

Tobacco Pack Surveillance System (TPackSS): Developing a Codebook for E-cigarette Design Features and Marketing Appeals

Background

The TPackSS protocol has been used to collect over 6,900 cigarette packs across low- and middle-income countries since 2013, providing information on compliance with labeling policies, design features and marketing appeals. With the expansion of e-cigarettes, we needed to adapt the codebook for the heterogeneity of e-cigarettes.

Methods

- The first TPackSS e-cigarette collection was in 2022 in Indonesia
- To develop a codebook, we reviewed physical e-cigarette packaging, conducted a literature review and met with research groups to discuss lessons learned from their work
- Compared to cigarettes, e-cigarette packaging displayed more unique shapes and seemed tailored to a younger audience
- We adapted the codebook to reflect the totality of the youth-centered design by adding appeals such as cartoons and fun fonts
- Due to resource constraints, we coded only the external layer of packaging visible to consumers at the point of sale

The TPackSS e-cigarette codebook allows for examination of marketing appeals, design features, and policy compliance on packs



Learn more about the
 Tobacco Pack Surveillance
 System (TPackSS)

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Results

- We collapsed our previous separate codebooks on intake, warning labels, and design features & marketing appeals into a single codebook for e-cigarettes
- We added questions on the external packaging layer, nicotine type and presentation, and cessation aid claims
- We expanded flavor and youth appeal answer options
- Packs were coded qualitatively for cultural appeals (e.g., use of Indonesian celebrities, slang, foods) by Indonesian coders

Conclusions

- Comprehensive surveillance of e-cigarettes in low- and middle-income countries is lacking
- The market rapidly changes, and continual monitoring is required to inform countermeasures
- Our freely available codebook can serve as a blueprint for researchers globally to perform similar surveillance of e-cigarette pack design and marketing appeals

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