



Article

Students' Perceptions of Health Warnings on Cigarette Packs

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Abstrak: Health warnings on cigarette packs basically have an important role in minimizing addiction on active smokers. This research aims to examine several factors that underlie smoking behavior among students in response to the policy of Minister of Health Regulation Number 28 of 2013 concerning Warnings on Cigarette Packs at Universitas dr. Soebandi, Jember. This research was conducted using descriptive qualitative methods, with data collection techniques using interviews and non-participant observation. Interviews were also conducted with students who were active smokers as informants in this research. The theory used in this research is the S-O-R theory put forward by Carl I Hovland to understand the social reality in society that underlies an action. The results of the research show that there are several factors that underlie students' smoking habits, including cultural factors, students' personal experience, and educational factors. The majority of informants admitted that they understood quite well about the dangers and consequences of Minister of Health Regulation number 28 of 2013, but had not been able to stop their habit of continuing to smoke.

Keywords: Perception, Students, Warning Policy, Dangers of Smoking

1. Introduction

The habit of smoking has become common among Indonesian society today, especially among adult. Based on KEMKES data, Indonesia ranks highest in cigarette consumption in the world, Indonesia is the third country with the highest number of smokers after China and India[1]. Smoking is a social issue that is never finished being discussed. Even though smoking has become a common problem, there are no effective preventive measures that encourage individuals to stop smoking. In the social environment, the freedom to smoke is considered normal without any clear separation between smokers and non-smokers[2]. Cigarette advertising and other promotions have a significant impact on teenagers and encourage many of them to smoke. In 2012, the Indonesian government responded to this problem by issuing Government Regulation (PP) Number 109 concerning safeguarding addictive ingredients in tobacco products for health. Even though the government is trying to provide information about the health risks caused by smoking, these regulations are not implemented optimally[3]. Since the regulation was issued, the number of smokers has not

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decreasing. Even in 2013, Indonesia became the 3rd highest country in the world. Facing this challenge, the Minister of Health then issued the Minister of Health Regulation (PERMENKES) policy number 28 of 2013. This regulation aims to strengthen and clarify the information contained in the PP. No. 109, especially regarding the inclusion of health warnings and health information on cigarette packaging. The government also issued a PP. No. 19 of 2003 concerning protecting cigarettes for health, which requires every cigarette manufacturer to include the health effects of cigarettes on their cigarette packaging. This regulation also regulates the indicators contained in cigarettes[4].

Jember is a district located in East Java province and is known as one of the largest tobacco production centers. The tobacco farming commodity in Jember is a commodity that has played a large role in the foreign exchange income of the people of Jember Regency since the Dutch era. This cannot be separated from the strategic area of Jember Regency, so that Jember Regency's position in the Dutch colonial era played an important role as a place of migration for migrant communities, especially agricultural and plantation workers. The immigrant community then elaborated on the culture they adhere to in their daily lives in Jember Regency. This research will be carried out at a private university, namely Universitas dr. Soebandi located in Jember Regency. The reason was that dr. Soebandi is one of the health universities that has the greatest interest in Jember Regency[5]. Apart from that, the image of dr. Soebandi has a positive image in society, making this university often an alternative for the younger generation to continue their education, especially in the health sector. The selection of the research population focused on Health Sciences students who were chosen because it was considered that they had sufficient understanding of health problems[4].

However, interestingly a number of Health Sciences students are also involved in the smoking habit. According to research conducted by (Nugroho et al., 2015) health students who have a deep understanding of the risks of smoking often remain involved in the smoking habit, and experience difficulties in trying to quit smoking. The smoking habit can be triggered by various factors such as the social environment, as a way to overcome fatigue, reduce stress, and even smoking can also be used as a source of inspiration. This phenomenon can also be found in Health Sciences students at Universitas dr. Soebandi, where many students who should be able to provide education regarding the dangers of smoking are actually involved in the smoking habit without paying attention to the health warnings on cigarette packs. Based on these arguments, researchers are interested in making Health Sciences students at Universitas dr. Soebandi as research informant[6].

2. Materials and Methods

Hovland created a classic communication model known as S-O-R or Stimulus-Organism-Response starting in the 1930s. This communication model is strongly influenced by psychological theory. Humans are the main subject of psychology and communication science, with a focus on psychological traits such as attitudes, opinions, behavior, cognition, affection, and conation. This model states that certain stimuli trigger the behavior of each individual, and the resulting reactions are specific responses to certain stimuli. In this way, someone can predict and anticipate how well the message will be received and how the recipient of the message will respond. According to this model, message recipients are directly, immediately and purposefully influenced by mass media. This model, which is also called the S-O-R Theory, describes communication as an action-reaction process. In other words, this model makes the assumption that the words are spoken. This S-O-R pattern can be found in several activities carried out by the community. One form of S-O-R application related to positive and negative influences can be found in the use of advertising media. Advertisements often highlight interesting points for consumers, advertisements create a positive impact where consumers are inspired to buy the advertised product. On the other hand, if advertising does not suit consumer needs, consumer interest in the product may decline[7].

Based on the assumptions in this theory, the causes of changes in individuals depend on the stimulus, namely the quality of the stimulus, which communicates with the organism or research subject. The type of research used by researchers is descriptive qualitative, this research utilizes as many data sources as possible in the hope that this will help researchers in collecting data. The data collection instruments applied involved the use of survey results, field observations and interviews. The selection of these instruments was based on the belief that this combination could produce complete and comprehensive data. Descriptive qualitative research was chosen for the purpose of describing and summarizing the various situations that are the focus of the research[8].

Research methods, according to Daymon & Holloway (2011) as quoted by Rachmat Kriyantono, are a series of structured steps that researchers can take to solve their research problems. The technique used for sampling in this research was purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is an approach in determining samples that is carried out deliberately to achieve certain goals, and the selection is based on specific criteria possessed by the respondent[8]. The use of purposive sampling techniques in this research aims to find out how students perceive the response to health warnings on cigarette packs. The following are individuals selected by researchers based on certain as informants[9]:

1. Active smoker for more than 5 years
2. Age 18-22 Years
3. Health Sciences Students at dr. Soebandi who are active smokers
4. Know the health warning images on cigarette packs

Researchers determined 7 active students at Universitas dr. Soebandi who meets the specified criteria.

3. Results and Discussion

Cigarette advertising and other promotions have a major impact on teenagers, encouraging them to start smoking. In 2012, the Indonesian government responded to this issue by issuing Government Regulation (PP) Number 109 which aims to protect health by regulating addictive ingredients in tobacco products. Even though the government is trying to convey information about the health risks caused by smoking, the PP has not been fully implemented optimally. Since the PP was implemented, the number of smokers has not shown a decline; even in 2013[10], Indonesia remained in the third highest ranking in the world. In facing this challenge, the Minister of Health then issued Minister of Health Regulation (PERMENKES) Number 28 of 2013. The PERMENKES aims to strengthen and explain the information contained in PP No. 109, especially regarding health warnings and health information that must be included on cigarette packaging[11].

The government also issued PP no. 19 of 2003 concerning the safety of cigarettes for health, which requires every cigarette manufacturer to include information about the effects of cigarettes on health on their product packaging. This PP also regulates the indicators that must be present on cigarette packaging. Health warnings on cigarette packages serve as an effort by governments or health institutions to convey important information to consumers regarding the health risks associated with smoking[12].

There are various warnings clearly printed on cigarette packaging, often accompanied by striking graphics, with the aim of raising awareness of the negative impacts of smoking. The warning includes the risk of cancers such as lung, mouth, and throat cancer, as well as the potential for heart disease and lung disorders. In addition, the warning also highlights the risks to pregnant women and the fetus, emphasizes nicotine addiction, and provides warnings regarding the risk of premature death and reduced life expectancy. By presenting bold and clear information, health warnings on cigarette packs aim to provide consumers with a better understanding of the health risks they may face, in the hope of encouraging behavioral change towards healthier life choices[13].

Health sciences students are individuals who are pursuing higher education in the field of health sciences at colleges or universities. They choose various health science majors, such as Nursing, Pharmacy, Midwifery, and Medical Laboratory Technology. Their learning activities include an in-depth understanding of the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease, patient care, health research, and efforts to improve the health

of society as a whole. In addition to gaining theoretical knowledge, health sciences students also develop practical skills, such as communication, leadership, and problem solving. Their education involves clinical practice, research, and community service, preparing them to contribute to a variety of health sectors, from hospitals to government organizations, research institutions, and the health-related private sector[14]. Thus, health science students are expected to become skilled professionals who are committed to improving the health and welfare of society[15]. Health science students who smoke may engage in a paradox because they, as future health professionals, understand the health risks posed by smoking. Factors such as academic stress, social pressure, and environmental habits can influence their decision to smoke. However, it is important for them to seek support and raise awareness about the consequences of smoking to motivate behavioral change towards a healthier lifestyle[16].

In the phenomena that have been explored, researchers found 3 aspects that can be correlated with warning messages, images available on cigarette packs, as well as responses from informants regarding several diseases caused by smoking. Through pictures and warnings on cigarette packs[17], it is hoped that consumers can understand the consequences that will occur if they become active smokers so that they can reduce their smoking intensity. In the data mining session that was carried out, the researchers then explored the perspectives actualized by smoking students at the Faculty of Health Sciences, Universitas dr. Soebandi. In the interview session that was held, one of the informants, namely Viola, 21 years old, gave the following opinion[18]:

"It seems that until now we have not found any effective solutions, even though we have often warned about the problem of smoking, there are still many people outside campus who smoke. Actually, if you see the warning picture on a cigarette package, you'll be scared, but because you haven't experienced the effects yourself, you might not pay attention to the warning."
(Viola, 21 years old)

In his statement, Viola explained that currently the informant has not been able to find an effective way to suppress this habit[19]. The informant felt that he had the awareness not to smoke in the campus area, but the informant admitted that he still continued his smoking habit when he gathered with his friends. Meanwhile, even though the informant had observed pictures of the dangers of cigarettes on cigarette packs, the informant felt less deterred by the image advertisements that had been provided because he had not felt the real effects of the dangers of cigarettes. A similar opinion was also expressed by RRP 21 years, who provided the following statement:

"In my opinion, the health warnings on cigarette packs are very ineffective because I myself don't really pay attention to them, basically I buy cigarettes to finish, and when they're finished, I throw them away." (RRP, 21)

RRP explained that he did not really pay attention to the warnings on cigarette packs because he thought that cigarettes were to be finished, and then thrown away, so the informant admitted that he had not been able to reduce the intensity of smoking just by observing the dangers of the ban on cigarette packs[20].

Meanwhile, another opinion was also conveyed by Zaka Wahyu, 22 years old, who expressed the following opinion[21]:

"I started smoking when I graduated from high school, at the beginning of college. The picture warning about the dangers of smoking on the cigarette package scared me at first, when I first started smoking I saw it, it was a bit scary to see the disease. But after I tried cigarettes, I felt that there was no effect, so for a long time I ignored the picture. Cigarettes make me relax, so I finally ignored it because the impact definitely won't happen immediately, maybe it could take several years. As a student, I actually know that the dangers of smoking exist, apart from studying, we also often see cigarette packages, but if we are asked about our attitude, we should just reduce the portion of cigarettes so that there aren't too many. And I also agree that what is in the warning image on cigarette packs does exist, especially as there has been a lot of research that proves that cigarettes are dangerous, but again, because we are addicted to cigarettes, we definitely ignore the warnings on cigarette packs. ." (Zaka Wahyu, 22 Years)

In the interview results obtained, Zaka stated that he was actually afraid of the images presented on cigarette packs. Meanwhile, as a health student, he also understands and knows that cigarettes are indeed dangerous for health, so one way to reduce the intensity of the dangers of cigarettes is to reduce daily cigarette consumption. Zaka is of the opinion that the disease caused by smoking cannot be felt directly by the user, because the user is lulled by the relaxing effect produced by the nicotine from the cigarette. Zaka gave his opinion that he personally agreed with the warning signs on the cigarette packs, but as an addict he felt that when someone was lulled by the effects, he would ignore the warnings even though this would have long-term effects on the user. Another opinion was also conveyed by Lubis[10]:

"I was actually scared when I saw the cigarette pack, but it didn't really affect me. Actually, I'm also afraid that one day I might get a disease like that, but because up to now I haven't felt the effects, I'm just getting used to it. Maybe later, if it turns out that I feel the effects, whether I'm sick or something, I'll definitely stop. "So, in my opinion, the warnings on cigarette packs are less effective because after buying cigarettes I definitely throw away the pack."

In this answer, the informant revealed that although he felt fear when looking at cigarette packs and was aware of the potential health risks associated with smoking, this was not enough to influence his decision to quit smoking at this time. Although he acknowledged his concerns about the possibility of developing a disease from smoking in the future, he also noted that to date, he has not felt any significant impact from his habit. His thoughts on warnings on cigarette packs also reflect his view that warning messages

are less effective, perhaps because he tends to throw away cigarette packs after buying them. However, he implied his intention to stop smoking if one day he really felt serious health effects. Thus, this answer reflects the individual's ambivalence towards the smoking habit, where awareness of the risks has not fully encouraged him to change his behavior at this time[22].

In another interview session, Wildan said that:

"If you ask me about the warnings on cigarette packages, I definitely know, but I don't think it is effective. "Honestly, I was worried when I saw the picture, but because I'm already addicted and haven't felt the impact as depicted, I didn't think too much about the impact."
Wildan

This is in line with informant M. Hasbullah's answer:

"I understand that the health warnings on cigarette packs are accompanied by quite horrific images in an attempt to provide a visual understanding of the negative impacts of smoking. Even though I feel wary and aware of the potential health risks caused by smoking, in reality, I have not felt any significant health impacts directly. Maybe this makes me think less about the long-term consequences, even though I realize that smoking has a proven negative impact on health. I realize that this may be subjective and can vary between individuals." M. Hasbullah

This answer indicates that although the informant is aware of the health warnings and scary images on cigarette packs that aim to provide a visual understanding of the negative impacts of smoking, he has not experienced significant health impacts directly. He is aware that smoking has a proven negative impact on health, but perhaps because he has not experienced immediate or significant consequences, he may give little thought to the long-term consequences[23]. The importance of understanding that perceptions of health impacts can be subjective and vary between individuals was acknowledged in the response. There may be differences in how each person responds or perceives the health impacts of smoking based on individual experience and sensitivity to health. However, this answer also reflects the awareness that smoking has proven negative impacts, even though they have not been felt directly by the individual[7].

Based on the information obtained from the six informants, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of responding to warnings about the dangers of smoking on cigarette packs are still limited to warnings only[24]. The informant knew that the advice was there to reduce his intensity in smoking, but the informant could not stop the smoking habit just by looking at the advertisements available on cigarette packs[25]. This perception is motivated by the assumption that the advice on cigarette packs is only advertising, so the user's intensity to pay attention to and obey the advice on the image is relatively low[26]. Apart from that, the informant also believes that personally he still has not personally felt

the effects of smoking as shown in the picture on the cigarette pack, so this smoking habit is difficult to control[27].

The results of this research are relevant to research carried out by Ana Swandayani and Juariyah in 2019 with the title "Opinions of the Community of Kertosari Jember Village Regarding the Change of Final Waste Processing Site (TPA) into an Educational Tourism Object". This research uses the S-O-R theory to examine the perceptions of the Kertosari Village community regarding the existence of a landfill as an educational tourism object. In this research, the community responded to the existence of a landfill with two perceptions[28], namely positive and negative perceptions. This difference in perception is based on the positive impact felt by the surrounding community regarding the use of the landfill as a field for earning a living and as a place for education. On the other hand, quite a few people react to the existence of this landfill with the negative impacts it causes, namely the appearance of unpleasant odors and a decrease in the quality of river resources in the area[29].

Referring to the results of research that has been carried out, this difference in perception is also present in students at Universitas dr. Soebandi in responding to smoking ban advertisements on cigarette packs[30]. On the one hand, students realize that this prohibition is here to provide an appeal to minimize daily cigarette consumption, especially for the younger generation who are considered to be of productive age[31]. However, on the other hand, users still consider the warning to be just a warning, because they already have a high addiction to cigarettes so this habit is difficult to control. This dualism is caused by environmental factors and a lack of control from the family to be able to carry out supervision as early as possible to minimize the smoking habit [32].

4. Conclusion

The conclusions in this research are several aspects as follows:

Health warnings on cigarette packs basically have an important in minimizing addiction on active smokers. In data mining, several reasons were found behind students' decisions to smoke, including cultural background factors and encouragement caused by students' personal experiences. In terms of cultural background, the majority of smoking habits among students at the Faculty of Health, Universitas dr. Soebandi are caused by smoking friends and a lack of supervision from smoking parents. This resulted in several informants admitting that they had been exposed to cigarettes since elementary school age, so it was quite difficult to get rid of this habit.

The informants' educational background, namely as Health Science students, does not have a sufficient correlation to stop smoking, especially in interpreting pictures warning

of the dangers of smoking on cigarette packs. The majority of informants admitted that they understand quite well about the dangers and consequences that they can feel when they become active smokers, but have not been able to stop their habit of continuing to smoke.

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