one zone and another zone that may demand special treatment. For this situation, the local

government shall sign an agreement to solve such kind of issues.

Of the total registered students in one school, 20 percent of students from economically misfortune families shall be accommodated in Senior High School. The local government shall issue a document to acknowledge their family economic condition in an inferior condition. The absence of such document can end with the punishment of being dismissed from school upon an evaluation conducted by the school committee, school council, and the local government based on the existing regulation. As an exception, the school zonation system is not imposed for vocational school (Dikdasmen, 2018; Permendikbud no. 17, 2017).

### ***Impacts of school zonation system***

Various studies all over the world have revealed the impacts of school zonation system in society. The first impact of zonation is school choice mitigation (Fack & Grenet, 2007). The parents are not willing to sacrifice their students' quality education. Unable to choose their assumed high-qualified public schools, parents tend to choose an alternative to high-quality private schools. They mitigate their choice from the public to better quality private schools. A study in Paris mentions that strict zoning system that did not apply to private schools trigger parents to send their students to such schools (Fack & Grenet, 2007). The current choices were whether to send their children to reputable private school inside the zone or to enroll to good public school outside the zone with any kinds of consequences by moving their settlement nearby the targeted school.

Secondly, school zoning may affect housing prices (Fack & Grenet, 2007; Mandic et al., 2017, 2018; Rehm & Filippova, 2008; Thrupp, 2007). A research conducted in New Zealand revealed that the middle class always obtain benefits with whatever school educational policies. They might move to a new place by buying new houses to stay to anticipate their children's educational advantage (Broccolichi & Zanten, 2000; Mandic et al., 2017; Strauss, 2012; Thrupp, 2007). The movement was because they meet inequality opportunities for individuals to choose further education

Thirdly, school zoning poses inequality that increases parental protests due they considered unfairness (Pöder et al., 2017). Two arguments appeared in term of the meaning of educational equity. This can mean as equal outcomes or equal opportunities (Pöder et al., 2017, p. 2). To have a school with similar learning outcomes is not related to the nature of the background of the parents; instead, it is determined by the school level. The works of the school stakeholders mainly construct learning outcomes of a school. For example, Finland schools possess broad autonomy to work with their curriculum, and they hey produce better learning outcomes (Pöder et al., 2017). A policy maker in New Zealand removed the school zoning policy to retain individual equality. The policy removal reshapes the students' choice toward their further education, and studies mention that a lot of students prefer to choose nearby schools as their sites to study (Mandic et al., 2017, 2018). Without zoning system, the majority of

students prefer to study in schools that are close to their residence.

Fifthly, school zoning can motivate students to achieve higher. A study in the District of Columbia in the United States revealed that students who were originated from a low-income family could perform better academically in the middle-class school. Parents who send their children most likely motivated their children to achieve higher (Chingos, Whitehurst, & Gallaher, 2015; Strauss, 2012).

Sixthly, school zoning affects a load of traffic to schools. The short distances between school and students' residence increase the students' walking rates and enhance the students' cycling habits. The increase takes place since the distance is affordable for students to undertake such activities (Black, Collins, & Snell, 2001; Mandic et al., 2017, 2018). The works of literature have denoted such kind of impacts of school zonation or school zoning. As a student city with its own unique characteristics, Yogyakarta as a special province shall face its own issues in the implementation of this policy.

### ***School zonation system in Yogyakarta***

The regulation No 1070, 2019 issued by the head of Education, Youth, and Sports Office, Yogyakarta special province on Technical Guidance on School Admission Online mentions zonation in Yogyakarta Special Province. The zonation is differentiated into 4 zones: Zone 1, Zone 2, Zone 3 and Zone 4. Zone 1 is in the village level as listed in the attachment 2 of the regulation. Zone 2 constitutes villages in the nearby of Zone 1, yet they are not included in the Zone 1. Zone 3 covers the villages in the same regency, but they are not covered by Zone 1 and Zone 2. Zone 4 comprises villages outside Yogyakarta Special Province with exceptions of villages in the Yogyakarta borders under agreement with the Central Java Local Government.

School enrolment in Yogyakarta consists of three ways: regular, sports special class, and art school. Regular enrolment is carried out through zonation line, academic achievement, and parental mobility. Enrolment through zonation line covers 90 percent of total enrollment in which this number includes students from low-socioeconomic status family as well as students with disabilities registering in inclusive schools. Enrolment through this line imposes the four-zonation systems, Zone 1 to Zone 4, from public senior high schools, and apply two zonation systems, Zone 1 and Zone 2, from vocational schools. Students from all zones can apply for senior high schools with their terms and conditions while for vocational schools, only students from Zone 1 and Zone 2 where the school is located can apply.

Regular enrolment also includes selection through academic achievement. The quota for this type of enrolment is five percent. This five percent quota is dedicated for students who can obtain at least 320 points of their final examination scores. For public senior high schools, Only students from Zone 1 can take this enrolment line, and for vocational schools, students from Zone 1 and Zone 2 possess the right to apply excluding students from zone 3 and 4.

The Yogyakarta Special Province government accommodates parental mobility due to working assignment or others in the school enrolment processes. This line accommodates 5 percent at most of the total enrolment capacity. Parental mobility covers mobility from outside Yogyakarta moving into Yogyakarta and mobility from one regency to another within Yogyakarta Special Province. The mobility shall provide evidence in the form of Family Card or *Kartu Keluarga*. Upon working assignment mobility, parents shall prove as well by including a letter of assignment from the office where they work. Failure to fulfill such requirement will end up at dropping the students out of the schools (Dinas Pendidikan Pemuda dan Olahraga DIY, 2019).

Besides the regular enrolment methods above, there are still two other methods: Sports special class, and Arts Schools. Sports special class is intended for students who possess talent and interests in sports. Students who enroll in this class shall indicate their achievement in sports up to certain levels based on the attachment of the regulation (Dinas Pendidikan Pemuda dan Olahraga DIY, 2019). Art schools refer to three schools namely SMKN 1 Kasihan (Public Vocational High School 1 Kasihan), SMKN 2 Kasihan (Public Vocational High School 2 Kasihan), and SMKN 3 Kasihan (Public Vocational High School 3 Kasihan). Students with special interest and talent in arts can apply for these special art vocational schools.

### Methodology

This study is a qualitative study. The data of this study were obtained from interviews. The researchers interviewed 10 teachers, 10 school principals, and 10 parents that the researchers conveniently met them. In addition, the researchers administer document analyses to triangulate the data from online local newspapers namely *Kedaulatan Rakyat Online* with the website address <https://krjogja.com> and *Radar Jogja, Jawa Post Online* with online address <https://radarjogja.jawapos.com>. The consideration of choosing the two local newspaper was mainly feasibility reason. Both newspapers were easily accessed. The researchers used the keyword “zonasi” to search the data. The researchers got 73 articles from *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, and after screening, there were 23 related articles. The results of keyword searching in *Radar Jogja* revealed 23 articles, and after screening them, there were only 19 articles that were related to school zoning in Yogyakarta. The data analyses were conducted using thematic analyses through some steps of open, axial and selective coding. To address the participants and document analyses, the researchers used terms parent 1 up to parent 10 to represent parents. Similarly, they used term teacher 1 up to teacher 10, and used Principal 1 up to Principal 10 to represent school principals. They utilize terms Newspaper 1 for *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, and used term Newspaper 2 for *Radar Jogja, Jawa Pos*.

### Findings and discussion

Thematic analyses revealed several findings that indicate pro and against the school zoning policies. The findings that revealed pro with this policy among others dealing with safety, distance, and fair chance

### Safety.

Safety becomes the major findings that parents, teachers, and school principals agree. Some parents consider that because the zone is close distance, they consider that their children were easily monitored as seen in the following excerpts:

... I don't know if my son study in School X (anonymous), I feel secured because if something happens with him, I can just take a walk to take care. (Parent 3, 2019)

The school principals also expressed a similar concern. Some school principals were concerned with their students' safety, especially dealing with school fight and gangsters.

... I have been in the position of school principal for three terms in different schools. My worst experience was when I had to handle school fights. Students in a group like gangsters raid my school. I am optimistic that school zoning can hamper such an incident happening again since students live nearby that most likely they have known each other...

(School principal 9, 2019)

Most teachers have similar views that school zonation or school zoning can eradicate the possibility of school fight to take place since violence in Yogyakarta raised as some students stabbed others in a fight without clear reasons. This violence was popularly named *klitih* (Muryanto, 2017).

### Economy

School zoning puts the short distance between home and school. This can result in more economic impacts in some respects. The short distance enables students to take a walk to school that significantly reduce the transportation cost as said by a parent below.

...what makes me agree with this policy (school zoning) is the distance between my home the school is very near, reachable on foot. This is really economical for me..

(Parent 1, 2019)

Document analyses also indicated that the close distance exposed benefits for students to have short times and a limited budget to reach schools. Another parent expresses her joys of having her son being able to enjoy his lunch while having noon break. She said as follows:

....my son regularly take his lunch at home while having noon break. He kept his pocket money. In this part, school zonation is good....

(Parent 6, 2019)

These economic benefits were also felt at New Zealand when they surveyed students enrolling at closet school, one of the consideration is that closest distance can provide a chance of

going to school mobility alternatives as walking to school (Black et al., 2001; Mandic et al., 2017).

Besides giving good economic benefits, school zoning can provide a fair chance for all students to access education in their surrounding house.

***Fair chances to obtain social justice***

School zoning opens opportunities to access schools at students' neighborhood. Regardless of where they are from, whether they from low or high socioeconomic status families obtain equal access to education in their zone. Teachers mention this benefit as follow.

.... I do agree that school zonation policy at the community level provides fair chances for students to obtain social justices. All students possess similar chances to enroll in schools in the home vicinity....

(Teacher 7, 2019)

At the surface, in my view, this zoning policy offers equal opportunities for all hierarchical social strata to obtain educations in public senior high schools. ...

(Teacher 2, 2019)

The above arguments support equality view on the fairness in obtaining the same types of educations for students in all locations. Based on their arguments, it is likely that school zonation policies can offer social justice. However, studies pose an argument that struggles to reach equality mostly sacrifice the fairness at the individual level (Mandic et al., 2017; Pöder et al., 2017).

In addition to the voices that pro to the school zoning policies, the arguments are against the policies do appear. The findings that against the policy of school zoning system includes eradicating the sense of competition, no favorite school, blank spot, heterogenous students in a class, moving places, no freedom, low-middle level private schools in dangers, location problems, and private school problems.

***Decreasing sense of competition***

The findings both from interview and document analyses denote that school zonation or school zoning policies pose dangers in terms of eradicating the sense of competition among students. Some school principals propose their views at this point.

... Students at the individual level may feel that how hard the student learn at their class cannot go to schools they want. Instead, they only can study at the schools in their neighboring village. This condition can decrease students' motivation to fight to excel in their performance.

(Principal 5, 2019)

The above argument gained supports from teachers. Some teachers view that some low achiever students show their joys upon their opportunity to study at school as decided by the government.

... low achievers are happy as they know that they can study to the public schools close to their house as listed in the regulation. Knowing this information, students seem to be reluctant to study hard to compete.

(Teacher 4, 2019)

School zonation produces less competition. This is against nature to some degree. In my opinion, to live is to compete.

(Teacher 7, 2019)

Students who habitually motivate to achieve high can loosen their spirit as their freedom to choose school diminishing. Moreover, as a student city, students in Yogyakarta province possess the habit to compete to achieve high (RadarJogja, 2019a; Wijayanto, 2019).

***No favorite schools***

The intention of the government to implement the policies of school zoning system is to abolish favorite schools as the government wants all school to have the same standard. But parents argue against such policies

....One school has its own culture. If the school possesses excellent cultures, it will reflect their performance so the society will see and choose as their favorite. So making no favorite school is almost impossible. We still have our own favorite although the policies diminish it. ....

(Parent 2, 2019)

As a new policy in Indonesia, a question can again be raised on whether the government's argument or parent argument will become a reality although the current facts present that there is still favorite school (Widiyanto, 2019).

***Blank spot***

Arguments against the policies of school zonation are because of blank spot zone. Some critical arguments materialize that based on the facts that school was not built based on zonation. For this reason, some areas may not have a public school in the distance decided by the government. The document analyses revealed this circumstance. The existence of blank spot can endanger the students' right to obtain an education.

In our zone, there is no public school. I think the government should establish a public school so students can study in our surrounding distance zone. We have a blank spot here...

(Principal 6, 2019)

Blank spot possesses benefits to some private schools since they can promote and accommodate students at the areas to study at their school. The policy demands consistency of the government to serve the people to access a deserve education. A logical consequence of the fulfillment of the demand is by establishing a new public school in the areas. The government shall be cautious to consider every single interest of the community conditions to avoid any detrimental impacts in the future.

### **Heterogenous students in a class**

Teachers' main objections to the policies are due to the class are too heterogeneous. Such heterogeneous class forces teachers to work extra to teach students to make them understand the lessons. Majority teachers complain about this state.

... the government does not want to be an advanced state. In previous years, we teach homogenous students, so they are about at the same stage. When we prepare an easy lesson, they mostly understand as well, and vice versa. Now it is different. Students are too heterogeneous. It is challenging to make comprehending the lesson. Extra effort is required.

...

(Teacher 10, 2019)

...Now, schools have no choice other than accepting students in the zone. Enrollment processes screen students loosely. We got difficulty in facing students with a big gap in their academic aptitude. It is not easy...

(Teacher 3, 2019)

Studies revealed that teaching heterogenous class has its own difficulties and demand certain strategies and methods (Clement, Oudeyer, & Lopes, 2016; Tzivinikou, 2015). The above teachers' voices are having strong ground. Such a condition shall be properly addressed by the government by preparing and training teachers to have the capability to cope with such issues.

### **Moving living places**

One of the strategies of parents to enable better education in the Yogyakarta to face the school zoning is moving their living place.

My friend moved to a place that is close to the favorite school. He moved together with all of his family. This is common especially the ones that have relatives in the intended zones. ...

(Parent 6, 2019)

Most parents will not sacrifice the education of their children. For the capable parents, they will invest a big amount of fund for their children education by buying a house to close to the school that can promise better education for better futures (Fack & Grenet, 2007; Mandic et al., 2017; Rehm & Filippova, 2008).

### **Conclusion**

School zoning policies have been responded variously by the members of the societies. Responses that are pro to the policies signify that they obtain benefits. The benefits are thematized through thematic analyses revealed several themes, including safety, distance, and fair chance. On the other hand, the members of the community also responded against the policy of school zoning system includes eradicating the sense of competition, no favorite school, blank spot, heterogenous

students in a class, moving places, no freedom, low-middle level private schools in dangers, location problems, and private school problems. The pro and contra against the policy should be addressed adequately by the government to ensure the benefits of the policies for the people and to anticipate any kinds of disadvantages

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