

Wicked Problem and Evidence-Based Policy: A Case Study on Ensuring Fairness for Government Employees

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ABSTRACT

To prevent conflict of interest, since 2018, the Indonesian Food and Drug Authority (Indonesian FDA) has issued an internal policy prohibiting its employees from working in companies or facilities under FDA supervision such as drug manufactures, hospitals, pharmacies, drug stores, and minimarkets. After more than seven years in effect, the policy has come under scrutiny for being considered discriminatory and restricting employees' rights to earn additional income. The discrimination issue arose from the group of pharmacist-employees, as they were impacted most. Then, it escalated into a form of demotivation. The research aims to find evidence scientific evidence as a basis for encouraging policies that better accommodate organizational and employee expectations in a balanced manner. The research was conducted using a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach. Data collected through a Focus Group Discussions and questionnaires to all employees. More than 1,000 employees participated in the study, from a central office and 78 local offices nationwide. The study indicated that there were equally strong pros and cons to this policy. Proponents believed it was a good choice preventing conflicts of interest to maintain the organization's reputation and public trust; while opponents argued it was resulting in significant financial impact for employees due to the loss of opportunities for side jobs. However, the legal perspective considered it insufficiently flexible. The good policy should achieve organizational objectives without imposing unnecessary burdens on employees.

JEL Codes:

Keywords: Conflict of Interest, discrimination, demotivation, policy analysis, ethic review