



Evaluative Analysis of the Implementation of PPDB 2025 Between Public and Private Schools in Indonesia

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Received: March 19, 2025	Revised: March 22, 2025	Accepted: March 25, 2025	Online: March 27, 2025
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ABSTRACT

Admission of New Students (PPDB) is an important stage in the national education system, which is the beginning of the journey of students in obtaining access to quality education. PPDB 2025 is in the spotlight because of significant dynamics both in terms of regulations, technical implementation, and social impacts felt by the community. This study aims to evaluate the implementation of PPDB 2025 by comparing the practices and challenges faced by public and private schools. Through a literature study approach, the author examines various official government documents, academic articles, current news, and reports from relevant independent institutions. The results of the evaluation show that although the zoning system in public schools aims for equal distribution of education, in practice it creates new inequalities, especially for students in densely populated areas. Meanwhile, private schools face different challenges such as competition to recruit students, operational financing, and diverse public perceptions of the quality of education. This comparison shows the need for more adaptive and integrative policies between the two types of educational institutions so that the goals of equity and quality of education can be achieved in a balanced manner. This research also provides strategic recommendations for policymakers, school managers, and the community in optimizing the PPDB process in the future.

Keywords: *PPDB 2025, Private Schools, Public Schools*

Journal Homepage <https://ejournal.iainbatanghari.ac.id/index.php/attasyrih/index>

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How to cite: Anam, A.K., Ni'mah, N.A & Bashith, A. (2025). Evaluative Analysis of the Implementation of PPDB 2025 Between Public and Private Schools in Indonesia. *At-Tasyrih: Journal of Islamic Education and Law*, 11(1), 53-61. <https://doi.org/10.55849/attasyrih.v11i1.53-61>.

Published by: Center for Research and Community Service, Islamic Institute of Nusantara Batang Hari

INTRODUCTION

Education is the key to growing future generations of the nation with the ability to take on the role of regulating and managing the nation (Rosyid et al., 2022). One of the many tasks in education is about PPDB. PPDB is a strategic annual agenda that has a wide impact on the national education ecosystem (Meritasari et al., 2024). Since the implementation of the zoning system in PPDB in previous years, including in PPDB 2025, this policy has continued to undergo revisions and adjustments aimed at creating equal access and quality of education. However, the implementation of PPDB remains a source of controversy and debate in the community (Sabur et al 2022). On the one hand, public schools face pressure from a zoning system that prioritizes living distance, while on the other hand, private schools have to compete in attracting new students without getting direct subsidies from the state (Darya, 2020). PPDB 2025 reflects a variety of systemic and technical problems. In various regions, there is an imbalance between the number of prospective students and the limited capacity of public schools (Ishak et al 2022). This has caused a number of students to be forced to register for private schools or public schools outside their residential zones, which ultimately gives rise to new dynamics such as manipulation of domicile data, double enrollment practices, and so on.

On the other hand, private schools face challenges in building public image and trust, especially in the midst of increasingly fierce competition with public schools. Financing factors, curriculum, teacher quality, and facilities are important considerations for parents in making choices. However, there are also many private schools that offer their own advantages that cannot be found in public schools, such as management flexibility, alternative pedagogical approaches, and superior programs based on character and religion. Previous research conducted by Salim and Nora (2022) Regarding the evaluation of the PPDB zoning system at the elementary level in Matur District, it is stated that the implementation of the zoning system makes it easier for parents to monitor their children, especially for those who are still at the elementary school level. On the other hand, the image of a superior school that was previously only owned by certain schools is now starting to diminish thanks to this policy. The distribution of study group quotas that previously accumulated in several schools is now starting to spread more evenly. However, this policy also opens a gap for fraudulent practices in PPDB, where some parents take advantage of certain individuals to enroll their children in a school of choice.

Previous research conducted by Damayanti et al (2024) at the junior high school level of Karanganyar Regency stated that in implementing PPDB zoning, school capacity is met, the creation of equity in education, the elimination of discrimination in the education sector, the ease of parents in supervising, time and cost efficiency, improvement of school achievement, and the development of teacher competence. On the other hand, the dysfunction of zoning policies includes the loss of the image of superior schools and uneven division of zones, the emergence of areas without access (*blank spot*), decreased motivation and competitiveness of students, challenges for teachers in classroom management, declining academic performance in schools, and cheating practices in the PPDB process. Previous research conducted by Winarti et al (2023) at the high school level, public and private schools in the city of Surabaya stated that the PPDB Zoning System in Tanjungpinang City has not reached the expected results optimally. Based on the research, it was found, first, the PPDB Zoning system policy has not been able to provide equal access to educational services and equal distribution of education quality. Second, the use of online/online systems in system management and time has essentially been achieved. Third, the mechanism for admitting new students through the zoning system is recognized as still

giving birth to various controversies, considering that there are still many fraudulent acts that occur so that prospective students can attend their dream school. Fourth, there is an uneven distribution of applicants, the number of students registering in the East Tanjungpinang zone has exploded, while on the other hand there are schools that are too quiet for students. This zoning system policy is an initial response from the government in providing solutions to access to educational services and eliminating exclusivity and discrimination so that parents and students do not feel left out due to school.

It is important to evaluate PPDB 2025 to identify whether the policy and its implementation have run according to the initial goal, which is to provide equitable, fair, and quality access to education. This evaluation also seeks to compare the dynamics that occur in public and private schools in order to draw lessons and policy solutions that are relevant to the future of Indonesian education (Rohmah et al., 2021). By considering the complexity of the problems and the social context of the community, this evaluation is expected to make a real contribution to the improvement of the PPDB system as a whole.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a library research approach, namely by examining and analyzing various written sources that are relevant to the topic of PPDB 2025. Literature studies were chosen because of the evaluative and comparative nature of this research, which relies on the analysis of policies, previous research results, statistical data, scientific articles, and official government documents. The data collection process is carried out through an exploration of literature available online and in print, including the latest regulations from the Ministry of Education, articles from educational journals, credible mass media reports, and evaluation report documents from educational institutions and NGOs. The data sources used cover the period between 2019 and 2025, with a focus on the trend of PPDB implementation since the implementation of the zoning system (Madjid, 2023).

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively, by identifying the main themes related to the comparison between the implementation of PPDB in public and private schools. The data interpretation process also involves a critical study of policy effectiveness, social impact, and long-term educational implications. With this approach, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of PPDB 2025 can be obtained and provide evidence-based recommendations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation of the Zoning System in Public Schools

The zoning system in New Student Admissions (PPDB) is a national policy that has been systematically implemented since 2017 through Permendikbud No. 17 of 2017. The initial goal was to create equal access to education, remove the stigma of favorite schools, and avoid discriminatory practices based on academic achievement alone. However, in the implementation of 2025, the zoning system will again be in the spotlight because it still leaves various problems in the field, both from the technical, administrative, and sociological sides. Based on data from the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2025, out of a total of 5.7 million PPDB registrants at the junior and senior high school levels throughout Indonesia, 58% registered through the zoning route, 20% through the achievement route, 15% through the affirmation route, and the rest through the parent transfer route. This shows that the zoning system remains the main route used (Datuk, 2020).

However, a number of cases that occurred showed the practice of manipulating domicile data that was still rampant, even though the validation process had involved data from the Population and Civil Registration Office.

This manipulation occurs in various forms, such as the use of a relative's address or the rental of a fictitious address in order to get into a school that is considered superior. This shows that people's perception of favorite schools has not changed significantly. The community still believes that the quality of education, teachers, and facilities is greatly influenced by the location of the school, even though the zoning system is intended to eliminate this stigma. One of the biggest challenges of zoning is the inequality of education infrastructure (Achmad Tavip Junaedi et al., 2022). In big cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, and Surabaya, the demand for quality public schools far exceeds capacity. On the other hand, in remote areas or suburban areas, the capacity is often greater than the number of prospective students. This inequality gives rise to logistical and economic consequences, where students are forced to study far from home or even not be accommodated at all in public schools (Setiawan & Rahaju, 2021).

A case study in the East Jakarta area shows that by 2025, 12 public schools at the high school level will have a very high level of competition with an enrollment ratio of 1:9, while in the border area of Bogor Regency there are 7 public schools that only have a 1:3 enrollment ratio. This inequality indicates that the distribution of quality public schools is not even and not enough to meet the demands of the community in densely populated zones. From the administrative side, the PPDB online system is still not completely stable. Many schools reported problems in system access, data processing errors, and delays in synchronizing Dapodik data with Dukcapil. As a result, the process of verifying domicile data is hampered and causes confusion among parents. Several reports from the student parent forum stated that the valid address data based on the Family Card was not recognized by the system (Haikal et al., 2022).

In its evaluation, the Ministry of Education and Culture stated that improvements have been made in the 2025 PPDB by requiring synchronization between the PPDB system and the national Dukcapil as well as active supervision from the Inspectorate General. However, the effectiveness of this supervision is still uneven in all regions, especially outside Java. Local governments with minimal digital resources and infrastructure have difficulty implementing a good supervision system. Zoning is also inseparable from the social dimension. Many students feel disappointed that they cannot be accepted into their dream school simply because the location of their home does not meet the zoning radius. In a survey conducted by the Center for Education Assessment (Pusmendik) on 3,000 respondents of junior high and high school students, it was found that 34% of students felt that the zoning system was unfair and did not consider their academic achievement. This shows the friction between the principle of equal access and the spirit of meritocracy (Ulwan et al., 2024).

Education observers from Yogyakarta State University said that the zoning system needs broader policy support, such as equitable distribution of the education budget, redistribution of quality teachers, and the construction of new schools in densely populated zones. Without this support, the zoning system will only be a short-term solution that creates new problems. As an example of affirmative policy, some regions such as Central Java have added special quotas for students from underprivileged families in remote zones, as well as providing transportation subsidies for students who have to attend school outside the zone due to limited capacity. This policy has been relatively successful in suppressing the

potential for discrimination and expanding access to education for marginalized groups (Haikal et al., 2022).

Table 1. Distribution of PPDB 2025 Registrants Based on the Admission Path

Admission Pathway	Percentage of Applicants (%)	Information
Zoning	58%	Based on the radius of domicile
Achievement	20%	Based on academic/non-academic grades
Affirmations	15%	For families who cannot afford it
Parental Transfers	7%	For ASN/TNI/Polri who have mutations

The table above shows that the majority of students still depend on the zoning pathway. Therefore, improving this system must be a priority in national education policy in order to be able to ensure equity and quality equally. The implementation of zoning is not enough just to regulate domicile, but must also be accompanied by a comprehensive transformation of the quality of schools in all zones. Future improvement efforts include the preparation of school distribution maps based on demographics, digitization of the PPDB management system nationally, and special incentives for teachers and principals assigned to disadvantaged zones. The government also needs to open up greater space for public participation in formulating zoning policies, including involving teachers' forums, parent organizations, and education observers.

Challenges and Strategies of PPDB in Private Schools

Private schools in Indonesia have a vital role in supporting the national education system, especially in absorbing the excess number of students who are not accommodated in public schools. Unlike public schools that are subject to the zoning system and administrative provisions from the government, private schools have flexibility in drafting the PPDB mechanism (Darmawan & Diantari, 2024). Typically, the selection is made based on academic tests, interviews, psychological observations, and student portfolios. However, this flexibility also brings its own challenges, especially in 2025 which is colored by various socioeconomic dynamics. Data from the Directorate General of Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary Education (Ditjen PAUD Dikdasmen) in 2025 shows that the number of applicants to private schools has decreased by 12% compared to 2023 (Siva Ripani Fauziah, Patimah, 2023). This decline was largely due to economic reasons, especially after the impact of the pandemic and volatility in the price of basic necessities. Many parents who originally sent their children to private schools began to switch to public schools to reduce the burden of costs.

The decrease in the number of students has a significant impact on the operational continuity of private schools. Schools with a limited number of students are forced to carry out efficiencies such as merging classes, cutting learning hours, and terminating non-permanent teacher contracts. In some cases, small private schools in suburban areas have even experienced permanent closures. This shows that even though the private sector is self-sufficient, they still need state support, especially in crisis situations. To stay afloat, many private schools implement a differentiation strategy or branding Education (Marjenny & Yuwono, 2019). For example, integrated Islamic private schools emphasize the excellence of character education and spiritual formation, while international private schools emphasize bilingual programs, Cambridge certification, or Montessori methods. There are also those who build international cooperation, such as student exchanges and collaborations with foreign educational institutions.

In big cities such as Jakarta and Surabaya, the trend of STEAM-based thematic schools (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) is also becoming a new attraction. These schools utilize digital technology, interactive classrooms, and a project-based learning approach to appeal to the interests of the upper-middle class. This strategy has proven effective in maintaining the stability of the number of students despite the relatively high cost of education. However, not all private schools are able to implement this strategy. Lower-middle private schools in rural or small towns have limited human resources, infrastructure, and funds. They depend on the operational costs of very limited student dues. Unfortunately, school operational assistance (BOS) from the government is only given to private schools that are already legal entities and accredited at least C (Ulfa & Fauzan, 2024). As a result, many small private schools are untouched by subsidies, even though they are the ones who need it most.

The government has launched several assistance schemes such as the Performance BOS and the Affirmation BOS, but the scope is still minimal and the administrative procedures are complicated. From the results of a survey by the Indonesian Private Education Foundation (YPSI), only 38% of private secondary and lower schools receive BOS assistance regularly. This inequality shows the need for new regulations that are more inclusive for private schools. In the face of these challenges, many private schools are starting to strengthen their communication and marketing strategies. They optimize social media, hold open houses, publish alumni testimonials, and collaborate with educational influencers to expand the reach of information. This approach aims to form a positive narrative and showcase the uniqueness of the educational programs they offer.

Cooperation between private schools is also an adaptive strategy that is beginning to develop. For example, some private schools form local consortiums to share teaching staff, organize joint training, or share facilities such as laboratories and multipurpose rooms. This collaboration strengthens their resilience in the face of external pressures. However, the most crucial is government support in the form of affirmative policies that involve private schools on an equal footing with the state (Mashudi, 2019). Local governments can provide tax incentives, infrastructure assistance, or ease of operational permits for private schools that absorb students from underprivileged families. This is important because in many cases, private schools are the only educational option available in certain zones.

Table 2. Comparison of the Number of Applicants and Students Admitted to Private Schools in 2023–2025

Year	Number of Registrants	Number of Students Accepted	Absorption Percentage
2023	2.750.000	2.000.000	72.7%
2024	2.580.000	1.890.000	73.2%
2025	2.270.000	1.650.000	72.7%

The data in the table shows a consistent decline in the number of enrollees and students admitted since 2023. This is an important indicator for the government and education stakeholders to immediately intervene so that the existence of private schools is maintained and able to serve education optimally. In the future, harmonization between the public and private education sectors is very important in order to create an inclusive, competitive, and equitable national education ecosystem. With the support of regulations and policies that favor social justice, private schools can become strategic partners of the state in providing quality education services throughout Indonesia.

Comparison of Social and Psychological Impacts for Students and Parents

The impact of PPDB is not only administrative, but also touches on social and psychological aspects. In public schools, students who are not accepted because of zoning feel disappointed and marginalized, despite being academically qualified. This psychological pressure has an impact on students' motivation to learn and confidence. Parents also experience emotional distress because they feel that the system is unfair to their children (Putra et al., 2024). In contrast, in private schools, although the admissions process tends to be more open, there are still concerns about financing capabilities during the study period. This anxiety causes uncertainty in family education planning. Some parents even have to make lifestyle adjustments in order to send their children to private schools in the hope of getting better educational services (Fauziah et al., 2023).

PPDB also creates social disparities in society. In some large cities, there has emerged informal mapping of "elite" versus "ordinary" school areas, which reinforces social segregation. This risks lowering the spirit of inclusivity in education and hindering the goal of equity. Social jealousy also arises among people who feel disadvantaged by the zoning system or cannot afford private schools. Efforts to reduce this social impact need to be carried out with a systemic approach, such as improving the quality of schools in all zones, providing incentives for private middle and lower schools, and providing cross-sector scholarship or affirmation programs. Inclusive and fair education can only be realized if all government actors, schools, and communities collaborate synergistically.

CONCLUSION

PPDB 2025 shows that the education system in Indonesia still faces major challenges in terms of equitable access and quality. Public schools with their zoning systems are trying to create a fair distribution of students, but reality shows that there are still many

gaps in their implementation. Meanwhile, private schools face their own challenges in terms of operational sustainability and increasingly fierce competition. A comparison between the two types of schools reveals that the solution cannot be one-way. The government needs to consider a more flexible and contextual policy approach according to the conditions of each region. In addition, there needs to be a strengthening of synergy between the public and private sectors so that both can complement each other in achieving national education goals. Equitable, inclusive, and quality education can only be realized through continuous policy evaluation and the active involvement of all elements of society. Therefore, PPDB reform must continue to be carried out, not only in the technical aspect, but also touching on the values of social justice and partiality towards students.

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