

Appendix 2

Reflexivity statement

How does this study address local research and policy priorities?

This study was conceptualised based on increasing caesarean section rates in Indonesia in recent years. The Indonesia Social Security Administrator for Health (BPJS Kesehatan) reported that the caesarean section contributed to the largest national insurance expenditure in 2019. The authority issued a call to optimise the use of caesarean section in the country.

How were local researchers involved in study design?

Five out of nine authors in this study are Indonesian researchers (RIZ, AH, MADM, FME, OE). The first author (RIZ, an Indonesian) led this study as it is part of her PhD at The University of Melbourne. RIZ conceptualised this study guided by senior researchers and PhD advisors from Australia (MAB, CHE, MC), Indonesia (FME, OE), and Switzerland (APB). RIZ first designed the protocols and instruments, and all the co-authors, including the other Indonesian researchers, commented on the drafts in several iterative cycles. The data were collected by Indonesian researchers (RIZ, AH, MADM), with senior researchers in Australia and Indonesia on stand-by to troubleshoot any challenges that arose. RIZ, AH, and MADM also conducted preliminary analyses to generate themes from the transcripts.

How has funding been used to support the local research team?

This study was supported by Population Health Investing in Research Students' Training (PHIRST) Grants from the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health at The University of Melbourne through RIZ and a Dame Kate Campbell Fellowship through MAB.

The PHIRST funding was used to fund the RIZ's travel to Indonesia and reimburse the participants involved in the study. The Dame Kate Campbell Fellowship also supported the study to cover AH's time in the project and data collection associated expenses, such as local transport and accommodation for AH and RIZ.

How are the research staff who conducted data collection acknowledged?

The topic of authorship inclusion was deliberated at various points throughout the project, with a consensus reached that all individuals involved in data collection and analysis would be recognised as authors. Therefore, all Indonesian researchers involved in the data collection (RIZ, AH, MADM) are the first three authors of the manuscript.

Do all members of the research partnership have access to study data?

All members of the partnership have access to the de-identified data.

How was data used to develop analytical skills within the partnership?

The data were analysed by Indonesian researchers (RIZ, AH, MADM), including transcription of interviews, development of a codebook by coding, and analysis of the rest of the data. The data analysis on this study served as training opportunities for RIZ, AH and MADM, who are also early career researchers. They were mentored on qualitative data analysis by the rest of the research team.

How have research partners collaborated in interpreting study data?

The data analysis was conducted collaboratively and iteratively with all the co-authors. Firstly, RIZ, AH, and MADM conducted the first coding or preliminary analysis, after which AH and RIZ conducted further analysis to structure the code book. While RIZ conducted the rest of the analysis, she actively double checked her interpretation with AH and sought feedback on the analysis iteratively from the more senior researchers (MAB, MC, CHE, FEM, OE, APB), through meetings and also written feedback sessions.

How were research partners supported to develop writing skills?

As this is part of a PhD study, RIZ drafted the first draft of the protocols, instruments, and manuscript. The co-authors then provided extensive and constructive feedback in person and in writing to improve the drafts. This happens iteratively throughout the course of the study. Therefore, all the authors were involved in reviewing, feedback, and editing the protocol, instruments, and manuscript drafts.

How will research products be shared to address local needs?

This paper will be published as an open-access publication. Post-publication, we intend to disseminate the study results to a broader audience through social media and news publications to target the general public.

How is the leadership, contribution and ownership of this work by LMIC researchers recognised within the authorship?

The first five authors of this paper are all Indonesian researchers, and the first author, as well as the corresponding author, RIZ, is also an Indonesian researcher. Other Indonesian researchers, AH, MADM, FE and OE, contributed to the research and manuscript writing in different aspects of the research, and their contribution has been recognised in the authorship.

How have early career researchers across the partnership been included within the authorship team?

This study's first three authors, RIZ, AH and MADM, are early career researchers. FEM also finished her PhD in less than 5 years. Thus, this study provides a platform for her to mentor and advise a more junior researcher like RIZ, AH, and MADM. RIZ, AH, and MADM received training in qualitative research prior to data collection and they contributed to research and manuscript writing.

How has gender balance been addressed within the authorship?

Out of the nine authors, eight are women (RIZ, AH, MDM, FEM, OE, MAB, CHE, APB), while one is a man (MC). We recognise that this gender distribution is not equal; however, given that the topic of this research (pregnancy and childbirth) is an issue that greatly impacts women's health, we are comfortable with the gender balance in authorship.

How has the project contributed to training of LMIC researchers?

The authorship team consists mainly of senior researchers, with only three authors being early career researchers. All of the early career researchers are Indonesian researchers. Therefore, this study has also served as a training platform for Indonesian researchers to design, conduct, analyse, and report study results.

How has the project contributed to improvements in local infrastructure?

This project has not directly contributed to improvements in local infrastructure.

What safeguarding procedures were used to protect local study participants and researchers?

All data were stored on a password-protected database. Written consent was obtained before interviews took place, and all participants were given contact information of the first author (RIZ) and senior author (MAB) should any questions or concerns arise. All members of the data collection team were trained on human subject ethics, and the study received ethics approval from both the University of Melbourne in Australia and the University of Gadjah Mada in Indonesia.