

Analyzing Culturally Specific Youth Appeals on E-cigarette Packaging

An Indonesian Case Study



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Disclosures & Funding Sources

- This work was supported with funding from Bloomberg Philanthropies' Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use (bloomberg.org).
- Competing interests: Dr. Cohen was a paid consultant in litigation against a tobacco company

	Tobacco industry	E-cigarette & nicotine product industry	Pharma industry
Has the presented work received funding or other means of support from any of the following sources?	NO	NO	NO
Have any of the authors received funding (including consultancy) from any of these sources in the past five years?	NO	NO	NO



Photography Allowed





Background

Indonesia & E-cigarettes

- Youth ages 13–15 (2019)
 - 14% reported current e-cigarette use
 - 23% reported ever trying e-cigarettes
- Lacked regulations on e-cigarette sales/marketing until July 2024, when new regulations were adopted
- Plain packaging, health warning labels, and a ban on non-tobacco flavored e-cigarettes are scheduled to go into effect in July 2026



Exposure to **e-cigarette marketing** is associated with future e-cigarette use



Objective

- Study examined marketing appeals used on e-cigarette packaging purchased in Indonesia
- This analysis focused on culturally-specific marketing that may appeal to youth



Methods

- Following the Tobacco Pack Surveillance System (TPackSS) protocol, unique e-cigarette packages were systematically purchased in Indonesia in Sept.–Oct. 2022
- E-cigarette liquids, disposable devices, and disposable cartridges/pods were collected



Vendor Selection

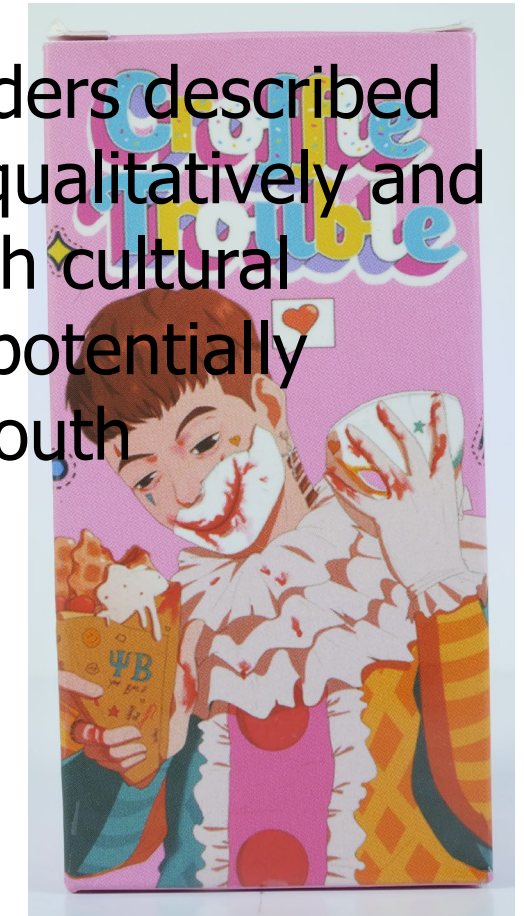
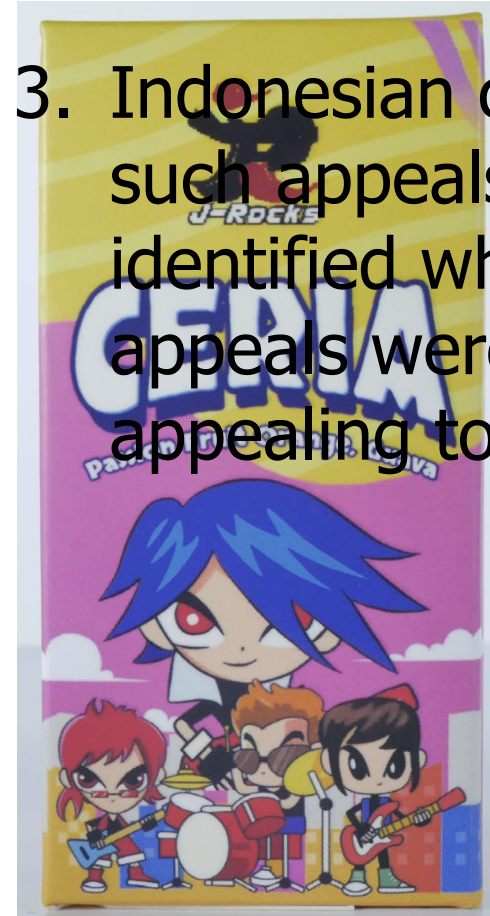
- Packs purchased at three vape stores located in neighborhoods of different socioeconomic status in each of three diverse cities
 - Stores selected for wide variety of products (based on online images/descriptions)
- Unique e-cigarettes also purchased **if seen** during walking protocol to purchase cigarettes from 12 neighborhoods across each city



Coding

1. Packaging was double-coded by non-Indonesian coders for marketing appeals that would likely appeal to youth
2. All packaging was also coded by Indonesian young adults for the presence of text/imagery specific to Indonesian consumers

3. Indonesian coders described such appeals qualitatively and identified which cultural appeals were potentially appealing to youth



Categorization

Culturally-specific youth appeals were categorized as:

- Youth slang/language or humorous content
- Entertainment and pop culture references
- Recreation
- Flavor





Results

Cultural & Youth Appeals

- **825** unique e-cigarettes were purchased
 - **218** had an Indonesian cultural appeal
 - Among these, **44 (20%)** had a culturally-specific appeal that also **likely appeals to youth**



Slang & Humor

- **19** presented **youth slang/language** and/or **humorous content**



Slang for
"cool"

Slang for
"no worries"



Slang for
"that's a mess"



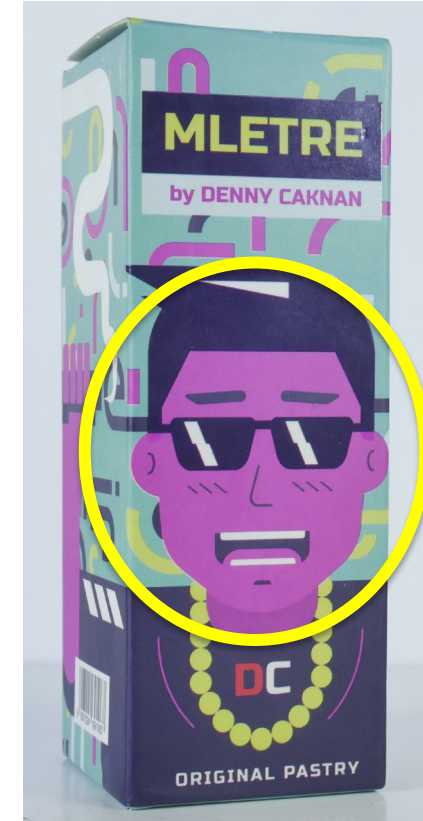
Entertainment and Pop Culture

18 contained entertainment/pop culture references such as:

- Social media influencers
- Singers/musicians
- Comedians
- Gamers



Likeness of Indonesian comedian/actor
Ananta Rispo



Likeness of Indonesian singer/musician
Denny Caknan



Entertainment and Pop Culture



Likeness of **Summerlane**, Indonesian band

Dyland Pros, Indonesian gamer/YouTuber with 16.3 million subscribers



Entertainment and Pop Culture



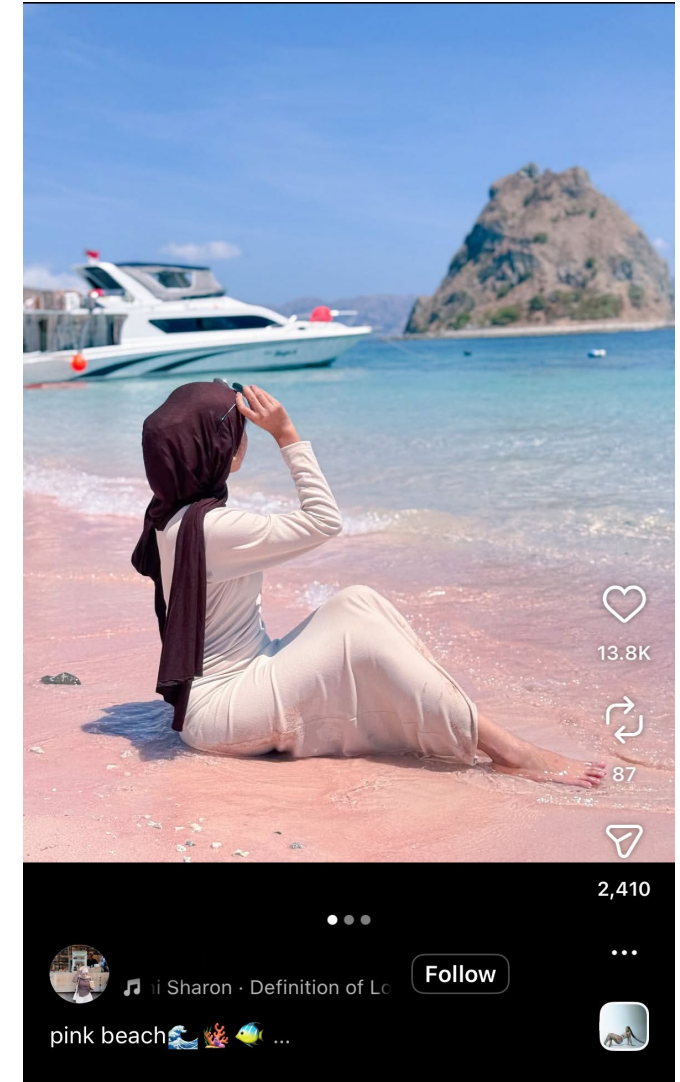
**Ndarboy
Genk,**
Indonesian
singer/musician

**Elizabeth
Angela
Lorenza,**
Indonesian
influencer with
2.6 million
followers on
Instagram



Recreation

6 referenced a popular local destination



Flavor

One featured a type of **low-priced alcohol** that is often consumed by **Indonesian youth**



"Amer" stands for
"anggur merah"
(*"red wine"*)





Conclusions

Cultural Youth Appeals

- Marketing via packaging incorporated references that resonate with youth (e.g., Indonesian slang and pop culture references)
- Many of these references included influencer/celebrity names or likenesses
- Culturally-tailored age-based targeting may have an even stronger impact on consumer behavior



Policy Implications

Findings of **e-cigarettes with youth-specific cultural appeals** supports the implementation of Indonesia's new **e-cigarette packaging provisions to reduce product appeal among youth.**



Source: "This week Israel became the first country to implement plain packaging of e-cigarettes." (Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada)



Other Considerations

- E-cigarette manufacturers may attempt to undermine these new regulations, once implemented
 - Tobacco companies have used brand names and concept descriptors to circumvent packaging and flavor restrictions
- Stricter regulations that ban the use of names/likeness of celebrities/influencers, as well as official collaborations with these individuals, and the use of concept descriptors should be considered



Images of Collected E-cigarette Packs



*Available via the
Tobacco Pack Surveillance System
(TPackSS) database*





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