

Impact of Tobacco Control Policy for Health in Indonesia

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Keywords: Tobacco control, Health policy, Indonesia.

Abstract: Tobacco industries in Indonesia have a significant impact on the economic sector through creating opportunities in the farming and industrial sectors. Tobacco industries also contribute the biggest taxes, meaning that Indonesia's government earns significant revenue from it. On the other hand, increasingly the tobacco industries in Indonesia also have an impact on the health sector as consumption of cigarettes causes high prevalence of many diseases, such as cancer, cardiovascular, etc. The budgets allocated by government for dealing with the health effect of smoking are far greater than the taxes they receive. Therefore, a regulatory requirement is required. The role of the health sector in formulating a policy related to control of the tobacco industries needs to gain full support from all parties who feel the adverse impact of it, especially the Indonesian government itself. This paper reviews literatures related to the impact of tobacco control policy in Indonesia. The results show that there are many pros and cons in Indonesian society regarding tobacco control policy

1 INTRODUCTION

The tobacco industry is one of the largest industries in Indonesia with the majority of smokers in low and moderate income, especially among Indonesian men. It is estimated that around 65% of Indonesian men are smokers. Indonesia is the second largest cigarette market in Asia. Given that the Indonesian population numbers over 255 million and around two-thirds of Indonesian men consume tobacco-related product, it implies that there exists a huge market. There are about 53.7 million active adult smokers and 2.6 million active youth smokers in Indonesia (Ministry of Health, 2014).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there were 95 million smokers in Indonesia in 2015 and also 20% of the Indonesian youth were categorised as smokers. On the other hand, there are millions of passive smokers in Indonesia who must also be of concern. The high consumption of cigarettes in Indonesia is a result of citizens having easy access to buy and a wide distribution network which makes cigarettes available in all provinces in Indonesia. Another factor is that cigarette packs are cheaper in Indonesia than other countries, costing only USD \$1.4 a pack in Indonesia (WHO, 2012).

2 METHODS

This paper uses narrative review methods. Narrative review involves selecting studies that are compared and summarised on the basis of the author's experience, existing theories and models. The aim of this paper is an issue review, which is an investigation of an issue in a specific field of research. In this paper, the author wants to know what is the impact of tobacco control policy implementation for health in Indonesia.

3 RESULTS

Despite the fact that a pack of cigarettes in Indonesia is cheaper than in other countries, the Indonesian government actually tried to increase the nominal cigarette price in 2010, but Indonesia still has among the world's cheapest and most affordable cigarettes. Due to the increase of tobacco consumption and the increasing demand for cigarettes, the Indonesian government made a new policy. Increasing the excise tax has the potential not only to generate

additional revenues for the government, but also reduce cigarette consumption. Excise taxes on cigarettes was increased from 38% to 44% and, then, from 44% to 46%, but that is still below the maximum allowed by the country's national tax law. However, the tobacco industry is also a great source of income for the government through excises and taxes. The cigarette industry absorbs a lot of workers with skills and low formal education, so this is very helpful to the government's effort in reducing unemployment rate in Indonesia.

In the other hand, the development of the cigarette industry in Indonesia has another effect, especially concerning health. Widespread consumption of tobacco products in Indonesia implies negative consequences for the general health of the Indonesian population. Some of the adverse health effects include high prevalence of many diseases, such as cancer, cardiovascular, respiratory system disease, etc. This condition will prove fatal if there is no policy that regulates the high level of cigarette consumption, as the data showed that there are 53.7 million active adult smokers and 2.6 million active youth smokers in Indonesia. The youth population is a valuable asset to the economy, provided it can be absorbed by employment opportunities. Health is important to remain productive (South East Asia Tobacco Control Alliance. 2016).

It is undeniable that the tobacco industry also has a negative impact on consumer health, such as costs incurred for long-term medical expenses, lost employment due to declining health conditions, and effects on the health of passive smokers. Therefore, it needs to be measured, calculated and tested as to whether the benefits received by society, government, corporations and employees are comparable, greater, or less than the loss to be borne. Therefore, the government should pay more attention to making a firm policy to protect all elements. The government must be able to look at things from multiple perspectives, not just from the economic field. The policies made must be able to reduce the impact of the cost burden of cigarette-related disease.

4 DISCUSSION

The economic and social costs incurred by tobacco consumption continue to increase and this burden is largely borne by the poor. The annual rate of cigarette losses reaches 200 million US dollars, while the number of deaths from smoking-related

diseases continues to increase. In Indonesia, the total cost of tobacco consumption in 2005, which includes direct costs at the household level and indirect costs due to loss of productivity due to premature death, illness and disability was US \$18.5 billion. This amount was about five times higher than the excise revenue of US \$3.62 billion in 2005. (1 US \$ = Rp 8.500,00) (Barber, 2014).

The government needs to make regulations protecting children and teenagers from the aggressive efforts of the tobacco industry to capture them as long-term consumers and damage the present and future generations. Child and adolescent protection efforts from the dangers of smoking to reduce their access to cigarettes can be achieved by, among other things, raising the price of cigarettes, forbidding sale of cigarettes to persons under 18 and prohibiting the sale of bar cigarettes.

The government has a duty and authority to protect through increase in excise duty, a thorough ban on tobacco advertising, application of non-smoking areas, and creating warnings of health effects through the use of pictures.

The World Health Organization (WHO) issued the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), which is an international treaty, and became effective on February 27, 2005. The FCTC aims to protect current and future generations from health, social, environmental and economic consequences caused by smoking and exposure to smoke. In addition, to attract the world's attention to the problem of the tobacco epidemic, in 1987, the WHO created a World No Tobacco Day, commemorated annually every May 31 (WHO, 2012).

Indonesia is an agricultural country with most of its people working as farmers, some of whom are tobacco farmers. This matter ultimately lead to pros and cons against various government policies related to the control of cigarette in Indonesia. Pro groups support government policy with the idea that it can reduce the negative effects of high cigarette consumption, whereas the con groups consider that the policies will harm tobacco farmers, who are mostly from the middle to lower class. Therefore, it is necessary to have a policy review planning related to cigarette control to reduce the pros and cons. The policy review is expected to produce a new policy that does not harm any party. In addition, it can also provide tobacco use interventions and training to produce products other than cigarettes, so that tobacco farmers can still be productive.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The Indonesian government is expected to be able to overcome the various problems of the pros and cons related to tobacco control policy in order not to cause turmoil in society. The government should also seek tobacco management interventions and training into other products that continue to produce economic value. In addition, the need for socialisation to change the paradigm of society so that the benefits of taxing the cigarette industry does not benefit the country, but bears the burden of health costs to treatment of disease caused by consumption of cigarettes.

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