

**CAPITALIST PATRIARCHAL RELATIONS AND  
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED ESSENTIAL  
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES POLICY:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE  
IN TASIKMALAYA DISTRICT, INDONESIA**



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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of this research was to explore the process and pattern of introducing and implementing the national policy of Integrated Essential Reproductive Health (IERH) Services at health care facilities at the sub-district level (Primary Health Care or PHC units) and to investigate capitalist-patriarchal systems that are related to either introducing and implementing, or obstructing the services. A qualitative approach with a Socialist Feminist Perspective was used, and a series of open-ended interviews were conducted. The informants, especially the policy makers, health care providers, and religious leaders at the PHC units that have not implemented the IERH program were selected purposively and documents available from health-related institutions were also reviewed.

This study found that the IERH Services could not be fully implemented at the PHC because of the law on regional autonomy, which gives authority to local governments to make decisions on implementation of programs initiated by the central government. Religious leaders and health care providers, including doctors, also resisted implementation of these services. On the other hand, the successful IERH Services at PHC units were mainly due to cooperation and support from religious leaders and health care providers.

IERH Services were not allowed because of the patriarchal and capitalist ideology of the health workers and religious leaders. They have applied radical patriarchal interpretation of the Islamic teaching and values against the IERH Services, such as sterilization and abortion. Religious leaders and health care providers have assumed that sterilization of either men or women stops the natural process of fertilization, and prevents the reproductive organs from performing their natural function. They have also assumed that family planning is a program intended to control the number of children, contraceptive methods are population control measures from the central level, distribution of condoms increases promiscuity, and sex education for adolescents encourages premarital sex. Abortion is considered to be a crime, and it is prohibited in Islam. Privatization of the health sector has resulted in commercialization of health services, and as a result has decreased the accessibility and affordability of the services for women. For instance, doctors and midwives who operate private clinics are concerned that if IERH Services are implemented, they will lose income. Most policy makers are men, and their policies are gender biased, which tends to ignore women's rights. The health policies do not differentiate between the health care needs of men and women. These strong patriarchal and capitalist ideologies have restricted women from making decisions and accessing their reproductive health rights.

**KEY WORDS: PATRIARCHY/ CAPITALISM/ INTEGRATED ESSENTIAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES/ PRIMARY HEALTH CARE**

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