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## **The Implementation of The Health Protocol Policy in Preventing the Dissemination of COVID-19 in Minimarkets, Indonesia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Despite governments' development and enforcement of preventive guidelines, COVID-19 spreads across nations, causing unprecedented economic losses and mortality. Public places remain hotspots for COVID-19 transmission due to many people present; however, preventive measures are poorly enforced. Minimarkets are among the high-risk establishments due to the high interactions, making compliance with the COVID-19 preventive guidelines paramount. However, there has been limited evidence on compliance with the set COVID-19 prevention guidelines. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the implementation of the COVID-19 prevention guidelines among minimarkets at Makassar City, South Sulawesi. This is a qualitative study. Data were collected using a semi-structured questioner. Total 11 informants participated; they were minimarket managers, staff, consumers, and the COVID-19 task forces. The data were analyzed using NVivo. The application of regulation Number HK.01.07 /Menkes/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the public in public places and facilities to prevent and control coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), we found that most of the minimarkets have implemented health protocols, especially in washing hands with soap. In addition, although the application of social distancing during the visit (transaction) process at minimarkets has not been maximized due to crowded conditions and narrow locations. This study, therefore, suggests the need for the health authorities to proactively sensitize those involved in the implementation of COVID-19 measures on the importance and mechanisms of implementing health protocols.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Health Protocols, Mini Markets

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**BACKGROUND**

The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) remains a significant global health threat, with adverse effects on human health and trade, and industry (1). This is because trade and industry remain a significant source of livelihood for a significant proportion of the global population. Moreover, COVID-19 has impacted communities' social, physical, and psychosocial aspects worldwide (2). Since the declaration of COVID-19 as a public health threat of international concern on 30 January 2020, the number of cases and deaths has continued to rise exponentially. As of 19 December 2021, a total of 271, 963, 258 cases and 5,331,019 deaths were reported globally (3). In Indonesia, the first case of COVID-19 was reported on 2 March 2020. However, prior to reporting the first case, the country had started implementing several stringent public health measures to prevent and minimize the spread of COVID-19 (4).

At the beginning of March 2020, the government of Indonesia banned all public gatherings for 32 days. It encouraged people in public facilities to observe the recommended social distance, not to cough, sneeze or spit in public, frequently and appropriately practice hand hygienic (handwashing with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR)), and regularly clean and disinfect surfaces, such as tables and door handles among others. Several public facilities such as bars and entertainment centres, including discos, cinema halls, and sports centres. Additionally, travellers entering the country at the different border points were quarantined for 14 days. By 10 March 2020, all academic institutions were closed, all border points were closed except for cargo, and a ban on public and non-essential private transport was in place. A 14-day total lockdown with a nationwide curfew from 7 p.m. to 6.30 a.m. was declared on March 2020 and later extended until December 2020, when a phased easing of the restrictions commenced (4).

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the causative agent of COVID-19, is primarily transmitted through respiratory droplets and contact with contaminated surfaces (2). Surfaces can get contaminated by infected respiratory droplets expelled when an infected person coughs, sneezes, laughs, or talks (5). These droplets land on objects and surfaces, which are touched by people who may then touch their eyes, nose, or mouth. Once the surfaces are contaminated, the virus may remain viable for hours to days (6). Currently, there are inconsistent data on the survivability of SARS-CoV-2 on different surface types. However, existing evidence indicates that the virus can survive on plastic, stainless steel, and countertops for up to three to four days (7), persists on copper and copper alloys for up to four hours (7,8), up to two days on glass and up to 24 hours on cardboard (7).

Shopping in minimarkets and other public places regularly visited by many people increases Coronavirus transmission. These opportunities for infection spread include frequently touched surfaces such as refrigerators, doorknobs, staircases, elevator buttons, trolleys, and basket handles, which an infected person may have contaminated. Furthermore, minimarkets have limited spaces that limit social distancing yet allow frequent human interaction, which heightens the risk of transmission of COVID-19. Owing to this risk, the Ministry of Health (MOH), Indonesia, developed guidelines to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 in public places, including minimarkets. These include; temperature screening of all shoppers and minimarkets staff before entry, the appropriate wearing of face masks, social distancing, provision of adequate and functional handwashing facilities at strategic points in the minimarkets, ensuring hand washing before entry, provision of adequate waste management facilities, regular provision of updated information on COVID-19 to workers, display of posters with information on

COVID-19 in conspicuous places and in different languages, and providing a copy of the guidelines on do's and don'ts to every customer who accesses the minimarkets premises. Furthermore, the MOH recommends regular cleaning and disinfection of commonly touched surfaces such as doorknobs, staircase, elevator rails and buttons, countertops, and communal places such as bathrooms, toilets, and floor surfaces at least 3–4 times a day under close supervision (9). Regular cleaning and disinfection of commonly touched and visibly dirty surfaces are critical for preventing COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in public settings (10).

Despite the existence of these guidelines and the public health importance of specific preventive measures, there is limited evidence on the extent of compliance with the COVID-19 prevention guidelines (9). Some of the previous studies on compliance with COVID-19 prevention guidelines in Indonesia have been among market vendors (9). In all these previous studies, poor compliance with COVID-19 guidelines was generally reported. Unfortunately, compliance among minimarkets, some of the busiest public places in urban areas, has not been studied, and implementation of prevention guidelines remains poor. However, implementing and enforcing COVID-19 prevention guidelines can establish norms that protect minimarkets workers, shoppers, and other clients from infection (11). This study established the extent of compliance with the COVID-19 prevention guidelines among minimarkets in Indonesia.

## **METHODS**

The approach of this study is qualitative research to uncover the facts on the implementation of health protocol policies at minimarkets. This study also made a comparison on theoretical support that compares the implementation of health protocols in minimarkets in the context of COVID-19 prevention, with health protocol standards set by the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia; Number HK.01.07/Menkes/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the community in public places and facilities in the context of preventing and controlling COVID-19.

The location of this research was carried out in minimarkets including; Alfamart, Indomaret, and Alfamidi in the Biringkanaya sub-district, Makassar City, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The time of the research was carried out in September – October 2021. Total of 11 informants participated in this study. They were managers, employees, and visitors in a unit of time (one day) from three minimarket units (Alfamart, Indomaret, and Alfamidi), which had been operating since before the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. NVivo was used to analyze the information.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***Perspective from Managers***

Implementing the health protocol policy for minimarket employees has been carried out according to KMK Number HK.01.07/Menkes/382/2020. The following are excerpts from interviews with ordinary informants (managers/persons in charge).

Regarding providing facilities for implementing health protocols by minimarket managers, managers have provided health protocol facilities, including handwashing tools and soap, barriers at cashiers, and mandatory mask posters at minimarket locations. The following is an excerpt from an interview with AR, 34 years old, an ordinary informant in charge of Alfa Mart,

*As the person in charge at Alfamart, we only receive instructions from our boss, indeed to interview with the manager is very difficult because he is swamped. When*

*there is a policy, we are told to provide hand washing equipment and soap in front; we are told to also install a barrier at the cashier, must wear a mask according to the health protocol recommended by the government (AR, 34 years old, manager of Alfa Mart)*

The person in charge of the minimarket always follows the boss's directions or the minimarket owner in preparing health protocol facilities.

The person in charge of the minimarket consistently implements a health protocol policy, in the form of providing a place to wash hands, reminding the use of masks and keeping a distance,

*Yes, we prepare a handwashing area, give a barrier between the cashier and visitors. If someone does not wear a mask, we will reprimand (IS, 33 years old, Indomaret)*

The person in charge of the minimarket does not provide special officers in implementing the health protocol because they only work in the store. Visitors themselves carry out the process of washing hands in front of the shop,

Managers manage minimarket operating licenses following government instructions, where minimarket managers are allowed to open on condition that they comply with health protocols,

*Yes, the manager should answer, but in this case, we must have permission from the Makassar city government; there is also notification from the president that if mini markets are allowed to remain open while still complying with health protocols. Because people also want to shop for their basic daily needs (HT, 38 years old, the regular informant in charge of Alfa Midi).*

In terms of supervision implementation of health protocols by minimarket managers to employees, carried out by managers are swab checks, body temperature checks before starting work, vaccines, wearing masks, washing hands, and keeping a distance,

*The most important thing to do before serving is to check health where there are no signs and symptoms of Covid-19, swab checks, temperature checks, and vaccines are carried out. It is also mandatory for employees to always wear masks and wash their hands while maintaining social distance (HT, 38 years old, Alfa Midi).*

The minimarket managers have pretty good knowledge about Covid-19. They understand that a person can be exposed to Covid-19 because it is caused by several factors, including contact with sufferers, droplets through the air, contaminated hands holding the eyes and face area, or contamination.

*As we know that COVID-19 can attack anyone, the cause can be because we contact a patient, breathe air that the patient's saliva has splashed, do not wash our hands, and then touch the eyes and face area, or are contaminated with sufferers. We also do not know who has suffered from covid-19 because of an OTP (people without symptoms). If a patient is found in this mini market, the first thing we contact the health workers, then people who have communicated with the patient must be swab checked, do not forget to do self-isolation (HT, 38 years old, Alfa Midi).*

### ***Perspective from Staff***

Minimarket employees have implemented health protocols following the policy KMK Number HK.01.07/Menkes/382/2020, where they require vaccines, antigen/swab

test checks, provide handwashing tools and hand sanitizers, check the availability of water and soap, wear masks and keep a distance,

*Yes, before providing services, we are required to carry out vaccines, health checks such as antigen/swab tests, also check the temperature for signs or symptoms of covid or not, and we are required to wear masks and also always wash our hands, wash our hands, or we must have hand sanitizer (AS, 35 years old, casual informant (Alfa Midi employee)*

Minimarket employees always carry out orders from the manager (boss) in serving visitors, including by reminding visitors to wear masks and keep their distance,

*Must wear a mask, keep your distance. Buyers were also told to reprimand visitors who entered not wearing masks (MJ, 28 years old, regular informant, Indomaret employee).*

*Informant: must constantly be reminded if someone does not wear a mask (MJ, 28 years old, regular informant, Indomaret employee)*

Minimarket employees have carried out supervision of the implementation of health protocols for visitors, especially in conditions where if there is a case of exposure to Covid-19 or when a visitor or co-worker is indicated to be Covid-19, the employee or visitor is asked to go home and check himself in the hospital to find out whether they are exposed or not, in addition to, In addition, employees who are on duty at that time also need to check themselves in case they do not get infected.

*We must have been told to rest, let alone we do not know what illness we are, we must be ordered to check; we are also afraid that any of us will get COVID-19 because it can be contagious, especially if we return home, it can spread to our family (MJ, 28 years old, regular informant, Indomaret employee)*

Minimarket employees have varying knowledge or information about Covid-19 through various sources, including the Internet, television, and co-workers,

*from the Internet, television, and work friends (MJ, 28 years old, regular informant, Indomaret employee).*

Disinfectant spraying is always carried out by minimarket employees according to the manager's instructions (boss) when the shop is closed,

*when it's closed, it's just sprayed with disinfectant (MJ, 28 years old, regular informant, Indomaret employee).*

Minimarket employees usually obtain information about Covid-19 through social media; however rarely receive training/socialization directly from the task force Covid-19,

*nothing, just constantly being reminded in group chats. If directly, especially from the task force or the government, you have never been given training or socialization, look for your info on the Internet (SF, 27 years old, regular informant (Alfa Mart employee).*

Minimarket employees have educated visitors about health protocols by constantly reminding visitors always to wear masks and avoid crowds.

*Must be adequately conveyed if not wearing a mask or crowding in front (SF, 27 years old, regular informant (Alfa Mart employee).*



Minimarket employees only rely on visitors' awareness to wash their hands before entering the store because no special officers supervise the implementation of handwashing for visitors.

*We have provided hand washing equipment, yes we cannot also take care of it in front because water and soap have been provided (SF, 27 years old, regular informant (Alfa Mart employee).*

### ***Perspective from Consumers***

Implementing the health protocol policy for minimarket visitors has been carried out according to KMK Number HK.01.07/Menkes/382/2020. The following are excerpts from interviews with regular informants (visitors),

Minimarket visitors have implemented health protocol policies when shopping at minimarkets by wearing masks, maintaining distance and washing hands,

*Wear a mask, keep the same distance, and wash your hands first if you want to enter. MN, 23 years old, regular informant (Alfa Mart visitor)*

To avoid contagion Covid-19 when shopping at minimarkets, minimarket visitors always wear masks,

*Do not forget to obey the health protocol, especially wearing a mask (MN, 23 years old, regular informant (Alfa Mart visitor)*

Minimarket visitors know the flow of health protocols, namely washing hands before entering the store, wearing masks, and maintaining distance. However, sometimes visitors forget because time is urgent or in a hurry.

*Before entering, I saw that hand washing equipment was provided; there was only an inscription on the area where you must wear a mask (IA, 22 years old, regular informant, Indomaret visitor).*

*I did not, because I was in a hurry and I did not even have to ask to wash my hands, but I had to wash my hands first, just like that, I usually forget the noodles (IA, 22 years old, regular informant, Indomaret visitor).*

According to minimarket visitors, the public needs to understand and understand the implementation of health protocol policies, especially wearing masks because Covid-19 can spread through the air and attack anyone regardless of age. Visitors or the public should be responsible for implementing health protocol policies. Implementation of health protocol policies can reduce the spread of Covid-19,

*Informant: yes, it is essential especially knowing that covid-19 spreads through the air, you do not know your age, you want small children or older people to get still covid (IA, 22 years old, regular informant, Indomaret visitor).*

According to minimarket visitors, during the Covid-19 pandemic, managers and employees have provided education about health protocols by providing and reminding the presence of handwashing places, recommending wearing masks, and maintaining distance. However, there are no special officers or security that supervise visitors.

### ***Perspective from COVID-19 Task Force***

According to a key informant from the Covid-19 Task Force Team, health protocol policies for traditional markets and minimarkets (Alfamart, Indomaret, and Alfamidi) need

to be prepared and socialized in shopping locations is a lot of overcrowding and crowds that can cause Covid-19 transmission. Following the leadership's direction, the Covid-19 task force members always control and disperse if there is a crowd. However, socialization has not yet been carried out in areas in minimarkets.

*Preparing for the implementation of health protocol policies must be done, especially in traditional markets and minimarkets, because many people are passing by; the Covid-19 task force suggested that socialization should be carried out to traders and various parties in the trading area (MA, 55 years old, key informant for Covid-19 Task Force Team Member, 20 October 2021)*

The implementation of the health protocol is carried out by establishing a command post and call centre as well as informing the public that there will be raids or sweeping according to a schedule daily targeting mass crowds, and also providing information on prevention and control as well as handling the spread of the Coronavirus. In addition, there is a time limit for store closing operating hours. The following are excerpts from interviews with key informants, MA, members of the Covid-19 Task Force,

*For now, there is no direct socialization as you asked, let alone entering every minimarket, where now there are many minimarket noodles scattered. However, we always control and check if there is another crowd, and if the minimarket is past its working hours, it will be told to close (HP, 54 years old, key informant for Covid-19 Task Force Team Member, 20 October 2021).*

*Controlling the implementation of health protocols where we have established a command post and call center and inform the public, we will conduct raids or sweeping according to schedule every day targeting mass crowds, do not forget we will always provide information about prevention and control as well as handling the spread of the Coronavirus, In addition, there is control for all business actors (warungs, minimarkets, shopping centres and the like) to limit their operations until 19.00 at the beginning of the pandemic and then extended again until 21.00 WITA, now it is level 2 and starting to relax until 22.00 WITA (MA, 55 years old, key informant for Covid-19 Task Force Team Member, 20 October 2021)*

*Controlling the implementation of health protocols where we will conduct raids/sweeping on the community and supermarkets which do not comply with health protocols, there are also command posts in every community gathering place such as GOR, markets, and every sub-district has provided a covid-19 control post. We also monitor all business actors (stalls, minimarkets, shopping centres, and the like) to limit their operating hours (HP, 54 years old, key informant for Covid-19 Task Force Team Member, 20 October 2021).*

In this study, related to the provision of facilities for the implementation of health protocols by minimarket managers, the researcher assumes that the minimarket has implemented a health protocol policy following KMKRI Number HK.01.07 / Menkes/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the community in public places and facilities in for the prevention and control of coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

Minimarket employees have implemented health protocols in the context of preventing and controlling coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), which include wearing

masks, washing hands, maintaining a minimum distance of 1 meter, administering vaccines, checking body temperature, antigen/PCR tests, examinations to hospitals. It supposes you have symptoms of Covid-19 and self-isolate if you are sick. In this study, regarding the application of health protocols for minimarket employees, researchers assume that the minimarket has implemented a health protocol policy following KMKRI Number HK.01.07 / Menkes/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the community in public places and facilities in the context of prevention and control. Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

Minimarket visitors have implemented health protocols in the context of preventing and controlling coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19), which include wearing masks, washing hands, maintaining a minimum distance of 1 meter, administering vaccines, checking body temperature, antigen/PCR tests, examinations to hospitals. If you have symptoms of Covid-19, and self-isolate if you are sick.

This is following what was revealed by informants 1) MN, 23 years old, regular informant Visiting Alfa Mart, 2) IA, 22 years old, regular informant Visiting Indomaret, 3) DN, 20 years old, regular informant Visiting Alfa Midi, and strengthened by a statement from 4) MA, 55 years old, key informant for Covid-19 Task Force Team Member, and 5) HP, 54 years old, key informant for Covid-19 Task Force Team Member.

In this study, related to the application of health protocols for visitors, researchers assume that the minimarket has implemented a health protocol policy following KMKRI Number HK.01.07 / Menkes/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the community in public places and facilities in the context of prevention and control. Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19).

## **CONCLUSION**

The application of regulation Number HK.01.07 / Menkes/382/2020 concerning health protocols for the public in public places and facilities to prevent and control the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) is that most minimarkets have implemented health protocols, especially in washing hands using soap. Although social distancing during the visit (transaction) process at minimarkets has not been maximized due to crowded conditions and narrow locations.

This study, therefore, suggests the need for the health authorities to proactively sensitize those involved in the implementation of COVID-19 measures on the importance and mechanisms of implementing health protocols. The health authorities also need to strengthen the inspection of public places such as supermarkets to ensure that the recommended measures are implemented at all times, including weekends. The government should put penalties for supermarkets that lack the necessary infrastructure and provisions related to hand hygiene, regular cleaning and disinfection, PPE, and social distancing. The government should provide a resource to learn more about the COVID-19 prevention guidelines for public facilities like supermarkets.

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## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

All authors state that there is no potential Conflict of Interest in this research and article.



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