

Negotiating Publicness in Neonatal Care Policy in Indonesia

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Abstract

Neonatal care in Indonesia is a public policy issue that extends beyond medical considerations to include how public values (publicness) are managed and negotiated within health service provision. Persistently high infant mortality rates, particularly among premature and low birth weight (LBW) infants, combined with limited capacity and infrastructure in neonatal health services, reveal tensions between service accessibility and medical safety standards. These conditions position neonatal care policy as an arena for negotiating publicness values involving both state and non-state actors. This study examines how publicness is negotiated within neonatal care policy in Indonesia. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and policy document analysis involving the Ministry of Health, civil society organizations particularly the Indonesian Premature Baby Foundation (Yayasan Bayi Prematur Indonesia/YABAPI) and local healthcare facilities. The analysis focuses on negotiations of publicness values across the dimensions of actors, access, and interests. The findings show that publicness in neonatal care policy is dynamically negotiated through interactions among actors with differing interpretations and interests. YABAPI emphasizes accessibility for vulnerable groups through free incubator provision, while the Ministry of Health prioritizes medical safety and regulatory compliance. Local healthcare institutions exercise policy discretion to balance these competing values in practice. This study demonstrates that neonatal care policy in Indonesia is shaped by a complex negotiation of publicness values within public health governance and contributes to public policy studies by highlighting the role of interactions between state and non-state actors in policy implementation.

Keywords: Publicness; Neonatal Care Policy; Accessibility; Non-State Actors; Public Health Governance