



Between Development and Morality: Muslim Resistance to The Porkas Program in Indonesian Media Discourse 1986-1987

Teddiansyah Nata Negara*, Muhammad Dzaki Irvan Syauqi, Salman Najmudin

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia

Correspondence: E-mail: teddiansyahnn@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study examines public resistance to Porkas, a state-sanctioned prize coupon scheme used to raise funds for sports development during Indonesia's New Order era, as represented in *Tempo Magazine* from 1986 to 1987. Using historical method through heuristic, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography, this article analyzes *Tempo* articles, opinion pieces, and readers' comments as primary sources. The findings show that Porkas was not merely debated as a funding mechanism, but as a socio-political controversy reflecting tensions between developmentalist state rationality and public morality. Criticism of Porkas appears in several dimensions. Economically, it was considered unproductive because it redirected household income into speculative practices. Socially, it encouraged gambling addiction, superstition, poverty, and potential criminality. Religiously and morally, it was rejected as gambling that weakened work ethics and social responsibility. Legally, its administrative legitimacy was questioned because state authorization did not remove its gambling substance. The study also revealed that *Tempo Magazine* functioned as a public discursive arena where society criticized state policy, questioned religious authorities, and defended lower-income groups. Therefore, the Porkas controversy demonstrates that development policy requires not only legality, but also moral legitimacy, social accountability, and sensitivity to public welfare.

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1. INTRODUCTION

During the New Order era, development was promoted not only through economic planning and political stability but also through the mobilization of alternative financial resources beyond the conventional state budget. One of the most controversial mechanisms was Porkas (*Pekan Olahraga dan Ketangkasan*), a state-authorized prize coupon program introduced to finance national sports development. Officially, Porkas was presented as a form of public participation in supporting sports achievements. In practice, however, it immediately generated widespread controversy because many Indonesians regarded it as a legalized form of gambling. Rather than representing a purely technical funding policy, Porkas became a socio-political phenomenon that exposed tensions between the developmental objectives of the New Order state, legal legitimacy, religious morality, and the lived experiences of ordinary citizens (Crouch, 1978).

The controversy surrounding Porkas reflected the broader characteristics of the New Order development paradigm, in which economic growth and political stability became dominant state ideologies. As Ariel Heryanto argues, the regime constructed legitimacy by promoting development, order, and stability as unquestionable public values (Heryanto, 2006). Within this framework, Porkas was justified as an innovative solution for financing sports development despite the moral and social debates surrounding its implementation. Consequently, the policy illustrates how developmental goals could conflict with prevailing religious, ethical, and legal norms within Indonesian society (Kartodirjo, 1992).

The Porkas debate also demonstrates the importance of mass media as a public arena where competing interpretations of state policy were articulated. Among Indonesian publications, *Tempo* Magazine occupied a unique position by providing extensive coverage of Porkas through investigative reports, editorials, interviews, and readers' letters. These reports documented criticisms from religious leaders, academics, politicians, social activists, and ordinary citizens who questioned the social consequences of the policy. Consistent with Benedict Anderson's conception of print media as a space where collective consciousness is constructed, *Tempo* functioned not merely as an information provider but also as a forum through which public opinion toward state policies was negotiated (Anderson, 2006). For historians, these media narratives constitute valuable historical sources for understanding public responses under the constrained political environment of the New Order.

Beyond political debate, Porkas also generated significant socio-economic concerns. The attraction of large cash prizes encouraged many lower-income households to spend money that would otherwise have been allocated to daily necessities. *Tempo* frequently reported stories of small traders, farmers, and laborers purchasing Porkas coupons with the hope of escaping economic hardship. Such practices reveal how state policy intersected with the vulnerabilities of economically marginalized communities. As James C. Scott explains, peasant and lower-class communities prioritize subsistence security, making speculative economic practices particularly problematic when they threaten household stability (Scott, 1976). Consequently, criticisms of Porkas extended beyond religious objections to include concerns over social justice and the state's responsibility toward vulnerable citizens.

Religious criticism constituted another central dimension of the controversy. Many Muslim scholars regarded Porkas as containing elements of *maisir* (gambling), which Islamic ethics prohibit because it promotes speculation rather than productive labor and social responsibility. Fazlur Rahman emphasizes that Islamic social ethics are grounded in justice, accountability, and the protection of society from practices that undermine social welfare (Rahman, 1979). Simultaneously, legal debates emerged regarding whether state

authorization could transform an activity widely perceived as gambling into a legitimate public policy. Daniel S. Lev argues that Indonesian law cannot be understood independently from political power and state interests (Lev, 2000). Thus, Porkas highlighted the complex relationship between legal authority, political legitimacy, and public morality during the New Order period.

Several historical studies have examined Porkas from different perspectives (Lumaksono, 2014). Analyzes the legalization of Porkas and its social impacts between 1985 and 1987, emphasizing public responses to government policy (Zdhiyauddin, 2017). Broadens the discussion by tracing the historical development of legalized gambling from Porkas to SDSB between 1985 and 1993. More recently, investigate local governmental and community responses to Porkas in Semarang, while examine legalized gambling in Surabaya through a comparative study of Porkas, KSOB, and SDSB (Panuntun & Indrahri, 2024). Although these studies have substantially contributed to understanding the historical development of legalized gambling in Indonesia, they primarily focus on policy implementation, regional case studies, or institutional history. Limited attention has been given to how contemporary media represented the controversy and constructed public criticism through social, economic, legal, religious, and moral discourses. This study addresses that gap by positioning *Tempo* Magazine as the principal historical source for examining the interaction between state narratives and public opinion (Adinda & Riyadi, 2025).

Accordingly, this article seeks to answer the following research question: How did *Tempo* Magazine represent the Porkas controversy during 1986–1987, and how did it construct public criticism of Porkas through economic, social, legal, religious, and moral arguments? Employing a social history approach combined with media discourse analysis, this study argues that Porkas should be understood not merely as a legalized gambling policy but as a reflection of the broader tensions between the developmental ambitions of the New Order state and the moral values upheld by Indonesian society. By examining media representations, the article contributes to a deeper understanding of public resistance, state legitimacy, and the role of the press in documenting social debates under authoritarian rule.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. The first section reviews the historical background of Porkas and the political context of the New Order. The second section explains the research methodology and analytical framework. The third section analyzes *Tempo* Magazine's representation of the Porkas controversy by examining its economic, social, religious, legal, and moral dimensions. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the main findings and discusses their implications for the historiography of the New Order and the study of media, state policy, and public discourse in modern Indonesian history (Kuntowijoyo, 2013).

2. METHOD

This study employs the historical method to reconstruct the public controversy surrounding Porkas as represented in *Tempo* Magazine during the late New Order period. Historical research is conducted through four interconnected stages: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Gottschalk, 1969).

The primary sources consist of articles published in *Tempo* Magazine between January 1986 and December 1987, the period during which public debate over Porkas reached its peak. Source collection was undertaken through a systematic review of all available *Tempo* issues within this timeframe. Articles were selected using three inclusion criteria: (1) they explicitly discussed Porkas or related government lottery programs; (2) they addressed public responses, government policy, religious opinions, legal debates, or the social consequences of Porkas; and (3) they appeared in news reports, editorials, feature articles, interviews, or readers' letters. Articles that mentioned Porkas only incidentally without substantive

discussion were excluded. Applying these criteria resulted in eleven articles, which constitute the primary corpus analyzed in this study (Abdullah & Surjomiharjo, 1985).

Secondary sources were used to contextualize the findings rather than as primary evidence. These include scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, doctoral dissertations, and historical studies concerning the New Order, legalized gambling, media history, religion, and Indonesian social history. Secondary literature was selected based on its scholarly credibility, relevance to the research topic, and contribution to interpreting the historical significance of Porkas within broader political, economic, and social developments.

The second stage involves source criticism, comprising both external and internal criticism. External criticism was undertaken to assess the authenticity, publication context, and reliability of *Tempo* Magazine as a historical source. During the New Order, *Tempo* was recognized as one of Indonesia's leading news magazines and was widely respected for its investigative journalism. Nevertheless, its publications were produced within an authoritarian political environment characterized by censorship and varying degrees of editorial self-censorship. Consequently, *Tempo* is treated not as a completely neutral source but as a historical text shaped by the political constraints and journalistic practices of its time (Crouch, 2006).

Internal criticism focused on evaluating the credibility and meaning of the published texts. Each article was analyzed by considering the author's arguments, the social position of quoted actors, the language employed, and the broader political context in which the text was produced. Particular attention was given to identifying recurring themes concerning religious objections, legal legitimacy, socio-economic impacts, public morality, and government justifications. This analytical process enabled the identification of dominant patterns in the construction of public criticism toward Porkas (Kartodirjo, 1992).

The interpretation stage synthesizes the verified historical evidence to explain how media discourse reflected wider social tensions between state developmental policies and public moral values. Rather than treating *Tempo* merely as a record of events, this study understands media reports as representations of contemporary public discourse through which competing political, religious, and social perspectives were articulated. The analysis therefore combines historical contextualization with discourse-oriented reading to explain how criticism of Porkas was framed and negotiated within Indonesian society during the New Order.

The final stage is historiography, in which the analyzed evidence is organized into a coherent historical narrative that explains the relationship between state policy, media representation, and public response. The objective is not only to reconstruct the chronology of the Porkas controversy but also to demonstrate its broader significance for understanding the interaction between development policies, religion, law, and civil society in modern Indonesian history (Negara, 1988).

This study also acknowledges the researcher's positionality. The interpretation presented here is informed by a social history perspective that emphasizes public voices, everyday experiences, and the interaction between state institutions and society. While every effort has been made to critically evaluate the available evidence through systematic source criticism, historical interpretation inevitably involves scholarly judgment. Accordingly, the findings should be understood as one historically grounded interpretation rather than the only possible reading of the available sources.

Finally, several limitations should be acknowledged. The analysis relies primarily on *Tempo* Magazine, which, despite its reputation for critical journalism, operated within the constraints of New Order censorship. Consequently, the magazine may not have fully represented all

contemporary perspectives or forms of resistance. Moreover, this study focuses on published media discourse rather than unpublished archival records or oral testimonies. Future research incorporating government archives, organizational records, and interviews with individuals involved in the Porkas controversy would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Opposition to the Porkas gambling practice has come through various articles published in magazines. These articles sharply highlight the negative impact of Porkas on society, both economically and socially. Furthermore, some articles also raise relevant questions about the silence of some religious scholars regarding this gambling practice. How is it possible that some scholars with significant influence in society still choose to remain silent or even support Porkas, despite its proven negative impacts?

Economic and Social Criticism of Porkas

One of the most dominant themes emerging from *Tempo* Magazine's coverage of Porkas between 1986 and 1987 was the criticism of its economic and social consequences, particularly for lower-income communities. Although the government promoted Porkas as an innovative mechanism for financing national sports development, public responses documented in *Tempo* consistently questioned whether its economic benefits justified the social costs borne by ordinary citizens. Rather than being perceived as a voluntary contribution to sports, Porkas increasingly became associated with the exploitation of economically vulnerable groups who viewed gambling as a means of escaping poverty rather than merely participating in recreational betting (Tempo, 1986).

Economic criticism was clearly articulated in Petrus Mamuko's commentary, *Porkas: dan Jeritan Rakyat Sorong*, published on 20 December 1986 (Mamuko, 1986). Writing from Sorong, Mamuko portrayed Porkas as a policy that diverted household income away from essential needs such as food, education, and daily living expenses. He vividly described how poor families spent money earned from selling cassava, fish, and other basic commodities to purchase Porkas coupons, driven by what he called "*sejuta harapan*" (a million hopes) despite the extremely small probability of winning.

"Dengan didorong '*sejuta harapan*', uang pembeli beras seliter kebutuhan keluarga harus disulap menjadi selembat kupon tumpuan rezeki.... Mungkin peluang mendapatkan hadiah itu: 1 lawan 10.000."

This commentary illustrates that Porkas functioned not only as a gambling mechanism but also as an economic practice that capitalized on the financial insecurity of low-income households. The hope of obtaining sudden wealth encouraged many families to redirect scarce financial resources from productive consumption toward speculative spending. Consequently, the economic burden of Porkas fell disproportionately on those least able to absorb financial losses, reinforcing rather than alleviating poverty.

A similar criticism appeared in *Tempo*'s feature article, *Pilih Tempe atau Porkas?*, published on 13 December 1986. While acknowledging Porkas' success in generating approximately Rp13 billion annually for sports development, the article questioned whether the policy produced meaningful economic value. Monetary economist Anwar Nasution argued that Porkas represented an unproductive economic activity because it generated revenue by selling lottery coupons rather than creating real goods or services.

"Sebab, yang dijual 'kan hanya kertas. Dan, kalau kebanyakan orang kemudian membeli Porkas, peluang masyarakat membeli tempe jadi berkurang."

Nasution's criticism shifted the debate beyond gambling morality toward broader questions of economic efficiency. In his view, every rupiah spent on Porkas reduced

household purchasing power for essential commodities and weakened local economic circulation. Instead of stimulating productive economic activity, Porkas transferred disposable income into a centralized funding mechanism whose benefits were unevenly distributed across society. Although government officials defended the program as a necessary source of sports funding, the article revealed growing concern that the economic sacrifices required of ordinary citizens exceeded the public benefits generated by the policy (Tempo, 1986).

Beyond its economic implications, *Tempo* also portrayed Porkas as producing significant social disruption. This concern was particularly evident in Masri Singarimbun's article published on 1 August 1987 following his field observations in Tiganderket, North Sumatra. Singarimbun linked the spread of Porkas with broader rural hardships, including declining agricultural prices, crop disease, and rising unemployment. Within this fragile economic environment, Porkas became increasingly attractive to residents searching for rapid financial relief. However, instead of improving livelihoods, the practice intensified social problems, including theft, declining mutual trust, and growing dependence on superstition (Singarimbun, 1987).

"Astagfirullah. Sudah berapa banyak rakyat kecil berjatuhan seperti ini. Dalam situasi ekonomi yang sulit, mereka digoda oleh Porkas.... beragam teknik ramalan, mimpi, sampai roh-roh di tempat-tempat keramat."

Singarimbun's observations demonstrate that the consequences of Porkas extended beyond financial loss. The expectation of instant wealth encouraged speculative behavior that gradually displaced rational economic decision-making. As economic hardship deepened, many individuals increasingly relied on dreams, fortune-telling, sacred places, and supernatural beliefs in the hope of predicting winning numbers. Simultaneously, local communities experienced declining social cohesion, as neighbours became reluctant to interact for fear of being persuaded to purchase Porkas coupons. In this context, gambling was portrayed not merely as an individual vice but as a catalyst for broader social disintegration.

The growing public concern over these economic and social consequences was further reinforced in *Tempo*'s report *Menebak-nebak Izin Porkas*, published on 28 November 1987. At the centre of the debate was the government's uncertainty regarding the extension of Porkas' operating permit. A *Tempo* survey reported that the majority of Porkas participants came from low-income households, raising fundamental questions about the social justice of maintaining a policy whose primary financial contributors were economically vulnerable citizens.

"Menurut hasil angket Tempo, pembeli Porkas berpenghasilan rendah."

The survey significantly strengthened earlier criticisms by demonstrating that the burden of financing sports development was disproportionately borne by poorer communities. Although the Ministry of Social Affairs argued that Porkas generated greater public benefits than disadvantages, critics questioned whether state-sponsored fundraising could be justified when it depended heavily on the hopes and financial vulnerability of lower-income groups. Consequently, debates over the renewal of Porkas' operating licence were no longer limited to administrative or legal considerations but increasingly centered on questions of economic equity, social welfare, and state responsibility toward vulnerable citizens.

Taken together, these reports demonstrate that *Tempo* consistently framed Porkas as more than a gambling policy designed to support sports development. Instead, the magazine presented Porkas as a socio-economic phenomenon that disproportionately affected lower-income communities by reducing household purchasing power, encouraging speculative

economic behaviour, weakening social solidarity, and exacerbating existing conditions of poverty. The recurring emphasis on ordinary citizens' experiences suggests that criticism of Porkas was grounded not merely in ideological opposition to gambling but also in broader concerns regarding social justice and the unequal distribution of developmental burdens during the New Order period.

Religious and Moral Criticism

Religious and moral criticism constituted one of the strongest forms of public opposition to Porkas as represented in *Tempo* Magazine. Unlike economic criticisms, which focused on household welfare and purchasing power, religious objections challenged the ethical legitimacy of state-sponsored gambling itself. Contributors to *Tempo* argued that Porkas was not merely a fiscal instrument for financing sports development but a policy that contradicted Islamic teachings, weakened public morality, and placed religious authorities in a difficult position between political accommodation and moral responsibility (Mubin , 1987).

One of the most explicit criticisms appeared in Muhammad Mubin's commentary, *Porkas: Mandulkah MUI?*, published on 11 July 1987. Mubin questioned the silence of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) toward the government's decision to continue Porkas despite its widespread association with *maisir* (gambling), which is prohibited in Islam. His criticism was directed not only at the policy itself but also at the reluctance of religious authorities to publicly challenge it. The statement by MUI Chairman KH. Hasan Basri that there had been an agreement with the President not to discuss Porkas became the focal point of Mubin's criticism because it suggested that political considerations had taken precedence over religious obligations.

"Kalau MUI tetap membisu, bahkan bersepakat untuk tak membicarakan Porkas, ya Robbi, pertanda apakah ini? Apakah MUI Pusat lebih mengutamakan 'kesepakatan' daripada tunduk patuh kepada Allah SWT?"

For Mubin, the issue extended beyond institutional silence. He feared that the absence of a firm religious stance would normalize gambling within society and diminish the moral authority of Islamic institutions. Particularly alarming was the reported participation of school students and young people in Porkas, which he interpreted as evidence that state policy had begun to influence the moral formation of the younger generation. The controversy therefore reflected a broader concern that economic interests and political compromise were gradually eroding the ethical values that religious institutions were expected to uphold.

A complementary perspective was offered by Soepardjo in his commentary *Porkas: Ganti dengan Sedekah*, published on 1 August 1987. Rather than limiting his criticism to the prohibition of gambling, Soepardjo proposed a constructive alternative for financing sports development. He argued that national development should not rely on funding mechanisms that conflicted with religious principles, regardless of their financial effectiveness. Instead, public fundraising should be based on voluntary charitable contributions (*sedekah*), thereby aligning economic objectives with moral and religious values (Soepardjo, 1987).

Drawing on the experience of Jakarta under Governor Ali Sadikin, Soepardjo recalled that earlier gambling-based revenue schemes such as Lotto Jaya and *hwa hwe* had eventually been replaced by a modest increase in fuel prices, which successfully generated development funds without relying on gambling. He argued that this historical precedent demonstrated the availability of ethically acceptable alternatives to Porkas.

"Waktu itu, pencarian dana melalui Lotto Jaya, hwa hwe, dan sebagainya dihapuskan, kemudian diganti dengan penambahan harga bensin Rp1 per liter.... Kalau kita memang berkemauan baik, kita sebetulnya bisa meniru cara tersebut."

This proposal illustrates that religious criticism of Porkas was not merely prohibitive but also solution-oriented. Instead of rejecting sports development, critics sought funding mechanisms that preserved public trust, strengthened social solidarity, and remained consistent with Islamic ethical principles. In this respect, *sedekah* was presented not only as a financial alternative but also as a moral framework emphasizing voluntary generosity, social responsibility, and collective welfare (Mubin, 1987).

Taken together, these commentaries reveal that religious opposition to Porkas extended far beyond the legal status of gambling in Islamic law. The debate reflected a broader struggle over the moral direction of national development and the role of religious institutions in responding to controversial state policies. *Tempo* portrayed the controversy as a contest between developmental pragmatism and religious ethics, in which critics argued that economic objectives should never override moral principles. Consequently, the Porkas debate became not only a discussion about gambling but also a broader reflection on the relationship between religion, state authority, and public morality during the New Order era.

Legal and Political Debate

The controversy surrounding Porkas extended beyond economic losses and religious objections, evolving into a broader legal and political debate over the legitimacy of state-sponsored gambling during the New Order. *Tempo* Magazine consistently portrayed Porkas not merely as a fundraising mechanism for sports development but as a public policy that raised fundamental questions regarding the rule of law, constitutional governance, and the state's responsibility in promoting social welfare. The legalization of Porkas through a Minister of Social Affairs decree created a paradox: although administratively authorized, many legal experts, politicians, and members of the public questioned whether the policy remained consistent with Indonesian law and the constitutional principles underpinning national development (Tempo, 1987).

A particularly strong legal critique appeared in Sahat Maurelie's commentary, *Porkas: SK Mensos Menyalahi UU*, published on 4 July 1987. Maurelie argued that the Ministerial Decree authorizing Porkas contradicted the spirit of Indonesian law because its operational mechanism clearly fulfilled the characteristics of gambling. While the government framed Porkas as a form of public fundraising for sports, Maurelie maintained that changing its administrative status did not alter its substantive nature. Since participation relied entirely on chance and required participants to stake money in the hope of obtaining a prize, Porkas remained legally indistinguishable from gambling activities prohibited under Indonesian law.

For Maurelie, the issue was therefore not limited to administrative legality but concerned the integrity of the legal system itself. He argued that public policy should be grounded in constitutional principles rather than political expediency. Referring to the ideals of the 1945 Constitution, he emphasized that Indonesia was founded as a *negara hukum* (state based on law), where government actions should derive their legitimacy from legal norms rather than solely from executive authority. Consequently, legalizing gambling through ministerial regulation risked undermining public confidence in the consistency and authority of the legal system. In this respect, the Porkas controversy reflected a broader tension between the government's developmental agenda and the principle of legal certainty that should govern state policymaking (Maurelia, 1987).

Maurelie also highlighted the educational and moral implications of legalizing gambling. In his view, state policy plays an important role in shaping public behaviour and civic values. Rather than encouraging citizens to achieve prosperity through hard work, discipline, and professional competence, Porkas promoted the expectation that economic success could be

attained through luck and speculation. He argued that this tendency was particularly dangerous for younger generations because it contradicted the state's own commitment to developing responsible and productive citizens.

"Porkas tidak saja mengeruk uang sehingga mengganggu kantung seseorang, tapi juga bagi perkembangan anak muda sangat memprihatinkan. Sebab, tak dididik untuk mendapatkan sesuatu berdasarkan keahlian dan kerja keras. Sadar atau tidak, kita mesti merenungkan konsep kita bersama membangun manusia Indonesia seutuhnya."

This argument demonstrates that legal criticism of Porkas was closely intertwined with broader concerns regarding the social purpose of law. The issue was not simply whether the government possessed the authority to regulate gambling, but whether public policy should legitimize practices perceived as weakening the moral and social foundations of national development. From this perspective, legality alone could not justify a policy whose broader consequences were considered detrimental to society.

The political dimensions of the controversy became equally apparent in *Tempo's* report *Birokrasi sampai Porkas*, published on 28 March 1987. The article revealed significant differences among Indonesia's major political parties regarding the government's decision to maintain Porkas. Rather than reflecting a unified political consensus, the debate exposed competing interpretations of development priorities, public morality, and state responsibility (*Tempo*, 1987).

The United Development Party (PPP) firmly rejected Porkas by aligning its position with the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), arguing that the policy generated greater social harm than public benefit. For PPP, gambling could not be justified merely because it contributed to sports financing, as the social and moral costs outweighed the economic advantages. Meanwhile, the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) criticized Porkas from a developmental perspective. Instead of emphasizing religious arguments, PDI questioned the government's allocation of resources, maintaining that national development should prioritize sectors such as education, healthcare, and social welfare rather than relying on gambling-based fundraising mechanisms. These differing arguments illustrate that opposition to Porkas was not confined to religious circles but also emerged from broader concerns about governance and development priorities.

By contrast, Golkar, as the dominant political force supporting the New Order government, defended Porkas as an integral component of the state's development strategy. Rather than questioning its legal or moral basis, Golkar argued that the government's responsibility was to regulate the policy effectively while minimizing its undesirable social consequences. According to this perspective, the financial benefits generated by Porkas for national sports development justified its continuation, provided that adequate supervision could prevent abuses.

"Golkar selalu mendukung kebijakan pemerintah, dan Porkas merupakan bagian integral dari kebijaksanaan pembangunan itu. Yang harus dilakukan adalah mencegah eksekusi."

The contrasting positions adopted by PPP, PDI, and Golkar demonstrate that Porkas became more than a debate over gambling itself. Instead, it evolved into a political contest over how development should be financed, what constituted legitimate public policy, and the extent to which moral considerations should influence state decision-making. Opposition parties emphasized constitutional accountability, legal consistency, and public welfare, whereas Golkar framed the issue within the broader objectives of political stability and developmental pragmatism that characterized the New Order regime.

Tempo's reporting further illustrates that legal and political debates surrounding Porkas reflected deeper tensions within Indonesian governance during the late 1980s. The

legalization of gambling through executive policy generated public concern because it blurred the distinction between administrative authority and legal legitimacy. At the same time, parliamentary debates demonstrated that support for development did not necessarily imply agreement with every government policy adopted in its name. Consequently, Porkas became an arena in which competing visions of law, morality, and development were openly contested.

Taken together, these reports suggest that *Tempo* framed the Porkas controversy as a broader debate concerning the relationship between law, politics, and state legitimacy. Legal criticism challenged the compatibility of the Ministerial Decree with Indonesia's legal framework, while political debates revealed competing understandings of development among political parties. Rather than presenting Porkas simply as a gambling controversy, *Tempo* portrayed it as a reflection of the broader dilemmas faced by the New Order state in reconciling developmental objectives with constitutional principles, legal certainty, and public accountability.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Porkas controversy represented far more than a debate over a state-sponsored lottery intended to finance sports development. Through an analysis of *Tempo* Magazine between 1986 and 1987, it becomes evident that Porkas evolved into a contested public issue situated at the intersection of economic policy, social welfare, religious morality, legal legitimacy, and political authority during the New Order. Although the government justified Porkas as an innovative mechanism for mobilizing public funds, *Tempo* consistently documented critical responses from diverse segments of society who questioned both the legitimacy of the policy and its broader implications for Indonesian society.

The findings reveal five interrelated dimensions of public criticism. Economically, Porkas was portrayed as an unproductive mechanism that redirected household income from essential consumption toward speculative gambling, disproportionately affecting lower-income communities. Socially, contributors to *Tempo* associated Porkas with the erosion of social solidarity, increasing dependence on luck, the spread of superstition, gambling addiction, and the emergence of poverty and crime. From a religious and moral perspective, Porkas was widely condemned as a form of *maisir* that conflicted with Islamic teachings, undermined the work ethic, and weakened the moral responsibility expected of both the state and religious institutions. Legally, critics argued that administrative authorization through the Minister of Social Affairs' decree did not remove the gambling substance inherent in Porkas, thereby raising questions regarding the consistency of state policy with existing legal principles. Politically, the controversy exposed competing interpretations of development among government officials, political parties, religious organizations, and civil society, revealing the persistent tension between developmental pragmatism and moral accountability.

Beyond documenting these criticisms, this study highlights the active role of Indonesian society in negotiating state policy. The debates published in *Tempo* demonstrate that public opposition to Porkas was not merely an emotional rejection of gambling but a reasoned critique grounded in concerns about social justice, constitutional values, and public welfare. Ordinary citizens, academics, religious leaders, politicians, and social observers collectively questioned whether national development could legitimately rely on mechanisms that imposed disproportionate burdens on economically vulnerable groups. Significantly, many contributors did not simply reject Porkas but proposed alternative methods of financing sports development, including charitable contributions, limited public levies, and more

effective management of public sports facilities. These proposals indicate that the controversy was fundamentally a debate over the ethical foundations of development rather than a rejection of development itself.

The study also underscores the historical significance of *Tempo* Magazine as a discursive arena during the New Order. Despite operating within a political environment characterized by press restrictions, *Tempo* provided an important platform through which competing social voices could evaluate, challenge, and reinterpret government policy. The magazine not only reported the Porkas controversy but also preserved the perspectives of groups that were often underrepresented in official state narratives. Consequently, *Tempo* serves as an important historical source for understanding how public opinion, moral discourse, and political criticism interacted within the broader dynamics of state–society relations during the late New Order.

These findings contribute to Indonesian social history by demonstrating that the legitimacy of public policy cannot be assessed solely through formal legality or developmental objectives. The Porkas controversy illustrates that state legitimacy also depends upon public trust, moral accountability, and sensitivity to the social consequences of policy implementation. Although sports development required sustainable financial resources, many critics argued that funding mechanisms encouraging speculation and disproportionately burdening lower-income communities contradicted the broader objectives of equitable national development. The Porkas debate therefore reveals the limits of a developmental approach that prioritized economic pragmatism without adequately addressing ethical and social considerations.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis relies primarily on *Tempo* Magazine as its principal historical source. Although *Tempo* provided extensive coverage of the Porkas controversy, it represented only one important segment of Indonesia's public discourse and was itself subject to the political constraints and editorial considerations characteristic of the New Order period. Second, this study does not incorporate oral history interviews with individuals directly involved in the controversy, nor does it utilize internal government archives that could provide additional insight into the policymaking process behind Porkas. Third, although considerable effort was made to identify relevant *Tempo* articles published between 1986 and 1987, the selection cannot be claimed to represent every contemporary response to the policy. These limitations should therefore be considered when interpreting the findings.

Methodologically, the use of historical methods combined with media discourse analysis demonstrates the value of periodicals as primary sources for reconstructing public debates and social criticism. Rather than treating newspapers and magazines merely as repositories of information, this approach enables historians to examine how competing narratives, values, and political interests were negotiated within the public sphere. At the same time, reliance on a single media source highlights the importance of triangulating future historical research with archival documents, institutional records, and oral testimonies to strengthen historical interpretation.

Future research could extend the present study in several directions. Comparative analyses between Porkas and subsequent state-sponsored gambling programs, such as KSOB and SDSB, would contribute to a broader understanding of continuity and change in government fundraising policies during the New Order. Further research may also examine internal government deliberations through ministerial archives or presidential records to better understand the political decision-making process behind the legalization of Porkas. Finally, comparative studies of gambling controversies in other Southeast Asian countries could

provide valuable regional perspectives on the relationship between development policy, public morality, and state legitimacy.

In conclusion, the Porkas controversy, as represented in *Tempo* Magazine, illustrates a fundamental contest between the developmental ambitions of the New Order state and the moral expectations of Indonesian society. The debate demonstrates that public policy cannot be separated from the ethical, religious, legal, and social values of the communities it affects. By documenting the voices of ordinary citizens alongside those of intellectuals, politicians, and religious leaders, *Tempo* preserved an important record of how Indonesian society questioned, negotiated, and resisted state policy. The Porkas polemic therefore represents not merely a historical episode concerning gambling but a broader reflection on the relationship between development, legitimacy, and public morality in modern Indonesian history.

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