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Women, Children, and Tobacco

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Abstract

Tobacco has been a well-known commodity in Indonesia, especially since kretek has attracted immense attention to be sold internationally. Both tobacco farms and the tobacco industry have also been subjected to the undesirable circumstances of tobacco within the range of national and international frameworks. This research aspires to uncover the health perspective of tobacco smoking activities by underpinning the questionable way of nurturing children in the surroundings of tobacco as a way of protection towards the future of the tobacco industry. In order to unravel the novelty of the research on the subordinate roles of women and children, an enormous proportion of the communication field is embodied throughout the discourse analysis, such as nonverbal communication, standpoint theory and relational schemas following the sociopsychological tradition. Overall, the paper aims to come up with the latest general overview of tobacco-related issues with different scopes of analysis in favor of the discourse on nature, nurture, and culture.

Keywords

Women, Children, Tobacco, Discourse analysis

Introduction

It is not uncommon to come across tobacco-related activities in public spaces in Indonesia. From the plain transaction and tobacco smoking activities, sometimes leaving waste in inappropriate places, to the copious placements of bright-colored advertisements of the products, tobacco remains to be a well-known commodity.

As the country whose tobacco-related statistics has become the highest among countries in Southeast Asia (Reitsma et al., 2021), the issue of young tobacco smokers in Indonesia alone is noteworthy to analyze tobacco to a greater extent. In addition, approximately one-third of cancer incidence and mortality among Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members are attributable to tobacco smoking (Kristina, Endarti and Thavorncharoensap, 2016).

Uncovering the health perspective of tobacco smoking is certainly the sine qua non of enquiring into this habitual activity and other related activities. Acting upon tobacco epidemic spreading globally, the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) was developed in 2003 due to (1) complex factors, such as cross-border effects, including trade liberalization and direct foreign investment; and (2) other factors, such as global marketing, transnational tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship and the international movement of contraband and counterfeit cigarettes (WHO, 2003).

However, it is easier said than done given that over decades people still find ways to continue any tobacco-related activities beneath the alibi of health warnings to
justify individual consequences. The subject of individuality, then, calls for careful consideration as tobacco has accumulated several harmful impacts to the environment, particularly pollution of waters, deforestation, climate change and the waste it produces (WHO, 2017). It is safely summarized that “tobacco is imagined as a solved problem, a vanishing anachronism from our distant past” (Proctor, 2011, p. 2). Moreover, it is also no doubt that “a great deal of effort has gone into having such nonsense fill our newspapers and magazines, while most of the industry’s manufacturing remains invisible” (ibid).

Inevitably, the verbal notion of health warnings in mass media has a tendency to be ignored out of free choice without considering the sense of collectivity in terms of the environment. The nonverbal notion of health behaviors pertaining to tobacco-related activities seems to vanish in the air with the continuation of production and consumption. This contrast lays out the foundation of the problem that the nonverbal communication of people smoking tobacco and people working in the imperceptible exterior of the tobacco industry sticks in the minds of people to despise the risk regardless of the verbal communication of health warnings.

The research in this paper focuses on nonverbal communication in which nonverbal behaviors may form a universal language system (Burgoon, Guerrero and Floyd, 2016) with regard to the subordinate roles of women and children as part of the backbone of tobacco production and consumption. On top of that, nonverbal communication is expressed in the realm of “the study of behaviors other than words that create shared meaning between people who are interacting with one another” (Hale, 2003 as cited in ibid).

As a matter of fact, the rates of smoking among women are lower compared to their male compatriots inside and outside the country while Indonesian women have engaged in tobacco farming over the course of labor (Barraclough, 1999) since the dawn of time. Children have also engaged in planting, watering, harvesting, and applying fertilizer with the exposure to pesticides, working long hours and in extreme heat (Bureau of International Labor Affairs). The relationship between women and children against the backdrop of higher rates of smoking among men is coupled with the fact of kretek increasingly becoming a symbol of Indonesian culture by the 1990s (Arnez, 2009).

The objective of the research in this paper encompasses the reality of women when it comes to the discourse of nurturing children as a way of protection towards the future of tobacco. For the most part, the interrelation among nature, nurture and culture of tobacco is the center of the discourse surrounding kretek, a variant of cigarette made of tobacco that remains favorable over time, as heritage passed down from generation to generation.

To bring out the core aspects of gender and communication, standpoint theory is in the context of social groups and power relations (Griffin, 2012) in this paper. Moreover, human communication of sociopsychological tradition in the context of family is exercised (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008) to strengthen the interrelation mentioned earlier throughout discourse analysis used as the research method.

Therefore, the opposing stances in the enquiry of tobacco-related activities are obviously expected due to the characteristics of discourses potential to be contested and resisted by counter discourses and social practices (Jupp, 2006). The opposing stances are helpful for enquiring into the reality of women being questioned due to the undesirable circumstances of tobacco at the same time smoke-free prospects being escalated towards the future of the tobacco industry.

**Standpoint Theory: Social Groups and Power Relations**

Tobacco has undergone refinements over time in favor of cigarette consumption at the very least. Often delighted with the countless amount of billions in ad and
promotional revenues, cigarette consumption has positioned modern cigarettes as a work of art with the typical image of “a handy, handsome, white, svelte, smooth, and easily fondled consumer ‘good’” (Proctor, 2011, p. 486). In Asia alone, brand-stretching and sponsorship of tobacco includes women’s football and cigarette names are used for travel holidays, bistros, jewelry shops and so on while arts sponsorship elicits an aura of culture, glamor and respectability that appeal to both men and women (Mackay and Amos, 2003).

Breaking down the surroundings of tobacco in general, it is important to note that there lies a distinction between tobacco farm and tobacco industry. This explains the intricacy of the complex factors and the other factors in the global sense of the surroundings as arranged in the WHO FCTC developed in 2003 (WHO, 2003). Bearing the significant burden of tobacco, Indonesia is even the one and only country in Asia Pacific, not only Southeast Asia, that has yet to ratify the treaty alongside the irony (Astuti, Assunta and Freeman, 2020).

By economic size, tobacco leaf cultivation is a relatively small agricultural sub-sector with high levels of imports to satisfy domestic demand (World Bank Group, 2017). It comprises approximately 0.30% of the agricultural sector and 0.03% of gross domestic product in Indonesia (Rachmat, 2010 as cited in ibid). While the number of tobacco farms in the country mainly consists of middle-aged men with an elementary school education (ibid), the inequality of gender pay emerges at nearly 23% that on average women earn less money per month (Rahman, 2020). As the fifth-largest tobacco producer in the world, it is also not surprising that children suffer from the side effects of labor in tobacco farms, including nausea, vomiting, headaches or dizziness and all symptoms consistent with acute nicotine poisoning (The Jakarta Post, 2016).

The blending of tobacco with clove leaves that has grown to be popular in the country for manufacturing kretek in the domestic industry concurrently intensifies the cultivation of tobacco leaves (Sahadewo et al., 2020). Initially designed for health purposes of human lungs to relieve chest pain and asthma with clove leaves, kretek has attracted immense attention to be sold internationally ever since the 1800s when it marked the beginning of a long history of tobacco in the country (Arnez, 2009; and Hanusz, 2000 as cited in Palipudi et al., 2020). In spite of the bleak reality of tobacco farms, the portrayal of virtuous narratives along with the instrument of corporate social responsibility (CSR) seemingly prolongs the ever problematic existence of the tobacco industry (Saputra, 2021).

All of this situation insinuates the roles of different social groups which serve different standpoints composed of men, women and children in the same surroundings. A standpoint is necessary to view the world as a location for focusing attention on certain features of the natural and social landscape while obscuring others (Griffin, 2012). There is one more key takeaway to dissect the standpoints, besides social groups, called power relations to provide the dynamics of the roles. These key takeaways out of standpoint theory are incorporated for further context in regard to the interrelation among nature, nurture and culture of tobacco.

As it becomes clear that different standpoints of different social groups affect worldviews to be likewise, the importance of social groups cannot be dismissed that “the social groups within which we are located powerfully shape what we experience and know as well as how we understand and communicate with ourselves, others, and the world” (Wood, 2004, p. 212-220 as cited in ibid). Even though each social group is put in the same surroundings of tobacco, forcing them to cope with the difficulties of labor on a daily basis together, the consequences of labor occur in different ways due to the different facets of experience and knowledge.

The realm of nonverbal behaviors which each social group draws upon to
understand and communicate, thus, appears to sustain the labor despite the undesirable circumstances of tobacco. Borrowing the illustration of ‘social behavior’ in terms of organization, the elimination of certain aspects of ‘individual behavior’ found in each standpoint of social groups strikes as plausible to reckon only with “those respects in which it corresponds to certain norms of conduct which have been developed by human beings in association with one another and which tend to perpetuate themselves by tradition” (Sapir, 1949, p. 545). Accordingly, the consequences of labor known and felt by these individuals found in each standpoint of social groups belong to the certain respects of ‘individual behavior’ to be eliminated and forgotten for the sake of certain norms of conduct in continuing tobacco production.

Taking the individuality in the realm of verbal behaviors into account, there seems to be a consequential gap in which these individuals are free to consume as much as they wish to have however unhealthy it can be as long as health warnings come into view. In the meantime, it is not so much a result of choice coming from the social groups in the realm of nonverbal behaviors to endure the consequences in the undesirable circumstances of tobacco.

To begin with, kretek workers are typically female at the average age around 40 years old with a low level of education and mostly under unwritten contract with their firms in a country home to tens of million tobacco smokers estimated as of 2015, making it one of the highest rates of cigarette consumption in the world (World Bank Group, 2017). Dubbed as the largest economy in Southeast Asia, the increase prevalence of tobacco smoking is apparent as well in parallel with the changing in socioeconomic profile of the country whose economic growth is the second fastest growing economy after China in which (1) the prevalence of current adult male tobacco smoking is 64.9% predicted to increase to 79% in the year of 2030; and (2) the youth male prevalence of current tobacco use is 23.0% (Andarini, 2019). Even though the global smoking prevalence has declined, the total number of smokers remains high due to population growth, that at least 940 million males and 193 million females ages 15 or older globally were current smokers in 2019 (Tobacco Atlas, 2022).

Setting aside the social group of children for a bit, such illustration on the dynamics of the roles gives the impression that the social group of men has a tendency to overshadow the social group of women, leaving them more excluded even in the same realm of nonverbal behaviors. Hence, it is useful to incorporate power relations here that “when people speak from the opposite sides of power relations, the perspective from the lives of the less powerful can provide a more objective view than the perspective from the lives of the more powerful” (Harding, 2004 as cited in Griffin, 2012, p. 448).

Based on the illustration, the social group of women resides in the perspective of the less powerful and is supposedly able to hold a more objective view towards, for example, the inequality of gender pay. Yet, the role of women will likely end up to be questioned as much as the role of men is questioned already if pay raise is implemented to be equal in relation to the discourse of nurturing children despite the moral fact that everyone deserves to be treated equally.

It finally leaves space for children to be in the perspective of the least powerful for the simple fact they should not be surrounded by and suffer from the undesirable circumstances of tobacco. In this context, the social group of children holds a far more objective view due to the standpoint of a child being unable to speak that “it is impossible to say what an individual is doing unless we have tacitly accepted the essentially arbitrary modes of interpretation that social tradition is constantly suggesting to us from the very moment of our birth” (Sapir, 1949, p. 546).

Sociopsychological Tradition in Discourse Analysis

Strictly speaking, it is unreasonable to escape from the concept of child labor in the
surroundings of tobacco. Child labor essentially refers to “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development” (International Labour Organization and Interparliamentary Union, 2002, p. 16), although the accurate definition of work actually varies depending on the child’s age, the types of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries (ibid).

Concerning the report of child labor in tobacco farms, it was found that the predominant age among children interviewed for the report was classified as underage in which they started working before age 15 on land farmed by their families, their neighbors and other members of their communities with no wages for their work at times (Human Rights Watch, 2016). It is worth reiterating, then, that it is not only the social group of women who are not exactly treated well and financially fit in the surroundings of tobacco. In fact, the social group of children is at worst as tobacco labor is not an ideal way to nurture these children.

This indicates that interpersonal behavior in the family, not in the limited contexts of social groups and power relations delineated earlier, is crucial in which relational schemas as a theory in sociopsychological tradition comes into play. The theory encapsulates “family types on the ways in which family members as individuals think about families” (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008, p. 199-200). Additionally, relational schemas help organize a set of memories made use whenever one interacts with other people from specific to general, such as (1) knowledge of specific relationships, what one knows about one’s relationship with other members of one’s family; (2) knowledge of types of relationships, what one knows about family relationships as a type; and (3) knowledge about social relationships in general, what one knows about relationships in general (ibid).

To sum up the relational schemas, the knowledge brings forth an image of relationships based on one’s experience and guides one’s behavior within relationships (ibid). In the perspective of a child alone, one uses the knowledge extracted from interaction with other members in one’s family first. If deemed insufficient, one proceeds to use the knowledge extracted from interaction within the family as a whole. The third knowledge happens as the last resort that, in the case of tobacco labor, the interaction among children in the context of a social group is formed.

What is more is that such interaction at the interpersonal level happens in the realm of nonverbal behaviors. Thus, nonverbal signals exist to be part of a universally recognized and understood code (Burgoon, Guerrero and Floyd, 2016) among children by responding to “gestures with an extreme alertness and, one might almost say, in accordance with an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known to none and understood by all” (Sapir, 1949, p. 556). Nonverbal signals of tobacco labor among children exist in which their individual sufferings are unknown at the same time understood as a social group due to certain norms of conduct perpetuating themselves by tradition.

Again, the undesirable circumstances of tobacco prove the opposing stances of the two realms to a larger extent, especially when in reality health warnings do not necessarily fill in the consequential gap. As a qualitative method, discourse analysis offers the suitable exploration of the connections between language, communication, knowledge, power and social practices by ‘reading’ texts, conversations and documents (Jupp, 2006). The connections in such a variety of elements would hopefully take shape to analyze health warnings, CSR and WHO FCTC in regard to the interrelation among nature, nurture and culture of tobacco as the center of the discourse.

Before moving to the analysis, it is substantial to keep in mind that the subordinate roles of women and children underpin the questionable way of nurturing children in the first place. As it has been learned by now that pay raise for the social group of
women is not so much of a solution and the standpoint of a child is the least powerful in the social group of children, it looks more beneficial to put a spotlight on the subordinate role of children rather than to keep insisting on the inability of women in contrast to the inability of men.

There are several questions that can be explored in doing so for the analysis (Jupp, 2006). In the first part, the question revolves around gap, silence and absent presence in connection with health warnings, CSR and WHO FCTC. Respectively, the gap is in connection with health warnings for health consequences of tobacco use, the silence is in connection with CSR for the aid of human development and the absent presence is in connection with WHO FCTC for the system of health cooperation. In the last part, the questions revolve around health warnings as texts and CSR as conversations for the smoke-free prospects towards the future of the tobacco industry.

While it is already palpable that the gap comes to the surface between the two realms of behaviors as briefly discussed earlier, the silence and the absent presence will not be exercised in terms of the opposing stances. This is partly due to the context of power relations about opposite sides in standpoint theory. So, the result of the discussion on the gap will set up the ground for the following discussions on the silence and the absent presence. The entire discussion will not be subjected to the segregations of the elements, namely language, communication, knowledge, power and social practices due to that the segregations will only violate the exploration of the connections.

On the particular order of the ‘reading’ technique in discourse analysis, the last part will explore two questions. The structure in the last part will also differ from the structure in the first part in which the two questions will set up the ground for the smoke-free prospects towards the future of the tobacco industry against the backdrop of WHO FCTC. The first question will explore the consistency of health warnings as texts. Meanwhile, the second question will explore the contradictions of CSR management as conversations. Not only the structure that differs in this last part of the discussion, the segregations of the elements will be expected too for language, communication and knowledge in the exploration of consistency and, then, power in the exploration of contradictions. Finally, social practices will thoroughly be expected in the smoke-free prospects as the result of the discussion.

The concept of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiated by the United Nations (UN) will also be explored to pick apart the interrelation among nature, nurture and culture of tobacco in the latter part of discussion based on the concept of human development. As it is crystal clear that child labor is not sustainable by nature, both concepts will be expected to intertwine to elevate the discourse.

**Tobacco Use along with Human Development and Health Cooperation**

Contract farming between individual farmers and the tobacco company has turned out to be the major way of producing tobacco aligned with liberalization allowing
widespread agricultural transformations since the late 1980s in various places all over the world (Simmons, Winters and Patrick, 2005 as cited in Amigo, 2010), not too long ago from the point in time when kretek increasingly becoming a symbol of Indonesian culture by the 1990s (Arnez, 2009). In a nutshell, the realization of contract farming apparently still stumbles in improving the quality of the farmers’ lives in favor of the tobacco company’s commercial needs (Susilowati, Rachmi and Riwayanti, 2018) as it has been widely conducted in many areas of the country (Eaton and Shepherd, 2001 as cited in ibid).

This strengthens the brief discussions in the previous sections that the consequential gap is real between the social groups in the realm of nonverbal behaviors and the social groups in the realm of verbal behaviors. Health warnings for health consequences of tobacco use are indeed commercial-centric in which there is zero exposure of the social groups in the realm of nonverbal behaviors suffering from the undesirable circumstances of tobacco. Even though these health warnings are lacking in actuality of age appropriation in the form of minimum age, which put the social group of children in both realms similarly, this section focuses more on health warnings as simply free pass.

Exposing the tobacco smokers to those sufferings in the realm of nonverbal behaviors, of course, could possibly hinder the rise of commercial profit as well as could be morally strange for supporting the social groups who suffer by consuming more cigarettes. In other words, it would be a weak reason-to-believe (RTB) on, for instance, a cigarette pack through the branding lens. Tobacco industry has been able to take advantage of it as the drive of tobacco smoking activities with every single inside and outside space of it being a mini billboard opportunity to entice first-timers or tobacco smokers (Bigwanto and Soerojo, 2020).

Nevertheless, the regulations of warnings on cigarette packs have encountered changes over the years. The country issued regulations within the range of text warnings on all tobacco products in 2003 followed by pictorial health warnings to cover 40% of both the front and back of all cigarette packs in 2012 (Tobacco Labelling Resource Centre). The pictorial health warnings are composed of warnings on the danger of smoking near infants, the danger of smoking that causes death and the danger of smoking that deteriorates body organs (ibid). Percentage-wise, 17.0% of all deaths in the country are caused by tobacco with kretek being the most widely consumed variant and representing about 95% of the cigarette market (Zheng et al., 2018 as cited in Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 2021).

The loads of illicit cigarettes, on the other side, take considerable part in the arena of tobacco-related issues. The lack of legitimate excise bands and health warnings exacerbates the situation in issuing solid regulations due to the narrative built by the tobacco industry on the increase of illicit trade in correlation with the increase of excise tax (Kartika et al., 2019). However, it would likely be premature to deduce that the appearance of health warnings is the mere cause of suffering in the undesirable circumstances of tobacco. In spite of the high rates of healthcare expenditures for smoking-related illnesses (ibid), it would be much safer to underline free pass as the postulate of health warnings not being able to solve health problems at the core.

In result, health warnings as the free pass can be regarded as the entrance for CSR to be involved by glorifying the positive image of the tobacco industry which does not rely upon WHO FCTC while running the business. The glorification of such a positive image of the tobacco industry, nonetheless, seemingly extends the silence in which the social groups in tobacco farms are out of the picture as long as the consumers are served with the comfort of positivity regardless of the absent presence of WHO FCTC to set the bar of tobacco-related activities in the global sense of actuality.

As a general rule, it would be futile to cut off the thick causality between CSR and
WHO FCTC in a plethora of studies on tobacco-related activities. For a starter, there is a contentious debate among the international community, including Indonesia (Tandilittin and Luetge, 2015), in which WHO insists that CSR in the tobacco industry should be banned as it inherently weakens tobacco control (WHO, 2013 as cited in ibid). By the same token, a westernization of the Indonesian tobacco market by purchasing domestic kretak manufacturers impedes the ratification of WHO FCTC (Hurt et al., 2012) following the unsuccessful attempts to penetrate the market in the 1990s (Lawrence and Collin, 2004 as cited in ibid).

The concept of human development plays a role in the aftermath of the so-called CSR instead of digging into the theory of social responsibility to avoid the analysis on the silence in the realm of nonverbal behaviors being inseparable with tobacco control, which has remained largely gender blind with little integration of gender considerations in research, policy and programmes (Amos et al., 2011). For advancing the wellbeing of humans in this realm, it is neat to bring forth such a concept coined by the UN slightly in accordance with WHO FCTC. Approaching the discourse on the silence with this concept means, according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to focus on people and their opportunities and choices for “expanding the richness of human life, rather than simply the richness of the economy in which human beings live” (UNDP).

Recalling the discussion in the theoretical section, the concept of human development is well-suited with the non-preferable pay raise in the realm of nonverbal behaviors. This is not to say that focusing on people undermines the value of economic growth at all, but “income growth is seen as a means to development rather than an end in itself” (ibid). Once more, it would be bluntly pointless to struggle for a more decent pay raise in the social group of women due to the high rates of healthcare expenditures for smoking-related illnesses (Kartika et al., 2019). The aid of human development the so-called CSR delivers, therefore, looks like an easy-way-out from the existing silence they would probably fail to cover, although in reality it extends the silence.

Engulfed with the fight for gender equality led by women and also supported by growing numbers of men, the concept of human development is indeed primarily one of the movements that defined the 20th century (UNDP, 1995). Firstly, it is tenable to give people more opportunities in the light of more freedom to live lives they value (UNDP). Yet, the undesirable circumstances of tobacco do not permit the basics of the movement which emphasized the concept in the first place, especially when the social group of men tends to overshadow the social group of women. Secondly, it is fundamental to give people more choices in that they are not forced to make use of opportunities as the choices they make are their own concern in order to guarantee their own happiness (ibid). At this last point of the concept of human development, the social group of children suffers the most out of the no-choice situation in the undesirable circumstances of tobacco.

All of which reveal however much the amount of the aid coming from tobacco industry, the concept would never turn out to be successfully applied as the aid has a deafening impact to the silence in the realm of nonverbal behaviors that would never cease to end. Such entire silence is worsened with the present absence of WHO FCTC in the country as a comprehensive way of international health cooperation for tobacco control. Besides, the lobbying activities in Southeast Asia were against tobacco taxes and graphic health warnings (Amul, Tan and Eijk, 2021) with the ‘Roadmap of Tobacco Products and Excise Policy 2007-2020’ in the country to reach a 12% increase in annual cigarette production up to 2020 and to participate in policy-making (Hurt et al., 2012). It is no dispute, then, that the ratification of WHO FCTC has awfully led to nowhere but a present absence up to now.
In connection with the present absence of WHO FCTC, affordability, meaning the price of a product relative to a measure of income, is prominent to point out the negative externalities of cigarettes that pose challenges for public health with dramatic action required to make them less affordable over time (Blecher, 2018). Aiming for such dramatic action brings to increases in tobacco taxes as one of the most effective and proven measures (WHO, 2020) which would expectantly ease up the initiatives of economically viable alternatives for tobacco farmers and workers towards a healthier workforce and higher labor productivity (ibid). Recently, tobacco tax reform took effect on January 1, 2022, finally to reduce the production of cigarettes and to reduce the affordability of cigarettes in order to decrease smoking prevalence in the country (Tobacconomics, 2022).

During the very long period of time before tobacco tax reform took effect in the country up to now, some other policies have been implemented in the present absence of WHO FCTC, which at the very basic requires warnings to cover 50% or more of a package’s principal surfaces (Hammond, 2011). One of them has been implemented to regulate tobacco advertising as well as the promotion and sponsorship of tobacco products, to introduce smoke-free public places and also to regulate the packaging and labeling of tobacco products under Law No. 36/2009 on Health (Asia Pacific Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, 2017). The complete implementation of this policy is, however, not actually free from defects. For instance, tobacco advertising is allocated on national television between 9.30 p.m. and 5.00 a.m. with several limitations only on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorships (TAPS) to regulate outdoor billboards as well as print media promotion and to prohibit publicity of tobacco sponsorship (Astuti, Assunta and Freeman, 2021). The expensive cost of placing advertisements on television is ironically the reason behind the reluctance of placement and dissemination of the anti-smoking message on electronic media like television by the Ministry of Health (Rosemary et al., 2021).

**Texts and Conversations for the Smoke-Free Prospects**

Considering the sense of collectivity in terms of the environment in the country, the commodity of tobacco has been deeply etched to be a generational habit to the point of utopian afterthought for pinpointing nature on the interrelation among nature, nurture and culture of tobacco. Instead of being a source of shame, the kretek industry has served to be a source of pride in that any attempt of tobacco control is a subaltern depiction of neocolonial plot against an indigenous industry when it is increasingly foreign-owned in reality (Welker, 2021).

The consistency of health warnings as texts and the contradictions of CSR management as conversations are, hence, predictable to be subjected given that there is an attitude of dilemma to a certain degree towards the tobacco industry, the kretek industry in particular. Only then, the smoke-free prospects in terms of the environment transpire.

Addressing health warnings which are not fully enforced in actuality, the social groups of children in both realms suffer similarly from age appropriation in the form of minimum age. This invites the consistency of health warnings to be explored in what kind of language and how texts are communicated. Concentrating on health warnings as texts, the pictorial health warnings are not the subject to be explored again in this section.

One of the biggest indications which determines the huge debacle of tobacco smoking activities among youth in Indonesia is the aggressive exposure of TAPS on tobacco products. Even though the texts of health warnings explicitly display age 18 as the minimum age for consuming tobacco products, plenty of music and sport events in the country are sponsored by the tobacco industry despite the national ban on tobacco sponsoring events involving minors stated in Government Regulation No. 109
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of 2012 (Government of Republic of Indonesia, 2012 as cited in Septiono et al., 2021). Moreover, the reliance upon the sales of restrictions on tobacco products in which the sale prohibited to persons under age 18 (Tobacco Control Laws, 2019) is an inadequate indicator to guarantee the success of the enforcement in actuality, especially when consumers with a diverse range of age have the wider access to internet sales in the present.

The previous discussion on child labor in tobacco farms is not even pleasant to add into the subject of health warnings as texts. Before scrutinizing the realm of nonverbal behaviors to explore language, it is indispensable to bear a universal language system in mind in which the system enables nonverbal signals for “people to communicate with one another at the most basic level regardless of their familiarity with the prevailing verbal language system” (Burgoon, Guerrero and Floyd, 2016, p. 24). In the realm of nonverbal behaviors with the dearth of verbal language system both on written contracts and age labeling, the social group of children is automatically formed by falling back on their “nonverbal communication system to achieve some degree of mutual understanding” (ibid) when words with their family members and family as a whole fail them out of relational schemas.

Now it shows that mutual understanding sustains tobacco labor among the social group of children in the undesirable circumstances of tobacco when the consequences individually known and felt are recognized and understood by all with their knowledge about social relationships in general. Age labeling communicated on tobacco products in the realm of verbal behaviors is, thus, conceived to be an empty promise of health warnings as texts by default. The loophole of the consistency already exists way long before age labeling is communicated by the tobacco industry to attract consumers by selling the justification of individual consequences beneath the alibi of health warnings. Furthermore, the consistency of health warnings as texts is prone to be crushed by tobacco-related activities among the social group of children in the realm of verbal behaviors with the lack of tobacco control.

Tracing back the loophole of the consistency on age labeling to the realm of nonverbal behaviors, health warnings as free pass on tobacco products communicated in public opens the doorway for the contradictions of CSR management to a fault. Tobacco industry itself confesses that issues beyond tobacco are vital for CSR management, such as “child labour, human rights and the necessity to create corporate codes of ethical conduct in order to stave off anti-corporate attacks” (Hirschhorn, 2005, p. 450). Unfortunately, the contradictions of CSR management exist in the country as tobacco industry negligently jeopardizes tobacco labor with underage workers in tobacco farms (Human Rights Watch, 2016) as discussed in the first part of the analysis.

The persistence of the contradictions sadly exist at early age too in the realm of verbal behaviors by conducting CSR management in the field of sport, for instance, through badminton scholarships for children (Siahaya and Smits, 2020). The findings of this CSR management describe at least three points of glorifying the positive image maintained in tobacco industry which are (1) branding tobacco as a sport brand of health and happiness; (2) recruiting children to become badminton athletes and nurturing them to become badminton world champions; and (3) integrating sport as a corporate culture (ibid). All of which essentially betray the concept of human development.

Similar to the idle contrast of inabilities between women and men in the context of social groups, it does not look more beneficial either to keep insisting on which realm of behaviors the social group of children suffers the most in the context of power relations. This is so due to the standpoint of a child being unable to speak as much and depending on the essentially arbitrary modes of interpretation in which social
tradition is constantly suggesting from the very moment of birth (Sapir, 1949). In a word, the social group of children in both realms of behaviors still holds a far more objective view as the standpoint of a child is still the least powerful.

The contradictions of CSR management for disaster relief corroborates the subordinate role of children even more. Such philanthropic tactic of CSR management improves the public image of the tobacco industry to the greater societal good in order to gain maximum public exposure and influence through, for instance, a promotional event following the eruption of Mount Merapi in Java by dispatching rescue workers, vehicles and tents with the logo of tobacco products on them to the site (Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 2011). This way the tobacco industry in the country has seamlessly managed disaster relief to link CSR with sustainable development and went as far towards the UN SDG 11 for Sustainable Cities and Communities (PT HM Sampoerna Tbk.).

The conduct of greenwashing in the tobacco industry is surely not new in many countries as it is utilized by controversial industries to market environmentally friendly goods and image (Houghton et al., 2018). Environmental labeling of products and services has indeed multiplied in recent years to be further integrated in marketing strategies, although it closely resembles greenwashing on some occasions devoid of any meaningful underlying sensitivity or change in practice to boost sales (Houghton et al., 2018). Ideally, greenwashing integrated in CSR management sparks conversations rarely isolated and rather connected to one another over time creating communication contexts much larger than any one conversation (Littlejohn and Foss, 2008), including disaster relief on the relationship among different social groups.

At last, sustainability is a critical keyword to consider the sense of collectivity in terms of the environment. Orchestrated in a total set of seventeen goals, such an international agenda of sustainable development targets the enforcement of implementing WHO FCTC in all countries under the UN SDG 3 for Good Health and Well-being (UN). The 17 UN SDGs themselves were established in 2015 to be hopefully accomplished by 2030 (UN), roughly allotted the first six years with suspicion in the contradictions of CSR management before tobacco tax reform took effect on January 1, 2022 (Tobacconomics, 2022). The policy is in an effort for tobacco reduction and apt to be tailored to the legal instrument as advised under Part III for Measures relating to the Reduction of Demand for Tobacco, precisely Article 6 for Price and tax measures to reduce the demand for tobacco (WHO, 2003).

The sense of collectivity in terms of the environment is further detailed in WHO FCTC under Part V for Protection of the Environment, precisely Article 18 for Protection of the environment and the health of persons that states as follows (ibid).

“In carrying out their obligations under this Convention, the Parties agree to have due regard to the protection of the environment and the health of persons in relation to the environment in respect of tobacco cultivation and manufacture within their respective territories.”

Even so, the overall progress in the attainment of the 17 UN SDGs has met a lot more obstacles with the coronavirus pandemic going on (UN, 2021) during more or less a couple of years as of 2022 when tobacco tax reform finally took effect for smoke-free prospects towards the future of the tobacco industry. In contrast with human development, the divergence of both national and international frameworks on tobacco-related issues has likely been molded in such a way to prevail with the slightest chance of sustainable development to zero in on the value of economic growth.

Against the backdrop of the absent presence of WHO FCTC, it is foreseeable to find, for instance, the UN SDG 8 for Decent Work and Economic Growth meticulously formulated right at the center of the mapping by the tobacco industry while the UN
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SDG 3 for Good Health and Well-being is missing in the following (PT HM Sampoerna Tbk.).

Betraying the essence of human development on the richness of human life, the mapping of the UN SDGs by the tobacco industry was arrayed for the richness of the economy. In spite of the reiteration by the tobacco industry on the attempts to align with the UN SDGs, it is hard to imagine the verticality of human life in the future without taking care of health and well-being over time around the environment where human life resides. The 17 UN SDGs themselves are not to be directly held liable due to the condemnation of the international agenda as nonsense would be unmistakably premature. As part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, these 17 UN SDGs are intended to be a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone and everywhere in which countries share their good or best practices to each other over the course of the action (UN).

Practices, specific and recurrent types of human action and activity are, arguably, the most fundamental ‘building blocks’ of social reality (McMillan, 2018). Social practices of tobacco labor in the undesirable circumstances of tobacco are, therefore, manifested among the social groups of children as long as knowledge about social relationships in general is entailed in the nonverbal communication system to achieve some degree of mutual understanding. It is so given that there is no practice existing in a vacuum in which any practice is part of a broader realm of activity with some degree of ‘internal’ interconnectedness (ibid).

Pinpointing nature on the interrelation among nature, nurture and culture of tobacco, good or best practices of countries in implementing the international agenda are, then, questioned for the smoke-free prospects towards the future of the tobacco industry. In this particular case, the 17 UN SDGs as a whole need to be well-interlinked from one to another in order not to toughen the imperceptible exterior of the tobacco industry and to magnify the suffering among the social groups of children in both realms. The duality of practices on sustainable development in question would
hopefully be diminished by considering the sense of collectivity in terms of the environment for nurturing children as a way of protection with regard to the subordinate roles of women and children in the circumstances of tobacco.

Conclusion

Reflecting upon the health perspective of tobacco smoking in the country, it has been more than a decade since the predicament of a proposed clause in the Indonesian National Health Bill being mysteriously removed in the short period of time after it was passed by Parliament and before the President signed the bill into law for identifying tobacco as an addictive substance (Amul, Tan and Eijk, 2021). This further verifies that the dynamics of each standpoint among social groups of men, women and children in the country have long been severely plagued by the shortage of cooperative line of communication among national and international frameworks.

The understanding of communication, both verbal and nonverbal, demonstrates that power relations have suffered for a long time over the reality that the social group of children is in the least powerful position in terms of health perspective. It is agreeable, then, that the smoke-free prospects towards the future of the tobacco industry result in disorder of contexts among nature, nurture and culture.

References


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